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September 26, 2024

Neighbour sues Konzelmann, town over special event permits

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

A lawyer representing a NOTL resident involved in a lawsuit against the municipality is accusing the town of not enforcing its own bylaws by allowing what he calls illegal gatherings on estate wineries.

Standing before council Sept. 24, St. Catharinesbased lawyer Tom Richardson, who is a municipal law specialist, took councillors to task about special events, such as weddings, being held on estate wineries.

A practice he contends is in contradiction to current

agricultural zoning bylaws.

He was representing NOTL resident Ed Werner, who launched the suit. He lives on Lakeshore Road next to Konzelmann Estate Winery.

Richardson recapped

that Werner has for several years complained to the town that events are occurring next to his home at Konzelmann, resulting in considerable disturbance.

"The Konzelmann property is zoned for the

estate winery and has no provision to allow special events," said Richardson.

"My thesis is this," he added, speaking not specifically to the

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New transit service falls short for specialized needs

Julia Sacco Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Alexis Dowsett hasn't been able to get a ride with Niagara Transit since July 2.

Alexis, 43, is quadriplegic and uses a power chair, relying heavily on transit to go about her day-to-day life.

As of July 2, Niagara Transit, which adopted Niagara Specialized Transit and NRT OnDemand, now functions under a new service provider, Voyago.

Since the transition, Alexis and her mother, Ruth Dowsett, have encountered several problems that inhibit her ability to complete daily activities.

"My daughter has not been able to get one ride. One ride," Ruth Dowsett told The Lake Report.

As per a board report from August, the Niagara Transit Commission is

Continued on Page 7

HEARTBEAT of the HARVEST

A Rubik's Cube of planning and problem solving at Trius



Emma Garner, director of winemaking for Andrew Peller Ltd., with a batch of incoming Sauvignon Blanc grapes. DON REYNOLDS

Jill Troyer | The Lake Report

here's a whole lot going on at the production facility at Trius during harvest season, and Emma Garner is in the thick of it. Her day starts early and finishes late. She's up at 5:30 in the morning and on site at Trius until 6 p.m. — and that's on days when everything goes smoothly. The ripening grapes in the vineyard dictate the schedule and the pace.

"Once the fruit's ready, we've got to go. That's the biggest thing."

Garner orchestrates the complex processes at the Trius production site in her role as director of winemaking for Andrew Peller Ltd., working very closely with the winemaking teams from both Peller and

Trius. Their premium wines are made here. She is also the winemaker for Thirty Bench. In a masterful understatement,

Garner allows that "my day is

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Maxwell charged with second count of assault, remains in custody

Staff
The Lake Report

A former Niagara-onthe-Lake child care worker was charged with a second count of aggravated assault on Tuesday.

Matthew Maxwell, 26, was charged with one count of aggravated assault last

week for allegedly choking a child under the age of five while he was working at Way to Grow Daycare in Niagara Falls.

He has remained in police custody since he was initially charged.

The details of the second charge are protected by a publication ban, said

Niagara Regional Police Cost. Jesse Vujasic, in response to questions from The Lake Report.

Maxwell was previously employed at Niagara Nursery School, located beside the community centre in Old Town.

A source told The Lake Report Maxwell was fired for grabbing a child's arm while he worked there.

Police would not answer questions about that, stating the incident is part of an ongoing investigation.

It appears from a review of Ontario Ministry of Education records that Niagara Nursery School may not have reported that incident when it occurred, which is it required to do by law.

Police said that matter would be "an investigation run by FACS and the Governing Bodies that manages daycares."

Reached last Tuesday, Niagara Nursery School executive director Candice Penny said, "We cannot comment at this time."

Police are urging anyone with more information, or who suspects their child may have been a victim, to contact detectives at 905-688-4111, option 3, ext. 1009468. Anonymous tips can be provided to Crime Stoppers of Niagara online or by calling 1-800-222-8477.





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Protest against luxury hotel poorly attended

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

A second protest outside NOTL town hall against the already approved Parliament Oak Hotel development attracted only eight people.

Organizer Karen Taylor-Jones arrived at the planned start time of 5:15 p.m. on Sept. 24 to a scene much different than the one she led just under two months ago.

The small group of protesters spent most of the time huddled amongst themselves in even smaller groups of two or three.

No protest signs were seen and no hot-tempered words were aimed at arriving councillors.

In contrast, councillors arriving for their monthly meeting on July 30 were greeted by the sounds of hundreds of residents gathered outside, some calling them liars and demanding their resignations.

The Parliament Oak Hotel is a proposed four storey, 129-room five-star facility at the former Parliament Oak School site at 325 King



Karen Taylor-Jones talks to Coun. Erwin Wiens as he arrives at town hall. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

St. in the heart of Old Town that has faced criticisms.

Along with concerns that it will create a traffic nightmare thanks to the large amount of staff and guest vehicles coming to and from — and other concerns about stormwater management deficiencies - many in the community simply believe is too tall and an

affront to the surrounding homes, NOTL's heritage and serenity.

"I am disappointed," Taylor-Jones said Tuesday of the low turnout.

"I had lots of people saying they were coming. Maybe they are discouraged because this council is hell bent to just say yes to everything," she added.

She also blamed a number of other reasons for the apparent apathy such as general life commitments and the weather — forecasts earlier in the day called for heavy rainfall, though that didn't happen.

Taylor-Jones had also hoped to address council in chambers Tuesday but didn't submit delegation papers by the deadline. It was the second time she failed to get the proper paperwork filed in time.

She feels she's been given the runaround and being prevented from speaking.

"Before the protest in July, I came in on a Friday morning to do delegation (paperwork) and I was told I was too late. So, now I'm doing a delegation for this and they told me I had till Monday night (Sept. 23).

"So I got my paperwork in and they told me I was turned down."

If she can't do it in person, Taylor-Jones is promising to continue her fight with a pen and paper.

"I guess I'll write letters to the Ombudsman, the Ontario Land Tribunal," she

wright@niagaranow.com





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A lot going on at Trius press house

Continued from Front Page

pretty busy, for sure, it's a bit busy."

The day starts with a meeting, with key players from all areas, some in person, some remote.

"Every morning we're reviewing what grapes have come in, the plans for them, and then considering everything that's coming in that day. In my office, I have a big schedule for a five-day span of all the fruit that we have planned to come in, and all of the presses we have available. We're making sure we're maximizing those, making sure we're not over-committing and making sure we're going to be able to get everything completed," she explains.

"So we will have that conversation and then the winemaking team here at Trius will go through and taste all of the juices that have come in, and all of the fermenters that are going, and make decisions about whether or not the fermenter needs food or whether or not that juice is ready to rack. So there's the grape part of the scheduling, but then there's all the downstream steps that happen here."

Planning is one thing and responding to inevitable hiccups is another. It adds up to countless decisions each day.

"We have things scheduled, but obviously things change," she says. "It's a big logistics game. So say we've got our schedule and we've got our tentative times. We've got our tentative tonnages, we've got our tentative processing plan. But then the grower ends up having to start picking later because it's too dewy, so that shifts the schedule."

There's a huge domino effect to any one wrinkle.

"It could be we're getting less tonnage than we thought, or at a different time. We're constantly juggling. It's a matrix," Garner explains.

"Yesterday, for instance, our press broke down. It's equipment that you don't use for eight months of the year, then all of a sudden you get this period of time where it's in use all the time."



Grapes are dumped from the truck into the hopper. It takes us about an hour and a half to dump the truckload, so about two hours is scheduled for each load. DON REYNOLDS

"We've got four days worth of fruit scheduled to come in. So now we have to get in touch with growers, we've got to change our plans. We have to use different presses. We've got to rejig things, and that had a three day effect."

Garner takes it all in stride. "That's all part of it, right? That's what kind of makes it fun. There's always something exciting going on."

"Last night, the alarm was going off, so I got the call to help navigate that. Someone had set it for the night, not realizing that when harvest is on, we have people here all the time."

The operation runs 20 or 24 hours a day, and will process 2,500 tonnes of grapes.

On this particular day, the broken press is back online and the schedule is packed.

"We've got two more days of picking for our Methode Champenois grapes destined for our sparkling program. We've got Sauvignon Blanc coming in today and we've got some Pinot Noir coming in from Clarke farm. All kinds of stuff on the go," Garner says with a smile.

A huge truck rolls in, its big black bins filled to the brim with Sauvignon Blanc grapes harvested that morning. The grapes are weighed and the juice is sampled for

its sugar levels. Growers are paid based on tonnage on brix levels.

These grapes were machine harvested, which Garner says works out well for Sauvignon Blanc.

"It helps extract some of that flavour, because there's some juice already coming out," she explains.

The truck lumbers off to the press house next, where the bins are dumped into a stainless steel hopper. It's a process that will be repeated many times, every day.

"It takes us about an hour and a half to dump the whole truckload, so we try to schedule about two hours for each one," Garner says.

Once the grapes are dumped into the hopper, "there's a spinning auger inside, which feeds them into the winery, into one of our presses, then goes into a cold stainless steel tank. We'll settle it so we get clear juice, and then we'll rack that juice off the solids in probably five to seven days, and then we'll ferment it."

Meanwhile over in the yard, bunches of Pinot Noir grapes handpicked early that morning wait in insulated bins, keeping them cool. Four hundred kilograms will be kept as whole bunches and the rest will be crushed and then all of it put into huge wood fermenters. Every

grape variety calls for very specific and often different treatment.

There's a lot to worry about, a lot of balls to keep in the air, but Garner moves through the day and the challenges with an air of calm assurance. The one thing she may dread is the sound of rainfall waking her at night. Then she'd have to decide whether to delay picking, or cancel the day, and manage all the ripple effects of those decisions.

But this season has been generous with the weather so far.

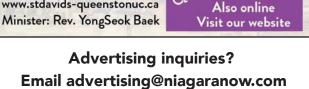
"It's been amazing," she beams.

"Good weather gives me the flexibility to decide what I want to pick on a given day because it's ready, not because I have to, because there's four days of rain forecast," she says. Even the rain that came earlier this week hasn't dampened her outlook. "The season is still shaping up to be fantastic. That rain helped to give the late reds a watering, and has now put us in a position to finish up bringing in the aromatics."

Next week in our series Heartbeat of the Harvest, we'll visit the vineyards at Niagara College, where harvest is all about handson learning, and program graduates have fanned out into successful careers in the industry.







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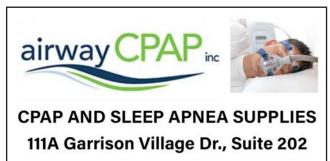


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SUMMER OF THE FLOOD











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Preventions to ease rural flooding won't start until next spring

This week, in Part 5 of our Summer of Flood series, we look at concerns from rural residents who say flash flooding, as a result of two intense storms this summer, dramatically affected their properties and homes. They believe the flooding can be attributed to a lack of debris clearing and maintenance of ditches and culverts.

The Lake Report witnessed numerous locations where water enveloped properties and spoke with homeowners who believe while the neglect is frustrating, a lack of communication from town officials is compounding their anger and, in some cases, prompting them to take action into their own hands and do the cleanup and dredging the town is responsible for.

The town, on the other hand, says it's difficult to respond proactively to every resident with maintenance concerns in a town the size of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Responding to urgent infrastructure concerns on an as-needed basis may not be the most effective way to prevent water and flooding issues on many rural properties, says Niagara-on-the-Lake's operations department in response to resident criticisms.

Darren MacKenzie, the town's acting director of operations, said while mowing and clearing of ditches and culverts does take place intermittently throughout the spring and summer months, the municipality's size doesn't allow for regular removal of growth and debris in all areas.

He was responding to information sent to The Lake Report which revealed many inquiries and service requests from residents to have their ditches and culverts cleared have gone weeks — and sometimes months — without a response.

