



The Lake Report

Vol. 1, Issue 9

September 20, 2018

Niagara-on-the-Lake

Community pulls together after house fire



A pile of items left for a family whose house just burned down in Virgil. (Richard Harley)

Richard Harley
Editor

Rachel Spiewak and her boyfriend Jay didn't know when they climbed into bed Saturday night that it would be the last time they'd ever sleep in it.

Sometime around 1:30 a.m. on Sunday Sept. 16, a fire broke out in the garage of their Virgil home while they slept. The flames ate through the walls, collapsing the lives they'd built with loud bangs.

If it wasn't for their dog Tucker starting to bark wildly, Spiewak doesn't know what might have been the outcome for her, Jay and their two children who were in the house.

"I heard a bang, and Tucker was growling at things ... I was like 'shh, don't wake the baby,' and then I think five to ten minutes later maybe I heard real big bang and Tucker was losing it. He was barking, growling, pacing around the room, up on the bed. So I woke up Jay. I'm like 'Jay something's wrong, you need to get up and see what's going on.'"

Jay opened the bedroom door and the room "lit up bright," Spiewak said.

"(He's) like, 'the house is on fire, you need to get the baby out.'"

By then the fire had consumed their garage, spread to the vehicles in the driveway and was coming into the house — all without a smoke alarm going off. The fire wasn't breathing smoke into the house yet.

The next few minutes were a whirlwind as the couple ran for the children (luckily two of them weren't home) and scrambled to get out.

"There were people out in the street already, yelling 'get out of that house! Get out of that house!'" Spiewak said.

"By the time it lit up and got into the house, it was just an inferno."

Luckily the entire family made it out, along with Tucker.

After finding some clothes to wear, Spiewak watched from a neighbour's house as almost everything they had was reduced to ashes — clothes, cribs, childhood photos, cherished items, school work; it all went up in flames, despite the best efforts of firefighters from all five of Niagara-on-the-Lake's departments, who miraculously managed to stop the fire from completely destroying the neighbouring residences.

Later that morning another fire started within the town, and is still burning strong — only this fire's fuel is compassion.

Local residents have banded together to help the family recover from the tragedy. The support has been pouring in, said Spiewak, during a sit down with a reporter and some of her close friends on Tuesday.

For someone whose life was just turned upside down, Spiewak has a forward-looking attitude, largely due to the outpouring of support offered by a long list of community members. There are many people she's grateful to.

The McShane family has offered out one of their furnished rental homes to the family while they figure out the next steps. And even though the house is supposed to be animal-free ...

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CROSSROADS MEDICAL CENTRE APPROVED

Penny Coles
Staff

Despite being unable to solve traffic problems plaguing the neighbourhood around the site of a new medical centre, councillors voted Monday at their last meeting of the current term to rezone the property and allow the project to go ahead.

Council also handed over responsibility for site plan approval, which covers many of the details of the building, parking lot and landscaping, to the Town's planning director so the developer won't have to delay construction waiting for the site plan to come back to the new council for approval.

Last fall, 10 Niagara-on-the-Lake family doctors from the Niagara North Family Health Team announced they had chosen Lloyd Redekopp's property beside Crossroads Public School for their new 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 will bring all the NOTL doctors under the same roof, the project will include 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 could move ahead, the property required rezoning and Official Plan amendments to allow for commercial use, instead of residential.

A majority of councillors voted last month to defer their

decision as they struggled with the need for safety measures at the busy intersection at Line 2 and Niagara Stone Road. They were also concerned about the problems of residents living on Henry and Andres Streets and Line 2, who are already dealing with increased traffic and cars parked on side streets in the area, and they had hoped a meeting with regional and town representatives and the property owner might find a solution that would make them comfortable with the rezoning.

They learned Monday the Region has said a flat-out no to traffic lights or a crosswalk on Niagara Stone Road, which is a regional responsibility, so although the Town and Redekopp have agreed to put some money behind fixing traffic concerns, councillors heard those particular solutions aren't going to happen.

Lawyer Tom Hanranhan, representing Redekopp, told council the developer was willing to put aside \$75,000 for a traffic light if the Region had allowed one on Niagara Stone Road at Line 2, but a Regional traffic count and a traffic impact study initiated by Redekopp and confirmed by a Town-initiated peer review indicated numbers don't warrant one.

Since councillors agreed it is unlikely the Region will reverse its decision, they asked as a condition of rezoning approval that the \$75,000 be secured for two years, for any traffic-calming measures that might help the neighbourhood.

Coun. Martin Mazza continued his opposition to the Official Plan and rezoning amendments of the residential property, stating there is sufficient com-

mercial office space available in town for the doctors, and nothing to indicate traffic concerns could be solved.

"Voting on this today without knowing how those concerns will be worked out is not responsible government," he said.

"\$75,000 is not going to buy my vote."

He also pointed out that if the medical centre owners decide to charge for parking, visitors to the site will use either Crossroads Public School or neighbouring roads to avoid the fee, and will only exacerbate the current problem, and that the staff report said the town has 57,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space that could be used for a medical centre without rezoning.

Coun. Maria Bau-Coote also turned down the rezoning, saying she knows from her former work with the doctors there are other appropriately-zoned areas to build the facility. In one of those "tough moments around the table," she said, "I wouldn't be able to look myself in the mirror if I support this."

Coun. Paolo Miele also opposed the rezoning due to traffic and safety concerns at what he considers a dangerous location.

Coun. Terry Flynn, who put the motion for deferral on the floor last month, said he didn't want to hold up the development any longer, and that he hoped in the future everyone involved can come to the table and find a solution to traffic problems.

Flynn, Coun. Jim Collard, Coun. Betty Disero and Lord Mayor Pat Darte voted to approve the rezoning.

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Rundown of FocusNOTL candidate meetings: Pt. 1

Penny Coles
Staff

The first of a series of meetings for new candidates running in the Oct. 22 municipal election drew a packed house Tuesday, with five of the 21 first-time town council hopefuls on hand to introduce themselves to voters.

The crowd of about 180 people at the Royal Canadian Legion on King Street had an opportunity to meet Gary Burroughs, Terry Davis, Stuart McCormack, Sandra O'Connor and Bernhard Peters.

Peters stepped in to replace Norm Arsenault, who was on the schedule for the first meeting but had to cancel.

Sitting councillors will not be included in this series of meetings, hosted by FocusNOTL, one of several local Facebook groups.

Colin Patey, the commentator for the evening, spoke about the exclusion of current councillors who are also candidates for the next term, saying that contrary to charges of being undemocratic, it could be considered democratic to ensure those who won't have as much of a voice at other meetings have a chance to speak.

"New candidates have a steeper hill to climb," he said, pointing out the incumbents are already well-known from their years on council.

Each of five candidates had 10 minutes to talk about their experience, qualifications and priorities, and then questions were read to them, with each having a minute and a half to answer. The questions had been submitted to organizers by email leading up to the event.

With the order of speakers chosen at random, Davis spoke first, telling the audience he wants voters to know he will serve with honesty and integrity, and will listen to the key issues of residents and respond. He has extensive experience in government and not-for-profit agencies, has led charitable

fundraising campaigns, and has served on boards and served boards of national associations, he said. He has also worked on his family farm, and has been a newspaper reporter and a magazine editor — jobs where listening is important, "and which I did and still do well."

He said he also understands the roles of elected officials versus staff, and knows what it takes to get things done in municipal government.

Davis said he's not happy with what is happening in the town and would like to see "a substantial change" to the handling of development, with a council that can say no to development that doesn't make sense.

His priorities also include preserving heritage, tree canopies and streetscapes, he said, and he would like to see a noise bylaw that sets maximum noise levels.

He promised to respect and serve residents, listen and respond to their concerns, strive to keep taxes and user fees reasonable, preserve the natural characteristics of the town, consult taxpayers and seek consensus in both urban and rural areas, and plan for the future with a completed Official Plan.

"Together we can keep our town one of the most beautiful in the world, and resolve concerns in ways that work for all of us," he said.

Sandra O'Connor grew up in Niagara, specifically St. Catharines. Her grandparents were farmers in NOTL, where her father was raised. She went to Brock University where she studied geography and urban planning, and has worked in management and consulting, mostly for science organizations and government. She also ran her own geometrics consulting company. In her years living in Ottawa, before she retired, she watched live-streamed council meetings to keep in touch with what was going on in NOTL. In her work she has reviewed official plans and subdivisions for the Ministry

of Natural Resources, and developed skills such as problem-solving and analyzing complex situations, she said.

It was her dream to retire in NOTL, and when she did and found she finally had the time, decided to run for council four years ago. She was not successful, and has spent the last four years being engaged in the community, including serving on local committees.

She believes in being transparent and accountable, she said. Preserving natural and built heritage is a priority, as is completing a revised Official Plan — she campaigned on that last election, and it still isn't finished.

She promises to listen and respect community concerns, encourage appropriate development controls, support the environment, offer sound financial management, safeguard farmland and support farmers.

She stressed the community needs to be consulted in meaningful ways — not just asked an opinion and then forgotten.

"I want to be your voice on council. I promise to work for you and work with you."

Burroughs started with why he chose to run for council: the message clearly presented at the meeting from all candidates is the desire for change.

"The town is changing. I want to ensure it's changing for the better," he said.

He spoke of his time as a town councillor, then after an absence from politics, while he was running a business, a return with the position of Lord Mayor. He has also been a regional councillor for the last eight years, and regional chair for four years.

"I understand how the Town can work together, and it's not happening at this time," he said.

His resume reflects a record of community service, leadership, listening, understanding and tackling issues, he added.

He spoke of the need for a comprehensive approach to



Gary Burroughs, Terry Davis, Stuart McCormack, Sandra O'Connor and Bernhard Peters. (Penny Coles)

development, a need to work with developers on projects that preserve heritage and are consistent with what residents want, and his plans to jump on the Official Plan right away. He said the Town is exceeding provincial guidelines for growth, and that needs to be made clear in the preamble to the OP. He would also like to see the urban tree bylaw completed.

"I don't think it's as frightening as some appear to think it is," he said, referring to discussions at council which have led to a deferral of the bylaw.

Burroughs said as the former owner of the Oban Inn, he understands the difficult balance between the needs of tourism and residents, and the importance of promoting tourism while also managing infrastructure and traffic to benefit residents.

"There's only one way in and out, and most of us use the lines and concessions during tourist season." But the "incredible growth" in agritourism is causing problems on the back roads as well, he said, calling for a comprehensive plan to deal with traffic.

"I remember when I first came to Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Lord Mayor asked if anybody had a spare car, could they please park on Queen Street so we look busy," he said. "Times have sure changed."

He also spoke of the need to improve communications and the relationship between the Town and residents.

At council meetings, he said, it's hard to hear what's being said, or to see who is speaking.

The agenda, which is no longer printed out, is available online but it's hard to follow and often residents

don't know what issue councillors are addressing, he added.

And one last issue that needs to be solved, he said as his time ran out — "we have a garbage problem." Although garbage collection is a regional issue, "it's all of our problems and we need to work together to solve it."

Local electrician Bernhard Peters said he's lived in town most of his life — he left for a short time and came back to raise a family.

He lives in St. Davids, has a background in business and working with companies in receivership, has worked in real estate, is a deacon on a church board, and is the president of a charitable organization in Niagara Falls, which helps low-income people and the homeless.

He said he's running for council because "we always complain about government and never do anything about it," and he decided it was his time to do something about it.

Peters said he's watched the town change over the years — he remembers what it was like before the Shaw Festival and tourism, and he's seen schools close as it becomes more of a senior population.

"I went to Parliament Oak, and it closed. I went to Lakeshore, and it closed. I went to Col. John Butler, and it closed. Then I went to District, and it closed."

The families moving into town are, like him, settling in St. Davids, he said.

"They didn't close that school — they built an extension."

As a businessman, Peters says he's pro-development — he is building a 60-unit project in Niagara Falls.

"But the last thing I want to see is the town destroyed by

development," he said.

"It has to be done in the right way and the right place," he explained, saying he would support drawing borders "to show where we want development and where we don't. We love our small community. We're very blessed. We have virtually no crime and we need to maintain that, by keeping the wrong development out of our town."

He believes in working with people, in a way that is straightforward, honest and transparent, he said.

"I want to bring that to council. If you don't like what I say, at least I'm being honest."

Stuart McCormack introduced himself as a lawyer retired from one of Canada's leading law firms, where he was the managing partner of an Ottawa office for 10 years, and a member of the partnership board, setting the direction of the firm and its 500 lawyers. His expertise, he said, was in intellectual property and information technology. He has also worked for the provincial and federal governments, but when he came to NOTL in 2012 for a break, he decided not to leave.

He has been watching the current council and believes one of the most important issues is the lack of an Official Plan. He would look at a community plan, with a building code specific to NOTL, which developers would have to follow.

It would require public notice and consultation, and would avoid ad hoc approvals that occur now ...

Continued on Page 6

Number of candidates for NOTL town councillor drops to 24

Richard Harley
Editor

The number of candidates seeking the position of town councillor for Niagara-on-the-Lake has dropped from 25 to 24.

In an interview to the paper Friday morning, former candidate Rob MacInnis said he

will no longer be running due to a professional opportunity that will require him to be out of town frequently.

"Basically it's an external commitment that I didn't foresee, and it's going to have me out of town during the week a lot and I just won't be able to commit the time that would be necessary to serve

properly," MacInnis said. "And I don't want to be that guy that's missing half the meetings and all that kind of stuff."

He said he "couldn't pass up" the opportunity, but added "it looks like we've got a really good slate of candidates, so I don't feel too badly."

It's a possibility he may run in the future, he said.

