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# The Lake Report

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Hyper-local news for Niagara-on-the-Lake



Vol. 9, Issue 8

Canada's most-awarded community newspaper

February 26, 2026



## Join us for Women's Day photo March 8

International Women's Day is just around the corner, and The Lake Report is proud to continue its tradition of celebrating the incredible women of our community.

Over the years, our International Women's Day coverage — and especially our big group photos — have become some of our favourite and most meaningful pages to publish. They're a snapshot of the strength, diversity and spirit of women in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and we'd love to make this year's photo the biggest yet.

We're inviting all women in town to come be part of it on Sunday, March 8, 2026, at Simcoe Park.

### Here's the plan:

We'll start gathering and mingling at 1 p.m. so everyone has time to connect and enjoy some light refreshments.

The photo will be taken at 1:30 p.m. SHARP.

Please plan to arrive early to make sure you don't miss out. Feel free to invite any women you know — moms, daughters, sisters, friends, neighbours — everyone is welcome.

# NOTL protests amalgamation

Residents and council both say historic area has a unique identity worth preserving



Grinning, regional chair Bob Gale flashes a thumbs-up while entering Niagara-on-the-Lake's municipal building Tuesday night, as protesting residents warn his and the province's push toward amalgamation threatens the town's unique and historic identity. PAIGE SEBURN

Paige Seburn | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

**A** packed Niagara-on-the-Lake council chamber, and a protest at town hall, made one thing clear Tuesday night: many residents fear merging Niagara's cities and towns

would shrink local representation and change the town they chose to live in.

Councillors pressed Niagara Region chair Bob Gale on the financial case behind the proposal to amalgamate Niagara's

municipalities, with one describing it as an "existential threat" to the community of NOTL.

"When you get amalgamated, certain areas get priority and your voice gets smaller," said resident Anita Barber, who was

among those with protest signs opposing the idea.

"Governance is smaller and it's less representative."

Gale is proposing a region-

*Continued on Page 3*

# Court permanently restricts Konzelmann outdoor events

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A Superior Court judge has permanently barred Konzelmann Vineyards Inc. from hosting outdoor events not permitted under its zon-

ing — and the winery says none will proceed unless council grants approval.

The case stems from an application by neighbouring farmer Brox Company Limited that questions whether the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, also named in the

case, properly enforced its bylaws after the Lakeshore Road winery hosted outdoor events not permitted under its zoning.

Last week, the judge ruled Konzelmann held outdoor events in 2024 and 2025 "contrary to the permitted

uses" under the town's zoning bylaw and inconsistent with its approved site plan agreement.

The judge issued permanent injunctions barring the winery from any future use not permitted under its zoning bylaw, as amended,

its site plan agreement, or any licence issued by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

The judge has not yet ruled on remaining issues involving the town —

*Continued on Page 4*

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# Amalgamation won't fix Niagara's problems, Brock professor argues

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

“The A word” is back in the spotlight. That’s Brock University professor Charles Conteh’s euphemism of choice for amalgamation, a phrase that has taken over headlines in Niagara this past week as the regional government’s chair ignites efforts to make this move a reality for Niagara. Conteh, who teaches public policy at Brock, says he’s doubtful merging Niagara’s cities and towns together will, as regional chair Bob Gale has said, lower costs and make governance more efficient.

Gale is pushing to bring the 12 municipalities of Niagara together into one city, or combine some of them to form four cities total in the region. His push saw him appear before Niagara-on-the-Lake council this past Tuesday to argue his position and face questions and concerns from councillors. In his letter to Niagara’s mayors, received by them Feb. 19, Gale raises the idea of creating either one city of

Niagara or four. A four-city model could include an east Niagara city combining NOTL, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie. Conteh, however, said he’s skeptical of the idea. “I don’t quite know, in the context of Niagara, how amalgamation would really resolve any substantial concrete issues at all,” he said. Amalgamation took place in Ontario under the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario government led by Mike Harris in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The province merged smaller municipalities into larger cities such as Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa. Supporters argued the mergers would lower the cost of public services and save money by reducing administrative duplication. Conteh said the evidence does not support that claim. “We haven’t seen in the academic literature, at least within the context of Ontario, of any major cost savings at all,” he said. He noted that some services delivered by a larger entity — such as public health and solid waste management — can produce



Prof. Charles Conteh of Brock University expressed skepticism as to whether amalgamation would work in Niagara. If a four-city model were to be implemented, Niagara-on-the-Lake could merge with Niagara Falls and Fort Erie. SUPPLIED

“We haven’t seen in the academic literature, at least within the context of Ontario, of any major cost savings at all (as a result of amalgamation).”

CHARLES CONTEH  
PUBLIC POLICY PROFESSOR AT BROCK UNIVERSITY

savings. Others, including firefighting and parks, do not. Conteh said intermunicipal co-operation offers a better solution than amalgamation. He added that too much of the debate focuses on dollars and cents instead of broader economic con-

siderations. “There is an economic development argument for amalgamation,” he said. “Now, I don’t hear chair Gale talking about that. I hear him talking about efficiencies, and I worry that things are being conflated.” Amalgamation can also

reduce representation, Conteh said. A town such as Niagara-on-the-Lake could go from a mayor and eight councillors to fewer representatives within a larger municipality. “You could lose representation, you could lose identity,” he said. “And rep-

resentation is major, right? Because with identity comes with a desire for voice, for being able to shape your own destiny.” Conteh also said he views Gale’s proposal as the latest sign of long-standing tensions within Niagara Region. He pointed to divisions that predate the region’s creation in 1970, particularly between north and south Niagara. He cited the economic shift from what was then Welland County to Lincoln County, and from Welland to St. Catharines. He also addressed NOTL directly. “NOTL is not that excited about a fusion with Niagara Falls,” Conteh said, adding that as tourism expanded in Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake felt pulled into its orbit, creating new tensions. He said amalgamated cities can be harder to govern because of differing local histories and priorities. A single-city model, he added, would pose particular challenges. “Do you expect to see a united Niagara?” he said. “Think again.”

daniel@niagaranow.com

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## Gale 'tasked' with gathering 'results' on amalgamation from Niagara residents

Continued from Front Page

wide governance review that could reduce the number of elected officials — noting the Niagara region, collectively, has 126 municipal politicians, two more than the number of members of provincial parliament at Queen's Park — and potentially restructure municipalities through four-city or single-city amalgamation.

A crowd of about 50 residents gathered ahead of the 6 p.m. meeting.

The push for amalgamation became public knowledge after Gale sent a Feb. 19 letter to Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing calling for a review of Niagara's governance structure — including possible amalgamations — and later that day asked Niagara's mayors in a separate letter to provide feedback on potential structural changes, attaching his letter to the minister.

Gale asked Niagara's mayors to submit their feedback to him by Tuesday, March 3 and said he will forward initial recommendations to the province no later than the first week of March.

At Tuesday's meeting, Gale said the review is being driven solely by him and his office because of what he described as regional tax increases in recent years and a \$2.7-billion shortfall in infrastructure projects.

"We are broken right now," he said.

At a press conference Wednesday, Premier Doug Ford said a Niagara amalgamation would be led by Niagara itself. When The Lake Report asked whether his government had tasked Gale with pursuing amalgamation, Ford said it would be up to Gale and the mayors to decide on it.

When asked about studies suggesting amalgamation does not produce cost savings, Ford said, "I've never seen that."

Ford said he has "not specifically" met with Gale about the proposal. At council, Gale said he has spoken by phone with ministerial staff on the matter.

Several councillors acknowledged ongoing fiscal and infrastructure pressures, but questioned whether merging Niagara's municipalities would address those challenges.

Gale said he did not have new data to support amalgamation and argued



It was a tense Tuesday night at NOTL town hall as regional chair Bob Gale took on pointed questions from Coun. Erwin Wiens about the future of regional amalgamation. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

**"I have been tasked with bringing in the results from the citizens."**

BOB GALE  
APPOINTED NIAGARA REGION CHAIR

his "data" was based on the issues he described and discussions he's witnessed over the past 27 years that repeatedly raised governance models such as four-city or single-city structures as possibilities.

Council also raised concerns about the short turnaround and asked why March 3 was selected.

Gale said it "was a Friday" and that he believed the date "set enough time to provide the mayors to respond to us." A councillor pointed out that the date falls on a Tuesday.

But when pressed on who would ultimately decide whether amalgamation moves forward, and how, he said he did not know.

"I know that I have been tasked with bringing in the results from the citizens," he said.

"What does local decision making and local representation look like in your minds?" Zalepa asked. Gale said a council no greater than eight members.

"I can't see any councils being any bigger than that, because the 'more' doesn't make it efficient," he said.

A few minutes later, Coun. Sandra O'Connor asked Gale, based on his wording, who had "tasked" him with the amalgamation idea.

Gale responded, "I never used those words."

"This was my idea," he said. "Nobody told me to do this."

To Zalepa, Gale "opened a significant can of worms" without providing evidence of restructuring being financially beneficial.

Zalepa said the regional

fect, \$786 for policing, more than any other Niagara municipality.

Gale said policing represents a significant financial commitment but argued that he has only been in the regional chair role for two months.

Wiens replied, "You want to see the end of Niagara-on-the-Lake."

At different points during the meeting, spectators in the gallery could be heard gasping or laughing in reaction to different statements from Gale.

As disruptions continued during the evening, Zalepa called for order and warned he would clear the chamber if necessary.

Outside the chamber, residents said they remain unconvinced of the endeavour.

"We don't want to see it swallowed up into a bigger municipality," said Steve McGuinness. "Niagara-on-the-Lake is one of the oldest towns in Canada."

"We want to preserve the unique character."

McGuinness said Gale is "right about taxes being too high and going up too fast," but said there's no evidence showing this is how savings would actually occur.

He said there was "virtually no consultation" before the proposal was announced and said in Hamilton and Toronto, amalgamation "replaced one problem with another."

"The risk is it will get worse, not better," McGuinness said.

Barber said she worries amalgamation would erode what draws people to NOTL in the first place — its natural beauty, historic character and cultural institutions such as the Shaw Festival — rather than the large-scale attractions found elsewhere in the region.

"The two can coexist, but one should not be overshadowed by the other."

Opposition is also crossing municipal lines, with some NOTL residents planning to attend a protest in Thorold Thursday, after Fort Erie residents showed up at the rally in NOTL Tuesday night.

The town plans to create a council-staff working group to develop an autonomy strategy, assess governance risks and prepare for possible restructuring.

