



Pumphouse Pride event postponed after threats from white supremacists

Zahraa Hmood
The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre cancelled and postponed a Pride-related event it was set to host in June after calls to protest the event took off on social media, The Lake Report has learned.

A source who reached out to The Lake Report, an artist who we've chosen not to name, said the Pumphouse received a threat regarding the event from Canadian white nationalist group the Second Sons.

The Pumphouse would not confirm if the hate group made any threat, however director Rima Boles, confirmed the event drew negative attention from people online that led to concerns and ultimately the postponement of the event until late August. She did not answer questions about the scale of the backlash or alleged threats.

"There were changing circumstances in the days leading up to the event, including scope, and social media posting encouraging the protesting of the event," Boles told The Lake Report in an emailed response to questions about the event.

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Art uncorked

NOTL artist Sal Fasullo turns one man's trash into masterpieces



After working at Peller Estates, Sal Fasullo grew tired of watching thousands of corks get thrown away. "They are beautifully made," he says. He decided to take them home and repurpose them into works of art — one of which will soon be on display at Trius. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Tim Taylor | The Lake Report

When most winery retail employees finish a long shift, they choose their favourite wine from the shelf and head home to sip from the fruits of their labour.

Sal Fasullo, 72, a retail team member at Peller Estates Winery, has an entirely different shift-end ritual.

With the help of his workmates, Fasullo collects the corks from all the sampled bottles opened in the shop that day.

And then, he goes home to make art — a growing collection of three-dimensional artworks fashioned from reclaimed corks.

Over the past couple of years, Fasullo developed a deep respect

for corks — so historically essential to the wine industry.

And he sees a lot of corks. Peller's diverse portfolio produces four to five million cases of wine, across some 50 brands.

"I felt an affinity with all the corks we were just throwing away," says Fasullo. "They are beautifully made. They are

uniquely made.

"And we were throwing them away. So, I started to collect them. I could not stand to see them being thrown out. Suddenly, I had more corks than I knew what to do with."

Fasullo didn't come by his af-

Continued on Page 11

When the power goes out: Council's pre-election plan

Zahraa Hmood
The Lake Report

With one month to go until nominations close for Niagara-on-the-Lake's municipal election this fall, the town is preparing for the possibility that council could temporarily lose some of its power until the election is over.

Committee of the whole endorsed a contingency plan Tuesday that would give chief administrative officer Nick Ruller temporary authority over certain major decisions if council becomes subject to Ontario's restricted acts provisions, commonly known as "lame duck" rules.

Continued on Page 9



Major municipal decision-making power may be transferred from council to chief administrative officer Nick Ruller between late August and the end of this fall's election. PAIGE SEBURN



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\$218K clears major hurdle for Irish Harp to reopen patio

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Irish Harp is one step away from keeping its popular back patio for good.

But first came months of debate, a major shift in thinking at town hall and a \$218,000 price tag for three parking spaces.

The Old Town pub came to the town with a request to pay it \$217,992 for the removal of three required parking spaces, clearing the way to make its seasonal patio permanent. Committee of the whole voted Tuesday to recommend approving the pub's ask.

The pub has operated the patio since 2020 under the town's temporary patio program introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. When the program ended at the close of 2025, businesses wanting to keep those patios had to seek permanent approvals.

The pub's original application sought permission to remove six parking spaces, but council deferred a decision last December after staff recommended against it and directed staff

Consultant Dan Romanko stands next to Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki during delegation.

to work with the applicant on another solution.

Since then, the patio has been reduced in size, the request has been cut from six parking spaces to three and the required minor variances have been approved. This time, every town department that reviewed the application supported it with no objections.

But the debate quickly shifted from one patio to how the town should handle future requests to waive parking requirements.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor questioned why staff were now supporting a proposal

they had previously opposed, saying it appeared the town was taking a different approach to those requests.

"It seems to be a bit of a switch in how we are applying certain models," she said. "Will we be applying this type of thing to future applications?"

Jordan Frost, director of public works and infrastructure, didn't shy away from the question.

"I will admit there has been a change in direction since I started the town in January," he said.

Instead of rejecting ap-

plications over parking shortages, Frost said he believes the town should use the cash-in-lieu program the way it was intended: collecting money that can later go into a reserve fund to help pay for future parking improvements.

"I believe it is a way to move businesses forward," he said.

Frost said the town is already studying parking needs.

"There could be parking structures. There could be parking lots. There could be different use of land elsewhere. There's a whole

plethora of options to address parking," he said.

"Most of which could involve cost. So cash-in-lieu is a great way to offset those costs."

Frost added that every application would still be reviewed on its own merits, but staff would apply the same "common-sense approach" going forward.

Speaking on behalf of the owner, planner Dan Romanko said the revised proposal was the result of months of discussions with town staff.

"We came up with kind of a hybrid approach," he said, noting it would allow the pub to keep both its patio and the three hotel rooms upstairs while still reducing and scaling back the request.

Residents' written comments to the town also backed the application, saying the patio has operated for five years without causing noticeable parking problems and has become a welcome addition to the neighbourhood.

Heritage, building, fire and emergency and public works staff all reported no objections to the revised proposal.

Coun. Maria Mavridis, whose family operates restaurants in Old Town, thanked the applicant for working through the town's approval process before asking about the patio's pop-up tent.

"My understanding is that's there to get through this season, because we're so far behind, and you will be investing in more structure, permanent structure in the space. Is that still happening?"

Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki told Mavridis "that's correct."

"We are extending till 2027, since it's late in the year to purchase patio equipment," Joki said.

Before the vote, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa reminded council it had asked staff months ago to return with another option for the file.

"We actually made a direction and asked the staff to take away this particular situation and come back with some ideas for a specific direction that this council needed," he said.

The recommendation still requires final approval from council on July 21.

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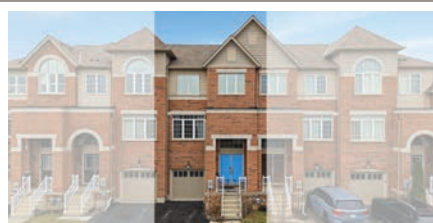
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NOTL could soon be able to issue quicker fines for illegal land uses

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake may soon get a faster way to deal with cases of land being used in ways that aren't allowed, including a retail shop opening on farmland where retail is not allowed.

That was one example raised by NOTL council as it reviewed changes that may come to the provincial Planning Act under Ontario's Bill 119.

If passed, the change would let municipalities use administrative monetary penalties, known as AMPs, for zoning bylaw violations tied to land uses that are not permitted.

Right now, zoning bylaw enforcement is handled through Provincial Offences Act proceedings or court applications, which staff said can take significant time and resources.

Coun. Maria Mavridis said the proposal seemed connected to earlier council discussions about the commercialization of agricultural land and master business licensing.

"This should help actually alleviate some of the issues we were trying to achieve with that."

"If there's farmland and all of a sudden, there's a retail shop — (and) it's not zoned for retail — this allows the municipality to go on and say, 'OK, you're not zoned.'"

Chief administrative officer Nick Ruller said that is staff's early understanding of the proposal.



A proposed provincial law could give bylaw officers a faster way to enforce zoning violations by allowing administrative penalties instead of relying solely on court proceedings. FILE

"Upon our initial review, staff believe that this would potentially lend itself to address some of the concerns that were brought forward previously," he said.

Mavridis welcomed the change.

"This is really great," she said. "I feel that all the delegations and the advocating at the province by the mayor and the council, that we've been heard."

The town already uses administrative penalties for some bylaws, mainly parking and administrative-type offences. A July 14 report says the town issued 38 administrative monetary penalty tickets totalling about \$28,000 between January and June this year.

Bill 119 would expand that tool to zoning contraventions, but council would still have to decide how to use it. That means approving local rules for which zoning violations could be fined, how much those fines would cost and what the process would look like before anything changes on

the ground.

Ruller said the town regularly deals with businesses operating outside permitted zoning and that enforcement can be resource-heavy.

"It tends to be a resource-intensive process for us to enforce," he said.

"This may provide us a mechanism, you know, to assist in a more timely manner and gain compliance as a result of that."

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said the proposed system sounded like it could help the town move faster.

"It does sound like the mechanism will actually allow us to be more efficient, streamline things, be quick and fine things that are currently not being fined," she said.

Coun. Tim Balasiuk asked whether the change would mean the town could avoid some court fights and "implement their own fines and actually govern this on their own."

Aimee Alderman, director of planning, building and development services, said

the proposed change would allow the town to apply AMPs for zoning contraventions.

"It does simplify the process," she said, adding by-law enforcement would still be based on the complaints the municipality receives.

The report says AMPs would not replace the town's existing enforcement tools. Instead, they would be part of a tiered system, with administrative penalties used for minor or first violations and court reserved for serious, repeat or high-impact cases.

Staff were expected to send formal comments to the province before the June 25 deadline. Council and staff discussed the planned changes during a June 23 council meeting.

If the province passes the changes, staff would review NOTL's zoning bylaws, draft changes to the town's AMPs bylaw, develop internal enforcement policies and procedures and bring council a detailed plan before anything is put in place. paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



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Orange smoke haze fills the sky



People, some wearing masks against the smoke, look out from Queenston Heights as a thick orange haze obscures the normally idyllic view along the Niagara Parkway. Smoke from massive wildfires burning across Ontario pushed Toronto's air quality to the worst in the world, ahead of Kinshasa, Delhi and Dubai, while events across Niagara were cancelled or postponed. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



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A small group of Chautauqua residents gathers for a community celebration with cake and snacks after earning the inaugural title of Neighbourhood of the Year from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. RICHARD HARLEY

A community united

Chautauqua's secret is no secret: It's the people

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

What makes Chautauqua stand out among Niagara-on-the-Lake's neighbourhoods?

Some might point to its leafy tree canopy, pocket-sized parks, beach access or the famous sunsets at Ryerson Park.

But ask the people who live there and the answer is clear: community.

Chautauqua won the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's inaugural Neighbourhood of the Year contest and residents marked the honour with a celebration at Chautauqua Park on Saturday, where the town provided cake, refreshments and snacks.

It was a modest gathering, one that felt more like a family picnic than an awards ceremony.

Asked what makes Chautauqua worthy of the title, longtime resident Brian Crow did not hesitate.

"The people, our residents," he said.

"We come together, we help each other. That's gone on for years and years and years."

Crow said the neighbourhood has a strong sense of connection, supported by an active residents' association, a community newsletter and traditions that have brought neighbours together for decades, including the annual corn roast and carol singing in the park.

He gives a lot of the credit to Chautauqua's dogs, which bring their owners together on the streets every day.

Crow attended the celebration with Zack, his "mostly Bichon" companion. And all around people were with their furry companions.

Chautauqua Residents Association president Weston Miller, who is also running for town council, offered a similar assessment.

"For me, I think it just comes down to community. I mean, Chautauqua, you know, visually, physically, is a great unique area and neighbourhood of town, obviously, and we've got such a proud history. But above all, I think what makes a neighbourhood a 'neighbourhood of the year' is the community and the fact that everyone is just so intertwined with each other, happy to help each other out, friendly. We know everyone's name. It truly feels like a community within a community in Niagara-on-the-Lake," Miller said.

Miller is a third-generation Chautauqua resident. His grandparents, Roger and Carol Miller, honeymooned in the area in the 1960s before buying the iconic log cabin near the end of Shakespeare Avenue.