The problem came to a head in June and July of this year, when a pair of once-in-a-generation storms turned many rural areas into flooded expanses, damaging properties and causing heaps of frustration.

"There hasn't been a proactive program (for ditch cleaning) in place," said MacKenzie.



This isn't an irrigation pond. It's Jim Cole's yard after heavy rain on June 18 flooded it. He blames a lack of ditch clearing by the town for backing the water up. SUPPLIED

"We do have a ditching program that is starting up in 2025 to make sure our ditches are to the proper grades," he added.

Jim Cole, who lives on Line 7 Road southeast of St. Davids, believes a proactive approach to clearing ditches would have saved him considerable grief.

His home was almost completely surrounded by water after the June 18 deluge.

On the east side of his property, a low-lying area which is approximately 150 metres wide by 400 metres long looked like a swimming pool with depths in some areas up to 1.5 feet.

At the front of his property, the culvert under the entrance to his driveway clogged with debris, making the passage of water to the nearby municipal Harrison Drain almost impossible and filling the ditch to the rim.

Cole has always felt the upward slope of the ditch, as it heads west from his home, is also caused by a lack of maintenance and contributed to his flooding.

He believes years of neglect caused fallen growth and debris to become part of the landscape within the ditch, raising its level from the bottom-up to a point where it can no longer deliver water to the municipal drain.

"If you look west, you can see the road terrain rises up," he said in August as he walked the length of his driveway toward the road to view the ditch.

"Well, the water can't climb the hill."

He believed then, as he still does now, dredging the ditch with an excavator to a flat plane will help solve the problem. Today, Cole still hasn't heard back from town officials following his service request for maintenance.

"No, they never did (call back) and they never came out," he said on Sept. 23, over three months after the flood.

Cole eventually took the matter into his own hands with the help of his visiting brother-in-law.

"What we did was cut all the foliage out of the ditches there, and so that had a more clear area to try and flow, but they never came with any Gradall (excavator) or anything."

Denise Curry, who is 71 years old and lives alone at at the corner of Concession 6 and Line 7 roads, has ditches outside her home that are filled with towering reeds and plant life.

She's experienced the same problems and frustrations as Cole, and recalls the June 18 and July 10 flash floods, clearly because not only did they turn her property into water world, but they flowed into her basement.

"I called them (town officials) before it even got to (the house)," she said, referring to July 10 flood.

"I told them that the water is coming up further and further onto my property. During the first (storm), it was the same thing."

Curry said someone from the town was dispatched to her property following the June 18 storm but left without any solution.

Like Cole, she took matters into her own hands, although unlike Cole, she was unsuccessful. She also suffers from cancer and is very ill.

"The guy came, and he said that, you know, there's nothing much they could

do (because) the (ditch) was clogged up," she said.

"I told them I was out digging, trying to dig the end of the ditch because they haven't cleaned the ditches."

As of Sept. 24, Curry was still waiting for someone to come out and clear the ditches.

MacKenzie sympathizes with Cole and Curry, but he insists due to the size of the municipality, there is little more that can be done but for residents to file a service request with the town and wait for action.

This, he said, could take some time.

"I appreciate everyone's patience, but if there is something that you are looking for, please either email our customer service or email myself and I will have somebody come take a look."

MacKenzie and town maintenance staff are doing everything they can to address the concerns, he added, and said this summer's extreme weather patterns not only frustrated residents, but town officials as well.

"This year is difficult," he said.

"When you have great rainfall, great heat, things grow quicker. Maybe instead of three or four week intervals for cleanups, it will happen at longer intervals. So it is more or less (for town staff) to assess it accordingly."

Cole expressed frustration with MacKenzie's responses.

Prior to taking on the work himself, he was in contact with the town numerous times, via email, phone and in person, he said.

"I called in for a request," he said, noting that initially he drove to the town hall and was turned away.

"They said you had to go online and basically send the message to them asking for a service request, which I did."

"And, you know, I think I got an email back saying something that they would be in touch with me in the future."

"I never heard anything."

NEXT: Part 6 of the

series will look at a Four

Mile Creek Watershed

study between the town of

Niagara-on-the-Lake and
the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority that,
while in the preliminary
stages of development, will
take a holistic look at water
issues in NOTL.

wright@niagaranow.com

Rescue group seeks new volunteers

Continued from Front Page

Julia Sacco Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Doug Mepham recalls a time when his crew was called out to rescue some people floating on paddleboards.

When they got to the scene, Mepham found seven people clinging to three paddleboards, including a mother and her four children.

"Our crew follows its training, collects them all. We get the paddleboarders in, the kids are crying, we treat the hypothermia," he said.

And it doesn't end there. On the way back their crew finds a man who had been knocked off of his jetski and found unconscious, he was saved too.

"In 106 minutes, they saved eight lives," Mepham said

Those days are chaotic, but they make it all worth it, he said.

Mepham is a volunteer for GAMRU South Shore Search and Rescue, which is both a unit of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary and an Ontario not-for-profit organization.

Volunteers aim to save lives and promote safety on the water, particularly Lake Ontario.

Although they volunteer for the same organization, doing the same intense, time-sensitive work, Mephan and James Walker aren't necessarily cut from the same cloth.

Walker, 24, owns a land-



James Walker, left, and Doug Mepham are two volunteers with GAMRU South Shore Search and Rescue. The group is looking to recruit new volunteers. JULIA SACCO

scaping business and helps out at his family's business, Walker's Country Market, when he is not volunteering.

Mepham, 75, started volunteering with his first marine rescue outfit when he was 49. With a background in journalism and public relations, it was his boating experiencing growing up that drew him to volunteer.

Mepham has been with the rescue organization for more than 25 years and Walker is completing his first year.

"We get people from virtually all walks of life. Our membership looks like the communities we service," Mepham told The Lake Report.

Every volunteer brings a different set of skills to help address any kind of emergency.

"With every crew having a different role, each person has a different job. They bring all kinds of different experiences and skills," Walker said.

And those varied skill sets are vital, given that the crew has to be ready for just about anything. Volunteers go through a wide variety of training that are administered through phases, one of the most important being scenarios, Mepham said.

"As adventurous as our trainers are, there's still things we haven't thought of that you encounter out there. So the training makes people as flexible as they can. There's no fixed answer for everything," he said.

Training this extensive is no small time commitment either, which is something Walker understood when he applied.

"We go about once a week to do the in-class training and in the summertime you're expected to do one night a week with your designated crew and one weekend per month," he said.

When looking for volunteers, the only real requirement is that the individual be over 18 and willing and able to commit the appropriate amount of time, Mepham said.

"It can be beastly hot, it can be terribly cold, it can be rough, it can be wet. Being physically ready for that and a willingness to learn are the criteria," he said.

The organization trained a volunteer who stepped on a boat for the very first time during her April training session.

"She's become a real contributor," Mepham said.

Search and rescue is not for everyone and Mepham understands that, but there are moments that make it more than worth it for the right volunteers.

GAMRU South Shore Search & Rescue has experienced an unusual shortage of volunteers and is in need of new helping hands.

"We're looking for a minimum of 10 new members to rebuild a fleet," Mepham said.

These new volunteers would be looking at getting into the water next May, with in-class training beginning in January.

"The sooner they get on the boat, the better," he said.

Those interested can reach out to membership director David Rohr at david. rohr@gamru.ca.

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Seniors for Climate plan all-ages flash mob at Simcoe Park

Staff
The Lake Report

The future of planet
Earth is not a subject that
inspires joy in many people,
let alone makes them want
to dance — however, in an
effort to bring attention to
the climate action cause,
Seniors for Climate are
turning this sentiment on its
head.

A local group is planning a flash mob and dance at Simcoe Park this Tuesday, Oct. 1, as part of Seniors Day of Climate Action, a cross-Canada initiative led by six seniors' climate organizations.

Lidija Biro with Seniors for Climate is co-ordinating the day of action in Niagara, which will be held from 4 to 5 p.m., with the flash mob



Lidija Biro, an organizer with Seniors for Climate Niagara, encourages everyone to come out to Simcoe Park on Oct. 1. SUPPLIED

taking place 4:30 p.m.
"In recent years, youth have led the world in demanding urgent action on climate change," said Biro

"Seniors are now joining youth to demonstrate that they too are prepared to put

in a media release.

their time and energy into rebuilding a sustainable planet for their grandchildren and for generations to come."

This day was chosen as it coincides with the country's National Seniors Day, meant to recognize the contributions and value members of the aging poulation bring to society.

"It's great to have seniors' contributions to Canadian life celebrated nationally," Biro said, "but our age doesn't mean we plan to simply sit back and watch the world go by: the seniors day of action is a strong statement that we're an active and important force for shaping Canada's future."

Also taking part in the event will be young performers and volunteers with the Yellow Door Theatre Project, who've been working with the group on this initiative.

There will be petitions available at the event asking the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government to make further commitments to climate action, plus information about to get involved with Seniors for Climate.

"But the main attraction," said Biro, "is to watch seniors and youth perform together in a fun flash mob climate dance."

"We're looking forward to it, and hope it will bring a great crowd of people to the park."

For more information, visit the Seniors for Climate Facebook page, or linktr.ee/seniorsforclimate.



Have an opinion you want heard?

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Event permits side-step bylaws: Richardson

Continued from Front Page

Konzelmann issue at hand, but to a practice he believes is happening at other wineries and agriculturalzoned locations across the board: "The town is now permitting wineries, Konzelmann in particular, but others as well, to evade the requirements of the zoning bylaw by just giving them a special event permit."

Richardson questioned why the town has a bylaw if the practice is to allow these events to go ahead by simply side-stepping the rules with special event permits.

The bottom line, he added, is simple: The town is failing to go after violators of municipal legislation.

"The failure of the town to enforce bylaws passed by this council results in a municipality that is not reflective of the goals of the council as expressed in its bylaws," he said.

Richardson said the town's example in this case is setting a dangerous precedent.

"If the town is not going to enforce its bylaws, why should anyone comply with the town's bylaws?" he asked.

"By not requiring compliance with its bylaws, the town is penalizing its citizens, businesses and wineries who do meet the requirements of the law and rewards others who are allowed to elect to act in defiance of the bylaws," he said.

Richardson added that he and his client are not asking for more regulations, rather they are only asking for the enforcement of the rules that are in place.

Then he made a further

Referring to a motion by Coun. Maria Mavridis that was already on the agenda for the night's meeting, that requests a town staff

Lawyer Tom Richardson speaks to NOTL town council Sept. 24 on behalf of resident Ed Werner. RICHARD WRIGHT

commercial operations on all agriculturally zoned lands, Richardson implored the members to pass it.

The motion was passed and referred to town staff for investigation.

Deputy Lord Mayor Erwin Wiens, who chaired the meeting in the absence of Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, thanked Richardson for his presentation and reserved judgement on whether or not bylaws are being enforced until after

He later elaborated on his decision to defer his judgement

"There are rules in place and bylaws and site plans for wineries," Wiens told The Lake Report.

"We enforce those as they come about through a complaint-based (system). His (Richardson's) position is that we weren't doing a good job. But until I get a full report from our staff, I'm not going to concede that."

Coun. Gary Burrooughs thanked Richardson for his presentation, stating that he believes this is a matter that will need a very careful approach to unravel the rights and wrongs.

"It is a very complicated issue," he said.

"And I am sure there will be groups on all sides worrying that their rights are (being) taken away."

"I don't think that is the intent," he added, "It is a tough question that we are going to deal with."



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Applications close October 14th

NOTL resident hasn't been able to get ride since July 1

Continued from Front Page

aware changes need to be made — and they are underway.

The BTS Network, the former service provider for Niagara Specialized Transit, was "absolutely wonderful," said Dowsett.