Gale and his staff did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

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This story is part of a series about NOTL's "Wild West" of wineries, examining zoning bylaws, restrictions, how some wineries are ignoring those bylaws and restrictions and operating as they please, and how the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake doesn't appear to be enforcing its own bylaws. And we look at whether the solution is to change the rules to ease restrictions or crack down on those who aren't following the existing rules.

## NEWS

# Judge rules Konzelmann's outdoor events violated rules

Continued from Front Page

whose counsel maintains that enforcement of bylaws is discretionary under Ontario law and that the court should not interfere with that discretion.

Konzelmann president Jim Reschke said no outdoor events have been booked, scheduled or planned and none will be hosted or marketed unless the winery receives approval, adding it is working with the town on its original submission and has revised it based on staff feedback.

"We respect the ruling and understand the importance of following proper planning and legal processes," he said.

Reschke said the goal of the application is to "work collaboratively with the town and to ensure compliance," while offering "small-scale, low-impact experiences" such as intimate wine tastings and small ceremonies in the vineyard.

The town confirmed

no court order has been issued with respect to the municipality and that no new planning applications have been submitted for 1096 Lakeshore Rd. since a zoning bylaw amendment application was received June 9 last year and deemed complete July 2.

In an email, Brox president Ed Werner said the company is pleased with the ruling but argues it highlights "the negative consequences of the town's decision not to enforce its bylaws." He described the decision as "the end of the beginning."

"Regardless of the judge's decision, Konzelmann Winery is again asking council to legalize its activities and allow it to conduct commercial activities in the agricultural zone," said Werner.

He pointed to public court records in which Reschke testified that town officials told the winery it could continue activities not permitted under existing zoning, without being stopped



A Superior Court judge has ruled Konzelmann's 2024-2025 outdoor events were not permitted under Niagara-on-the-Lake's zoning bylaw. PAIGE SEBURN

— activities Brox argues went beyond enforcement discretion.

Werner said the situation led to neighbour suing neighbour and the municipality being drawn into the case. He argued the dispute could have been avoided had the town acted on the "dozens of complaints."

"This is no longer a matter of enforcement but a much deeper issue of town officials knowingly acqui-

escing to the illegal use," said Werner. He argued if municipalities are not required to enforce their bylaws, council could decide whether to apply its own laws "against whoever they choose."

"Council would then be lawmaker, judge and enforcement — all in one body," Werner said.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said he has no confirmation that such a conversation

took place between Reschke and town officials, but said the ruling provides "very good clarity."

"It basically says the property owners need to comply with zoning," he said.

Zalepa said that technically, if council approves a zoning amendment permitting outdoor events, that would comply with the court order.

"But I think that's a larger conversation."

He said the application must first go through the full review process, including evaluation under the town's zoning bylaw and official plan, along with any required public meetings.

"That's always the case."

Zalepa said the town's new special events policy and bylaw, approved this winter, provides clarity on how events are managed and said any activities beyond that policy would have to be addressed through a zoning amendment.

Werner, however, said the new policy and bylaw give

the clerk's office authority "to determine who, where and how many special events can be held without regard to zoning bylaws, or site plans."

He said allowing commercial operations in agricultural areas — rather than encouraging farming — would disadvantage compliant operators and negatively affect nearby residents "due to the uncontrolled tourist activities."

Town communications co-ordinator Marah Minor said town staff continue to review the application and resubmissions, noting the winery remains subject to existing zoning and would require both a zoning bylaw amendment and a site plan amendment to permit outdoor events.

She said the town will review the application to ensure it complies with provincial and local planning rules and is processed in accordance with the Planning Act.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



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# 1,000 words: Canada-U.S. game



If a picture is worth 1,000 words, this one says even more: visibly distraught, red-clad patrons at the Sandtrap react as Canada falls to the United States in overtime in the Olympic gold-medal game on Sunday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

# Museum expansion inches forward

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The expansion of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum moved another step closer to reality Monday as the town hosted an open house to gather community input on the proposal.

The plan calls for a two-storey addition behind the museum's Memorial Hall and a one-storey addition to the west that would connect to it. A ramped entrance from Castlereagh Street would provide access to the new one-storey space.

The expansion would span 43 Castlereagh St., home to the museum, and 25 Castlereagh St., the site of the Janet Carnochan House on museum-owned land.

Attendance at the open house was light, but those who came voiced their support for the museum's growth. Museum member David Snelgrove said he saw little downside.

"There's very little negative aspect to it," he said.

Snelgrove asked whether the proposal would go before the municipal heritage committee. Town planner Victoria Nikoltcheva and



The long-planned NOTL Museum expansion was discussed in a town open house on Monday. The museum is looking to raise \$10 million to fund the expansion. DAN SMEENK

NPG Planning Solutions senior planner Mary Lou Tanner said it would.

NPG planner Daniel Banatkiewicz said a second phase of an archaeological assessment is still required at 25 Castlereagh St. A first phase has been completed there, and assessments have already been completed at 43 Castlereagh St.

The project would require the removal of four trees, reducing the total on the property from 39 to 35. Planners said existing parking can accommodate the expansion and heritage fea-

tures will not be affected.

The two-storey addition received a heritage permit in 2021. Tanner said the museum has applied to amend the permit because costs have increased since then.

To proceed, the museum is seeking to rezone the lands from part institutional and part residential to a site-specific institutional designation.

No decisions were made at the open house.

The museum is raising \$10 million for the project. It received \$2 million from

the federal government last year and will receive \$500,000 from the town over five years, in addition to other grants.

The museum marked its 130th anniversary last year. It operates out of the former Niagara High School, built in 1875, and Memorial Hall, built in 1907. A link connecting the two buildings was added in 1971.

A public meeting on the development is scheduled for March 3 at 6 p.m. in the NOTL town council chambers.

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# Native Centre board members counter misconduct allegations

Paige Seburn  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Conflicting accounts are re-emerging at the Niagara Regional Native Centre, where current leadership is pushing back against allegations of intimidation and mismanagement from past leaders and staff.

This comes amid disputes over a Sept. 11 protest outside the centre in Niagara-on-the-Lake, as well as over staff levels, membership approvals and legal cost reimbursements.

Former board president Sean Vanderklis, who resigned Feb. 26 last year, said he received a lawyer's letter on Oct. 17 alleging defamation related to the dispute.

A copy of the letter reviewed by The Lake Report shows counsel for former board member Lacey Lewis demanding the removal of social media posts and a public retraction, and reserving the right to pursue legal action.

As of right now, Lewis' counsel has not pursued legal action.

At the time of the interviews for this story, Lewis was an active board member. She has since confirmed she resigned on Jan. 13, but wouldn't provide her reasons for resigning on the record.

Any references to governance requirements are drawn from the centre's posted bylaws, approved and affirmed in 2012, which remain the only publicly available bylaws on the centre's website.

Board president Tammi Givans did not respond to a request to confirm that this

is the up-to-date bylaw by press time.

**Board denies intimidation, rejects staffing and membership concerns**

On Oct. 16, 2025, The Lake Report published accounts from Vanderklis, a former staff member and board member, who said they and others at the centre have faced intimidation, mistreatment and mismanagement from the board of directors.

Givans said that she doesn't know anyone who has dealt with these issues since she joined the board, which was April last year.

"I have heard their stories of what happened previously," she said. "They're valid, is the thing."

"They just were not happening with the people who are currently sitting on your board."

It is not clear which iteration of the board Givans was referring to in that remark and she did not respond to a request to clarify by press time.

She said there may be "residual feelings" from past issues at the centre, but "no massive conflicts" involving bullying, leaves of absence or anything similar taking place now.

"We all work together here. The board comes in and helps."

Lewis also rejected claims that current board members have intimidated staff.

"We never received one complaint," she said.

Givans also disputed what Vanderklis previously described as an understaffed centre, saying it has 41 funded positions with two staff on educational leave, three on medical leave and



Tensions have resurfaced at the Niagara Regional Native Centre, with current leaders rejecting allegations of intimidation and governance concerns. PAIGE SEBURN

six positions vacant — leaving 11 of the centre's 41 jobs not staffed.

Former board members also raised concerns about membership application handling.

Givans said the board does not arbitrarily delay or waive applications, noting the centre currently has about 100 members, with four applications denied and one membership revoked. Additional unratified applications expected to bring the total to "well over 100 active members," she added.

**Court ruling sparks cheque dispute**

Questions have also been raised about cheques issued to former board members following a September 2024 court case.

In 2023, board members Lacey Lewis, Wanda Griffin, Wendy Wilson and Bobbi Jones Japp were removed amid conflict and allegations of mistreatment of staff and a new board was elected at a special members meeting.

This change was ruled invalid in September 2024 after a judge found it violated the centre's bylaws and Ontario law, ordering

their reinstatement later that year.

In previous coverage, Vanderklis said the cheques should not have been issued, arguing "the court ruled that they were only able to receive \$80,000" — not additional compensation.

"That's all they're entitled to," he said.

Lewis disputed that characterization, saying total legal costs exceeded \$170,000 and her and the others' cheques were reimbursements "through the proper governance, the proper channels" for out-of-pocket expenses not fully covered by the court's \$80,000 award.

Under the bylaws, directors receive no remuneration for serving on the board but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in performing their duties. The bylaws do not outline an approval process for such reimbursements.

According to Ontario civil procedure, courts have discretion to award a portion of legal costs to a successful party, but such awards typically cover only part of the fees incurred and

are not automatic.

"Sometimes, as a volunteer, you don't ask for that stuff back. Sometimes, as a volunteer, you might," Lewis said, adding she was not involved in the approval or signing of the cheques, citing a conflict of interest.

Givans did not respond to a request for board records or minutes of the decision by press time.

Vanderklis said the ruling restored the board's authority until the next annual general meeting, which he said was not held in time, but Givans said provincial rules allow the next meeting to be held in early 2026 or a maximum of 15 months after the previous one.

The annual general meeting is scheduled for March 6.

**Conflicting narratives surround Sept. 11 protest**

A small protest held Sept. 11 outside the centre has become a point of dispute.

Vanderklis previously said community members organized the protest at staff's request, though no employees participated, and alleged the board was holding a meeting without notice, which he said is not permitted.

He said staff reached out to him beforehand and alleged they were threatened with dismissal if they participated and were sent home from the centre.

Givans and Lewis disputed that account, saying it was not a board meeting but that Lewis and two other directors were at the centre preparing orientation materials for newly appointed board members.