"They honeymooned in Niagara Falls, as you did back in the 60s, and they had a rental car and they drove down from Niagara Falls down the Parkway, down Queen Street, around the bend by Ryerson Park, and there was a for sale sign in front of the log cabin. Bought it in '68, and haven't left since. So my father grew up on Shakespeare. I grew up on Shakespeare."

His family's story is not unusual in Chautauqua.

Miller pointed to families such as the Davidsons, who have also lived in the neighbourhood for three generations.

"That's what I think speaks wonders about the neighbourhood, is there's a lot of people who have been here for that long,

and raised families, and been here for multi-generations. I mean, you look at the Peak Inn even — it's been in the same family since it was built back in the 1800s. Truly, it's a special area, and I think people realize that."

For Lee Chan, who moved to Chautauqua five years ago, the warmth of the neighbourhood was immediately apparent.

"It's just the camaraderie, the camaraderie of the folks around the neighbourhood, and everyone says hello to everyone. It's a it's a good relief from where I used to live, which is in the GTA or Markham, which everyone is so cold. I hate to say, but when I moved here, it was just a breath of fresh air."

Since moving to Chautauqua, Chan said, he has developed genuine friendships with his neighbours.

"It's not superficial. You really know your neighbours, and it's almost like a family."

The area's natural beauty is another part of its appeal.

Chan praised Chautauqua residents Holmes Hooke and Leslie Frankish, who started a project to plant native oak trees throughout the neighbourhood using saplings grown from Chautauqua acorns.

He said it is an example of the kinds of grassroots projects residents undertake and embrace to protect the character of their community.

Then, of course, there are the sunsets.

"I go there almost every night, to be honest, with my dog. And it's almost it's every sunset is different. I mean, I'm not exaggerating. Every time I go there, it's a different type of vibe, type of feel because the clouds

are different, people are different, and you can have a windy day or have a very cloudy day, or just a clear day. The sunsets are just to kill for."

Margaret Walker, who bought her Chautauqua home in 1979, said residents are united not only by their love of the neighbourhood, but by their willingness to protect it.

"We're such a together community. We have the best residents' association. We do things together. We look out for each other.

We care for each other as neighbours. We care about our trees. We fight for our neighbourhood. We love it. I mean, what else can I say?"

Even when neighbours disagree, Walker said, they generally do so respectfully.

"I mean, we can we can even agree to disagree."

The neighbourhood's natural beauty "obviously doesn't hurt," she added.

Robin Patterson, who moved to Chautauqua in 1976, said its architectural character also sets it apart. The neighbourhood is home to an eclectic mix of cottages, modest bungalows and larger family homes, rather than the uniform streetscapes found in many newer communities.

The celebration may have been small, with some residents away on vacation and others unaware it was happening.

But those who gathered in Chautauqua Park made clear why the neighbourhood earned the town's first Neighbourhood of the Year title.

Its trees, cottages, beach and sunsets may give Chautauqua its character. Its people give it life.

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Petition calls for safety for farmworkers

Staff
The Lake Report

After the hit-and-run death of a seasonal farmworker in rural Niagara-on-the-Lake, an advocacy organization is calling on elected officials at every level of government to take action to improve safety and support for migrant workers, including safe transportation and road safety improvements.

The Migrant Workers Alliance for Change has launched a petition, endorsed by the Niagara Community Legal Clinic, urging local, provincial and federal representatives to back a funded migrant worker safety and support plan.

The campaign follows the June 26 death of 39-year-old Sínhue Garcia, who was struck while cycling home on Concession 6 near Line 4 Road. Garcia, who worked at St. David's Hydroponics, died at the scene. He is survived by his wife and two daughters in Mexico.



Sínhue Garcia, 39, was struck by a vehicle and killed while cycling home on Concession 6 near Line 4 Road on June 26. FILE

A 22-year-old NOTL man was charged with failure to stop after an accident resulting in death and impaired operation causing death.

The alliance says Garcia's death has renewed concerns about the safety of temporary foreign workers, many of whom rely on bicycles to travel to and from farms in Niagara.

In a news release announcing the petition, the organization said Garcia was riding on a rural road without streetlights, paved shoulders or bicycle lanes. "The reason people keep dying is that governments have never treated migrant workers as full human beings," said Kit Andres of the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change in the release.

The alliance said Garcia's death is one of several serious collisions involving migrant farmworkers in Niagara over the past several years.

It points to the 2019 hit-and-run death of a Mexican farmworker, known as Zenaida, in NOTL, the 2022 death of Fermin Soto Sanchez and serious injuries to two co-workers after they were struck, including Ceto Reid in 2022 and a worker known as Omar in 2023, and other collisions that injured migrant workers riding bicycles.

The petition calls for

governments to fund free transportation for migrant workers, road safety improvements, emergency support for families after workplace injuries and deaths, and permanent funding for legal, health and community services.

It also calls on the federal government to grant migrant workers permanent resident status, saying workers should be able to report unsafe conditions without fear of losing their jobs, housing or ability to remain in Canada.

"We are asking a simple question," Andres said. "What are you willing to do so that no one else dies? Every candidate and level of government owes migrant workers an answer."

The alliance also criticized elected officials for what it described as a lack of public response following Garcia's death.

The petition is available on the organization's website, at migrantworkersalliance.org/sinhue.



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Modern mapping **retraces** Laura Secord’s historic journey in new museum lecture

Staff
The Lake Report

Visitors to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum later this month will get a chance to see how modern technology is shedding new light on one of Canada’s best-known historical journeys.

Sharon Janzen, Brock University’s maps, GIS and geospatial data specialist, will present “Curating a Journey: How Maps and Technology Bring Laura Secord’s Story to Life” next Thursday, July 23.

The lecture will explore how historical maps, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and ArcGIS StoryMaps can be used to reconstruct Laura Secord’s 32-kilometre trek from Queenston to warn Lt. James FitzGibbon of an impending American attack during the War of 1812.

By aligning centuries-old maps with modern



Sharon Janzen, a geospatial data specialist, will show how aligning old and new geographical maps can shine a light into the route Laura Secord famously took. FILE

geography, Janzen will explain how historians and geospatial specialists identify likely travel routes and gain new insights into the landscape Secord would have crossed more than 200 years ago.

“Imagine being able to

step in the landscape of 1813 and experience history as something you can actually see, follow, and explore,” Janzen said.

The presentation will also examine how digital mapping tools are changing the way historical stories are researched and

shared with the public. “It’s where curation meets cartography,” Janzen said. “The past comes alive right in front of you.”

The lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. Visit notlmuseum.ca/whats-on to register for the event. Registration is required.

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Town prepares to delegate **limited powers** to CAO for election

Continued from Front Page

Those rules, under the Municipal Act, can take effect when election nominations or results show too few current councillors will return to next council.

That's a real possibility this year — the town is shrinking council to seven members from nine.

Restrictions for councillors would include hiring or firing employees, selling municipal property worth more than \$50,000 and approving spending or liabilities over \$50,000 that are not already included in this year's budget.

To keep town business moving if that happens, the recommendation would give Ruller the power to make those decisions until the new council is sworn in after the election. Any actions taken would have to be reported back to the new council.

Ruller described the report as a routine step



From being inaugurated in 2022, to the 2026 municipal election, Nick Ruller was a councillor, then resigned, and now is the chief administrative officer of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Now he will be making some decisions himself. FILE

taken during municipal election years.

"A lame duck simply means that enough members of the current council are not returning after the election, so the Municipal Act limits certain decisions for the remainder of the term," he told councillors.

"Because Niagara-on-the-Lake is reducing the size of

council from nine to seven members, the legislation operates a little differently this election," he said. "To avoid becoming a restricted council, at least six members of the new seven-member council must also be members of the incoming council, or candidates."

As of Wednesday, four candidates are registered to

run in the council election. Two of them, Couns. Sandra O'Connor and Gary Burroughs, are on this term's council. The nomination period will end Aug. 20.

Ruller said the recommendation before council was "simply to delegate those limited authorities" to him during this period, "so that the town can continue to op-

erate without interruption."

"Ultimately, this report is about ensuring continuity of municipal operations throughout the election period while complying with the Municipal Act," he said.

O'Connor asked whether those restrictions could affect planning decisions if they resulted in legal costs exceeding \$50,000.

"Does that mean in our planning decisions, if something triggers, for instance, having to pay legal costs, does that impact that we can't make a decision if it impacts legal costs over \$50,000?" she asked.

"Based on our interpretation, yes," Ruller replied.

He later said that without the temporary delegation, "there would be significant limitations in municipal operations."

Ruller would be able to approve those expenditures if council delegated the authority.

The recommendation to endorse the contingency plan will go to council for final approval July 21.

After nomination day on Aug. 21, if too few current councillors have filed nominations to seek re-election, the restrictions could take effect. If not, the town will make the same determination after the Oct. 26 election once the results are known.

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ART UNCORKED

Artist's love for corks pops out of his works

Continued from Front Page

finity with the wine industry naturally.

He hails from central England and still calls Nottingham home, returning annually to visit family and friends.

When he was 20, his parents moved to Canada, where he continued his academic studies in chemistry, physics and biology.

Fast-forward some 40 years, Fasullo retired from a career in the printing industry, troubleshooting and providing technical support for specialty magazines like Time Magazine.

Along the way, he married Noemi and raised four now-grown children in Stouffville, Ont. They moved to St. Davids 10 years ago.

He's proud of his new community: "It's magical here. A wonderland. We've never had such a good time. I pinch myself when I get up every morning."

When the couple arrived in Niagara, Fasullo decided he wanted a second career.

"I didn't really know much about the Ontario wine industry," he says, somewhat sheepishly. "But Peller hired me and I did a lot of training, in-house and at Niagara College and Brock."

Today, Fasullo spends much of his workday conducting wine and food pairing sessions with Peller guests.

"Visitors are dying to find out about picking the right wine for this or that food. At one time I wanted to be a teacher. So, this part of the job is very satisfying."

And then came his fascination with corks.

"It just seemed such a

waste to throw the corks out. We fill so many boxes and bags, and they go right in the trash," he says. "I started messing around trying to create something interesting."

He admits he has a creative bent, spending a lot of time fashioning his own music.

"I used to perform, but now I just compose. Now I have a few listings on Apple Music." He has also done a few standup gigs at Yuk Yuks.

But Fasullo took to a couple of art classes at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre for help with his cork art. His first completed work was a large two-foot by four-foot guitar, framed in a shadow box. It now takes him two to three weeks to complete a work.

The Pumphouse recently included his piece, "Champagne Bottle," in an exhibition. He is open to selling his works, but he admits he's hesitant to let go of his earliest work. Trius Winery has commissioned a piece for their new café bar.

Fasullo's eyes light up when he talks about the future opportunities for cork art.

"These are creative things that anyone can do. You can take the corks into retirement homes, or schools, wherever. It's cheap. It's easy. A wonderful opportunity."

"And I think throwing them away is wrong. They shouldn't be going to landfill."

Fasullo works hard to balance his work, his art and his reverent mission to give corks a new life.

He's just brimming with new ideas.



Top: Fasullo's wine cork art involves adhering hundreds of corks onto a canvas, then painting them to represent a particular image. It now takes him two to three weeks to complete one of his works. Left: The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre recently included his piece "Champagne Bottle" in an exhibition. Right: This two-foot by four-foot blue guitar, framed in a shadow box, was his debut of this new artistic venture. DAVE VAN DE LAAR/TIM TAYLOR

Band in the Barn fundraiser for NOTL Museum returns July 31

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is trading town lights for starlight again this summer as Band in the Barn returns July 31.