"You know, four years from now, who knows what my circumstances will be. I'm getting to the point where I'll probably be looking at retiring, so we'll see."

The municipal election is Oct. 22.




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Firefighters launch smoke alarm program



Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Expiry dates are tricky things. Sometimes you can ignore them on food with relative safety — but you can't ignore them on smoke or carbon monoxide alarms.

Yes, those life-saving gadgets have expiry dates.

Firefighters from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire Department are going door-to-door this month with the aim of making sure residents have the knowledge and tools they need to be safe

in their homes. "Don't be intimidated if we show up in your neighbourhood with a fire truck — we're just talking with people and making sure everyone is safe," says Andrew Allan, Fire Inspector and Public Educator.

The transparently-named Safe Home Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Program runs twice a year, in spring and fall.

"One of the things we find really surprises people is the ten-year expiry date on smoke alarms," says Jay Plato, a fire prevention officer

with the department. He encourages everyone to check for a label on their unit at home, and make sure it's still viable. "When it expires," he says, "the devices inside that detect smoke might not work anymore. It can still make noise that leads you to believe it's fine, but the sensors may have worn out."

Smoke alarms have a life expectancy of ten years. Carbon monoxide alarms vary — it is advised that owners check their units' manuals for details.

Allan explains the program: "We are checking residential smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure proper function and placement. Citizens are also encouraged to talk to firefighters to learn more about keeping your family safe from fire." They emphasize the importance of an escape plan in case of fire, including agreeing on a safe meeting place. And one of their most important messages: Never go back

inside a burning building.

The firefighters find children are usually the most safety-savvy people in a household — perhaps because the fire department works in conjunction with schools and other youth groups to make them that way. "The kids will proudly quote what we told them at school," says Plato with a smile.

If the visiting firefighters find smoke or carbon monoxide alarms that are not working for any reason, they will replace them. "We will not leave residents unprotected," says Allan. A partnership with Penner Home Hardware pays for the alarms.

The firefighters from all five districts aim to visit 500 homes during the program. On Sept. 17 they visited the Old Town and Virgil areas; on Sept. 24 they will be in St Davids, Queenston, and Glendale between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 7 to 13.

Lawn sign wars ramp up

Richard Harley
Editor

According to a resident who lives in St. Davids near Cannery Park and Concession 3, a political sign was removed from her lawn and replaced with another candidate's sign.

The resident, who asked not to be named, said while she was out of town, somebody removed a Daniel Turner sign and left it beside her garage, only to replace it with a Betty Disero sign.

Turner said he discov-

ered the scenario after driving by the house and noticing the owner had apparently switched sides. He said he stopped in to have a quick chat and collect his sign, when he was told of the situation.

The resident, after the confusion, has decided she will no longer be letting anybody put signs on her property.

"If this is the way people are campaigning, we're done for," she said.

She said she had attended a candidate meeting in Queenston and had told candidates



Lawn signs for different candidates can be seen across town. (Richard Harley)

they could put signs up on her lawn if they desired, though she didn't expect any signs to be removed.

"I said they could all put signs up there," she said.

The resident said now she's going to save herself the hassle by not having anything displayed.

"I already know who I'm voting for," she said.

Group pushes for a natural Lakeshore park

Debi Goodwin
Special to TLR

While voters are asking candidates in the upcoming municipal election strong questions about development and its effects on our heritage, one group in town believes they should also be seeking candidates' opinions on preserving the natural and historic Department of National Defence property along the Lakeshore before crucial decisions about that land are made.

For ten years now, the board of the Harmony Residents Group has been advocating for a public park on the land that would include trails and educational opportunities while protecting and rehabilitating its forests,

wetlands and shoreline. The property contains one of the last stands of Carolinian forests on the Great Lakes with several endangered or threatened species of trees and is the habitat to a wide variety of wildlife including a valuable nesting area for the threatened chimney sweep.

"As well as preserving the Carolinian forest," says Finn Madsen, Harmony's President and Chair, "this will put the 'lake' back in Niagara-on-the-Lake with the longest stretch of waterfront accessible to the public."

The proposal, which can be read online at harmonyresidents.org, calls for the soon-to-be decommissioned Wastewater Treatment Plant to be returned to a natural wetlands area, keeping the

existing building as a welcome centre and encouraging the ponds and surrounding land to naturalize.

"This is exactly what was done by the NPCA (Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority) with great success at Biggar Lagoons in Grimsby," says Peter Harvey, the group's Vice Chair.

The proposal also calls for the park to reflect the historic use of the land by Indigenous people, early settlers and the military. It believes such a park would be a draw in the growing market in nature and heritage tourism.

The ultimate use of the land has been on hold until DND cleared the property of any remaining armaments before giving it to Parks Canada who will decide its

fate. In the past year, the clean-up accelerated to the point that the transfer is in progress. In preparation for its plan, Parks Canada has been hearing proposals from groups like Harmony. NPCA is now looking at taking the lead in pushing for the park in partnership with the town, the region and Harmony.

To find out how much support the new council will give to the park, the Harmony board has sent out emails to all candidates asking them what they believe should happen on the property. The answers they receive will be posted on the Harmony Residents Group website.

Debi Goodwin is a member of the Harmony Residents Group board.

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Editorial: Supporting choice and education is one thing – meddling is another

Richard Harley
 Editor

A letter recently was sent out by a local politically-minded group called Focus-NOTL outlining the group's beliefs that our past council has failed us and mentioning its plan to help educate voters before the municipal election.

While the efforts to educate residents on who is running for council is commendable, the approach of this group seems to be somewhat counter-intuitive, and arguably undemocratic.

The group has organized a series of candidate meetings

to which the incumbents running were not invited.

The paper reported on these meetings, and so far the meetings have admittedly been informative. But couldn't everyone have been involved?

It could be argued these meetings will lean attendees in the favour only of the invited candidates — after all, any exposure is good exposure, or so it's said — and it seems like a slap in the face to the incumbents, who, regardless of differing points of views, deserve the same chance to offer their platforms in a public setting.

If the reasoning behind the exclusion of all incumbents is that residents already know enough about them, that's not good enough. There are plenty of new and old residents who don't know who our current councillors are. If one of those people — perhaps a first time voter, or maybe someone trying to get more involved — decides they want to find out about candidates by attending a candidate meeting, all options should be presented.

If the exclusion is politically motivated, they might as well call it what it is — a rally for a new council.

Whether intentional or not, without inviting the other candidates, it seems to be a form of tipping the scales.

Thankfully, all names will be on the ballots regardless.

I imagine they'd have been better off letting all candidates come, and asking some tough questions head-on about the issues they care about or have been disappointed on during the past term. It would be a better way to educate voters, and wouldn't have a 'ban the other team from my fort' vibe.

editor@niagaranow.com

Letter to the editor: Youth voices and leadership

"The leaders of tomorrow can become the leaders of today and develop their impactful voices through involvement with their peers and town community ... The time for us to speak up as youth and collaborate with others has come."

These were my thoughts when I approached Lord Mayor Pat Darte about the idea of establishing a real voice for youth in NOTL. I was met with incredible support and encouragement. Along with councillors Martin Mazza and Paolo Miele, and staff member Lauren Kruitbosch, we decided that the time for youth voices to be heard is now. And so, the NOTL Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council was established October 2017.

The Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council aims to

include the youth of our beautiful town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and increase opportunities for youth — because it is our town, one with a considerable youth demographic.

It was a whirlwind of action, excitement and lots of emails to start. Our Council consists of myself and eight amazing members, each who brought their ideas, enthusiasm and hearts to our meetings. Meeting once a month meant we had to move fast to start our first initiatives. We entered the NOTL Christmas Parade to introduce ourselves to our town and promote the message that we are ready to listen to the NOTL youth.

In December we held the first annual NOTL Youth Holiday Celebration, where youth aged three to 18 displayed their musical,

vocal, and dance talent on the stage spreading holiday cheer. We will be hosting our second annual Youth Holiday Celebration this December. Those interested in attending or performing should contact me using the Town's Join the Conversation website. We are always looking to highlight the talents of our local youth.

In the spring, we organized and hosted our first mental health and wellness conference for our local Grade 8 students. This day was a great success. In addition to the Town, we found partnerships with Rotary, Twin Power Financial, Yellow Door Theatre, Niagara Regional Health, Niagara Fitness and Rehabilitation and Enbridge. We are also teaming up with the NOTL Library to encourage teen readers by starting a Teen Literary

Club. Our very knowledgeable speakers included Jason LaLonde, a certified Financial Analyst, Melissa Dunlop, a registered dietitian, and Andorlie Hillstrom, the founder and artistic director of Yellow Door Theatre Project.

Anyone interested in participating in the Youth Holiday Celebration or in the Teen Literacy Club should contact me using the Town's Join the Conversation website, www.jointheconversation-notl.org.

A link to register for the Raising Healthy Teens workshop is available on the website. We can't wait to hear from you!

Bethany Pörtl, chair of the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council.

Letter to the editor: Regarding the Oct. 22 election

OPINION

The pending municipal election on Oct. 22 will provide an opportunity for the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake to select representatives on town council, regional council and school boards.

It is a testament to the community's spirit that so many candidates are showing concern for NOTL's future and want to make a difference.

It will be a difficult challenge for voters to decide on which candidates to choose.

Some have developed web sites that provide personal background information and have identified issues in the Town that need to be addressed. Finalizing a strategic plan, controlling

development and maintaining the historical characteristics of the community are a few priorities commonly mentioned, which certainly are important.

Since retiring and moving here in 2012, we have taken more of an interest in our community and are enjoying all the benefits Niagara-on-the-Lake has to offer.

However, we've also come to realize, existential and internal influences are putting greater pressures on council to strike an appropriate balance between maintaining the attractiveness of the area with improvements in services and efficiencies.

Let's hope the new town council will recognize the importance of bringing the

community together and avoid the polarizing politics that we've seen intensify in NOTL and in fact the world.

A candidate that can demonstrate the ability to get things done through listening, compromising and building relationships with all stakeholders has a greater chance of success and should get our vote.

This is far more important than a particular policy issue.

An article in the Sept. 15 Globe and Mail by Eric Klenenberg quoted Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg:

"History is a story of how we've learned to come together in ever greater numbers as tribes, nations and cities to achieve things we couldn't do on our own."

Although the quote was in the context of the role of social media, it also helps crystallize the importance of a community working together for the betterment of all.

We hope all NOTL residents will be engaged in this election. In 2014 only 48.5 per cent of registered voters cast their ballot. Research has shown there is a direct link between voter turnout and the quality of the Government elected.

The residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake deserve good representation but that responsibility rests with us.

Debra and Dana Branscombe

You're invited



The Lake Report invites you to attend our official launch party this Sept. 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.

A fantastic menu will be provided by Gooddine Catering and wine will be available to purchase by the glass from Perridiso Estate Winery. Craft beer will also be available to purchase, courtesy of Oast House Brewers.

The night will be hosted by David Green and Cary Frank and will include live music by local musicians including Laurel Minnes and Taylor Hulley.

All local residents are invited. Food is first come, first served.

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

The paper extends thanks to Miguel Mori for helping coordinate this event, to Collin Goodine 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.

The Lake Report

Letter to the editor: To residents from Rob MacInnis

Dear residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I appreciate your interest in my candidacy in the NOTL Municipal election. As a former Municipal Councillor of 12 years in another Municipality, I was hoping to make a contribution in NOTL. Unfortunately unforeseen future commitments will not allow me the time required to properly serve you as a member of council. I ask that you do not waste a vote on me as I will not be able to accept a position on council if I were to be elected. I offer a heart-felt thank you to all those who supported and encouraged me to run. Thank you.

Rob MacInnis

Correction from TLR

The Lake Report would like to clarify that Gus Korneos will be attending the Oct. 9 candidate meeting at the Legion. A list of candidates was reported in our latest issue that did not include his name.

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Letter: The Call – “let’s create a desirable future for Niagara-on-the-Lake”

Terry Mactaggart
Opinion

Concerns have again been growing about development pressures building in our community, particularly in and around the Old Town.

I say “again” because this is by no means the first time such concerns have arisen, nor will it be that last. There appears to be something more fundamental about this occasion, however, that warrants our collective response.

These pressures and lack of a clear path forward, coupled with our local election on Oct. 22, present a valuable opportunity. Now can become a time to observe and reflect carefully, consult with a wide cross section of our citizenry and, above all, wake up as a community.

How should we think with purpose about a desirable future for Niagara-on-the-Lake, as well as take steps to improve the chance that vision will be fulfilled?

My perspective is derived from a 47-year residency, a long interest in creative community development and a 13-year tenure as executive director and president of the Niagara Institute.

The current debate about Randwood, which the Institute acquired, improved and operated successfully during that time, is providing a major source of personal stimulus because I know that property intimately and how it could be compromised. That, plus a sense — unlike times before — that the town we love has now in some areas reached its limits to growth makes it timely to sound this “call to action.”

For years, Niagara-on-the-Lake has been considered by many to be one of the more desirable small communities in North America. Its combination of historic, cultural and recreational resources, combined with an agreeable lifestyle, provided an endowment I felt equivalent of a Carmel or Nantucket — and certainly of Victoria. The town’s rich agricultural heritage, a growing reputation for fine wines and a distinctive mix of urban and rural life added to its reputation.

While the town’s popularity as a tourism destination was growing, it hadn’t become overwhelming — you could still ride a bicycle on Queen Street on a sunny summer afternoon without experiencing a life-threatening drama.

One essential foundation we should never forget was

the over-arching attitude of its citizens towards balancing “progress” and “preservation.” While not codified, this perspective was quite evident in the evolution of the town and township. Frankly, we were lucky, for without it we could have been over-run long ago by fast food and other encroachments.