They denied threatening staff, saying one director briefly left to relay information about the protest and no employees were confronted. They added that no notice was required because it was not an official meeting.

Givans said the centre contacted police after receiving "several frantic calls and messages" about online discourse surrounding the matter and sent staff home as a safety precaution on authorities' advice. Lewis added that the board first attempted to address the situation through Indigenous liaison channels but called police when those supports were unavailable.

Vanderklis said his concerns stem from conversations he had directly with staff.

"Maybe what they're saying is true. I don't know," he said. "But what I can speak with absolute certainty on is that I had direct conversations with staff."

"They're fearing for their jobs."

The bylaws set notice requirements for members' and board meetings, but do not address directors attending the centre outside of formally called meetings.

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# Proposed five-storey residential building for Virgil faces backlash

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Residents weighed in Monday on plans to build a two-storey commercial building and a five-storey residential building on Four Mile Creek Road during an open house hosted by the town.

The five-storey residential building, to be located at 1544-1546 Four Mile Creek Rd., would include 31 apartments and rooftop amenity space on the fifth floor. The development would provide 241 surface and underground parking spaces.

"The proposal will support new housing by pro-



Council heard from residents on Monday about proposed commercial and residential buildings at 1544-1546 Four Mile Creek Rd. in Virgil. A public meeting will be held on March 3 to discuss plans for the site. DAN SMEENK

viding a range of unit sizes to accommodate all stages of life," said Lauren Saito, a planner with MHBC Planning.

A house and garage currently occupy the property.

The listed owner is Stephen Aghaei of Times Group Corp. in Markham,

who attended the open house.

The developer has submitted a revised application that would allow for a larger project. The original proposal included residential and commercial buildings ranging from 3,600 to 3,800 square metres each. The revised plan calls for a 6,433-square-metre residential building and a 7,985-square-metre commercial building.

The updated proposal also increases the height of the residential building, as well as the number of parking and bicycle spaces, apartment units and overall density.

Lloyd Redekopp, who owns property south of the

site, questioned ownership of the road allowance associated with the development. Resident Michael Watson also raised the issue.

Aghaei said they hold title to the road allowance through ownership of the property, but the town disputes that claim.

"It is ongoing discussion to resolve that as quickly as possible," said Dana Anderson, a partner at MHBC.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident and municipal heritage committee member David Snelgrove asked whether the units would be rentals or condominiums. Anderson said the developer is interested in rental units given current market conditions, but no decision has

been made.

Snelgrove also cautioned about the design of the underground parking garage serving two buildings.

"Sometimes they're required to be integrated together, so that's just a caution for you to keep in mind," he said.

Watson questioned the scope of the underground garage, particularly the amount of soil that would need to be excavated.

"It's too far down the road to plan this," said Aghaei.

Council will hold a public meeting on the proposal March 3 at 6 p.m. in the council chambers at Niagara-on-the-Lake town hall, near the proposed site.

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# Noise issues sideline pickleball again at Virgil courts

Dan Smeenk  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The sound of pickleball paddles striking whiffle balls likely won't return to Virgil Sports Park this spring and summer, as the long-standing issue of noise complaints, which led to a prior two-year ban on pickleball at the Virgil courts, persists.

Niagara-on-the-Lake council voted to keep the courts closed at its Tuesday meeting while it works to provide pickleball players with access to another outdoor court this year.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said the town is closing the courts because it couldn't find a solution to the noise issues that led to the ban from 2022 to 2024.

"We had tried everything we could to mitigate the noise and mitigate the issues and we're just unsuccessful in doing that," he said.

In 2022, a resident of the courts' neighbouring Lamberts Walk condominiums took both the town and the NOTL Pickleball Club to court over what she described as excessive noise



Pickleball's on hold at Centennial Sports Park. The town is trying to find another, more "appropriate" court. FILE

from the park.

A Welland court judge found both the town and the club in violation of the municipal noise bylaw and ordered the two-year probation on pickleball at the Virgil courts. The town and the club were each fined \$1,000.

NOTL Pickleball Club president Dragana Simao said this latest closure has left the members of the

NOTL Pickleball Club "surprised and disappointed."

"They have been a valued recreational space for both our members and the broader community."

Simao detailed the club's efforts to reduce the noise levels after the ban was lifted.

"Sound barriers were installed, with financial contributions from the club," she said. "In addition,

the club reduced its scheduled play hours, particularly in the early mornings and evenings."

"It's also important to note that the courts were frequently used by the general public, including visitors to NOTL, reflecting the sport's growing popularity."

Janice Young, a resident of building D at Lamberts Walk since 2019, which is

the furthest building from the pickleball courts in that neighbourhood, said she was disappointed by the closure.

"For me, it's a pleasant sound," she said, saying she just heard ball hitting and laughter.

"I don't necessarily think that the people who've made these complaints are like most of the residents from Lamberts Walk, I

don't think they would agree."

She described the sports game in the area, including basketball and baseball, as "all a part of life."

Young said the sound barriers didn't make a huge difference from her perspective, and that it was "more of a visual" to appease people in buildings A and B, which are closer to the court.

Wiens said the town would have to move "as quick as they can" to find a new location.

Simao said the club has 525 members. She said that "while we don't have exact seasonal usage figures, the Virgil courts were regularly used by a significant number of members, in addition to community residents and visitors to NOTL."

The courts were frequently used outside club-designated hours, she added.

Pickleball will remain available outdoors at Queenston Heights Park and indoors year-round at the NOTL Community Centre, as well as at Centennial Arena in the spring and summer.

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# Rotary gets \$3,470 gift from Peller Estates

Dan Smeen  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake is getting a big lift from Peller Estates Winery and Restaurant, to the tune of \$3,470, raised through the restaurant's Holiday House Tour silent auction the previous week.

Peller Estates is the club's platinum sponsor — its highest sponsorship level — a status it has held for “many years,” said Carol Lipsett, chair of the Holiday House Tour. The winery earns the designation through a combination of monetary and in-kind support.

“Peller has been a sponsor with us for a long time,” Lipsett said.

The club also offers gold, silver and bronze sponsorship levels.

Peller Estates held a silent auction last year that raised \$1,100, Lipsett said.

The silent auction is part of the annual Holiday House Tour, held each December. The event features historic Niagara-on-the-Lake homes that owners lend to the club for decorating and public tours. This year's tour featured



From left, Holiday House Tour organizers Rose Ellen Campbell, Carol Lipsett, Peller Estates Winery event manager Leeanne Spelier, and Holiday House Tour organizer Kevin Stokes pose with \$3,470 cheque from Peller from its silent auction earlier this month. SOURCED

seven homes, along with a separate event at the McArthur Estate, the former residence of Trisha Romance. “It's become a real NOTL event,” Lipsett said. “4,000 people, approximately, come every year.”

Peller event manager Leeanne Spelier said they went with several smaller items this year rather than a few big items, which she said “generated more excitement and more bidding and in

turn created more dollars.”

The prizes included tour and dining experiences, packages that included self-care items and gourmet food and snacks, picnic basket, a Yeti cooler and cup, Christmas decor items and wines and spirits from Peller stores.

The Rotary Club debriefs in January to review the event and begins fundraising, marketing and planning in February, Lipsett said.

Ticket sales and corporate sponsorships support charitable organizations and help offset event expenses.

In a post on its page, the club said the donation brings this year's Holiday House Tour total to \$212,000.

In July, the club will allocate the funds — \$106,000 to its international services committee and \$106,000 to its local services committee — that will determine the recipient organizations, Lipsett said.

International organizations the club has supported in the past include End Polio Now and ShelterBox disaster relief.

Local recipients have included Red Roof Retreat, Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, Niagara Pumphouse, Ronald McDonald House, St. George's Breakfast Program, Gillian's Place, NOTL Palliative Care, Niagara Nutrition Partners, The Farmworker Hub and Westview Centre 4 Women.

Lipsett said it “takes a village” to do this work and wants the community to know about the fundraising efforts.

“It's pretty unique,” she said.

[daniel@niagaranow.com](mailto:daniel@niagaranow.com)

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NUMÉRO DE DOSSIER DE SHARED TOWER INC : STC0615

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SHARED TOWER FILE NO. STC0615

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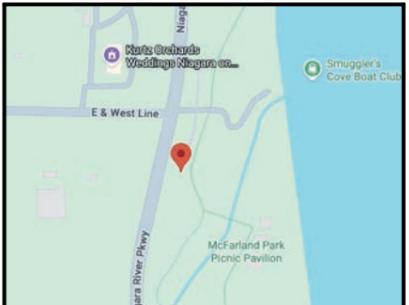
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4475, chemin de service Nord, bureau 100, Burlington, ON L7L 4X7  
Tél. : 1-855-465-6307; Fax : 905-639-6551  
Courriel : ic.spectrumswodo-spectrebdsoo.ic@canada.ca

Une séance d'information publique aura lieu au Queenston Chapel, 29 rue Queenston, Queenston, ON L0S 1L0, le 1er avril 2026 de 18h00 à 19h00.

**TOUTE PERSONNE** peut soumettre une proposition écrite aux personnes énumérées ci-dessous au plus tard à 17 h (HE) le **6 avril 2026**. Veuillez mentionner notre numéro de dossier, **STC0615**, dans votre correspondance.

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**APPLICANT CONTACT/PERSONNE-RESSOURCE DE LA DEMANDE:**  
Cheyenne Zierler  
Shared Tower Inc.  
1300 Cornwall Rd. Unit 101, Oakville ON, L6J 7W5  
czierler@sharedtower.ca

**Niagara Parks Contact Information:**  
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Email: [info@niagaraparks.com](mailto:info@niagaraparks.com)

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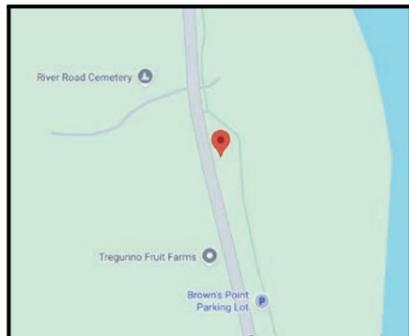
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A Public Information Session will be held at Queenston Chapel, 29 Queenston St, Queenston, ON L0S 1L0 on April 1st, 2026 from 6:00 - 7:00 PM.

**ANY PERSON** may make a written submission to the individuals listed below no later than 5pm (ET) on **April 6th, 2026**. Please reference our file number, **STC0600**, in your correspondence.