The midsummer fundraiser will feature live music by Gumbo Stew, food from PigOut Niagara, beer and wine from Bella Terra Vineyards, Konzelmann Estate Winery and the Exchange Brewery, a live auction and dancing among the vines.

This year's event will be held at the 150-acre farm of Albrecht and Anja Seeger.

Albrecht Seeger, an eighth-generation grape grower, worked alongside Niagara wine industry pioneers Paul Bosc, Donald Ziraldo and Karl Kaiser, helping champion the cultivation of vinifera grapes in the region.

The Seeger farm is also home to some of Niagara-on-the-Lake's oldest Riesling and Chardonnay plantings, according to the museum, giving guests a

rare chance to spend an evening among some of the town's most historic vineyards.

Barn doors open at 7 p.m., with entertainment beginning at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$125 and include food and drinks, along with a \$75 tax receipt.

The event is outdoors and guests are advised to dress for the weather. Parking is available on site.

Tickets are available at notlmuseum.ca. All proceeds support the NOTL Museum.



Tickets for the Band in the Barn concert are available at notlmuseum.ca.

Abuse builds a House of Cards

NOTL artist's new song inspired by overcoming years of domestic violence

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Validation.
It's what Niagara-on-the-Lake-born-and-raised singer-songwriter Catherine Leniarsky says she needed most while living through an abusive relationship — and what she hopes someone else finds when they hear her new song, “House of Cards.”

Leniarsky, 37, waited more than two years to release the song she says she has never felt more compelled to share, holding it back until the trial involving her accused abuser was over.

Now, with the trial behind her, she's releasing it on July 16, the third anniversary of the day she fled the relationship.

The track, produced by a team that included two producers from NOTL, will be released at midnight as July 16 turns to July 17 and will be available on all streaming platforms.

“Being in an abusive relationship is very confusing,” Leniarsky says, and finding the courage to report it was “nearly impossible.”

“It took a lot of coaxing from mental health professionals and people that cared.”

The case eventually went worked its way through the court system, with a three-day trial beginning Oct. 31, 2025.

“That's how slow our justice system is,” she says.

“It took me two-and-a-half years to get to court.”

The man was found not guilty on four charges, leaving Leniarsky with a peace bond that bars him from having contact with her.

She says the experience exposed what she sees as a serious gap in the justice system: a lack of understanding among some court professionals — mostly judges — about the specific dynamics of abusive relationships.

Still, Leniarsky feels reporting it mattered.

“I'm very thankful that I did.”

“I know that if I hadn't reported, the girl that my abuser eventually went on to date after me wouldn't have reported him,” she says.

“And she got it a lot worse than I did.”

Leniarsky says therapy,



Above: A screenshot from Catherine Leniarsky's new music video for her song “House of Cards.” The song is inspired by her fleeing a violent relationship and reclaiming her sense of self after having it taken away for so long.



Left: Leniarsky at the Toronto Courthouse on the day she testified against her ex. While he was ultimately found not guilty, she said her testimony help his next partner find the strength to report him, too.

SUPPLIED PHOTOS

“I know that if I hadn't reported, the girl that my abuser eventually went on to date after me wouldn't have reported him ... And she got it a lot worse than I did.”

CATHERINE LENIARSKY
NOTL RESIDENT, MUSICIAN, SURVIVOR

friendship and community helped her heal enough to share her experience.

“It probably took me at least a year to feel comfortable talking about it.”

“That's around the time when I started to write this song,” she says.

Leniarsky worked with NOTL producers Adrian and Lucas Rezza, a Toronto videographer and his assistant, and her guitar player

and partner.

All are men.

That mattered to her because it challenged the way she had come to see men in the music industry.

The person she had been in a relationship with was a Toronto musician and the experience had left her with a terrible view of men in that world.

This time, she says, she had kind, compassionate,

encouraging and safe men behind her.

Working with them helped change her view of men in the music industry and became an important part of her healing.

The song's title, “House of Cards,” reflects how she now understands abusive relationships: built on lies and far more fragile than they may seem.

“The idea that abusive

relationships are typically built on lies and are about as strong as a house of cards,” she says.

One line in the song captures the point where fear begins to turn into defiance: “Go ahead and collect all the ammo you can, it won't scare me this time.”

Leniarsky says the “ammo” in the lyric refers to everything an abuser can weaponize to keep someone small, quiet and afraid to tell others what is happening.

“Do your worst. It's not going to scare me. I know it's all based on lies.”

She hopes the song gives other survivors the validation to remember their

worth and know they are not alone.

“Validation when you're in an abusive relationship is huge.”

“You get to a point where you think everything is your fault,” she says.

Though she has written music her whole life, Leniarsky says she has “never felt so compelled” to release a song before.

“It is incredibly important to me to be loud about this topic,” she says.

“This song, to me, is remembering what I'm worth, remembering what I deserve — and it's when I started to feel empowered again and remember who I was.”

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Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

I confess to never falling under the spell of golf. I tried, but failed to find the magic, the passion, the dedication to be a "dew sweeper" on a pre-determined route over the links, in weather fair or foul, to hit a wee white ball into a cup.

Such time was certain to be better spent birding or tucked into a comfy chair, chilled with glass of delectable grape at hand, reading P.G. Wodehouse. I then discovered how misguided, judgmental and uninformed I was.

Wodehouse was knowledgeable and passionate about golf. Besides Bertie Wooster and Jeeves, Lord Emsworth and his Empress of Blandings, Gussie Fink-Nottle and the melting eyes and cooing voice of Madeline Bassett was another memorable character. This

was "The Old Member," he of any number of golf clubs, quietly observant and sage advisor to those smitten by love and golf, neither easily attained.

Elin Woodger of the Wodehouse Society spoke of Wodehouse's lifelong love of golf and the many witty books that resulted including "The Clipping of Cuthbert," "Ordeal by Golf," "The Magic Plus-Fours" and "Heart of a Goof." In these stories and others compiled in the "Golf Omnibus," we learn the language of golf's golden age of the 1920s and 1930s.

There are niblicks, a heavy wood-headed golf club similar to a modern pitching or sand wedge. The mashie is an iron head with moderate loft equivalent to a modern five-iron. There are baffies, brassies, cleeks and spoons. Archaic featheries, golf balls made of chicken or goose feathers, phased out by gutta-percha balls, in turn replaced by rubber-core balls.

The Wodehouse test of a great golfer is "the ability to recover from a bad start and get a couple of birdies right away." If unsuccessful, the resulting dejection is "the



"Perfect Pairings" is on now until Sept. 19. COOKSON

walk of the overwrought soul." One can rise from the depths but just when one thinks "I'm done," golf pulls one back in.

Matters of etiquette, rules and styles of play inform. To Wodehouse, the only way to really find a true character is to play golf with him. Some players waggle and waggle some more as they ponder the next drive or putt.

"The wrecking crew" of every golf club is a foursome of respectable, retired businessmen who take up golf late in life on orders of their doctors to get air and exercise. They are slow, lose balls, don't allow singles through and don't know the rules.

Human nature being what it is, there are the gabbers who don't shut up, the

swearers, the club throwers and alas, the cheaters.

Golf is humbling: "Men capable of governing empires fail to control a small, white ball." One must preserve composure and self-control, avoid attitude, behave calmly and with effortless dignity, and always remember to "play the ball where it lies."

Two devotees of the game, vice-president Stan Lapidus and secretary Lorne Emery from the Golf Historical Society of Canada, brought antique hickory golf clubs and

classic steel clubs to the Shaw's "The Art of Golf and other Nonsensical Things" to show and share their passion for the history of the sport and the society's role in preserving, restoring and bringing golf's past to life.

Modern golf is said to have originated in the 15th century in Scotland and was brought to Canada by Scottish immigrants in the 19th century. The first club was the Montreal Golf Club, established in 1873. Niagara-on-the-Lake has the oldest continuing golf course in North America, having been established in 1875 by wealthy Americans residing in our town.

Another event, "Perfect Pairings," seemed a natural pairing with Wodehouse, as he loved theatre and was a successful writer of musical comedies on Broadway from 1906 through to the 1920s. He worked with Jerome Kern and was known for his sophisticated lyrics.

"Perfect Pairings" is a concert series directed by Kimberley Rampersad that began with the associate music director, Ryan deSouza. Nine actors and music interns are included in a three-part series of musical selections drawn from three teams of composers and lyricists.

The first pairing highlighted music of Kander & Ebb including "Coffee in a Cardboard Cup" from "70, Girls, 70," "Razzle Dazzle" from "Chicago" and a very spirited "New York, New York" sung by Alana Bridgewater, Élodie Gillett and Éamon Stokes in different languages one might hear in New York.

The performance was enthusiastically received. Future pairings will include the compositions of Ahrens & Flaherty and Webber & Rice.

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



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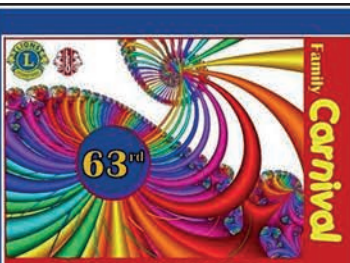
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‘Grassroots’ investment will decide soccer’s future in Canada

Andrew Hawlitzky
The Lake Report

Canada’s best FIFA World Cup showing is over, and the president of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s youth soccer club says the game’s future in this country now depends on what happens far from the big stadiums.

Julia Friesen leads the Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club, which grew to 372 young players this season from 324. She says the men’s national team gave the sport a historic boost this summer, and the challenge now is turning that excitement into lasting growth on local fields.

“Continuing to invest in grassroots programs, supporting coaches and volunteers, and making the sport accessible to young players will be key,” she said.

Canada lost 3-0 to Morocco on July 4 in the round of 16, the furthest the team has ever advanced at a World Cup. The run included a 6-0 win over Qatar



The NOTL Soccer Club has 372 young players this season, up from 324 last year. FILE

on June 18, the first men’s World Cup victory in Canadian history, during which Jonathan David became the first Canadian male soccer player to score a World Cup hat trick.

“I’m incredibly proud of how the players and coaching staff represented Canada,” said Friesen. “They played with heart, resilience and confidence throughout the tournament.”

The women’s national team set the standard on the

world stage for years, she said, and this tournament marked a breakthrough for the men’s program.

“It was inspiring to watch the continued growth of the men’s game in Canada, and it gave Canadians so much to be proud of,” she said.

Cost gives soccer an advantage in the competition for young athletes. A 2026 report by Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities found soccer is Canada’s most played youth sport, with

half of young Canadians taking part at an average cost of \$450 a season. The report found hockey costs almost five times more.

As for NOTL, the sport’s growth depends on the club finding enough volunteers to match player participation. The club runs on 50 coaches and a 15-member board, and every new wave of players means the club must recruit more coaches before a season can start.

“Volunteer coaches are

the backbone of grassroots soccer, and as participation grows, so does the need for coaches and community members who want to get involved,” said Friesen.

Alongside Canada’s performance as a team, the nation hosted 13 matches this tournament, split between Toronto and Vancouver, and broadcast figures show the audience grew with each Canadian win. The round of 16 loss to Morocco drew an average of 5.4 million viewers, the largest audience of Canada’s three matches.

“Canada should be incredibly proud of what we accomplished as a host nation,” said Friesen. “The atmosphere, organization, and enthusiasm surrounding the tournament were fantastic.”

Families from the club travelled to matches across the tournament, watching France, which played two matches (against Sweden and Senegal) in East Rutherford, N.J., South Africa vs. Czechia in Atlanta and

Iraq vs. Senegal in Toronto, Friesen said. The mix of flags in the stands reflected the country itself, she said.