Alexis could book a specialized bus trip as short notice as a day in advance to do things such as go to the mall, visit a friend or go to a doctor's appointment, Dowsett said.

Now, the Dowsetts have trouble getting a ride at all, even weeks in advance.

The lack of access to transit has affected more than just Alexis' social life, her mom said.

"She was involved in independent living and they had all sorts of activities she would go to — can't get rides," she said. "She volunteers at Niagara Longterm Care on Thursdays — can't get rides."

Neither Alexis nor her mother have been able to get through to Voyago or Niagara Transit for solutions.

"I just don't know what to do anymore, because



Ruth Dowsett and her daughter Alexis have not been able to book a ride for Alexis to get to her volunteer job or see friends since transit changed on July 2. JULIA SACCO

nobody will speak to you," Dowsett said.

Alexis said she is left feeling frustrated.

"With the old service, I was friends with some of the dispatchers. I could call them up and they'd try to get me a ride," she said.

Missing out on volunteering is a huge source of frustration, Alexis added.

"If we can't get this resolved, I can't get back to work."

The unification of Niagara Specialized Transit and NRT OnDemand came after NOTL council, along with six other municipalities in Niagara, voted in favour of amalgamating all transit services across the region in 2021.

With amalgamation approved by the required majority of municipalities, Niagara Transit took over multiple existing transit contracts, including NRT OnDemand and Niagara Specialized Transit.

MJ McGraw lives in Old Town and had also been using the service formerly run under BTS to get her to and from medical appointments for the last five years.

"They knew, just from their familiarity with the clients based on the number of times they had to pick them up, what they had to do to keep them safe," Mc-Graw told The Lake Report.

When the service initially transitioned to Voyago, McGraw said BTS employees weren't allowed to share any information with clients about how to use the new services.

"It meant that everybody, including Alexis' mom, were wandering around trying to figure out what the hell to do with this," she said

When using the app instead of the phone, McGraw

said she can book rides with a few days' notice, rather than two weeks in advance.

She understands how Alexis may have a hard time getting a ride though, Mc-Graw said, adding that she has only seen one wheelchair accessible van during recent rides.

Voyago seems to have realized they made a mistake in taking on these transit services, McGraw said.

Leah Tracey, Niagara
Transit's communications
consultant, sent The Lake
Report the commission
board report from Aug. 27
outlining what changes will
be implemented to fix ongoing issues — and how.

"Niagara Transit Commission staff have investigated the operational and logistical challenges that have impacted both the Niagara Transit Commission and its customers," the report said.

The report recognized that without proper service clients could become isolated and miss out on potential life-saving treatments.

The challenges outlined in the report include: Vehicle capacity, high-demand periods and extended hold times, unconventional payment methods, abandoned and delayed rides, on-time performance confusion, new customer base and other issues.

More than 100 new clients applied for specialized services immediately following the launch, the report said.

To help mitigate the problems, Niagara Transit is promising an increased vehicle count, booking platform improvement, abandoned and delayed ride mitigation, multi-modal integration and increased staffing.

"Starting Oct. 1, we will have an additional seven wheelchair-accessible vehicles in service," Tracey said in an email to The Lake Report.

This is in addition to those vehicles already in service. The full fleet will operate across the region, including in NOTL.

Tracey requested contact information for McGraw and the Dowsetts and said Niagara Transit would be in touch to ensure all improvements made had been relayed.

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The Lake Report





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Contributed by Patty Garriock

"Happiness is a byproduct of an effort to make someone else happy." - Gretta Brooker Palmer

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Restoring a NOTL landmark



Exterior has begun to restore the historic clock tower cenotaph on Queen Street. Street parking is blocked off on either side during the work. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Opinion

Let's turn down the political heat



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner Columnist

Notice how divided and angry things are getting? We need to chill.

Two of my neighbours are Floridians. Of course, I ask them about the Trump-Harris slugfest.

One says she is "utterly embarrassed for my country that a felon and a liar" is running for president. The other says he thinks Harris is "a communist" and Trump's needed, "to burn things down."

Wow. Americans are crazy.

But wait. Are we any

There was a convoy of trucks down Queen Street the other day, festooned with flags. Half of them said "F*** Trudeau." That was sad and ugly.

In Ottawa, the NDP leader came close to whacking a stalker who called him corrupt in the parking lot.

The Conservative PM-inwaiting has nicknamed him "sellout," claiming he won't pull the government down until he qualifies for a pension. (But Jagmeet Singh's a multi-millionaire. Poilievre knows it.)

And here in NOTL, angry citizens protested outside council, as I mentioned last

Signs. Slogans. Threats. Cursing. The whole nine yards. That doesn't happen often. Like, ever.

Local politicians get a failing grade as citizens split over density, tourism, heritage and zoning.

Have we all changed? The last time I was in Parliament, it was okay for MPs from different parties to actually eat or work out together.

Messing around outside of the House of Commons gave rise to an understanding we can all love the same thing (Canada) yet differ intensely how to express it.

Politics is toxic now. Politicians shoulder blame for that. At no level of government do elected people have more impact than here at

The feds can change tax policy, and it matters. But if a 40-unit condo gets approved beside your bungalow, well, that's war. It can ruin your life.

"When you see decisions which are so egregious — Parliament Oak (hotel), Hummel's hotel, Mary Street (condo) — pass through council with bogus explanations, people are starting to give up," says Lyle Hall.

He's a full-time hospitality industry consultant and part-time disturber. Head of the Niagara Foundation and a pervasive volunteer, he's also a burr under the saddle of a local council he thinks folks have given up on.

"People throw up their hands, say it's still a nice place to live, but what can I do?

"Rather than find a compromise," he says, "the pendulum is going to swing all the way in the other direction and you're probably going to see the folks there being jettisoned. It's maddening, confusing disillusioning when you hear members of council say things that aren't true and staff responses are equally untrue — it's easy to be frustrated. There's a pervasive arrogance."

For his part, Hall speaks out. He had a steamy article here last week ("Opinion: Can we be upfront about planning in NOTL?" Sept. 19). The Niagara Foundation puts its money

down and rescues heritage properties.

But the efforts of other citizen warriors fade fast in the face of the build-furiously-and-big mentality of the province, plus the way local politicians cave to it.

The issue of development has the potential to tear this wee, bucolic place apart. The scenic cornrows of grapes, the river's majesty, the horses and storybook gardens of the Old Town hide a troubling anti-establishment buzz. Animosity is growing.

The situation's turning into "us" and "them." Once the excavators rip through the former school and bite into the Parliament Oak turf, tensions may rise.

How to turn the temperature down?

A few neighbourhood public meetings would help. Let folks vent. Councillors spending some weekends door-knocking would render them more accessible, and humble.

Do an online poll. Ask for feedback on the NOTL Facebook sites. Make people think they matter. Better still, make them matter.

How rad would that be?. Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.

garth@garth.ca







Thank you for supporting Terry Fox Run

Dear editor:

"No Matter What" was the theme of the 44th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run.

Terry started his journey across Canada in 1980, persevering through rain, wind, snow and heat running a marathon (42 kilometres a day) for 143 days.

It didn't matter if he had 100 people cheering him on or if he was all alone — he ran to bring awareness for cancer research.

Terry Fox was our first fundraiser to gain support and recognition for a worthwhile cause.

On Sunday, Sept. 15, at Simcoe Park, 250 people chose to show up and contribute to cancer research because it matters.

We heard a heartfelt message from Dave Eke honouring his late wife Debbie, who died last October from glioblastoma.



Joan King organizes the annual Terry Fox Run in Niagaraon-the-Lake. She thanks the community for support.

We took a moment to think about friends or family members who have been recently diagnosed, currently getting treatment or in recovery knowing how significant all contributions are to Terry's legacy.

The funds raised online have reached \$76,000 to date. To be included in the final total will be the shirt

sales, button day, Pleasant Manor walk, Joe Pillitteri's comedy night, the school runs (on Sept. 27) and your donations at the run.

Sincere thanks for the generous donations of fruit from the MacSweens at Quiet Acres farm, Epp Family Fruit Farms and Walker's Country Market, along with pizza from Sandtrap Pub & Grill and water from Peter Gill enjoyed by the participants.

Huge thanks to all the dedicated volunteers and participants — you make this world a better place.

You embody the passion and energy "no matter what" it takes to beat this dreaded disease.

It is with much respect to our Niagara-on-the-Lake community that I thank you for keeping the Marathon of Hope alive!

> Joan King Run organizer

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Public no longer interested in 9/11 ceremonies

Dear editor:

The Lake Report's editorial of Sept. 19 ("Editorial: Remembering 9/11 in NOTL") states that the public's attendance at NOTL's 9/11 ceremony has been "lagging" and this year, it was particularly low.

Kevin MacLean blames the town's poor job of promotion. My view is that the public is no longer interested in attending.

On Sept. 11, 2001, I was living in Washington, D.C. When I moved to Niagaraon-the Lake in 2004, I was surprised to find that the town held a 9/11 commemoration even though not one citizen from NOTL died during the tragedy.

I have never attended one of the town's 9/11 ceremonies. I prefer to watch the ceremonies at the World Trade

Center, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, Pa., in which family members of those who died that day participate.

For me, those commemorations have much more meaning.

Elizabeth Masson **NOTL**

Residents and visitors beware of Bell's roaming charges

Dear editor:

If you live near the border or visit any place near the border, check you Bell bill carefully.

I am a Bell Canada subscriber living in Niagaraon-the-Lake. After waiting for about 20 minutes to speak with a live person, I have just finished a conversation with Mark, a supervisor at Bell Roaming.

This conversation is about an amount of \$13 charged to my account for "roaming" on Aug. 15 when, in fact, I was in Canada that full day.

This is not the first time that this has happened. In the past, when I complained, I was told that Bell apologizes for the inconvenience and that my account would be credited with the unwarranted charge.

This time however, the conversation with Bell was different.

In a first conversation with someone named May at Bell, I was told that the fact that I live near the border means that I accept that a U.S. communication tower may connect to my phone and therefore, I acknowledge that I will be billed for roaming even though I did not cross the border.

May's answer was that I would not get a credit and that I should turn off the roaming feature when I am near the border, i.e., just about all the time.

I then asked to speak with the supervisor and was passed on to Mark.

Mark also told me that he was aware of the issue but that there is nothing that Bell can do to prevent this type of unwarranted billing from happening again in the future (including to any other Bell customer who happens to visit Niagara Falls or any other place near the U.S. border).

Mark did agree to cancel the charge but on one condition ... he would turn off the feature of the automatic \$13 roaming rate if I do enter the United States.

In other words, I must

now always call Bell before entering the U.S. and cannot avail myself of the protection feature I enjoyed

I understand that Bell takes the position it cannot do anything to prevent incursions into Canada by U.S. communication towers, but I do not understand why Bell takes the position that it is the subscriber who must bear the risk and the cost.

I wonder how much Bell has already collected from unwary customers and how much more this new policy of Bell will take out of the pockets of unsuspecting clients.

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Of bricks and other things



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall Columnist

OK, it is probably not a surprise when I admit about a third of my television viewing is focused on design, restoration and renovation programs.

And, on various occasions, I have sat and shaken my head over certain mistaken practices displayed when it comes to a very common building material: Brick.

So, I thought this week we might begin the column by considering brick and a couple of these "mistaken" practices.

Prior to the advent of machine-made modern brick late in 19th century, bricks were handmade by workers who mixed native clay with water to make the slurry that was then hand-packed into rectangular forms, then laid out to dry.

Once sufficient moisture had leached out, the clay blocks were carefully removed from the forms and stacked in a wood-fired beehive kiln.

For one and a half to two days, the fire in the kiln was constantly monitored around the clock to maintain the high temperatures required to make the molecular changes which produce a hardened brick.