Further information may also be obtained through the following contacts:

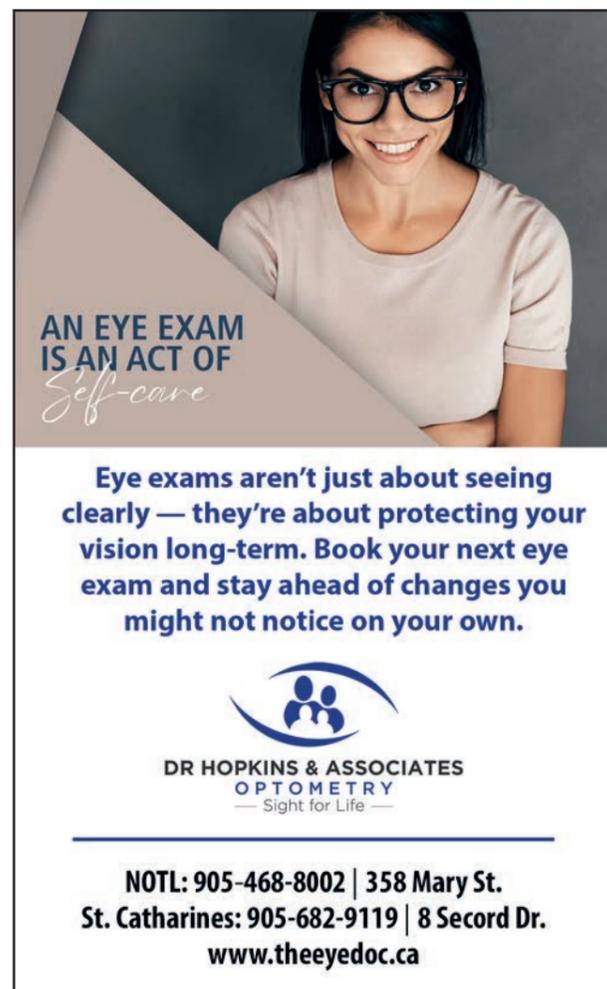
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## Royal George marquee stripped bare

William Shakespeare once asked, "What's in a name?" At the Royal George, the answer is: more than four decades of history. After decades of occupying a spot in downtown Niagara-on-the-Lake, the marquee on the Royal George Theatre has been stripped of its name. Demolition has been put on pause as the Shaw is still in a legal dispute challenging the legality of tearing down the beloved theatre. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



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**#64: When dining out and the table next to yours is celebrating a birthday, engage in singing Happy Birthday to them to make them feel special.**

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



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

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## Canadian spirit

Red, white and proud: Two-year-old Ted Ball gives it his all while cheering on the Canadian men's hockey Olympic team at the Sandtrap. Proud mom Sarah Ball looks on as Ted proves you're never too young to be a superfan. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

## Editorial

# Niagara's amalgamation gong show

Kevin MacLean  
 Editor Emeritus

Sometimes we wonder if our political leaders think the people they serve are ignorant fools.

Sometimes their actions unintentionally speak volumes.

And sometimes their words belie their intentions as they say one thing, promote another and then deny they ever said the former.

Politics can make your head spin, as we are seeing in a fresh effort to shrink the number of municipalities in Niagara Region.

Tuesday night at Niagara-on-the-Lake's council meeting the gong show was on full display.

The ring leader was a guest — the newly appointed chair of Niagara Region and Tory political henchman Bob Gale.

Gale's presentation was, to be frank, embarrassing. It offered mainly self-serving anecdotes and tales from his long career in Niagara politics, with no data or details to support his effort to possibly amalgamate Niagara's 12 local municipalities into one, three or four larger cities.

It was so poorly done we almost felt sorry for him. Almost.

At one point he insisted the whole charade of giving area municipal leaders barely two weeks to respond to the amalgamation proposal was solely his idea.

Two weeks, why bother? Well, in Gale's view, people have been complaining and musing about blowing up



Premier Doug Ford's political henchman, appointed region chair Bob Gale, gave an embarrassing presentation to Niagara-on-the-Lake council on Tuesday, admitting he's completely ignorant of numerous studies that show amalgamation does not equal savings. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Niagara's governance model for “the last 27 years.”

So, there's already been plenty of debate.

Later Gale seemingly misspoke and said he has been “tasked” with solving Niagara's regional conundrum — as if perhaps Premier Doug Ford had given him that “task.”

(Asked about that on Wednesday in Niagara Falls, Ford dodged the question but wisely said it would be up to Niagara's leaders to decide whether to amalgamate or “continue to pay double-digit” tax increases. So, we know where he stands on the subject.)

Meanwhile, back at NOTL council, Gale denied ever saying he'd been “tasked” with the amalgamation assignment. But our own ears and the meeting video, as Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa reminded him, would tell the tale of his utterance.

A predictable scenario, perhaps. Just another minor,

annoying example of how powerful people often try to steamroll through issues to get their own way and, in some cases, tell you that you didn't actually hear what you just heard.

We've grown so used to it, many just assume that politicians twist the truth as a matter of habit. Such cynicism.

The night before the farce in NOTL, Gale made a similar ill-prepared presentation to Fort Erie council, which subsequently voted to pursue a code of conduct complaint against the regional chair for citing a litany of regional waste while being unable to provide any examples of such.

At the NOTL meeting, Gale had to admit several times that he was “not aware” of numerous facts related to amalgamation, especially regarding how the practice never brings the windfall of cost savings predicted by proponents.

This whole seat-of-the-

pants, back-of-the-napkin approach to blowing up a regional system that dates back to the days of Progressive Conservative premiers John Roberts and Bill Davis seems intentionally rushed, with a pre-ordained outcome.

Ontario has a municipal election on Oct. 26. Is Gale's big push on amalgamation being driven by that?

The regional chair's presentations and arguments thus far have made for a low-grade “Bob and Doug” tragicomedy. It might be humorous if so much was not at stake.

Yes, many feel the regional model of governance needs improvement. So, by all means, let's look at it.

But to make an informed decision, we need relevant data and evidence, not simplistic, anecdotal arguments.

We must rely on more than just the mantras of “efficiencies” or “we have too many local municipalities” or “all these councillors cost way too much” (uh, well, in NOTL, where they earn barely \$20,000 a year, that's hardly the case).

Yes, NOTLers already pay a lot in local and regional taxes — way more than we should, especially for policing (as we have argued previously).

But let's take a careful and thoughtful approach toward amalgamation. Niagara's entire system of local democratic representation hangs in the balance.

If we're going to change it, let's make sure it is for the better..

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# So much digging. So little telling



**THE TURNER REPORT**

Garth Turner  
Columnist

A core business on Queen Street is bracing for survival.

"We're kicking up the social media and online profile," the owner told me days ago. "The trucks have already started and once that hoarding goes up, blocking people, we're going to need the digital business just to get by."

Yes, it's impactful. And just the beginning. Unless a court challenge is successful today (Feb. 26) — which seems doubtful — the Royal George will soon be another dusty pile of junk and the irreversible altering of NOTL's iconic street (and premier economic gem) will be upon us.

Go visit Victoria Street. See for yourself. The next month will bring the collapse of the theatre, the erasure of the historic barber shop beside it (lately a box office and wardrobe place) and geothermal drilling.

After that, digging. So much digging. So many dump trucks. And all of them are slated to rumble, fully loaded, through the adjacent heritage residential area.

"If I had a historic house on Prideaux Street with a stone



Equipment has been massed where Old Town heritage buildings recently stood. GARTH TURNER

foundation (which I wish I did), I'd be thinking about getting an engineer's report with documentation on the foundation and brickwork," says Mark Taylor.

The professional builder has roots in NOTL and serious concerns for what may be about to happen here.

"I'm thinking about the thousands of trips that heavy trucks will make in and out through the streets," he says. "I can't imagine running heavy construction traffic through the heritage district will end well. If you are on the trucking route, at the very least I would photograph my foundation (where exposed) and the exterior brickwork looking for fracture lines in the mortar joints."

In case you missed it, the construction plan (which elected politicians have not seen, has not been made public and which staff will be

quietly approving) calls for a truck every nine minutes (during the dig phase) to roll through Old Town's signature heritage home district. Details of this are missing from the builder's site (royalgeorge@govnbrown.com) but are spelled out graphically in the plan.

Will that document ever be posted online by Nick Ruller, who runs NOTL as CAO, or Aimee Alderman, the new planning czar? Will we get transparency?

Don't count on it. Not after the RGO (Ruller gag order) that we detailed last week. If your reporter wants more info out of town hall, I'll have to wear a black balaclava and break in.

"Count me among those who look forward to your column each week," writes Jim Reynolds. "In this day and age, when bending the knee to authority is encour-

aged, I appreciate a voice that tells it like it is. I drove past the horror on Victoria Street today to see your predictions already coming to pass.

And Dave Vida is giving voice to the cynicism swirling at the moment.

"The idea that NOTL is an island and can stay a strong gatekeeper of history and preservation is a noble one, but politicians march to a different woke drummer..." he warns. "Doug Ford and others are against, and have gone to great lengths to destroy, the Heritage Act, and the idea that it should prevail."

"Once the new theatre is half-built, someone will say we now need to appropriate another dozen historic properties for the badly needed parking garage next to the new George (another four years of construction). Or maybe a 10-storey hotel, over the parking garage. We can partner with a chain!"

Some fear recent decisions — the Parliament Oak hotel (now with a tower crane soaring over the hood), the massive Royal George complex, the Berlin brick wall of short-term rentals and the glassy Clayfield (Terminal 4) Hotel — will ruin this place. And what if amalgamation happens and we slip into the greasy clutches of Niagara Falls?

This seems like a pivotal moment. A call to arms. I'm channelling 1812.

Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.

garth@garth.ca



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style  
Category: COME OUT AND PLAY

**"Squid Game" put a gruesome twist on this stop-and-go game also called Statues.**

Last issue category: BANGERS

Clue: In 2020 he was on a "watermelon sugar, high, watermelon sugar, high."

Answer: Who is Harry Styles?

Answered first by: Lynda Collet

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Bob Wheatley, Sue Rautenberg, Claudia Grimwood, Jane Morris, Jesse Agnew, Randie Topps, Esther VanGorder, Jeff Lake, Jim Dandy, Tuja Johansson, Katie Reimer, Donna Pearce, Marla Percy, Daniel Smith, Wesley Mann, Wade Durling, Patricia Fraser, Jillian Meyers, KC King

Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com, with your name, for a chance to win a \$25 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

\*REMEMBER TO PUT "WHAT IS" FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!

