



The Lake Report

Issue 5

July 15, 2018

Niagara-on-the-Lake

Dozens of vehicles toast after vicious field blaze

Story on Page 6



A quick-travelling blaze completely destroyed 19 vehicles and damaged another 15 that were parked in a dry hay field across from the packed Niagara Lavender Festival on on Niagara Stone Road on July 8. (Richard Harley)

ELECTION 2018



A new term of council will start this October, with a new gavel block to go with it. (Penny Coles)

The new kids in town

Richard Harley
Editor

With eight registered candidates so far for Niagara-on-the-Lake town council — none of them current councillors — this municipal election is sure to shape up to be one of the biggest in some time, with deadlines closing on July 27.

In previous stories, we heard from the councillors likely to run again — Terry Flynn, John Wiens, Martin Mazza and Paolo Miele — as well as those expected, or known to be out of the race — Jim Collard, Maria Bau-Coote, Jamie King and Betty Disero, who is running for lord mayor.

If those predicted to run again file nominations, it would mean at least 12 registered candidates will be running during the next election — one of the biggest turnovers in recent years.

Another first for the town this election is the nomination of a 23-year-old candidate for lord mayor. Young Dan Turner will be pitting himself against veteran politician and current councillor Betty Disero.

Not-so-new is the nomination of Gary Burroughs, who will seek a position on town council once again after returning from the Niagara Region.

More election stories on Page 7.

Smoking regulations, smells from grow operations, the marijuana industry is going to cause a buzz as small town Canadian adjust to the new laws. In Niagara-on-the-Lake, home to one of the largest grow operations in the world, there has been a lot of debate about how these facilities should be allowed to reside. Many who live in town say they've had troubles with smells already.

How will the Town handle marijuana grow operations in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

In the face of legalization will big companies win over residents?

Penny Coles
Staff

While the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake attempts to further restrict potential marijuana production facilities by increasing the distance they can be located from homes, churches, playgrounds, schools and other sensitive areas, one local greenhouse operation is already gearing up to sell recreational marijuana.

Jordan Sinclair, vice-president of communications for Canopy Growth, the parent company of Tweed Farms in NOTL, said the regulations for growing recreational marijuana as set out by Health Canada are similar, but less stringent in some areas than those controlling medical marijuana operations.

While controls on production, such as quality assurance, are the same, other regulations regarding items such as security and storage are less onerous, so facilities such as Tweed, with licences to produce and sell medical marijuana, would already meet regulations for recreational marijuana, said Sinclair.

Continued on Page 2

Front page design based on an Oct. 15, 2000 feature from the Boston Globe, titled "Blowing Smoke."

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The Age of Pot

Tweed gearing up for recreational marijuana market

Continued from front page.

Canopy Growth has secured contracts to supply retail outlets in some other provinces, but has nothing signed with the Ontario government, which Sinclair says will be the biggest market in the country.

“We’ve got teams of people working on that.”

He said there hasn’t been a Health Canada licence issued yet in Canada under the new recreational marijuana legislation.

The recent provincial election may mean some changes in the way recreational marijuana can be sold in Ontario — while the previous Liberal government planned to set up stand-alone outlets controlled by the LCBO, Premier Doug Ford said during his election campaign he would consult with municipalities to see if that was the best way to go, and hinted he might be amenable to privatization.

Sinclair said Canopy

Growth would be working on that as well, but doesn’t expect an answer soon.

The federal government has said recreational marijuana will be available to consumers across the country by Oct. 17.

The size of commercial operations is licensed based on square footage, not the number of plants, and Tweed, already considered the world’s largest legal marijuana operation when it was growing crops under 350,000 feet of glass, was licensed to expand on Concession 5 to one million square feet last April, and is ready to jump into the recreational market with product to sell.

Although the federal government has also legalized the large-scale growing of pot outdoors, and NOTL residents have expressed some concern about odour issues from any future outdoor operations, Sinclair says Canopy Growth has done its research and isn’t interested in that type of expansion.

Even without the expensive



Daniel Beltrame, post-harvest manager at Tweed Farms gives an explanation of how the harvesting and trimming process works at Tweed. The operation is treated like a medical space with regards to sanitation, filtration and quality control. (Richard Harley)

infrastructure of indoor production, it’s not as profitable, he said.

Growers would still have hurdles to clear and boxes to tick on extensive regulations such as security and odour control, and that would mean “substantial up-front costs,” he said.

“It would also mean we’d lose the ability to produce multiple crops a year.”

Tweed can harvest four to five crops a year, he said, which pushes the economics in favour of greenhouse production over outdoors.

The Town of NOTL, in considering new bylaws that would increase setbacks for marijuana operations from residential neighbourhoods, schools, churches and playgrounds, among other sensitive areas, is suggesting an even greater setback for outdoor operations.

According to the draft bylaws — which are subject to a public meeting at the committee of the whole meeting Monday — any operation without a filtration system to control odours would have to be 300 metres

from an area with a sensitive land use. Residents at a recent open house suggested that be changed to 500 metres.

Setbacks of 70 metres to residential, institutional or open space land, or closer than 150 metres to sensitive land uses, where there are filtration systems in place, have been recommended in the new bylaw, but residents at the open house recommended 70 metres be increased to 150 metres and 150 metres increased to 300 metres.

Those bylaws apply to production of medical and

recreational marijuana, in rural and urban areas.

Planning director Craig Larmour said while Tweed’s operation complies with the current requirements of the zoning bylaw, it would likely fall short of meeting setbacks in the new draft bylaw.

“Because Tweed was legally established, if they are unable to meet any new provisions, they would be considered to have legal non-conforming status,” Larmour said.

By: Penny Coles

NOTL could be the spot for pot one day

Richard Harley
Editor

With the legalization of marijuana approaching in Canada, farming communities such as Niagara-on-the-Lake could face a number of challenges with regards to legal marijuana grow operations.

There are several potential problems residents and councillors wish to address, such as the smells wafting from production factories affecting neighbouring home, the potential for loss of diversity in Niagara’s fruit farming land if more greenhouse facilities open up, and further complications if the provincial government allows for a private market.

Niagara-on-the-Lake has already seen many of its peach orchards replaced with grape vines, as wineries and distilleries become increasingly popular in the region, and some fear when cannabis is legalized it will could wind up the same.

The potential for Niagara-on-the-Lake to become a tourist spot for pot is a real one, said Coun. Betty Disero.

She said figuring out exactly what power municipalities will have to decide their own fate with regards to controlling production facilities will depend largely on provincial standards, which have yet to be determined in some cases, and are likely to evolve based on what works and what doesn’t.

Jordan Sinclair, vice-president of communications at Tweed Farms, which is currently gearing up for the recreational cannabis market, said he isn’t aware of any competitors coming into town just yet, but that it “wouldn’t surprise” him.

“There have been some areas in the country where you see one person open up shop and a second producer will follow in behind,” he said.

“One of the big hurdles you have to clear is to make sure you’ve got a community where there’s some buy-in — so if town council for example is already experienced with cannabis producers, they’re less likely to have stigma and less likely to say no right out of the gate.”

He said the provincial election also makes things “interesting” for places like Tweed, with new potential for private retail in the province.

“Right now obviously the plan in Ontario is to have the Ontario cannabis stores, and there’s going to be 40 of them, but Premier Ford has said that he’s open to consultation to maybe including the private sector,” Sinclair said.

He said if that were to happen, Tweed could be able to “sell from the production point,” similar to how craft breweries operate.

“Imagine a case where someone is doing a winery tour, and then one of the stops on that winery tour is also at a cannabis grow-op,” he said.

When asked how that could be bad for driving or bike tours, he joked that “maybe we’ll have to get them a bus.”

When Tweed first set up shop in NOTL, things were a bit different, Sinclair said.

“In 2014, the climate — and I’m talking the political and social climate — was not what it is now. A lot has changed in the last

four years with regards to cannabis production and cannabis producers.”

Part of the decision to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake was because Canopy Growth purchased a facility that was already here, which was in the midst of trying to acquire a licence and had yet to do so, he said.

“Part of it just came down to pure availability of options, because the options were very limited at that time. There weren’t a lot of communities or a lot of facilities where you could even pursue this and have any type of social buy-in.”

Other factors, he said, were more “specific to the region itself.”

“And that was largely because the climate is so good down there. Obviously people know (NOTL) as wine country, and for us, those conditions leaned themselves really well to cannabis production.”

When the first greenhouse opened, it didn’t have supplemental light or shade curtains for climate control, “it

was just pure greenhouse,” Sinclair said.

Now, he said the company could operate just about anywhere in the province.

“We’ve got a level of climate control, and we’ve got a level of shade control and things that basically recreate nature for us.”

Disero said if operations can open anywhere in the province, she hopes they won’t come into Niagara-on-the-Lake just to open up a greenhouse in wine country.

With Tweed, which has developed a partnership with Niagara College, Sinclair said the company has “become part of the community now.”

“We’re a member of the Chamber of Commerce, we try to be involved as much as we can with other stakeholders, we’ve got a partnership with the local college down there (Niagara College) and that allowed us to feel the confidence to be able to expand a bunch.”

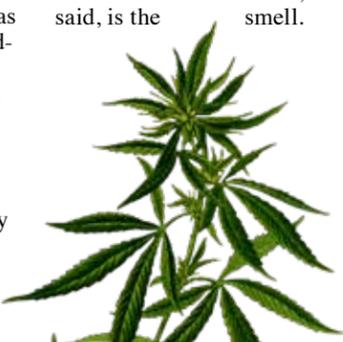
The company is currently expanding its production from about 350,000 square feet to one mil-

lion, and being in the middle off a “massive” expansion right now, doesn’t have anything planned with regards to an outdoor expansion.

There currently is no need for outdoor growing at Tweed, with the greenhouse having climate controls that allows for multiple crops per year.

“We’ll get through tripling, and then we’ll see if there’s another phase of expansion after that,” he said. “But we’ve got a hub here now.”

Disero hopes to protect the town’s agriculture if she ends up winning the municipal election as lord mayor, as well as make sure operations aren’t interfering with residents. Her main concern, she said, is the smell.





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NEWS 

Residents say proposed restrictions on pot producers don't go far enough



Even with all of Tweed's ventilation systems, residents have complained about the smells coming from the facility. (Richard Harley)

Penny Coles
Staff

As several residents made it clear to councillors Monday that the proposed setbacks for marijuana production facilities are too lenient, they learned there is at least one more potential marijuana producer seeking a commercial licence to operate in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Most of those who spoke at an hour-long public meeting in a packed council chamber and lobby at town hall supported an increase to the existing setbacks from residential neighbourhoods, churches, schools, playgrounds and other "sensitive" areas where an operation would impact residents, but said the proposed bylaw, while more restrictive than the one currently on the books, does not go far enough.

The main concern with the potential growth of the marijuana industry, especially with legalized recreational use and increased demand for the product, is odour control and its impact on quality of life and property values to those who live nearby.

Councillors were asked to ensure any new bylaws "err on the side of caution," with far greater setbacks than proposed.

A distance of 500 to 1,000 metres as a starting point was suggested by one resident who lives with odour problems from the Tweed Farms greenhouses on Concession 5, owned by Canopy Growth.

Andrew Stewart of St. Davids told councillors that although he is more than a kilometre away, "downwind" of Tweed's large commercial marijuana facilities, he is impacted by the noxious skunk smell from the greenhouses, especially during harvest time in spring and fall.

The proposed setbacks in the draft bylaw "fall far short of what should be done," he said.

The draft bylaws under discussion say no land, building or structure used to produce or process marijuana, if equipped with air treatment control, may be closer than 70 meters to residential, institutional or open space land, or closer than 150 metres to sensitive land uses.

The proposed bylaws define air treatment control as "Industrial grade multi-stage carbon filtration system, or similar technology, to reduce and/or treat the emission of pollen, dust and odours expelled from a facility and sized accordingly in comparison to the facility it serves as designed by a qualified person."

Without air treatment control the setback to sensitive land uses must be 300 metres or more, according to the draft bylaw, and would apply to outdoor crops.

Current federal legislation allows for no escape of odours from marijuana facilities, said Stewart, but complaints to Canopy have not solved the problem, and the response from complaints to the Town indicate confusion about what can be done.

He urged councillors to consider the residents and businesses they currently represent, including grape growers, and protect their properties, asking if the Town would rather be known as premier wine country or "a pot producer's paradise."

Larkin Road resident Sue Bates also asked for increased setbacks, citing a Pelham production facility that is also causing issues with its residents. Even 1,000 metres would not be enough, she said - the lives of residents close to that facility "are forever changed."

She described a possible scenario of a proliferation of outdoor marijuana crops, with large licensed growers contracting to smaller farmers, paying for their security fences, with only a

300-metre setback from other neighbours required in the proposed bylaw.

The setbacks "are insufficient," said Bates, "and rural residents are not the only ones who could be impacted by this."

Irene Murray, also on Larkin Road, where a marijuana operation was raided by police and charges laid, said she too opposes the setbacks as insufficient, "not as a NIMBY response" but for the good of the municipality. In the absence of scientific data regarding necessary setbacks, she also urged the Town to err on the side of caution with greater setbacks than those in the draft bylaw.

She said NOTL has had trouble with the registered designated medical marijuana growers, who can legally grow limited quantities for personal use without the restrictive licensing requirements of large commercial growers. Those problems are not addressed in the draft bylaw, she said.

She also addressed a comment made about a shortage of supply of medical marijuana for those who need it, saying that is not the responsibility of the municipality - what is important, she said, "is what this town will look like in the future."

The issue of sufficient supply was raised by land-use planning lawyer Laura Dean of Toronto, representing a client who has acquired property in town and is in the process of seeking a Health Canada licence to produce medical marijuana in NOTL, although she did not mention the specific location.

Her client is opposed to increased setbacks as "unnecessary restrictions" that will make it more difficult to meet the needs of clients who rely on medical marijuana. She said the Town report on the draft bylaw doesn't provide "evidence or justification" for its proposal.

"I think it's premature to expand setbacks," she said, adding her client takes odour control "quite seriously" and is working with leading engineering firms and the newest technology to ensure the facility will be of the "highest quality."

Town planner Craig Larmour, in response to a question from Coun. Paolo Miele, said as far as he knows there is no application before the town at this point for a new marijuana facility - although town staff have received several enquiries, when it gets to the application stage council members are notified and the information is posted on the town's website.