This process resulted in three general product grades. The bricks closest to the fire were generally over-exposed to heat, often resulting in a shiny blackened surface, flawed shapes and referred to as "clinkers" after the metallic sound they produced when stuck together.

First quality brick came from the middle of the stacks where the clay blocks had received the proper amount of heat to create

both the strength and hardness to be weather resistant.

Finally, "soft" or "salmon" brick was produced from the outer of the stacks where, furthest from the heat, the clay blocks had been imperfectly fired and lacked weather resistance.

Although the clinker bricks were water-resistant and durable, they had a higher thermal conductivity than the more porous, first quality and salmon bricks, lending less insulation to climate-controlled structures.

This, combined with their irregular shapes, resulted in clinkers often being relegated to discards throughout most of the 18th and 19th centuries, although they were occasionally used as pavers or in decorative elements incorporated into a building's brick field.

Clinkers did enjoy a relatively brief period of popularity when architects of the Arts & Crafts movement — who found them distinctive, charming and evocative of their Romantic ethos — incorporated them into their builds and, in the eastern North America, they found their way into many Colonial Revival designs.

First quality bricks were the product of choice for the outer layer or "wythe" of buildings where their uniform size, strength and resistance to climatic conditions produced an outer sheathing that was long-lived, visually appealing, and easy to construct, this last point saving on labour costs — important since these bricks were the most expensive to purchase.

Our ancestors, typically being a frugal lot, used structurally sound (and cheaper) salmon bricks on the inner, unexposed wythes of their buildings where their lack of weather resistance didn't matter.

To be clear, even the first quality handmade brick was not as strong as modern machine-made brick ... however, since historic brick was laid with lime mortar (not as strong as Portland



Staining a mottled '80s brick to traditional red. Staining bricks is better than painting, allowing the brick to retain its necessary porous quality, Brian Marshall writes. SUPPLIED

mortar), the structural integrity of the brick was maintained.

Which brings us to the first and second of the "mistaken" practices.

The first I most recently witnessed while watching a segment of a popular restoration show wherein the host assisted the homeowner of a mid-19th century house in cleaning old mortar off bricks that had been salvaged during a renovation of the building.

These bricks, the homeowner stated, came from the inner and outer layers of a wall removed as a result of the building alterations and he planned on reusing them to clad the outer surface of a new chimney.

No one mentioned that, if the salmon brick was used in a fashion which exposed them to the weather, these bricks would inevitably fail in pretty short order.

Salmon bricks belong on the inside of a building, not the outside. And, it should be noted that I have even seen masons who are not familiar with handmade brick make this same mistake.

The second erring practice made by those inexperienced with historic brick is to lay or repoint them using Portland mortar.

Bluntly, the rigidity of modern mortar will cause handmade brick to crack, spall and fail over the near term.

But, historic brick is not alone in suffering from errant practices — modern brick is also susceptible to the vagaries of the uninformed.

Take, for instance, a long standing exercise of applying paint on clay brick, something that has become more popular in the last few years as renovation television has expanded its reach into homes around the world.

There are a number of reasons why painting brick is a bad idea but most revolve around the nature of clay brick itself.

You see, unlike cement for example, brick is porous. This porosity is expressed in tiny voids that allow moisture vapour to pass through in both directions, helping to regulate humidity and prevent moisture from being trapped within the walls.

One can easily say brick "breathes" and must be allowed to do so.

However, applying paint to the brick creates a bar-

rier, effectively sealing the voids and results in trapping moisture inside the brick.

Amongst other issues, this situation can lead to the following:

The trapped moisture creating the ideal environment for the growth of mold and mildew in the materials — wood framing, drywall, some types of insulation, etc. — behind the brick.

During seasonal freeze and thaw cycles, the trapped moisture will expand and contract causing the outer layer of brick to flake, spall or crack.

The trapped moisture can cause deterioration (softening) of the clay brick, potentially compromising the structural integrity of the brick field over time.

Moreover, just like clapboard, painted brick must be regularly addressed to maintain a pleasing appearance.

Further, once painted, it is incredibly difficult and expensive to strip the paint off the brick.

Now, if you are dead-set on changing the appearance of your brickwork — and there can be good reasons to do so — there are alternatives to paint.

The most traditional method that can be seen on some historic masonry buildings would be a limewash.

Consisting only of lime putty, water, and pigment, it keeps the brick's texture and breathability, offers buildable colour intensity and weathers naturally.

This application offers a light or whitewashed look that can either fully cover the brickfield or allow portions of it to be visible.

Another option some folks find attractive is a mortar wash and German smear, which involves applying a very thin layer of mortar over the existing brick and mortar joints, and subsequently wiping it down (smearing) to subtly alter the overall colour of the brick façade.

Note that this method actually allows the character of the brickwork to be visible through the mortar layer.

Then there is water-based brick stain that offers a practical and cost-effective solution to change the colour of brick or brick-and-mortar surfaces, while still maintaining the appearance of its natural texture.

Brick stain colours can range from classic reds and browns to more contemporary shades like grays, whites and even blues.

Unlike paint, which creates a surface barrier, stain actually slightly penetrates the masonry to colour the material while leaving the voids intact preserving its "breathability" — a new fresh, vibrant hue that doesn't mask or inhibit its innate character.

In addition, you have the option to restain the brickwork with a different colour should that be desired in the future.

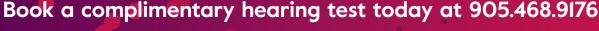
Understanding brick, whether you have historic or modern, is the key to its use, maintenance and making the right choices to keep it beautiful.

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



Pauline Reimer Gibson is an Audiologist with over 20 years of experience who loves helping people of all ages in the community. Julia Dick is the Front Office Coordinator and a longtime resident of Virgil. Call Julia today to book a complimentary hearing test.

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Who's responsible for future flooding and water problems?

Dear editor:

In the July 11 edition of The Lake Report, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa stated: "In the St. Davids area on that day, they experienced three-and-a-half inches of rain in less than an hour and that's almost a 500-year rain event."

The in-ground infrastructure, he said, is simply not built to manage that volume of water in that short period of time.

"It was definitely problematic, but I would not say that's because of over-development," he added.

Well OK, it was almost a once-in-a-500-year event and not a one in 500-year storm, but why quibble about 50 or a 100 years?

I believe that mayor Zalepa's message, through implication, was that it was an event that perhaps we wouldn't see in four to five lifetimes.

Well, it seems opinions from other sources differ significantly. "Definition of 100-year storm 'seems to have flown right out the window': Toronto official," according to Globalnews.ca.

Toronto's city manager, Paul Johnson, stated the amount of rainfall that



Gienek Ksiazkiewicz says overdevelopment and impropoer planning by the town and council is playing a huge role in serious floods in St. Davids. SUPPLIED

fell on that July morning exceeded estimates from Environment Canada.

"I don't even know why we continue to talk about 100-year storms any more because that definition seems to have flown right out the window. We've had three of them in the last 11 years," he said.

It appeared by mayor Zalepa's quotes in The Lake Report that he was trying to calm the masses and continue to champion real estate developers keen on profiting from the attractive aspects of Niagara-on-the-

So, he appears to deny that climate change is here, denies that there is an infrastructure problem, denies that there is a water drainage problem caused by development in places like St. Davids and denies further development approvals

Town staff and councillors have been made aware of flooding in St. Davids for over a year. Pictures and videos have been sent to them and presentations have been made.

will exacerbate the problem.

These rain events have occurred several times this year alone accompanied by

flooding and are not one in an almost 500-year cycle.

Pictures of the Vineyard Estates reservoir that is supposed to regulate water flow into Four Mile Creek (at maximum capacity coincidentally with the flooding in St. Davids) were sent to councillors and staff indicating that a high-density development like Tawny Ridge would not be able to adequately drain the increased water and the rapidity of water flow into the Vineyard reservoir.

In 2021, an engineering study requested by Brett Ruck, the supervisor of environmental services and superintendent of irrigation and drainage, clearly indicated there was a drainage problem in Four Mile Creek which is fed by, among other areas, St. Davids.

Nevertheless, council continues to approve developments that will contribute to the flooding on Four Mile Creek as well.

How much more evidence does council need to conclude that there is an infrastructure problem and that the existing infrastructure cannot accommodate further development in St. Davids, amongst other

Tawny Ridge was approved subject to specific conditions that had to be achieved beforehand.

One of them was a hydrological study to confirm that the existing infrastructure was capable of handling the increased water flows.

This hydrological study, which should reflect the reality of rainfalls in St. Davids and then some, is to be reviewed by staff and signed off on as to veracity, accuracy, credibility and reality.

Liability disclaimers with regards to the data that any conclusions are based on within the hydrological study would by definition invalidate the study.

If the Tawny Ridge developer can't provide a hydrological report that says, unequivocally, that the infrastructure is adequate (which everyone knows isn't), then the Tawny Ridge project should be declined by council.

St. Davids sewage is pumped to Niagara Falls. And, we know that the sewage capacity in Niagara Falls is at its maximum.

Niagara Falls has recognized it has an infrastructure problem and is the reason for a \$400 million expansionthat will take several years to complete.

Even today, without the addition of new developments in St. Davids like Tawny Ridge, sewage is being released into the Niagara River (an environmental hazard) and has been for years.

I wonder if boaters and swimmers would enjoy those downstream waters as much if they actually knew all of this?

Shouldn't the town be concerned about the liability and insurance issues the municipality might incur, or the personal liability issues resulting from decisions that placed people's property in danger of being damaged?

Everyone in the decisionmaking process had prior knowledge that the infrastructure was inadequate to handle any new developments that increased water drainage, so would they be personally liable?

I've asked several people on council and staff to provide an update on Tawny Ridge and it appears as if there is a gag order in place.

> Gienek Ksiazkiewicz St. Davids.





Pumphouse celebrates hydro box beautification winners

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre has had a busy start to the fall season, starting with the announcement of this year's winners of the annual Hydro Box Beautification Competition.

Held each year as an arts competition to find works of art to install on selected hydro boxes in Niagara-on-the-Lake, this year saw artists Jeannie Manning and Lynne Gaetz win for their works, "Into Our Woods," and "Turbulent Silence," respectively.

These works were selected as the winners by a jury, picked from 22 submissions: acrylic and oil paintings, mixed-media works, ink art, photography and collages.

Both Manning and Gaetz' original works depict forests, Manning using acrylic paint to depict vibrant-green trees and Gaetz using mixed media to show faces, objects



Judy Scrimger (in hat) and Muriel Scrimger admire two of the winning art pieces, "Heart of the Community," a painting of the NOTL cenotaph, by Yenis Camargo, and Jeannie Manning's painting, "Into Our Woods." DAVE VAN DE LAAR

and phrases embedded in tree trunks.

Alongside Manning and Gaetz, Yenis Camargo won the People's Choice Award, voted on by visiting members of the public, for her acrylic painting of the clock tower cenotaph, titled "Heart of the Community."

The winners were announced at an award ceremony on Sept. 12, and each

winner received a \$500 honorarium.

Jodi Eppler, the Pumphouse's administrative assistant, expressed her enthusiasm for Camargo's work and said she paused to appreciate the applause during the ceremony, feeling proud and grateful that her piece won.

"She's just full of life and exuberance about communi-

ty, which really shone during the awards ceremony," said Eppler.

During Culture Days — a national event highlighting the importance of arts and culture in Canadian communities — the Hydro Box Beautification Competition at the Niagara Pumphouse Art Centre's Walker Room Gallery showcased the multifaceted local talent of

Niagara region artists.

All 22 artworks are on display at the Pumphouse until Oct. 21.

Artists drew inspiration from themes such as nature, landmarks, and the rich history of the area, with a special emphasis on submissions that highlighted the importance of community.

