



The Lake Report

Vol. 1, Issue 8

September 6, 2018

Niagara-on-the-Lake



TERRY FOX

NOTL RUNS REACH \$600,000 MILESTONE

Penny Coles
Staff

Joan King took on the organization of the Terry Fox run in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2007, to ensure the run continued locally.

This year marks the 38th anniversary of the Marathon of Hope, with the first run in town held in 1991. But in 2006 nobody stepped up to organize the event, so the next year King — a retired school teacher who lives in Queenston — decided to take it on.

“The Terry Fox run is not just raising money for cancer research but also hope, inspiration and determination. It’s about remembering those we lost, supporting those who still fight and honouring those who won the fight,” said King.

Last year, thanks to her efforts over the last decade and those who organized the event in its early years, a milestone was reached — the little town and its residents, with big hearts and generous pockets, had raised \$600,000.

The run/walk takes place every year on the second Sunday after Labour Day, which this year falls on Sept. 16.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. at Simcoe Park, with the run beginning at 10 a.m.

Most people walk the five-kilometre route but the runners or cyclists can do it twice to make it a 10-kilometre event, said King.

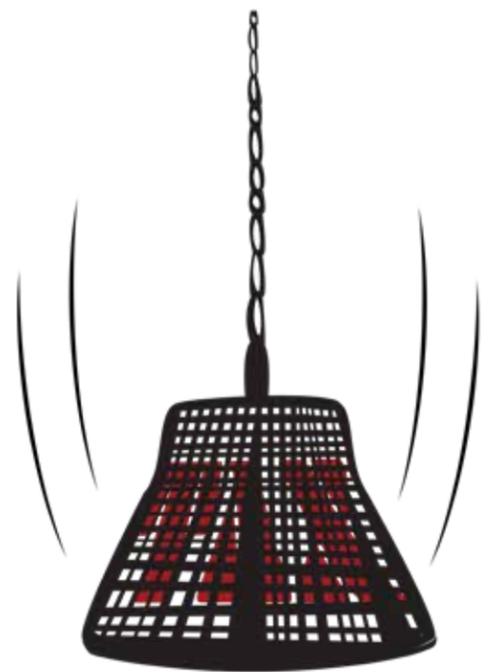
And there is more to it than that — it’s become a great family and community event ...

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Terry Fox became a Canadian hero at age 21. (Supplied)

HOTEL TAX SQUASHED



Penny Coles
Staff

For the second time in a little more than six months, Niagara-on-the-Lake town council showed it has no appetite for an accommodation or “hotel” tax.

Coun. Paolo Miele tried to drum up support on social media recently for taxing tourists who stay in local hotels — an issue that was thoroughly discussed and dropped in January.

It was made clear then that those in the industry were fearful of the negative impact an extra tax would have on accommodations providers and other tourism-related sectors.

Miele has used Facebook in recent weeks to hold a very basic and informal survey, asking residents whether they are in favour of a tax that could save them about \$600,000 a year that is spent on tourism-related programs — money he said could be directed toward items such as local infrastructure or more parks and trees.

At Monday’s council meeting, he was promoting a provincial program that permits municipalities to collect an accommodation tax to split between the Town and a non-profit agency that would administer its portion of the revenue to market local tourism. He suggested \$4 a night could be an appropriate amount as a test project.

But Janice Thomson, president of the NOTL Chamber of Commerce, and other industry representatives asked councillors not to burden visitors with a municipal accommodation tax ...

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Medical centre decision delayed

Penny Coles
Staff

With it looking like construction on a new health centre in Niagara-on-the-Lake could be delayed by about six months, property owner and developer Lloyd Redekopp holds little hope the building will be completed to meet local doctors' desired timeline.

He remains optimistic, though, that the required rezoning and Official Plan amendments will pass, with site plan approval to follow, to eventually allow him to move ahead with his proposal.

After a lengthy discussion about how to best deal with traffic and safety concerns of neighbours to the site at Monday's council meeting, the rezoning decision he hoped to hear was deferred until September.

Last fall, 10 Niagara-on-the-Lake family doctors from the Niagara North Family Health Team announced they had chosen Redekopp's property beside Crossroads Public School for their two-storey medical centre. The site backs on to Niagara Stone Road, with an entrance from Line 2.

In addition to the medical clinic, which would bring all the NOTL doctors under the same roof, the proposal includes plans for a pharmacy, laboratory, optometrist, physiotherapist, imaging and professional offices. The doctors, now split between the NOTL hospital building and the Niagara Medical Clinic down the road from the chosen location, will require new offices by the end of 2019.

But before the project can move ahead, the property must be rezoned for commercial use, instead of residential, as it currently stands.

Although councillors were reminded more than once Monday the issue before them was one of land use only, those who voted to defer their decision were struggling with the need for safety measures at the busy intersection at Line 2 and Niagara Stone Road, and how to solve the problems of residents living on Henry and Andres Streets, who are already dealing with increased traffic and cars parked on side streets in the area.

A traffic impact study initiated by Redekopp to ease residents' concerns, confirmed by a Town-initiated peer review and mirroring Regional comments, found traffic counts do not warrant a traffic light at the intersection. At the Aug. 13 planning committee meeting, although those concerns were discussed, the rezoning was approved by a majority of councillors.

This week, three short videos were played for councillors, showing a long line of traffic on Henry Street



A rendering of a proposed medical centre beside Crossroads Public School. (Supplied)

following an accident on Niagara Stone Road Saturday, as well as traffic backed up on Line 2 and cars parked on both sides of the residential roads, making it awkward for through traffic.

Coun. Martin Mazza made it clear his lack of support for the proposal at this point is not a lack of support for the doctors or the family health team, and "contrary to the fear-mongering comments from some of the doctors," who have told their patients they may have to look outside of town if this project doesn't move ahead, "there will continue to be doctors in NOTL," he said.

In the meantime, he won't approve the new building as long as safety issues continue. "I for one will not put one person at risk."

Coun. Paolo Miele said neighbours of the proposed development "want their doctors, but not in that location."

If the property remains residential, he said, there might be 20 to 30 new homes built, "but that would be a little more acceptable" than the increased traffic flow from 60 to 70 staff members at a medical centre, and those who use it.

"Traffic will be a nightmare. It already is." "Obviously the issue is close to all of us," said Coun. Terry Flynn. "They are our family doctors. My concern is for the residents in the neighbourhood."

He spent some time at Line 2 watching the traffic, he said, and understands the concerns of the residents in the vicinity.

Approving the rezoning, he said, could mean the Town would lose control over any improvements to traffic safety.

"We can't throw it on the back of the developer or the Region. All three of us have to come to the table," Flynn said, adding, "we really need something between now and September."

Coun. Jim Collard

blamed the current situation on the Region, suggesting there should be a plan for dealing with traffic along Niagara Stone Road from Homer Bridge to the Old Town. The Town has been asking the Region for that for the last 15 years, he said, "and they've done nothing for the last 15 years."

Coun. Betty Disero pointed out whether the development goes ahead or not, the problems on Henry and Andres Streets will remain. "We need to resolve this and we will," she said, but holding up the rezoning and Official Plan amendments and site plan approval doesn't have to be part of the solution.

The doctors went looking for a location when council wouldn't agree to allowing a building beside the community centre, she said.

The doctors chose the current site, and if the medical building doesn't go ahead, "I do have a fear that the doctors will scatter. The family health team will stay, but the doctors will not."

Coun. John Wiens, who also spent some time watching traffic in the area, says he worries that as more new homes are built in the area, the streets will become even more congested.

"Common sense tells me that intersection is not going to work for us, with this added traffic that's going to be created by the new facility."

Redekopp is hoping he can sit down with Town and Regional representatives to come up with some "viable options" to alleviate traffic problems, which he has seen first hand, having owned a business nearby. But he says he believes it's a pre-existing condition that will only be "minimally affected" by a new medical centre, and one that won't necessarily be solved by a traffic signal.

He said he agrees traffic congestion is a separate issue that needs to be solved,

whether or not the medical centre goes ahead.

He was also hoping site plan approval authority could be delegated by council to town staff to save some time and allow construction to begin this fall, since council will meet only once before being dissolved for the October election. Instead, it's looking like it will be January before a new council can deal with it, delaying the start of construction five to six months, he said.

Couns. Mazza, Miele and Wiens voted for the deferral motion, which was made by Flynn. Collard, Desiro and Lord Mayor Pat Darte, who agreed with Disero that postponing the rezoning issue wouldn't solve the traffic problems, were opposed.

Flynn's motion also directed staff to organize a discussion about a traffic signal with the developer, and have a report for councillors in September, the last opportunity for the current council to deal with the rezoning.

Redekopp says although options have been discussed to provide interim office space for doctors until the Line 2 building is completed, there is no plan B at this point. The former Virgil public school, which he also owns, has been mentioned, but it too would require rezoning, he said.

"It would be the doctors themselves that would have a plan B."

He didn't expect when he began this process that it would be stalled where it is today, he added.

As to ownership of the building, which some believe will include a group of doctors, it's a question that remains unanswered, at least for now.

Redekopp says at this point the property is family-owned. He considers the doctors partners, in that he is working with them - but not necessarily as part owners, he said.

"And I'm still hopeful for positive results."

Town puts a temporary stop to new cannabis production facilities



Penny Coles
Staff

With changes in federal and provincial laws that will make growing marijuana legal in Canada this fall, Coun. Betty Disero suggested the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake put a hold on approving marijuana operations for a year, with the possibility of extending it for a second year if necessary.

She also asked planning staff to look at land use planning policies to see if they require amending — there could be issues of land use compatibility and conflicts that were not considered when the original agricultural zoning bylaw was written, she said.

"We're on the eve of legalization" for recreational marijuana, she said, and although there have been discussions about increased setbacks recommended by the town's agricultural committee at 1,500 metres, as it stands, with council dissolving in October, currently the setbacks stand at 70 metres for medical marijuana production, and no restrictions for anyone considering a new facility for recreational marijuana.

Disero said she was worried about the Town being left with no control over such facilities, at least until the new council has time to look at policies early next year.

Increased setbacks, she added, have to be appropriate and defensible if a business wants to locate in NOTL and opposes municipal legislation, and 1,500 metres may not be.

"We have to buy some time to work with the residents and the agricultural committee."

Her motion for an interim control bylaw, which was approved by council, covered both rural and industrial facilities, with Disero specifying it is intended for larger operations only.

"This will not stop an individual from putting four plants into their backyard or flower pots," she said.

Coun. Jim Collard agreed with the need for interim control, saying it will likely take two years to finalize new land-use policies.

He said the recommendation from residents and the agricultural committee for setbacks of 1,500 metres "is absolutely not defensible because you have no science" proving such a large distance is required.

"How do we get that science? We don't have the ability within our own municipality to do it."

He suggested the Town should be turning to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and if necessary, the federal Department of Agriculture to see what other communities are doing.

The Town should use the two years "to get it right," Collard said. He recommended inviting members of the cannabis industry to sit on the Town's agricultural committee and be part of the discussion.

Irene Murray, a Larkin Road resident living near a large greenhouse facility that could potentially be the site of marijuana production, said it's clear after four years of production, Tweed Farms on Concession 5, one of the largest legal medical marijuana facilities in the world and expected to enter the recreational market, has not been "getting it right" with respect to odour control.

Setbacks and odour control are main concerns for most residents, she said, however the impact on crop lands, and "the fact that we just don't know how nearby tender fruit crops will be impacted," are issues to be considered.

Murray would like to see the Town limit marijuana facilities to industrial areas to keep the odour away from residents. She is also concerned open-field production could have significant negative impact on the tender fruit and grape industry.

"The approval of the interim control by-law was vital," said Murray. "The new council will have time to fully understand the ramifications of cannabis production in our town and its potential to negatively impact our tender fruit, wine and tourist industries. Staff can give this important issue the attention it deserves."



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NEWS 

Cont'd: Tourism tax gets squashed again

Penny Coles
Staff

Tourism spending in NOTL supports \$21.4 million in wages and other expenses, and \$7.4 million in capital investments and profits, Thomson said. An analysis of adding an accommodation tax on top of Bill 148, which increased the minimum wage, showed it could result in an annual reduction of \$3.4 million in profits and capital investment for hotel properties and other businesses depending on the overnight visitor market.

Currently, through parking meters, bus parking at Fort George and the provincial gas tax rebate, the Town receives more than \$2 million each year, revenue that stays in town, Thomson reminded councillors.

Instead of levying an additional tax on visitors and adding risk to local hotel and tourism operations, she asked council to focus on helping NOTL remain a competitive tourism destination.

"Please, council, do not put our competitive advantage at risk by implementing a tax on our visitors."

John Crescenzi, general manager of the Holiday Inn Express in NOTL, spoke of his experience in the industry in other locations where another layer of tax was added. He agreed with Miele that many tourists don't see the extra charge on the bill, but added, "those who do are vehemently opposed to it. The value perception to the customer is gone."



Supplied photo.

An added tax will be detrimental to all businesses, he said, imploring council not to agree to it. He suggested if councillors were even considering it, a discussion should involve the business community first.

Carlo Robazza, also representing the hotel industry, said such a tax would be negative not only for hotels but for their staff and families, due to the layoffs that would ensue. That loss of livelihood would extend to industries serving hotels, he said, and to other local businesses that benefit from tourists who stay overnight, as opposed to the day-trippers.

Coun. John Wiens said he wouldn't support an accommodation tax without hearing from residents and the business community, and

that it wasn't fair to bring up the issue before the dissolution of the current council. "I think we really need to move forward slowly if we want to go this way."

Coun. Betty Disero said it's too soon to know the impact from the minimum wage hike on the hotel industry and its employees, adding she would want more information before heading down the road of an accommodation tax. She suggested looking at other ways to increase revenue rather than adopting a tax that would harm the hospitality industry.