“Seeing people proudly wear their colours, share their traditions, and cheer side by side was a great reflection of what Canada is all about,” she said.

Tournament money has already reached town. Airbnb announced this month it would spend \$567,000 across four Ontario communities through the FIFA World Cup 2026 Impact Program, and the company said the NOTL portion will rebuild the community meeting space at Virgil Sports Park and add spectator seating.

The club’s outdoor season runs from late May to late August. Coach recruitment begins in January, and registration for next season opens in February, when the board will learn whether this summer’s World Cup fever translates into more kids on the pitch.

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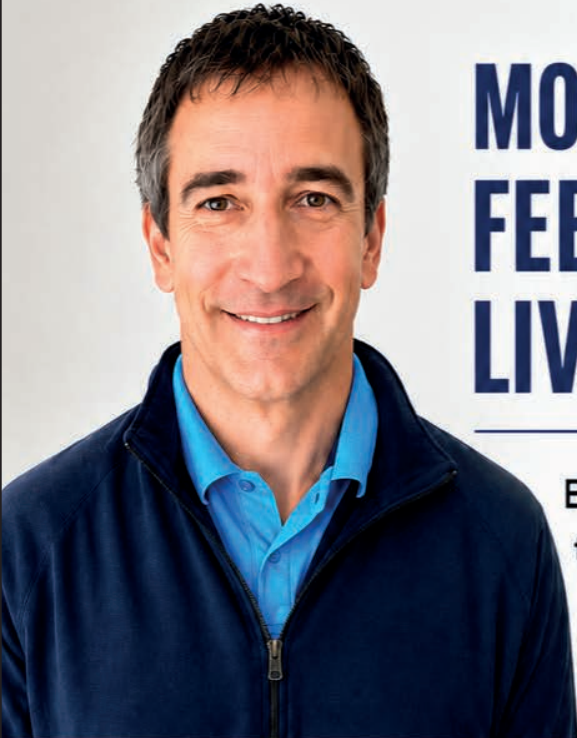
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NOTL women second in 60th Wood Trophy competition

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

More than 80 women from across Niagara gathered last week to compete for the 60th annual Wood Trophy, one of the longest-running and most prestigious amateur contests in the region.

The results couldn't have been closer, with four teams finishing within two shots of one another.

Ultimately, the team of Carol Cort, Lisa Petro, Anita Upshall and Denise Weaver of Rockway Vineyards Golf Club prevailed by a single shot over Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The tourney, played at Whirlpool Golf Club in Niagara Falls, combines each team's four best net scores (after handicaps are deducted) to determine the winner.

Rockway finished with a net total of 283, while NOTL's top four of Martha Cruikshank, Tracey Peters, Sue Gagne and



NOTL Golf Club's Wood Trophy team, which came in second against Rockway Vineyards Golf Club, included Ginny Green, Robin Foster, Tracey Peters, Judy Mantle, May Chang, Sue Gagne, Lisa Allen, Cathy Taylor, Yolanda Henry and Martha Cruikshank. SUPPLIED

Ginny Green were right behind at 284.

As if that wasn't close enough, teams from Lookout Point and Bridgewater were tied for third, one more shot back at 285.

Over the decades, NOTL has won the Wood Trophy 11 times, second only to Twenty Valley, which has a dozen championships. St. Catharines has won nine

and Lookout has eight.

The main individual award at the tourney is the women's low amateur and it also was close.

The winner was Sandra Billyard from Port Colborne Golf Club, who carded a 73. Last year's champion, Chris Critelli of St. Catharines, was just one shot back.

Three NOTL golfers earned individual honours:

In the C flight, Peters' 90 gross score had her tied for first while Gagne was low net winner with 71. Cruikshank's net 69 won the Diamond Lil award.

The Wood Trophy was first competed for in 1966 and "continues a proud tradition of recognizing teamwork, dedication and sportsmanship among amateur women golfers,"

federal sports minister Adam van Koeverden said in a message in the tournament program.

The former Olympic kayaker and gold medallist congratulated the Niagara District Women's Golf Committee for helping to mark the 60th anniversary and preserve the history of women's golf in the region.

Cruikshank, one of the committee members, noted, "This being a special celebratory year, we started last fall to garner sponsorships and applied for a grant from the Golf Canada Heritage Fund."

"Part of that grant applied to the history project we also started in partnership with Brock University's Sport Oral History Archive, which is gathering and archiving the history of women's golf in the Niagara District."

The online archive can be viewed at sportoralhistory.ca and will continue to evolve over the rest of the year, Cruikshank said.

Brock University professor Elizabeth Vlossak is the lead researcher on the project and has worked with the golf committee since the spring.

LEAGUE PLAY

Weather has been a big part of the story this season — and not in a good way — for the hugely popular Thursday men's league at the NOTL Golf Club.

Last Thursday, for the fourth week in a row, thunder and lightning again forced cancellation of play.

With this week's oppressive heat wave, the men remain hopeful of getting their league back on track.

In this Monday's business women's league, Carroll Baker led all players with a gross score of 42.

Other winners were: Theresa Dyck (longest drive on #1), Margie Churchill (closest to the 150 marker on #2), Tracey Peters (closest to the pin on #4), Cathy Van Der Zalm (sank the longest putt on #7) and Nikki Jenkins (closest to the pin in two on #9).



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Pop-Up Sessions – Wednesday, July 22

- Memorial Park - 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.
- Virgil Sports Park - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Pop-Up Sessions – Thursday, July 23

- Community Centre Lobby - 9:30 a.m. to noon
- Sparky's Park - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Public Information Centre – Thursday, July 23

- Community Centre Simpson Room - 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Your feedback will help us:

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- Make community engagement more accessible, meaningful, and effective.



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BKind Grateful #84: When someone is grieving, mention the name of the person they lost. It tells them they are remembered.

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



Contributed by Patty Garriock

“Live in the sunshine, swim in the sea,
drink the wild air.”
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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He smoked it!



The smoke on the water and fire entrails in the sky Wednesday didn't deter Niagara-on-the-Lake's John Kozik from notching the first hole in one reported so far this season at the NOTL Golf Club. Playing in 40C temperatures and low-lying haze from Northern Ontario wildfires, Kozik sent his 9-iron shot sailing 120 yards toward the cup on the fourth hole. However, thanks to a bunker out front, no one could see the hole from the tee. He and playing partners Paul Jacot, Larry Mantle and Ken Porter arrived to find four balls on the green – but one proved to be a beat-up practice ball someone left behind. And Kozik's was in the hole. It's his second ace on #4, along with another at the St. Catharines Golf Club. It's unclear when we'll get relief from the smoke and haze that's blanketed the province this week.
KEVIN MACLEAN

Lessons from an Old Town ditch



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

A beating update. It's been a month now.
The guy who handed me my ass, kicked me in the head as I lay in an Old Town ditch and creamed my eyeball was arrested. He was charged. Now, it's up to the courts.
I filed a victim impact statement, which felt completely weird. It's the first time in my lengthy life that I've ever been a victim. “Just don't call yourself a survivor,” said Dorothy. “Don't be a drama queen.”
This is why we have spouses.
Unknown is when the legal system might deal with this guy (who lives four blocks away), or the outcome. I saw the cop who handled the case when he was walking the beat in the early morning sunshine on Queen Street. “Out of my hands now,” he said, “but I'm attaching your statement to my report and submitting it all.”
“I saw that you wrote about the assault,” he added. “That was pretty good.”
Yeah, and good did come out of the bad, as I detailed.



Hate is never far away, as seen last year when a white supremacist group targeted NOTL. But overall Canadians rank themselves as moral. Turner agrees. GARTH TURNER

Neighbours and strangers hugged me. They dropped off cookies. They came to the door. People lent support online. They helped identify the perp. And now it's time to move on.
That was my thought when I asked Mr. Editor not to publish a news article about my assault, and the guy who did it. Enough already, I said.
But he refused. “We don't do ‘favourites’ like that,” his email barked. “It's not ethical, and how would we be able to hold our heads high? That's a slippery slope into losing all integrity. And it ain't happening.”
So, it didn't. The perp's name appeared in print. The news spread.
“Are you the guy who was assaulted?” a woman asked, in an unexpected phone call a few nights ago. “I'm his daughter and he's done this before. It's what broke up our family.”
I mused on the fact that I'd walked past his house a hundred times, maybe two hundred, on my daily treks. Now I can't stop looking around in case his silver car again blocks my path and he emerges.
The kindness and support in the past few weeks made me wonder: are we unique in our society in abhorring violence and supporting those who encounter it? Are we inherently more peaceful than, say, the Americans who live next door (and populate downtown NOTL)? More ethical and moral, or just delusional and conceited in our misplaced maple superiority?
Someone sent me a chart of nations ranked by “morality.” Canada was at the top, with a large majority

of citizens believing their neighbours are moral.
Is that realistic?
Canada has its share of racism, anti-immigrant sentiment and a growing white supremacist movement here in town, which I have chronicled. Folks muse openly about cutting off our foreign aid to less-favoured nations, and slashing the money allocated to support the Indigenous population.
The stuff published online against those of Indian or Southeast Asian heritage is intense and disturbing. And how about the hatred between generations, as boomers are blamed for every house that costs too much? Meanwhile, we think it's completely moral and ethical to cheat on taxes, game the system and screw the government.
Are we better, or just pretending to be so? Maybe living beside the MAGA nation to the south would make anyone look pristine.
Well, this is the last time I'll visit this topic. Just wanted you to know I'm good. Thanks.
Lessons? You bet.
I've learned how generous and thoughtful people are.
I'm grateful it was only a beating, not a disease.
I better understand how some people need mental help.
And I sure know where not to walk.
Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.
garth@garth.ca



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Why do car drivers control our roads?

Dear editor:

Recent tragedies involving pedestrians and cyclists in Niagara-on-the-Lake should prompt us to ask a difficult question: what will it take before we decide that preventing these collisions matters more than saving a few seconds on our journey?

Driving is a privilege, not a right. Every driver is entrusted with a licence that can be revoked because operating a two-tonne vehicle carries enormous responsibility.

Pedestrians and cyclists, as vulnerable road users, have no steel cage, airbags or crumple zones to protect them. They rely entirely on drivers exercising due care and attention.

A cyclist cannot be banned from cycling and a pedestrian cannot be banned from walking. They have an inalienable right to use the available transport infrastructure system safely.

When a pedestrian or cyclist is killed, the consequences extend far beyond the crash scene. There is an empty chair at a family's dinner table that will remain empty forever. Parents lose children, children lose parents, spouses lose partners,



Too many drivers become impatient when asked to share the road with cyclists and pedestrians, Frank Hayes writes. FILE

and neighbours lose friends. That loss is permanent.

More than 180 years ago, Friedrich Engels used the term "social murder" to describe preventable deaths that society comes to accept as inevitable. While the context was different, the phrase challenges us to consider whether we have become too accepting of road deaths as simply the price of getting from A to B.

We know that lower speeds save lives. We know that distracted driving and speeding remain leading contributors to serious collisions. Yet too many drivers resist slower speeds and become impatient when asked to share the road.

There is even a name for

this mindset: motonormativity — the tendency to view the risks and harms caused by motor vehicles as normal or unavoidable while expecting everyone else to adapt.

We readily wait 15 minutes in line at Costco or for a coffee, yet some drivers become frustrated by waiting a few seconds to pass a cyclist safely or to yield to a pedestrian.