Larmour was also asked how long it would take the draft bylaw to be completed and approved, given that any current applications would be processed under the existing setbacks. There have been a number of important issues raised, he said, and the bylaw shouldn't be rushed, but he couldn't provide an exact timeline for a report and recommendation to council.

Two representatives of Canopy Growth, owner of Tweed Farms in NOTL, also opposed the draft bylaw, which would make Tweed non-complying and could hinder any efforts of the company to undertake upgrades or modernization to the older greenhouses on the property, possibly preventing it from improving its odour control measures. In response to a question about what Tweed is doing to address odour control problem, councillors were told there are four to six kinds of air filtration and odour mitigation at work in different areas of the greenhouses, and further efforts are being made to improve the system.

While the gist of the presentations targeted odour control issues, Coun. Jim Collard asked Tweed representative Sean Wallace about the effect of the odour on other crops, such as peaches, pears and plums.

Wallace had no answer, saying that wasn't an issue they'd considered, but Brian Lillis, an Old Town resident and medical marijuana user, had a response. He can legally grow four plants in his home or back yard, he said, for relief of symptoms from Crohn's disease.

"It blows my mind," he said, that with today's technology, odour from greenhouses can't be controlled.

His answer to Collard's question brought some comic relief at the end of the lengthy meeting.

"I'm not going to eat a peach that smells like a doobie," he said.

"Nobody's going to."



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The Lake Report

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Editorial: The biking problem needs addressed



A group of cyclists rides down Concession 1 road, taking up an entire lane. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
 Editor

Surely I'm not the first to say it. But it's something this town and its councillors need to hear — we need to get the bike situation under control.

Lately around town, I've been seeing more and more large groups of bikers riding around the back lines and concessions, hopping from winery to brewery to winery for flights and tastings, before heading back out on the 80 km/h back roads of rural Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Some wear helmets, some don't bother. But that's another story.

The problem is, not only is drinking and biking a recipe

for disaster, there is a lack of infrastructure to handle these gaggles.

And while it's surely a lovely joyride for those riding without a care in the world, it's going to lose its charm when people start getting hurt.

At this rate, it really isn't an 'if.'

At the very least, there needs to be proper infrastructure for bikers, who currently tend to take up entire lanes and forget there are people who actually live and work in this town.

A Shaw Festival employee told The Lake Report he recently witnessed a group of bikers purposely cutting off an entrance to the parking lot

at Shaw so cars couldn't get in until they passed.

And now you'll hear it from residents across town — frustration with bike tours and a lack of any sort of structure.

For years, at least you could just avoid Old Town if you didn't want to deal with the tourists, but that era has come and gone.

This town needs to switch into high gear on creating bylaws for bikers in the next term of council, as well as ensuring the proper infrastructure is there for bike tours as they grow in popularity.

People should be able to enjoy riding through the orchards and vineyards. I'm sure it's a beautiful experi-

ence. But it should be done safely, and in a way that's fair to the residents of the town, who work here and pay the taxes for the roads.

That being said, judging by how often bikers along the Niagara Parkway forget the asphalt trail along the bank is made for them, who knows if they would even use it.

Part of the bylaw, based on what residents have told the paper, is that bikers should not be able to ride side-by-side on roads with no designated bike trail.

How that could be enforced is something council should also explore.

The cost of bike trails should probably fall on the Region and the province since they are promoting biking at a high level.

Until then, it would be prudent for the Town to start thinking of ways it can get cyclists under control.

Perhaps some signs warning people of potential fines could be a good deterrent.

Whatever happens, it needs to be something, and it needs to be soon. It's literally a miracle nobody is dead yet.

Sooner or later, somebody is going to pay the price.

It won't just be one person who suffers; it will be the cyclist who ends up dead, the person responsible, and the emergency responders who have to clean the mess off the pavement.

Letters to the editor



From the Niagara Foundation

We are writing with respect to the Two Sisters Resorts letter of June 25 to Council advising of its intent to demolish a number of structures at 200 John Street and 588 Charlotte Street.

The board of The Niagara Foundation is astounded and dismayed by that letter. Coming on the heels of Council's June 11 decision to proceed with the process of designating all four properties on the Rand Estate, this can only be seen as a flagrant disregard of the wishes of both Council and the Town's Municipal Heritage Committee.

The Two Sisters Resorts letter can be seen as nothing more than a complete denial of the repeated and unqualified assurances by the developer in their presentations to Council that they were pursuing heritage designation for the properties.

We urge Council to do

everything in its power to ensure that the developer is not able to proceed with what could be viewed as wanton destruction of the irreplaceable cultural heritage assets on the Rand Estate.

We trust Council will take urgent action to address this affront to you, our cultural heritage and the many people of Niagara-on-the-Lake who have clearly and passionately voiced their opposition to the actions of Solmar Resorts on the Rand Estate.

We will support Council in any way possible in addressing this blatant defiance of the decision of Council and the wishes of the vast majority of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of The Niagara Foundation,

Michael Howe, President

Best to be pro-active with pot

Penny Coles
 Opinion

Niagara-on-the-Lake is on the precipice of what could be massive changes — likely unwelcome changes — to its agricultural industry, with little control over preventing them.

Picture a local greenhouse owner/operator, maybe getting on in years, with greenhouses that have seen better days, who is thinking about a hard-earned retirement and uncertain about whether he can afford the cruise he and his wife have always dreamed about. Or a farmer who has worked hard all his life, is ready to ease off and enjoy a more relaxed life, and has some land available that could help finance his plans. Either are obvious choices for being approached by a potential marijuana grower looking for a location, willing to offer ridiculous amounts of money because of the potential for profit. In fact, those local growers may be picking up the phone and offering their land — why wouldn't they?

If NOTL is seen as hospitable to the marijuana industry, and it likely is with all the media attention to what is being called the largest legal commercial medical marijuana

facility in the world right here in town, we can understand why the Town planning department and councillors are on the receiving end of enquiries about NOTL land use policies.

At the moment there are some restrictions, but very lenient ones. There isn't much the Town can do in the face of federal legislation that legalizes the crop — it can be grown in greenhouses, in industrial warehouses, outdoors and in limited quantities in homes and backyards. All the Town can do in the way of legislation is determine where such facilities are located, by dictating how far they have to be from "sensitive" land uses, which can include homes, schools, churches, day cares, and playgrounds. While municipalities are helpless in the face of strong skunk odours from the crop disturbing neighbours, they can ensure future operations are far enough away that those odours are less likely to be a problem.

Increased setbacks can eliminate some greenhouses and farms as potential medical production sites in rural communities with residential neighbourhoods, such as Larkin Road, where residents have organized to combat some of the issues

they foresee, which is what the Town is focusing on with its draft bylaw. But as several residents have said, those setbacks should be as restrictive as possible, since that may be the only control in local hands.

The real money, we're told, is in the largest commercial operations that can grow several crops a year. They can be located in industrial-area warehouses — one of Canopy Growth's facilities is in a former Hershey chocolate factory in Smiths Falls, Ont., that was vacant, which seems like a good solution to repurposing factories that are shut down and otherwise face demolition.

We might not have those in NOTL, but we do have vacant industrial property. That would take the pressure off greenhouse and farm properties — although it doesn't help those greenhouse operators and farmers who are ready to retire.

Twenty-five or more years ago, the Town introduced bylaws controlling wineries — they had to be located on agricultural properties that were 25 acres or more, and those acres not taken up by the winery building had to be planted with grapes. The concept behind the bylaw was that while wineries

would provide a welcome boost for grape growers and the agricultural industry, they shouldn't be allowed to take too much farmland out of production.

It seems similar to the situation faced today with marijuana production, with the added pressure we're learning about — the odours that mean such operations don't make for good neighbours.

We've seen the Town deal with resident complaints about odour from chicken farms, the noise from bird-bangers, the health risks of spraying, and even the noise from winery events, as was discussed at the same committee meeting Monday night as the setbacks for marijuana operations, so this situation has some familiarity to it — but in the past it has always been in a reactive sense, since the farmers were here first.

This is an opportunity for the Town to be pro-active, putting into place any and all controls within the jurisdiction of the municipality. It won't, and shouldn't, stop all marijuana facilities from finding appropriate sites, but it might help prevent NOTL from becoming, as one of the speakers at Monday's meeting warned it might, a pot producer's paradise.

From the Sentineal Family

The Sentineal Family has a long tradition of having horses in the Old Town.

In the 1970s Fred did weddings for friends and family. This was supported by the late Fred and Jackie, his parents.

In the late 1980s we continued this tradition and added tours to our repertoire.

We took a leap of faith in 1992 and took it on as a business.

The why of it is simple: Fred was always a natural with horses and we really enjoyed meeting so many wonderful people and having the opportunity to take part in their special times and occasions. It was a great way to share our beautiful horses and town with visitors and locals alike.

We had a young family and wanted to be with them and raise them as a part of our family business, so Sentineal Carriages was created.

It has not been easy. We take so much pride in what we have been able to bring to the town.

Our objective was to try to make a living doing what we loved with our family and horses. Our staff members present and past have enriched our lives and our business with their hard work and dedication.

They, as well as our beloved horses are family to us.

Now we find ourselves in the spotlight, being accused of all sorts of terrible abuse of our horses and being all about money.

Fred, our staff and I are so thankful for all the support we have received from the community and beyond.

All the encouragement and kind words make an otherwise difficult situation much more tolerable.

We plan on being here for many years to come with our family and carriage horses.

We are so privileged to be able to live and work in such a wonderful community.

Thanks to all for your support and friendship.

Sincerely,

The Sentineal Family


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NEWS

Volunteer Talent Bank a good way to engage in the community



Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Those looking to get off the couch and volunteer in Niagara-on-the-Lake have a place to do it as of last summer.

The Town's Volunteer Talent Bank was created in August of 2017 by the Community Engagement Committee "to continue to invest in the skills and talents within our key volunteer sector," as per one of Council's Strategic Plan priorities.

Victoria Steele, community engagement coordinator at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, explains the process:

"Anyone wanting to participate can visit the Town's website and fill out their contact information," she said.

"Organizations, community groups, companies, and committees can also go to the Town's website and fill out a brief form to explain the volunteer opportunity. The Town acts as the go-between."

As volunteer opportunities are submitted, a staff member emails the details to everyone who has subscribed. Those on the mailing list receive all opportunities that are sent out but only have to respond if they're

interested and available.

Interested people contact the organizer directly to ask questions or to sign up.

People of all ages enlist, from high school students looking to fulfil their mandatory volunteer hours to college students and older adults looking for extracurricular activities. "It's also a great way for new residents to get a sense of what takes place in the town and to meet new people," she said.

Opportunities for volunteering come from all across the community, and include committees looking for members and events looking for people to assist in any number of ways. The only criterion for those looking for volunteers is that the opportunity or event must take place in or service NOTL.

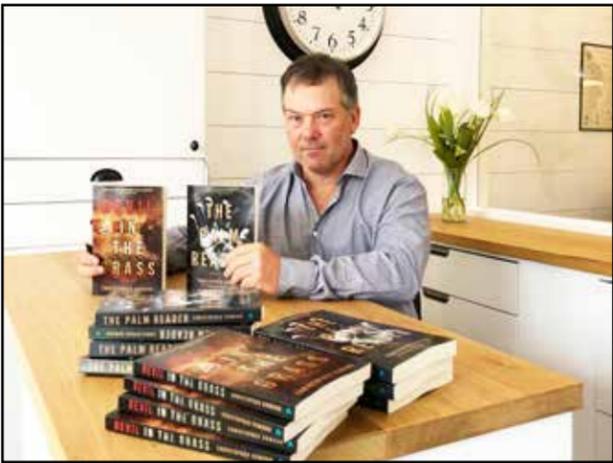
Steele says there has been an excellent reaction to the volunteer requests. "One group's posting was emailed out and within 15 minutes

the group called and asked for another email to be sent out announcing the opportunity as closed because they had already received an overwhelming response."

A Community Engagement and Volunteer Fair was held at the Community Centre in April of this year. Approximately 30 groups seeking volunteers attended, along with 120 people looking for volunteering opportunities. "The event was a great success and we hope to make it an annual event," says Steele.

Coun. Betty Disero, a member of the subcommittee that created the talent bank, says, "Niagara-on-the-Lake is blessed to have an active community that cares so much about the town that all one has to say is 'we need help' and residents reach out to lend a hand. It is community engagement like this that keeps our town the best place to live."

Chris Bowron launches second mystery



Chris Bowron. (Supplied)

Penny Coles
Staff

Chris Bowron is well-known in Niagara-on-the-Lake as a lifelong resident whose family roots go back four generations — and with a successful career in the real estate industry, he is also rapidly developing a reputation as an author of popular mystery novels set in a different world and culture, a long way from home.

Since his youth, Bowron's family has divided time between NOTL and Fort Myers Beach, and it is there he has chosen to set his two novels, *Devil in the Grass*, and its sequel, *The Palm Reader*, which was released in print and on Amazon recently.

Bowron's main character is Jackson Walker, a lawyer who in *The Palm Reader* is investigating a porn ring to help his client who has been charged with distributing child pornography. But the villains he met and overcame at personal danger to himself in *Devil in the Grass* come back to haunt him in the sequel — as does his heritage as a Seminole Native American, with a grand-

father who believes he has some psychic powers related to his native spirituality.

That makes for a touch of the paranormal introduced to the plot, a subject Bowron said he finds interesting, although he's not sure he's a believer himself.

Walker reflects that ambivalence — he struggles with accepting his psychic abilities in *Devil in the Grass*, although in *The Palm Reader*, he is reluctantly beginning to believe there might be some truth to what his grandfather has been telling him all along about his gift.

"It's not in-your-face paranormal," said Bowron.

"It gives a reader the chance to believe it or not — it's not hocus-pocus that the mystery depends on."

Although writing has to be fit into a busy lifestyle — with Bowron juggling a wife, family and a business, he said he loves the craft.

"I love hearing from people who have read my book and like it — it's amazing. If I can get thousands reading it and liking it it's even more amazing," he said.

He does most of his writing while in Fort Myers Beach, where he and his wife have a condo and where he knows the locale, which he portrays with a familiarity in the settings he creates.

He travels to Florida from NOTL every two months or so, usually staying a couple of weeks, where he says the salt water and humidity are good for his health, and the change of pace provides a break from the stress of everyday life.

He sets himself a goal of 300 words a day, which only takes a short time late at night or early morning, when he's most productive. He's a high-energy kind of guy who isn't good at sitting, so that isn't a hardship, and in some sessions the words come quickly and he can write much more.