"Quite honestly," summed up Coun. Jamie King, agreeing with Disero, "I thought we had a good discussion in January. I really regret whatever procedural process led us to having to talk about this

again tonight. I fear we've wasted a lot of people's time, brought a lot of people out in the summer, and raised a lot of concern right in advance of the election. I thought we sent a pretty clear message of council. I think the intent of council from January needs to be maintained."

Miele said he believes businesses are adapting to the raise in minimum wage, and he disagreed a \$4 tax would destroy the accommodation industry, citing plans for more hotels in NOTL. However, realizing from the discussions of councillors that there was no support for his motion nor institute the tax or even continue a more thorough discussion, Miele took it off the table.

Village Hotel approved

Penny Coles
Staff

A compromise on height has allowed a boutique hotel and assembly hall to move forward along the entrance-way to the Old Town.

The Village Square, a commercial centre on the border of the Garrison Village residential neighbourhood, will include a four-storey hotel at the corner of Niven Road and Niagara Stone Road, as well as an assembly hall, a grocery store and small shops.

John Hawley, owner of Traditional Neighbourhood Development and the builder of The Village, a neighbourhood approved more than 20 years ago, and The Village, a newer section of the subdivision, had asked for a height increase to 55.8 feet for the hotel and assembly hall, the cornerstones of the project. He could have built to 36 feet without the amendment he was seeking.



This view will soon include a hotel. (Richard Harley)

Although the height increase was approved at the committee of the whole meeting of Aug. 13 without discussion, and many residents at previous meetings have said they supported it, a petition signed by 164 people was presented to councillors indicating opposition to the hotel and assembly hall, the increased height, the tourist draw to their neighbourhood and parking issues as some of their concerns.

At this week's council meeting, Coun. Betty Disero put forward an amendment to the bylaw, keeping the height of the two main buildings at just under 50 feet. She also asked for a cap of 60 rooms for the hotel — Hawley was asking for permission to build up to 80 rooms.

She said she likes the concept of the project, but Hawley's request for the height increase "went one tiny little step too far."

To the question of traffic concerns on Garrison Village Drive, at an intersection where residents have been asking for improvements, she pointed out the town is working with Hawley on a solution which would likely involve a small roundabout.

"I don't particularly care for the design of the building. I'm sure the urban design committee and residents will have some comment," said Disero.

But she said she really likes The Village concept, where people live and walk in their community.

"This is what drew me to Niagara-on-the-Lake. I was thrilled so many people were walking, meeting their neighbours, getting to know their neighbours. That's the best form of community safety."

She said she wishes Hawley luck with the next stage of his development. "I just hope it doesn't take him another 20 years."

Her amendment passed with Coun. Paolo Miele the only one opposed.



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Once again, we at Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service would like to thank our NOTL and surrounding area residents for coming out to our yearly SHRED-IT event, sponsored by and held at the Meridian Credit Union.

Together as a team volunteers from our organization, the Meridian Credit Union, past Hospital Auxiliary members and special young ladies from the Royal Elite International Academy raised just over \$2,700. We had two trucks and managed to have space left over this year. It was a huge success for such a worthy cause and much needed service.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service offers services free of charge to NOTL residence facing a serious life-threatening illness and their families. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts every single one of you.

See you again in 2019.

Bonnie Bagnulo and Margret Walker



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Editorial: What kind of experience?

Richard Harley
 Editor

What an election season it's already been. With 25 candidates vying for council, and three seeking the position of lord mayor, it's candidate mayhem out there, with a sea of election signs to back that up.

In light of that, I feel the need to start this off with a disclaimer that this editorial is not about any particular candidate for council or for lord mayor.

It seems the common tune being played around town by voters is that there's a need for council to improve, whether it be removing bits and pieces or a clean sweep.

People are talking about change — a change in council; change in the way the Town is operated; and change in attitude towards a town that's growing at one of the fastest rates in Canada.

The ironic thing is, change is the last thing people want.

Most people I've talked with seem to want Niagara-on-the-Lake to stay just the way it is for the most part, and when asked, many don't entirely know how they want to improve about council — they just want people who they feel better understand municipal policies.

Amongst my talks, "experience" is a word that keeps



Illustration by Cary Frank.

coming up, and my counter-question is always: "what kind of experience are we talking about?"

As far as I can tell, for better or worse, most of the incumbents have more direct council experience than the candidates running — so is experience what we're really looking for? And what kind?

Is it time spent on local council; a history of being chief executive officer of a big company; or having attended school here? Or is it integrity that really appeals to us?

Unfortunately, I don't have an answer. I don't think anybody does — but I can speculate.

I think if people were to vote solely based on time spent, whether it be on council, as a local, or anything else, we would just be casting the same ballots every year — and what's the point of an election then?

I think we're better off to focus on what candidates bring to the table, and how they're likely to act on council; they say history is the best teacher.

The same concept applies to voting for somebody who has experience on boards and committees, or who's been CEO of a major company — it requires researching those companies, what they did, how well

they did it, and asking if the experience they bring to the table is truly relatable to running a town.

We should also vote for somebody that has the best interest of the town's people at heart — but how do you figure that out?

Research, ask hard questions, and follow the money. That's a good start.

Just don't get your information from social media.

I think it's important for us to research who is truly most likely to listen to residents. It seems most just want it to stay touristy but semi-quaint, and we certainly don't want high-rises moving in. One thing all locals — new or old — agree on is that we love it here because there aren't skyscrapers and apartment buildings. It's picturesque.

To protect that, we shouldn't vote just for the word experience — it's just too vague. Anyone can claim experience in any subject, and any good lawyer can justify why it will bring value to the board of a corporation; which is all town council really is.

We all have our own ideals, and we should vote based on who is most aligned with them.

editor@niagaranow.com

Letter to the editor: St. Davids pool

Penny Coles' article on the outdoor pool in St. Davids gave residents of St. Davids plenty to think about.

The good news is that the Town will begin consultation with St. Davids residents about what kind of municipal, recreational facility should be planned to replace the aging outdoor pool in a village that has grown 10 times faster in population than the rest of Niagara-on-the-Lake over the past seven years and looks set to double in size again in the next seven.

A realistic, equitable master recreational plan for Niagara-on-the-Lake would have at the top year round facilities for those communities that either have no facilities or are about to have none.

The bad news is that the pool will close shortly when it can no longer be maintained. There will be a gap between the pool closure and the opening of a new facility

that the coming Council will need to be creative to shorten. Kevin Turcotte, manager of parks and recreation for the Town, pretty well admitted the Town had put in place a sub-standard maintenance program for the pool that has shortened its useful life. I can only assume this was done intentionally, to siphon funds off for use elsewhere in the recreation program.

The current Council needs to accept responsibility for budget approvals that did not include funding for appropriate maintenance. And finally, The article reports that Councilor Mazza again suggested a splash pad for St. Davids.

Perhaps he's already forgotten my delegation to Council on June 12th during which I suggested it would be hard for do an aqua-fit program in a splash pad if the St. Davids pool closed.

Kenn Moody

Letter to the editor: Where have all the flowers gone?

Recently I've been noticing our beautiful roadsides blooming with Queen Anne's Lace, Chicory, Bird's Foot Triflor, several kinds of clover, wild asters, milkweed and many more lovely wild flowers that are so necessary to our pollinators - bees, butterflies and other flying insects. And then...and then... our town spends money sending out workers to mow down all this beauty. Why???

This happened in past years as well. I had been cycling along the path along Niagara Stone Road and stopped frequently to photograph the different wildflowers blooming. I took photos of at least 24 different species - and likely missed a good number more. A few days later, to my surprise, they were all gone! Mowed down!

Just because a few people who don't understand the need for these plants in our environment and who call

them "weeds", the town mows them down. This must be stopped! It may be too late for this year, but if there are any roadsides left uncut, please let them be.

Have you ever wondered why cereal companies have put packets of wild flower seeds into their cereal boxes? They'd like us to plant them so the few bees we have left have places to feed. These companies need honey for what they produce. Some farmers in Quebec and Vermont have even planted large fields of wild flowers for this purpose

Hopefully, we all understand the need to cut invasive reeds like the phragmites that cause damage to Ontario's biodiversity, wetlands and beaches. Let's keep on top of that, but not the wildflowers - please.

I look forward to a response.

Charlotte Letkemann

You're invited



The Lake Report invites all Niagara-on-the-Lake residents to attend our official launch party this September 28 at Mori Gardens in Virgil.

The night will include a chance to meet the paper's editorial team, mingle with other locals and enjoy some great food and wine.

There will also be a donation raffle, with all funds going towards keeping the paper free and independent.

The celebration will start at 5:30 p.m. and run until 9:30 p.m.

Here's the menu, provided by Gooddine Catering. There is no cost for food. Wine will be available to purchase by the glass from Perridiso Estate Winery.

Stationed canapes

(5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.)

Olive board

Cheese board

Kate's Sushi Display

Shucked Oysters and Poached Shrimp

Passed canapes

Chicken Burger Sliders

Devils on Horseback

Mushroom Ricotta Tortellini

Crab Stuffed Mushrooms

Chef's Table

7:30 p.m.

Surf and Turf on grilled ciabatta

The night will be hosted by David Green and Cary Frank and will include live music by local musicians.

All NOTL residents are invited.

For those who can't make it, a second event will be held a week later (Oct. 6) at the community centre, with light refreshments provided by Sweet and Swirls Cafe.

The paper extends thanks to Miguel Mori for helping coordinate this event, to Collin Gooddine for his generous contribution to the night at Mori, and to Erin and James Lockard for the afternoon at the community centre, to all of our advertisers, donors — and last but certainly not least, to our readers and contributors, who have made the launch of this paper a greater success than we could have imagined in a short time.

If all goes well, we'll have another event like this to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the paper's first issue in May 2019.

The Lake Report

Correction and apology

We regret there was an error in one of our advertisements last issue.

The ad said Town Coun. Terry Flynn has served on council for 12 years.

In fact, Flynn has been on council for 21 years.

The Lake Report apologizes for any inconvenience caused to Coun. Flynn and to our readers.

Even in our advertisements, the paper pledges to hold itself accountable for all errors. We always aim for the highest standards of accuracy in our journalism.

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Lake Report to open NOTL office



The Lake Report's new office. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

It's official — the Lake Report has an office in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It's located on the corner of Mississauga and John streets on the way into the historic Old Town and will have a storefront that's open to the public, where anyone is welcome to stop by and chat, pick up current or past issues of the paper, purchase a Lake Report souvenir, or just to chat about what's going on in town.

As well, we're planning to offer Lake Report merchandise such as t-shirts, mugs, pens and notebooks.

We're planning to open the office by mid-September and have a small ribbon-cutting ceremony in October.

All members of the community will be welcome to

attend the ribbon-cutting, where we will have coffee and light refreshments.

This is a huge step for the paper, and it is only happening because of the fantastic support local residents have shown us. Since launching, it's been a whirlwind of late nights getting everything together, as most starting businesses usually are. I want to personally thank everyone who has come up to staff to let them know how much they like the paper. It's a great feeling to know what we're doing is wanted and appreciated and it inspires us to keep growing faster than we ever imagined could happen.

As well, to those who have made financial contributions to the paper, and of course our advertisers, we owe a profound thank you. It's because of your support

that we've been able to grow so quickly, and to get an office in a location we hope to stay for a long time.

It was in April when I officially took over Niagara Now Ltd. I spent every dime I had on it — and even borrowed a bit from my family.

At that time, Niagara Now was solely online, but I wanted this town to have its own newspaper, and had a feeling the residents here felt the same.

I had \$1.36 in my bank account the day I went out to sell ads for the first issue.

With the help of a now good friend who was doing an internship from Niagara College, we hit the streets to ask people to commit to our first three editions. That way, we'd be able to start it all up.

Three days later, without a product to show clients, we

had somehow managed to get the support we needed.

We launched our first paper in May, just 5,000 copies intended to be monthly to get going.

We quickly realized residents wanted more, so we increased to bi-weekly the next month and went into Canada Post the next, delivering 4,000 copies — we didn't even know what route to pick, we just decided we'd go back and forth.

Four months later, we've increased to 10,000 copies, 8,000 delivered, and we have our own office in NOTL.

It's been amazing so far, and we hope to continue bringing the best local paper we can possibly produce for the residents of this town.

Thank you all again. Please, stop in and say hi. We'll likely have a pot of coffee on!

Letter to the editor: the destruction of NOTL

The destruction of Niagara-on-the-Lake grinds on at its slow but relentless pace, until, after 41 years of residency, my wife and I find ourselves forced to consider relocation.

Not that the exodus of long term residents is something new; we have all witnessed the departure of friends and acquaintances increasingly in recent years, but we took solace in living in Garrison Village, an enclave of homes off the beaten track and away from the tourist hordes, with spacious yards, ensuring peace, privacy, and gracious living.

Of course we were keenly aware of the undesirable changes taking place around us — large old town properties being snapped up and severed; traditional businesses driven out by huge rent increases; most hotels and

restaurants being bought up by international companies; wine, beer, liquor and now pot being produced everywhere; wineries vying for customers with noisy concerts; bird bangers going off every day for six months each year; and almost impassible roads, given the constant stream of cars full of tourists heading for the giant emporium.

Still we hung in there, clinging to the serenity of our own quiet neighbourhood.

Then the Hawley family took over Bud Wright's planned development of Phase Three of Garrison Village, and convinced a sleeping council that what the town needed was much denser housing.

Up sprang "The Village," crowding dwellings together, boosting the profits of the developers, and opening the door

to even greater horrors.

Now the final straw: the Hawleys wish to build a hotel and an assembly hall at the corner of Niven Road and Regional Road 55, in short at the traditional entrance to Garrison Village.