In addition to the competition, the Pumphouse

Centre proudly hosted an enchanting solo exhibit by local artist Grace Marquez, titled "Immersion."

Eppler said her captivating artwork brings the wonders of the water world to life, inviting attendees to explore the transformative power of nature.

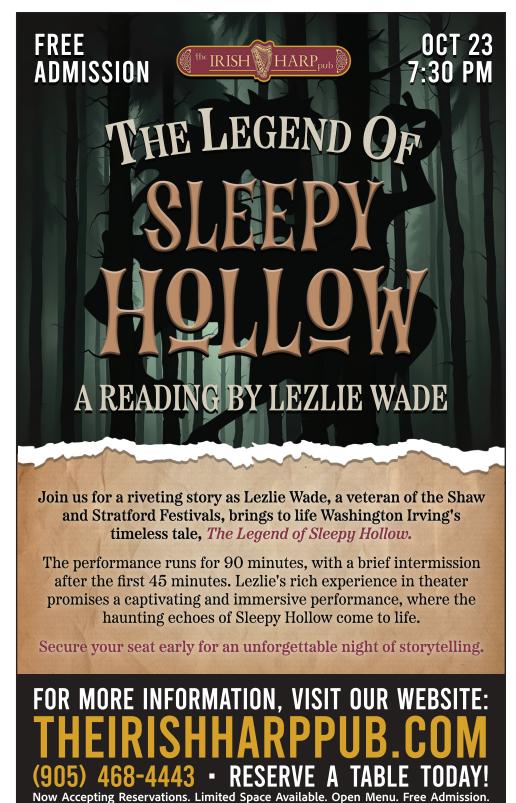
Marquez's beautiful depictions of underwater scenes have resonated deeply with the community, Eppler added.

"Culture Days bring awareness to the place that we have, our community, and to the fact that we have such a great amount of amazing artists and artistic people in our community," she said.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake is not just about the wine or the music — it's about the visual art too," Eppler said.

We're about making sure that, in many ways, we can provide art for all."

The winning artworks will be unveilled and installed on the selected hydro boxes later this year.





FOOD DBIVE

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary, NOTL Kinsmen and St. David's Lions Clubs, are holding a porch pick-up food drive. On **Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024,** teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

If you wish to donate in support of our food bank, please call 905-468-7498 or email us at newarkneighbours1@gmail.com to register your address and phone for pick-up. **Email is preferred.**

ITEMS REQUIRED FOR THANKSGIVING HAMPERS:

Stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, canned gravy or mix (turkey or chicken), cranberry and/or apple juice, apple sauce, canned fruit and vegetables (corn, pineapple, green beans, peas), snack crackers, cookies

ITEMS REQUIRED ON AN ONGOING BASIS:

Canned salmon, canned tuna, Sidekicks and ramen soup packets, canned chili or spaghetti or ravioli, peanut butter, granola bars, cookies, Chunky Soups – any kind or flavour canned beef stew, Habitant soups, canned ham, corned beef or Spam, Flakes of Ham, Chicken or Turkey, Jams (any flavour), canned fruit, soda, soup crackers, Kraft Dinner, canned beans (kidney, chickpeas, lentils), canned tomatoes, canned potatoes, instant mashed potatoes, tomato sauce, pasta, rice, pudding cups (any flavour), cereal and oatmeal, coffee (any kind — instant/regular/ decaf), tea, shelf stable milk (e.g. condensed, powdered, rice, etc.), paper towels, toilet paper, household items ie. dish soap, laundry detergent, cleaning products, condiments (salad dressings, mayonnaise, sauces, HP Sauce, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, etc.), dried spices, salt & pepper, toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, hand and body lotion, mouthwash, feminine products).









From competition to creation, Sharon Frayne ignites young minds

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

While local author Sharon Frayne's latest book was borne from the seed of a frenetic 72-hour writing contest, it comes from a deep desire to encourage young people to perservere in what they're passionate about — in spite of the sting of failure.

With her critically acclaimed novel, "The Sound of a Rainbow," published last year, Frayne captivated readers with a story exploring the impact of toxic social media on a talented teen — and her inspiring comeback.

Her story follows a young girl who faces a public failure on a televised talent show and learns resilience through unexpected friendships at the performing arts camp her parents enroll her in to help her bounce back from her funk.

Frayne's goal was to write something that would connect with kids right now, she said.



Author Sharon Frayne with Cari-Beath Kernahan and her children, Isla and Charlotte.

"I would see kids, who were great talents, getting to certain points of success. Then, once they'd receive feedback, it would either really build them up or it would knock them down," she said.

"So, it's sort of the uplifting story of rehabilitation." Frayne greeted fans at the Chapters/Indigo at Fairview Mall on Sept. 21, signing copies of her book for readers.

This was her second appearance at the store, following a successful signing in August, which prompted the store manager to invite her back.

Creating "The Sound of a Rainbow" was a journey for the author.

She entered a 72-hour writing contest in Hunts-ville, organized as a fundraiser for adult literacy.

As a former high school English teacher, she said the experience felt fitting. During the marathon, she stayed at the facility for 72 hours, striving to stay awake while writing.

Much of the book's sto-

ry had been in her mind, but some ideas emerged during the writing process, she said.

After completing the contest, she submitted her manuscript to a panel of judges and, a few months later, received the exciting news she had won.

The prize included sending her manuscript to Canadian publishers and agents for consideration.

"Normally, when that happens, it's like a 'Good job!' kind of thing. But then, a few months later, the publisher got in touch with me and said, 'We want to publish your novel,'" said Frayne.

"It was a thrill. A total thrill. That was the big jumping off point. Trusting myself with 72 hours of non-stop marathon writing—which was really, really hard. Then, leaping from that to actually winning and being published. It was a tremendous journey for me," she said.

The novel was picked

up by CBC as a recommended book for young adults and recommended as a book to read twice through their cycle of advertising.

Then, it got picked up by a bunch of other big Canadian reviewers, saying it was authentic, real and great for kids, said Frayne.

Cari-Beth Kernahan and her children, Charlotte and Isla, stopped by the Chapters/Indigo store after some casual shopping and were drawn to Frayne's colourful display.

"It hits home with the age group," said Kernahan. "Once she started telling the story, I knew it would be a really good thing for my kids to read."

Charlotte said meeting an author in person and getting her book signed was a cool experience.

"I hope you enjoy the book, because I wrote it for girls just like you," said Frayne, as they walked away excited for their next read.





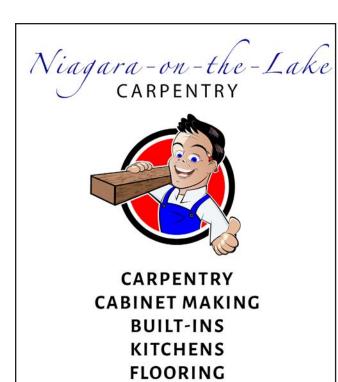
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Justice done to world's greatest detective with Shaw's latest Sherlock Holmes play

"SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE MYSTERY OF THE HUMAN HEART"

(out of five)

Festival Theatre, 2 hours, 45 minutes, two intermissions. Ends Oct. 13. By Reginald Candy. Based on characters created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Director: Craig Hall. Penny-Lynn Cookson Special to The Lake Report

Attention, Sherlockians! This Sherlock Holmes play may not have been penned by Arthur Conan Doyle, but take heart!

This is a cohesive, entertaining, visually and technically superb production directed by Craig Hall, having its world premiere at the Shaw Festival.

Holmes, his friend Dr. John Watson, his landlady Mrs. Hudson and his nemesis Moriarty are lifted from "The Final Problem," where, in 1893, Conan Doyle chose to kill off Holmes so he could get on with more serious writing.

His readers strongly objected resulting in a canon of 62 Sherlock Holmes stories written over 40 years and numerous adaptations, films and plays including the Shaw's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (2018) and "Sherlock Holmes and The Raven's Curse" (2021).

The initial mystery was "Who is Reginald Candy?" He is an Australian living near Adelaide whose acting aspirations began with performing Sticky the pickpocket poodle in "Pets, An Operetta."

Candy moved on to an apprenticeship with the Sydney Theatre Company before deciding that being a playwright with a particular bent for Sherlock Holmes held more appeal.

Central to understanding "Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart" is Conan Doyle's own background.

Born in Edinburgh (1859-1930), he trained as a physician and his inspirations for Sherlock Holmes were two men with whom he studied.

Dr. Joseph Bell was a surgeon at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh who had what Conan Doyle described in his autobiography as having "the most remarkable powers



Damien Atkins stars in Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Human Heart. EMILY COOPER

of observation." Sir Henry Littlejohn was chair of medical jurisprudence at the University of Edinburgh Medical School.

They provided the link between medical investigation and the detection of crimes that is the hallmark of Sherlock Holmes's acute observation and power of deduction.

The play opens with Watson, narrator of the life of Holmes, standing before a backdrop suggesting an aerial view of London at night. Our insight to Holmes comes from Watson as they share the flat at 221B Baker St.

Ric Reid is the quintessential Watson: intelligent surgeon, steady, guileless, a Victorian gentleman and devoted friend. The perfect foil for Holmes.

Damien Atkins as
Holmes fires on all cylinders with whippet energy,
quick speech and movements, a cool, unemotional
eccentric. He confesses that
his brain governs his heart:
"I have never loved."

Holmes self-references as a "consulting detective." Clients clamour for his expertise but he only takes cases that interest him.

His knowledge of chemistry, anatomy and sensationalist literature is deep. He is au courant with British law and the latest psychology.

Holmes is intrigued by coincidences and the inexplicable, observes details and applies deductive reasoning and forensic science to hard evidence.

Every detail of the human condition is noted: emotional state, body language, skin marks, clothes, state of wear, stains. His 19th-century chemistry lab displays Jena glass beakers, flasks, test tubes, petri dishes, goggles and reference books used for analyzing blood samples and toxicology detection.

Mrs. Hudson, well-played by Sochi Fried, is longsuffering but accepting of intrusive clients, scientific experiments and the atmosphere of genuine danger, as the rent payments are "princely" and she is genuinely fond of the always courteous and gentle Holmes.

Sanjay Talwar is convincing as Inspector Lestrade, who seeks the expertise of Holmes when human hearts are being found in popular public places such as Piccadilly and Paddington Station.

Whose hearts are they? What is the rationale of a serial killer to leave them as clues? Who will be next?

Holmes deduces the culprit to be the arch-villain James Moriarty, a ruthless and cunning professor of mathematics and criminal mastermind based on the real-life Adam Worth known as "the Napoleon of crime."

But who is this Moriarty? Is he the man (Johnathan Sousa) who comes for an overlong tea? Or Miss Vespertine Hunter? Her name means evening hunter, a bat. She is powerfully played by Sophia Walker.

Holmes reports Moriarty to the police and, in fear for his life, flees to a hotel in the Swiss Alps. Moriarty tracks him down.

They will have their final encounter at the edge of the Reichenbach Fall and will disappear without a trace.

Conan Doyle's inspira-

tion for location was likely J.M.W. Turner's 1804 water-colour, "The Great Fall at the Reichenbach in the Valley of Hasle, Switzerland." Conan Doyle and his wife stayed at the Parkhotel du Sauvage in Meiringen near the falls.

This production achieves its goals of detailled accuracy worthy of Sherlock Holmes.

Kudos to the costume designer Hanne Loosen for the 19th-century men's Ulster, frock and morning coats, the three-piece suits with waistcoat pocket watch chains, stiff collars, floppy ties and bowler hats.

A pompous businessman's startling plaid suit indicates his new wealth and pretence. The custodian helmets of the bobbies are a symbol of British law enforcement and worn by constables and sergeants on foot patrol.

Women's garments feature long, puffy sleeved day dresses, visiting short capes over pussy bow dresses and small hats with upturned brims adorned with ribbons and feathers.