But much harder than writing a book is marketing and selling it, he said.

Although some people still like to read their books in print — and those copies make a larger profit than their digital editions — distribution through Amazon, where *Devil in the Grass* became a best-seller, helps books to reach a larger market, and if enough are sold, helps build an author's reputation and encourages readers to pick up their other books.

He's "not ready to give up" his day job, although he is excited he has a new book finished. Although not yet published, this one is a non-fiction titled *Waiting for Morning Time*, which he said is being looked at by one of the top-10 publishers in the US.

It's about three men whose boat sank while they were fishing in the Gulf of Mexico, and spent 48 hours in shark-infested waters off the coast of Venice, Florida.

He's also just signed a deal on a true story about a Hungarian chef who escaped during the Cold War after being shot in the head and eventually reached London, England where he secured a position working for the Queen Mother, before going to the US, where he ended up as a chef for John and Jackie Kennedy, and four more presidents — eventually working for the American government as a spy.

"I think it will be a fiction, based on his true story," he said.

And he has already started a third Jack Walker book, but is taking a break from it while he works out some of the plot details, he said.

He's finding his writing comes easier and quicker and his dialogue is getting better — he's learned with each book.

But now he's taking a "crash course" in promoting his work, which is far more difficult.

"You have to get yourself in front of people — promoting is an art. If you can keep readers interested with each book you write, you can sell more books, and become sustainable as an author."

The Palm Reader has received a great review from a very reputable reviewer — it's "action packed and exciting with twists and turns, fantastic characters and a truly spellbinding plot — the best book in its genre I have ever read," said the Columbia Review, which is a feather in Bowron's cap and bodes well for his other books.

To get a copy of his books or explore more about Bowron and his work, visit his website at www.christopherbowron.com.

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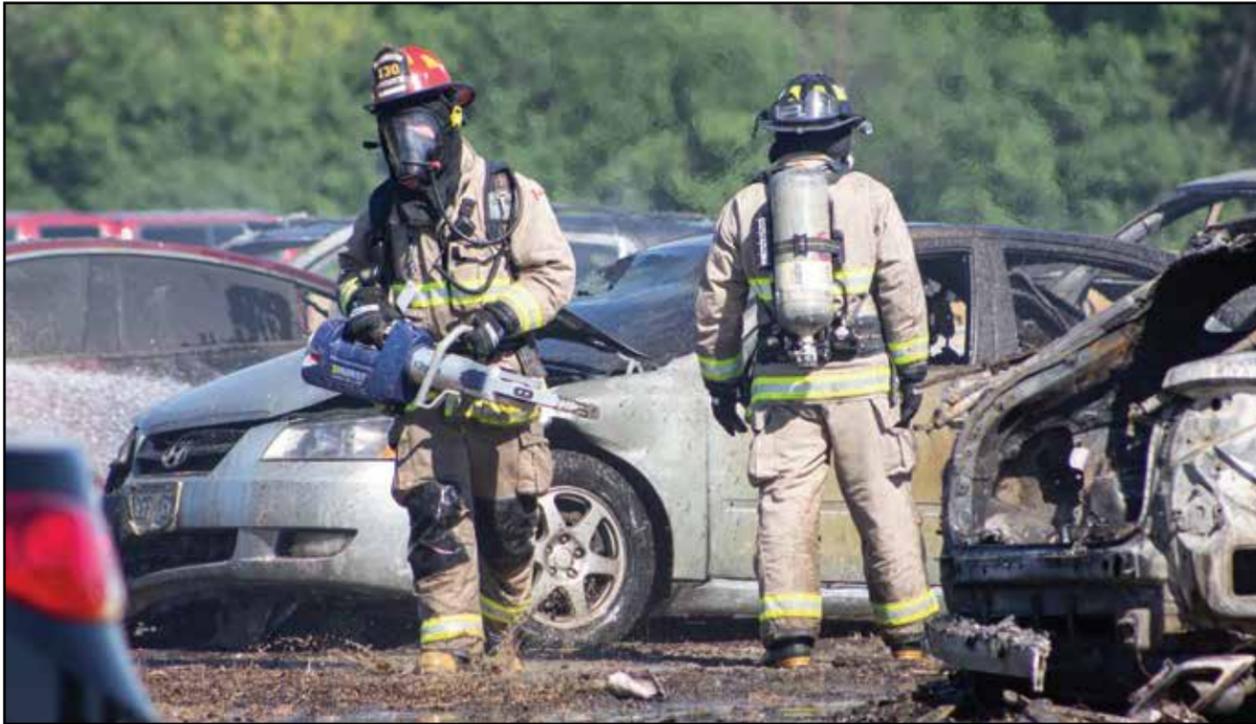
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NEWS

Blaze tears through vehicles

Fire Chief: Parking cars in hay field "such a bad idea" that Fire station communicated to event organizer not to do it.



Niagara-on-the-Lake volunteer firefighters battle a blaze that broke out in a hay field across from the Niagara Lavender Festival on July 8. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

A vicious blaze completely destroyed 19 vehicles and damaged another 15 that were parked just off Niagara Stone Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 8.

Video footage of the fire clearly shows the cause, NOTL Fire Chief Rob Grimwood told town councillors Monday evening.

He said a hot catalytic converter on the undercarriage of one car ignited dry hay on the ground and the blaze quickly spread to other vehicles.

Addressing the committee of the whole meeting, Grimwood said damage is estimated to be between \$1.2 and \$1.5 million.

One car, he said, was a brand new Tesla worth around \$100,000.

Hare Winery next door to the field had to shut down its business mid-afternoon and evacuate customers in the midst of their wine-tasting, and will likely also make an insurance claim increasing the cost of the damages, he said.

Eleven fire trucks and 44 firefighters battled the blaze as they would a forest fire, keeping it contained to the area around the 34 cars, but despite the extent of the fire, it could have been significantly worse, Grimwood said.

"It could have been catastrophic in terms of injury and potential fatalities, which were all prevented."

The fire started sometime around 3:50 p.m. across the street from the packed Niagara Lavender Festival, held at Neob Lavender Boutique.

Grimwood said parking vehicles in the field with the dry hay was "such a bad idea

that (firefighters) communicated to the event organizer not to do it."

"It's some advice from the fire department that wasn't followed," he said, the cause of the fire being the "exact reason" the fire department advised against it, but with nowhere else to handle the number of cars, they went ahead and used it anyway.

"They accepted they went against our advice, but at this point that's water under the bridge," Grimwood said, although he added there has to be a larger discussion about the handling of on-site parking for large special events, including taking a look at any in the near future that might intend to use fields of dry hay or straw.

"It's a dry season, there are several municipalities already with fire bans, because once you get fire into dry grass, hay or wheat like this, it travels very quickly."

He said the problem with a parking lot like the one used, is the fire will travel underneath the cars, start one car on fire and move to the next. Nobody was injured in the incident that firefighters know of, but for firefighters, the threat of heat exhaustion and exertion is a real threat, Grimwood said.

"These firefighters are wearing an excess of 100 pounds," he said, while he himself was standing the sweltering July heat.

He said firefighters on scene were rotating through a rehabilitation centre to cool them off and check their vital signs, as heat exhaustion can set in fairly quickly.

Grimwood himself looked like he was cooking. "And I'm doing the coor-

dinating, I'm not even doing the physical work," he said, offering praise to his crew.

"These firefighters are amazing. These guys are all volunteers who are out here on a Sunday afternoon in the summer. They're doing an amazing job. This could have been a lot worse. I mean you look out here, and you see all these damaged vehicles, but for every vehicle that is damaged, you see two that were saved."

"I can't say enough about my firefighters. They're amazing. They did incredible work today."

He said although some firefighters were treated for

heat exhaustion at the scene, though none required transportation to hospital.

Both committee chair Jamie King and Lord Mayor Pat Darte praised the fire chief and his team of firefighters Monday for controlling the fire.

"I salute the bravery of you and your team," said King, to applause from the audience for the chief and volunteer firefighters.

"Our firefighters are our heroes. They're friends of ours, and we fear for their safety. They prevented what could have been a whole lot more damage," echoed Darte. "Kudos to you guys."



A plume of thick smoke could be seen for miles around.

Fuel draws environmental concerns for nearby drains

Penny Coles
Staff

Fuel from the fire that destroyed or damaged 34 cars parked in a dry field bordering Niagara Stone Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake Sunday "probably didn't make it" into the watercourse used by farmers for irrigation, councillors heard Monday.

Addressing Monday's committee-of-the-whole meeting, Brett Ruck, the Town's supervisor of environmental services, irrigation and drainage, said following the fire, which damaged fuel tanks and fuel lines of 20 of the 34 cars, staff was concerned about the possible contamination of two nearby drains which are part of the Town's irrigation system.

Ruck said he took a look at the sub-drainage in the field Monday, expecting if there was a drainage system, it would be old - the

property owner wasn't sure himself what was under the surface.

What they discovered was plastic sub-drainage pipes, with enough mud and debris built up over years to contain any contaminated water in the pipes and "probably" keep it out of municipal drains, Ruck said.

But just to be safe, he told councillors, the Town brought in a company that would use booms to absorb any possibly contaminated water before it reached the drains, and water samples were taken for testing.

He also spoke to farmers who use that drain for irrigation, asking them to hold off irrigating until he gets answers on the water quality.

"As far as we're concerned, we've done our part. Now it's up to the land owners to do their part" if any soil remediation is necessary, he said.



Fire burning under the cars was difficult to put out.



A line of vehicles left destroyed after the blaze.



Firefighters worked in shifts to battle the blaze, taking breaks to make sure they didn't overheat.

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23-year-old joins lord mayor race



Lord mayor candidate Dan Turner. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

Twenty-three-year-old Dan Turner officially filed his nomination papers for lord mayor Thursday morning.

The nearly lifelong local surprised many residents in June when he announced his plan to seek the position of lord mayor at such a young age, with no experience in a council room — though having lived in Niagara most of his life, Turner feels he's got what it takes.

He has a lot of ideas of about change, he said, including increasing tourism revenues to lower taxes, finding out how the municipality can keep control of things that affect residents from the Region, and ensuring potential provincial funding changes don't affect public facilities like libraries.

He said he thinks now that he's officially in the running, people will be open to hearing his ideas.

"Most people have been surprised to see someone as young as me going around and saying I think we need some change ... I'm curious to see if there's been any change in attitudes with me being officially on the ballot now."

Turner said he's been studying hard over the past few months to prepare for the election and position.

Part of that process, he said, has been "a lot of reading," digging through documents like the Municipal Elections Act and the Ontario Municipal Act, as well as going door-to-door to find out what residents care about.

He said so far people have reacted well to him.

"Overwhelmingly I've

had a lot of positivity. I've had a lot of people say that we need fresh blood in Niagara-on-the-Lake and it's about time that we had some change. A lot of people are glad to see a young local being able to take a stand to advance some change, and to go out there and actually try to make the change."

"With a little more recognition of this actually being official — and maybe with people taking me a little bit more seriously — it's going to be interesting to see how people react to it."

He said he thinks NOTL needs a young, passionate, local to come in and take the reigns.

"I've heard the terms young blood and fresh blood over and over," he said.

Another reason Turner is running, he said, is to fulfil a dream of sorts, one that began the first time he voted when he was 18.

Since then he's taken courses in school which have given him experience he feels is valuable to bring to the table, he said, pointing to a first-class honours degree in economics from Brock University and time spent working with Statistics Canada and the Niagara Region.

That experience, he believes, have taught him how to adapt quickly and problem-solve.

It's important to focus on both the big things and the little ones, he said, telling a

story from when he worked at Mercedes-Benz Financial Services Canada. During his time there, when a document needed a signature, instead of printing it off, scanning it and sending it back, he would add an electronic signatures and save paper. Although he wasn't technically supposed to, he admits, after running it by the boss, the entire department started doing it, which resulted in significant savings on printing costs.

It's that type of ingenuity Turner hopes to bring to town council, he said.

With regards to the position of lord mayor, he said he's done his homework.

"You're never going to be able to know every little bit going into it, and there's always going to be something to learn every day when it comes to talking to people and figuring out what's important."

He said so far from visiting residents at their homes he's learned one of the most concerning issues for a lot of people, especially in Virgil and the Homestead area, is the possibility of a new medical centre being built on Niagara Stone Road.

Contender for the position of lord mayor Betty Disero — who has spent four years on NOTL town council and brings more than two decades of experience in the political world — said she thinks Turner would be better off to run for a position on council, where he "might stand a



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chance," in the election.

Turner said he's not discouraged by anyone who thinks he's too young.

He wants to "bring change" to the town, he said.

"I think I'm the person who might be able to do it."

As far as NOTL chief administrative officer Holly

Dowd can recall, Turner is the youngest to run for the position in the history of the town, though there is no recorded list of candidate ages. If Turner wins, he would be the sixth-youngest mayor to be elected in Canada, according to information from Wikipedia.

Burroughs to seek former position as town councillor



Gary Burroughs. (Supplied)

Penny Coles
Staff

Gary Burroughs hopes the October municipal election will return him to his roots in municipal politics — as one of eight sitting at the Niagara-on-the-Lake council table.

He has known for some time he would be a candidate in the upcoming election, but was keeping his cards close to the chest about what role he wanted to play, with most people expecting him to either seek a third term as regional councillor for Niagara-on-the-Lake or campaign to return as lord mayor.

He first sat on town council as an alderman in 1989 to 1991. After a break from poli-

tics, he ran and was elected as lord mayor in 2000, completing three terms before running for regional council in 2010. Not only did he secure a seat as NOTL's elected representative at the region, but was voted in as regional chair, a job he loved - it kept him involved in every facet of the region, he said.

Although he was re-elected to regional council in 2014, he did not get to serve a second term as chair. And since then he has become disillusioned, not because he was relegated to the role of councillor but because regional council has become about party politics, he said.

"There have been changes going on, and they're changes I don't like."

He's been especially concerned about the turnover of staff at the region, and choices that have been made about replacing people. He also sees a similar trend at the municipal level, sometimes leading to inexperienced staff.

Rather than hiring from within, at both a municipal and regional level, Burroughs would prefer to see a search for the best person for the job, even if it means looking at people from other municipalities.

Burroughs, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, was the owner-operator of the Oban Inn for 30 years, taking over the family business from his parents. He sold it to Vintage Inns in the 1990s, and was able to return to politics full-time.