It's not enough that we have had to negotiate an overcrowded two-lane road (55) which Region should have widened to four lanes years ago, now we will have to contend with the traffic generated by a hotel, retail complex and assembly hall.

The profiteers who have descended upon this poor town over the past quarter century have utterly destroyed its continuing viability as a desirable place of residence. Anyone who thinks the town has improved hasn't lived here long enough.

No doubt the Hawleys will have their wish granted once again. Whatever the reason, successive town councils have proven virtually impotent in standing up to undesirable development. Years ago little Queenston showed the way, successfully styming (sic) development by pointing out the inadequacy of their sewage plant. We could have done likewise, at least ten years ago — even before we discovered that Region's ineptitude has delayed the completion of our new sewage plant by three years and counting.

More than one civic leader has declared Niagara-on-the-Lake "open for business" — not "open for residence" — and the deplorable results of this one-sided approach are all too evident.

J. Tupman



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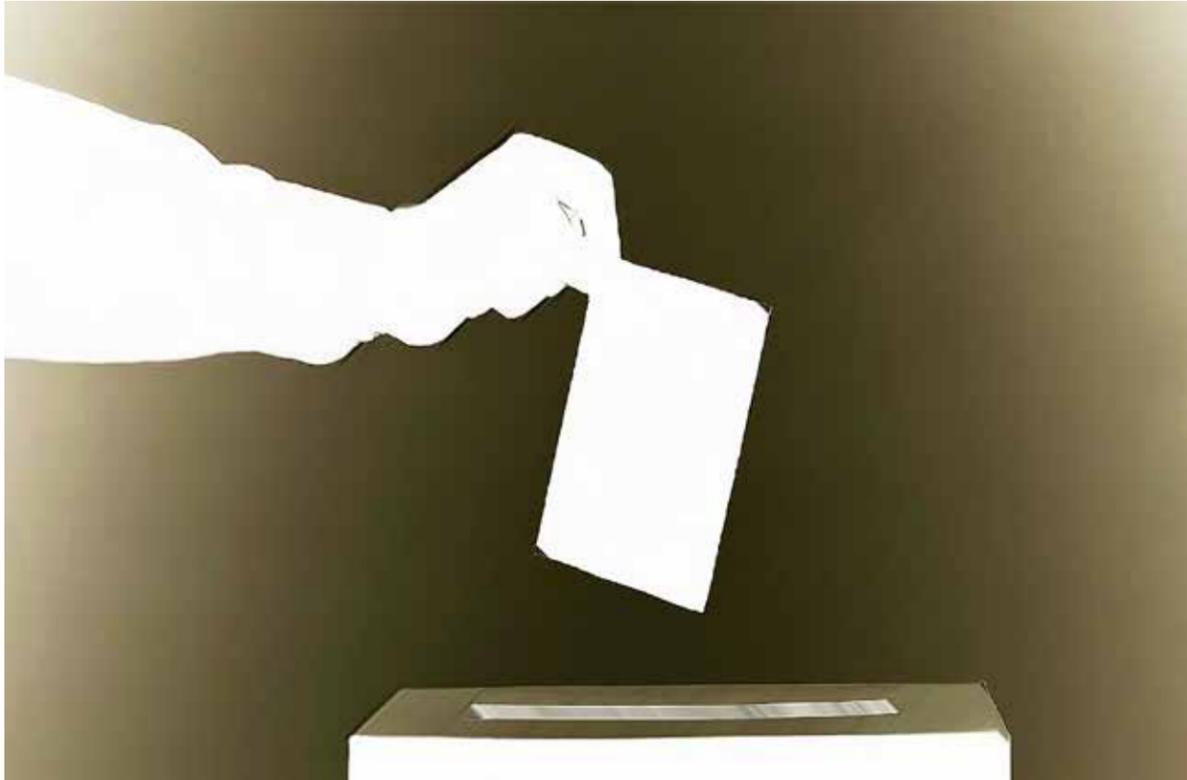
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Multiple candidate meetings planned

Various groups to provide several opportunities to meet local candidates for the upcoming municipal election



There will be a number of chances to find out about the candidates for the Oct. 22 Municipal Election. (Supplied)

Penny Coles
Staff

A great deal of careful planning is going into organizing meetings for the unusually large number of Niagara-on-the-Lake candidates running in the Oct. 22 municipal election.

There are two scheduled all-candidates meetings in Niagara-on-the-Lake so far, one at the community centre and one in Queenston. A third in St. Davids is still in the planning stages.

The Chamber of Commerce has created a format that includes all 32 candidates — 25 people are seeking one of eight positions for town council, four are hoping to win the one seat at the regional council table, and there are three mayoral candidates. The chamber-organized meeting will be held at the community centre Oct. 4, from 6 pm to 8:30 pm.

The format has been changed from past elections, when audience members could submit questions before the meeting that would be directed at a particular candidate.

To be able to wrap up in a reasonable amount of time, each council candidate will be given three minutes to introduce themselves and speak to the question: what will you do to support business growth during the next term of council, if elected?

Candidates for regional councillor and lord mayor will

be given five minutes each to introduce themselves and answer the same question. There will be time at the end of the question period for a meet-and-greet.

All but two of the candidates are available to participate in the evening.

This year, due to limited capacity and the large number of people expected, members of the public were asked to order a complimentary ticket in advance on the chamber website, and the 280 available seats were taken quickly, with a waiting list if more seats can be added.

Nicole Cripps of the Chamber of Commerce said this week the meeting will be recorded by Cogeco, and organizers were also trying to have it livestreamed for people to watch at home.

The Queenston Ratepayers Association has also scheduled its meeting, and will follow a similar format to other years, but will tighten up the time allotted for the questions and answers, says QRA president Jim Armstrong.

Council candidates will have three minutes to speak initially; regional and mayoral candidates will have five minutes.

There will be questions from the audience as for previous elections, but they must be succinct and to the point, with no rambling, said Armstrong. Candidates will have a minute to respond, controlled

by moderators Rob and Helena Copeland, and there will be no debate, he said.

The question period will be divided into 15 minutes each for the group of regional and mayoral candidates, and 30 minutes for the 25 council candidates. All questions must be directed at only one person - no blanket questions, no derogatory or inappropriate language or insinuations, he said, and no "back-and-forth" between questioner and candidate. "The question presented is the one that gets answered."

The biggest change is a move from the Queenston Library, which only holds 60 people, to the Willowbank lower campus, formerly the Laura Secord school. The building is wheelchair accessible, and the plan is for about 150 seats for the audience, with some standing room allowed.

The switch in location also offers more parking, Armstrong said.

The association members briefly discussed holding two meetings, one for the candidates for council and one for regional council and mayoral candidates.

"It was suggested, but it was going to take twice the organizational time and two nights to bring people out," said Armstrong. "Instead we decided to go for broke and get it all done in one night."

It is likely to be "a long haul," he said, with the expect-

ation of wrapping up around 10:30 p.m., and there may be some candidates who get few or no questions.

"We can't control that, and we don't control the questions. What we can control is this is not a debate session - it's an opportunity to ask questions, and nothing more or less. The one criteria is being polite."

He and moderator Rob Copeland are prepared to shut down anybody who asks "inappropriate or impolite" questions, he said.

"We like to have an open forum, but we don't tolerate nonsense. We consider badmouthing other candidates inappropriate. We expect they all come forward with an avowed interest in the community, and you've got to hand it to anybody who does that. But to get into dirty politics is not appropriate for NOTL."

The meeting will be held at 5 Walnut St. in Queenston Wednesday, Sept. 26, doors open at 6 p.m.

St. Davids Ratepayers Association president Gregory Bell says his board members are still working out the format for their meeting, as they try to figure out how to best accommodate the large number of candidates. Some suggested not holding a meeting, he said, and there was discussion about posting questions and answers from candidates on the association website, but he convinced the board the meeting is a long-standing

tradition, and an important one, to address issues that are specific to St. Davids with the candidates. They're still considering spreading it over two nights, to avoid cutting back the time for each candidate to speak, Bell said.

As in previous years, they expect questions to focus on issues that have an impact on residents of St. Davids, such as the future of the community pool, heritage, and safety and traffic concerns.

Administrators of the Facebook page FocusNOTL are holding a series of meetings, with the focus on the 21 new candidates for town council. Only those who are not currently on council are being invited.

The Facebook post says with the unusually large number of new candidates, and the restricted amount of time they would be afforded at all-candidates meetings, the group wanted to provide a forum for candidates to meet voters, present their qualifications, platform and vision for NOTL "in a more intimate setting."

The meetings are not open to incumbent candidates, the Facebook post says, "as they are well-known to the electorate and will likely receive most of the 'air' time at the all-candidate meetings."

Four sessions have been scheduled, Sept. 11, Sept. 19, Oct 3 and Oct 9, each with five to six candidates partici-

pating. The meetings will be held at the Royal Canadian Legion hall on King Street, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Norm Arseneault, Gary Burroughs, Terry Davis, Stuart McCormack and Sandra O'Connor will attend the Sept. 11 meeting.

Simon Bentall, Clare Cameron, Dennis Dick and Jordon Williams will speak Sept. 19.

Allan Bisback, Wendy Cheropita, Andrew Niven, Erwin Wiens and Anne Kurtz-Just will be at the Oct. 3 meeting, and to wrap up the series, Crispin Bottomly, Mark Brown, Lauren Goettler, Bernhard Peters and Katherine Reid will be at the Legion hall Oct. 9.

Written questions are being requested from the public, and will be read to the candidates, each of whom will have an opportunity to answer. Questions can be submitted to notelection2018@cogeco.ca.

Each candidate will have 10 minutes to speak, followed by a 30 to 45 minute question and answer period, and time for a meet and greet at the end.

There has been some push-back on Facebook — A group called FocusNOTL has been open about wanting change on council, and some see the exclusion of current councillors as undemocratic. Others see it as an opportunity to get to know the large number of new candidates.

Council puts off tree bylaw decision

Penny Coles
Staff

Although Niagara-on-the-Lake residents have said they overwhelmingly support a tree bylaw that would apply to private property in urban areas, a decision before council last week was deferred.

A consulting company hired to gauge residents' interest in a tree bylaw reported results to council in July, saying 88.5 per cent of the 600 who answered a survey said the Town should have a bylaw to protect trees in urban communities.

After having talked about it for more than three years, council agreed at that meeting staff should have a draft tree bylaw prepared by August, with answers to questions such as fees, penalties, enforcement, and the need for a tree inventory, with a goal of having a bylaw approved before the end of this term of council.

At the Aug. 14 committee meeting the draft bylaw drew a lengthy debate, with some councillors asking for some changes.

Coun. Jim Collard wasn't happy with the draft bylaw set out before him — he was concerned about the rights of property owners, the cost of removing a tree, the penalty for not replanting a tree, the requirement of an arborist and the need to exempt some weed and problematic trees.

He described the draft bylaw as "brutally difficult"

and a "hammer" that would hit residents hard.

Councillors debated whether to make amendments to improve the draft bylaw before it returned to council for final ratification, and in the end approved the report as it was written.

But when presented to council for ratification this week, it stalled. Collard was disturbed that he didn't see any changes to the bylaw reflecting his concerns, and suggested the deferral until September's committee of the whole meeting, which could still allow for approval of the bylaw at the last council meeting of this term.

"We can debate this ad nauseum tonight," he said, "or defer to next month so we can sit with staff to talk about it. Would council be willing to set this aside for a little more time for some sober second thought?"

He suggested councillors who continue to want changes to the bylaw could meet individually with staff to voice their concerns.

Craig Larmour, director of planning, said it was going to be difficult to try to balance differing opinions of councillors. "I don't know how I can possibly bring forward a bylaw that's going to make any sense," he said.

But with only three councillors asking to discuss changes to the draft bylaw, it was agreed it could come back to the next committee meeting in September.



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Abandoned kayak prompts police search of Four Mile Creek



A pair of shoes found along Four Mile Creek in August. Local police are concerned for the owner's welfare. (Supplied photo)

Richard Harley
Editor

Niagara Regional Police are still looking for answers after an abandoned yellow kayak and a pair of shoes prompted a search of Four Mile Creek in August.

Police were called to the area of Line 3 and Four Mile Creek roads after being notified of the abandoned items by members of the public

Aug. 22, said NRP Const. Phil Gavin.

The area the items were found in is known for fishing, and as a "hang out" spot for youth, he said.

Police officers lowered the water levels of the creek to assist in a shoreline search of the area and canvassed nearby homes, but so far have turned up nothing.

He said detectives have also reviewed the on-file missing



A yellow inflatable kayak was found abandoned along Four Mile Creek.

persons cases and "none are consistent to this incident."

Members of the marine unit also conducted searches of the creek reservoir, and forensic detectives conducted airborne searches of the reservoir using an "unmanned aerial vehicle," also

with negative results.

Gavin said currently there is "nothing to suggest any foul play or that a drowning has or has not occurred," but anyone who can provide further information is asked to contact police at 905-688-4111 ext. 9318.

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Hillstrom: YDTP production of Robin Hood “a little on the edge”

Richard Harley
Editor

A local production of Robin Hood will tell a slightly different tale of Sherwood Forest this winter, with a plot that might hit close to home for some locals.

The adaptation of the classic story, to be written and presented by Yellow Door Theatre Project, depicts the infamous Sheriff of Nottingham as a big bad developer who threatens to build a housing development in the middle of Sherwood Forest.

Naturally, Robin and his band of merry outlaws must find a way to thwart the plans of the Sheriff. Yellow Door's version will follow the traditional tale in that regard, said Lezlie Wade, the show's playwright, though she and Yellow Door's artistic director Andorlie Hillstrom have added a few twists.