Cameron Davis's projections of London by night and the high-altitude Swiss Alps by day were very effective in establishing mood, as were the set designs by Ken MacKenzie and lighting designs by Bonnie Beecher.

And if you need more, an official estate approved new adventure novel, "Holmes and Moriarty" by Gareth Rubin was just published in September.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an arts and culture historian, writer and lecturer living in Niagaraon-the-Lake.

St-Roch exhibit highlights art in adversity

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As visitors stepped into King St. Gallery on the weekend, they were greeted by the vibrant works of Isabelle St-Roch, a Montre-al-based artist whose work took a turn from realism to abstraction after she suffered simultaneous ankle fractures.

Gina Edward, gallerist and curator of the feature, said that during her recovery, St-Roch couldn't stand upright to do her abstract work. That's when her husband sparked a creative revival in her through the art of collage.

"She was lying on the couch, recuperating and working from her computer. Her husband put a stack of magazines beside her. And, lo and behold — collage," said Edward.

Among the standout pieces displayed was a dynamic work where bright colours and intricate forms danced across the canvas.

"This one, 'Flamenco,' has a lot of movement and form," said Edward.

"You see a movement coming this way, made to



Isabelle St-Roch's "Flamenco" collage is on display at King St. Gallery. PAIGE SEBURN

look like a flamenco dress," she added.

"Some people even think that these are pieces of fabric or fibre. But no, it's all magazine pieces," said Edward, showcasing the intricacy and creativity involved in St-Roch's process.

Her works range from vibrant, energetic collages to more subdued abstract creations, with one particularly intricate piece, "Japanese Garden," featuring over 3,000 individual compo-

nents layered with glaze for a smooth finish.

Edward said the piece embodies St-Roch's dedication and meticulous process.

The feature aimed to broaden the gallery's representation by featuring artists from across Canada, said Edward.

"The gallery decided that we would reach out and have a more national presence. The goal was to start curating for one artist from every province and territory," she said.

"Our local artists and regional artists would be the primary focus, but to have one from a different province each year would be great to give a broader perspective to visitors."

The feature not only spotlighted more national talent but also was a testament to the power of creativity to overcome adversity.

"She's a wonderful artist. She loves to create. She needs to create. And it shows."



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OCT. 10 - MAPLE JAM

OCT. 11 - JIN

OCT. 12 - BLACKSHEEP

OCT. 13 - DUO LEEPA

OCT. 17 - RYAN THOMAS BAND

OCT. 18 - GRAND THEFT AUDIO

OCT. 19 - FEVERISH LEMONS

OCT. 20 - TIN ROOF

OCT. 25 - BUTLER'S BACKYARD

OCT. 26 - MAPLE JAM DUO

OCT. 27 - RON MCEWAN

OCT. 31 - BARREL DOWN

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Niagara wine pairing experience brings local flavours

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As the day unfolded at Konzelmann Estate Winery during the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival's Weekend Discovery Pass, Donna Taylor, a senior wine consultant, welcomed visitors.

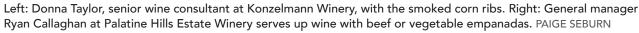
Pass holders were able to try up to six seasonal wine and food pairings at various participating wineries.

Taylor said she is effortlessly enthusiastic with each tasting because of how much she loves teaching guests that pairing wine with food is truly an art.

Their featured pairing, "Corn to be Wild," showcased hickory smoked corn ribs, served with a spicy chipotle crema. The dish was paired with their Vidal Golden Vintage.

Taylor instructed guests to eat the food and drink the wine simultaneously, promising "magic" would happen as the aromas and





flavours came together and complemented one another.

She said her goal is to provide interactive experiences that deepen visitors' appreciation for local wines and ingredients.

"We do everything here on premise, and I like to teach people how to do an actual pairing," she said.

"I put a different twist on it," said Taylor.

At Palatine Hills Estate Winery, general manager Ryan Callaghan introduced their 2023 Lakeshore Rosé, a blend of 95 per cent Riesling and five per cent other varietals, paired with a handmade beef (or veggie) empanada from Fiesta Empanadas.

"Our Lakeshore Rosé is always super, super popular in the summertime, going into the fall time as well. It's something that we wanted to showcase," said Callaghan.

"We also always like to do something a little more unusual with our food pairing."

He said the Riesling vines at the front of the vineyard provide a perfect visual connection to the wine's origins.

At Inniskillin, manager Sumie Yamakawa, said their dedication to food and wine pairings is what keeps visitors returning.

Inniskillin's pairing showcased their 2022 Reserve Cabernet Franc, which Yamakawa said is a favourite among both winemakers and customers. It was complemented by a gourmet toasted French baguette filled with smoked brisket, sweet caramelized onions and rich marble cheddar cheese.

Yamakawa said chef Daniel McAllister crafted the dish specifically to highlight the wine's unique qualities.

This was the winery's first time doing a sandwich pairing, said Darlene Morris, a longtime volunteer at Inniskillin.

The tasting experience ran from Sept. 6 to Sept. 22 — however, the fun in wine country isn't over yet this year.

Starting Oct. 1, passports will go on sale for Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Taste the Season event, in which local wineries will host holiday-themed tasting events with festive food and wine pairings.

Set to run Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in November — including Sunday, Dec. 1 — Taste the Season's passes start at \$65.98 plus tax and include eight winery experiences.

Visit wineriesofniagaraonthelake.com/experiences for more information.









Rich Merlino, riding with the Hummel Properties team, ready to hit the streets for the Healing Cycle. PAIGE SEBURN

Pedal to the metal for palliative care

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As Gail Rizzuto pedalled through the picturesque parkway on Sunday, she couldn't help but feel the warmth of community support surrounding her.

The Hummel Family Healing Cycle ride was a perfect fit for Rizzuto, who is a passionate cyclist and volunteers for Niagara-onthe-Lake Community Palliative Care Services.

"It was a beautiful, quiet morning and a beautiful ride in the park. On our way back, everybody was waving and saying hi as they saw us coming. It was really nice," said Rizzuto.

Participants took part in a five-kilometre walk and 10-km and 25-km bike rides, all starting from 176 Wellington St. in Old Town, taking off at 9 a.m.

The fundraiser attracted an inspiring turnout this year, raising nearly \$65,000 by the time people were heading home.

The Healing Cycle Foundation helps fund palliative care in the community, showcasing the effectiveness of collective generosity.

Last year, approximately \$60,000 was raised by the Hummel Family Healing Cycle, and additional funds from the Healing Cycle Foundation are distributed among participating hospices.

Bonnie Bagnulo, executive director of the NOTL palliative care organization, said that the support over the years has been crucial for expanding services that help those facing lifechanging health challenges.

"Over the last three years, we've had more riders, more volunteers, more people come out, and more sponsors. It's grown quite a bit,"

"Every year it gets a little bit bigger, and we're hopeful that it will continue to grow."

Mark Gaudet, who Bagnulo said has been instrumental in supporting the

hearing healthcare.

amplifon

fundraiser, took on the role of equipment maintenance and cleaning for the riders.

"Mark stepped up to the plate. Today, he came out to do the 25K ride and actually put himself at the end of the ride and followed all the riders up to 25K and backjust in case somebody's bike broke down along the way," said Bagnulo. "He's amazing."

Participants wore "Pedal Pushers" shirts featuring sponsors printed on the back, with each cyclist representing a different sponsor on their shirt with a sign.

"It's a great way to show support for sponsors," said Laura Fakla, a five-kilometre walker and volunteer with the palliative care community who is personally connected to the cause.

"I went to their pet loss support group, and it was profound to have that community support," she said. "It's important to help and be helped by others going through similar experiences."

The fundraiser's success can be attributed not only to the participants but also to the Hummel family, who pledged to match every dollar raised up to \$25,000, effectively doubling the impact of community contributions.

"Palliative care is probably one of the most overlooked, thankless jobs because it's messy, it's heartbreaking and it's uncomfortable," said Raiana Hummel during her address to the crowd.

"I think for people to give their time, love, and expertise in that space is one of the most honorable things that you can do," she said.

"This is an incredible organization, and I'm very proud to support it."

Organizers won't have a final count on the total amount raised until October: donations can be added until Sept. 31, however then the Healing Cycle Foundation adds donations to the teams, for first, second and third-place teams.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style. Category: POP CULTURE

Caroll Spinney was the original puppeteer for both Oscar the Grouch and this feathered resident of "Sesame Street."

Last issue:

Category: LET'S "SEE"

Clue: Absolutely boiling with unexpressed

Answer: What is seething? Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Lynda Collet, Claudia Grimwood, Susan Rautenberg, Jeff Lake, Becky Creager, Howard Jones, Susan Dewar, Sylvia Wiens, Kathy Humphries, Jim Dandy, Marjory Walker-Barone, Marla Percy, Nancy Rocca, Catherine Clarke, Elaine Landray, / Sheila Meloche

*Special mention to Wade Durling and Daniel Smith who answered "seeing red" — we will accept that.

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)

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Across

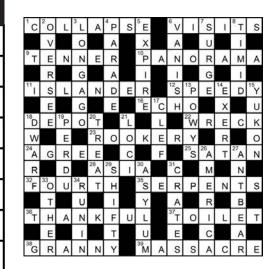
- 9. Cloudburst (9)
- 10. Move stealthily (5)
- 11. Possibly (7)
- 12. Glitter (7)
- 13. Reach one's destination (6)
- 16. Eddy (5)
- 18. Thick cord (4)
- 19. Overturn (5)
- 20. Long stories (5)
- 21. Seethe (4)
- 22. Irritably impatient (5)
- 24. Passenger ships (6)
- 26. Dental filling (7)
- 28. Out wooing (2,1,4)
- 30. Run up (5)
- 31. Christian festival (9)

Down

- 1. Burst forth (5)
- 2. Coffin stand (4)
- 3. Betrayer (8)
- 4. Crustacean catcher (7,3)
- 5. Little devils (4)
- 6. Squirts (6)
- 7. Minstrel (4,6)
- 8. Insomniac (9)
- 14. Opposition (10)
- 15. Enchanted (10) 17. Smallest continent (9)
- 20. Parched (3-5)
- 23. Curdled milk (6)
- 25. Cults (5)
- 27. Brood (4)
- 29. Speck (4)

Crossword Puzzle 12 18 20 22 31 30

Last issue's answers



	7		4	1				
5		4			8			1
	3	8					5	
			1				9	
7	6						2	5
	5				7			
	1					9	8	
2			8			3		7
				3	1		4	





Why embracing newcomers is crucial for Canada to prosper



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown Columnist

In the 1981 film "Chariots of Fire," two seasoned masters at a Cambridge University college, both members of the establishment, snobbishly refer to one of their students, Harold Abrahams, son of a rich Jewish family in London, as a bright, ambitious young man, who, in their minds, was determined to win at all costs, including hiring a professional coach to train him for the upcoming Olympics in preference to the "way of the amateur" preferred by the college

To them he was yet "another semite, who worshipped another god" and decidedly not one of them, the English elite.

It was a stark reminder of the anti-Jewish prejudice

throughout Europe for hundreds of years and certainly the English establishment and elite of the 1920s, and universities such as Cambridge and Oxford.

That and other racial prejudices exploded in Nazi Germany and the Far East in the Second World War with terrible consequences and remains a simmering, sometimes boiling problem south of the border and even Canada to this day.

What was once mostly white immigration from Europe to the Americas has changed and is evident to anyone who lives in any medium-to-large-sized city in Canada.

Most immigrants to Canada come not from Europe these days, but from virtually every country in the world. Pleasant Manor, where my wife is in longterm care for dementia, is a small window into the transformation.