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# Farewell to Scott Finlay, our Sir Isaac Brock

Dear editor:

We were saddened to learn of the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Scott Finlay, on Feb. 19.

We first met Scott when he portrayed Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock during the town's 1812 bicentennial celebrations. Through those events and in the years that followed, he became a dear friend and colleague.

Intelligent, generous, kind, and dedicated, Scott was always willing to don his magnificent 1812 general's uniform to support



Scott Finlay.

local historic or fundraising events, whether for the NOTL Museum or the Friends of Fort George. He was a gifted orator, and audiences loved his warmth, quick wit and humour.

Scott was always willing to help with the many fundraising events hosted by

the Friends of Fort George. He cared deeply about commemorating Niagara's rich history.

Born in Hamilton, Scott later moved with his family to St. Davids. After university, he started his own company, providing master of ceremonies services at corporate conferences. In the spring of 2009, he joined Parks Canada as a corporate co-ordinator at Fort George — a role he described as his "dream job."

Scott once said, "Find your passion and pursue

it; then there is no such thing as work." He certainly found his at Fort George, bringing history to life through his portrayals of Brock and many other figures who helped shape Canada's history.

Scott will be deeply missed by the Friends of Fort George and Parks Canada, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to his family.

**Tony Chisholm**  
President,  
Friends of Fort George  
NOTL



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# Amalgamation costs less? Some researchers disagree



**ARCHITEXT**

Brian Marshall  
Columnist

After the lamented passing of our regional chair, Jim Bradley, Premier Doug Ford — exercising his legislative powers — appointed Bob Gale as Niagara's newly anointed regional head honcho.

Not surprisingly as Ford's appointee, Gale has undertaken to champion the premier's expressed direction for regional amalgamation.

Gale claims he has had a "bit of a change in mindset" since assuming the chair's role, suggesting that he now has to look at the whole picture — although, why an elected regional councillor would not consider the greater good of Niagara in fulfilling his duties remains a mystery.

Now, on the face of it, 126 elected politicians serving on the 12 municipal councils and the regional council seems bloated. However,

because the vast majority of Niagara's councillors and mayors are considered to occupy part-time positions — and their compensation reflects that — the actual cost charged to municipal coffers is only about 1 per cent of total operating.

That said, it should be noted that the cost of regional council in 2024 was \$1.411 million — an amount more than double that of the next-highest cost for a council (St. Catharines at \$648,000) and nearly seven times greater than the average 2024 budgetary charge for councils across all Niagara municipalities (excluding Niagara Falls, Welland and St. Catharines) of \$210,966.

Of course, this leads to the question of whether or not the value conferred by the regional council across Niagara is commiserate with its comparatively exorbitant cost.

But let's move on to address the question of amalgamation and, more specifically, whether there are any resultant cost savings.

We'll set aside the experience of Toronto which, during the post-amalgamation decade, suffered an operating budget that exploded by approximately 70 per cent. Instead, let's consider the data contained within



When asked Wednesday about research showing amalgamation doesn't cut costs, Premier Doug Ford said, "I've never seen that." DAVE VAN DE LAAR

a study (authored by Lydia Miljan and Zachary Spicer) published by the Fraser Institute on May 26, 2015, examining the outcomes of amalgamation on three smaller Ontario municipalities.

In the case of Kawartha Lakes, the municipal employee compensation budget cost rose by 52.9 per cent. In Haldimand, property taxes rose by 50 per cent. While in Norfolk, the long-term debt mushroomed by 111 per cent.

In fact, the published findings of this report resulted in the conclusion that while amalgamation was supposed to bring cost savings, smaller government and lower taxes, it didn't.

Across Canada and around the world, study after study examining the re-

sults of amalgamation have, almost invariably, concluded that it does not reduce costs — it increases them.

Timothy Cobban researched the impact of amalgamation on Ontario municipal governments over a 15-year period. In a January 2014 interview with Global News ("Ontario municipalities spending more since amalgamation: report"), he observed that, "On average all municipalities added employees, but restructured ones, ones that were amalgamated, added employees at twice the rate of unstructured municipalities, ones that were left alone."

Quite simply, a bigger organization requires more people, more time and more dollars to produce equivalent results — a phenom-

enon this columnist delved into in the Jan. 25, 2024 edition of The Lake Report ("Architext: Amalgamation shows bigger is rarely better").

From a commentary authored by Spicer and Adam Found published by the C.D. Howe Institute ("Thinking Regionally: How to Improve Service Delivery in Canada's Cities") and citing multiple research papers, we read, "Municipal amalgamation, in fact, produces few economies of scale, as many studies have shown. Rather, costs generally increase after amalgamation, despite repeated assertions that larger units of local government will result in cost savings. Aside from an increase in costs, research has also found that amalgamation has not led to municipal service efficiencies."

So, if amalgamation is not the answer to lower costs and smaller government, what is?

First and foremost, allow me to suggest the centralization across multiple municipalities and outsourcing of certain functions to private companies may be part of the solution.

As one example, fleet procurement and maintenance: Similar to any large corporation, every municipality has

a fleet of vehicles, which they acquire and maintain on a year-over-year basis. But, unlike corporations that likely have a single fleet manager (and very small staff) to coordinate annual requirements and oversee contractual compliance with their outsourced fleet provider, each municipality tends to do this all on their own at a significant upside cost.

Why not follow the corporate example (it's cheaper) and consolidate all of Niagara's fleet and maintenance under a single contract?

Want to reduce politicians? Look first to the regional council.

I see no reason why regional council should not be structured along the lines of the U.S. Senate: that is, two councillors from each municipality, which would result in a reduction of regional council to 24 members from 32 (more than \$540,000 in annual savings), and a significant boon to equalizing democratic representation across Niagara.

And, so many more proven cost saving options to consider.

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

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# Amalgamation **threatens** the identity and decision-making power of NOTL



Wayne Gates  
Special to The Lake Report



A map shared by MPP Wayne Gates shows towns and cities that could be erased if Niagara is amalgamated.

Last week, Niagara Region Chair Bob Gale sent a letter to the mayors of Niagara's 12 cities and towns about what he considers the "urgent need" for governance reform, up to and including possible municipal amalgamation into a one-city or four-city model.

Let me clear: I've been ringing the alarm bells about this issue for a long time, and I am opposed to any plan of forced amalgamation of municipalities in Niagara, including Niagara-on-the-Lake.

And that's for three main reasons: the lack of evidence supporting amalgamation as a cost-saving measure, the loss of local identity and decision-making for smaller communities like NOTL, and the way that this process is being handled by Premier Doug Ford's appointed chair without proper consultation or transparency.

I am open to plans for reform that cut costs for taxpayers or improve services for residents. But what the data and research tell us is

that forced amalgamation does not achieve the goals of lower costs or better services. In fact, it may make life even more expensive for residents.

According to a report titled "Toronto Ten Years After Amalgamation" by Harvey Schwartz at York University, "One of the justifications given by the provincial government in support of amalgamation was that it would reduce costs by eliminating duplication and simplifying municipal government. The evidence indicates that amalgamation has not reduced costs. On the contrary, it has increased costs."

Niagara-on-the-Lake is one of the most special and unique communities in all of Canada. It was the first capital of Upper Canada and is home to some of the greatest historical landmarks in all North America.

Our local economy is also dependent on this unique identity and culture, from the Shaw Festival to our wineries to so many local shops and businesses. We need to have the ability for local voices to make decisions that are best for the character and residents of the town. All of that is put under threat by amalgamation.

In terms of the lack of appropriate consultation on such a huge decision, let me quote Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, responding to chair Gale's letter: "Any proposal that would fundamentally change our municipality must have a clear legislative foundation, a transparent process, and meaningful public consultation. None of that has occurred."

Or the statement from Mayor Cheryl Ganann in West Lincoln: "I am very disappointed in the way that this matter was brought forward for discussion this past

week. Starting with the letter from regional chair Bob Gale to Niagara mayors, dated Feb. 5 but not emailed until noon on Feb. 19, together with a letter sent to Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Rob Flack that same day was not, in my mind, an appropriate way to start a discussion regarding an issue of such magnitude, an issue with potential repercussions for so many people living and working in Niagara today."

Or, from the Town of Fort Erie: "It is not reasonable to expect a careful and informed response to major and disruptive changes like governance reform or municipal amalgamation within 12 days. Rushing a decision of this size shows poor judgment and does not allow for meaningful consultation."

Chair Gale has offered no evidence, no research and no data to support his claims about amalgamation. Serious questions have been raised about whether a premier-appointed chair, who is a former Ontario PC candidate, is doing this for the benefit of the community or for the benefit of those in the premier's office.

This is the wrong decision for Niagara-on-the-Lake, and I will be standing against it, every step of the way.

*Wayne Gates is the member of provincial parliament for the Niagara Falls riding.*

# Has the culture of respect in NOTL gone for good?

Dear editor:

In light of the myriad of issues surrounding our present town council, and the disturbing trend to withhold information as The Lake Report has reported, I am once again compelled to comment via a letter to the editor.

One would think that after eight decades, I should probably relax, sit back, watch the world unfold, and chill out. However, when something is wrong, you must speak up. Silence breeds complicity.

It was amazing to see this common thread throughout the letters to the editor last week. I would encourage other residents to speak up.

Over the years, I have been involved in town affairs through my employment with Parks Canada, chairman of the parks and recreation committee, the tree advisory committee, and president of the Chautauqua Residents Association.

All of those interactions with town council and staff over a period of 30 years were generally respectful and courteous. However, things appear to have changed under the current administration.

The recent issue with Ryerson Park and the concerns I have, motivated me to ask some questions and make comments from a resident's point of view. I emailed the lord mayor and all of town council. Four council members responded to me with respectful and dignified responses, and thanking me for my input.

However, in contrast, the same cannot be said for the lord mayor. What I received was a curt and condescending one-liner.

Another example of this behavior (which I personally witnessed), occurred at the committee of the whole meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 10, when the lord mayor was chastised for his flippant and off-handed remark about the discussion surrounding Ryerson Park as being "hysterical."

Ironically, in a social media post recently (as reported by The Lake Report), he was advocating for respectful treatment of town staff and council.

I would suggest that all of the controversy engulfing this council since its inauguration, will pale in comparison to picking a fight with the free press and the media.

This council ran on a platform of transparency and listening to the wishes of the community. Yes, they sure did.