Wade's story takes place “somewhere nearby, in the not too distant future,” and as mandated by Hillstrom, Robin is a young orphan girl — her band is a group of orphan children that wind up sharing a similar fate when their parents are taken away for protesting the development.

Without their parents around, Robin and the other orphan children — John Little, Tuck and Marian to name a few — have to work together to free their families and stop the sheriff from destroying their home.

Both Hillstrom and Wade said they adapted the story with a “certain development” in mind.

The setting is almost Neil Gaiman-esque, with Wade being a big fan of the author.

“(Wade) has done some very fun things with it.”

Wade said when she first found out what Andorlie was looking to do, she went back and started researching the origin of the tale, and realized fairly quickly there is no definitive source material for Robin Hood.

“You kind of can see it when you the movies of it,” Wade said. “You have the men in tights version, and the Sean Connery version ... and so that kind of right away let me off the hook a little bit in terms of sticking in any particular time or place.”

“Really, what I took away from all of that is that the ‘take from the rich, give to the poor’ is sort of the main theme, or one of the main themes, and then there's the Sheriff of Nottingham and there's Robin Hood and



Yellow Door is presented student sponsorships from Bosley Real Estate's Doug Rempel during a performance gala in August. (Richard Harley)

there's a couple of these guys that we sort of know, which is Friar Tuck and Will Scarlett.”

Changing the gender of Robin wasn't that difficult of a task, Wade said, though it did play a factor in deciding to set the play in modern times — Wade said she felt there may have been obstacles with a female lead in a medieval setting.

The play has some humour to it, both Wade and Hillstrom said.

Wade's version of Friar Tuck (just Tuck) is non-denominational religious, and “basically just rips on every religion anyone could have,” she said.

“But he's the peace-keeper in the group. He wants to talk instead of fight ... and then Robin is sort of the confrontational one.”

“And of course, there's absolutely nothing redeeming about the Sheriff, which is great fun,” said Hillstrom.

“He's just bad.”
“He revels in it,” Wade said. “He's a Cruella DeVille without the dalmatians. He comes from a long line of crooks. He's Voldemort in Nottingham — every town probably has one of these,” she wrote to Andorlie in the drafts.

“I thought, who would build a housing development in the middle of this beautiful forest?” said Wade.

The Sheriff, “isn't necessarily referred to as a developer, but he supports them, and so he is part of that whole segment of the society that has literally taken the children away because they were environmentalists and tree-huggers, etcetera,” said Hillstrom.

“I absolutely love the

story,” she said.

It's sort of like the opposite of the Lord of Flies, Wade said.

“The theme of the whole play is about family, loyalty, friendship and doing what's right. (The kids) each have a role that they've played.”

The maid Marian situation is a bit of a surprise which Hillstrom didn't want to give away.

The character is still female, and starts out under the wing of the Sheriff, before heading off to join Robin's clan.

“She's feisty, and she really doesn't agree with what the Sheriff is doing,” Hillstrom said.

There is a minor love sub-plot between Marian and John Little.

“I still kind of wanted a little bit of a love interest in there,” Wade said.

“It's very innocent,” Hillstrom said.

Jenny Wright and William Vicars will be the only two performing adults in the show and the music for the play is being adapted by John Luke, who is working long-distance from San Diego.

“I always incorporate professionals so that there is a mentoring situation as well for the kids, so they get to work on stage with other theatre professionals. The design crew, the stage manager— all of these people, the director, they are all working professionals, and that's part of the vision for the company ... as the kids move into a performance situation.”

“Jenny Wright's character is fascinating,” said Hillstrom.

“She's written her so that she starts out as being this underling, this lackey of the

Sheriff of Nottingham, so it should be quite humorous, but over the course of the play she finds her own power and mysticism and ends up being a very powerful figure and ends up helping the children achieve what they need to have their parents returned.”

“Over the past three years, what I've chosen to do with the kids is to do something that's based on a classical children's story, or literally is a classical children's story ... so this year I was looking for another classic story, and I don't know why, I was just struck by Robin Hood.”

Hillstrom said she thinks the play may even have the potential to be picked up by another production company.

“Andorlie is amazing,” said Wade.

“She has this reputation in Canada of being this incredible force with children. Many of the people who have started out with Andorlie have gone on to have incredible careers,” said Wade. “What she brings the community, and with those kids — it's fantastic. I wish she would have been there when I was a kid.”

When asked if the Sherwood Forest was meant to be Randwood, Hillstrom said, it “could be.”

“It's never actually called that,” she said, with a chuckle.

“I guess there is something here to be said for it being just a little on the edge,” Hillstrom said.

“That's what theatre does,” Wade said. “You draw your own conclusions.”

Corn roast gets rained out



Supplied photo.

Richard Harley
Editor

The annual Chautauqua corn roast was rained out this year due to a thunder storm that rolled in just about an hour before the event was supposed to get started.

Organizers from the Chautauqua Residents' Association had already been setting up, but were keeping an eye on the weather in case, as rain was predicted.

According to John Gleddie of the residents' association, this was only the second year the roast has been cancelled due to weather issues.

The last time was about seven years ago.

Gleddie said there will be a rain date for the event, exactly two weeks later (Monday, Sept. 17) in the same location

at Chautauqua Park.

All of the community is invited, even residents who don't live in Chautauqua.

The annual event usually draws a large crowd of locals out, with the fire being lit to roast the corn early in the afternoon.

It was an early warning sign this year that the fire still hadn't been lit by 3 p.m.

Gleddie said it was unfortunate, but the CRA didn't want all of the food to go to waste if nobody came.

The weather seemed to be playing tricks. By 4 p.m., when things were supposed to start, the sky had let up.

Many nearby residents walked over despite the rain and dropped off donations for Newark Neighbours.

Donations will also be collected on the rain date.

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The Lake Report strongly encourages readers to support the local businesses that advertise with us.

When reading, we ask you to please remember that the businesses you see allow us to operate and keep the paper free and independent.

When you're looking for a service or product, check the paper and try someone local first. There are a variety of great businesses inside to choose from — don't forget to mention you saw them in the paper!

The Lake Report would also like to acknowledge and thank those who have made financial contributions to the paper, whether through our donate button online or by mailing us a cheque.

The paper encourages all residents to support the paper through a “voluntary subscription” annually.

For those interested in supporting us, we suggest \$1 per issue, per household, at 52 issues per year, which we strive to get to. That's only \$52 — less than most people spend on pizza and wings — and will help us grow to a weekly edition and ensure all households receive a copy.

Larger donations are also accepted and greatly appreciated. Donations of more than \$1,000 will receive a special thank you (it's top secret) and an exclusive limited edition Lake Report mug, as well as a copy of the first edition of the paper signed by Editor-in-Chief Richard Harley. (Limit of 100 special mugs)

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A week to remember the Legion

Al Howse
Submitted

For most of the year we ask everyone to remember Veterans, both alive and dead, as we follow our mission: to serve veterans and their dependants, promote remembrance, and act in the service of Canada and the community. Once a year we ask you to remember us.

Sept. 16 to 22 this year is Legion week across Canada, when we reach out to remind the community that we are here for you. You will notice that the flags marking our Veterans' graves are new, and the markers are straighter. We welcome everyone to stop by and meet our members, and see what we are about. Our Poppy year is almost over and we are preparing for the next campaign. On Sunday, Sept. 16, at 2 p.m. there will be a parade at the Lakeshore cemetery. We invite all to join us in saluting the Veterans from The Town who came back after war and military operations and have now passed on. We call this "Decoration Day" because of the flags we use to decorate these graves.

Many may not know



Al Howse, president of the NOTL Legion. (Richard Harley)

some things we are doing to promote Remembrance this year. We have two projects ongoing and a new one we are just announcing.

The ongoing efforts are our memories project, and our memorial garden. I hope everyone has noticed the new flag pole at the front of our building. This was donated by Janice Dart Strang in memory of James M. Strang. She and her sister have also been the force behind the new garden and flowers on our berm. We

are all working toward having a spot for picnics and rest and reflection all year for anyone passing by.

Our memories project is community oriented. We are reaching out to everyone in Niagara-on-the-Lake who has had family members serve in the military as long ago as you can remember. We are looking for photos of service men and women in their uniform. We are upgrading our collection of veterans memories by putting about 90 hours

of interviews into digital form and providing copies to the Niagara Historical Society & Museum for their website. We are looking for other places to post them, along with the 70 pictures we have already posted.

Through a new project announced nationally called the Honour Roll Initiative, we want to recognise all military, firefighters, police and other civilians who served as a part of the many U.N. or other military operations since 1953. The goal is to list all those people on an honour roll placed at the town hall. This is our call out to all those eligible to contact us so we can get this project going.

This is our 90th year as a registered branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, 50 of those years at our present location. We need to upgrade our building to accommodate our aging veterans and their families. Our major fundraising goal is for an elevator. We all need a hand up — literally.

Much of our work is done in private, as it needs to be, but once a year we wave our flag for those who have served.

Newark Neighbours gets a new look

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

"I call the old colour of the building 'school portable yellow'," says Pat Hicks, a volunteer at Newark Neighbours. "It was a little worse-for-wear, and didn't do much to entice people in."

A strong new board with galvanizing leadership from Chair Hilary Bellis has given NOTL's little-charity-that-could a brave new identity throughout.

In the branding department, a new logo has been developed, along with a clean and informative new website.

In communications, there is a monthly newsletter to keep members and volunteers up to speed, as well as a regularly updated volunteer manual.

The building's exterior has been given a fresh new coat of paint — a sophisticated green hue chosen very diplomatically by members and volunteers via ballot. The interior has been spiffed up with new shelving, a designers corner for higher-end clothing, and a glass display case for finer items like crystal bowls or china dolls.

New signage on the build-



Edna Geoff has been a volunteer at Newark Neighbours for six years. (Lauren O'Malley)

ing and at roadside will be added shortly, making the charity easier for the uninitiated to find.

The changes go right through to the commode — the bathroom has been painted a cheery yellow, and even the compostable toilet is being replaced, "For the comfort of our many volunteers," says Hicks.

Susan Sparrow-Mace, Barn Maintenance, explains the compostable toilet: "We have no running water. The

building is really just a large utility shed with wiring and ductwork. We're so grateful to Riverbend for letting us do what we do here, on their property, in what is really their shed."

All of Newark's volunteers express this gratitude — to their landlord, their board, their patrons and their donors. "We're here on the good graces of our incredibly generous community — and they are indeed generous. We felt it could be more

pleasant for our customers to shop and to donate," says Hicks. Hence the changes.

The driveways and parking lot will be graded and re-gravelled shortly. Access from the Peller Estates Winery off John St. was recently made permanent, giving the building more presence and increased accessibility.

These upgrades were all paid for by proceeds from Newark's thrift shop, which continues to thrive. "It's kind of like a family atmosphere, and that's what we strive for. There's something for everyone — members of the Horticultural Society come looking for vases; migrant workers come for clothing, kitchen appliances and tools, as well as clothing and toys to send home to their children. We also love to see locals looking for bargains," says Cindy Grant, a volunteer.

"We'll be asking the community to donate suitcases soon," says Hicks. "We're seeing some of the offshore workers starting to pack up their things and head for home."

That now-green utility shed is useful indeed to so many within our community.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
9 NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	10 Little Red Tail Hawks - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Community Pot Luck and Drumming Night - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Committee of the Whole - 6:30 p.m. - Council Chambers	11 The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Municipal Heritage - 7 p.m. - Council Chambers	Tentative Sign Com Meeting - 9 a.m. - Council Chambers Info Health - Dementia, Clinical Future - 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. - Public Library The SupperMarket 9 p.m. - Garrison Village Wine & Words: Kar 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Les Charmes
16 Famous & Infamous: Fred Banting - 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Phil Bosley - 3 p.m. - Silversmith Brewing Co.	17 Community Pot Luck and Drumming Night - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Town Council Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - Council Chambers	18 The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Simply STEAM Story Time - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Fall Trivia League - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery Birthday Bash w DJ Moose Mike - 9 p.m. to 12 a.m. - The Olde Angel Inn	Babies and Books - 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Building with Bricks to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Akwe:go Afterschool - 4:40 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Community Social 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Committee of Adj Hearing - 7 p.m. - Council Chambers Laurel Minnes - 7 p.m. - Silversmith Brewing Co. Camp Kosciuszko L - 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum

Owl photo by Sandra Nass

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	6 Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> The Makeshift - 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Exhibit & Opening: Rob Crosby - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - <i>Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</i> Joshua Wood & Thalia Couture - 7 p.m. - <i>Silversmith Brewing Co</i> Community Service - 9 p.m. to 12 a.m. - <i>The Olde Angel Inn</i> Weekly Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. - <i>The Legion</i>	7 Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Moonlight Picnic at the Pumphouse - 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. - <i>Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</i> The Old Winos with Fergus Hambleton & Julie Long - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Old Winery</i> Ear Candy - 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Olde Angel Inn</i>	8 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - <i>Garrison Village</i> Niagara Polo - 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>The Commons</i> Sourpalooza Beer Festival - 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. - <i>The Courthouse</i> Niagara Rhythm Section with James Anthony - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Old Winery</i> Rusty Jacobs - 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Olde Angel Inn</i>
12 Committee Council Antia: Pre-Trials and the - 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. - <i>NOTL</i> Ma Brown - 7 p.m. - <i>Château</i>	13 Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Rod & Mel - 7 p.m. - <i>Silversmith Brewing Co.</i> Weekly Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. - <i>The Legion</i>	14 Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i>	15 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - <i>Garrison Village</i> St. David's 9th Heritage Day - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - <i>Lions Club Park</i> Niagara Rhythm Section with Dan McKinnon - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Old Winery</i> The Athertones - 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Olde Angel Inn</i>
19 Public Library - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - <i>Niagara Historical Society & Museum/St. Andrew's Church</i>	20 Healthy Kids Community Challenge: Power Off & Play - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - <i>Niagara Historical Society & Museum/St. Andrew's Church</i>	21 Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - <i>NOTL Public Library</i> Mike Lynch Trio - 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. - <i>Oast House Brewers</i> Postmen - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Olde Angel Inn</i> The Old Winos w Kim & Frank Koren - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - <i>The Old Winery</i> NOTL Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. - <i>Community Centre</i>	22 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - <i>Garrison Village</i> Electronics Recycling & BBQ - 11 a.m. - <i>Simpsons Pharmacy</i> Celebrate the Harvest - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - <i>Southbrook Vineyards</i> Harvest Party - 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. - <i>Pondview Estate Winery</i> Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - <i>Niagara Historical Society & Museum/St. Andrew's Church</i>

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Autumn is coming

Hermine Steinberg
Writer's Circle

It was a warm still night and my husband was out of town. As much as I tried, I couldn't sleep. And till this day, I can't explain the restlessness I felt or why I decided to do something that night I had never done before. It was past eleven o'clock and I got redressed, thinking I would go for a short walk around the block, expend some energy and perhaps clear my thoughts. I turned onto King Street and started walking, but found myself continuing to head north instead of turning. I kept telling myself that I would go around the next block and return home. Instead I kept walking and before I knew it, I found myself by the lake.