So what’s happening now — why does it feel quite different today? Property development, particularly housing and hospitality — broadly defined — is clearly a major driver. We have nearly doubled the housing stock, reshaping most of our constituent neighbourhoods and utilizing much available land. Demography and a relatively strong economy have created an unprecedented demand for housing (notwithstanding much higher prices) resulting in a noticeable immigration of mainly retirement age people who wish to enjoy “Canada’s Prettiest Town.”

Traffic and related safety concerns have become a significant issue not just into and around the Old Town (where the line of incoming cars on Highway 55 stretched out to the airport on a recent Sunday) but also for St. Davids and Virgil.

And housing costs and a lack of high paying jobs is continuing to convince many young people to move away.

We appear to be trending towards becoming an exclusive community of aging residents, many of whom are disconnected from the public affairs of the Town.

Much of this was predictable given NOTL’s favourable positioning and the inevitability of a significant migration and wealth transfer as baby boomers began to retire. I can recall discussions as long ago as the 1970s about how the high traffic season should be handled by permitting and peripheral parking. Spot situations like the busing invasion (92 in one day!) were confronted and solved effectively. And developers quite naturally recognized the number of profitable opportunities they could take advantage of.

New residents can provide a barometer of community wellbeing. While the sample I experience is mainly Old Town related, they reiterate the lifestyle reasons for wanting to move here but increasingly report their impression that the community is changing and is not entirely the pleasing environment they expected.

A recent study of “Best Places in Canada to Live” also noted that Niagara-on-the-Lake had slipped 53 points in ranking last year from 55th to 107th — anecdotal evidence perhaps, but one can argue an indicator of a community in some decline.

My main concern is that parts of the town are at — not just close to or approaching — limits to growth. To carry on as before will undoubtedly result in notable deterioration.

Immediate causes are frequently referred to — “It’s the division on Council that’s to blame; some are in the developer’s pocket; Town staff can’t do the job; they lack the experience; we have suffered from the lack of an up-to-date official plan; it should have been finalized long ago; we can’t seem to win; provincial guidelines and the OMB-like review process favour developers,” and so on. Such blame games, apart from not being corrective, are another manifestation of a community that is overheating and potentially trending in the wrong direction.

We might remember Pogo and consider whether “the enemy is us!”

The key question, of course, is what to do? Odds are carrying on in an incremental way under the present ground rules will not result in a significant course adjustment regardless of who sits on the new council.

A more opportunistic view is to recognize that real change is usually driven by either a prominent opportunity or a notable crisis, in some cases by a combination of the two. And a persuasive argument can be made that we are presently confronting elements of both. What’s needed is a higher order formula that is citizen-driven. What can set a better course involves defining what we seek as a desirable future and applying that framework as a template for future development.

Let’s therefore assume that we now have a once in a 25-year opportunity to take on such a project. Let’s further assert that willingness and capabilities to do so are present in the community. What might such an effort be aiming towards and how might it be organized?

Definitions of what makes up a great community are relatively easy to come by. Several factors are often cited that go beyond simply a vibrant economy. “Strong leaders with vision and shared purpose, capable of

inclusivity and teamwork” is near the top. Closely coupled are “citizens who know the civic story, often sharing a ‘big dream’ and are engaged with its affairs.”

“Effective infrastructures” for education, transportation, housing, medical and other essential services as well as opportunities for recreation and cultural activities are inevitably mentioned.

A “caring community” has also become basic as has a “commitment to sustainability.” These attributes and more are seen to contribute to a community’s social, economic and environmental well being.

At the core of such an enterprise are the values that citizens share about behaviour, the quality of their lives and their collective future.

Without using values as a touchstone and guide, growth and development usually lacks coherence, becoming ad hoc and incremental. Many communities following such a course have found themselves occupying a different and less satisfying space, incapable of unwinding what they assumed was “progress.”

If enough of us believe this is a good time, perhaps a critical one, to come together in order to map out a desirable future, then I am confident that it can be done. Similar initiatives have been taken elsewhere to great advantage and the process of finding common ground is well known. That is not to suggest that it’s easy, for it usually involves work in advance and a relatively large cross section of people throughout the community willing to suspend judgement and invest their energies for a couple of days in joint pursuit. An ideal time would be in the weeks following the late October election.

New council members could participate as citizens but the process in no way should be lead by council or staff. The payoff aimed for would be a charter of sorts, an elaboration of a Desirable Future for NOTL which, while not binding on policy and decision making, would serve as a frame of reference and template for conditioning how we approach issues as well as for guiding future development.

Who is prepared to respond to such a Call; to help wake up our community and plan for its future?

Terry (He) Mactaggart

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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.

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Community rallies for family after house fire consumes home



Photo courtesy of Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire and Emergency Services.



Tucker.



A box of birthing photos was one of the only things found safe in the rubble.

The Fire Marshal investigation concluded the cause of the fire is undetermined, Spiewak said. The house was simply too far gone for a forensic investigation.

The family would like to thank the NOTL Fire Department, Victim Service Niagara, The McShane family, Dave Dick Jr. at Niagara Motors, Phil and Shannon Leboudec of Phil's Valu-Mart, Silks Country Kitchen, Paul and Natasha Dietsch of The Sandtrap, NOTL Pet-Valu, Martin and Rita Mazza of Italian Pizza and Subs, Paul Davis Systems of Niagara, Shoppers Drug Mart of NOTL and Hartzel Road, Bliss Salon, Skycraft Hobbies, NOTL Dart League, Lord Mayor Pat Darte, the Brownies, The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124, The Olde Angel Inn, St. Michael's School and a long list of others, which one could be forgiven for forgetting during such a time.

Going forward, one thing Spiewak said she and Jay will be strongly advocating for is that laws be changed to require smoke detectors in garages, to prevent something similar from happening to another family who may not be as lucky as them.



Donations have been showing up at the door of Spiewak's parents' house.

it didn't burn down as well, thanks to the efforts of NOTL's volunteer firefighters who worked to ensure the blaze was controlled.

"It's unbelievable how a house can burn like that and not catch. It was so lucky that it wasn't windy," Konopka said. "And those are the good parts."

Konopka said he can replace at least one thing — something one of her sons was "pretty banged up about" he said — Spiewak's son had a signed Konopka hockey stick, one he used in the NHL.

Konopka said he's going to replace it with one of the last three he has.

And then there's Tucker, who nobody has forgotten about either — Sweet and Swirls Cafe had a donation box out for the family — and asked people to buy him a steak and cheese sandwich.

As well, piles of donations have been sent to their temporary home and to Spiewak's parents' house on Hunter Road.

As of press time, a GoFundMe page had also raised more than \$3,600 in three days with donations from 58 people.

Continued from Front Page

... Tucker was of course allowed to come along.

Niagara Motors has rented a vehicle for the family, and numerous other businesses have come to their aid, including Phil's Valu-Mart, Silks Country Kitchen and the Sandtrap.

It won't be easy, Spiewak said, but she's looking forward and staying positive.

"It's hard not to be positive when you have so much coming at you in such a positive manner — you literally have people, like Megan and Terry (two close friends), wrapping their arms around you saying 'we got you, we're getting you through this.'"

Spiewak said she would like to thank the entire community for their support.

"I personally want to thank my parents and family, Megan and John Vanderlee, Terri Andrusiw, Angela Porpiglia and Zenon Konopka. Of course, all of the Ann-Marie Drive neighbours who set up a command, clothed us and put shoes on our feet in our moment of need."

Zenon Konopka, a long-time friend of Spiewak's, said "from the outside looking in, it's been obviously a horrible situation ... but now they're turning the page on trying to see how this is a positive — how the town has come together, how they don't take things for granted with their kids."

Another positive to look at, is that the houses beside

Cont'd: Rundown of candidate meetings: Pt. 1

Continued from Page 2.

... His priorities would include sustainability, active transportation and green energy, and he favours new urbanism development with complete communities where people can live, walk, work and shop. That can be integrated with agricultural, he said, pointing to farmers' markets as an example, and aid farmland preservation.

"I know we all want a better NOTL. What does that mean and how are we going to get there?"

He suggested instead of looking at how long people have lived in town, the real question to ask candidates is "are you qualified to do the job?"

If elected, he said he intends to work responsibly for all communities of NOTL, not just the Old Town, and he closed with a pitch to voters: choose carefully and pick the candidates best qualified to do the job.

"Vote, and encourage others to vote."

To open the question period, candidates were asked about the most important deliverable they could offer on council, and the theme that emerged and continued throughout the evening was the need to complete the Town's Official Plan to control development.

"Council has to prioritize getting this done," said Davis. "It will be a long process but we have to do it and create certainty for residents, farmers and developers."

"Delay, delay, delay," said O'Connor. "We have to stop delaying."

Peters agreed the OP needs to be revised, but said he could bring transparency and honesty to the table, and would have the community working together with developers to provided input. "It has to be a combined effort."

"The last OP was 1996," said McCormack, also looking at its completion as a priority, "but it's not a straightforward process."

He suggested staff should be reviewed "to ensure they are following best practices."

Burroughs was the only candidate who did not focus on the OP as his first deliverable - he spoke of communication and listening to residents.

"I don't think we do that well. We need to improve communication." He referred again to the difficulty of seeing or hearing at meetings in

the council chamber, and for residents who try to communicate with town staff on issues. "They don't respond well," he said. "It's you we're working for."

Candidates were also asked if the OP could be completed within the first year of the next term of council, and what each candidate would want to add to it that would be different.

"Where we are at the moment is in a contract with consultants to finish it," O'Connor said. "It should be revised soon."

Public consultation has to follow, and that could be done within the year. She would like to see the wording changed - there are too many "wishy washy words" such as 'may,' 'if possible,' and 'should be.'

"We need to be more definite, with stronger wording."

Burroughs said within six months it should be ready to be presented to the region and province, but cautioned "the document is a moving target. It can change daily, with amendments."

He would like to see streetscapes covered in the Official Plan, he said, so that with any infilling, developers are obligated to meet streetscape standards.

Peters said the OP should be moved forward rapidly, that it was important to get it done quickly.

McCormack has already spoken with the Town's planning director to find out the timeline of the OP, and he was told September. He said he'd like to see it include sustainable goals, active transportation and green energy.

Davis said the timing of the completion of the OP "will depend a great deal on the decisions everyone makes Oct. 22. It's important to elect councillors who will make the OP their first priority and move forward."

He would like to ensure a municipal tree bylaw is part of the new OP, he said, and he would want to hear from the residents and businesses in NOTL, the people who live, work and farm in town, what they want it to look like. "I want it to look like that."

Next councillors were asked if they would support a freeze on development, but all agreed that would be too extreme.

"Freeze' is a strong word," said Burroughs. "The new council should take a stand. We've exceeded provincial

growth targets past 2035. We need to get it into the Official Plan and say no more often. Development must suit our community."

"A freeze doesn't solve anything. I'd be against a freeze," said Peters. "Development goes through planning, with strict guidelines. It's not easy to go through the planning process." He suggested development issues could be addressed through zoning amendments until the OP is complete.

McCormack said he's talked to other lawyers about a moratorium on development, and the answer was "we'll get sued."

The OP provides for development and affords rights to developers, he said. "That's why it's a priority. It needs to be done."

Davis says he supports council saying no as opposed to a freeze on development. "We don't have to approve a building that's six stories high. Council has some authority over development while we're waiting for the OP to be finalized."

O'Connor said a freeze is not a solution. "We can say no to development if we have a strong council." She spoke of the regional plan underway for the Glendale area, and said the "density is incredible. It has a 20-storey building beside White Oaks. We have to get on this quickly or we're going to lose control."

When asked about a solution to the traffic problems in town, Peters said Niagara Stone Road should be widened to four lanes, but to avoid a bottleneck in Virgil, there have to be more access roads out of town. "St. Davids is a mess. We need to develop another route. We have too much traffic and two few roads."

McCormack suggested a comprehensive transportation plan to help move traffic in and out of town. "There has to be a better way," he said. "Widening Niagara Stone Road wouldn't solve the problem."

Davis agreed, saying parking lots and shuttle buses would be a better solution than widening roads. "I'd like to see us look at traffic safety, with lowered speed limits and stop signs."

O'Connor said a plan should be developed with meaningful input from residents, looking at ways to redirect traffic.

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Council passes the bark on tree bylaw

Penny Coles
Staff

After four years of discussing an urban tree bylaw, Niagara-on-the-Lake town councillors have passed the buck to the incoming council, who will have the responsibility of balancing tree preservation with property rights.

Several new candidates are already campaigning on the importance of a tree bylaw, and it was recognized at the final meeting of council Monday that it is sure to become an hot election issue, but after extensive discussion about the best route to go, councillors could not agree to the bylaw that was presented to them for approval.

The bylaw had been approved at the committee-of-the-whole meeting in August, and then when presented to council for ratification the following week, it stalled, mostly because of Coun. Jim Collard's concerns. Council agreed then to defer it to the September meeting, the last opportunity for approval of the bylaw before the end of the term.

Although Niagara-on-the-Lake residents have said they overwhelmingly support a tree bylaw that would apply to private property in urban areas, and councillors had asked staff to prepare one, when they were faced with it this week, they used words such as "intrusive" and "aggressive" to describe what was before them. Residents, they said, likely don't fully understand the implications of a bylaw that would apply to every property owner, not just developers.

Coun. Jim Collard had tried to have some revisions made to the bylaw, but he wouldn't support it as written, and after a lengthy discussion, the majority of council agreed to receive the report, take the bylaw off the table and have the information, with Collard's revisions, ready for the next council to deal with.