I for one, am extremely excited about the proliferation of mega commercial developments that threaten to suffocate this beautiful historical town.

Have any of you attempted to access and navigate the insane traffic situation at Shoppers, Foodland, the Niagara Health Office or Life Labs?

Imagine the traffic chaos once Clayfield Commons is open for business. It boggles the mind.

If I may, I would like to give this council one small piece of advice: listen to your electorate and respond accordingly with respect and civility. In the meantime, I want to thank The Lake Report for keeping us as residents informed and aware.

**Buddy Andres**  
NOTL

# We need clarity around heritage designations

Dear editor:

Last week's piece about the expansion of the heritage district may have created more anxiety than clarity ("Town expands Old Town heritage district after cost debate," Feb. 19). Most residents are asking one simple question: how is this going to affect me?

The article didn't clearly explain the difference between a property that is individually designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and one that is simply located within a Part V heritage conservation district. Without that distinction, readers could reasonably conclude that every home inside the new boundary carries the heavier restrictions associated with Part IV designation.

What seemed to be missing was practical guidance. How does a homeowner



Those who own a house in the new heritage district need practical guidance about the implications of this latest move for their home, writes Debra Rowe. FILE

determine whether their property is individually designated? If it isn't, what does inclusion within the district actually mean for renovations, rebuilding or insurance?

When those practical questions aren't addressed, uncertainty fills the gap.

Heritage preservation is important, but so is clear communication. A straight-

forward explanation of designation categories and the obligations that accompany them would go a long way toward helping residents understand their situation without unnecessary worry.

While stewardship sounds positive in principle, it can feel ambiguous without explanation. For many homeowners, the term may suggest responsibilities that

carry potential restrictions and added expense. Transparency is not an obstacle to preservation — it is essential to it.

For homeowners who want to confirm their property's status, it's simple: just Google your address along with the words "heritage designation." This is public record and can clarify whether your home is individually designated under Part IV or simply part of a Part V district.

Part V primarily focuses on the facade and streetscape rather than specific materials, which is the key concern of Part IV; in other words, it's about ensuring that rebuilt homes or new homes blend in with the neighbourhood rather than imposing strict requirements.

**Debra Rowe**  
NOTL

# Town officials shouldn't be making important decisions **in secret**

Dear editor:

Thank you for your excellent editorial on the role of a free press in a democratic society ("Editorial: Transparency and the role of local media," Feb. 12).

For too long, our local officials have made their important decisions in secret and have treated

questions from the press and public as impertinent intrusions into their cozy process.

Thank you for keeping a foot in the door and for insisting on answers to questions you are asking on our behalf.

**Jim Reynolds**  
NOTL



# Survival swim lessons, yet **no indoor pool?**

Dear editor:  
Your recent article on mandatory survival swim lessons raises an important issue for Niagara-on-the-Lake (“Should survival swim lessons be mandatory for Ontario’s kids? Some say yes, absolutely,” Feb. 19).  
If swimming is a basic life skill — and council has supported urging the province to make it mandatory

— where will our children learn?  
Niagara-on-the-Lake does not have its own indoor aquatic facility. Families must travel to Niagara Falls or St. Catharines for consistent, year-round access.  
That creates barriers of cost, transportation and limited program availability — the very inequities highlighted in your article.  
For more than a decade,

residents have advocated for a local indoor pool. Petitions have been signed, surveys completed and council consulted. Yet the recently approved parks and recreation master plan rejected proposals for an indoor aquatic facility.  
It is difficult to reconcile the town council’s public support for mandatory swim education with the absence of the infrastructure re-

quired to deliver it. The data from the Lifesaving Society of Canada makes clear that water safety is not optional.  
If we believe swimming saves lives, local access must be part of the plan.  
**Dawn McIsaac,  
Sheila Serio, Pam Lillos,  
Garron Wells  
Niagara-on-the-Lake  
Indoor Pool  
Facebook group  
NOTL**

# Censorship and freedom of press are **incompatible**

Dear editor:  
We’re again facing irony during Freedom to Read Week.  
While we’re being “encouraged to think about and reaffirm our commitment to intellectual freedom,” the town has announced it will be restricting information given to the media. Intellectual freedom and censorship are incompatible.  
There have been many interesting and insightful editorials and letters to the editor about this situation with many comparing the town’s announcement to censorious behavior south of the border. In fact, we don’t have to look to the U.S. for similarities because we have much to compare within our own borders.  
I encourage everyone to read the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedom’s report, “Manufacturing consent: Government behavioural engineering of

Canadians.” The summary reads as follows:  
“This report examines how the Government of Canada has incorporated behavioural science and legislative mechanisms to shape public attitudes, restrict expression, and manage dissent. Through the Impact and Innovation Unit (IIU) in the Privy Council Office (PCO), federal officials have implemented strategies drawn from so-called nudge theory to influence citizen behaviour under the guise of ‘evidence-based policy.’ The Justice Centre urges thorough scrutiny of such behavioural programs to preserve transparent, representative governance in Canada.”  
Thank you to The Lake Report for protecting democracy by holding those in power accountable.  
**Cathy Simpson  
NOTL**



## We welcome your letters

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated. Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 496 Mississagua St., NOTL.

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# The Lake Report

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- Smart development
- Sense of community
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# Thank you!





# In response to Coun. Mavridis' letter

Dear editor:  
This letter is in response to Coun. Maria Mavridis' accusations towards a group of our neighbours here in Niagara-on-the-Lake ("When I stand up for truth, I get banned?" Feb. 5).  
With all due respect to the councillor, there are many serious inaccuracies and allegations in her opinion letter that need to be corrected.

First of all, Coun. Mavridis was not banned from the group — she was temporarily suspended for breaching the group's rules (note that there is a significant difference between the two in social media).

I might also mention that, not only was the suspension temporary, but she has already been reinstated.

Secondly, the group Residents 4 A Better NOTL is, in fact, a private group on a social media platform that defines very precisely what "private" means.

I run three different private groups on this platform (note that I am only a member of Residents 4 A Better NOTL, not an admin) and the rules are very clear



A representative of the Residents 4 A Better NOTL Facebook group says Coun. Maria Mavridis' ban from the group earlier this month was, in fact, a temporary suspension, and the councillor has been reinstated. FILE

on each one: members join with the understanding that they are to respect everyone's privacy in the group; they cannot share or screenshot externally anything posted within the group.

A private group is a safe and strictly monitored place for members to post and conduct discussions of relevance. Residents 4 A Better NOTL is restricted to residents of NOTL only, due to its particular mandate of local knowledge, input and discussions; this residency requirement is carefully reviewed and upheld, unlike other NOTL groups that

allow the world at large to join (which, of course, is their prerogative).

Thirdly, note that Coun. Mavridis repeats several times that she was "banned" from the group for trying to correct misinformation. Quote: "Not for being abusive. Not for violating standards. But because my participation disrupts a preferred negative narrative."

In fact, it was put in writing to the councillor that the only reason she was admonished was because she was, in fact, violating the group's rules.

Coun. Mavridis, as far as

I know, is the only elected NOTL official in this group, and I can honestly say this is truly appreciated because she helps us understand the frequently nebulous workings within our town governance.

She is welcome, together with all other residents of our town, to join, participate, comment and discuss within the group in a respectful, non-threatening, non-abusive way (far different than what frequently happens in other groups — and I say this from personal experience).

In this group, if we feel uncomfortable or personally attacked, we have the absolute right to contact the admin, whom I trust to take action as appropriate.

It is not OK, however, to take one's complaint to another group or even to this newspaper, with misinformation to which we can only respond days or weeks later.

Now that Coun. Mavridis realizes her error, I would expect her to retract her unfounded accusations

*Elena Morandi-Bonner*  
NOTL

# We need transparency on pickleball courts closure

Dear editor:  
The reclosing of the outdoor pickleball courts at Virgil Sports Park is unacceptable.

For two years, residents endured a shutdowns, legal disputes, and vague explanations while one of the community's most heavily used recreational facilities sat idle.

After finally reopening with mitigation measures in place, the courts are once again closed — leaving residents frustrated and questioning the town's commitment to providing accessible recreation.

Pickleball is not a nuisance. It is a legitimate, healthy, community-building activity enjoyed by residents of all ages, particularly seniors who depend on it for exercise, social connection, and overall well-being.

Public recreational facilities exist to serve the broader community, not to be repeatedly withdrawn without clear and transparent justification.

If additional concerns have arisen, taxpayers



deserve honest communication. Citing confidential matters while offering no meaningful explanation erodes public trust.

The town has already invested in sound mitigation efforts. If those measures are insufficient, then council must present a concrete plan forward — whether through enhanced mitigation, adjusted hours, relocation or development of a purpose-built facility.

What residents should not accept is a cycle of reopening and reclosing with no clear resolution. Leadership requires balancing interests and delivering solutions, not prolonged uncertainty.

It is time for council to provide transparency, accountability and a firm timeline for restoring outdoor pickleball in Virgil.

*Vince Serratore*  
St. Davids

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**6pm - 7pm**

Funding provided by the Government of Ontario.

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**Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**1pm - 2pm**

**Social Connection**

**Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**1pm - 2pm**

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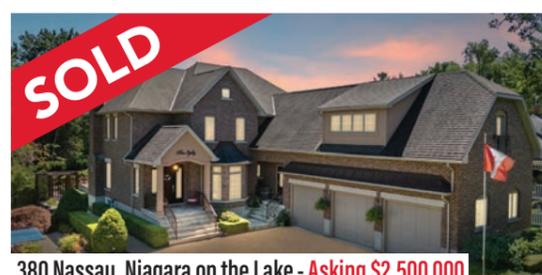
1074 Niagara Stone Rd, Niagara on the Lake - \$4,500,000



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# Did the **black maple leaf** jinx our Olympic hockey players?



## ROSS'S RAMBLINGS

Ross Robinson  
Columnist

May I politely and respectfully ask, "What was with the black maple leaves on the sweaters worn by our women and men hockey players at the recent Winter Olympic Games in Italy?"

Some things in life are sacrosanct, not to be changed or even modified. Inviolable, as it were.

Since the apparently nation-building Summit Series in 1972, a red or white maple leaf, sometimes stylized, has proudly identified our international ice hockey players. Niagara's own Terry O'Malley had creative input in the edgy design of those sweaters. Generally speaking, I

love the Olympic Games and what they accomplish. Much of the world has something in common to watch. Tourism marketing opportunities abound and are shamelessly exploited. Infrastructure projects get expedited.