On that moonlight night I could feel myself drawn to the shore, the call strong and undeniable. But as I got closer I saw that I was not alone.

A small group of women were standing in the gazebo, holding hands and chanting, their voices creating a beautiful haunting melody. I stood watching them when I heard one of them call out to me.

"Join us," she said. Simple words yet in the middle of the night, standing alone I felt a bit frightened but excited at the same time. My curiosity won out.

She told me her name was Shoshana and they, like many peoples and cultures around the world, were celebrating



Autumn is on its way. (Supplied)

the September equinox. The time when night and day are equal, marking the beginning of autumn. Some call it Mabon, for others it is the time of the Corn Dance, but for them it was Yom Kippur. For all, it is a symbolic turning point of the year.

Shoshana and the others welcomed my many questions. For them it had been a day of fasting and feasting, a time to reflect, taking an inner journey into dark places to remember who they truly are and who they want to be, and praying for the strength to change and try to fulfil the tremendous potential within them to create goodness in their lives.

Shoshana explained that as in many cultures around the world it is a time for renewal

and recommitment, and a time for contemplating the wonders of creation. It was the tenth day after celebrating Rosh Hoshana, Jewish New Year, followed by the days of atonement. According to Judaism, Rosh Hoshana is the anniversary of the day on which God created humanity. Adam and Eve are born on Rosh Hoshana, as is the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. On this tenth day when the moon is bright they remind themselves that it is possible to awaken ourselves, just as according to legend, Abraham first encountered the Divine on an autumn equinox, while looking at the stars, on the cusp of the dark half of the year that inspires dreams and visions, and a greater truth was revealed. It

is a time to remind ourselves of our obligations to the earth and to each other. Our mere creation or existence is a miracle that should be considered sacred and requires us to honour our spirit, our unlimited power to overcome and be better.

That night I followed Shoshana and her friends along the shoreline. We silently helped one another over obstacles, and listened and looked for spirit guides. One of the women drummed quietly for us. We prayed for the strength to make our hopes and dreams come to fruition. We opened the doorway to autumn, into the new season. Then, aided by the spirits of all our ancestors who have tried to show us the way, we celebrated our connection to the earth, the web of life, and to each other. We started to sing and dance with abandon and I felt as if I was transported back in time to an ancient tribal moment, a deep and wild place where we all reconnected with the essence and potential of who we were.

Today that night seems like a dream. I never saw Shoshana or any of those women again. But now every Yom Kippur I go out at midnight and raise a glass, send out a prayer of gratitude to the universe, and remind myself of the power I have to become an agent of positive change in the world.

Stepping into a lifetime

Sharon Frayne
Writer's Circle

I held tightly to my daddy's hand as we hurried along the sidewalk on the long journey that led to my first day of kindergarten.

That little trip was full of excitement, energy, anxiety and joy. It took about 10 minutes to walk that half-mile with my tiny legs pumping as hard as they could to keep up with my father's long stride.

How could I know, that I'd spend the next 56 years heading to school each September. That special feeling was rekindled every year as I spent a lifetime in the school system.

But no memories are better than that very first exposure, at 4 years of age, to the open door to the world that was granted to me in the classroom. My teacher's name was Mrs. Morley, and after my mom, I thought she was the prettiest lady in the world. I can still see her twin set sweaters, pencil skirts, high heels and pearl



Supplied photo.

necklace. She was kind and gentle, but organized our day so thoroughly that we were kept occupied and busy learning each minute we spent in her classroom. I remember circle time, and learning my A,B,Cs, days of the week, colours, and numbers. Before long, I could print my name! My creativity knew no boundaries when it came to art time, and I proudly carried home my creations each Friday.

I still have the black and white photo taken of our class

soon after the start of the school year. There's me in the centre of the middle row, bangs, gap toothed smile and excited grin lighting up my face. I remember the pushing and shoving as we struggled to organize ourselves on the benches the photographer provided. He hid beneath a huge black cloth and held up his arm with a flashing bulb.

"Look at the birdie," he shouted.

I squinted hard, imagining that I'd see a little yellow ca-

nary fluttering over his head, as I'd seen so often on the cartoon shows.

I retired as a principal on June 30, 2014. I spent my last day in the kindergarten class, still learning with the other 4 and 5 year olds. We practiced our printing and reading and worked hard with the paint and chalk. I used my digital camera to capture the busy children at work, and forwarded the photos on to their parents.

The world has altered in many ways over the past 56 years. It would be impossible to predict the changes I experienced, and futile to predict the future of today's kindies. The excitement, energy, anxiety and joy that I felt on my very first day lasted me through Elementary and Secondary school, University and College, Teaching and Administration. Kindergarten opened a universe for me, and I know that every child who starts this September has that possibility ahead of them.

Thank you, Mrs. Morley, for giving me a great memory and gifts to last a lifetime.

ARCH I TEXT: with Brian Marshall Shuttering at the sight



Various types of shutters. (Supplied photo)

Anyone who is a fan of architecture likely has a few pet peeves. For me, incomplete, incorrect or wrongly hung shutters are near the top of the list.

Historically, shutters provided security, privacy, insulation, protection of expensive glass, and shade (draperies being the province of only the very wealthy). Made of wood planks on modest dwellings, shutters on upscale homes typically were raised panel on the main floor and fixed louver on upper floors (where ventilation outweighed security). Mounted on hinges attached to the window casing, shutters were closed by releasing the shutter dog (or catch), grasping a ring or knob, swinging them inside the frame and locking them together with a bar or hook. If louvered, the slats would then be slanted down and away to shed rain. Adjustable louvered shutters entered the Niagara market circa 1840, but over the next few decades cheaper glass & draperies, window screens, storm windows and other innovations combined to make shutters largely obsolete. While many architects abandoned them, others continued to include functional shutters as a design element until the 1950's when sub-division developers degraded shutters to a cheap 'tack-on' decoration with no regard to the size, shape or style. Generally considered frippery, today it's a challenge (even on many designated houses) to find correct shutters properly installed. So, how are your's hanging?

PHOTOS: Fort George gets live

By: Fred Mercnik, Special to the Lake Report



Top: Battle reenactments took place at Fort George during a weekend in August.



Second: Fort George show off their fire power during the event.



Third: Brent Norton (driver) and Rudy McKay ride a 1944 BMW flathead motorcycle that was used in WW2.



Bottom: Karl Muller mends a pair of boots. It was very important for soldiers to wear proper boots in the war.

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NEWS

Red Roof Wine Run returns September 30

Richard Harley
Editor

The fourth annual Red Roof Wine Run returns this September, offering locals a chance to flex their muscles and community spirit, and enjoy some wine and gourmet food in the process.

The event, sponsored by Niagara Fitness and Rehabilitation and NOTL Chiropractic, will see participants run one of three route options to raise money for Red Roof Retreat.

The longest (10-kilometre) run starts at Pillitteri Estates Winery at 11 a.m. on September 30 and ends up at Red Roof in the afternoon, where the party will continue with Pillitteri wine and lunch spread by Goodine Catering. The shorter options will be five and two-kilometre runs, starting from points along the long route.



Participants in last year's Red Roof Wine Run. (Supplied)

Jacyln Willms, owner of Niagara Fitness, said the event is one of the major fundraising efforts for Red Roof; a local organization that provides care to people, especially children, who have special needs.

It will also be a race, with medals awarded to the first three to complete the route, though participants are welcome to take things at a comfortable pace too.

Parking for the run will

be at Red Roof in the morning, and a shuttle will take racers to their route destination, so they will end up back at their vehicles and be able to drive home at their leisure, said Willms.

Shuttles start at 9:45 a.m. and runs every 30 minutes until 10:45 a.m.

Participants will also receive a "swag bag" with a running bib and some other souvenirs to take home.

The two-kilometre race

registration includes four people, one swag bag per registration and four lunches included after the race.

Thursday is the last day for early bird prices, available until midnight.

To register, or to leave a donation for Red Roof Retreat, visit events.runningroom.com/site/15676/red-roof-wine-run-2018/.

WHAT:

Annual Red Roof Wine Run

WHEN:

September 30. 11 a.m. (Shuttles start at 9:45 a.m.)

WHERE:

Parking at Red Roof Retreat in the morning. Run ends there as well.

Sailing club winding down after busy summer

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club is winding down its jib after another successful summer.

The club is a distinct group of its own within our greater community — and it would appear all paths in that group meet at or at least traverse that of Ed McIlroy.

McIlroy has seen a few things, having worked in the yards and offices of the club since 1982 — when he filled in for someone one spring, and never left. In his current iteration as manager — a post he has held for 25 years — he says he oversees everything. "On any given day, when that gate opens, you don't know what's going to happen."

For the most part it's the predictable day-to-day. With 225 members, there's the general bustle of boating. The Learn to Sail programs have been running successfully for decades now, as generations of locals can attest.

According to Donna Genge, Learn to Sail Director, this was a banner year. "We had five of the best sailing instructors you could ask for — all the kids were so happy and having so much fun! We had about fifty kids in lessons over the season. The Adult Sail program also very busy, very successful."

Genge also offers a Discover Sailing program, for folks who aren't so sure about the nautical life. "For a donation, we take people on a



Ed McIlroy has worked at the local sailing club since 1982. (Lauren O'Malley)

two-hour sail on a large-keel boat. They're given the opportunity to learn the basics of steering and tacking, and then they can decide whether or not they're interested in taking regular lessons. Oh, we have so much fun!"

You won't catch McIlroy out on a sail with Genge and her crew — or anyone else. The sailing club manager is a die-hard landlubber. "I don't sail and I don't boat," says the lively and bearded redhead. "Sailed three times. The third was with my boss at the time. He said, 'I'm your boss — you have to come.' I dared him to sail up close to the Jetboat docks, and I jumped off. Haven't sailed since."

Perhaps staying grounded gives McIlroy the perspective required to handle all of the

many aspects of managing this hub of some diversity.

There are the visitors seeking berths in the club (there are none available). There are the classes. The much-envied (by non-members) celebrations in the clubhouse. The hauling, and fixing, and rescuing (mainly of boats, broken down in the lake and in need of towing).

He likens the club to any community, saying there are many smaller pockets of people, social circles, special interest groups, each with their own agenda and issues. While there is the occasional small disagreement, overall the feeling is one of inclusiveness, of shared purpose.

Recently one group within the club hosted a Texas BBQ Fundraiser for the Learn to Sail program.

"Texas Don drives his smoker up every year from the Lone Star State for this fundraiser — he's married to member Janice Corvino's sister. The event has become a 'thing' for the group over at the A-frame," says McIlroy. "They had about 130 people on a Wednesday night — a race night. Smart of them to do it then."

Club members are loyal, and attrition is minimal. "With 180 usable docks, we have less than five percent turnover per year. And I'm always surprised by who announces they're leaving. These people just joined, painted their boat — and now they're out. These other people are frail — and staying."

There are shifts in the trends, notes McIlroy looking out of the window of his office onto the marina. "The race program is still doing well, although the numbers have shifted. In general there seems to be a veer toward larger boats, from racing to cruising."

Having said that, he also observes with some real admiration, "There are some enthusiastic young people coming back into racing, buying Sharks. There's a nice young group of competitive racers looking to host the World Championships here in 2021."

McIlroy's affable stories and observations could go on, but, as Genge puts it, that's the NOTL Sailing Club's 2018 season "in a nutshell."



PART 1

A little bit about me

I am fifth generation scion of this great municipality. I remember watching my grandfather Scoop McCarthy (former Town Works superintendent) shovel snow on Queen Street, and my mother, Liz Flynn helping the tennis club get started and leading Cub Scout troops in our basement. My Dad, Dave Flynn, is equally amazing — a retired firefighter and chief Fire prevention Officer from NOTL. In the winters, he would be out flooding ice rinks for all the children to enjoy, and setting up the sound system for the Christmas music we all enjoy downtown. The two of them inspired me to achieve many goals. In 1996, I was chosen as citizen of the year and received the Rotary Club Paul Harris Fellowship Award and Lions Club Melvin Jones fellowship award. Civically, I have been involved with the development of the Virgil Nature Trail, Shakespeare in the Vineyard and numerous Heart and Stroke Benefits, to name a few projects. This year marks my 35th year as a paramedic, now superintendent of Operations at Niagara EMS and 35 years as a volunteer firefighter. Being on a small town council, issues dealt with can, and do impact the lives of families, friends, and people you genuinely know and care for. This is a great challenge, One I have been honoured to be part of and have always accepted. I want to continue being there as the person working for and with you

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PHOTO:

Raising the flag for Terry Fox

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A glimpse into NOTL's Rezza Brothers



The Rezza Brothers. (Supplied photo)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

The Rezza Brothers have known screaming fans. While being driven in a limo to gigs where they performed for tens of thousands of people, they've heard giggling girls request their songs on the radio.