Pre-COVID, the great majority of the staff and residents at Pleasant manor in Virgil were Mennonites Christian, one God, one book, one culture, one common understanding. COVID and the post-covid staffing



challenges changed all that.

Now, the great majority of the residents remain Christian and white, but the staff reflects what's been happening in Europe, the U.K. and Canada for decades: immigration from a broad spectrum of countries from all points in Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India to Southeast Asia and beyond, which has changed the look and feel of the staff and communities to which they now belong and reflect their beliefs, cultures and experiences.

In no time, what looked familiar for many decades, worshipped the same way, from the same book and shared the same culture, changed overnight.

And thank goodness. Canada needs immigrants to grow and prosper to fill jobs from service

industries to scientists, physicians, engineers, technologists of all sorts, entrepreneurs, business leaders, educators and yes, even politicians.

Without them, Canada, like so many European countries, Russia, China and other countries, was aging - too few babies and young adults to fill the needs of a developing and evolving

Of course, there has been resistance — much as we hear from politicians in the United States and some European countries. Why would we expect less?

Humans are tribalistic by nature, suspicious of others who look different, worship another God or perhaps no God at all, dress differently, behave differently and whose stories differ from ours.

But surely looked at the other way around, our ways, stories and affiliations must seem peculiar to many immigrants.

Tribalism has deep evolutionary roots. Most species, or bands within species, are wary of one another. Chimpanzees are very territorial: other bands are likely to be attacked if they intrude on another band's territory.

But not always — there are examples of different bands coming together peaceably and learning from one another.

From a larger perspective, trying to stem the immigration tide seems hopeless to me: the numbers are so huge and the need so great for immigrants that Canadians, Americans and Europeans must surely realize that time and numbers are not on their side. China and India are on course to hit the two to three billion mark by this midcentury.

By comparison, growth in the original colonizing countries, mostly European, will be far less, making it harder to maintain any edge, technological or otherwise, the West had for much of the 20th century and before.

The answer is collaboration: immigrants need safety and opportunity, and Western countries need their talents and energy to secure the country. It's that simple.

We need them and they need us and hopefully in due course there won't be any "them" and "us."

Returning to Pleasant Manor and the Niagara region as a whole, my observations have been that the changing mix of longterm care workers and other jobs has been a big plus.

The only question should be whether applicants can do the job, not what or who they believe in or how they dress.

What counts is performance on the job for the rest, I welcome new workers, whatever their stories and origins, precisely because they bring diversity and interest.

And on the matter of God, any God worth the name is surely God of all.

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.

Cenotaph restoration and other Queen Street observations



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson Columnist

I love living here for many reasons, and often comment on our smalltown happenings — almost always in a positive vein and I strive not to be judgemental.

Each of us comes from a different background and therefore we all have different terms of reference.

Please allow me to ramble this week in a helter skelter fashion.

The first few minutes for many visitors to NOTL is spent mentally and physically wrestling with our downtown parking meters. Surely this longtime lingering problem can be fixed.

Many people are late for Shaw plays, restaurant reservations and free

walking tours due to our complicated and mechanically weird parking procedures. And there seems to be no urgency to rectify this embarrassing situation.

And will it take a serious injury or death before we finally place a well-signed crosswalk between the post office and the Independent?

Locals and tourists get confused, and we get compared to other tourist destinations, from Ellicottville to Aspen to Huntsville to Nashville (or "Nashvul"). Why don't we solve this problem?

And how about the corner of Queen and Regent?

The intersection of Queen and King — or is it King and Queen now? — begs for creative improvement. Other busy tourist areas like Hamilton, Bermuda show us

Let's consider a traffic expediter dressed like Sir Isaac Brock in a red coat uniform and cool black hat, perched on a two or three-foot-high platform, signalling for drivers to proceed straight, stay in place, turn left or turn right.



Crews work on the cenotaph. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

busy day watching the current gong show, and wonder when a nervous tourist or local is going to get in a loud and disconcerting crash. What a way to ruin

Now, to motorcycles for a paragraph.

In my younger days, I dabbled with a Honda 90, a Triumph 250 and a Kawasaki 325. Now though, even with impaired hearing, from my viewing position in front of the Court House, I am appalled by the thoughtless, arrogant and macho displays of loud and aggressive bike riders.

Usually travelling in groups of two or more, their handheld devices must be telling them to rev up and

Spend five minutes on a be really obnoxious when they pass our cenotaph.

And, when they power down when parking, or power up when leaving, plug your ears and delay that conversation.

Now talk to me about vaping. What can possibly be the attraction or benefit? Unless one believes that creating a cloud of smoke

Ah well, at least vapours don't litter our sidewalks and gutters with cigarette butts. Each day in Canada, literally millions of butts are thoughtlessly left for others to clean up or admire. With today's prices, who can afford to smoke or

In our lovely town, so many visitors wax effusive about our flowers. Is there a way we could discreetly place little laminated sheets that would picture and name the plantings?

Our bylaw enforcement officers are hard-working, determined and singleminded. But hardly part of the welcoming attitude we strive to provide here in Shaw and wine country.

Think about it for a moment. In Honolulu, the parking squad wear fun and multi-coloured aloha shirts, and in Bermuda, pink Bermuda shorts. Simple sartorial strategies that send such positive and effulgent vibes.

As I weekly rambler, I try my best not to be a grumpy old man. But here I am, nailing it!

Writing creatively to this week's conclusion, let me describe a very meaningful retirement party I happily attended last Saturday.

A great friend of mine, my athletic idol since he won an Olympic silver medal in 1996, retired after 27 years with the St. Catharines fire department. Looking around, I was reminded that firefighters have great-looking girlfriends and wives.

But, they also seem to have an unnatural attraction, almost primal and indeed physical, to what I thought they would hate and avoid: at the party, after great food, icy cold drinks and lotsa' love, the highlight and finale was a bonfire.

The tension was palpable as two large, previously felled trees were chainsawed a bit more, and a jerrycan of gasoline was poured on. Then, ignition.

The retirement was apparently complete, as flames leapt skyward in the darkening sky.

Many times I have felt completely at ease on an Algonquin Park composite at dusk, sitting around a relatively small campfire on a rocky point.

As Robert Service rhymed, the silence is broken only by the maniacal laugh of the northern loon.

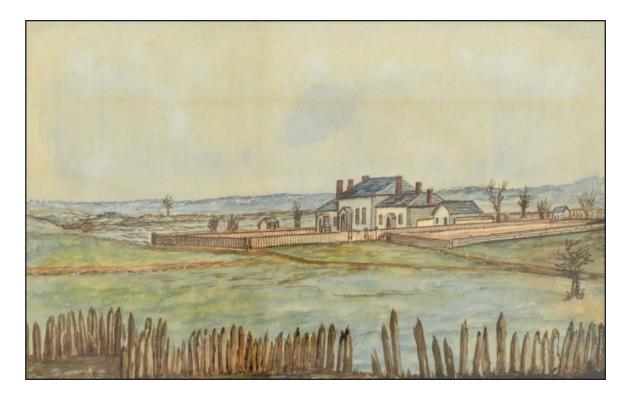
The happiness and obvious joy that firefighters seemed to feel as my pal's retirement bonfire roared was somehow disconcerting. But I ramble ...

Stay tuned for the announcement of the unveiling of our new and improved cenotaph. Before Remembrance Day.



EXPLORING HISTORY WITH NOTL MUSEUM

Indian Council House, 1864



This painting by local artist Francis Granger was completed in 1864. It is an image of the military hospital on the Niagara Commons, also the former "Indian Council House." The original 1797 building was destroyed during the War of 1812. It was rebuilt and used until 1822, when the Indian Department was no longer active here. The council house served as an embassy and a meeting space for the British Indian Department and the local Indigenous Peoples. Annually they would meet to discuss treaties, alliances, concerns, celebrate and to provide gifts to the Indigenous people. On Nov. 8, 1807, there was a council of Six Nations chiefs and the Indian Department to give thanks and gift a wampum belt to Dr. Edward Jenner. Jenner discovered how a cowpox vaccination helped to prevent smallpox. Smallpox devastated many Indigenous people during the early settlement of Europeans here in North America.

To learn more about local Indigenous history up to present day, the NOTL Museum is now selling the newest publication, "Landscape of Nations: Beyond the Mist" in our gift shop. I would also encourage you to attend the Niagara Regional Native Centre's 10th Annual Nurturing Our Roots Traditional Pow Wow at the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines on Oct. 5 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Brock Chronicles:

Funerals of Brock, Macdonnell and the first monuments

One of those most revered names from the War of 1812 is that of Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock. Referred to as the "Saviour of Upper Canada," Brock has roads, churches, universities and towns named after him — but why? Through this chronicle, we are going to delve into who Brock was and why he was so beloved in both life and death.

Andrew Laliberte Special to The Lake Report

Though the battle at Queenston Heights was a significant victory for the British and Indigenous forces, proving to the Upper Canadians that an American invasion could in fact be repelled, it was not without cost.

The death of Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock and his aide-de-camp, Lt.-Col. John Macdonnell, left a mark on the people and soldiers in the Canadas, one which immortalized Brock in particular as a saviour of the colonies.

The reverence displayed for Brock and Macdonnell by generations of Canadians would serve as a testament to the legacy of these two men being symbols of patriotism and heroism.

On Oct. 16, 1812, the bodies of the two officers were moved from Government House where they lay in state, onto gun carriages drawn by a team of horses.

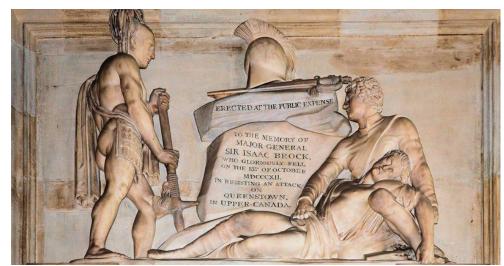
From there, a funeral procession began down the road to Fort George. Soldiers from the garrison, as well as 200 Indigenous allies from their camp on the Commons, flanked the procession as it passed along, with six-pounder artillery pieces firing minute guns.

The procession itself was led by the garrison's Fort Maj. Donald Campbell, soldiers of the 41st Regiment of Foot, Upper Canadian militia volunteers, and the band of the 41st Foot playing a dirge with drums muffled with black cloth.

Notable officers of the local militia, British regiments and civil staff acted as pall bearers and supporters.

Buried in the northeast bastion of Fort George, Brock and Macdonnell's funeral was evidently a significant event. Thousands of mourners travelled from across Upper Canada to attend the ceremony, with even a gun salute offered by the American garrison across the river at Fort Niagara.

"No pen can describe the real scenes of that mournful day, a more solemn and



The first-ever monument created for Sir Isaac Brock, commemorating his death in the Battle of Queenston Heights, located in St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England. BRIAN MAWDSLEY

affecting spectacle was perhaps never witnessed," wrote Capt. John Glegg in response to the procession he witnessed.

Following the funeral, a separate condolence ceremony was held by the leadership of Indigenous allies in the area, symbolically placing a white wampum belt across Brock's grave to protect the site in order that it "receive no injury."

Interestingly, the graves of the two officers were never disturbed throughout the remainder of the war, even during the American occupation of 1813.

However, the first monument to Brock would not be erected in British North America, but rather back in Britain.

Westminster had passed

a bill in 1813 requiring a memorial to be erected to Brock, their reason being that he "died to preserve what Wolfe died to gain" (a reference to Maj.-Gen. James Wolfe, who died in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham).

And so, a Royal Artillery officer and sculptor by the name of Richard Westmacott produced a bas-relief mounted on the wall of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, a project valued at £1,575.

The statue remains in the cathedral today, with the fallen general posed in the arms of a soldier with an Indigenous warrior looking on in solemnity.