Obviously the whole concept is flawed, but today I will not ramble about the deep and worrying issues of current and future games. But, to be repetitive, what was the point of having black maple leaves on the Canadian ice hockey sweaters? Was it Nike's creative folks dictating to our national Olympic bosses?

To watch so many athletes competing at the highest level in so many disciplines has to inspire even the most jaded and uninformed watchers. Every Olympian has trained so hard for a long time, being indescribably disciplined, and sacrificed so much to get to the games.

Such a minuscule percentage of the world's population makes it. Rosie DiManno wrote in the Toronto Star that only



Mark Cherney cheers on Team Canada on Sunday.

"0.0000017 per cent of the world's population will compete at the Olympic Games." Who am I to doubt her?

Hall of Fame baseball player Edwin Donald "Duke" Snider thoughtfully said, "You don't have to win to be a winner. If you give 100 per cent, getting yourself mentally and physically prepared, if you look in the mirror and can say you gave it everything to win, that's it. You're not going to win every time."

God bless the Duke of Flatbush, who was a unique part of the colourful

Montreal Expos baseball story.

Quick rambling question: athletes from Quebec dominate our Canadian short track and long track speed skating teams. These skaters have won a lot of medals representing Canada at Winter Olympic Games. Beaucoup. They can really skate fast.

During the recent gold medal men's hockey game between the U.S. and Canada, which was magnificent and very emotional, I realized that there were no Quebecois on our team. What gives?

They have excelled wearing speed skates, so what's the problem with hockey skates?

Or am I overthinking this?

Yes, I really love the Olympic Games. I have felt the magic of being at the centre of the world's focus — twice. Not as an athlete, but working in the Olympic Village dining halls in Munich and Montreal. Such logistical miracles, such hard work, and such an education to see the world's best athletes living at close quarters.

Speaking of that, I love that the U.S. hockey teams lived in the Olympic Village. Cheerfully, and wide-eyed. Marvelling at the world's best athletes, and sleeping in small beds. Often thin walls. They really seem to get into the Olympic spirit. Did the Canadian men only stay in the village for one night? If so, not a good look.

Putting on the Winter Olympic Games is expensive, for such a small number of athletes and spectators. We don't want

to know the cost of building the ski jump, the half pipe and the icy chute for the bobsleigh, luge and skeleton.

And so dangerous.

Too many images of air ambulances airlifting seriously injured Olympians from their competition venues to local hospitals.

As I ramble to a close, I will repeat: I love the Olympic Games.

Bonnie Blair, an Olympic Gold medalist in speed skating, said, "Winning doesn't always mean being first. Winning means you're doing better than you've ever done before."

One more quick vignette. In 1996, at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, the aforementioned Nike launched a very expensive marketing campaign. Billboards, TV ads, you name it. "The silver medalist is the first loser." People were aghast, and the campaign was pulled the next day.

Now, last week in Italy, did the black maple leaves make any difference?

Our Canadian ice hockey players did their best.

[rossrocket9@gmail.com](mailto:rossrocket9@gmail.com)

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Paid for by the Government of Ontario



# Have some fun



**Across**

- 1. Fly traps (7)
- 5. Man's felt hat (7)
- 10. Separate article (4)
- 11. Of the highest calibre (5-5)
- 12. Very large woman (8)
- 13. Sister's daughters (6)
- 15. Lovesick glances (6,4)
- 18. Consumes (4)
- 19. Where Paddington originated (4)
- 21. Brave (10)
- 24. Hedge plant (6)
- 26. Earthy (8)
- 28. Luxury London hotel (10)
- 29. Covetousness (4)
- 30. One who views things as they are (7)
- 31. Silly talk (7)

**Down**

- 2. Fast-running bird (7)
- 3. The distaff side (5)
- 4. Stereotypical cowboy characteristic (3,4)
- 6. Ancient (5)
- 7. Viewpoint (9)
- 8. Esteem (7)
- 9. Skills (4)
- 14. Gaze (4)
- 16. Deliberately ambiguous (9)
- 17. Berkshire public school (4)
- 20. Body part pierced for rings (7)
- 22. Flight personnel (7)
- 23. Disentangle (7)
- 25. Corners (5)
- 26. Aquae Sulis, in Somerset (4)
- 27. Give up (5)

## Crossword Puzzle

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Last issue's answers

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## NS&T Railcar on King Street, circa 1920

In December 1913, the electric railway service known as the Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto (NS&T) arrived in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Without delving too deeply into its full route from St. Catharines, the train travelled from the terminal on Geneva Street to Lakeshore Road, passing through the community of McNab. From Hunter Road, the railcar continued toward Niagara Stone Road and eventually along King Street to the docks. This photograph captures the railcar travelling up King Street. Visible in the image are what we now know as the Irish Harp Pub, Balzac's (which at the time served as the train station), and Aura-on-the-Lake.

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# Filling in the gaps in the story of **humanity's origins**



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Columnist

The broad evolutionary trail that eventually led to chimpanzees and bonobos on one hand, and the other hand to modern humans, began with a common ancestor some six to seven million years ago in Africa.

On the human side of the split, evolution was dominated for several million years by a variety of small ape-like creatures, with brains only a few hundred cubic centimetres in volume.

They became increasingly bipedal and accompanied by a series of related adaptive changes in their spine, pelvis, hips, knees, ankles and toes that favoured fluid walking and even short distance running, but less suited for

climbing.

These were the australopiths, of which one, *A. afarensis*, was famously called Lucy after the Beatles 1967 song, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

As a group, australopiths, were highly successful, probably because subgroups evolved to take advantage of changes in their environment, especially food sources.

For example, differences in the shapes and sizes of their jaws and teeth, such as smaller teeth and jaws, probably reflected an abundance of easily found and chewable foods or the opposite, the need to dig up and chew tougher foods such as buried hard-skinned legumes, which favoured stronger, more robust jaw muscles and bigger molars for grinding and chewing — hence the name *robustus*, applied to one australopith variant.

There's little evidence that australopiths regularly created and used tools in their lives. However, toward the end of their reign, other transitional species emerged with slightly larger brains, who made regular use of stone tools,



Lucy, the famous female hominin of the *A. afarensis* species. SOURCED

one of which, *homo habilis*, was initially claimed to be the first tool-maker by Louis and Mary Leakey, and hence the first of *homo* lineage.

Then, about two million years ago, a bigger brained *homo* species appeared called *erectus*, now fully erect and bipedal, which managed over the following two million years to continue to evolve and spread throughout Africa and Eurasia as far as Indonesia.

Through that long period, the brain almost doubled in size in later variants such as *homo ergaster*, later still, *homo heidelbergensis* and later still, even variants such as our cousin species, the neanderthals in Europe, and the denisovans in Asia, whose brains exceeded

the size of the last of the line, fully modern humans 150,000 years ago.

Finally, about 30,000 years ago, what had often been several overlapping species finally died out, save us, the lone survivor (as Chris Stringer is fond of expressing it) of so many evolutionally distinct species before us.

The picture of human evolution that emerged was a chancy affair that could have ended several times and almost did, 950,000 years ago when the population of prehumans (*H. ergaster*), plummeted from nearly one million to less than 3,000, where it remained for more than 100,000 years before gradually increasing.

At any one time, there were often two or as many as four or more prehuman species, sometimes living in the same region and competing with one another for resources much as the neanderthals may have done with modern humans in Europe for a few hundred thousand years in Europe and perhaps the denisovans in Asia, both of which species left genetic legacies in modern humans

to this day.

Beyond the foregoing highly simplified summary of human origins, there are other issues about the human origins story.

For example, the fossil record is spotty and incomplete. Finding fossils isn't easy and although new discoveries will be found, many will not.

Genetic studies suggest there are many ghost species, for which there are genetic traces but no matching fossils. And what fossils are found, are often very incomplete, such as the earliest period between the last common ancestor and the emergence of the australopiths.

These days, there are many more well-trained scientists around the world interested in human evolution now helped by novel technologies for identifying variations of species, and even new species, and telling us something about how they might have lived.

This is especially so in China, where there have been several discoveries of species variants which help to fill in evolutionary record of our species' history.

These changes suggest to me that the picture of human evolution, and indeed the evolution of most species, may look very different by the mid-century mark and beyond. That's what makes the story so intriguing for me. For most of my life, I knew little more than recorded history because that's what was taught, and because I was busy with neuroscience and medicine.

If there's a lesson to be learned from reconstructing the past history of our species, it's that our evolution was a dicey affair, dictated by chance and, for almost all of our history, by natural selection as Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace suggested in the mid-1800s. That may change with the introduction of technologies designed to change our genome.

How long will our species last? That's next week's subject.

*Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.*

# OBITUARIES

**The Lake Report**

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*For obituary and memorial inquiries, please contact [megan@niagaranow.com](mailto:megan@niagaranow.com).*

## Audrey French



FRENCH, Audrey, Muriel — Surrounded by her loving family, Audrey passed away peacefully in her sleep on February 16, 2026, at Niagara Long Term Care Home in Niagara-on-the-Lake, at the age of 97. Beloved wife of the late Kenneth. Devoted mother of Michael, Patricia, John, Peter, and Paul. Adored grandmother of Sara, Colin, Zach, Dan, and Michael. Dear sister of Peg, Iris, and Kay. Fondly remembered by many nephews and nieces, especially by two special nieces Jen, and Sue, cousins and friends. In keeping with Audrey's wishes, cremation has taken place. A celebration of life will be announced and held at a later date. As an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Niagara Long Term Care Residents Council- 120 Wellington St. Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, L0S 1J0. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com).