The bylaw as written, Collard said, would mean that a resident who just wanted to trim a branch on a backyard tree or take one down that was dying would have to pay for an arborist to evaluate the tree, pay for a permit to allow for the work, and then pay to have the work done.

He also objected to the stiff penalties for not following the process.

Residents had asked for a tree bylaw to curb developers from cutting down trees, but instead, what was before council was aimed at controlling what home owners could



The stump of a tree removed from John Street in September. (Richard Harley)

do on their own property, Collard said, calling the bylaw "one of the most intrusive pieces of legislation" council has considered.

"If you're going to use this bylaw to stop development, I don't think it can be done," he said, "Developers have ownership of land, and they have certain rights to do things on it. The bylaw as written is very aggressive, almost nasty, especially when you're talking about thousands of dollars in fines."

An urban tree bylaw on private property, Collard said, "is putting big city values on our town."

Coun. Maria Bau-Coote said she has never supported a tree bylaw and wouldn't support the one before council.

"I don't see residents cutting down trees with no reason," said Coun. Terry Flynn. "If somebody is taking down a tree on their property, they're doing it for a good reason."

Although he spoke of NOTL being the envy of other municipalities because of its tree canopy, he said he's concerned about "tree police," people reporting to council when neighbours are taking down a tree.

"I'm becoming concerned about my rights as a property owner," he said.

"I understand we need something to control trees on developers' properties, but this is too intrusive."

Coun. Paolo Miele agreed. "The rights of a tree is not my main concern — it's the rights of property owners."

He suggested instead staff could look at a tree policy

that could be attached to site plan approvals, rather than telling residents they have to pay for an arborist before trimming a tree branch. He also wanted to look at options such as educating the public and enhancing public participation in protecting trees - options that were offered in the staff report that outlined the bylaw.

Coun. Martin Mazza identified that council had asked staff for a bylaw, which had been four years in the making, and staff had presented them with 127 pages of information, "but I think it missed the mark. What's on everyone's minds is development, and the urban forest that has been lost due to development. Because this is the last meeting, we were pushing staff to give us something and they gave it to us."

Rather than pushing it forward so council could point to it as an accomplishment of their term, Mazza suggested it would be better to let the next council deal with it.

He said he was looking for something much more simple — take a tree out, plant a new one, if not in its place, somewhere else — rather than what was presented in the document "that punishes good, honest homeowners" who want to care for their properties or prevent an insurance claim if a diseased tree comes down.

"This report isn't coming out of nowhere," said Coun. Jamie King, "but it's a complex issue. I don't think people in town have a clue about the implications - that's the Achilles heel. This has the ability to greatly im-

part home owners and their responsibilities."

He suggested it should be for the new council to decide, after being informed about what residents want while on the campaign trail.

"I think at the end of the day the canopy is important to everyone in town. This is one tool. I think it needs to be revised."

Coun. Betty Disero was offended at Collard's reference to the "big city" interpreting it as anyone who wants a tree bylaw is bringing Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"I know it's political, I get it. Anyone who wants a tree bylaw is going to bring Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake. That's not the case. Let's be clear," she said. "This council has been asking for a tree bylaw on private property. To say it's all these people from Toronto who want it is wrong — and that's the wrong message to send."

She reminded councillors of the number of times staff had come to council with a report on a tree bylaw, and council had sent it back to staff, learning along the way that the bylaw could not legally be aimed just at developers and development lots.

She also reminded them of the many subdivisions of lots that have come before council, with large, beautiful trees already removed by developers before they applied for the subdivision. The only way to prevent that occurring, she said, is with a general tree bylaw.

Disero said she could support the changes Collard had suggested, including reducing the costs of getting a permit and the impact of having to get an arborist, and expanding the exemptions for weed trees, but she didn't want the bylaw to be lost — it could be brought back to the next council, to try to protect native trees, "the ones that are not weeds, that are not dying," she said, while protecting the rights of home owners with problem trees.

"But to say this is a big-city intrusion coming from Toronto is unfair."

King proposed council receive the report on a tree bylaw on private property for information, suggesting with a month to go before the election was no time to revise it. His motion was approved with only Coun. Disero voting against it.

The issue "is going to come forward again - it's not going away," King said, adding there's been a lot of good work done with a lot of good information that should be circulated and brought forward to the incoming council.



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Cont'd: Rundown of candidate meetings: Pt. 1

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There are better solutions than widening Niagara Stone Road, said Burroughs, such as Concession 6 once the Mewburn Bridge is completed. "The goal of this council should be to put aside a budget for Concession 6 so it meets current standards. The solution is not more roads, it's a better way to get into the community. I'm not a fan of parking lots." Candidates were also questioned about heritage preservation, with Randwood, the proposed hotel development on John Street, as an example of the issues that surface from development.

"A mistake was made by council first time round," said McCormack, referring to a 2011 decision to allow a hotel on the property. "It will be necessary to take a relatively strict interpretation of that bylaw." He cautioned it would not make the developer happy and the decision would appeal it to the Local Planning Appeal Board.

"Randwood has the potential to create precedent," said Davis. He too suggested council should stick to the height allowed by the 2011 bylaw.

O'Connor said she supports heritage in built and natural environments, and would apply those principles to any development in town. "We don't want to change the character of this town." As for Randwood, she said, "we have to be cognizant of what the

original bylaw intended."

Burroughs did not support the 2011 Official Plan amendment, he said, and moving forward, that should be the baseline. In future he'd like to see the lord mayor representing council and meeting with developers, to say "this is what our town wants and this is why everyone is so upset." We're not doing this, we're allowing staff to work through the process, and that's not the way to get things done."

"This is a heritage town. If we ruin our heritage no one will want to come here," said Peters. If the Randwood development has to go ahead, he added, "we should make sure it's not an eyesore to the rest of us."

The final question of the evening was about health care delivery, with Davis saying the doctors have chosen the site for a new medical centre, and if the current council doesn't provide the necessary rezoning, then the next council needs to figure out a way to get it done and get the traffic problems solved for the neighbouring community. "The town needs to move forward and get the facility built."

If the current council approves the rezoning for a new medical centre on Niagara Stone Road and Line 2, "we will have to work with them to make it safe," said O'Connor. If the rezoning isn't approved, "I think we should revisit the non-profit model the current council turned down. Then we

should provide the infrastructure needed to keep our residents healthy."

She also would like to see a walk-in clinic restored in town — one that would serve people who are not members of the local family health team, including the visitors to town.

Burroughs said he would like to understand why the current facility, the Niagara Medical Centre, became an undesirable location to doctors, when it's already zoned for a 30,000 square foot expansion. "Why didn't that work, and what can we do to make it work," he said. "I'm not keen on rezoning another property for that use when we already have one." In addition to traffic problems, the site on Line 2 already has water issues, he said. "It's very hard to get water away from this property. I don't know why we're looking at it."

"It's very important to have an urgent care clinic," said Peters.

McCormack said "one thing is clear, there is a need for doctors in this town." He referenced the high number of seniors, which is only going to get higher, and seniors require more medical care. A decision has to be made on the medical centre, he said, "and if it doesn't suit the doctors, they have the option to leave."

The next three meetings for the new candidates will be held at the legion hall on King Street, Oct. 3 and 9, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Region working on plan for Glendale district

Penny Coles
Staff

To prevent "piece-meal development" in the Glendale area of Niagara-on-the-Lake, The Niagara Region has completed the first phase of a "better plan" for the district to councillors last week.

Thomas Vilella, manager of special projects for the region, introduced the Region's vision for a complete community "in one of Niagara's key future growth areas," which would be bound together with parks, open spaces, improved transportation and community services.

After "robust" public participation that included workshops and meetings with residents, town council, planning staff, and landowners in the area, the initial work of creating the vision for the future of the area is done, with the second phase including the technical information about how to complete that vision to be finished in May, 2019, he said.

The district plan is intended to drive growth and economic prosperity, by creating a community that will attract investment, talent and jobs, he said.

Donna Hinde, a consultant with Planning Partnership, said the study looked at about 400 acres east of Homer Road.

She detailed some of what was heard at public and stakeholder meetings - that Glendale should be a



community with "walkability," a variety of housing and places to work, a main street, more restaurants, and an eco-park along the Welland Canal as part of an integrated park system.

Also on the wish list are a robust transit system, cycling trails and pedestrian connections, protection for natural features, and more public and civic spaces, including a community centre. Residents would also like a grocery store, she said.

Regarding land-use issues, she noted the 2010 secondary plan of the district includes development provisions based on a broad mix of residential, commercial and institutional space, "with a very simple height regime," setting aside areas for buildings of up to four storeys, a midrise section for up to eight storeys and a location for taller buildings, with heights yet to be determined.

There will be more roads and trails, a transportation hub and about half of the 400 acres will remain greenspace, she said.

There will be an area east of Niagara College for a business district, which could also include a hotel, and a

new residential area along Concession 7.

As phase 2 of the plan is developed, there will be more public information sessions and an online survey, said Vilella, and the plan will be refined according to local input before being presented to regional and town council for endorsement. Up-to-date information will be shared on the region's website.

Lord Mayor Pat Dart said one of the concerns he's heard from stakeholders is that the plan is moving forward too quickly, and told Vilella he's glad to hear there will be more opportunities for public participation.

He also asked "how tall" the tall buildings would be, and reminded Vilella that "we have to be cautious and cognizant" that Glendale is a gateway to NOTL.

Following the meeting, town planning director Craig Larmour clarified the height restrictions according to the 2010 secondary plan - it allows for a variety of building heights including a 20-storey structure on the White Oaks site, subject to the approval of council at the time of rezoning and site plan review.

Lincoln Interiors closing shop after decades of operation



Lincoln Interiors owner Petra Wiens-Browning. (Lauren O'Malley)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

After more than 30 years of operation, Lincoln Interiors in Virgil is closing its doors. "It's bittersweet," says Petra

Wiens-Browning.

The decision follows a plan she and her husband made — to retire early enough to enjoy time with their children.

Unfortunately Mark didn't stick with the plan — he was

a victim of terminal cancer four and a half years ago.

"The decision to close the store was hard to make," says Wiens-Browning. "I love this business, I love the customers, the suppliers, the networking. But my family needs me."

Wiens-Browning has two children, 10 and 12 years old, and aging parents who live with her. "My dad has dementia, so he needs full-time care," she explains.

Her father is Siegfried Wiens, a rather prominent business owner in Niagara. He started Peninsula Upholstery and Flooring in 1963, and then doubled his empire when he purchased Lincoln Interiors from Henry Wiens in 1978. Henry Wiens (no relation) subsequently used that money to invest in the Prince of Wales Hotel.

Wiens-Browning was groomed to run Lincoln Interiors. She started working in the Virgil store after school and weekends in her teens, and then went away to university at Wilfred Laurier. When she graduated with a degree in business administration, she had her choice of jobs at large companies such as IBM and GM. Her parents would support any decision she made but, "They suggested I just try the store for a little while — and I never left. I'm so glad I made this choice: this is the best community to live and work in."

The goal is to sell off all of the store's inventory in a big closing sale, starting Friday, Sept. 21. The sale will go on as long as there is furniture to sell — Wiens-Browning hopes to be closing the store completely before December.

However there is a lot of inventory. "We'll be emptying our warehouse as well. It's one of the properties being considered for the medical centre, so we may need to clear it out sooner rather than later."

Wiens-Browning plans to lease out the building when the current business closes, but is in no hurry and hasn't yet begun that process. "I don't want to be rushed out of the building," she says. The plan is to keep the doors open for as long as there are items to sell, and then take a step back and assess what her next steps might be.

"It might be fun to work two or three days a week — but not right away. Right now my parents and kids need me — and I'm happy to take it easier for a while."

Chautauqua corn roast cancelled after all

Richard Harley
Editor

Plans for a rain date for the Chautauqua corn roast were thwarted after all, said members of the Chautauqua Residents' Association.

The group said it was just not feasible to coordinate another day so soon when all of the volunteers could attend.

John Gleddie, president of the CRA stopped by the paper this week to let us know the news.

However, there are some recent developments for Chautauqua residents.

The CRA has a new website that anyone can visit and keep up-to-date on group happenings, neighbourhood meetings and keep in touch with organizers.

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Angry turkey on the loose

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Angela Santilli was minding her own business, training for a marathon in early September by taking a run along the Niagara River Parkway by Fort George.

As she ran, a tour bus slowed and its passengers stared at her. Annoyed by their rudeness and assuming they were just amazed that anyone would be running in the extreme heat, she ignored them — until they started pulling out their phones and filming her, or more precisely, behind her.

She looked back and was shocked to see a giant wild turkey on her heels.

She ran around trees and bushes trying to evade the bird, but it wouldn't give up chase. She ran into traffic — which had thankfully stopped to watch the drama — dodging around and between cars, and the bird kept on.

Finally a man in a pickup truck yelled out his window, "jump in!" She pulled on the door only to find it locked, and had to run around the truck two more times before she could grab the handle and leap to safety.

"I was terrified," she says, describing the incident.

"I was totally defenceless — if that man hadn't stopped I don't know what might have happened."

You might be laughing right about now. Turkeys are inherently comedic. But this aggressive Tom is no joke.

Another local resident, who is withholding his name for fear of being mocked about his run-in with a turkey (perhaps the same one) had to see his doctor and get a tetanus shot when the bird flew up to his face and scratched him using its talons.

"If it didn't happen to me, I wouldn't believe it," he says. He was also out for a run, in May, on the path between the river and the Carolinian forest near the fort.