In 1814, the Upper Canadian legislature followed suit and passed a motion to

erect a monument at Queenston where the general fell, commemorating his actions.

By 1815, a proposed sum of £1,000 was granted by the legislature in order to start a design selection process.

The public officials responsible for organizing the project wrote the general's family in Guernsey for their input on the design choice, however the response from William Brock was too expensive for the proposed budget.

A Tuscan-style column was instead chosen, designed by engineer Francis Hall.

The project was an estimated £2,200, which was paid for by government grant and public donations.

By October 1824, the

initial stages of construction were complete and the second burial of the two officers took place. An even larger crowd assembled for this funeral, with an estimated 8,000 civilians massed between Fort George and Queenston to watch the procession.

The following spring,
Hall continued his work
on erecting the column,
a project that reached its
finality in 1827, when the
available funding restricted
the finished project to a
41-metre-tall column, with
an exterior observation deck
and enclosed tomb.

The monument was opened to the public and became a popular picnic spot for visitors and veterans of the war.

Though the first monument was unfinished as per Hall's plans, the remainder of the work including a statue at the summit would have to wait for future funding to be granted.

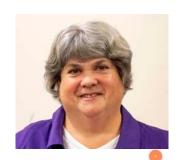
However, next week's chronicle entry will discuss why the completion of Hall's design would never come to be.

Andrew Laliberte is a Heritage Interpreter at Brock's Monument. He has worked at Brock's Monument for the past three seasons, which completed his undergraduate degree in history at Brock University.

COMMUNITY (%)



What shrubs do you prune in fall?



GROWING TOGETHER

Joanne Young Columnist

Before you spend too much time wondering about the answer to this question, let me tell you that it is a trick question.

The easy answer to the question: best not to do any pruning back of shrubs at this point of the year.

I know you must be thinking, "But I always do my pruning in the fall and nothing bad has happened."

That may be true, but fall is not the proper time. Here is a bit of science to explain my reasoning.

As we go into autumn and start seeing plants go into dormancy and the leaves start to turn beautiful fall colours, what we don't see

is what is going on inside of the plant.

All summer, the leaves have been storing up food from the sun in a process called photosynthesis.

As the fall approaches and the temperatures become cooler, all this stored energy starts to move from the leaves, down the stem and back into the roots.

In the spring, that same energy then moves from the roots, up the stem and forces out new leaves. That is why, in springtime, we say that the sap is rising in the maple trees, because it is physically rising from the roots and up throughout the plant.

If this whole process did not occur, a plant, when it dropped its leaves, would lose all its stored energy, resulting in a weakened plant.

So what does that mean when it comes to pruning shrubs in the fall?

If you prune your shrubs at this time, before its leaves drop, you are cutting off this stored food, which will result in a weaker plant.

Will it kill the plant? No, but it will not be perform at its best.



Also, by pruning in the fall, the cut area does not have time to properly heal up, making it more susceptible to winter die-back.

Pruning also stimulates new growth. Whenever you cut back a plant, its first instinct is to push out new growth.

Therefore, if you prune early fall, the plant may push out new growth before going dormant. This new growth will not have a chance to properly hardenoff before winter and may suffer more damage from cold winter winds.

This is true for evergreen shrubs as well.

Early spring flowering trees and shrubs, such as magnolia, wisteria, lilac, forsythia, purpleleaf sandcherry and viburnum all set their flower buds on growth from the previous year (usually in late summer).

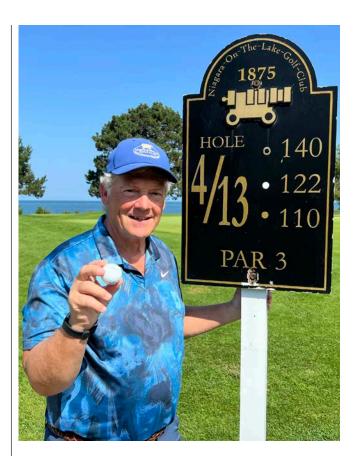
Therefore, pruning back these early bloomers in the fall will result in loss of flower buds that would have opened the next spring

If a shrub has grown excessively this year and some of its branches are overhanging walkways or scratching against a wall, you can prune back those branches lightly so they are not problematic - wait until spring to do your final cutting back.

So, when it comes to pruning shrubs, trees and evergreens and this time of year, put down your pruners and slowly back away.

This is one chore that you can stroke off your to-do list until next spring. You're welcome.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.



Another ace at NOTL Golf Club

NOTL's Alan Young is the latest golfer to score an ace at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club this season. His holein-one on the 120-yard par-3 fourth hole lands the 15-year golf veteran in elite company. Playing with regular partners Kemal Uyar, Neil Wilkinson and Mark Chapman, Young managed the feat thanks to a "lucky shot" with a 5-hybrid. It was his first ace but is one of a handful this year at the club, including two in the past month on the par-4 seventh hole, something that apparently had never been done previously. KEVIN MACLEAN

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Very gouda time at restoration farm's weekend cheese tasting

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As Barbara Walsh stood among a selection of artisanal cheeses at Payne-Zimmer Restoration Farm on Saturday, her excitement was palpable.

Walsh had just purchased the water buffalo cheese and a cow/goat mix she thought resembled a brie in taste.

"The cow and goat mix is just so creamy and lovely. There's even a sweetness to it too," said Walsh.

"The water buffalo cheese

is lovely, too. It's like an authentic Italian mozzarella."

Having grown up on a farm in Niagara, Walsh appreciates the opportunity to support local agriculture while enjoying some delicious cheese.

"It's so good that I have to hide the cheese from my husband. I put it in the vegetable crisper," she said, while chuckling.

The cheese tasting invited the community to explore a variety cheeses from 2 to 4 p.m.

Leslie Payne-Zimmer, the

farm's owner, acquired the land two and a half years ago and is passionate about creating an authentic farm experience.

While she currently sources cheeses and other products from various farms across Ontario, there are plans to begin making cheeses in-house once the operation is fully established.

"Everything that's here, I've tasted myself. I've made sure there's no artificial ingredients, that it's very high-quality and that it's good for the price," said Payne-Zimmer.

She encourages anyone interested in purchasing products to reach out via email at info@paynezimmer.com.

The farm also offers memberships to its recreational areas, featuring a dog park, jogging tracks, a labyrinth and two mazes.

She believes it's a perfect place for families to explore and relate to the land, she

The farm is located at 831 Concession 6 Rd.

Mary Walker-Williams



Leslie Payne-Zimmer selects the cheeses she sells at her farm, and plans to make her own varieties. PAIGE SEBURN

Obituaries

Colin Ford



FORD, Colin William Douglas — Died suddenly on Sept. 12, 2024, at the age of 45. Cherished precious son of Karen (Egginton) and Bill Ford and treasured younger brother of Kimberley Ford. Colin also leaves a large family of Aunts, Uncles and cousins. Colin loved his family, our family's pet dogs, the Pittsburgh Penguins, and water adventures like cliff jumping and shark diving. We will forever miss his love, the way his eyes twinkled, laughter that dissolved into giggles, and hugs so

tight we knew he meant them with every fibre of his being. Colin gave his all to everything he did. A private family service has been held. We have placed Colin in God's loving embrace to take care of him for us. In Colin's memory donations can be made to Jumpstart, a registered charity to help children to overcome financial and accessibility barriers to sport and recreation in an effort to provide inclusive play for kids with all abilities. Condolences may be left online at www.hulseandenglish.com.

Late Fragment

And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so? I did. And what did you want? To call myself beloved, to feel myself beloved on the earth.

Every Detail Remembered Dignity.

WALKER-WILLIAMS, Mary — Sept. 5, 1931 - Sept.

18, 2024 It is with extreme sadness that we announce the passing of Mary Williams (née Walker) who passed

away peacefully, at the age of 93, with family by her side on Sept. 18 at NHS-St. Catharines Site. Raised on the Walker family farm in Niagara-on-the-Lake, she grew up surrounded by

nature, which sparked her lifelong sense of curiosity and joy. In 1953, Mary married Bill Williams, the love of her life and her best friend. For 51 years, they laughed together, supported one another and created countless memories. They raised three cherished daughters, Heather, Linda (Jacquie Henderson) and Laura (Jeff Tucker). Mary also adored and was incredibly proud of her four grandchildren; Tasha, Daniel, Tara and Jennifer. She also loved her loyal French Bulldog, Louis, who was always at her feet. Survived by her sisterin-law, Sue Walker, and many nephews, nieces and cousins. Predeceased by her husband, Bill Williams (2004); brother, Jim Walker; sister, Ruth and her husband, George Warren.

Mary's career began at Foster Wheeler, where she worked as a secretary for a group of engineers. She later went on to assist Dr. Tuney, the Head of Public Health Department, and finally to curate McFarland House, where she and her husband Bill raised their three daughters. During retirement, Mary spent many hours working at the family farm. But her work was just one facet of her life. She loved to travel and live life to the absolute fullest. Her quick wit and humor had a way of brightening any room, always leaving those around her laughing.

Mary's greatest joy, however, came from her family. As matriarch, she brought them together, whether through Sunday dinners, shared stories or simply the warmth of her presence. She loved playing cards and watching her two favorite sports teams Toronto Blue Jays and the Toronto

The family would like to thank Dr. Durocher and the respirology team, Dr. Ullah and Dr. Nolan and the staff of unit 4A at NHS-St. Catharines Site.

As per her wishes, there will be no formal service. Instead, her family will gather for one of those special Sunday dinners she loved so much - a time to remember her and share laughter, just as she would've wanted. A private family burial will be at St. Mark's Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations for Mary can be made to a charity of your choice.

Arrangements entrusted to Considerate Cremation & Burial Services, 26 Nihan Drive, St. Catharines (between Lake Street & Scott Street), 289-362-1144. Online condolences may be made at CCBSCares.ca



- Raymond Carver

Robert Witherell



WITHERELL, Robert - Passed away peacefully at the Greater Niagara General Hospital on Sunday Sept. 22, 2024 at the age of 86. Beloved husband of the late of Marcelle Witherell (2011). Loving father of Renee Witherell. Caring grandfather of Lucas Witherell. Cousin of Melissa Taylor. Predeceased by his brother Charlie Witherell (2018).

Cremation has taken place. Friends and family are invited to

Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake on Friday September 27, 2024 from 2 to 4 pm. A private family interment will take place at Stamford Heritage Columbarium. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Walker Family Cancer Centre. Memories, photos, and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



Joan Draper



DRAPER, Joan — Died the morning of Sept. 14 at Niagara Long Term Care Residence in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She is survived by cousins in the Toronto area and many friends in Niagara-on-the-Lake and in England. Joan was grateful to Murray Weaver for his support and aid. For many months Joan resided at Niagara Long Term Care where she was lovingly cared for by her long time friend Heidi Barrett and by the attentive staff.

Joan was born and raised in North Toronto where she attended school. As an only child she quickly learned the necessity of entertaining herself and thus began her deep interest in reading and books. As an adolescent she discovered Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group. For the rest of her life she was passionate about their writing and art, but perhaps more importantly about the effect they had on the twentieth century literary world. She travelled frequently to London and to Sussex in England to attend lectures and conferences where she made many friends and enriched her knowledge of the group. To share what she had discovered with a larger group Joan conducted series of lectures and discussions here in Niagara-on-the-Lake and became something of an authority on the Bloomsbury Group. For many years she operated a book shop that bought and sold antique and rare volumes. She assembled an impressive collection of first editions and art created by the Group which will become part of the permanent collection of McMaster University.

Joan leaves many friends both in Niagara and in England to mourn her death. A service of committal of Joan's cremated remains will take place in St. Mark's Memorial Garden on Tuesday, Oct. 8 at 11 a.m. A reception at St. Mark's Addison Hall will follow where friends may meet to celebrate Joan's life and her achievements.

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