More recently, they've come to know the serenity of family life in Niagara-on-the-Lake. "We really love the life here. We go get ice cream with the kids and watch the sun set."

The path of this transition is long, winding, and littered with dropped names. Within fewer than six degrees of separation from Adrian (42) and Lucas (39) Rezza, you might find Drake, Simon Cowell, The Weeknd, Misha Brueggergosman, C-Lo Green, Eminem, Taylor Swift, Sam Roberts, and even actor James Gandolfini.

Like Gandolfini — famous for his tough-guy role in the television drama *The Sopranos* — these brothers play at a gangster lifestyle in their alter-ego life as 80 Empire (the name of their band, as well as their singer/song-writer/production team).

Their social media feeds and online presence are filled with sinister sunglasses, gangster hand signs and

headgear, and nasty sneers and pouts.

In direct contrast, the Rezza boys in person are gentle, engaging and have families. Their four children (two each, all between the ages of five and twelve), answer the door at Lucas' home in town.

The two young families moved to NOTL from Toronto in 2014, following their parents' move of 12 years prior.

"We just loved the pace, the small community — but with lots of arts and culture, very cosmopolitan. This felt like the place to raise our children," Adrian said.

"One evening I posted on Instagram, 'A great walk after a great night in NOTL. I could live here,'" said Lucas.

"Out of the blue, six weeks later, we put an offer on the house."

When he saw the listing, he sold his wife Mui on the move by saying, "We can actually have trees honey."

In the time they've been here the Rezzas have grown more than roots — they've sprouted big dreams. For themselves, for their clients, and for the town.

"NOTL is more than the place we go to sleep at night. We want to grow old here. We want to say that we helped to build a scene here."

The Rezzas were signed to

a major record label in 2000, and have recorded since then as the Syndicate Boys, the Syndicate of Sound, the Rezza Dons (TRD), the Rezza Brothers, and now, 80 Empire. Their current oeuvre also includes their own indie recording label, Gladiator Records.

"We chose the Gladiator name for our Italian roots. Gladiators were slaves fighting hard for their freedom — we're fighting for our own financial and artistic freedom. We're David against the Goliath of the major recording studios."

They are writers (with a publishing deal with Universal Records), producers, musicians and mentors. Their recent endeavours include co-writing and co-producing the theme song for the television series *The Real Housewives of Miami*, as well as producing a song for an indie film, and scoring the complete soundtrack for another television series.

Lucas has installed a full recording studio in the basement of his unassuming Old Town home — a fact which even the next door neighbours did not know. In this subterranean suite of cool, the brothers record themselves and a variety of clients.

There are roles: Adrian is Sir Analogue, with a pas-

sion for all things vintage. Lucas is Sir Digital, a Star Wars and sci-fi geek, the man behind the monitors — and keyboards. "Adrian was always the voice — I was always the pianist. I went to York University to study jazz, but after my first year became, according to them, too experimental. So I switched focus, and got a degree in digital recording and mixing." Paving that path for 80 Empire and Gladiator Records.

The latter now represents several young talents, including up-and-coming artists Heather Russell (once part of Simon Cowell's stable), Brazilian singer Julianna, and performer Taveeta, known for her role on the Canadian teen drama series *The Next Step*.

The Rezzas co-write and co-produce music for these artists, record, mix and master everything in their studio, and then head out into Niagara to create videos for the songs.

They've used the town as an inspiration and backdrop for a number of music videos, one featuring Taveeta, Shaw actor James Daly, and American actor Robert Funaro (of *The Sopranos*, *Vinyl*, and *Law & Order*).

"We flew him up from Jersey for the video — filmed it

in the bar at the Old Winery Restaurant." Also in this video is local Leo Medici — who couldn't have known when he parked his 1970 pink Cadillac at ValuMart on Queen St his life would take an interesting turn.

"I saw the car and knew it needed to be in our video. I waited in the parking lot until Leo came out, and I asked him if he wanted to be in a video," says Adrian, typically energetic and excited. They love to improvise and spontaneously add local colour.

Another video was filmed at the Niagara airport, where the Rezzas convinced a helicopter pilot to allow them to film his landing and add it to their oeuvre. Other local film sets include the Exchange Brewery, and Fort George.

Not only do they see the town as a set, even as a character in itself — they also see it as a future super-power in the music industry. "We want people to look to NOTL like [famous sound studio] Muscle Shoals, or Stax Records, or Toronto's current world-leader hip-hop and R&B scene. Why can't we build something here where years from now they're doing a documentary on NOTL and the Gladiator sound?"

Niagara-on-the-Lake is also home. "I'm a Niagara person for life. The schools are nice,

there's a sense of community. Our kids are growing up with a sense of history — Black Loyalists, Indigenous history — it's all here."

Back in the 'real world,' Adrian drops the Pharrell Williams hat and commutes to Toronto daily for his work as a high school teacher, and Lucas loses the mirrored aviators and travels Niagara as District Manager for Yamaha Music. Of course they're fathers and husbands too. And children themselves.

"Everything we've become, everything we do, is thanks to our amazing parents. They are our greatest influences.

They took us to see every Motown and hip-hop band that played in Toronto while we were growing up. We would go shopping with them for eclectic music: calypso, African, reggae, funk, motion, hip hip, all of it. They exposed us to everything, and supported us all the way."

In fact, the greatest arbiter of taste in their 'empire' is Gangsta P — their mother, Patricia. "We run everything by her because she really listens, and she's truthful."

Gangsta P is helping Sir A and Sir D build quite a legacy.

"Art lives forever. We're going to die, but our art will live on. Our grandkids can say, 'These guys really tried, they really were gladiators.'"

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Ford's buck-a-beer not really affecting local brewers



Robin Ridesic, Founder and CEO of The Exchange Brewery. (Lauren O'Malley)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

It's no secret our local micro-breweries are an important part of our community and economy — so what is their perspective on the provincial government's buck-a-beer challenge?

Says Chris Pontsioen, co-founder of Silversmith Brewing, "What can I tell you about buck-a-beer? It's kind of a complicated thing for us."

"We make a premium product — all craft breweries do. We're focused on quality, not pricing," he says. Microbreweries are not in the business of bargains, discounts, or compromises. They are, however, in the business of forging change.

"I am happy to see the pro-

vincial government trying new things. I'm hoping this will lead to interesting dialogue regarding the reduction of taxes — which are very significant, and contribute to our costs."

Pontsioen optimistically sees this as an opportunity to open doors and create dialogue. "It would be interesting for the government to engage in a conversation about production taxes."

Robin Ridesic, Founder and CEO of The Exchange Brewery, shares this perspective. "Microbreweries pay several different provincial taxes, including basic beer tax, environmental tax, and volume tax. Of course we also pay taxes on hydro and water, which are huge expenses for the brewing industry, and are

also controlled by the province. Our other major expense is wages, which are also determined provincially."

There are further taxes around draft or non-draft beer, industry standard bottles or alternatives, and regarding outlets and distribution.

"We would love to see the taxation process simplified," says Ridesic. "One thing I hope comes from the buck-a-beer challenge is a conversation with the provincial government to work with us to get input costs down, so we can better control the final sale price."

Overall, Ridesic believes the buck-a-beer idea has merit: "This program in concept is a great idea — lower prices are always good. But it's not a realistic option for craft breweries because production is more expensive. I would have thought only super-huge multinationals would participate in something like this, like Coors, or Bud Light for example. I checked the prices of those last week just for reference, and a 6-pack of small cans of Bud Light was at a special sale price of \$2 per can. I'm not sure which breweries this program is really for."

Pontsioen has a slightly different perspective on the cheap beer philosophy: "I was surprised by the move in that one of the LCBO's main pillars

is social responsibility, and so many rules are in place to maintain this. This proposal seems to contradict that fundamental idea."

Some Ontario microbreweries have turned the buck-a-beer idea on its foamy head, and introduced initiatives that donate one dollar per beer to social causes, such as support for refugees in Ottawa. Of this, Pontsioen says, "Buck-a-beer isn't a social program. We don't feel the need to counter it with a more productive social program."

Ridesic sees the alternative initiatives a little differently. "It's nice to see brewers step up, do something a bit tongue-in-cheek but fun and good for everyone." The Exchange doesn't have any immediate plans for similar offers.

"Buck a beer is a political platform," says Pontsioen. "The hope was that breweries would go along with it and they don't seem to have done so. It will be interesting to see what happens next."

He continues, "Craft brewers make 7-8% of the product [in the province] and we have 75% of the jobs in the industry. It's the fastest-growing industry in Ontario." So it would seem there should be much motivation for the province to come to the table for a sip and a chat.

Cont'd: Terry Fox Run celebrating 600K milestone in NOTL

Penny Coles
Staff

There is a barbecue put on by the Niagara-on-the-Lake - Lewiston Rotary Club, says King, pizza is donated from Sandtrap Pub and Grill and ice cream from Cows, all served up the day of the run in Simcoe Park.

At the run site, fruit is donated from Walkers and Tim Hortons donates coffee and goodies, water is provided from A1 Flooring and Valu-Mart. Shirts are sold the day of the run for \$20 but can be purchased ahead of time.

Other events are organized to add to the funds raised: there will be a movie night Friday, Sept. 7 at the Outlet Mall at Glendale. Food and wine will be served and all proceeds will go to support Terry Fox.

A Tunes for Terry trivia night will be held Friday, Sept. 14, and on Sept. 15, students who need volunteer hours will be out at the two

Valu-marts and Avondales in the Old Town and Virgil collecting money for the Terry Fox Foundation for cancer research, said King.

Individuals and businesses can form their teams and raise money as well. Joe and Mike Pillitteri have formed the team Pillsy and are perfect examples of what you can do to raise money, said King - they organize a car wash and bake sale, a lemonade stand, and a comedy and music night.

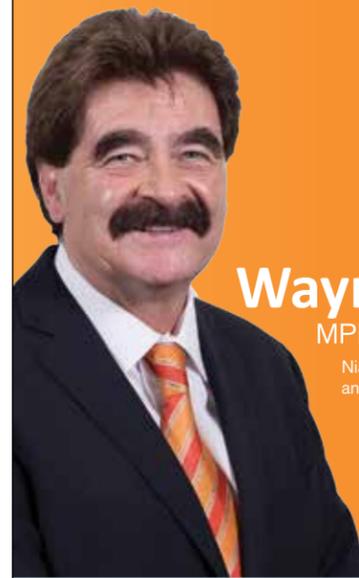
"Terry turned misfortune into a journey that brought a nation together. Terry brought out the best in us... compassion, togetherness and generosity. He inspired community. He passed the torch to us and his wish was to keep the Marathon of Hope alive," said King.

"What he did was solely for the benefit of others. He represents the human values we most admire, courage and determination. He is a Canadian hero embraced by the whole world."



Terry Fox. (Supplied)

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PHOTO: Mahjong fun



From left, Helmi, Margie, Faye, Judy and Jenny play Mahjong at the community centre cafe.



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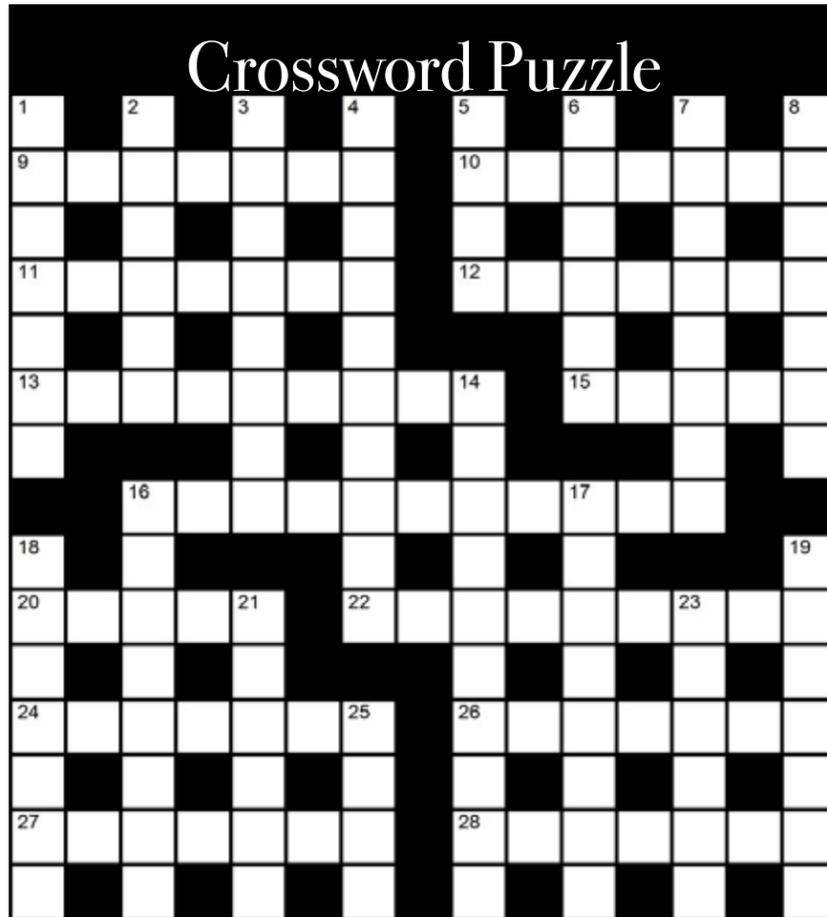
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Across

- 9 Hair cleaner (7)
- 10 German measles (7)
- 11 Chatter (7)
- 12 Anxious (7)
- 13 Emphasize (9)
- 15 Astonish (5)
- 16 Decent (11)
- 20 First prime minister of India (5)
- 22 Chinese revolutionary leader (3,3-3)
- 24 Type of chair (7)
- 26 Poorly matched (7)
- 27 Demolish (7)
- 28 Cooking vessel (7)

Down

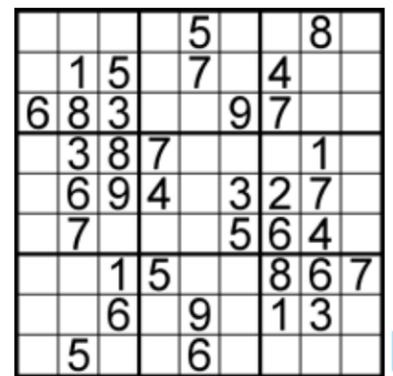
- 1 Sterile (7)
- 2 Largest desert (6)
- 3 On an upper floor (8)
- 4 Depression from lack of company (10)
- 5 Make beer or ale (4)
- 6 Spain and Portugal (6)
- 7 Last (8)
- 8 Walked like a duck (7)
- 14 Put out (10)
- 16 Practise (8)
- 17 Wrist band (8)
- 18 Indefinite person (7)
- 19 Fishermen (7)
- 21 Yet to arrive (6)
- 23 Squalid (6)
- 25 Supporting ropes (4)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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



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FEATURES

Nature's Lens: Treating the Great Lakes as such



Owen Bjorgan
Biophilic World
Featured



Lake Ontario at dusk. (Supplied photo)

I remember picking up a good friend of mine at the airport in Toronto.