"I saw the turkey from afar, and kept my distance, leaving it totally alone. And then it came at me, picked up speed, made it beside me. I turned to scare it by waving my arms and roaring loudly, and it attacked me using its talons on my face. I'm lucky I was wearing sunglasses, because that thing was going for my eyes."

Several other locals — and tourists — have experienced or witnessed attacks.

Sarah Regier was out for an evening walk recently, on the bike path by the river near the fort.



A wild turkey lurking near Fort George. (Lauren O'Malley)



Local resident Andrea Paradis captured a jogger running away from a wild turkey in September. (Supplied)

"As I pass by, someone says, 'Don't get chased by the turkey!' Then I see the bird, it's a really big turkey, getting closer. It comes right at me, I can tell it's angry, its head is moving back and forth."

Regier continues, "A man passing by on his bicycle said, 'Oh my god, you're going to have to be saved from that bird.' He stopped and slammed his bicycle on the ground several times and scared the bird away."

"A woman watching the whole thing said the day before her husband was attacked and he was saved by the honking of many cars passing by — she said, 'I didn't believe him until I saw you get chased,'" says Regier.

Santilli still has nightmares about the experience, and won't go anywhere near Fort George or let her children go there either. Many other locals have chosen to avoid the area completely. But cars and

tourists and the uninitiated are still encountering the brazen beast daily. It stops traffic by staring down vehicles and refusing to move.

Ken Reid, Niagara-on-the-Lake Canine Control, has had many calls regarding the bird's attacks since the spring. He refers people to the Niagara Falls Humane Society, which is generally responsible for wildlife.

"I went to check him out. I found him on the corner of John Street and the parkway. I parked the car at the side of the road and watched him for a while, then approached him carefully. His head is higher than my waist — he's a big bird. Next thing you know he was looking at me, and so I got right back in to my car and drove away," says Reid. He wonders if the bird is protecting a mate, and warns they do use their talons and aim for the face.

Anecdotal reports tell of

sweaters being torn, blood being drawn. Yes, by a turkey, and yes, somewhat comedic. But not.

It is perhaps this humorous aspect that has various levels of government handing off responsibility. Town offices refer reports to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as does the Niagara Falls Humane Society.

Joad Durst, resource management supervisor at the ministry, offers some insight. "Turkeys can become aggressive in the fall as young male birds start competing with elders in the flock," he said.

Unfortunately this doesn't explain the attacks that have happened consistently since May. The bird may have been defending a nest in the spring, but this is still clearly aggressive behaviour.

Durst suggests people ignore the turkeys and walk past them — a message our particular bird is ignoring. He continues, "Turkeys can also respond aggressively to shiny objects like car windows, mirrors and polished car doors. We recommend covering the reflection if possible."

Not very feasible along the busy parkway.

Some other advice from the MNRF includes shaking a stick at the wild turkey if it approaches you, or keeping a leashed dog close at hand.

Durst suggests calling Parks Canada, whose property the turkey has decided to patrol. Their official response to the situation is as follows: "The turkey has been seen in the general area but Parks Canada has not received any comments or direct complaints at this time. We understand other jurisdictions are looking into this issue and we are in communication with them."

The Niagara Regional Police have received many calls about the bird as well, and have attended the scene more than once, only to find the bird gone, or roosting in the forest where they can't safely reach it.

The NRP was unavailable for an official response at press time, but communication has been established and they are taking the matter as a serious safety hazard for the citizens of Niagara.

We will follow up on this for our next issue.

In the meantime, police do request that people call them only when there is an incidence of a person in immediate danger.

In such a case, they would treat the event in the same way as they would any animal attack.

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Pages 10 and 11

The Lake Report

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Don't forget to come out to The Lake Report launch events Sept. 28 and Oct. 6! Details on Page 4.			
23	24	25	26
NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Public skating - 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Katey Gatta - 3 p.m. - Silversmith Brewing Co	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	Table tennis - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Rotary Club of NOTL - 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Golden Age Club - 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Urban Design Committee - 5 p.m. - Council Chambers	Simply STEAM Story Time - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Drop-in painting - 3 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre All candidate meetings - Willowbank lower level Fall Trivia League - 9 p.m. - The Exchange
30	1	2	3
FTeen Youth Book Club - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Public skating - 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Ukesters Sunday Ukelele Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	NOTL Social Club - 10 a.m. - Sweets & Swirls Café Kareem Abbas "Attraction" - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Little Red Tail Hawks - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre The Antisocial - Beginner Belly Dance with Safira! - 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre	Table tennis - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Rotary Club of NOTL - 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Golden Age Club - 12:00 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre The Makeshift - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Active Transportation Committee - 4 p.m. - Council Chambers	Simply STEAM Story Time - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Movie: Phantom of the Opera - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Drop-in painting - 3 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Fall Trivia League - 9 p.m. - The Exchange NOTL council candidate meetings - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Canadian Legion H...

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	20 Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Community Social - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Committee of Adjustment Hearing - 7 p.m. - Council Chambers Camp Kosciuszko Lecture Series - 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum Weekly Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. - The Legion	21 Healthy Kids Community Challenge: Power Off & Play - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum/St. Andrew's Church The Old Winos with Andy Griffiths - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - The Old Winery Vinyl Flux - 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - The Olde Angel Inn	22 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Garrison Village Electronics Recycling & BBQ - 11 a.m. - Simpsons Pharmacy Celebrate the Harvest - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - Southbrook Vineyards Harvest Party - 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. - Pondview Estate Winery Public skating - 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum/St. Andrew's Church
26 Community Centre Drop-in bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Building with Brandon - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Akwe:go Afterschool Program - 4:40 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Weekly Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. - The Legion	27 Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Drop-in bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Building with Brandon - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Akwe:go Afterschool Program - 4:40 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Weekly Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. - The Legion	28 NOTL Newcomers Club - 9:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Healthy Kids Community Challenge: Power Off & Play - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library The Wild - Hike to the Lake - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library NOTL Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Drop-in Mah Jong - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Lake Report Official Launch Party - 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Mori Gardens	29 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Garrison Village Buffet breakfast - 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. - St Davids Firehall Etsy: Made In Canada: Niagara - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Garrison Village St. Davids Fall Fair & Handmade Market - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St Davids School Public skating - 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena Theatrical Cemetary Tours - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL History Museum/St. Andrew's Church
3 Community Centre Drop-in bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Practical Genealogy - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library DNA Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Akwe:go Afterschool Program - 4:40 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Exhibit & Opening: Kareem Abbas - Attraction - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	4 Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Drop-in bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Practical Genealogy - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library DNA Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Akwe:go Afterschool Program - 4:40 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Exhibit & Opening: Kareem Abbas - Attraction - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	5 P.A. Day Healthy Kids Community Challenge: Power Off & Play - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library NOTL Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Movie - Avegners: Infinity War - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Knit-a-Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Queenston Firefighters spaghetti dinner - 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Queenston firehall	6 The Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Garrison Village Battle of Queenston Heights commemorative tours - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Brock's Monument Public skating - 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena Niagara Rhythm Section with Johnny Max & Geoff Daye - 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. - The Old Winery Lake Report Official Launch Party - 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Community Centre

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Council says farewell to those not seeking re-election



Before the tough work of the last council meeting of this term began Monday, councillors took some time to celebrate their four years working together and to recognize those who have decided to hang up their political hats — at least temporarily.

Lord Mayor Pat Darte began the feel-good pats on the back by thanking Coun. Maria Bau-Coote for her “hard work and dedication over the last eight years. Your perspective through the health care lens has been a great asset to our community. You’ve got such a good background in it, you’ve brought a lot to the table and to our residents,” he said, wishing her the best in her work at the Good Shepherd Centre in Hamilton, which provides help to the homeless and vulnerable in society, a job she has come to love.

To Coun. Jamie King, Darte said, “Your experience in the education sector has provided a unique and welcome voice to this table. Your dedication to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro board has been commendable and I know you were very passionate about it. We wish you all the best as you continue your work at Sheridan College and as you pursue your Master’s of Education.”

Darte said he has known Coun. Jim Collard since they were boys, although Collard is a little older and hung around with Darte’s older siblings when they lived down the road and swam in the lake together.

“We don’t have enough time to begin listing all your accolades that span over 30 years as a council member. Your service to the town and residents is greatly appreciated.”

Darte spoke of just a few of Collard’s accomplishments, including working on Town committees and council, the Community Alliance of Schools, and as a board member of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

“We wish you all the best as you cruise around the world with your wife Patty,” said Darte.

After gifts were presented to the three councillors — sweaters with the town logo — he said the Town would also be planting a tree in their honour.

Coun. Terry Flynn was the first of councillors hoping to

sit at the table next term to offer congratulations to each of the departing members of council. He said it will be “weird” to be the senior member on council, and mentioned that he used to be the bus monitor on the school bus that Bau-Coote took to school. He knew King from his early days as well when he was hired by King’s mother to work as house manager at the Shaw Festival, and then worked with King when he was hired as an usher. “I used to be his boss,” he said.

He spoke of the days when Collard attended Cub meetings at Flynn’s house — his parents were pack leaders — and then later, in Flynn’s early years on council, when Collard was his mentor in dealing with contentious issues. “I’ve looked up to Jim for many, many years,” Flynn said.

He spoke of councillors working together, not always agreeing but always wanting the best for the town. “We’re going to be losing some great leadership around this table.”

Coun. Paolo Miele said it has been a pleasure and an honour to work with each councillor around the table, and he’d learned a lot from them in the last four years. “We will miss you.”

While she couldn’t share childhood memories with them, over the last four years Coun. Betty Disero said she has come to learn that although they all come from different neighbourhoods, different backgrounds and different lifestyles, “we all bring something to the table, and when we take the time to have a good solid debate on issues we collectively can find what’s in the best interest of this town, and I’ve enjoyed doing that. It’s been an interesting and good four years for me on council. I’ve learned a lot from you.”

She also thanked the staff for their hard work, and the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake for allowing her to be part of this term of council.

Coun. Martin Mazza said it’s been a pleasure for him to be at the council table with the others and to work with them, and he’s come to consider them all friends. “We all grew as a council,” he said, and although there were fights, bickering and arguments, “there were results too.”

He congratulated Collard on his retirement, thanked

Darte for his leadership, clerk Peter Todd for his innovations and CAO Holly Down for taking the job “and for helping us get through some rough times, for saving us some headaches and for always having our backs.”

“Going down memory lane,” Bau-Coote said, she remembers Flynn being her bus monitor, 25 cent chips at the Virgil Variety Store, and having printed paper agendas when she first joined council. “Now we have come along way to iPads and Livestream,” she said.

Never in her wildest dreams growing up had she ever expected to be sitting at the council table, she said, “and I never would have been here if it wasn’t for the faith of the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

It was a ‘humbling experience’ being the first female deputy lord mayor, she said, and then to be elected to a second term.

She thanked staff, Darte for his leadership and for rallying council together after a tough start to the term, and added a plea to the next term of councillors. After watching the dedication of the Town’s volunteer firefighters, and seeing a 10 per cent increase in fires, she asked the incoming council to look after the fire department and the needs of the volunteer firefighters.

She also thanked Gerry Benito of Chautauqua for encouraging her to run for council, telling her she only needed to make decisions that would enable her to be able to look herself in the mirror. She said she’s glad she listened to him. “This experience has taught me so, so much,” she said, adding politics might not be completely out of her blood.

King thanked Darte, staff and Dowd “for helping me out when I was going to look like a donkey — you pulled me back from the brink.”

He also thanked the residents. “I’ve never felt such a trust and privilege representing the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

His time working with the hydro board “was fantastic,” he said, and thanked councillors, “each and every one of you,” for being an inspiring group of people. He also thanked friends who helped him out with advice, and his wife, who would watch council meetings

and let him know when she didn’t agree with him.

King, who has taken an out-of-town job that takes a lot of his time and makes it difficult to give his all to council, also said he might be back in politics some time in the future.

Collard thanked Darte for his “excellent” leadership, and described council as a team that didn’t always have to agree, but had to learn to move forward.

“We didn’t mess it up — we got it right most of the time,” he said.

“We worked hard to make NOTL the kind of town people want to live in.”

He said he’s looking forward to a holiday with his wife, and not having to rush home for council.

“I hope we’re leaving the town in a better place than we found it,” he said.

“I’m so proud to be able to be part of it. Thank you all.” Darte acknowledged the

help he’s received from council the last four years, and thanked them for being patient with him.

He said he ran for lord mayor because he wanted to make some changes in town, and he wanted to show his kids that it’s possible to make a difference. What he and councillors have gone through have made them stronger, he said, and added to residents, “thank you very much for allowing me the past four years.”

Photos: Scout week brings out a bit of history



British red coats celebrate their victory after reenacting a battle. (Photos by Richard Harley)



Scouts “larping” as the American blue coats march their speaker cannon away in defeat after reenacting a losing battle with the British red coats.

Cadet program creates leaders, good citizens

Penny Coles
Staff

To Cpl. Thomas Forsyth, the best part of being an air cadet is the camaraderie.

Yes, the weekly meetings and training programs are about work and discipline, but they are also about having fun, he says.

The 13-year-old Crossroads student, beginning his second year as a member of the Niagara-on-the-Lake squadron, is meeting all the stated goals of the organization — he's enjoying making new friends, taking part in interesting and unique challenges, participating in diverse training exercises, improving physical fitness and learning valuable work and personal life skills. The one remaining goal, he already has in spades — his self-confidence is quickly evident at the open house held recently for the squadron as it begins a new season.

It's immediately obvious Forsyth is one of those teens who adults would recognize as a good'un, someone who will give 100 per cent to succeed at whatever he chooses.