Yes, cyclists who ignore stop signs or traffic lights deserve criticism. Every road user has a responsibility to obey the law. But a bicycle cannot inflict devastation on the scale that a motor vehicle can. That is precisely why drivers are licensed, insured and held to

a higher standard of care.

As someone who regularly cycles the roads of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I want to emphasize that the vast majority of drivers are courteous and respectful.

Unfortunately, on a typical 100-kilometre ride, I still experience one or two illegally close passes. It only takes one mistake, one moment of distraction or one act of impatience to change a family's life forever.

Cyclists are not obstacles. They are fathers, mothers, grandparents, children, neighbours and friends. Pedestrians are, too. Every person on our roads deserves to return home safely.

We cannot expect police officers to be on every corner. Lasting change will come only when every driver accepts that sharing the road safely is part of the privilege of driving — not an inconvenience.

So perhaps the question for all of us is this: what kind of community do we want Niagara-on-the-Lake to be? One where arriving a minute sooner matters most, or one where everyone gets home safely?

Frank Hayes
NOTL

Ironical plans for Scotsman Hotel from Marotta critics

Dear editor:

The folks that own the nice property next-door to the Marotta-proposed Ritz-Carlton hotel on the former Rand Estate, and who have been active core members of a fierce opposition force (aka SORE) against that infamous hotel development, are also the owners of 95 Johnson St., which is now known as the Scotsman Hotel — also a very nice property. They run this small boutique hotel and advertise rooms at \$2,000 per night.

Hear this: they want to get an official plan amendment to intensify the existing hotel use to allow for the purchase and consumption of alcohol for up to 57 individuals, among other curious things.

So what, and who cares in the real world, but this is

Old Town and the property is outside the commercial area in the new official plan, so this would set such a nasty precedent that would literally dissolve the intent of the new official plan that's been in the works for many years and at great political turmoil.

The 95 Johnson intensification proposal, when carefully analyzed in detail, borders on the edge of tragic comedy.

The hotel intensification application was presented in the council chambers last Tuesday, July 7 within the format of a public meeting, to try and accomplish something so extraordinary that it warrants not only public attention but also a fulsome understanding of the planning process and how this town is managed.

It may even be significant enough to breach both the Planning Act and Municipal Act legislation; it could be that serious, but who knows at this point?

Every single one of the council members appeared either as an accomplice to this somewhat stealthy proposal, or were simply comatose to the fact that the timing of this application falls after the May 26 date of the adopted new official plan (adopted by this council) and the Sept. 26 date when the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing must review, modify or approve the adopted official plan document.

Furthermore, the election year lame-duck period is Aug. 10. The lame-duck mode, as per the Municipal Act, strictly prohibits

town council not only from processing, but also passing major land-use change decisions, which the 95 Johnson official plan amendment application clearly is.

Not one councillor realized the magnitude of what potentially was about to take shape; they were being bamboozled.

This fascinating and truly original non-fiction story of one the biggest NIMBY SORE members working against Marotta, with unyielding persistence, now trying something so unusual on their own property by attempting to expedite an approval of something that could easily pass the test of being fictitious? Truly mind-boggling — worthy of a play at the Shaw.

Peter Rusin
St. Davids



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style
Category: THE TENTH

In 2023 this girls' name was the 10th-most popular in the U.S. — dad Xenophilus Lovegood was ahead of his time.

Last issue category: WE ARE LITERARY FAMILY

Clue: George R.R. Martin wrote, one in this family "always pays his debts ... I think I will try and sleep. Wake me if we're about to die."

Answer: Who are the Lannisters?

Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by:
Lynda Collet, Jeff Lake, Emma Balsas,
Sheila Meloche, Jim Dandy, KC King,
Donna Pearce, Hedy Wiebe

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Will U.S. strong-arming Canada be water under the bridge?



Keith McNenly
Special to The Lake Report

The Gordie Howe International Bridge was named in 2015 by former prime minister Stephen Harper and former Michigan governor Rick Snyder. It honours Gordie Howe, the Canadian-born hockey legend who became an icon with the Detroit Red Wings hockey team, making him a fitting namesake for a bridge intended to symbolize the connection between Canada and the United States.

The bridge was built as a major piece of infrastructure at one of the most important commercial crossings in North America. Its purpose is to increase capacity, strengthen transportation links and improve the movement of people and goods across the border.

The scheduled opening for June was delayed after U.S. President Donald Trump publicly insisted that the United States be “fully compensated” and given an ownership stake before the bridge would be allowed to open. The bridge is jointly owned by Canada and the state of Michigan.

Now, it appears the bridge is set to open by the end of this month.

A July 10 press release from Infrastructure Minister Gregor Robertson announced the Gordie Howe International Bridge will open July 27.

On social media, Trump posted: “I was able to cut a much better deal for America, and by so doing, will be allowing the new and spectacular Gordie Howe International Bridge, spanning Detroit and Windsor, Ont., to open.”

Canada financed the project’s \$6.4-billion cost, with the original arrangement providing that it would recover its investment through 100 per cent of toll profits before later sharing proceeds with Michigan.

On the new deal, Prime Minister Mark Carney said on Sunday, “We are sharing after Canada is paid back, so we get the revenues, then the servicing of the cost of the bridge, and paying the debt of the bridge, and then what’s left over, there’s a split of that for 15 years, and the U.S. money is invested back in economic development in the region, the U.S. side of the region. It’s a good deal for Canada.”

The bridge in its unopened state exerts symbolic importance. Instead of relieving congestion as early as possible, it becomes another symbol of the president’s authoritarian overreach. Moral decay unique to Trump is the real story.

As seen with the Gordie Howe bridge, his disruptive reach extends even into settled history: an interna-



The Gordie Howe International Bridge, linking Windsor and Detroit, is set to open July 27 after a political dispute delayed the long-awaited crossing. The span now stands as both a symbol of Canada-U.S. co-operation and of the growing strain between the two countries. Time will tell if relationships continue to be challenged. SOURCED

tional agreement that gave rise to a multi-billion-dollar infrastructure investment is rendered meaningless.

What is more troubling is his ability to capture people of good moral character. That is what makes Trump’s form of corruption distinctive.

There are, of course, the usual grunts populating his administration who are gleefully doing his dirty work, but he also draws decent people into unwarranted, undeserved and seemingly unavoidable complicity.

Case in point, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer commented, “I’m proud to have fought for its opening.” The opening itself is welcome, but there is little to be proud of in the way it was extracted.

Canada was forced to accept changes to a settled agreement under political pressure, leaving the commitment signed by its predecessor diminished by the Trump taint.

July 27 will be a moment of celebration, and we should not let Trump steal it from us. The bridge marks a significant achievement of Canadian resolve: more than a decade of persistence, with a fiscally reluctant United States, to build and finance this major piece of infrastructure.

The Gordie Howe International Bridge joins engineering necessity to visual grace. Its towers evoke hockey sticks in mid-slap shot, and its span across the Detroit River suggests the enduring bond between friendly neighbours.

More broadly, this episode illustrates the accommodations foreign leaders are forced to make, while yearning for a return to a normal adult relationship with America.

Since Trump’s second inauguration, world leaders have answered him with concessions and flattery, but appeasement has now shown its logic: it does not moderate pressure, it returns greater demands and deeper humiliation.

Prime Minister Carney rejected appeasement from the outset. That is the right instinct. Co-operation between allies is valuable, but co-operation is not the same as submission. A bad deal to open the bridge is not in Canada’s national interests, but we cannot simply walk away from this structure.

We have to navigate evolving circumstances. The Gordie Howe International Bridge is a testament to Canadian diplomacy and determination, while illustrating Canadian technical achievement in artful engineering. It must now also serve its purpose.

At the centre of the span, where the maple leaf will face off against the stars and stripes later this month, the handshakes and smiles at the opening will barely mask the tension of two nations’ citizens seeking to bridge a fracturing relationship. Time will tell whether this becomes just water under the bridge.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Keith McNenly was the chief administrator of the Town of Mono for 41 years.



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To the Editor,



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All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation.



Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated.



Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published.



Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com.



Your voice matters. We look forward to hearing from you.

Growing joy

Horticultural Society tour celebrates creativity, community and well-being

Maddy Gordon
The Lake Report

In Lenore Sooknarine's eyes, gardening is more than a hobby – it's an interaction with the world around her. She said that's why she agreed to open up her home for the NOTL Horticultural Society's annual garden tour, after a member drove by her house and noticed the greenery.

The annual Gardener's Garden Tour gives locals a chance to discover otherwise private gardens, and gardeners a chance to flex their green thumbs in front of the public.

"I do believe it's not by accident we are able to experience the town, the beauty," Sooknarine said.

Her garden is a five-year project intended to complement her house and fill her pre-retirement life. Titled "Finding Her Joy in the Garden" on the tour's map, she says gardening supports her mental health.

"It's rewarding emotionally," she said. "It gives me joy seeing the before and after, and to see the new seasons generating," Sooknarine said.

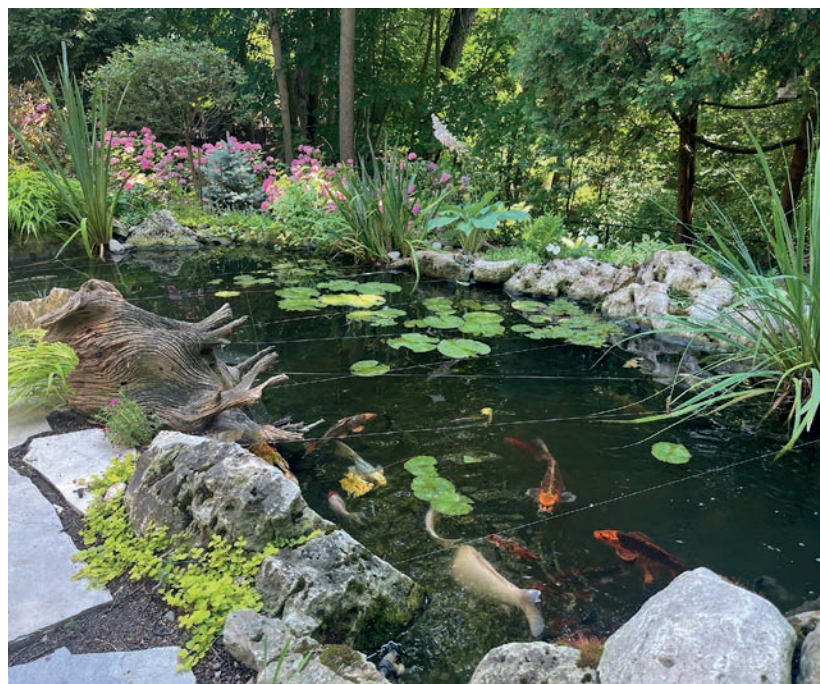
The proceeds from the tour will benefit three students from Niagara College's school of environment and horticulture, a cause that hits home for Rose Bartel — she's an alum of that program.

"I went to school for horticulture at Niagara College, and three students will be helped from [the tour]," Bartel said.

A decades-long member of the NOTL Horticultural Society, Bartel last opened her garden to tour guests in the 2000s. Since then, she has retired and has more time to dedicate to her yard — at least four hours per day, she says.

"I would have loved to have a garden years ago, but it didn't happen," she said. "There seem to be more older ladies, 50 and up, who are really enjoying it."

Bartel's garden occupies a large property, making space for vegetables, flowers and pathways that weave through greenery. Another location polished with paths is Heather Aycan's "Growing with the Flow" garden.