Two and a half years ago, finding more time on his hands as a regional councillor after four years as chair, he took a job as treasurer at Genaire Ltd., which has been manufacturing and repairing aircraft components in NOTL since 1951.

His two main interests which have served him well during his political career at the municipal and regional level are finance and waste management, so it's no surprise that it's tax revenue and providing clarity about property assessment which will concern him locally.

In addition to making it clear where the money comes from to run a municipality and what it is spent on, he said, at the municipal, regional and provincial level, he believes taxpayers could be better informed about assessment based on property values.

"Over the last four years I've heard mixed descriptions and complaints with one or

the other. It's important to understand both at the local level. I think there are still a lot of people who don't understand that just because their assessment goes up 10 per cent, it doesn't mean their taxes go up 10 per cent. I don't believe that's clear to a lot of people."

Niagara-on-the-Lake has won awards for its budget presentation, he said, and he's not criticizing current council for the misunderstanding, but he believes it can be presented more clearly to residents.

"I want to relate it to taxpayers so they understand what's happening."

Burroughs said if elected, "I know I will only get one vote, but these are common sense issues and I hope to help a new council, and those who have been there before, with my experience in other fields."

He's not concerned there will be up to four new faces at the council table, because it's good to have new ideas, but it's also a "catch-22," he said, because it's also important to have some experience around the table.

"Experience helps politicians develop a thick skin when it comes to criticism from constituents over decisions made, and while

it's important to listen to residents, it's also necessary to make a decision based on the best information you have at that time, and be able to take the criticism that might come your way, although it's not always easy. As long as you're always trying to do the right thing for the town you have to grin and bear it, and go to sleep at night knowing you've done what you think is best."

He said "in the old days" every councillor at regional and municipal levels just wanted to do the best for their constituents, but he no longer feels that's the way decisions are made at the region.

"That's why I want to go back to municipal council."

Burroughs said his concern is focused on Niagara-on-the-Lake, and that is the best way to serve it.

"I think I can provide a lot of experience to local staff and to council," he said.

"It's not that I have any intention of telling others what to do, but I will voice my opinion based on my own experience. Whoever wins the mayor's job, I intend to be quite vocal about trying to get information to residents that they need to understand - including information about where revenue

comes from and where their tax dollars go."

But although he has some ideas of the issues that are important to him, he is really looking forward to going door to door and hearing from residents.

"The community is quite a bit bigger now, and I'm looking forward to meeting people," he said.

His decision to run for council has been based on his beliefs and what he thinks is important to the town, he said, but once he starts campaigning and talking to people, he'll be hearing about all sorts of issues.

"We'll need to deal with them if we can, and if we can't, we need to let residents know we can't and why."

Burroughs has been chair of the Niagara Parks Commission and Shaw Festival. He's lived in NOTL for about 50 years, and he and his wife Sarah have two daughters and four grandchildren.

In the last term of regional council, Burroughs has been a member of the region's corporate services committee, public works committee, audit committee, budget review committee and waste management planning steering committee.



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Taren Trindade
B.A., DD

VBA to ramp up security for Virgil Stampede



The Virgil Stampede 2018. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

The Virgil Stampede has always had its ups and downs with regards to how some people choose to conduct themselves.

This year was no different, according to Niagara Regional Police constable Mike Malachowski, who spoke at a Virgil Business Association meeting in June.

The problem, he said, seems to be getting worse and worse, with the main instigators being teenagers from out of town.

He said police broke up three fights during the stampede weekend, among them

one between carnival workers and a group of teens.

The teens decided to start harassing one of the carnival employees, he said, causing the fight to break out.

The fight was broken up rather quickly and several of the teens were arrested, but he said incidents like this could be more preventable.

He suggested measures to help prevent trouble makers from getting into the stampede, such as limiting the entrance to one section, lowering the age for free admission to 12, and doing backpack searches for everyone who attends, similar to a concert setting.

VBA members seemed to

generally agree with the suggestions, noting the location has the advantage of already being completely fenced in, and that it wouldn't be very hard to block off the entrance on Loretta Drive.

Malachowski said another problem officers face is teens bringing in alcohol and drugs.

Backpack searches, he suggested, would be a good prevention method — one he thinks parents of younger kids would appreciate.

He said this year he confiscated alcohol from a child as young as 12, and older teens were reported doing "what they call blow" in the bathroom.

The types of kids who bring in alcohol and drugs also tend not to contribute to the stampede by spending money on food and rides, he said, adding he doesn't think lowering the age limit and cracking down on security should be a revenue concern, as he predicts it would have a minimal effect of profits.

This year the carnival closed early one night, he said, because nobody was spending any money.

"They're not contributing anything," he said, of the types of kids who are just there to cause trouble.

He said something needs to happen, as times are changing, and police have a tougher job than ever enforcing the law.

One boy made a racism complaint against him, he said, adding he is no racist. "And parents don't support us," he said.

He said most times parents take the side of their child and think the police are in the wrong.

VBA members agreed there is a lot to be done to increase security for future years, as times have changed.

No official decisions have been made yet, but VBA secretary Marcia Penner said there will be something done to ramp up security for next year.

The stampede is not the only venue police have encouraged increased security, Malachowski said.

"Times are changing. I'm not sure if parents aren't disciplining their kids or what."

Stirr: Tensions expected at July horse carriage protest

Richard Harley
Editor

The horse and carriage protests taking place in Old Town could get tense near the end of July, said Adam Stirr, animal rights activist and founder of At War For Animals Niagara.

In an email to the Lake Report, he said he expects about 200 people from both sides to attend a protest planned for July 28 in the group's favoured spot at the intersection of Queen and King streets where Sentineal Carriages operates its business.

The protests have sparked a large debate between those who believes horses shouldn't be used for work and others who support the Sentineal family, which has owned and operated their carriage business in Niagara-on-the-Lake for 30 years.

Both sides claim each other is misinformed about the impact such work as pulling carriages has on horses.

The Sentineals, horse owners for their entire lives, have said they treat their horses well and that certain species of horses, such as the large, heavy types they use for their business, are happier when they're working, also noting many of the horses are rescued from slaughter auctions.

Stirr and members of AWFAM refute those claims, saying the horses — which are used in all four seasons — are suffering.

Stirr said the group believes the horses would be better off in a "sanctuary" where they can live their lives "free of their human masters."

Fred Sentineal, who owns and runs Sentineal Carriages with his wife Laura, has said many of the claims by AWFAM members are ill-educated, such as that the heat affects their hoofs.

He also noted the activists aren't there protesting "when the horses go to slaughter."

St Onge: The man behind the scenes



Jean St Onge. (Lauren O'Malley)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

At any given moment during every performance at the Shaw Festival there are dozens of people you can't see working, so the ones you can see can keep you entertained.

Behind the scenes, Jean St Onge is one of those invisible people, working as first spot operator from his perch high in the ceiling of the Festival Theatre.

St Onge was given his 20-year pin by the Shaw last year, having worked in a variety of support positions, including deck electrician, flyman and rigger.

"Spot operator is one of my new favourites," he said.

"I'm directly involved in the show, I have to stay focused the whole time, and some people can really tell if I've had a good or a bad show. Plus, I actually get to see the play."

Most of the people who work in the dark back-grounds of the theatre never actually get to see the performances.

The musicians, dressers, electricians are all moving around invisibly, literally behind the scenes, following their own complex choreography.

St Onge's opportunity is a rare one — and one he cherishes all the more because one of the actors in the play he gets to watch this year is his wife, Jenny Wright.

"I'm just up there in my booth — really just taped lines marking my space — with a photo of my family taped on the air vent behind me, listening to the stage director on my headphones. I get to hear, 'Where's Jenny Wright?' when she's taking too long for a change, and I can make fun of her about it after the show."

St Onge sits in the back-

yard of the family home, which is teeming with life — two kids, a dog, cats, a flock of hens and greenery everywhere.

He and Wright are getting the kids and themselves ready for a very rare treat for two Shaw workers during busy season — a two day camping trip.

"We haven't both had two days off in a row at the same time in years," said Wright. "This is such a luxury."

Above his head is a double-layered tree house which he built himself, replete with wrought iron railings from the dismantled set of a Shaw production.

The structure is sound, with professional caliber cables and clamps, with suspended swings and aerial silks hanging from it.

"I like to make people and things fly," he said, referring to his work as a flyman, rigger and stage crew member — and this clearly applies at home, too.

His daughter Josie is an accomplished aerial silks acrobat, and Wright was recently certified to teach aerial acrobatics.

When St Onge met Wright he was travelling with the Cirque de Soleil as a rigger.

He said he does miss the excitement, the people and the travel associated with his former work, but his at the Shaw, as it was there, is to keep people safe — something he takes very seriously.

He is in the minority of theatre workers who have ETCP (Entertainment Tech-

nician Certification Program) certification — a demanding accomplishment, that requires constant training to earn credits for recertification every five years.

His motto is "setting the stage for safety."

St Onge is also a man of many hobbies, including sports photography.

"When kids see themselves in action shots it makes them better athletes because they see themselves at their best and think, 'I look like a pro.'"

St Onge also recently added leatherwork to his rather large set of skills.

"I saw a beautiful leather bag, but it was six hundred bucks, and there was no way I was going to pay that for a bag. So I went online and watched a couple of videos."

That little bit of self-teaching has led to an impressive array of technically complicated and aesthetically dramatic bags, purses and tool holders.

St Onge does all the work by hand from start to finish, dyeing and cutting the leather, punching the holes and stitching pieces together (he is a particular fan of the baseball stitch).

He molds thick pieces of leather to hold complicated shapes, and sources and attaches striking fasteners.

His leather hobby is now turning into a small business, with orders lined up from his many fans.

It seems Jean St Onge has found a way to not be invisible after all.

Firefighters to ramp up volunteer recruitment



NOTL firefighters. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire and Emergency Services will be ramping up recruitment initiatives throughout the summer and into the fall.

Information sessions will be held in September for interested parties and their families to learn about the application process and the amount of time required in the role of a firefighter.

Nick Ruller, deputy fire chief for NOTL Fire, said volunteer firefighters often explain their positions as demanding, but rewarding.

"Recruiting and retaining volunteers in any organization is challenging in today's climate. Specifically — in our organization — the time commitment often surprises potential candidates," he said.

"Our firefighters are continually training in order to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve. Gone are the days where the focus was on fire suppression. Our organization has evolved into an all-hazards response

agency covering services like auto extrication, patient care and rope rescue, to name a few," he adds.

Information session dates are September 13 at 7 p.m. at Station 1 in Old Town and September 25 at 7 p.m. at Station 5 in Glendale.

To register to become a volunteer firefighter, download the application form or fill one out online at notl.org/content/recruitment, or by calling the fire department's administration office at 905-468-3266.

Applications can be submitted all year round. Only applications received prior to October 19 (2018) will be considered for the 2019 recruit intake.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is provided fire protection services to its residents and visitors through a volunteer firefighter service delivery model that operates out of five fire stations. There are between 20 and 25 volunteers assigned to each fire station that collectively respond to over 650 incidents annually.



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New project for Virgil Sports Park



Illustrations for a potential pump track in Virgil. (Supplied)

Penny Coles
Staff

The Virgil Sports Park just keeps getting better, says Kevin Turcotte - next on the list is a project that could be a skate park, a pump track or a pipe park.

The Town has "generously agreed" to a \$150,000 capital expenditure to pay for this next project, with community involvement to determine what it will look like, said the Town's parks and recreation manager.

In recent years the sports park, home to two arenas and several ball diamonds, has seen the addition of a skateboard park, new soccer fields,

a splash pad, new playground equipment, an adult fitness circuit and coming next spring, pickleball courts.

The Virgil Business Association, which has helped fund most of the components of the sports park, including the first arena that opened in 1967, has also pledged financial support, with its proceeds from the May Virgil Stampede going to the project. The VBA has set aside \$75,000 to go toward the project, but hasn't officially voted on that amount.

Members are expected to vote on it when they reconvene in the fall.

The Town has organized a public meeting Tuesday, July

24 to solicit input on what kind of a project would be most fitting, said Turcotte, to ensure it will be well-used by the community.

"We're hoping for users of the park and those interested in a skate park, a pump track or even a pipe park to tell us what they want," he said.

"We're going into this with an open mind, not dead set on anything. We want the community to direct staff as to what would best fit in the community."

The new project, whatever it turns out to be, will be located near the playground equipment and soccer fields, he said.

A pump track, Turcotte explained, can be used by skateboarders, cyclists, scooters and even roller blades. It has banks and rolling hills, with an asphalt surface, and is traditionally designed for bikes but other modes of transportation can be used on it as well.

"We hope people will come to the meeting and let us know what they want."

Canadian Ramp Company, which designs skate parks, adventure parks and pump tracks, will be working with the Town through the design process, and providing detailed drawings for tendering.

The old skateboard park will

be removed - it's come to the end of its life - but the Town has no immediate plans for using that space, although it could be for expanded parking, Turcotte said.

"We're not quite there yet, although whenever there are major events at the park, such as hockey or lacrosse tournaments, we can always use more parking."

The Town has involved the public in deciding on the use of other recreational spaces, including the designs for the playground and splash pad at the Virgil park, the Queenston community park, and the Voices of Freedom Park now underway on Regent Street.

It's a system that works, said Turcotte, "so there's no need to change it."

There will be drawings at the meeting to indicate the possible variations of what the park could look like, and a power point presentation to show what a pump track is, he said.

With the capital input from the Town and the donation from the VBA, it's a healthy budget, said Turcotte, for a project that will "add another jewel to the sports park."

The public meeting is at 6 p.m. in the Mary Snider Room of the Centennial Arena on July 24.

Lavender Festival draws crowds



People roam the fields of lavender during the Niagara Lavender Festival. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

The sun was blue and the bees were buzzing as the annual Neob Lavender Festival returned this year, once again drawing thousands of people to celebrate everything lavender over the weekend of July 7 and 8.

There were vendors selling desserts, oils, lotions, scents, teas and just about anything else lavender someone could hope to find.

Local jelly maker Tracy Hanson of Tracy's Wine Jellies, who was at the festival for the first time as a vendor, said traffic was steady, and "much better than she'd expected."

"I don't know why I've never been a vendor here before," she said, and plans on being back next year to sell more of her gourmet selections.

The fields of purple lavender were also a big hit for people taking selfies, having lunch and basking in the aromas.

The event also saw food trucks, live music and free samples from a number of booths for those who had a festival sample card.

All in all, the day saw quite a bit of purple and most left smelling a little bit of lavender.