## Faye Shaver



SHAVER, Faye — It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Faye Shaver. Beloved wife, mother, sister, aunt, grandmother, and friend. Faye passed away peacefully at home on Monday, Feb. 16, 2026 at the age of 80. She was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ and now rests eternally at home with her Saviour in Heaven. Loving wife of John, mother of Patricia (Mathew) and Daniel (Irene), grandmother of Dawson, Julia, Annelise, Nadia and Isaiah. Faye is survived by her sisters Anne and Elaine, brother John (Lisa), sister-in-law Shirley, and brother-in-law Paul. Predeceased by her parents, Wallace and Josephine Longstreet, brother Bob, sister Sylvia and brother-in-law Jack. She will also be missed by her many nieces and nephews. Faye's lifelong career spanned several decades and began as a church organist when she was 13, at All Saints Anglican Church in her hometown of Erin, Ontario. For the majority of her career, she served as organist at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake and later, at St. Saviour's Anglican Church in Queenston. Faye was a member and past President of the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO - Niagara). Faye was recognized by the NOTL-Lewiston Rotary Club as a Paul Harris Fellow. Over the years, her hobbies included music, gardening, going for long walks and bike rides, knitting (Prayer Shawl Ministry), Tai Chi, crossword puzzles and watching the sunset. Faye's family wishes to thank Dr. Kalani, Nurse Erin Jarvis and Bobbie Van Gelder of the Niagara North Family Health Team and Dr. Chan of St. Catharines for their loving care over the years. In accordance with Faye's wishes, cremation has taken place. The family will receive guests at Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St. Niagara-on-the-Lake on Saturday February 28, 2026 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. A funeral service will take place at St. Mark's Anglican Church, 41 Byron St., Niagara-on-the-Lake on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026 at 1 p.m. followed by a reception. A private family interment will take place in St. Mark's Cemetery at a later date. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to Alongside Hope (formerly Primate's World Relief and Development Fund) or the Canadian Lung Association. Memories, photos, and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com).

**AVIS PUBLIC**

PYLÔNE DE TÉLÉCOMMUNICATION PROPOSÉE DE SHARED TOWER INC.

14184 NIAGARA RIVER PARKWAY, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ON (43.157877, -79.058602)

NUMÉRO DE DOSSIER DE SHARED TOWER INC : STC0485

Shared Tower Inc. propose l'installation d'une antenne de 30 mètres situé à 14184 Niagara River Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (coordonnées : 43.157877, -79.058602). L'éclairage et la signalisation seront déterminés par NAV Canada et Transports Canada. L'installation comprendra un enclos clôturé de 10 m sur 10 m. La structure de 30 m pourra accueillir la charge initiale et future de tous les fournisseurs de services cellulaires, ainsi que des équipements sans fil fixes supplémentaires, au besoin.

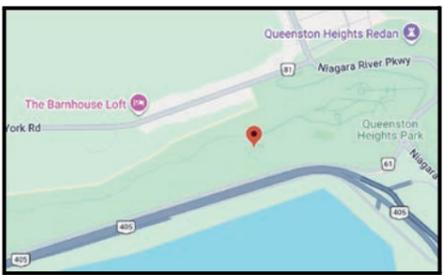
Innovation, science et développement économique Canada (ISED) est l'organisme directeur pour les installations de ce type et peut être contacté à l'adresse suivante :

**Bureau de l'ISED : Bureau de district du Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario**  
4475, chemin de service Nord, bureau 100, Burlington, ON L7L 4X7  
Tél. : 1-855-465-6307; Fax : 905-639-6551  
Courriel : [ic.spectrumswo-do-spectrebdsoo.ic@canada.ca](mailto:ic.spectrumswo-do-spectrebdsoo.ic@canada.ca)

Une séance d'information publique aura lieu au Queenston Chapel, 29 rue Queenston, Queenston, ON L0S 1L0, le 1er avril 2026 de 18h00 à 19h00.

**TOUTE PERSONNE** peut soumettre une proposition écrite aux personnes énumérées ci-dessous au plus tard à 17 h (HE) le **6 avril 2026**. Veuillez mentionner notre numéro de dossier, **STC0485**, dans votre correspondance.

**SITE LOCATION MAP/CARTE DE L'EMPLACEMENT DU SITE**



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

PROPOSED SHARED TOWER INC. TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER

14184 NIAGARA RIVER PARKWAY, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ON (43.157877, -79.058602)

SHARED TOWER FILE NO. STC0485

Shared Tower Inc. is proposing a 30-metre antenna system located at 14184 Niagara River Parkway, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (No Municipal Address), Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (coordinates: 43.157877, -79.058602). Lighting and marking features are to be determined by NAV Canada and Transport Canada. The facility will consist of a 10m by 10m fenced compound. The 30m structure will accommodate initial and future loading for all cellular service providers, and additional fixed wireless equipment as required.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) is the governing body for installations of this type of telecommunication installation and can be contacted at:

**ISED – Southwestern Ontario District Office**  
4475 North Service Road, Suite 100, Burlington, ON L7L 4X7  
Telephone: 1-855-465-6307  
Fax: 905-639-6551  
Email: [ic.spectrumswo-do-spectrebdsoo.ic@canada.ca](mailto:ic.spectrumswo-do-spectrebdsoo.ic@canada.ca)

A Public Information Session will be held at Queenston Chapel, 29 Queenston St, Queenston, ON L0S 1L0 on April 1st, 2026 from 6:00 – 7:00 PM.

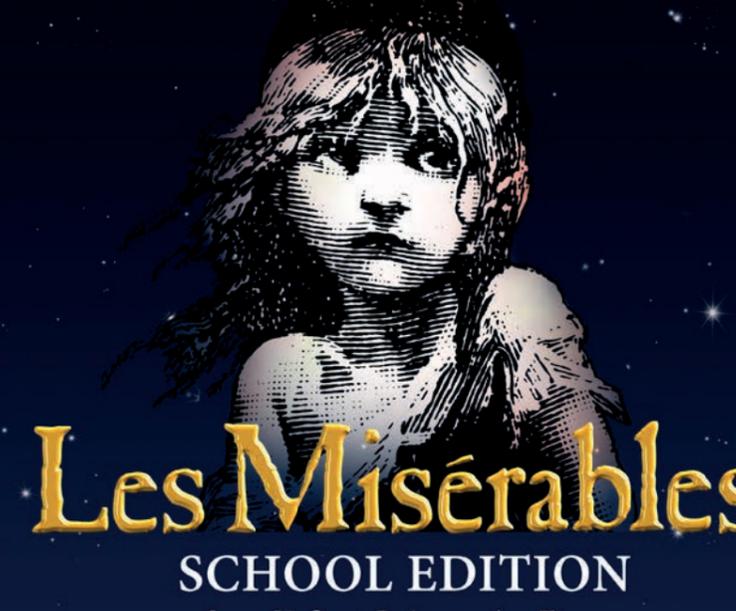
**ANY PERSON** may make a written submission to the individuals listed below no later than 5pm (ET) on **April 6th, 2026**. Please reference our file number, **STC0485**, in your correspondence.

Further information may also be obtained through the following contacts:

**APPLICANT CONTACT/PERSONNE-RESSOURCE DE LA DEMANDE:**  
Cheyenne Zierler  
Shared Tower Inc.  
1300 Cornwall Rd. Unit 101, Oakville ON, L6J 7W5  
[zierler@sharedtower.ca](mailto:zierler@sharedtower.ca)

**Niagara Parks Contact Information:**  
Guest Services Centre  
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A photograph of an elderly man sitting in a dark wooden chair in a room with large windows. He is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark striped pants. He is leaning forward with his hands clasped on a wooden cane. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the window behind him. To the left, there is a white wooden cabinet with drawers. The floor is dark wood.

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# CALL ANGELIKA = SOLD!™

CALL OR TEXT (289) 214-4394



Top Rated  
Niagara on the Lake Real Estate Agent  
Angelika Zammit

**ANGELIKA ZAMMIT**  
REALTOR® / OWNER / TEAM LEAD

**TOP RATED AGENT IN  
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE!\***

★ **FREE HOME EVALUATION!** ★  
**CALL OR TEXT ANGELIKA TODAY!**

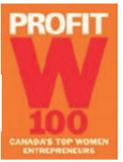


Cornerstone  
Association of REALTORS®

Toronto Regional  
Real Estate Board

listglobally

LUXURYHOMES.COM™



- Free packing of your house / estate cleanup/decluttering services\*\*\*
- World class videography, photos and drone footage, high quality hard cover print brochures & advertising in print media
- Large social media presence and extensive unique marketing techniques
- Your property will be globally listed gaining world wide exposure and will be seen on all real estate boards in Ontario
- Home renovation experience
- Help Elderly Relocate
- Passionate to be of service
- We offer a 24/7 open line of communication
- Several testimonials and 5 star reviews  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- Long term presence in Niagara-on-the-Lake. **Local Right at Home Realty Team Office in NOTL** (Over 6000 in GTA, #1 independent brokerage in the GTA for 10 years\*\*)
- Angelika previously owned a highly successful marketing/media business in Toronto for over 20 years. Built relationships with Fortune 500, big banks, CTV, Global, Olympics, Film Festival.
- Respected by colleagues and community
- Over 12 years of real estate business
- Knowledge in all aspects of real properties (waterfront, residential, agricultural, commercial and leases)
- Up to date on Mortgage trends and state of economy, strategy to sell
- Contribution to charities
- Your property is advertised on all 23 Real Estate boards in Ontario plus globally listed in over 200 countries

## FEATURED LISTINGS

<b>COMING SOON! FRIDAY</b>	<b>BONUS HEATED 6 CAR GARAGE!</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>
\$1,499,000	\$1,875,000	\$1,199,000	\$615,000	\$949,000
43 SCOTT ST E	643 KING STREET	21 TULIP TREE ROAD	16 WYCKLIFFE AVENUE	267 VICTORIA STREET
<b>OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, MARCH 1 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>GARDENER'S DELIGHT</b>
\$799,000	\$1,679,000	\$749,000	\$899,000	\$899,000
15756 NIAGARA PARKWAY	507 MISSISSAUGA ST	33-88 LAKEPORT RD	225 ANNE STREET	335 WILLIAM STREET
<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>POOL</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>PRICE IMPROVEMENT</b>
\$875,000	\$669,000	\$429,000	\$1,099,000	\$950,000
7 WINDSOR CIRCLE	5201 VALLEY WAY	707-81 SCOTT ST	80 LORETTA DRIVE	318 CONCESSION RD
\$999,000				
15 ANDRES STREET				



496 MISSISSAUGA ST, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE  
**NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE TEAM**  
Bringing GTA Buyers to Niagara-On-The-Lake  
**#1 BROKERAGE IN THE GTA FOR 10 YEARS\*\***

**RIGHT AT HOME**  
*Angelika* & ASSOCIATES  
LUXURY REAL ESTATE

\*Based on reviews from Rate-My-Agent.com, a triple verified review platform \*\*TRREB Jan. 1, 2013 to Dec. 31, 2022, combined units sold.  
\*\*\*FREE GIFT OF 10 HOURS OF PACKING AND DECLUTTERING SERVICES - excludes tenanted areas \*\*\*\*Based on closed transactions in the Burlington / Niagara Right At Home Realty Office, 2022, 2023, 2024