"He's a very strong young cadet doing well in this program. He will go on to do great things," said Capt. Jody Lemoine, commanding officer of the 809 Newark Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

But then he has confidence in all of his cadets — most of them are great kids when they join, or at least have the potential to be, "and we'll find it. You don't have to be the best to be here — you just have to want to be," said Lemoine.

The cadet program aims to create good citizens, and Lemoine sees that in the youth he helps train. The squadron had some "amazing" cadets, some who have gone on to work in other cadet training programs,

and some to careers in the military.

The cadet program, he said, is particularly well-suited to 12 and 13-year-old kids who want to find their niche — they don't have to be the best academic students or great at sports, but they will find something they're good at, that interests them, and they will make friends who hold similar interests. The program is attracting an increasing number of girls, and Lemoine says one strong benefit he sees among all cadets, but even more so with the girls, is the confidence they gain.

"When we teach them leadership, it gets rid of any self-esteem problems they might have. It's great to see that."

In addition to regular meetings, cadets are encouraged to take training programs offered by the national organization during the summer.

Forsyth was recommended to attend a general training program at the Trenton Air Force Base this summer, along with a six other first-year cadets from the squadron. Lemoine said he'd like all of his first years to attend the introductory program, but the numbers don't always allow him to send them all.

"I absolutely loved it," said Forsyth of his two-week training camp. "It was one of the best experiences I've ever had."

The camp offered many interesting opportunities, he said, including a flight on a military passenger jet from the air base.

He also enjoyed the field training exercises, where cadets practised survival skills, and the classes on aerospace, Canadian history, and the basics of flight.

He didn't mind that it involved some hard work and a lot of walking, he said.

"We were there to learn. General training is the course where they expose you to something new every day."

Experiencing a little bit

of everything the air cadet program offers helps younger cadets decide what courses they want to take in the future, he explained.

"I'm very confident now and hopeful that I can take some basic aviation technology and aerospace programs."

Forsyth, who hopes for a career as a pilot, said he'd recommend the air cadet program to anyone interested in aviation, but there are many other skills to learn, he said, including leadership and good citizenship — as well as having fun.

"I also really enjoyed the camaraderie with the other cadets. By the end of the camp we were almost like a family."

The highlight of his stay at camp, he said, was the opportunity to be the drill team commander in his flight — a group of about 30 cadets — and taking part in the drill team competition.

"We didn't do very well, but I was still honoured to be chosen team commander."

Forsyth was also chosen to receive an award for being the Top General Training Cadet for his squadron of about 150 teens, an award, he said, that was based on criteria such as good behaviour, leadership qualities, active participation and showing a high level of enthusiasm for the program.

"It's a good award to get, the top of your squadron," said Lemoine. "Awards at summer training camps are not easy to get. They're not given out lightly. If you're at Trenton and you get an award, you've earned it."

The camp, Forsyth said, was just one of the great experiences he's had since joining cadets a year ago.

"I never expected that shortly after joining I'd get to go up in a glider. I got to see over the whole town — it was really amazing to see. There have been lots of events I'd never have gone to if cadets

hadn't taken me there," he said.

"I've enjoyed every minute of it, and found it very rewarding."

Lemoine says although the cadet organization is connected with the military, it's not just for kids who want a career in the military.

"It's a very well-rounded program. We teach leadership and citizenship, with an objective of giving back to Canadian youth. We're very clear we're not a recruiting engine — that's not our objective. We offer a challenge, and what we get is dedication. Youth like challenge — if it's boring, or if it's handed to them on a platter, they're not going to stay around."

This year, the local squadron has moved to a new location, hopefully a permanent one — in recent years, they've gone from the former Virgil fire hall, to the former Virgil school, and most recently, the former high school, all which turned out to be temporary.

A long-term stay at somewhere they're offered storage space and enough room for activities is vital, and they feel they've found that at the Croatian National Centre on Line 3, which also offers a great outdoor space for games and practice drills.

The program is open to youth aged 12 to 18, with regular Wednesday meetings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. and Mondays for those who want to attend optional training. Anyone who feels they might want to join is welcome to come to a Wednesday meeting.

One of Lemoine's favourite quotes, from Oliver Wendall Holmes, sums up what he believes is the cadet experience: "One's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimension."

The cadet program opens young minds to new ideas, and they will always be the better for it, he said.

Terry Flynn

PART 2

Let's Continue our Partnership



The level of excellence of the Town Council, and therefore the community it represents, is directly proportional to the degree of the citizen involvement, as demonstrated by your vote — I need your continued involvement.

Each challenge we face seems greater than in previous years. We are in the process of completing our Community Official plan which needed updating to reflect smart and sensitive planning for Queenston, Glendale, St Davids, Old Town, Virgil and the rural areas. We need tools to allow sensible development that is sensitive to areas existing infrastructure. Smart Growth is not the right fit for all areas.

Fundamental issues facing our community include:

- Expansion of public transit to include all communities plus a network for safe travel of bikes pedestrian and cars between are communities.
- Fair and proportional costing for policing
- Continued pressure on provincial government to all planning issues to be dealt with at the local level. LET US DECIDE!!!
- Better planning to allow small communities to maintain a school presence.
- A plan for a continued and improved health care program/facilities for all residence meeting today and future demands
- Encouraging greater youth involvement in community matters.

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Harvest dinner to benefit Amy Janzen

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Harvest is an important time in an agricultural community. It's a time of abundance, of collaboration, of gathering.

That's why Kirsten Young decided to host a harvest fundraiser for her friend-since-childhood Amy Janzen.

Among her many and ongoing challenges, Janzen lost her husband Ben to an aggressive form of cancer earlier this year. This has left her on her own with two

young children (Kendal is three and Brooke is six), coping with all that entails.

But of course in this town you're never really on your own. Janzen's mother Christine Forrer says, "One of the things that brings me down to my knees is the immense amount of love and support from this community."

Young and her fellow organizers also chose the harvest theme because Janzen's immediate and extended family are farmers: they own Forrer Farms on East West Line. "Harvest seemed like an ap-

propriate time to get everyone together," she says.

As fortune would have it, the family also includes two professional chefs. Janzen's cousin Justin Duc is co-owner of the wildly successful Oddbird restaurant in St Catharines, and Young and her husband co-own In the Smoke Cookery. Both will be providing the food for the event at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre on Oct. 1.

Dinner will be served family-style, from large shared plates at large shared

tables. Duc and his Oddbird partner Scott White will be running an oyster bar and serving chicken wings among other things. Nathan Young will be serving up the BBQ food for which he has become well known.

Dozens of people from the community have stepped forward to contribute in any number of ways. Wineries such as Tawse, Peller Estates, Ferox, Megalomaniac and Big Head have made generous donations. The chefs are donating their time. Friends and family have volunteered

to serve at the event. Young's brother Neil Sachs and his friend Mark Bergen will be playing acoustic music at the dinner. It all speaks volumes about the tightly-connected residents in our small town.

"I think people just want to help, but they don't know how," says Young. This is one way people can offer their support for Janzen. "Come on out and have a nice dinner and do something good," Young says. All profits from the event go to Janzen and her children.

You can learn more about the family and their many struggles over the past decade at Janzen's blog, We Are the

Janzens. "She's so courageous — it's heart wrenching," says Young, in tears.

Tickets for the fundraising harvest dinner are \$65; there will be a cash bar. Capacity for the event is 120; reserving in advance is strongly recommended. More information and tickets can be found via the Eventbrite page, via the Oddbird or In the Smoke Cookery Facebook pages, or by email at inthesmoke-cookery@gmail.com.

"It's all about helping out the whole family: they're the nicest people in the world," says Young.



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Fox run draws crowds for a cause

Richard Harley
Editor

The annual Terry Fox run in Niagara-on-the-Lake drew a larger crowd than ever this year, said Joan King, who has been the champion of the event in town for the last decade.

She estimated there were more than 300 people who came out, she said, as she watched the runners finish the five-mile route.

Runners started and ended at Simcoe Park, taking a scenic route along the Niagara Parkway trail after heading down King Street.

Food was on sale, generously provided by local businesses to help raise some extra money towards the cause — the end goal being to fund cancer research that will hopefully save lives.

Photos of Terry Fox when he passed through NOTL were on display for participants to see, courtesy of King's personal collection.

Fox famously ran across Canada in 1980 to raise awareness for cancer and died from his own cancer a year later. Since then his legacy has continued across the country, his name being widely celebrated as one of Canada's greatest heroes.

Joe Pillitteri, who put together a team and comedy night to raise money for the Terry Fox Foundation, said he estimates the total raised this year was more than \$85,000.

Photos by Richard Harley



Runners and riders alike line up along King Street for the annual Terry Fox run.



Thomas Turner listens to Eye of the Tiger while he's taking his run.



Lord Mayor Pat Darte kicks off the run.



Joe Pillitteri makes sure he's running while the camera's on him.



Gus Koroneos

"Leadership is not about the next election, it's about the next generation".

I am running for town council because I want future generations to see and enjoy all the beauty, bounty, and splendour that NOTL has to offer.

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Plans, Visions, and Ideas

- ◆ Create a collegial atmosphere around the council table, working together for our community
- ◆ Putting policies in place to ensure a bright future for NOTL
- ◆ Preserving our prime agricultural lands, heritage and history
- ◆ Responsible, suitable, measured development
- ◆ Enhanced transit for our seniors and people with disabilities
- ◆ Meeting recreational needs for the growing population of NOTL

MEET GUS

Sunday Sept 23rd | St Davids Lions Club
2:00-4:00pm | 1462 York Rd NOTL

Sunday Sept 30th | Royal Canadian Legion Upper Hall
2:00-4:00pm | 410 King St NOTL

Light refreshments will be provided



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THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro has applied to increase its electricity distribution rates by \$1.29 per month.

This application may impact your bill for the next 5 years, starting May 1, 2019.

HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD'S COMMUNITY MEETING



WHEN? Tuesday, October 9, 2018
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
(Doors open at 6:00 p.m.)

WHERE? OEB Community Meeting
Niagara-on-the-Lake
Community Centre
Simpson Room
14 Anderson Lane
Refreshments will be served.

REGISTER Registration is not required, but appreciated! Visit oeb.ca/community-meetings for details.

If assistive devices or any other special considerations are needed, please email AODA@oeb.ca.



WHY ATTEND?

- Learn more about your utility's costs and rate application
- Find out how you can get involved in the OEB's process
- Provide your comments to the OEB about your utility's application



WANT TO MAKE A PRESENTATION AT THE MEETING?

If you would like to make a 5-minute presentation at the meeting, please email us at registrar@oeb.ca or call 1-877-632-2727 (toll-free).
The OEB file number for this case is **EB-2018-0056**.



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- Proud owner of the Scottish Loft here in Niagara-on-the-Lake which is run by my family and loyal staff members.
- Owned a cottage rental here for over seven Years.
- Involved in the town's grape and wine industry for over 11 years.
- One-year course in archaeology at Sheffield University, UK.
- Bsc. Hons. Degree in hotel and catering management.
- Completed 706/2 (UK equivalent to an advanced Red Seal as a chef).
- Post-grad Niagara College in leisure and tourism management.
- Two years as a historical researcher for the Welland Historical Society.
- Volunteer rugby assistant coach for AN Myer school's 2010 Season and 2011 Season.
- 2008 Volunteer for the NOTL history museum , doing research for 41st Foot Regiment.
- 2007 - 2008 volunteer researcher at Lock 3 Welland canal.



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Drag show story time coming to NOTL library

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

"Library" and "drag show" are two concepts we don't often see associated. The NOTL public library aims to change that.

Toronto drag performance artists Fay (Slift) and Fluffy (Soufflé) will be at the library for an all-ages reading on Sept. 29 at 2 p.m. "It's really just a lovely story time — with a lot of sparkle," says Debbie Krause, the library's community engagement coordinator.

The event is part of Culture Days, a nation-wide initiative to celebrate arts and culture over the last weekend of September every year. "We really wanted to be part of that event, and this reading seemed like a perfect fit," says Laura Tait, library manager.

Story time with drag queens is also part of a mandate within the library — strange as that may sound. "We're about being open to and supportive of all members of our community regardless of race, gender or

sexuality. LGBTQ+ is one group that seems to run under the radar a bit around here, so this seems important to do," says Krause. There are even plans to make this kind of thing a regular event, as one way to celebrate diversity.

"We want to encourage children and their families to be tolerant and accepting of differences," says Krause.

The stories read by Fay and Fluffy are in the children's shelves at the library, and generally focus on diversity, personal strength, and tolerance.

The reading will run for about an hour, and will include a little bit of dance, creativity or drama. (Where there are drag queens, there will be drama.)

Krause and Tait have vetted the act themselves, and are confident that it is not over-the-top or racy in any way. Both performers work with children professionally (one is an educator with the TDSB and the other is a child care provider), and are respectful, engaging and fun, within a supportive and inclusive environment.



Fay and Fluffy

You can register to attend the reading via the library's

website, and drop-ins are welcome.