The faces of some drivers taking Niagara Stone Road during the weekend were also likely a shade of purple - or slightly on the redder side, as traffic delays were significant with parking for the event.

Police were on scene to direct traffic, but even with assistance, the volume of cars caused traffic to be slow moving.

Across the road, the Hare Wine Co. took advantage of the traffic by offering free wine tasting.

Sunday put a damper on the event, when firefighters had to respond to a 34 car fire in the parking space allocated across the road.

More pictures on Page 13.

Niagara artist to showcase work at the Pumphouse through July



"Rhythm & Blues" by local artist Marilyn Cochrane.

Richard Harley
Editor

Niagara-on-the-Lake artist Marilyn Cochrane's will showcase her paintings at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre this July.

Cochrane creates her complex paintings by layering transparent colours to create a gem-like richness, most of her work being inspired by the vibrant landscapes and richly-hued florals of the natural world around her.

"The inspiration for these paintings flows directly from the beauty of the Niagara countryside - its bountiful vineyards, fields filled with gorgeous peony blooms and blossoming fruit trees," said Cochrane, who works out of her St. Davids studio.

The artist has been experimenting with ways to express and enhance colour for years. Her recent acrylic on panel series titled Echoes, for example, juxtaposed small painted landscapes with actual crystal minerals.

"The pairing of the painted

landscapes with the brilliant, natural crystals create beautifully poetic echoes between the two," said Cochrane, explaining the title.

Cochrane has a fine art history degree from McGill University, graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design, and studied painting at the American School of Art in Paris, France.

She is a member of the Society of Canadian Artists and the Society of Canadian Painters in Watercolour and has earned many awards and executed several commissions. Her work is in both private and corporate collections in Canada and the U.S.

A solo exhibit of Cochrane's paintings called Nature's Jewels runs from July 3 to 31 at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.

Both the exhibit and the reception are free to attend.

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre is located at 247 Ricardo St. in Old Town.

Visit niagarapumphouse.ca, for a complete list of programs offered at the Pumphouse.

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<p>15</p> <p>Music Niagara: Great Romantics Series - Victoria Kogan - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Music Niagara: Sunday in the Park - The Retro-Ramblers - Noon to 2 p.m. - Simcoe Park</p> <p>NOTL Writers Circle - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Commons Market - Antique & Vintage Fest - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Google Expeditions: Mission to Mars - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Music Niagara: Amor y Pasion - Isabel Bayrakdarian - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Rocket Club - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Town Council Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - Town Hall</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Club Code: Makey Makey Banana Piano - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Embroidery Machine Workshop - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Fresh from the Garden: Matt Tattrie of Zees Grill - Noon to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Music Niagara: Breaking the Silence - Clarion Quartet - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>Master Makers: Make a Mon... to 2:30 p.m. - NOTL Public L</p> <p>Music Niagara: Romantic Ce... Vynnytsky Duo - 7:30 p.m. t... - Court House Theatre</p> <p>Simply Steam Story Time - noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>The SupperMarket - 4:30 p.m. - Garrison Village</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Music Niagara: Great Romantics Series - André Laplante - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Music Niagara: Sunday in the Park - Niagara Falls Concert Band - Noon to 2 p.m. - Simcoe Park</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Google Expeditions: Into the Wild - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Music Niagara: Juliette Kang - violin - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Club Code: Lego Robotics - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Music Niagara: Gesualdo Six - Chamber Choir directed by Owain Park - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Music Niagara: Young Virtuosos 1 - Noon to 2 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Skatepark Design Meeting - 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Centennial Arena</p>	<p>Master Makers: Cupcake Ba... to 2:30 p.m. - NOTL Public L</p> <p>Simply Steam Story Time - noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>The SupperMarket - 4:30 p.m. - Garrison Village</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Music Niagara: Great Great Romantics Series: Trio Celeste - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church</p> <p>Music Niagara: Young Virtuosos 3 - 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p> <p>TD Niagara Jazz Festival: Dixieland Jazz by the Lake - 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Simcoe Park</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Google Expeditions: Underwater World - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Music Niagara: The Great Debate - Battle of the Romantics - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Court House Theatre</p> <p>NOTL Writers Circle - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Carvey Workshop - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Club Code: Sphero Olympics - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	

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25 ttle - 1 p.m. - library 11 a.m. to m. to 9:00	26 Clare's Bike Night - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Clare's Harley-Davidson of Niagara Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Mini Masterpieces: Ghana Kente Cloths - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library	27 Canned Film Festival: The Incredibles - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Healthy Kids Community Challenge: Power Off & Play - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Music Niagara: Up All Night - Celtic Band - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Royal Canadian Legion Music Niagara: Young Virtuosos 2 - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - Royal Elite International Academy	28 Food Truck in the Vineyard Series: Southern Smoke Food Truck - 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. - Coyote's Run Estate Winery Music Niagara: Jazz Masters - Phil Nimmons and David Braid - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Church TD Niagara Jazz Festival: Soul Jazz in the Vineyard - 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - The Hare Wine Co. The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Garrison Village

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McLelland's grocery store. (NOTL History Museum)

Richard West
Writer's Circle
Featured

Rhiain and I moved to Butler St, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, in the spring of 1979. Like many others, we were drawn to this town's distinctiveness. Being close to Queen St we could easily walk to the stores on the town's main street. Shopping for essentials, particularly cheese, was an important priority.

During our first walk downtown we discovered McClelland's (or West End Store as it was originally known), at the corner of Queen and Victoria streets. The building is still there but three new stores now occupy the original premises, Serendipity at home, The Little French Shoppe and Victoria Gallery. Built in 1835 as a general provision store it carried all sorts of products needed by the local community. By the time we discovered McClelland's, change had made it into a fascinating dry

goods and grocery store. With its bare wooden floors and Victorian finishes McClelland's was a delight to explore.

That is how we discovered Bert Hall. He worked in the store and in particular was the guardian of the cheese. Bert was a slight man with glasses, approaching eighty. He wore a tan coloured lab coat, as his badge of office. When we asked if he had any strong cheddar he delicately queried if we were local. We explained we had just moved into town. Hearing this he told us he has some limited quantities of aging cheese left and he led us to a counter at the east side of the store. Bert proudly showed us a large wheel of cheddar which was five years old. Impressed, we asked if he had any older cheddar. Somewhat furtively he showed us an uncut wheel of twelve year old cheddar. After letting us drool for a moment, he offered to cut a piece for us. We were delighted and promised to

be his admirers for ever. Bert explained that these were the last reserves from the traditional sources of cheddar wheels available.

A few months later we joined St Mark's Church and who did we meet there but Bert and Marjorie Hall. We recognized our friend from McClelland's but kept any conversation about cheese strictly for shopping expeditions. We learned Bert had been a member of St. Mark's for many a year. He had been a Church Warden for six years, from 1956 to 1961. After about a year of our attendance at St Mark's, Bert got into conversation with us and we pressed him about his life story.

His mother had brought him to Canada from England in 1914, at the outbreak of World War One. She had apparently feared he would be put in the British Army. As he was only 13 at the time, the fear seemed a little misplaced but probably sensible in the long term. They bought a house on Gate St. Once settled into their new home, his mother sent him out to find a job. Bert left the house, walked the 50 yards to Queen Street, crossed the road and entered McClelland's. He asked if there was any work he could do. The owner handed him a broom and said sweep up. He joked, he was still using the same broom 65 years later.

A few years later, Rhiain informed me we have eaten all the cheese. Puzzled, I wondered why we can't buy some more? What I had not realized was we, and others in town, had eaten all the 12 year old, 10 year old and 5 year old cheddar in McClelland's stock. In our modern world the sources of such cheeses had changed and their availability was now almost non-existent. From now on our heady cheese binges would be less savoury affairs.

Bert worked at McClelland's until the building was sold in the late 1980's. Both he and Marjorie are now part of history, resting in St Mark's cemetery.

He was a man who had one job for his entire life and was very good at it. A happy patient, gentle man.

I often wonder how many more Bert Hall's there have been in town, or perhaps, are still with us?



"I image, therefore I am"

Colin Brzezicki
Writer's Circle
Featured

"If you didn't 'insta' the supermoon, did it even happen?"

This posting on Facebook by a young friend made me smile, and then pause.

What feeds our desire to film every moment of our lives as if we're chronicling history? Under all the selfies is there a need to confirm that we happened?

An acquaintance lined up at the Louvre for half an hour to view the Mona Lisa and later told me that people paused in front of the painting only long enough to take a selfie, before moving on to the next thing.

Later they would view their photos and know that they, and the Mona Lisa, all smiling for the camera, really happened.

Imago ergo sum.

I spent Supermoon Day at the annual peach festival in the town where I live. The main street was closed off to traffic, providing marquee space for local shopkeepers to display their wares and for farmers to sell peaches and their spin-offs:

peach pies, salsa, ice cream and frozen daiquiris.

Live music played throughout the day. A big band jazz ensemble, a Celtic group, a Scottish pipes and drums marching band, and a variety of other musical performers entertained the large crowd.

An acrobat, perched on an impossibly tall unicycle, juggled flaming torches, even flipping them around his back as amazed onlookers cheered and applauded.

Visitors of all ages strolled up and down the street, taking in the music, the fine weather and the peaches. Some had dressed stylishly for the matinees to follow in a town celebrated for its theatres. On the restaurant patios, servers moved among the tables balancing dishes on their arms and pouring out glasses of the local wines.

The sun flared out of a sapphire sky, and a light breeze ruffled the maples and chestnuts that shaded the sidewalks; it was the kind of day that would imprint itself onto the minds of young and old — a "that's what summers were like back then" kind of day.

It was becoming one of

those timeless moments you experience where you don't actually think you're a kid again, but that you really never were anything else. You shed the years like a winter coat. All the things that had happened that aged you seemed not to have happened yet, because this was exactly how you felt before they did.

And, as if some marketing coup, the moon itself rose into the sky that evening like a giant peach.

Then something brought me back to earth with a bump — a young couple strode past, each holding a cell phone on a stick and filming all the action as they made their way through. They power-walked past everything like they had to be somewhere else that had to be filmed.

A moment later I saw a young woman walking purposefully through the crowd with a cell phone held up on a stick in front of her, like she was toasting a marshmallow, as she recorded herself live in a moving selfie — fifteen minutes of lasting fame in her very own movie: *Life's a Peach*.

And I thought, yes, I'd have

done the same if the technology were available back then.

I watched a harvest moon many years ago in the Yukon, where I worked a summer job on a railroad gang. We had finished our ten-hour shift and were riding back to camp for the night.

Rounding a bend in the track, we saw a bright orange hot air balloon rise above the darkening firs.

Everyone stared, open-mouthed at an August moon rising faster and more spectacularly than I thought was possible.

It was so gigantic, I remember thinking that if I looked closely enough I might see the footprint of Neil Armstrong's small step for a man, which he had taken only a month earlier.

I wished I'd had a camera. I'm sure we all did, though I

doubt if anyone would have thought to pose with an open hand held under the moon the way people now create the optical illusion of pushing against the tower of Pisa or tweaking Abe Lincoln's nose at Mt. Rushmore. I suppose we weren't that clever back then. A simple shot of a giant moon brushing against a dark mountain as it rose to its place in the sky would have sufficed.

The first photograph ever taken, in 1826, contained no people at all—just some farm buildings and the sky. With an exposure time of eight hours, you'd have to hang around for a while to make an impression. Literally. No wonder our ancestors in those early photographs stare at the camera like they've been injected with cement. Photo bombing would take a couple of hours at least.

I have albums of photographs I'm reluctant to look at any more. There's a sadness about them that accumulates with the years, because the people in them are either not around any more or no longer look anything like they did in the photo — myself included.

The pictures release unsettling intimations of our mortality.

So, these days I prefer to experience my life, not through a lens, but first hand — something I wish I'd done more of years ago.

Whether we "insta" our lives on the go, or dwell in the moment, relying on our memories to call up the experience at a later time, we are — like the power-walkers with the selfie stick — only passing through.

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The queen of the monarchs



Charlotte Letkemann. (Photos by Richard Harley)

Charlotte Letkemann
Submitted

As long as I remember, I've always been intrigued by the wonders in nature.

Perhaps growing up on a farm helped. Then, as a parent and teacher, I encouraged children to keep their eyes open to the world around them.

Back in 1971, I found a pair of cecropia moths mating on one of our bushes. Not wanting to injure these beauties, I covered the bush with netting for the night.

The next morning the female had laid numerous eggs on the branches of the bush. I brought in the branches, set them into a large jar, and within a couple of days the eggs began to hatch. I covered the jar with a piece of nylon net so they wouldn't escape and started feeding them leaves from various trees in our yard hoping to find the right food for them. They preferred maple and walnut leaves and fed voraciously.

Soon they turned into spiky, green caterpillars as big as one's thumb. Not wanting to

keep them out of their natural environment too long, I pulled old nylon stockings over the ends of the leafy branches of the maple tree in our front yard and placed a caterpillar inside each stocking.



Monarch caterpillars on the back of a milkweed leaves. The largest one seen here is only the size of a grain of rice.

Needless to say, many questions arose from our neighbours. When they had eaten all the leaves on that branch, I moved them to another. Finally they began to spin cocoons. Summer was coming to an end and I assumed the cocoons would protect them throughout the

winter. I placed them into an uncovered jar, put it into our garage to allow them to go through the freezing and thawing of our winters as they would in nature. In spring, I brought the cocoons in, placing them between the screen and glass of our kitchen window. In late spring, they began to hatch and we watched these lovely moths climb up the screen. As they could not fly immediately, we took the young moths outside and put them onto a tree. Within hours I noticed another moth had found the first, and they were mating. Again, I gathered the branches with eggs on them and started the process again. Unfortunately, I've not seen them since.

A number of years later I had my first experience

turn into a shape that looked like part of the branch. About 10 days later, we watched the butterfly emerge – beautiful!

Next were the monarchs. We found the cream-coloured monarch eggs on the underside of several milkweed leaves – often only one egg per leaf. They are tiny – only a mm across and about the same height. I placed the leaves into a jar and within a day or two the egg turned dark and a tiny striped caterpillar emerged.

It was time to add fresh milkweed leaves daily. Within 10 to 12 days the caterpillar stopped eating and began moving around the jar. At this point I had placed a stick across the top of the jar and covered it with nylon netting so it would not escape and the caterpillar attached himself horizontally to the stick.