The Australian and I exchanged some laughs and stories and then he suddenly whipped his head to look out the window.

"That's fresh water?" he asked, stunned by the never ending abyss that is Lake Ontario.

As most of you know, the view from the top of the Burlington Skyway can offer two profound thoughts — the Great Lakes are truly great; and we generally don't treat them so great.

Enter Sustain Our Great Lakes, a federally funded program about to inject \$6.6 million into 25 different environmental projects.

They see it as a win-win, because organizations like this understand the value of healthy ecosystems and their relationship with human life.

Some of Canada's rarest habitat and wildlife communities will benefit, and so will our water quality in this effort spanning across

Ontario and select Great Lake States.

The projects are aimed at wetland restoration, improved fish passageways, invasive species control, and ecosystem services such as water filtration and flood control.

The proposed statistics are impressive, including a goal to prevent more than 33,000 pounds of nitrogen and 8,000 pounds of phosphorous from entering freshwater ecosystems annually.

Algae thrives on nitrogen and phosphorus, creating explosive blooms in your backyard pond or even a third of Lake Erie at times.

This overwhelming plant growth deoxygenates the water and blocks sunlight, damaging the species richness. It also makes our swimming water totally repugnant.

Another noteworthy stat is the restoration of 72 miles of stream and riparian habitat. This just means "river side" habitat, such as wetland areas, forested banks, and natural floodplains. Maintaining, and in this case adding habitat along creeks and rivers flowing into Lake Ontario ensures that less sediment is eroded away, pollutants can be filtered more effectively, and we provide a bonus wildlife corridor for native species to travel around. I always thought this would be especially applicable for 2, 4, and 8 Mile Creek in NOTL, as the majority of these watersheds' courses are essentially ditches running through farmland, featuring very little structural or biological complexity.

We know that living in Canada's most densely

populated area puts immense environmental stressors on the Great Lakes. I remember feeling frustrated, as I dragged along the screen on Google Maps in an attempt to find areas of natural shoreline between NOTL and Toronto. There is literally almost none along that stretch. I suppose the frustration stems from wishful thinking, where previous decision makers over generations would have seen the value to leave natural ecosystems in tact.

My Tedx Talk, which can be searched YouTube called "The Biophilic World," homed in on a point of what drives people to be inspired (or care less) about the health of the environment, including the Great Lakes. For some, we see inherent value in the wetlands, unique birds, and clean water of the region. For others, they may be asking, "Well, what's in it for me? Why should I care about a shoreline swamp, or a blue spotted salamander?" (P.s. we have these salamanders near downtown NOTL).

Resorting 1,400 acres of wetland, installing 180,000 sq ft of green stormwater technology, and reopening 103 miles of fish passageways is only the start. These initiatives aren't just for tree huggers and wildlife enthusiasts — they are here to help everyone including ourselves. So yes, my Aussie friend, that is the almighty Lake Ontario, an oasis of fresh water that is ours to protect.

bjorganowen@gmail.com

Nostalgia in our trees



Alison Stewart
Grow Niagara
Featured



we simply take for granted. They are tied to our memories, to our lives and our livelihoods.

There are many who have planted trees in commemoration of a loved one, or indeed for the celebration of the birth of a child or the festivities of a wedding. Planting a tree in celebration of a wedding or the birth of a child allows individuals to watch as the tree develops and grows, much like the relationship or the child. Cherishing the changes, as it toughens, it spreads its roots and branches, reaching new heights and maturity, just like child or relationship.

Looking back to our childhoods, swinging from a rope tied over a body of water, as you tried to build up the courage to let go, or perhaps you weren't strong enough to hang

on and simply dropped to the water below. The tire swing, or the wooden board tied on either side to make a seated swing, a rope with knots in it — trees are simply built into our psyche.

It's not only recreational memories that are created, those who work on farms toil and sweat picking fruit, manicuring trees, tending to and caring for their livelihood. They have struggled through drought, flood, pestilence and frost. They have laboured to bring the best of their trees to our homes and provided our families with sweetness and nutrition. Trees are these farmer's everything.

Were it not for the tree we would not have the number of migrant workers who join us annually, coming to

Canada to make money for their families in other countries. They work tirelessly in partnership with our local farmers to help maintain and collect our local fruits. So to our farmers and their workers, I say thank you.

So the next time you are driving into Niagara-on-the-Lake, or for that matter, out of it, take a look at all of the trees on your travels. What stories could they tell if they could talk? How many of them saw the War of 1812? Were they buried in the Great Blizzard of 1977? Are the trees labouring to provide us with sustenance, or do they sway majestically in the breeze providing us with much needed shade? Are they ornamental in nature, providing us with a burst of colour and interest in our beautiful landscape here in NOTL? However the trees impact our vistas, take note of them, appreciate them and wonder at their splendor, their resilience, and marvel at the silent impact they have on our everyday lives.

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Time Capsule: The Commons

The Military Reserve, better known in the community as The Commons, has seen history unfold on the land for more than 200 years. With the start of the Great War in 1914, it became a training camp for over 14,000 soldiers of the 2nd Division of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Thousands of soldiers who fought and died at Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele and the many terrible battles of the Great War trained here.

In 1917, Butler's Barracks became Camp Kosciuszko, the winterized training camp for the Polish Army. Butler's Barracks, known as Camp Niagara in the 20th century, reached its greatest development during World War II when buildings, tents, parade grounds, streets and other necessary facilities covered much of the Commons. Camp Niagara was active until the 1960s.

Soldiers who trained here served in the Boer War, World War I and World War II, in the Korean Conflict, and in peacekeeping efforts of the 20th century. When the soldiers were camped on these lands, polo was one of the leisure sports in which they participated on the parade square.

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The Queen's Royal Hotel



Denise Ascenzo
Featured

In the 1860s, the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake suffered an economic blow when the county decided to relocate all legal proceedings to the Courthouse in St. Catharines. The new courthouse laid empty, jobs were lost, shops closed and people moved away looking for better opportunities for their families.

However, with money from the county as compensation for the loss of the courthouse business, town council built a world class hotel — The Royal Niagara which opened in 1869 — at King and Front Streets on the shore of the Niagara River. It was recognized as one of the finest hotels in North America and later changed its name to The Queen's Royal Hotel.

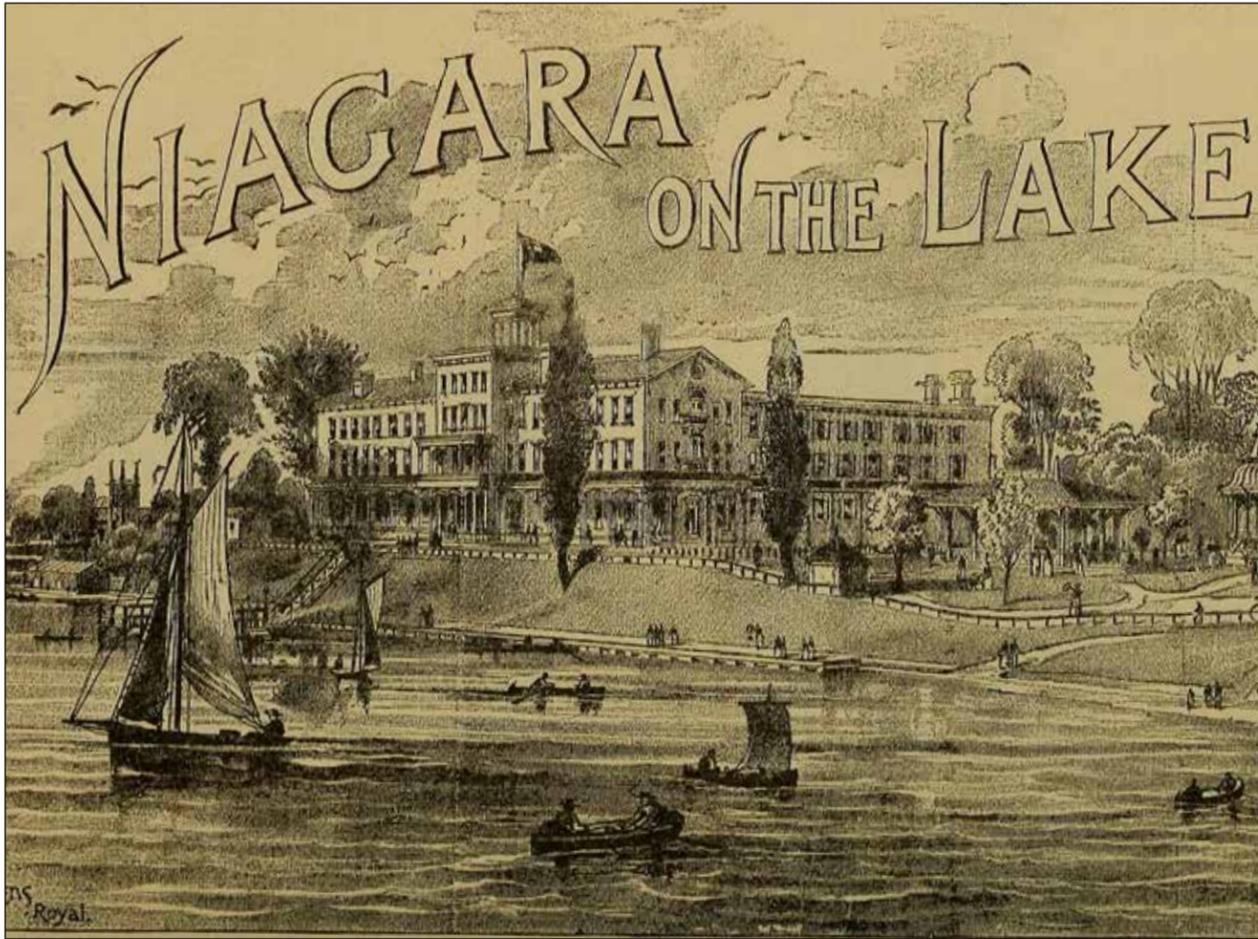
The hotel was first-class, becoming the destination of the very wealthy seeking the peace and tranquility of life in a small town. With it came the jobs the town's people desperately needed. Young men were hired as bell boys, waiters, gardeners, dock workers, and kitchen workers, while young women became parlour maids, ladies maids and housekeepers.

The hotel also brought other work with it. The hotel's laundry was sent out to Irish Town (near King and Pafford Streets) to the laundry maids, farmers were kept busy with supplying fresh produce, livery stables were bustling and small businesses in town once again flourished.

An advertisement from 1893 for the hotel stated, "The rooms of the Queen's Royal Hotel are high and well ventilated, the corridors, parlours and drawing-rooms are spacious (and) handsomely furnished. In the evening the whole is lit up by electricity."

A flight of steps off the main veranda of the hotel lead down to the private dock, where one could find little pleasure steamers for hire. Also located just a short walk from the hotel was the anchorage of the Royal Canadian Yacht club, the largest on fresh waters.

After 1900, visitors arriving by boat would have been very impressed when



An advertisement for the Queen's Royal Hotel. (Supplied)



Queen's Royal Hotel, unknown date. (Supplied)

the hotel came into sight — a magnificent four-storey building, white with green shutters and trim, dominating the Niagara River bank.

Wide verandas afforded the hotel guests with a lovely breezy afternoon as they sat in rocking chairs gazing upon the Niagara River flowing out into Lake Ontario.

The hotel was also host to the World Tennis Tournament. In 1907, the Toronto "Saturday Night" wrote, "The tennis prospects of 1907 look exceedingly bright.

The year 1906 was one of the best Canada has ever enjoyed and has paved the way for a still brighter year to follow." (Hmmm sounds like the same words we use each year for the Toronto Maple Leafs)

Later the tournament became the "Championship of Canada" with players coming from Europe and the United States to play on the courts of the Queen's Royal Hotel at the end of August each year. The tennis courts were located parallel to Front St., between Regent and King

Streets. Today it is a parking lot for tourists.

The hotel also boasted a lawn bowling club, a casino and a pathway along the river to the Mississauga Links, now the Niagara Golf Club, which has the distinction of being the oldest operating golf course in North America.