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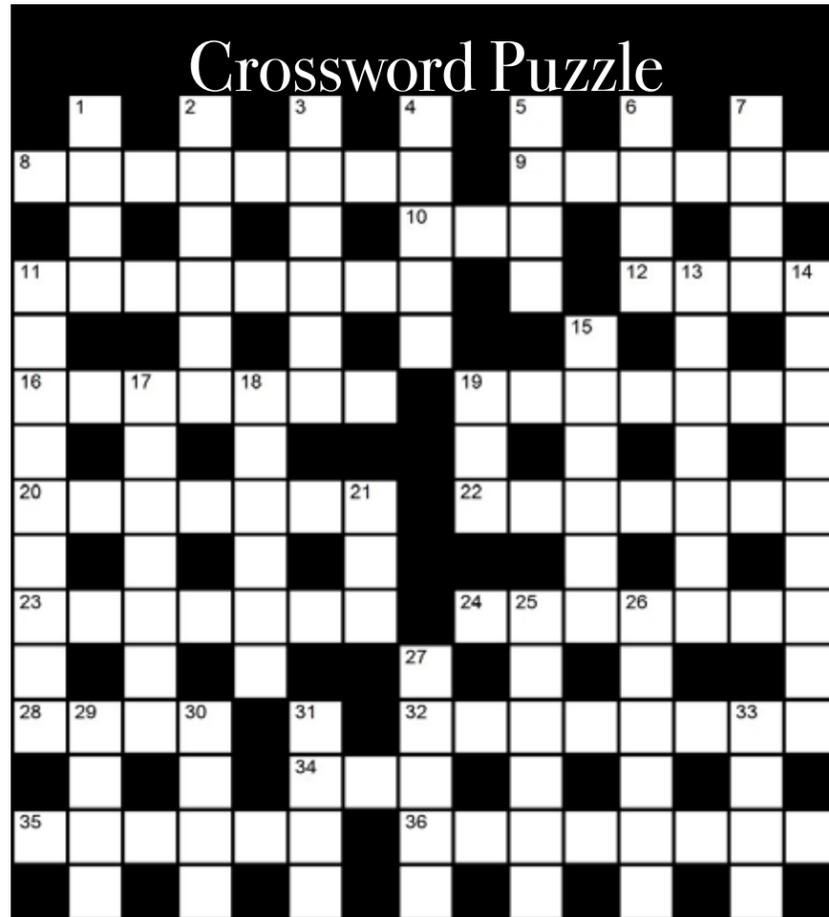
GAMES



Have some fun

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**
 8 Bucharest resident, for example (8)
 9 To an excessive degree (6)
 10 Company known as "Big Blue" (1,1,1)
 11 Hearty Sunday lunch (3,5)
 12 Fan blade (4)
 16 Mobs (7)
 19 Close-cropped hair style (4,3)
 20 Solvent (7)
 22 Before sunrise (7)
 23 Piled carelessly (2,1,4)
 24 As good as it gets (7)
 28 Scotch partner (4)
 32 Flattened (8)
 34 Hard, durable wood (3)
 35 Seller (6)
 36 Science of heredity (8)
- Down**
 1 Game played on horseback (4)
 2 Capital of Croatia (6)
 3 He asked "What is truth?" (6)
 4 One (5)
 5 Knock (4)
 6 Very detailed picture receiver (1-1,2)
 7 Scheme (4)
 11 Pictures of people (9)
 13 Applaud (7)
 14 Twisted into a confusing mass (9)
 15 Command (6)
 17 Pepper (7)
 18 Morning assemblies (6)
 19 Drinking vessel (3)
 21 Salesperson (3)
 25 Nosedive (6)
 26 Cracked (6)
 27 Wonky (5)
 29 Singles (4)
 30 Assistant (4)
 31 Tender (4)
 33 Apiece (4)



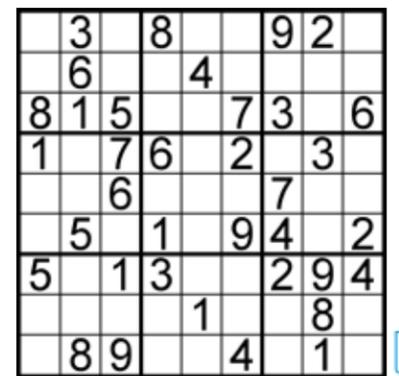
Want the answers early? Scan the puzzles using HP Reveal. (Must be following Niagara Now's channel.)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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MLS# 30665327
Perry Quinn*

285 Wellington, NOTL \$1,425,000



MLS# 30685854
James O'Connor* & Margie van Gelder*

213 John Street, NOTL \$999,000



MLS# 30664876
James O'Connor* & Margie van Gelder*

310 Tanbark Rd, NOTL \$1,795,000



MLS# 30676727
Robert Pozzobon*

58 Johnson St, NOTL \$2,250,000



MLS# 30656160
Michelle Reynolds** & Stefan Regier*

215 Ricardo #217, NOTL \$1,298,000



MLS# 30667521
Doreen Ibba*

85 The Promenade, NOTL \$599,000



MLS# 30682975
Cheryl Marr*

92 Loretta Dr. #17, NOTL \$599,000



MLS# 30684005
Helen Mosca* & Aaron Cherney*

19 Ridgeview Cres., St. Davids \$658,000



MLS# 30666782
Dan Stefels*** & Katie Redekopp***

18 Shakespeare, NOTL \$675,000



MLS# 30618523
Bev Wiebe*

14 Aberdeen Lane, NOTL \$729,000



MLS# 30680206
Heather Matte*

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Council flip flops on development issue

Penny Coles
Staff

Some confusion over information given to councillors on Monday's council meeting led to a contentious end to the final meeting of this term of council.

With no chance to deal with routine business until regular meetings of the incoming council begin in December, council approved four requests to bypass council approval of site plan agreements, delegating the approval to Town planning director Craig Larmour.

One was for a distillery on Lakeshore Road, and one was the site plan approval for the new medical centre, once the rezoning was approved.

Two came at the request of Maurizio Rogato, representing Solmar, for two developments - 135 Queen St., a commercial building that has been in the works for about five years, the other at the corner of Four Mile Creek Road and Line 9 for a five-unit commercial building that includes a restaurant and patio.

Councillors had no problem with Rogato's request for the St. Davids site plan approval after a zoning change had been okayed by council to allow the commercial use.

But after some discussion about the Queen Street development - the one that has the hoarding around it for years, with a mural on it to improve the look of the wooden boards - councillors decided the property was too important to rush and the site plan should come back to the new council for approval.

The development, which includes a large building that would incorporate a restaurant, office and retail space,

has been back and forth with the Municipal Heritage Committee several times while details were ironed out, and then when the developer wanted to change the design of the building to make it more financially viable - it has been an expensive waiting game for the developer while an archeological study held up construction.

"I wouldn't want to see delays, especially on Queen Street. I'm sure nobody wants to see it delayed," Rogato told councillors.

Coun. Jim Collard agreed. "The proponent has done everything the MHC has asked them to do." The hoarding has been there for a long time, he said, adding he hoped council would agree to delegating site plan approval to the planning director.

But Coun. Betty Disero disagreed, saying the delay would be a matter of a couple of months, and because of the location and some changes to be made, including a water fountain design and some trees planted at the request of the MHC, she thought it should come back to council.

Coun. Martin Mazza initially agreed with Disero, saying he was not a fan of delegating "bigger items like this. I think it should come back to the next council. It gives residents the opportunity to speak on the record. By delegating this step, it makes it harder for residents to do that."

Mazza said he didn't like delegating approval on either property - one on Queen Street and the other at the entrance to St. Davids.

When planning director Craig Larmour stepped in to say to say the Queen Street application would still have to go back to the MHC, with a report to come back to the new

council, Collard withdrew a motion he planned to make to delegate site plan authority and the matter was dropped, although the motion to delegate authority on the Four Mile Creek property passed.

But more than two hours later, as the last council meeting was wrapping up, Coun. Maria Bau-Coote stood up and said she had been asked to do a favour, to put 135 Queen St back on the table, with some new information councillors should hear about - some "misinformation" they'd been given. She didn't say who had asked for the favour.

Disero questioned the process of allowing the discussion back on the table when it had already been dealt with, and where the request had originated, but was told it was at the chair's discretion. Lord Mayor Pat Darte put it to a vote, with everyone else supporting re-opening the discussion.

Larmour explained the MHC had made recommendations to council and council had approved them, so it wasn't clear after all that the matter would be coming back to council. He said he would clarify that information before approving the site plan, should council delegate approval to him.

Disero argued it was just a 60-day delay, MHC would be meeting in that time span, and after waiting years, a little longer would not affect the outcome of the development.

"We agreed it was an important location. We don't need to rush it through," she said, asking what had changed in the two and a half hours since they decided not to delegate site plan approval.

Disero and Coun. Jamie King said no to delegating authority but it was approved by everyone else, including

Mazza, who had been adamant the decision should not be rushed.

Following the meeting, he said once he understood MHC had made its recommendations and they'd been approved, he felt there was no need for council to see the site plan.

"MHC supported it. They gave their approval. They found it fits their criteria."

When he opposed it, he thought MHC members hadn't yet signed off on the development, but once it appeared they had, he had no problem delegating site plan approval, he said.

But Disero is still concerned that residents won't have an opportunity to comment on the project, which is very different from what was originally proposed, and that public input would only be possible if the issue comes back to council. "There were substantial changes to the building," she said. "I think it should have gone to a public forum."

Council also learned that an earlier decision of theirs on property owned by the same developer has been appealed. A decision to have the Town initiate heritage designation on three John Street properties, including the Randwood Estate, and one on Charlotte Street, has been appealed.

But councillors were told Monday that until the appeal is heard, no work can go forward on those properties - they must be treated as if they are already designated until the appeal is heard and a decision made.

The developer wants to put up a six-storey hotel on the Randwood property, and although designation doesn't stop that, it would put some controls on the site and limit what can be done.

Consider nature in this election

Owen Bjorgan
Biophilic World
OPINION

Typically when I'm driving down Niagara's back roads, I'm scanning all the visual inputs that I need to be aware of. Signs, other cars, and wildlife. As the weather begins to cool down and the daylight hours recede, I expect a barrage of every colour imaginable, with big letters, big smiles, and big promises.

A few years ago, I wasn't enormously interested in politics. I certainly understood that politicians here are elected people (you'd hope) with jobs that shape many facets of our everyday lives. However, for the first time this year in my life as a NOTLer, I drive the back roads and find myself taking

a really good look at the election signs. Are they signs of a more balanced, eco-friendly Niagara?

I dive into a deeper thought- what are this candidate's values, how up front are they about these values, and which demographic will empower them? Like I said, I never used to take this too seriously. That is until some of these people hit something close to me - the scarce but significant remaining natural areas of Niagara.

In the past five years, Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Region as a whole have felt an undeniable wave of urban development. A couple of the many common denominators between these proposed developments is that they are all notably environmentally inconsiderate, and that they

oddly received little concern or resistance from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and its current board.

I can't comment on the quality or grandeur of these developments, but I will say that the locations for all of them were ecologically insensitive. When any of these municipalities has their elected officials vote on these projects, the NPCA ultimately has the last say on what happens to that land.

How could their decisions be so ill informed? It happens when the people we elect aren't aware of our environmental sensitivities. Perhaps we missed an opportunity on the world stage to bring forward large, unique developments while protecting a remaining green space. Maybe,

we could have had both with some modifications. The outcomes are not entirely, but largely, trickle down effects of the candidates we elect.

So now I realize local politics is connected to the health of the natural world more directly than I thought. My involvement in Niagara Falls' Riverfront Community had me standing in front of city council many times, trying to remain poised and professional, but feeling humanly desperate on the inside - because I knew the huge influence these people could have.

With the election sneaking up, I encourage you to discuss environmental thoughts and policies with potential candidates. How can our vote on election day indirectly or directly lead to these positive outcomes?

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ARCH | TEXT: with Brian Marshall
Victorian? Queen Anne?



Rowley House. (Supplied photo)

We've all likely heard of a house described as a "Victorian" in one breath and then as a "Queen Anne" in the next. What's the difference between these labels? Are they interchangeable? And what's correct?

So, what is a "Victorian?" It's tough to say, since the definition tends to vary widely. Sometimes it may refer to any architectural style introduced during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837 - 1901) or alternatively, any house built during the same period or then again, only certain architectural styles such as Second Empire, Queen Anne, Stick, Shingle and Richardsonian Romanesque. On the other hand, "Queen Anne" (whether in the staid English, heavily decorated American or middle-of-the-road Canadian interpretations) is a defined architectural style; where each "style" includes specific building forms, architectural and design elements. For example, a Queen Anne house will, amongst other elements, generally present an asymmetrical facade (main entry off centre), a medium to high pitched roof with irregular lines, front facing gable(s), decorative cladding/details on vertical surfaces that are commonly interrupted by bays, oriels, and often a square, round or polygonal tower. A porch and/or wrap-around verandah is de rigueur. At the end of the day, the expert will define a house by its style and use "Victorian" in terms of the era. For more on Niagara's architectural styles, you can visit: www.heirloomhomeguide.ca



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Colonel John Butler



Denise Ascenzo
Featured

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, there are many references to Lieutenant Colonel John Butler — Butler's Barracks, Butler Street, Butler Homestead, the Best Western Colonel Butler Inn and Butler's Bar and Grill, formerly Butler's Sports Bar (Sporty's to locals). There was also Colonel John Butler Public School which closed in 2011 and Niagara College calls one of their beers Butler's Bitter.

But who exactly was Colonel John Butler?

Many American websites portray him as a war criminal, while Canadian websites see him as an honourable founding father of Upper Canada — quite the dichotomy.

Butler was born in 1728 in New London, Connecticut and lived there with his parents, three brothers and one sister. In 1742, when Butler was 14-years-old, his father moved the family to Fort Hunter — considered the frontier — in Mohawk Valley, New York.

It was during the French and Indian Wars (1754-63) that Butler joined the Indian Department Regiment of Sir William Johnson, 1st Baronet and advanced to the rank of captain, partly due to his ability to speak several Iroquois and Seneca languages, which he had learned as a young boy while living in the frontier.

Butler was involved in the battles at Ticonderoga and Lake George (upper New York State) as well as the captures of Fort Frontenac, Fort Niagara and Fort Montreal, all of which were in 'New France'.