About 2 hours later it dropped its head end and hung by the tail end in a "J" formation. Then it shed its last skin. Within a few hours it became a beautiful green chrysalis with gold specks and a gold band.

Only 10 days later, it turned almost clear and black. You could see the monarch butterfly inside. The following morning, it broke open at the bottom and within minutes the butterfly gradually emerged. As it can't fly immediately, I coaxed it onto a stick and took it outdoors to transfer it to a flower. Picture-taking time.

I've used some of the photos on the photo art cards I've produced and sold in Niagara-on-the-Lake and elsewhere over the past 23 years.

Should anyone wish to see what I do, they are welcome to give me a call. I'll gladly share what I've learned.



The monarch transformation

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Time Capsule

By Sarah Kaufman, curator of the NOTL Historical Museum.

Monday July 9 was the 225th Anniversary of the passing of the Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada in 1793. This far pre-dated the abolishment of slavery in the rest of the British Empire (1833) and America (1865). The Act did not free existing slaves, however, it forbade the importation of new slaves, granted freedom to the children born from slaves upon twenty-five years of age and ensured the children of these newly freed slaves would also be free. It allowed for the gradual abolition of slavery and set the stage for the Underground Railroad. Niagara-on-the-Lake is the site where the first anti-slavery legislation was introduced in the British Empire. The passing of this act was motivated by the Chloe Cooley incident that happened several months prior. On March 14, 1793, Queenston farmer William Vrooman bound and forcibly transported one of his young slaves, Chloe Cooley, across the Niagara River. A week after, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe and the Executive Council, heard eyewitness accounts which stated that Chloe was taken against her will and was violently screaming and resisting the transfer across the river. The shock and violence of Vrooman's actions were seen by many as disgraceful, especially when it was learned that Vrooman had not broken the law. It motivated the legislative council to take immediate action to prevent other slave owners from doing the same. Chloe Cooley was never heard from again.

Lavender Festival pics cont'd



Bimla Singh, Erin Sloan and Sherry Lawless enjoy some lavender ice cream during the Niagara Lavender Festival.



Alison Mullins, Paige Villeneuve and Vicki Freeman hold down the Mori Gardens booth.




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Merry for cherries



The annual Cherry Festival was a massive hit this year, selling out of fresh pies within an hour of opening. (Photos by **Richard Harley**)

Hermine Steinberg
Writer's Circle
Featured

The St. Mark's Cherry Festival was a big hit again this year, with church members selling out of fresh baked pies within an hour of opening on July 7.

It's a sign that members of the church, who bake them homemade in advance to the festival, must know what they're doing.

It's not really a surprise though — they sell out every year, according to festival volunteers.

This year, around a hundred people were lined up down the street to get into the festival before the it was even open.

The line started at around 8 a.m., and once people got inside, the grounds of the church were packed all day.

The afternoon included a silent auction, book sale and trinket sale, a performance by Newark Singers, a barbecue served up by church

members, a bake sale, and of course a plethora of cherries.

Cherry-themed items on the menu included cherry pie with ice cream, Cherry Coke floats, homemade cherry jam and locally grown cherries from MacSween Farms and Quiet Acres.

The cherries were delivered fresh before the festival started, just in time for people to dig in.

The bake sale, while not cherry-specific, had quite a selection of cookies, muffins, cakes, tarts and brownies, all made by church residents.

The preparation for the festival takes most of the year, said church members — this year together they baked more than 750 pies, so that's the only way it's really feasible.

Some of the pies were sold frozen, while others were sold fresh and sliced up to be served.

All in all, the afternoon offered a little something sweet for people of all ages.



The line to buy fresh pies was a long, but worth the wait.



Judy MacLachlan helps unload the cherry delivery in the morning.



Dorothy Lees slices up some pies to serve to guests.



St. Mark's Church Cherry Jams for sale.



Cherries from MacSween Farms and Quiet Acres.



Betty Disero got to the festival early for some fresh baked Cherry pies.



People were lined up outside the church an hour before the festival started to get their pies.



Carole, Sally, Jill, Barb, Rosamund, Alex and Janet help run the bake sale table.

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Museum exhibits 'pop up' around the town



Lauren O'Malley
Staff

The Niagara Historical Museum is hitting the road to bring its historic collections into the communities of Niagara-on-the-Lake, through a series of 'pop-up' exhibits that will highlight the history of each community.

The exhibits will be on display in Queenston, St. Davids and Virgil for one month each between July and September, starting with the St. Davids exhibit, which has launched and is being featured at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery.

The Queenston pop-up exhibit will launch August 1 at the Laura Secord Homestead, followed by the Virgil pop-up exhibit on September 1 at the Meridian Credit Union.

Two additional pop-up displays can also be found at

the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre and the Chamber of Commerce, and will be on display until the end of October. The display at the Shaw theatre explores the First World War, to complement the festival's three plays this season on the subject, while the pop-up display in the Chamber is filled with fun facts about Old Town.

The exhibits are sponsored by the Niagara Region through the Niagara Investment in Culture Program and are free to attend.

For a complete list of museum events and exhibitions, visit niagarahistorical.com or call 905-468-3912.

The Museum is located at 43 Castlereagh St. and is open daily 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. from November to April, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from May through October.

Library launches "Ultimate Summer Challenge" for kids

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

While many adults find time for summer reading, the habit can fall right off a child's list of priorities during pool season.

It's part of the cause of the famed 'summer slide' — when skills learned during the school year slip backwards.

That's why Natasha Berezky, children's program director at the Niagara-on-the-Lake public library, came up with the Ultimate Summer Reading Challenge, which aims to make books fun and keep kids' "minds on."

"I wanted to create something fun, compelling, and broader than just reading," said Berezky, who is also an undergrad at Brock University's teachers' college.

"The goal is to keep kids learning in a variety of ways, practicing things consciously and with awareness."

Berezky has created "passports" full of age-appropriate challenges — a junior passport for kids ages three to six, and senior passport for kids aged six to 12. Some of the challenges overlap, and include categories such as a health, community, multicultural, science and, of course, reading.

Tasks include learning to say hello in a new language; trying a new food; going technology-free for 24 hours; using an atlas to find a good vacation spot; and picking

up five pieces of garbage at a local park.

Berezky said she's come up with around 100 ideas to get kids thinking and learning — and has left two spaces in each category for kids to add their own activity.

Some of the challenge suggestions should be a hit with parents, including one to floss your teeth five days in a row and another to help your parents with the dishes.

And then there's the "make a poem about a potato" challenge, which could be fun for all ages.

The program began on July 3 and runs until August 24.

Participants will check off challenges in their passports and head to the library to share their accomplishments with Berezky on Tuesdays from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The response has already been great, Berezky said, and there's always room for more participants.

So far she has been enjoying the feedback — one child tried eating mushrooms for the first time and another was determined to go a full day without using an iPad, and she's excited to see where things might lead, she said.

Parents can register their kids for the challenge on the library's website at notpubliclibrary.org, then pop by the library to collect the passports in person.

Randwood confusion continues

Penny Coles
Staff

In recent discussions about a proposed six-storey hotel on the historic Randwood Estate, there has been considerable confusion about the status of an Official Plan amendment in 2011, and whether it was approved by council.

David Bell, a resident of Charlotte Street and a core member of SORE (Save Our Rand Estate), spoke to councillors at the committee of the whole meeting Monday about the bylaw amendment and how it should be addressed by the current council and the proposal before them.

He was particularly interested in the role of the Municipal Heritage Committee as set out in the amendment, which said the MHC should have final approval over the site plan agreement, when it accepted role is to provide advice to council.

He was referring to a legal opinion by lawyer Callum Shedden that was included in the minutes of the June municipal heritage committee meeting regarding site plan approvals, as outlined in the 2011 amendment addressing what was then a proposal for the Romance Inn.

In what is being referred to as the "Callum opinion," Bell says despite the "crystal clear" language in the amendment, Shedden says the committee does not have that authority — in other words, staff and council of the day appear to have made a mistake.

Bell questioned the reasoning behind the decision of those on council in 2011

who agreed that the MHC should have a key role in the site plan approval of the Romance Inn proposal — while council might legally have the last say about site plans, he suggested it was an "understood and essential aspect" of the proposed 2011 development that the MHC would be the "ultimate safeguard" of the heritage property.

Bell asked council to honour the spirit of that amendment by requiring the Two Sisters Resort developer have the MHC onside with his proposal for the estate before it comes to council for approval, "rather than hiding behind a legal opinion now."

The 2011 Official Plan amendment also put the property in a "holding zone" that would not be lifted until site plan approval was given, Bell said.

Planning director Craig Larmour confirmed that since the site plan was never approved, the holding zone was never lifted, but said it's the only remaining condition of that zoning amendment.

Responding to a question from Coun. Paolo Miele, Larmour said all other issues such as the 57-foot height of the proposed hotel and the location of buildings, were approved in the 2011 bylaw.

Once the heritage designation of the properties now underway is completed, Larmour said, a heritage permit would be required before any development can go ahead, and that would require recommendations from the MHC to council.

But to clear up any continuing confusion on such an important issue, which will undoubtedly be back

before council, Larmour was asked by Coun. Jamie King to provide a brief report on the status of the 2011 Official Plan amendment and the holding zone.

As a member of the 2011 council, King recalled "a significant amount of discussion and community angst" over the Romance Inn proposal "which led to unusual controls on the property and its development." He voted against the Official Plan amendment that allowed it to move forward, he said, and although that discussion is "ancient history," he said, it's very relevant right now.

Miele expressed some frustration after the meeting that several issues regarding Randwood are being confused and are completely separate issues, including the site plan approval, which has nothing to do with the zoning application for an increased height to accommodate the six-storey hotel, the matter that is before council now.

Coun. Betty Disero made a motion Monday approved by councillors to give direction to Town staff to report as soon as possible on the information in Bell's presentation with respect to the holding aspect of the bylaw

and its relationship to the rest of the bylaw, including "does it hold everything, and does it change anything?"

Disero also brought up the issue of a letter from Benny Marrotta of Two Sisters Resort to the Town regarding his intention to demolish some buildings on the two properties that are not part of the hotel proposal, one on John Street and one on Charlotte. Those two properties have been mentioned in documents as the site of a future subdivision, although there is no application for the subdivision before the Town yet. Disero was hoping for an explanation of the process the Town would follow in responding to the letter, although it wasn't discussed at Monday's meeting.

The Town has 60 days to respond, said Disero, who expects the answer will come to the August committee of the whole meeting, which is before the deadline.

In the meantime, the Town must decide on its intention to designate the two properties where he plans to demolish buildings. Once that intention to designate is announced, he will be unable to move forward with the demolition, said Disero.



PHOTO: Lawn bowling club



NOTL Lawn Bowling Club members play a tournament at the community centre bowling green. (Richard Harley)



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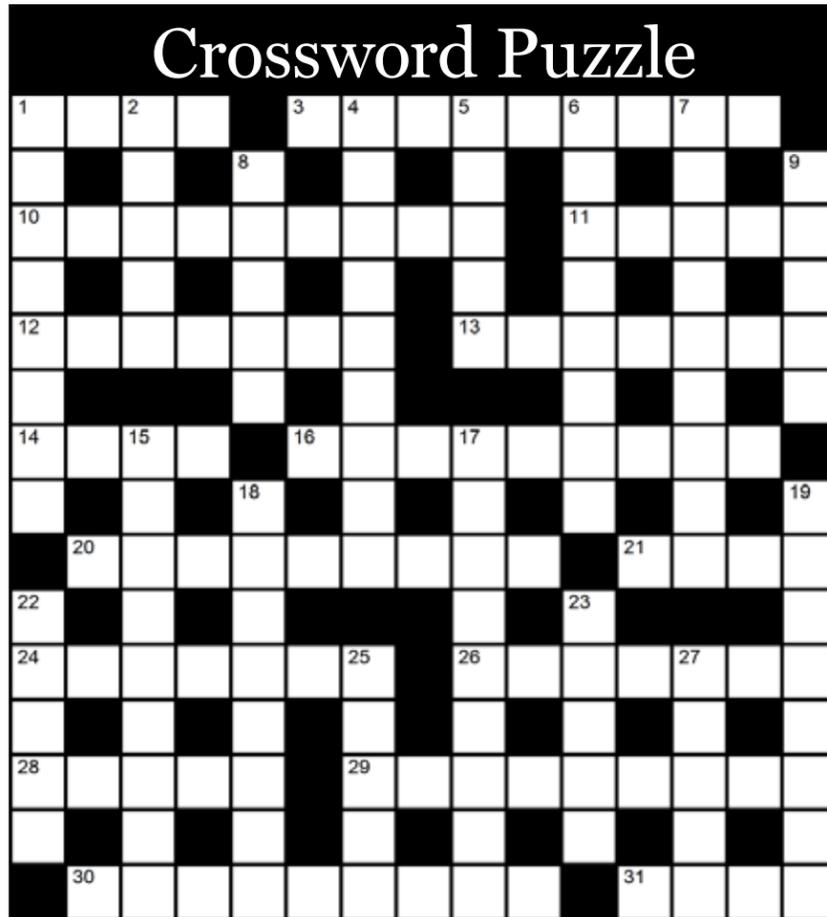
The Lake Report is seeking puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. Currently we are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers.

Across

- 1. Relating to aircraft (4)
- 3. "The Hay Wain" artist (9)
- 10. Moving stairway (9)
- 11. Joanna (5)
- 12. Hopelessness (7)
- 13. Among (7)
- 14. Back of the neck (4)
- 16. Poisonous mushroom (9)
- 20. Custom (9)
- 21. Doing nothing (4)
- 24. Pear-shaped fruit (7)
- 26. Breakfast flatbread (7)
- 28. Dull yellowish brown (5)
- 29. Professional personal car driver (9)
- 30. Observe with festivities (9)
- 31. Irritate (4)

Down

- 1. Removing faults (8)
- 2. Speed contests (5)
- 4. Farthest from the centre (9)
- 5. Rub vigorously (5)
- 6. Desire for food (8)
- 7. Type of impermanent tenure (9)
- 8. Communion table (5)
- 9. Injury (5)
- 15. Rectory (9)
- 17. Air-freshener (9)
- 18. Put on a pedestal (8)
- 19. Investigate (8)
- 22. Small nails (5)
- 23. Rigid (5)
- 25. Happen (5)
- 27. Wide-awake (5)



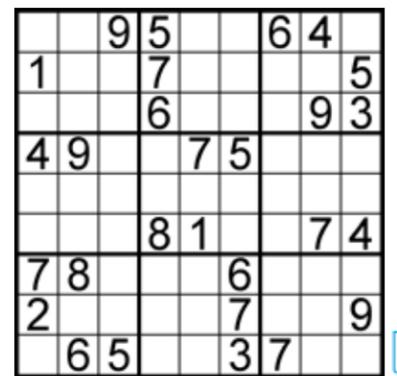
Want the answers early? Scan the puzzles using HP Reveal. (Must be following Niagara Now's channel)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



John Tavares bolts to blue team, Mark Turasz stays with Wallbangers red



Mark Turasz. (Terry Nord)

Editor's Note:

For 28 consecutive winters at 7 a.m. on Sunday mornings, Wallbangers hockey takes place at the Meridian Arena in Virgil, where a group of players aged 17 to 80 play their version of hockey — pure hockey, without referees, competitive, with no intentional hitting. And, no slap shots.