Top: Tiffany Tsantsoulas and her eight-year-old daughter, Lena, decide where to head next on the Gardener's Garden Tour on Saturday. The tour invited the public to discover local gardeners' sanctuaries. MADDY GORDON Left: This property on Red Haven Court was one of 10 locations in Old Town featured in the tour. DAVE VAN DE LAAR Right: The koi pond in Heather Aycan's garden, a highlight for many guests who visited her home. MADDY GORDON

"I'm in the garden all the time, pulling out weeds and hoeing and cutting the roses back," Aycan said.

She says she began gardening because of her grandmother, whose own garden felt "magical" to explore as a kid.

"She had a little bungalow and in the back, it was a total surprise. There were little pathways leading to little surprises in the garden, maybe a little fountain or a little

statue," she said. "I just loved it; it was beautiful."

With Aycan's garden including multiple pathways, small statues and water elements, the magic of her grandmother's legacy is in the air.

The tour was introduced to her through a neighbour, who recommended Aycan to the Horticultural Society. She says the hydrangeas and the koi pond were highlights for guests — the number of guests that turned out was

an exciting outcome of the event for her.

"People have been flowing through, which is fantastic for the Horticultural Society. Everybody's been so kind and gracious with their compliments," she said.

The tour included 10 stops throughout town — some visitors strode through the heat to try to visit every garden.

Tiffany Tsantsoulas and her eight-year-old daughter, Lena, share a love of gar-

dens and sought to follow the map to each location.

"We both really love gardens ... we wanted to see some other plants and houses that we don't normally get to see," Tsantsoulas said.

For Lena, the best part of the tour was seeing the pools. When Tsantsoulas repeated her daughter's most frequently asked questions, she said, "Why isn't it a garden and pool tour?" and "Why can't I

jump in the pool?"

The Gardener's Garden Tour ran from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and was run by volunteers who welcomed and led guests through each gardener's sanctuary.

"I don't need to have as many people around me, and not that I don't want to, but I find that the garden and the plants help me," Sooknarine said.

"Opening up the garden today has been an additional joy for me."

Museum made right choice with infrastructure upgrade



Brian Marshall
Columnist

If you’ve been in the neighbourhood of Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum during the past few weeks, it would have been impossible to miss the construction going on in their front yard.

And, you may have wondered: just what is being done here?

The answer to that question is a stormwater management tank.

You see, with the planned expansion of the museum creating additional impervious surfaces (roofs) on the property, current legislation that speaks to the management of stormwater during five- and 100-year-storm events, and the fact that the closest storm sewer on Davy Street is likely undersized, the museum was obliged to develop a solution.

As background, there are two principal methods by

which volumes of stormwater are managed in new developments.

Where space allows — such as in a new subdivision — open ponds are frequently deployed. However where space is constrained (such as in the museum’s case) and/or the land value is high, buried tanks are the preferred address.

There are two types of tanks.

The first is a detention style engineered to accept and temporarily store the stormwater generated during a rain event, then slowly release the water into the storm sewers at a rate that does not overburden the capacity of the town’s existing infrastructure.

The second is a retention tank wherein the captured water is used on-site for things like landscape irrigation, grey water systems (such as toilets), etc. A tank of this style is typically larger than the detention option to provide for the projected consumption of the stored water and be engineered to include an overflow drain — connected to the storm sewer — to ensure that maximum storage capacity is not exceeded.

While there are a number of benefits — both environmental and in cost recovery



As part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum’s expansion, underway right now, it’s adding a detention tank to temporarily store stormwater when it rains — Brian Marshall says it’s the responsible choice. BRIAN MARSHALL

— associated with retention tanks, they are only practical in cases where the property allows for the larger footprint, the anticipated water use is high enough to efficiently utilize the stored water and the construction budget is sufficient to address the capital cost of this more expensive option.

In the museum’s case, a detention tank was the most feasible solution.

Now, please don’t assume that a detention tank is an inexpensive option. Consider the fact that, in the museum’s case, this poured-in-place concrete tank (and the integrated Cupolex structure that supports the cement top slab) with a roughly 40,000-litre capacity will cost in excess of \$175,000.

That is not to mention the additional investment necessary to install the on-site storm sewer system required to capture and deliver the rain water that falls during a storm event from all points around the property to the buried tank.

Nor does it speak to ancillary costs such as connecting the tank to the town’s storm sewer, rerouting of existing services and so on, all of which will add substantially to the total bill at the end of the day.

I am forced to observe that a developer can recover the cost of a stormwater

management system through factoring it into their future revenues, whether such are generated by eventual property sales or rents or room/event charges.

However, for a non-profit museum, since all the buried infrastructure on the property adds nothing to the actual visitor experience (upon which they depend for current and future revenue generation), cost recovery becomes a very steep (if not impossible) challenge.

Bluntly, I would not want to be the person explaining to a regular visitor that the admission price went up by 25 per cent to pay for something that they will not benefit from nor actually even see.

That said, although this undertaking may be taking a fearful bite into the museum’s budget for its planned expansion, in speaking to Alex Topp, former vice-president and current head of the museum’s design and development committee, he suggested that although the organization really felt the pain of that bite into their fundraising, it was the “environmentally responsible thing to do” and something that “respected and responded to their neighbours and the town’s infrastructure needs”.

And Topp really wanted to do a positive call-out to the work of Scott Construction and the Silverline Group for their outstanding work on this project — something I completely endorse.

In my terms, this non-profit took the bitter pill in favour of supporting the health and welfare of the community they are anchored in. And, that decision, in and of itself, is a shining example of a cultural institution that understands its vital connection to the local greater good.

So, what can you and I do?

Belly up to the bar and pitch a few dollars to the museum’s fund raising efforts. While you may not think so, every \$10, \$20, \$50 or \$100 can make a real difference to the future viability of this critically important institution.

If it comes down to supporting a museum that underwrites the character of our unique community vs. one that proposes injury to NOTL’s heritage, you know where my dollars will flow.

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



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The internationally acclaimed Lithuanian Boys' Choir Dagilelis performs at St. Mark's during the Music Niagara Festival. The young singers captivated the audience with their pure voices, polished choreography and striking stage presence. ROSS ROBINSON

Lithuanian boys' choir leaves St. Mark's church spellbound



ROSS'S RAMBLINGS

Ross Robinson
Columnist

Just last week, we had the Lithuanian Boys' Choir Dagilelis at St. Mark's Church and the FIFA World Cup everywhere. The artistic abilities and passions of the entertainers couldn't have been more drastic and different. But both events had me totally transfixed — and no gambling ads to distract me from the proceedings. Huzzah.

To quote the Music Niagara Festival brochure, "Witness the internationally acclaimed Lithuanian Dagilelis Boys' Choir as they present a moving program of exquisite choral artistry."

Under the direction of Remigijus Adomaitis (apparently many Lithuanian names end in "is" or "us" or "as," according to Music Niagara artistic director Atis Bankas) some 50 boys between ages 10 and 20, approximately, sang their hearts out for us on a Sunday evening in our insular part of the world.

Could there be a more perfect venue than St. Mark's Church?

And the choir took the expression sartorial splendour to another level. Bow ties, vests and patent leather black

shoes. The Boys' Choir Dagilelis certainly understand the value added benefit of synchronized choreography, and every one of them were "into it," providing the vibe. Pure, unfiltered voices, and such an unbelievable value.

A lot of us oldsters in the audience had dressed casually in deference to the current steamy hot weather.

Further, I will bet (a very small bet, perhaps a Tim's coffee, dollars to donuts) that many NOTLers aren't certain of the difference between Baltic and Balkan. I didn't, until about five years ago. But I digress as I ramble.

We marveled at the professionalism and voice quality of these boys. The foundational bass voices reminded me of the Men of the Deeps from Canada's Cape Breton Island. Such exquisite and enthusiastic young voices, and such creative choreography. A bongo drum, and some lines delivered in Swahili.

To that end, NOTLer Jeanne Jennings, an enthusiastic and generous Music Niagara team member, expressed her gratitude to the choir in the Zulu language. This delighted the singers, as Swahili and Zulu are both spoken in East Africa.

OK, I hear you, and will ramble back on track. I took time to reflect on the relative newness of Canada. Students at Vilnius University study in buildings that date back to 1579. I only know this because my daughter was all set to study there, but got stymied by the COVID-19 pandemic. Not that long ago.

Permit me to say a few words about Music Niagara

artistic director Atis Bankas. Simply put, he knows so much about the world of music. He regularly says, "The very well known Italian, or Czech, composer so and so." They may be well known to Atis and some other people, but certainly not to me. Ask me about Montreal Canadian left wingers from the 1950s and '60s.

There is a proud Lithuanian community of about 10,000 over in Toronto, and some of them had endured the QEW to enjoy this very emotional cultural evening. Good on them, and they led the long and loud ovations — with many wet eyes.

Music Niagara has hit its stride for the 2026 season. It may be a long way from your normal comfort zone, but please step out this summer. Classical, a Pops Series or Young Virtuosos (you have missed Glory to Ukraine). Their five intimate venues are all just so Canada and Niagara, and trust this rambler, they spend enough on sound.

Please excuse my directness, but enough of the cajoling and subtle but enthusiastic encomiums for Music Niagara.

They bring world class music right to our wonderful Niagara wine country. Dragging myself into the current century, may I say, visit their website at musicniagara.org. Or email Kaden Lade (general manager) at klade@musicniagara.org. The festival ends Aug. 14.

And heaven forbid, don't miss the FIFA World Cup soccer/football final on July 19.

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Keeping it Green: Hit the beach, but stay safe while cooling off

Kyra Simone
Special to The Lake Report

“Go jump in the lake” requires a bit more nuance this summer. Additional guidelines for staying cool and enjoying Niagara’s waters are necessary as climate change exacerbates risks.

Look before your leap

In Niagara, we are lucky to have a wealth of public “blue space,” where we can easily access the water. As periods of prolonged, intense heat become more common, these spots become increasingly important as natural cooling centres.

At the same time, bacterial contamination of natural waters poses risks to beachgoers. To the untrained eye, the water may look perfectly clear — but there are a few important considerations before diving in.

Contact with bacteria like E. coli can cause skin and eye irritation, as well as gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Storm events elevate



Stay informed on health risks like E. coli in Niagara’s public beaches this summer, warns columnist Kyra Simone.

bacteria levels in water, both by churning up sediments and depositing runoff from surrounding land areas.

Warmer temperatures and more frequent, intense storms are likely as climate change progresses, both of which will likely increase bacteria levels in water. Indeed, an investigation by Lake Report editor Kevin MacLean found that Queen’s Royal Beach failed water quality standards about half the time last summer, though this did not seem to deter swimmers.

The best advice is to

“Know before you go,” says Gregory Ford, vice-president of Swim Drink Fish, a Canadian charity that advocates for clean water. He recommends to always check water quality data before getting in the water.

For Niagara residents, this information is available on the Niagara Region’s website, and the Swim Guide app run by Swim Drink Fish. The latter allows users to “favourite” specific beaches and receive water quality updates directly to their mobile device.

Another best practice is

to avoid swimming for 24 to 48 hours after any rain. Because the water is not tested daily, an “all clear” result may no longer apply if it has rained since the last test.

A little bird told me

Aside from watching the weather and checking available data, it’s good to be aware of other pathways of potential exposure.

A new study led by Dr. Ian Young at Toronto Metropolitan University looked at 10 Canadian beaches, including two undisclosed locations in Niagara. The research found that beachgoers were more likely to have gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms after swimming in water containing seagull feces.

This is one of the first studies to link human health impacts to seagull contamination. Though this is emerging research, beachgoers would be wise to avoid swimming in areas with large flocks of seagulls, swallowing any water while swimming, or playing in sand with bird droppings.