A most notable guest of the Queen's Royal Hotel was the Duke of York, later King George the V, who decided to spend some quiet time while on a tour of Canada in 1901.

The royal entourage arrived by private yacht from Toronto to the docks right in front of the hotel.

There is a picture of the Royal Party, taken on the veranda of the hotel, hanging in the NOTL museum. Not a cheerful looking group as it is rumoured that upon their arrival, they had to wait outside for some time due to a gas leak. As one can imagine, they were not impressed.

While the royal entourage was in town, they used the livery service of Mike Greene, whose business was located on King St. (now the Grill on King). Green provided a carriage and four white horses for the royal guests. Years later the carriage was purchased by the Niagara Foundation, carefully restored and is only used for special occasions.

In later years, the hotel was also the place to be for social gatherings. In 1910, when the annual military encampment of over 10,000 soldiers was in full swing, the hotel hosted a succession of dances and balls in the casino. The presence of Sir John French, who was commander of the British forces in France during the first years of World War One and who later became the Earl of Ypres, was a great draw for the very affluent of society.

The Toronto "Mail and

Empire" wrote in their social column, of the guests from the United States, England and the Continent in attendance at some of the military balls. They wrote glowing descriptions of the women in their lovely ball gowns as well as the young ladies dressed in pale blue satin gowns, white princess gowns and dainty white frocks.

These were the most glorious days of the hotel when three daily trains arrived at the docks to pick up the passengers from the four daily steamers that crossed Lake Ontario.

Unfortunately, after the First World War, the economy shifted and the importance of the hotel diminished. The private automobile became more fashionable and people were now able to travel to other destinations for their holidays.

In 1927, the Queen's Royal Hotel was slowly closed down with the dismantling of many of the room's furnishings. The last of the items from the hotel were auctioned off in 1935. All manner of items from outside shutters, window frames, doors, tables, chairs right down to the dishes were sold. Many a home in NOTL today might have remnants or furnishings from this magnificent hotel.

Years later town council decided this site should become a place for all people to enjoy. Today we have the lovely Queen's Royal Park at King and Front Streets. The gazebo is a major draw for tourists and the views from it include Fort Niagara across the river in the United States and on a clear day, Toronto across Lake Ontario.

To learn more about the topic of this story you can visit the [Niagara Historical Society & Museum website](http://www.niagarahistorical.com) at, www.niagarahistorical.com, or visit the museum for yourself.

The [Niagara Historical Museum](http://www.niagarahistorical.com) is located at 43 Castlereagh St. in Old Town, in Memorial Hall.

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

Denise is a regular [Niagara Now](http://www.niaganow.com) contributor. Her full profile can be found at [niaganow.com](http://www.niaganow.com).



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COMMUNITY

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



Ravine Vineyards named one of Top 50 family restaurants in Canada

Richard Harley
Editor

Based on 550,000 OpenTable reviews between June 1, 2017 and May 31, 2018, the company has named Ravine Vineyard Winery Restaurant as one of the Top 50 kid-friendly dining places in Canada.

OpenTable, which claims to be the world's leading provider of online restaurant reservations, announced the list of restaurants Aug. 21 to help those heading out on last-minute summer vacations during the last few weeks of summer.

"Eating out with children exposes them to foods they may not otherwise get at home and helps families connect and socialize, but parents often don't know where to go," said Danielle Binns, a Toronto nutritionist who specializes in picky eating.

"It's easy to fall into a routine of meals at home and for parents and kids to be distracted. Going out as a family allows families to focus while teaching kids how to be more flexible around what they eat."

"We view restaurant din-



Supplied photo

ing as an opportunity for families to bond over delicious food in an engaging atmosphere," said Caroline Potter, a chief officer at OpenTable.

"We are excited to connect people who enjoy going to restaurants that strive to accommodate all members of their party, regardless of age. These family dining options encourage togetherness and new food experiences."

Restaurants featured on the list include Toronto's Piano Piano, which offers a curated kids menu specially designed by Binns and Chef

Victor Barry, and Vancouver's Gyu-Kaku, that offers Japanese family-style dining and sharing plates.

These restaurants, among others on this year's list, offer variety and variations of foods that appeal to all members of the family.

All restaurants with a minimum "overall" score and number of qualifying reviews were included for consideration. Qualifying restaurants were then sorted according to a score calculated from each restaurant's average rating in the "kid friendly" category.

Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition postponed

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Maybe the War of the Worlds wasn't the best theme to choose for the fifth annual Great Canadian Steampunk Exposition — it seems to have been predictive.

A kind of war broke out between dreams and realities.

While the all-volunteer team planned an experience to remember to be held at Fort George on September 21 to 23, they couldn't have anticipated the sudden and urgent needs that would be imposed on each of them by their families.

Susan Spencer, chair of the event, said "unfortunately over the last six months, one after another of our team has had major family issues arise and take us away from the project. We just weren't confident we could produce the level of quality our loyal followers have come to expect, and the last thing we wanted to do was give them a less than stellar experience."

"It was pedal to the metal on the event. And pedal to the metal on the family end. You just run out of feet," she said.

"Making the decision to postpone the event was truly gut-wrenching — but the steampunk community and the local community have all pulled together and said, 'Hey, do what you need for your families and yourselves. We can wait.'"

Spencer hopes the wait won't be too long — the intention is to reinstate the Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition at Fort George as

soon as humanly possible.

"The site just has so much oomph to it, so much history and spectacle. And our patrons say, 'The town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is the most steampunk place on Earth. You've got to keep the event here.'"

Steampunk is an artistic style that draws from the past, present and future. NOTL definitely fits the bill. Previous versions of the occasion have brought more than 1,000 patrons to the fort, along with dozens of vendors, performers and specialty acts.

Spencer and her team had secured the majority of the artisans and entertainers for this year's happening, and were upset to have to tell them about the postponement.

The entertainment and vendors were the "hardest people to tell" they needed to cancel the event, Spencer said.

They put so much into preparing for this kind of thing."

Spencer knows this first hand, having been a vendor herself for many years.

"I was one of those crazy people following reenactors around, selling them period pieces."

She once owned a shop called Spenser's Mercantile that specialized in historical goods, 1812 costumes and other pieces, which she had taken to Fort George a number of times. The shop had a teaching component to it too, featuring workshops and classes.

The steampunk part of the story was accidental, she said.

"I was researching World

War I for my shop, and working out prototypes for pieces. But if they're not absolutely perfect, reenactors won't touch them. A friend said, 'You know, steampunk people would love these imperfect pieces — they don't care about historical accuracy, they're just going to play with everything and make it their own anyway.'"

So, Toronto-based Spencer attended a steampunk convention in Arizona to do some research.

"I arrived there and saw the skills they bring in artistry, engineering, seamstressing, creativity, and said, 'These are my people.'"

It's not surprising, Spencer being a self-professed history geek from a family of engineers, chemists and scientists. "I love the community, the way they behave and treat each other. Steampunk is a very special community. Very gentlemanly, very courtly and respectful."

Typical, then, that 'her people' would be so supportive and understanding regarding the postponement of one of the largest events of its kind in North America. "All without exception have said 'family first.'"

The Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition will return to "the most steampunk place on Earth" as soon as all of the players can make it happen. In the meantime Spencer says, "I would like to thank everyone for their support and understanding. It's so heartwarming. I'm truly touched."

SCENE OF THE WEEK



Residents are encouraged to submit photos and videos to this section for consideration — it could be your garden, could be your pet, or a beautiful sky — or it could be something as simple and small as an ant trying to pull something ten times its size. Whatever it is, email it in for a chance to be featured. This week's feature was submitted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake sailing club.



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms:
Jackson Triggs Winery

Jackson Triggs is on Stone Road as you drive into NOTL. The winery is a striking facility and a garden of fresh vegetables and herbs greet your senses at the front door even before you taste and smell the award winning wines. After perusing several beautiful tasting rooms, helpful staff directed us toward the restrooms. They're large, with stunning stone trough sinks that add to the unique modern vibe of the winery. The bathrooms are cleaned hourly and this is evident in midday cleanliness. There are no tricks at Triggs. We awarded four Gold Plungers.

4/5 Gold Plungers



JOKE OF THE WEEK

"Never get drunk and play with an Ouija board ... It's not good to mix spirits ... Have a couple beers instead, that's a happy medium."

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



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Farm-hers of NOTL: Kim McQuhae



Kim McQuhae with Echo the Bull. (Richard Harley)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

At 16, Kim McQuhae left a note for her parents: "Skipping school today, going out to buy a horse."

And that's what she did. Using money she'd saved from scooping ice cream at Taylor's Bakery and Ice Cream, she went to a horse auction in Stouffville and picked out a nice gentle pony — but then accidentally bid on a four-year-old Arab thoroughbred instead.

As any 16-year-old with a new horse would, she brought him home and put him in the family garage between her parents' two cars. In the morning she heard her mother getting ready for work. She recalls the moment she opened the garage door.

"She calls up, 'Kim, what's in the garage?' I tell her it's a horse."

Her mother surprisingly wasn't too bothered. She asked if it would bite her, and when McQuhae replied with "I don't think so," she just asked her to move him.

"I put him in the shed, and my mother just went to work, no further comment."

When my father came home from a business trip and found the horse in the

shed, he just said, 'Oh, that's nice,' McQuhae said. "I should have put the horse in the living room."

That horse — Rusty — went on to be one of McQuhae's greatest loves.

"We were each other's world — I would just get up and ride him everywhere. I even rode him to NDSS to pick up my report card — he knocked on the window with his hoof while I was inside. He lived until he was 26. His nickname was Captain Chaos."

Shortly after she acquired Rusty, McQuhae's parents moved to Europe.

She stayed in Niagara to care for her steed.

"Who knows what might have happened if it weren't for Rusty? I could have had a very different kind of life," she said.

Like that horse, every animal that joins McQuhae at her farm has a story, one that she is happy to tell in her excited, engaging way.

For example, Elsa the Highland cow was born in a lean-to during a January snowstorm. Her young mother didn't bond to the calf, so the baby wandered out into the snow.

Luckily for the calf, McQuhae's friend Fred Sentineal

happened to drive by and see it freezing in the snow, legs up in the air, and attempted a rescue.

He and another friend brought the calf inside and warmed her with hairdryers until she revived.

"We named her Elsa — because she was frozen," quips McQuhae, referring to a character in the Disney movie *Frozen*.

McQuhae chose to raise and breed Highland cattle "because they're so cute."

She saw some of the long-banded, long-horned shaggy beasts in a magazine, and fell for them, she said.

Shortly after that — during a visit with her parents in England — she saw the cattle everywhere. She took that as a sign.

On her return she did some research and found a breeder in Ontario. She visited the farm and fell for a white calf — who sadly wasn't for sale.

On a return visit not long after, the farmers had changed their minds, and were selling the white cow with whom McQuhae had been so smitten.

"When I told them I couldn't afford to buy it at the moment, they said, 'That's okay, just pay us when you can.' That's when I realized

that cattle people are the coolest, best, most honest people in the world."

Incidentally that cow, named Faith, went on to give birth to Bucky, McQuhae's prize-winning bull who is the model for the labels on all of her products.

McQuhae strides around the farm with a Sullivan comb in hand, grooming the cattle as she goes.

Each of the animals answers to their name when she calls them, and comes running for the attention and affection she offers.

While initially reluctant to compete in cattle shows, she now has a wall of ribbons and an almost unbeatable reputation. Her favourite bull, the aforementioned Bucky, took two championship titles in the two years he competed.

Given her full-time job as a cable technician, and two part-time jobs as a server at local restaurants, her 10-acre farm is more of a hobby — though with 75 laying hens, eight cows, three horses, and a pot-bellied pig named Wilbur, it's a full-time hobby.

McQuhae seems to have the ability to unfold time and squeeze ten extra hours into every day — not only does she work all those jobs, single-handedly care for her

livestock and manage her crops (hay, fruit trees, and an ample kitchen garden), she also makes award-winning jams. "Jams are where I make my money. Cattle are what I pour my money into."

"One day I had this notion to enter the Royal Winter Fair with my jams. My first championship was in 2007, with lime-ginger-water-chestnut marmalade. Which I actually dreamed about. I won Champion Marmalade. I thought, 'That was kinda fun.' So I kept doing it," McQuhae said. "In 2017 I won premier exhibitor — the most points over all. That was a big year — champion in four categories."

Her diverse careers were put on hold earlier this year when she was sidelined by a riding injury on her farm.

"I was riding Brandy in the field and she threw me. I realized I had an issue when I couldn't stand up. I called my boyfriend and said, 'Put me back up on the horse — we need to go by the dog again to make sure she doesn't spook this time.' I wound up in emerge three days later diagnosed with a broken L1 (vertebra)."

Most of McQuhae's stories end with, "I just fell in love, and so I brought the [calf,

miniature goat, rooster, Fjord-Arab cross miniature horse] back to the farm."

Other stories close with lines like, "I went out for coffee and a donut and came back with a horse."

Rescues are abound at Gryphon Ridge, including cats and dogs and the aforementioned pot-bellied pig.

There is also currently a young chicken on the farm who McQuhae thinks is convinced it's a dog — it's terrified of other chickens, she said, and it goes on regular strolls with her dog Jethro, Wilbur the pig and Kansas City Kitty the cat.

McQuhae said she chose the name Gryphon Ridge because of a pitbull she once had named Gryphon.

You can find McQuhae at the Farmers Market at the Village for the remainder of the season, and then at markets in Hamilton and Milton over the winter. The farm also has a Facebook page.

You can support our local farm-hers by visiting them at farmers markets, purchasing their local products and following them on social media.

This concludes the first series of our Farm-hers stories. Know of a local farm-her that should be featured? Send us an email.

News that

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