The team was started in 1991 by Dave Wall and Bill Dickson. The level of play, remuneration and attitude couldn't be more unlike the N.H.L. — but perhaps the Wallbangers Blue and Red Teams have more fun.

Ross Robinson (#9, Blue) Special

Observing the John Tavares Road Show was more stressful than trying to get a date for the high school prom.

Would he sign a ridiculous contract and move teams, or stay where he was comfortable, but didn't really see a winning future? San Jose, Boston, Tampa Bay, Dallas, Toronto, or Long Island?

Concurrently, the Mark Turasz negotiations were playing out in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with both the Wallbangers Blue and Red teams hoping to have him between the pipes this winter.

In the end, Mark stayed with Red Team.

"I really could not think of playing without Ray Jackson, Pete Vanderperk and Marcel the Rectangle Lounsbury in front of me."

Back to Tavares.

Finally, he went home to Toronto, for all the reasons that sounded so sincere. His agent, Pat Brisson, talked about his star client fulfilling a childhood dream, playing on his hometown team, a young team loaded with stars.

And the lure of being in a city where real hockey fans use real hockey terms — no jerseys, back pressure or puck drops, but rather sweaters, back checking and face-offs.

And the rink is surrounded

by the boards, not the wall. You don't get a two minute penalty for walling — it's boarding, damn it.

Agent Brisson said, "I was very impressed with how John presented himself, and how serious (sic) he took the process."

Gosh, we would hope so — \$77,500,000. Isn't chump change. Now they can buy adjacent fixer-uppers on Lake Muskoka. I suspect the key point in the negotiations was how much money they could get up front. "A bird in the hand," and all that.

We will see, Leaf fans. It's a pity the young kids cheer for their heroes. What the heck happened to stars James van Riemsdyk, Tyler Bozak, Leo Komarov and Roman Polak?

All gone within three days. Thank goodness Austin Mathews hasn't bolted back home to the Arizona sun — yet.

Meanwhile, back in the Niagara Peninsula, Wallbangers Commissioner Bill Dickson has again kept the teams competitive. Some say he has too much power, but his integrity is unquestioned.

Scheduler, player distributor, treasurer, rules enforcer, frozen puck bringer and chief disciplinarian — yes, there is much potential conflict of interest, but our 80 year old leader has seen it all. He can-

not be bought or tricked, and has no referees or committees to cloud his judgement.

At Butlers Sports Bar and the SandTrap, Wallbangers chat about next season. Will Rafael Aparicio suffer a sophomore slump? This speedster has great hands, is a 200-foot player, and makes every Red Team player better.

Modest and shy Mike Bruce will be back on the Blue Team blue line, a mirror image of Jacques Laperriere back in the 60s and 70s. Tall and rangy, this Huntsville boy exudes confidence.

This October will also see Shaw Festival veteran Gray Powell return to the hockey stage — what a skater, and so determined from the blue line in.

Josh Wiwcharyk will be wearing a Moore's Maple Leaf blue sweater again. James van Riemsdyk's parting quotation to the sycophantic Toronto media on July 2 could have been describing Josh's game. "I'm still a cerebral type of player who can still skate well and have good offensive instincts and can make the smart plays in all three zones." — Yes, but the smart plays are done at a much slower speed.

Let's review the value of Mark Turasz. He brings a constant positive good nature every Sunday, as well as a regular hockey bag

and a much bigger goalie bag. This makes him really valuable, because if the opposing goalie sleeps in or gets the skunk eye from his wife, Mark quickly puts on his forward equipment and plays "out."

This is a rarity. But come to think of it, three of the best known hockey players who can play both "in" and "out" (sounds like a belly button viewing) are from the Niagara Peninsula. Gerry Cheevers (Boston Bruins,) Doug Favell (15 years in the N.H.L. — and a better lacrosse player — and Sean Simpson (Wallbangers Blue Team.)

The planet earth continues to exist, and Wallbangers are dreaming of the alarm clock ringing at 5:55 a.m. on cold Sunday mornings.

There are two questions: Will we finally move to the old rink, which is considerably smaller than the new rink. Less backchecking, and more goals, eh? And, after a five month layoff, will memory magicians Lisa and Michelle at Silks Country Kitchen still remember how each of the 21 or so Wallbangers like their eggs and coffee?

This includes the preference of Mark Turasz's wife. Mark takes breakfast home to her each Sunday.

What a guy, eh?

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FEATURES

Nature's Lens: Introducing a regular voice for Niagara's unique wildlife



Owen Bjorgan
Biophilic World
Featured



A massive snapping turtle and another fairly large painted turtle in the wetlands at Niagara Shores Park. (Richard Harley)

How about that heat wave we just had? The hot and steamy days of a Niagara summer sweat a nostalgic feeling out of me. I associate these days with mountain biking up on the Niagara Escarpment, camping in lush forests, and rieling on the back patio.

Speaking of wine — the dog days of summer also remind me of the unending chains of bikers, sipping and pedalling their way around NOTL's countryside in search for delicious wines and some good laughs.

The wine route is — in my opinion — convenient, safe, and efficient for bikers and other visitors alike.

Of course, leopard frogs, white-tailed deer, milk snakes and coyotes don't require world class beverages,

but they do need their very own convenient, safe, and efficient route in town. Let's draw some parallels between the wine route and the "wildlife route", and which one could use an upgrade around here.

Let's suppose there are six wineries you want to visit on the wine route — it's a big day. After the first stop, you pile into your tour bus or hop on your bike, and you know your next stop can't be far because we are lucky to have so many wineries in Niagara.

Now imagine the few remaining chunks of natural

space in NOTL are "stopping points" for local wildlife.

As a biological law of nature worldwide, habitat connectivity between these points has enormous benefits to an ecosystem.

Keeping habitats connected ensures that species don't become isolated and inbred, which keeps the genetics healthy, and additionally, segregated islands of habitat can become too crowded or poor in quality to function like a healthy ecosystem.

Since 2005, NOTL has lost some of its last key habitat corridor areas.

In once case, up until about a year ago, there was a figurative "ring of green" around the outskirts of our downtown district.

When the area behind Two Sisters Winery was very suddenly clear-cut, we removed what I believe was a vital linkage of this green ring, where wildlife used these different parcels of habitat to move around the urban areas. I've heard the argument that this particular forest was removed because it was not an old-growth forest, and much of its composure was dead or dying ash trees.

When so little natural habitat remaining in NOTL, that spot still had value to wildlife for a variety of reasons.

The example I just used isn't meant to stir up a controversy of wine versus wildlife, because let it be made clear that I love both. I do however feel that our town has a responsibility to give back to nature when we can, and to mitigate further damages to our precious biodiversity.

We can do everything else so elegantly and calculated in NOTL, so let's not forget about our other inhabitants with our decision making.

bjorgan.owen@gmail.com

A Tribute To The Maple Tree



Sugar Maple Leaves. (Submitted)

Alison Mullins
Grow Niagara
Featured

Is there anything more quintessentially Canadian than the maple tree, and its magnificent leaves?

Be it the radiating red leaf of the autumn blaze maple tree, or sweet sap from the sugar maple — Canada's national tree (in Ontario at least) — the maple leaf is a symbol of our unabashed patriotism, taking pride of place in the middle of our flag.

It's emblazoned on the backs of our sports team's jerseys, and a much sought after specimen for our gardens.

And of course, many of us have taken our kids to a 'sugar bush', to watch Maple syrup being tapped straight from the tree into those silver metal buckets which hang on the sides, to then be made into our world famous nectar maple syrup.

Of hardy stock, and with hundreds of cultivar, according to an Ontario

Canada website some Maple trees can live upwards of 200 years, and reach heights of more than 30 meters tall.

Regardless of variety, images of Canadian children climbing branches, throwing the 'keys' (seeds) into the air to make helicopters, and jumping into a rustling piles of fall leaves, are simply part of the Canadian psyche.

The cultural importance of the maple tree cannot be overstated, its historical reach extending as far back at the nineteenth century; where according to The Canadian Encyclopedia, the image of the maple leaf was approved for use on the Ontario and Quebec coat of arms in 1868, and the Canadian coat of arms in 1921.

It also took pride of place during both the First and Second World Wars on regimental badges and was confirmed as the official symbol of Canada in 1965.

So this summer, when you're getting ready for trips to the cottage, drives through beautiful Ontario or just a Sunday outing, take a look around at Canada's very own version of 'splendid display,' and admire the beauty of your culture, your history and your very own national tree, the Canadian maple.

Mori Garden's, which has a collection of more than 60 different maple varieties, is celebrating summer by offering special prices on select maple trees, and an extra special something for clients who bring in this article.

If you see a beautiful Maple in your future, stop by and talk to one of our garden consultants.

Just remember, these bad boys get big, and you might want help choosing the right maple for your space, but there's one for every garden.

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20th annual NOTL Golf Classic Tournament moving to make room for participants

Penny Coles
Staff

With a bigger-than-ever 20th annual Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Classic Tournament planned for 2018, the event has been moved to allow for more participation.

Recent years' events have been sold out, said parks and recreation manager Kevin Turcotte, so this year's tournament will be held at the Royal Niagara Golf Course in the Glendale neighbourhood, which has three nine-hole courses, allowing for more golfers.

Traditionally, the event has been held at the 18-hole Whirlpool course, which was limited to 144 participants, and always left some potential golfers disappointed, said Turcotte.

"Registration fills up quickly and we always have a waiting list of foursomes. This way we should be able to accommodate them. We really hope to capitalize on our 20th anniversary and see how many golfers we can get out."

This year's event is also expected to have more prizes than ever.

The event will be held earlier in the season, instead of October, set to take place Thursday, Sept. 13.

"There were always some people who wanted to play but couldn't because of the grape harvest. This way they can be included," said Turcotte.

Registration will include 18 holes of golf with cart, a free sponsored lunch and a prime rib dinner at the community centre in NOTL.

A gift for each participating golfer will be provided by this year's major sponsor, John Hawley of The Village Developments.

All proceeds from the event are being directed to Voices of Freedom, a Regent Street park currently under construction to celebrate the town's black history.

Online registration is available at, <https://notl.icompasscms.com/content/2018-golf-classic>.

News that 

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Solomon Moseby

The man and town that made a statement



Denise Ascenzo
Featured

Niagara-on-the-Lake was a pulpit for the abolition of slavery in Canada, where significant events took place, such as the escape of runaway slave Solomon Moseby.

Moseby's case had an underlying question: can property steal property?

In 1793, Sir John Graves Simcoe succeeded in pushing a law through parliament to abolish slavery in Upper Canada. There were many heated debates over how and when this should be done.

Would the law simply state that from that day forward there would be no slaves?

With many parliamentarians being slave owners themselves, the government knew such a broad stroke would never pass. How, they thought, could you tell a person he will no longer own valuable property?

That is, unjustly, how slaves were considered — as property, stock or inventory.

In one particular case, a slave owner became so concerned he would lose some of his 'assets' with the looming anti-slavery law that he forcibly sent one of his slaves, Chloe Cooley, across the Niagara River to a new 'owner'.

She did not go willingly; pleading, screaming, kicking, biting and praying to stay in Upper Canada where she could feel the fresh breath of freedom blowing her way.

Simcoe, after hearing the horrible fate of this young girl, made great concessions with his executive council in Newark (NOTL) to have slavery gradually abolished in Upper Canada.

By July 9, 1793, it became law that the sale and import of slaves would no longer be permitted. Owners could keep the slaves they had, but the children of the slaves born after July 9, 1793 would be given their freedom when they turned 25. The following generation would be born free.

But what of the slaves who escaped from the plantations in the United States? Would they be free upon their arrival in Upper or Lower Canada? The answer was yes, unless the slave was accused of a crime.

This created a loophole, one which slave owners had



The owner of this NOTL house, William Steward, signed a petition for the release of runaway slave Solomon Moseby. His wife Susannah might have been among the women blockading the carriage that Moseby was to be transported in, though no documentation exists to prove her participation. (Supplied)

been looking for; a plantation owner could very easily get a judge in the United States to issue a warrant that a runaway slave was a criminal and should be returned to their owner to stand trial for their crime in the US.

Canada now had a difficult decision to face — should slaves be returned to the United States, knowing they might not receive a fair trial for a purported crime?

This brings us to the case of Solomon Moseby.

Moseby was a slave who 'belonged' to David Castleman, a very wealthy and influential horse breeder in Kentucky. One day Castleman gave Moseby a horse, a travel pass and instructions to take a message to another plantation owner. It was then, in 1837, that Moseby saw his chance for freedom and headed to Upper Canada instead.

He was horseless by the time he reached his destination several months later, but he was free.

Castleman eventually found out Moseby was living in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) and showed up with a warrant to have Moseby extradited for the crime of stealing a horse.

The sheriff of NOTL, Alexander McLeod, had Moseby imprisoned and a case was prepared against him.

The residents of NOTL, both black and white, were horrified that a man might be sent back into slavery for stealing a horse.

Castleman claimed the horse in question was worth \$150 and that he'd spent even

more to travel to Canada to have Moseby extradited.

Residents of the town raised more than \$1,000 to compensate Castleman but he refused the money.

Alexander Stewart, a lawyer from NOTL who was representing Moseby, contended that it was not the theft of the horse that Castleman cared about, but rather the return of his runaway slave — a 'property' more valuable than the horse.

The matter was sent to Sir Francis Bond Head, lieutenant governor of Upper Canada, who struggled with the decision — a decision that would affect Canada greatly.



An illustration of Solomon Moseby. (Conor MacNeill)

Did he allow the government of the United States to order Canada to return a slave on the warrant of a judge who is also a slave owner? Should he accept all refugees regardless of their possible crimes committed in another country? Or should

he send back any refugee whose crime and punishment would be considerably more than it would in Canada?