There is a risk of bacterial exposure in beach sand and sediment as well, due to water-logged conditions that make them a good breeding ground. It’s best to wash hands after building castles, and to make sure that kids don’t put sand in their mouths.

In the soup

Last, but certainly not least, warmer temperatures will likely bring harmful algal blooms later this summer. Contact with toxins produced by these blue-green algae causes a variety of symptoms in both humans and pets.

The Niagara Region announces confirmed blooms on their website, but knowing what to watch out for can help to keep loved ones safe. Harmful algal blooms are different than the common, nuisance Cladophora algae that often accumulates in piles along the water’s edge at Niagara beaches.

“Cladophora is a filamentous, hair-like algae that clings to rocks and is often

long and stringy. Harmful algal blooms look like a split-pea soup,” says Ford.

If you think you spot an unconfirmed harmful algal bloom, you can report it to the Ontario Spills Action Centre, and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks will send representatives to test it.

“With a warming climate, we can expect to see beach water quality advisories more and more often, so it’s critical that cities invest in monitoring as frequently as possible to keep beachgoers safe,” says Ford.

It’s such a privilege to enjoy these natural waters, and we should definitely continue to do so — with one eye on the data, and the other on the sand and surf.

Kyra Simone is a NOTL native and PhD candidate in environmental science, with master’s degrees in biology & science communication. She researches climate change, wildfire, ecosystem recovery and public environmental communication.



IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LAND AND PREMISES AT THE
FOLLOWING MUNICIPAL ADDRESSES IN THE TOWN OF
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

NOTICE OF PASSING OF BY-LAW

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of
Niagara-on-the-Lake has passed

By-law No. 2026-031
By-law No. 2026-032

Designating the following properties as being of cultural heritage
value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O.
1990, Chapter 0.18

**The Dock Company Manager House,
115 Delater Street**

**The Virgil Public School,
1665 Four Mile Creek Road**

As per the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Council’s decision may be
appeal within 30 days of the day the notice of Council’s decision
is published by giving notice of appeal to the Tribunal and to the
clerk of the municipality.

**Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
this 16th day of July, 2026
Grant Bivol, Town Clerk**



TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

LINE 3 ROAD FROM CONCESSION 3 TO CONCESSION 4 | ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is holding a Public Information
Centre (PIC) to inform the public of the proposed reconstruction of Line
3 Road from Concession 3 Road to Concession 4 Road, including
paved shoulders, and watermain replacement.

The Town, along with its consultant Kerry T Howe Engineering Limited,
welcomes residents and interested parties to attend this PIC. Details
are below:

Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026
Time: 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Location: Niagara-on-the-Lake Operations Building,
Operations Boardroom (3 Lorraine Street)

The PIC provides an opportunity to view the proposed design and
make any comments before construction commences.

Town Staff would appreciate receiving your comments and concerns
regarding this project.

If you have any questions, please contact:

**Kerry Howe, Project Consultant,
Kerry T. Howe Engineering Limited:**
905-688-6550
or
**Bryan McMillan, Engineering Technologist,
Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake:**
905-468-3266

Thank you.



NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property at **15506 NIAGARA RIVER PARKWAY, MERRIWOOD (PART LOT 18)** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

Description of Property

The subject property known as Merriwood (De Puisaye House) includes a one and a half storey wood framed structure known as De Puisaye House, and an attached 1981 structure known as Merriwood, constructed from salvaged historic materials. The building is located on the west side of the Niagara River Parkway, adjacent from the Niagara River. The subject property is on an approximately 2.25-acre lot in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

15506 Niagara River Parkway, known as Merriwood, is a significant cultural heritage property and a rare surviving pre-War of 1812 structure in Niagara-on-the-Lake, dating to circa 1793–1794. The original dwelling is a representative example of early Georgian architecture, characterized by its symmetrical three-bay façade, rectangular form, high-pitched gable roof, evenly spaced dormers, clapboard siding, brick chimneys, and balanced window arrangement. The building retains important heritage attributes and demonstrates traditional late eighteenth-century construction methods associated with the earliest settlement period in Upper Canada. The property also includes a highly distinctive 1981 addition that reflects a sophisticated approach to heritage conservation and adaptive reuse. The addition incorporates salvaged architectural elements from the demolished Rice Honeywell House in Prescott, Ontario, and blends Georgian, Greek Revival, Roman Revival, and Neo-classical influences into a cohesive design. The addition demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit through its detailed woodwork, hand-carved features, classical detailing, and careful integration of historic materials, including a Palladian window, mantels, beams, and tongue-and-groove flooring. The project further reflects specialized technical skill in the prefabrication and installation of heritage components.

Merriwood has strong historical and associative value through its connections to important individuals and events in the early development of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Upper Canada. The house is believed to have been constructed by Walter Butler Sheehan, a member of a prominent Loyalist family associated with Butler’s Rangers. In 1799, the property was acquired by Lieutenant General Comte Joseph-Geneviève de Puisaye, a French royalist military leader and émigré whose occupation of the property established its long-standing association as the “Count de Puisaye House.” During the War of 1812, the dwelling served as a British military hospital and sustained documented wartime damage, further linking the property to a defining period in Niagara’s history. The property is also associated with late twentieth-century heritage conservation practices through the work of architect Jack McCollum and artisan Ed Thalmann.

The property has contextual value as part of the historic cultural landscape of the Niagara River Parkway corridor. Situated on a large, landscaped lot facing the Niagara River, Merriwood contributes to the established scenic and rural character of the Parkway, which historically developed as a significant transportation and settlement route. Its scale, orientation, mature tree coverage, and estate-like setting reinforce the historic pattern of dispersed farmhouses and estate residences along the Parkway and contribute to the historical continuity and cultural heritage character of the area.

Description of Key Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes of the c.1793-94 section of the structure include:

- The original one-and-a-half-storey Georgian style residence.
- The rectangular plan form of the historic core.
- The symmetrical three-bay façade.
- The building’s orientation facing east toward the Niagara River/Niagara River Parkway.
- The horizontal clapboard siding.
- The high-pitched gable roof.
- The overhanging eaves and plain soffit detailing.
- The three dormers symmetrically arranged along the roofline (noting earlier historic dormer form).
- The brick chimneys located at the north and south ends of the original structure (including the earlier north chimney).
- The rectangular window openings with wood surrounds.
- The simple paneled wood entrance door with plain wood trim.

Key exterior and interior attributes of 1981 addition to the structure include:

- Two-storey massing and form designed in a Neo-classical style
- Use of locally sourced Niagara clay brick Integration of salvaged early 19th-

century architectural elements, including:

- Palladian window
- Baseboards, chair rails, paneled window surrounds, and deep window seats
- Mantels and interior woodwork
- Hand-hewn beams
- Tongue-and-groove pine flooring

Interior features reflecting classical influences, including:

- Fanlight and sidelights at the entrance
- Greek Revival cornice detailing
- Reeded Roman-style columns
- Hand-carved pilasters with vine motifs
- Evidence of high-quality craftsmanship and prefabricated architectural detailing

Overall attributes of 15506 Niagara River Parkway:

- The large estate-sized lot consistent with historic rural settlement patterns along the Niagara River Parkway.
- The building’s setback from Niagara River Parkway, reinforcing the established streetscape rhythm.

Objections

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice of Intent to Designate. Objections should be directed to Grant Bivol, Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S 1T0. The last date to file a notice of objection is **August 15, 2026**.

Queries

Any further queries should be directed to Sumra Zia, Heritage Planner at (905) 468-3266 ext. 327 or through email at sumra.zia@notl.com.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake this 16th day of July 2026

GRANT BIVOL, CLERK

Have some fun

- Across
8. Precision (8)

9. Freezing compartment (6)

10. Baste (3)

11. Drown Aunt Enid in a fluster (8)

12. Former U N leader --- Annan (4)

16. Tuscany province (5)

19. Out of shot (3,6)

21. Throughout the world (15)

22. Perceptive (5-4)

24. Pigment made from cuttlefish ink (5)

27. Gets the point (4)

31. Drive out (8)

33. US Confederate general (3)

34. Fine plaster (6)

35. Postponing (8)
- Down
1. Scrutinize (4)

2. Hit the sack (4,2)

3. 200 milligrams to a jeweller (5)

4. What I normally see in a mirror (6)

5. Fruit-bearing Chinese vine (4)

6. Hit this to get going (4)

7. Dance (4)

11. Inborn patterns of behaviour (9)

13. Venn diagram common area (7)

14. No matter what (2,3,4)

15. Twits (6)

17. Far-out (7)

18. First light (6)

19. One end of a fallopian tube (5)

20. Cooked in oil (5)

23. Beneficiary of primogeniture (6)

25. Unfold (6)

26. Posed (5)

28. Corrodes (4)

29. Fortified white Spanish wine of old (4)

30. Drama framework (4)

32. Characteristic carrier (4)

Crossword Puzzle

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Last issue's answers

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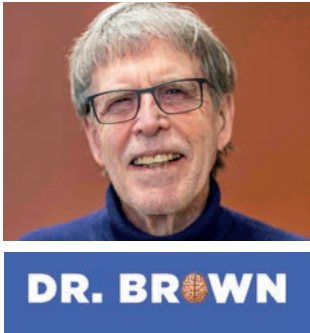
EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Ryerson Park,
circa 1888

The Chautauqua neighbourhood in Niagara-on-the-Lake owes its name to the Niagara Assembly's Canadian Chautauqua, established here in 1887. Inspired by the successful Chautauqua movement that began in New York State, the assembly transformed this area of town into a summer destination that brought together education, religion, music and recreation. Visitors may have come for the lectures, but they didn't spend all day taking notes. A section of the property overlooking Lake Ontario was set aside as Ryerson Park, providing a place to relax and enjoy the outdoors, as these people are seen doing in this photograph. Visitors could also take advantage of a variety of recreational activities, including lawn bowling, tennis, croquet, baseball and golf. Boats could be rented for rowing or fishing, along with bathing costumes, making it easy to spend a day on the water.

Soccer or tennis, Father Time catches up with all athletes



Dr. William Brown
Columnist

In my school days, I played pickup baseball and football, not so much hockey and rarely soccer. The sports I've really enjoyed as an adult were skiing, windsurfing, running and, in recent years, biking — all individual sports, my favorite being skiing because of the beauty of snow-covered mountains and ski runs in Europe, the U.S. and Canada and carving turns.

In 1970, my wife and I were in Oxford when Brazil won the World Cup and the great Brazilian player Pelé caught my imagination with his brilliant play-making and goal scoring. Many years later, one of my patients at McMaster was a former teammate of Pelé when they played for a professional team in New York in an ill-fated attempt to sell

soccer to America.

After I sorted out his problem, he gave me a whiteboard lesson on how to watch soccer games, what to look for and how to analyze players and the game. That gratis lecture was a pure gift for someone who knew so little about the game. That was then, and now, most of the world is mesmerized by the World Cup and its star players.

Readers may have noticed that over the last few years I've become interested in the aging process and especially how that affects performance in sports.

This past week, Novak Djokovic, now 39, lost in the Wimbledon Championships semifinals in straight sets to Jannik Sinner. Such was Sinner's mastery — the outcome was never in doubt.

Djokovic may be the best male tennis player in history, continues to train intensively and remains a top 10 or better player but, in the end, there is an end to being the very best.