During the peace that followed these battles, which took place from 1764 to 1775, Butler moved back to the Mohawk Valley, married a woman named Catherine Bradt and raised five children. He amassed a substantial estate of 26,600 acres which he named Butlersbury, near Caughnawaga (now Montgomery County, New York).

The American Revolution forced Butler to make a decision: Was he American or Loyalist?



Lieutenant-Colonel John Butler 1725-1796. (Supplied)

By May of 1775, his decision was made and Butler left for Montreal in Lower Canada, accompanied by his oldest son, Walter Butler, Daniel Claus (later superintendent of Indian Affairs in NOTL), Joseph Brant (chief of the Six Nations), and the Honourable Yost Schuyler (a Tory supporter and trusted friend of the Mohawk allies).

Butler's wife and children remained in Butlersbury, thinking this was the safest place for them. Unfortunately, with Butler's decision to remain loyal to Britain, his family was detained by the Americans and placed under house arrest for the remainder of the war.

In November of 1775, Butler was transferred from his post in Montreal to Fort Niagara, which is still standing today on the American side of the Niagara River where it joins Lake Ontario.

He was sent to persuade the Seneca Nation in the region to stay neutral during the revolutionary war. When the American Revolution was in full swing, Butler would later be ordered to use the

Six Nations, of which the Seneca were members, as allies in several battles.

It was the Battle of Oriskany in Mohawk Valley, NY, claimed to be one of the bloodiest battles during the revolutionary war, where Butler's skill in carrying out military campaigns was magnified. After this battle, Butler was elevated to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and given the authority to raise his own regiment, Butler's Rangers.

In July 1778, Butler led his Rangers and Iroquois allies in the Battle of Wyoming (in Pennsylvania) where he defeated Zebulone Butler (no relation) and took Forty Fort (one of the four forts in the Wyoming Valley).

Americans suffered great losses during this battle: homes were burned, crops were destroyed, children were abducted and many prisoners as well as fleeing soldiers were executed and scalped.

This is where we must start to consider whether Butler was a true soldier or a war criminal. From a Loyalist point of view, it was a successful battle.

From the American point of view, it was a cowardly act against civilians.

Butler claimed he did not give orders for prisoners to be killed and scalped and that the Native Allies were only following their traditions of war — and were not being paid for scalps as was rumoured.

This battle became known in American history as the Wyoming Valley Massacre.

American novelist Joseph Altsheler referred to Butler as a turncoat and a villain who sided with the Indians against white settlers. To the British, Butler was a loyal and skilled commander.

When the revolutionary war was over in 1783, Butler and his Rangers were in control of the frontier outposts throughout the Great Lakes region, from Niagara to Illinois.

The bitter result of Butler remaining loyal to Britain was that all of his land in the Mohawk Valley was confiscated. His wife and children were removed from the property and sent packing to Fort Niagara where

many other loyalists were now fleeing to as well.

Fort Niagara became very crowded with the loyalist who sought refuge there during the war. Butler sent his Rangers across to the west side of the Niagara River to complete surveys of the land. This was the start of the expansion of Upper Canada and a means to accommodate the loyalist settlers wanting to leave this new republic called the United States.

Officers and regular soldiers were granted land first, then all settlers who swore allegiance to the King and Crown received their land grants.

Butlersburg, the first town in what is now Niagara, was colonized in 1781 while the revolutionary war still was being fought. At this point, Butler and his family had started their lives over again as farmers and landowners.

A few years later, the residents changed the name to Niagara and in 1792, Sir John Graves Simcoe, first Lt. Governor of Upper Canada changed the town name again to Newark, declaring it the

Capital of Upper Canada.

The impending war (or as we know it the War of 1812) was brewing once again between France and England. With the new republic of the United States being a staunch supporter of France, Simcoe moved the capital of Upper Canada from Newark to York (now Toronto). With this move in 1798, the town's name reverted back to Niagara.

One might ask how we got the name Niagara-on-the-Lake. In the late 1880s, Canada Post was having great difficulty determining where to send mail addressed to Niagara. There was also a town by the great falls named Niagara and with little fanfare, the post office declared that the towns would be called Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Falls.

I digress — back to Butler and his family who now live in Niagara.

Butler became one of the great leaders of Upper Canada, his achievements being Deputy Superintendent for the Indian Department, Justice of the Peace and Commander of the local Militia.

He was also involved in the establishing of St. Marks Anglican Church and the Masonic Order in Ontario.

The Masonic temple on King St. is Lodge 2. The first lodge (designated Lodge 1) which Butler was instrumental in founding was burned by the Americans in the War of 1812.

Butler died in the town of Niagara on May 12, 1796, three years after his wife. Both of them are buried in the Butler family burial ground on the Butler Homestead site in Niagara-on-the-Lake. You can find this burial ground at the west end of Butler Street.

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

The Niagara Historical Museum is located at 43 Castlereagh St. in Old Town, in Memorial Hall.

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

Denise is a regular Niagara Now contributor. Her full profile can be found at niagaranow.com.





COMMUNITY

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



The sun sets on summer.

Radio Noir to hit Ravine Vineyards in November

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

Barbara (Babs) Worthy's home is punctuated with beautiful vintage pieces, giving it the feel of an Art Deco lounge. There are elaborately sculpted lamps, Tamara de Lempicka-like paintings, and large leather sofas. And, of course, a 1920's-era microphone.

Hardly surprising, then, that Worthy's passion runs towards radio, especially in its golden age. After her theatre career, she spent two decades at the CBC as a radio producer, and has spent the same number of years creating on-stage radio plays.

Radio Noir is, in fact, a term coined by Worthy's Shaw Festival cohort Neil Munro. They used it to describe live theatre recreations of old radio plays, complete with sound effects.

"The foley artist — the person creating the sound effects — is actually on stage with the performers. That's one of the things that makes it fun," says Worthy.

It's almost a form of transparent theatre: there is no trickery, no embellishment. The actors, in street clothes, hold their scripts and stand in front of microphones. The foley artist and musical accompanist are also on stage.

"What I love about it is the immediacy: the audience can



Barbara (Babs) Worthy. (Supplied)

see the work in front of them, and they can travel in their minds," enthuses Worthy.

With Radio Noir there is also an aspect of time travel: Each play is an adapted recreation of a famous 1930's to 1940's suspense-filled radio series, complete with the type of commercials that would have run during the broadcasts. Worthy adapts and writes the scripts herself, customizing them for each incarnation.

Worthy describes families uniting around the radio in that televisionless age, listening to these dramatic whodunnits and sharing the thrills. She hopes for a similar experience for Radio Noir audiences. "I want them to feel transported by the story — the drama, the mystery, the romance," she says. There are three dates

scheduled: Nov. 15, Nov. 29 and Dec. 14. The plays include Lucille Fletcher's 1943 radio thriller, Sorry, Wrong Number, Edgar Allan Poe's classic gothic fiction The Tell-Tale Heart, and After the Thin Man, based on the novel penned by Dashiell Hammett.

The plays will be animated by local actors and Shaw Festival alumni, including Worthy herself, co-producer Patty Jamieson, Guy Bannerman and Peter Millard. Shaw Festival associate music director Ryan de Souza will provide musical accompaniment, and Allan Teichmann is the foley artist.

General admission tickets to each performance are \$40, and include a glass of wine and a snack. Tickets can be purchased at Ravine Vineyards.

Get out your selfie sticks & send us your photos!

Send to: editor@niagaranow.com



Members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church blow some bubbles Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness month in September. (Submitted photo)



The Solheim Ladies and the Senior Ryder Cup Men after a recent tournament. Front row: Michele Darling, Martha Cruikshank and Harry Huizer Back Row: Cathy Murray, Sue Gagne, Yolanda Henry, Robin Foster, Barbara Ahluwalia, Elaine Lavery(hiding), Lisa Allen, Patty Garriock, Margot Richardson, Judy Mantle(hidden), Louise Robitaille, Donna Lailey, Brodie Townley, Jim Panetta, Stephen Warboys, Warren Tutton, Doug McCulloch, Darryl Fry, Ted Wiens, Jim McMacken, Paul Dickson, Don Allen, Neil Cuthbertson, Barry Day and Don Cruikshank. (Submitted photo)

SCENE OF THE WEEK



Niagara-on-the-Lake Nationals have started the season off with a 2-1 record. The Nationals split a home and home with the Niagara Whalers and won their second straight game against the London Lakers last Friday at home. The Nationals play their home games Friday nights 7 p.m. at the Meridian Credit Union arena. The team will host the Kingsville Kings Friday Sept. 21. Anyone interested in helping volunteer or get involved with the team can contact Head Coach Spencer De Wolfe. 905-380-2929 spencerdewolfe@gmail.com www.notlnationals.com



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms:
The Irish Harp Pub

The Irish Harp is located in the heart of NOTL on King Street. This Irish-style hangout offers the truly Irish experience with live Irish music to go with it. The "Harp" plays to your foodie senses offering some great grub to go along with your favourite Irish ale or lager. After eating we checked out the restrooms, though small each has a capacity for two users with private stalls. A stylish sink and ornate mirror makes the "wash-up" a pleasure. Definitely the restrooms echo the cozy feel you get with this pub experience. Well played by the Irish Harp.

3/5 Gold Plungers



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Heavy Hearts getting lighter



Jamie Gorman and Justin Glatt of Heavy Hearts. (Lauren O'Malley)

Lauren O'Malley
Staff

September is for many a time of new beginnings. So is it too for Heavy Hearts, the musical project of locals Justin Glatt and Jamie Gorman.

Glatt and Gorman sit on a couch in their Virgil rehearsal space, finishing each other's sentences. They're millennials and musicians, with sleeves of colourful ink up their arms, band-logo t-shirts, considered hair, and lots of black garb. They're also smart, funny, self-deprecating and polite.

The two long-time friends have been playing music together in this incarnation for about six years, Glatt on vocals and Gorman on bass.

"We started this band officially in 2013, but by then we'd been fumbling through it together for three years prior," says Glatt.

Gorman adds, "We've had different variations of this band for years, starting in Justin's garage — so hot! So

cold! So loud!"

The band has grown steadily in success, peaking with a UK and European tour earlier this year.

"Germany was sick, it was incredible" says Gorman. "We played in a real small town and had very low expectations. When we got there, there were people wearing merch items of ours that we had sold out of two years ago. The crowd was amazing, singing the words back to us. Just a surreal experience so far away from home."

While the tour was a hit, they knew changes were imminent. Drummer Davis Maxwell would be leaving the band on their return home.

"We knew going into it that it would be his last one so he could focus more on his recording career," says Gorman.

They were scheduled to go into the studio in March, having just touched down in January. They took the time in between to find ways to love playing music again, after having become a bit cynical about the industry. They

didn't write any new music, or do much of anything with the band.

"People were probably assuming we were finished," says Glatt.

But they had booked time at their chosen recording studio, so they decided to go in empty-handed and write on the spot, for three weeks in March.

"Writing in the studio was a real challenge. It was rough at the time. It is something we won't be doing again," says Glatt, shaking his head. Gorman laughs in agreement.

They took guitarist Riley Jensen with them to work with their producer Cory Bergean at Pebble Studios in Ottawa. The three of them share writing credits on the bouquet of songs that will make up the new record.

When they had wrung out the songs, they brought in drummer Joey Demers. "We wrote the drum parts and he performed them, with his added flair," says Gorman.

The new line-up — which will shift Demers to key-

boards and percussion, and be completed with JJ Sorensen on drums — gives the band an opportunity to switch lanes a bit. "The new material allowed us to say, 'Let's change, let's sound different.' We sounded dated — and we didn't want to be an EMO band in our late 20's," says Glatt with a chuckle. Gorman adds, "We also found ourselves playing with bands that were taking their toll on us, and we wanted to move on from that scene."

They describe the new Heavy Hearts sound as "a little more chill, maybe a little more dance-y. It still falls under the category of alternative rock, but that's a pretty broad genre. Of our new songs, one's the heaviest we've ever written, and one is the softest." The first single, Cut Too Deep, was released online on Sept. 12, and has been getting a good response.

"That song is the closest to the old sound. There are some pieces of this new album that are totally different. I don't know what

people are going to think," explains Glatt.

Gorman and Glatt manage the band themselves.

"It has its pros and cons. Pro — we have complete control and do everything ourselves. Con — we do everything ourselves," says Glatt.

"Being musicians as kids, and not focusing on school very much — sometimes the business know-how is over our heads and we have to make a few calls to professionals to get answers," Gorman adds.

In the streaming era, there are musicians who choose not to follow the tradition of recording a group of songs and releasing them as a "record." Regarding this, Glatt says, "You could just roll out one single after another, but putting out an album gives you the opportunity to rebrand, and create excitement. Plus it's hard to maintain momentum when you release one single at a time."

"An album allows for a proper roll-out that happens. Selfishly, I like the idea of a record: Here are 10-12 songs

that reflect the same head-space," Gorman adds.

Glatt finishes the thought: "A consistent vibe as opposed to a collection."

That vibe is still being built throughout the band's oeuvre, from songwriting through to performing.

"If it all goes the way we want it to it will be a totally different experience, a new sound," says Glatt.

"We also plan on approaching live shows and how we play them a lot differently. We want to use this rebrand to be the best band we have ever been," Gorman adds.

The band will play its first live show with the new line-up at HopeFest in Waterloo on Sept. 22.

"We definitely want to go back to the UK, and we're planning on making our way back in to the US. I'm mostly just excited to see how this record goes," Gorman says simply.

"My dream is to be able to continue to make records with my friends — I hope I get to do this forever."



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