A resident of NOTL named Hugh Eccles sent Bond Head a petition signed by 117 white citizens, which declared that "neither morally nor legally can a slave be guilty of the offense charged against him; not being a free agent."

Seventeen black residents submitted their petition against the return of Moseby to his master, stating "exact-ed his sweat with stripes that mercy with a bleeding heart weeps when she see inflicted on a beast".

Bond Head ignored these petitions and in September of

demonstrations are described as having been peaceful, with religious songs being sung and sermons being preached.

Sheriff McLeod, hoping to tire the crowd, kept postponing the date of extradition, but this did not deter the people from standing up for Moseby's rights. White town's people provided food and lodging, preachers came and gave sermons while more black supporters from surrounding communities came to join the protest.

A date was eventually set, but McLeod faced another setback when a man named Hugh Richardson, who owned the ferries that crossed the lower Niagara River, said no vessel of his would be employed to return a man to slavery.

Eventually another ferry operator was located, and a new date was announced, but it seems Moseby's extradition was destined to be fraught with problems.

The day Moseby was taken from King Street courthouse jail in handcuffs and loaded into a carriage, the women in the crowd blocked a bridge the carriage needed to cross.

A local preacher named Herbert Holmes led the protests, standing in front of the horses while a man named Jacob Green pushed a fence post through the spokes of the carriage wheels.

The details get murky here, as eyewitness accounts vary from person to person, though the final result of the protest saw Holmes and Green killed and many of the women slashed and bloodied by the soldier's bayonets.

Though, in the confusion, Moseby was able to slip his handcuffs off and escape.

Newspapers at the time had differing views on what Bond Head's decision should have been.

The St. Catharine's Journal was on the side of the law; Canada was not a place for fugitive criminals.

The Niagara Reporter stated that a refugee slave should only be returned if accused of murder, arson or the rape of a white woman.

The Christian Guardian of Toronto wrote that only in Upper Canada did a black man have any legal status, and that in Kentucky, a black man was regarded as property, therefore if he committed a crime he would be punished by his owner just like a horse would be punished. In other words, the returned slave would never see the inside of a courtroom, so to have Moseby returned to Kentucky as a "horse thief" was a sham; property can't steal property.

Several months later another case against a runaway slave, Jesse Happy, accused of stealing a horse was presented to Bond Head for a decision. On the advice of Bond Head's executive council, he turned the matter over to the colonial secretary, Lord Glenelg.

Unlike Bond Head, Glenelg preferred flexibility and decided each case of a runaway slave being accused of a crime would be judged on an individual basis. His suggestion was to consider what crime was committed when a slave was trying to escape to freedom.

Glenelg's policy guided all future claims to extradite runaway slaves. Owners from the southern plantations kept petitioning the Canadian courts without success until the American Civil War (1861-65) put a stop to all the petitions.

As to the opening question, today, thankfully, the answer is an overwhelming "no."

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

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

Visit, or give them a call at 905-468-3912.

Denise's profile can be found at, niagaranow.com, along with other stories about our town's history.

Niagara Historical
SOCIETY MUSEUM



43 Castlereagh St.
Niagara-on-the-Lake
905-468-3912





COMMUNITY

All local residents are welcome to submit photos and letters for consideration in this section. Send to editor@niagaranow.com



There's no place like NOTL.

Patriotism — and cake for all



Catherine O'Donnell of Willow Cakes & Pastries walks her Canada Day cake to Simcoe Park. (Richard Harley)

Want to see the video? Download the HP Reveal app on your phone or tablet and follow Niagara Now, then simply scan the photo using the app. Check around the paper for other fun augmented reality surprises. Just look for the HP Reveal logo — and maybe some other places too!



Richard Harley
Editor

Though the party wasn't quite as grand as last year, thousands of people showed up on Canada Day to help paint Old Town red and white for our country's 151st birthday.

The annual celebration saw its usual enthusiasm from both locals and tourists alike, during a day that included a pancake and sausage breakfast, a barbecue with live entertainment, and of course a massive cake — as has become local tradition.

The cake, as usual, was made and donated for the celebration by Willow Cakes and Pastries, hand-crafted by head baker Catherine O'Donnell.

This year she put a bit of "Niagara flare" to her decorations, with a fondant clock tower and some other messages for the locals — a few of the characters seemed

to be enjoying a glass or two of adult grape juice.

When the cake was in place, somebody in the crowd kicked things off by starting to sing O' Canada, and it wasn't long before the whole crowd joined in.

For a video, try our augmented reality feature on the picture of the cake (instructions above).

The day was one of the hottest of the year so far, with heat warnings across the Niagara region and decade-long temperature records being broken for the weekend, but it didn't stop the bands from playing or the politicians from showing up to cut the cake — MP Rob Nicholson, MPP Wayne Gates and Lord Mayor Pat Darte all got their hands on the sword used to make the first slice.

Councillors Betty Disero and Jim Collard also helped march the cake down Queen Street and into the park.



Mandy, Graham and Isabella Shanks enjoy the afternoon. Isabella was visiting from England for her first Canada Day.



Volunteers from the Niagara Rotary Club help with the ticket booths and ice cream sales.



The band performs for the crowd in Simcoe Park on Canada Day. (Photos by Richard Harley)

55TH ANNUAL LIONS CARNIVAL GREAT FOOD, DRINKS, RIDES & ENTERTAINMENT

WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY

JULY 25TH-28TH

THE LINE UP

WEDNESDAY JULY 25
SPONSORED BY CREEK ROAD PAINTS

MAIN STAGE: The Amazing MAGIC MATT ANTHONY FROM 6-7 PM
MAIN STAGE: PAC283 Dance Troupe FROM 7-8 PM
MAIN STAGE: ROCKIN' WITH DANNY LAMB & THE ASSOCIATION FROM 8-10 PM

THURSDAY JULY 26
SPONSORED BY AVONDALE ST. DAVIDS

MAIN STAGE: Local "Favs" THE PUBJUGS! FROM 8-10 PM

FRIDAY JULY 28
SPONSORED BY TELCON

MAIN STAGE: All time great Rock N Roll Tunes CLOCKWORK FROM 8-10 PM

SATURDAY JULY 28
SPONSORED BY REVEL NOTL

MAIN STAGE: All your Rock Favourites brought to life DARKHORSE FROM 7-10 PM

Thank you for supporting the Lions and our community initiatives!



Dozens of riders — members of the Wellington Waterloo Hunt — made their annual ride through Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 7, dressed in their fox hunting gear. The group was led by Jeff Peller of Peller Estates, and made a stop by Frogpond Farm Organic Winery for some wine and cheese — and some non-alcoholic drinks and snacks. Local resident Kim McQuhae said "it's pretty cool to see them on the road." (Richard Harley)



Scene of the week

Artistry By The Lake took over Queen's Royal Park during Canada Day weekend, with dozens of vendors selling handmade artisan goods, like jewelry, paintings, wood carvings and a variety of kitschy items. Photo by Richard Harley.



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol

Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms: Pieza Pizzeria

In NOTL, Thursday is restroom review day. If you see us lunching we are reviewing. If you see us wine tasting we are reviewing. At a coffee shop? Not a break; we are reviewing. So after our authentic neopolitan pizza and local brew of Lowery Bros. Peach Cider at Pieza Pizzeria we were again, reviewing. Pieza's bathrooms were recommended to us, so they already have fans. The two rooms are well appointed and welcoming. The accessible one is private, has automatic door locks and an emergency button that uses a light to alert those outside — as Jane dissuaded Betty from actually setting off the alarm we can only assume its effectiveness. We loved the gallery quality art exhibited on the restaurant walls and in both bathrooms. The bright, clean and practical washrooms are a great fit with their venue. Pieza Pizzeria offers a Gold Plunger Bathroom experience for its patrons.

4/5 Golden Plungers



JOKE OF THE WEEK

I made a bet with my brother, that whoever lost at ping-pong would have to smell the other's socks.



Needless to say, he ended up smelling the sweet smell of de-feet!

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



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Featured Local Story

No shortage of talent

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

"This is my time, I'll do with it what I please."

These are lyrics by Oscar Anderson-Oscar, also known as DRFTR, a powerful, raw solo folk act bred in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

And they're fitting words, because he's is indeed doing what he pleases — touring Canada as a musician.

He's just come off a tour opening up for Niagara funk band My Son the Hurricane, is recording a new album, and preparing for a month-long solo tour (with his brother as his roadie) of Canada's west coast in August.

The 28-year-old musician has quite the musical resume, having started singing at a young age. He credits his parents for encouraging — or not discouraging — him.

"I grew up imitating the singers on the radio, and my mom never told me to shut up. That's how I developed my voice," he said.

Growing up he worked on a number of projects, making a name for himself locally as a singer with bands like As Above, So Below, which had sort of a cult following in town for a while.

During that time, he shared the vocal spotlight with longtime friend and fellow NOTL Dylan Turner, and started learning how to play a bit of guitar.

Since then, Oscar has taken his music to a new level as a solo act. He's now well-versed with a guitar and a mic, and has even implemented some mouth trumpet.

Niagara-born drummer Jeff Luciani, who does work with Oscar, describes him as a "ferocious talent."

Oscar is particularly excited about a song called Oiled Up from the upcoming album — one we just might hear pouring out of every device in the coming months. The song also includes some mouth trumpet.

"That's the moneymaker. I've got to put that in every song," said Oscar with a grin.

He said his inspirations range widely, his style having been influenced by a number of artists including Dallas Green of City and Colour, UK-based bands like Little Comets and Alt-J, and American bands like Pokey LaFarge and Texas jam-band Khruangbin.

You can definitely hear a touch of Dallas Green in his voice.



DRFTR, known locally as Oscar Anderson-Shortt. (Richard Harley)



DRFTR performs a song. (Richard Harley)



The cover of DRFTR's first EP. (Supplied)

Jamming with friends is his current musical lifeblood, he said.

"It starts with nothing special, then it grows into something more. It's fluid, you just lose yourself in the groove. This is becoming the most influential music in my life."

He said his deepest influences come from his creative and supportive family.

"My dad was always in choirs and stuff. My brother Angus is a painter, my sister Aurora is an interior designer, and my mom is a carpenter," he said.

His family members are also key members of his management team, helping him take his career to the next level.

Sometime last year his

mother and sister asked him if he'd like to join them in a meeting with My Son the Hurricane manager Danno O'Shea, after deciding it was time for Oscar to take his career to the next level.

They sought O'Shea's advice on how to do that, which led to DRFTR's recent June tour with the band.

Oscar is currently putting the finishing touches on a new album, recorded with Joe Lapinski of WOW! Recording Studio in St Catharines.

He tells a story of when he was touring with Band On a Couch a couple of years ago, and met a former member of the Guess Who.

"The guy asked me if I planned on recording. I said I was in the process of doing

just that. He said, 'I hope it sounds physically the way it sounds in your head.'"

Oscar said that's why he chose Lapinsky to record his songs.

Lapinsky, he said, has the ability to not only manifest what's in his head, but to make it even better.

Putting it simply, Lapinsky is "the real deal," Oscar said.

"He kept the feel, and took it to a whole new level."

Lapinsky said it's been a "wonderful artistic experience" working with Oscar.

"His music ranges from foot-stomping folk-rootsy styles, to more soul-influenced grooves that'll get your butt moving. But the first thing that always catches my ear with his

music is his voice and the words he's singing. His voice is like silk sheets on a pillow cloud, floating above tree tops and mountains and city-scapes. He sings from the heart every time, and draws the listener into his stories. There is no denying his talent — and he's a nice guy on top of all that."

Oscar's new album will be a far cry from his recently produced EP, he said, which was more a low-fi affair featuring just himself and his guitar, packaged in a brown cardboard sleeve labelled "HELLO my name is DRFTR."

The new album will feature original artwork by artist Sam Estrabillo, a full band with Oscar on vocals, acoustic guitar and har-

monies; Lapinski on bass, pedal steel guitar, banjo, and percussion; Niagara's Laurel Minnes on back-up vocals/harmonies; Dave Clark on drums; Eron Stroud on keyboards and bass; Ben Goertson on cello; and Danielle Marconi on violin.

He said with the help of his family and supporters, the sales and marketing efforts have taken a stratospheric leap in professionalism, which will hopefully lead to success.

As far as what he writes about, he said all of his songs are about overcoming something in life.

"I create the music first, then when I'm really angry or upset about something, the lyrics will just come out all at once. I'm just sharing these wildly personal songs. Like for the song Sikhokele, I had a hard time getting over a difficult break-up and then one day I verbal-diarrheaed out this very blunt song and I haven't thought about the pain of the break-up since. Songwriting for me is a kind of therapy."

When he's not playing soulful tunes, Oscar spends his days working at Silver-smith Brewing Company and Mahtay Café in St. Catharines, where he said he loves being surrounded by so much creative energy. He is very conscious of the people surrounding him, he said, especially as he carefully builds his team of people who will help him and his career evolve and grow.

He said he's just now becoming more confident about asking to be paid what he feels is fair, which is an important step in a professional musician's career.

"I spend a lot of time creating these songs. At first I would take any gig for any money. Not anymore. All the songs I've been writing, all the work I've put into my career, it's worth being paid properly."

That attitude has helped him move further than ever, he said, landing him in dedicated venues, as opposed to bars and restaurants.

"So people tend to listen more, to pay more attention."

And pay attention they should, because it is DRFTR's time.

You can check out a video of Oscar playing a song by trying out the paper's augmented reality feature.

Just look for the HP Reveal logo, and try out other pictures while you're at it.

Find instructions on how to use the app on Page 19.

HAVE FUN & BE SAFE

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FIRST RESPONDERS FOR KEEPING THE SUMMER SEASON SAFE. REMEMBER TO DO YOUR PART AND TAKE PRECAUTIONS THIS SUMMER SEASON

FROM TERRY FLYNN AND THE NOTL SAFETY COMMITTEE TO:



- Stay hydrated and keep in the shade
- Wear UVB and UVA sunglasses
- Wear at least 30 SPF sunscreen
- Keep a safe watch on children in water
- Never leave children or pets in the car
- Pack an emergency kit
- Watch for cyclists and pedestrians
- Wear a helmet when cycling
- Wear a lifejacket on the water
- Take shelter when you hear thunder
- Lock up to prevent thefts
- PLAN A RIDE HOME IF DRINKING.