He's been unable to win major slam events for several years in the face of the likes of Sinner, Carlos Alcaraz and a bevy of other much younger highly skilled players. The same might



Portuguese soccer legend Cristiano Ronaldo won't be back in four years for the next World Cup. In 2030, he'll be 45 years old. Too old for pro soccer. WIKIMEDIA

be said for other high-skill sports that demand stamina, mental toughness, speed, power and agility from gymnastics to basketball to hockey and major league football.

True, some individuals manage to hang on, though few as successfully as Tom Brady, who performed well as quarterback in the 2021 Super Bowl at the age of 43 years and 188 days (to be precise). Brady's team, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, won that year.

What about soccer?

For this article, I checked the age distribution of players participating in this year's World Cup. The youngest was 17, Mexican midfielder Gilberto Mora,

and the oldest 43, Scottish goalkeeper Craig Gordon. In between, most players were clustered in the mid-to-late 20s, with the number in their late 30s dropping off steeply. Only eight were 40 or over. The distribution speaks volumes.

Most soccer players, like tennis players, begin learning as children and play a lot in their teen years. Two processes are going on: first, development and maturation of the neuromuscular system and brain; and second, learning skills specific to the sport.

They obviously overlap and shape one another but are distinct. For example, the neocortex reaches peak thickness in the first decade

and begins to shrink in the late 20s and early 30s — not much mind you, but noticeable in MRI studies of over 100,000 subjects.

Complementary studies of function in the brain reveal a similar age-related trend. These studies suggest that the nervous system may be at its best with respect to processing speeds and connections in the first two to three decades. Noticeable overall shrinkage of the brain begins in the 40s and is very noticeable by the 60s.

Performance in any sport depends on physical and neural fitness, acquired skills and stamina. Stamina is a key at least in tennis when players are tested every two to three days and is one area where, for example, Novak has lost his edge in recent years.

There's also the factor of the cumulative effects of injuries affecting muscles and joints. The last was a big factor in why Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal retired when they did and certainly plays a part in rough contact sports like North American football.

To return to the World Cup, what about the performance of 41-year old

Cristiano Ronaldo and 38-year old Lionel Messi, both well-established superstars?

Ronaldo has been shadow of his former self while Messi managed to score eight goals in six matches. That doesn't tell the whole story, though, because Messi also missed two penalty kicks. Ronaldo played in his last match in this year's tournament on July 6. His team, Portugal, lost to Spain 1-0.

But as Novak's recent history suggests, even a year or two can make a big difference in performance, however hard he trains. Suffice it to say, we won't be seeing any 50-year-olds playing at Messi's level and him and Ronaldo has confirmed he won't be on the field for the next World Cup in 2030.

And you sure won't be seeing me on this side of life performing even remotely like any of the names I've used in this article.

Takeaway point: stay as fit as you can, as long as you can.

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.

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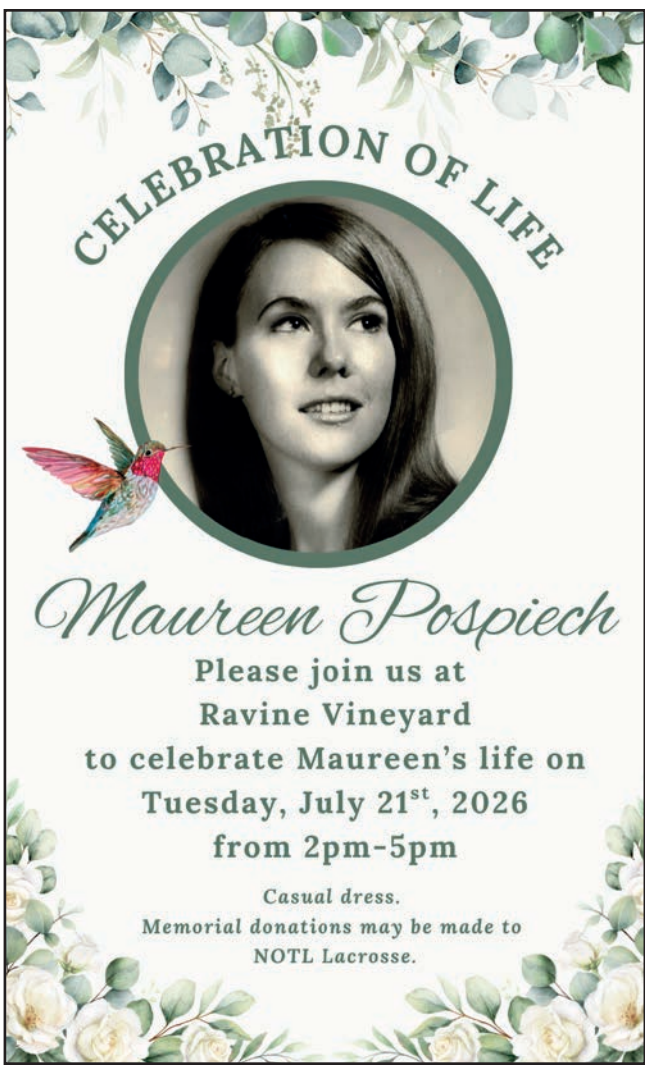
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CELEBRATION OF LIFE



Maureen Pospiech

Please join us at
Ravine Vineyard
to celebrate Maureen's life on
Tuesday, July 21st, 2026
from 2pm-5pm

Casual dress.
Memorial donations may be made to
NOTL Lacrosse.

For obituary and memorial inquiries,
please contact megan@niagaranow.com.

Obituary

Donald Chew



CHEW, Donald —
It is with deep sorrow and love that we announce the passing of Donald Chew, who left us peacefully on July 1, 2026 at the age of 84.

Born and raised in the Niagara region, Don's ties to the community ran deep. He spent 47 years practicing medicine in the area he always called home. Truly a man for whom "still waters run deep," he was quiet and humble, never seeking the spotlight. Instead, he was endlessly curious about the world around him and constantly looked for ways to support and help his family, his friends, his patients, and the teams he worked with. He was deeply fond of his team at Niagara Neurological Services and grateful for the shared dedication of the nurses and medical professionals on the Niagara Regional Stroke Team. For him, medicine was simply a meaningful way to be of service to his community.

While he was dedicated to his work, his family was his central focus. He was the beloved husband of Rosemary and a supportive, loving father to his seven children: Jason (Tamiko), Greg (Giselle), Bryan (Natalia), Chris, Allyson (Martin), Robyn (Mark), and Sarah (Andre). He was the proud grandfather of Ethan, Myles, Meryn, Jack, Sydney, Ella, Taylor, Cullen, Abby, Griffin, Bennett, and Eleanora, a dear brother to Diane (John) and uncle to Matt, Ian, and Cameron. His loved ones will always remember his steady presence, his quiet strength, his sound investment advice, and his wonderfully dry sense of humor.

His favorite place to be was his property in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He found great peace and satisfaction in the quiet, honest work of tending to his gardens, enjoying the company of his dog, Barney, and the occasional, pleasant surprise of finding a long, lost garden tool.

He is predeceased by his father, Jack, and his mother, Audrey.

The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Qawi for all her dedicated efforts. They also wish to thank the doctors and nurses at Marotta Family Hospital for their compassionate care.

He leaves behind a legacy of quiet kindness and a family who loved him dearly.

Service and donation information
Celebration of life: Thursday, July 23 from 2 to 5 p.m. at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery at 1366 York Rd., in St. Davids
Donations: In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to the Niagara Health Foundation/Walker Family Cancer Centre or Humane Society of Greater Niagara

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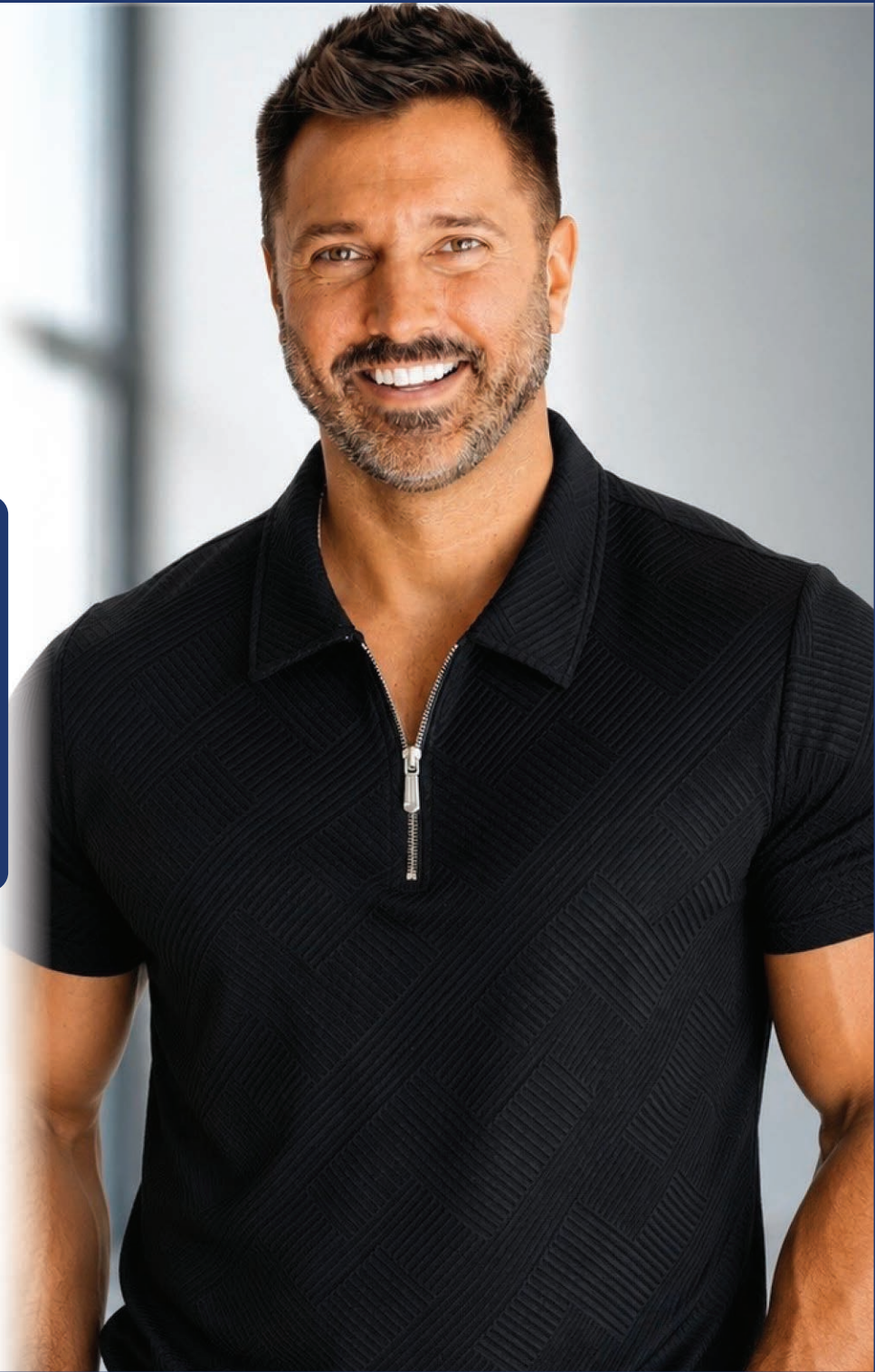
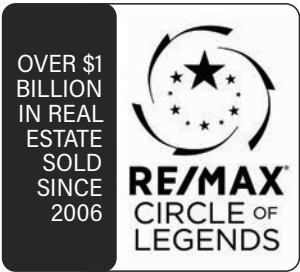
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