



Greens nominate candidate, Liberals still searching

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Doug Ford called for an early provincial election set on Feb. 27 — only three weeks away — and three parties in NOTL's riding have confirmed a candidate.

The Green Party website has listed Celia Taylor as candidate for the Niagara Falls riding.

According to her "about" page, Taylor, a legal expert, is dedicated to safeguarding Niagara's waterways, agricultural lands and green spaces.

The Lake Report reached out to Karen Fraser, chair of the Niagara Falls riding, for comment, before confirming Taylor was selected.

As of Wednesday morning, Fraser was left wondering whether a candidate had been selected.

"I'm chair of the riding, but I've called head office twice to see if they've got a candidate for us and they haven't gotten back to me,"

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Tension at mayor's open house

Resident says she feels unheard and town is too pro-development



NOTL resident Ingrid Regier voices her frustrations and concerns during the lord mayor's open house in Virgil on Monday. PAIGE SEBURN

Paige Seburn | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

Ingrid Regier is unhappy with a long list of things. The long-time Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, who has lived here since 1955, voiced some of her concerns on Sunday's community open house with Lord Mayor

Gary Zalepa at the Virgil arena. The village open house series aims to let residents talk to council members and town staff, ask questions and give feedback. It starts with a talk from Zalepa, then a question and answer

period. People can send questions in advance or ask during the meeting. Regier was one of those residents who took the chance to make some comments. First up, she said she feels she's

not being heard. She said she's constantly redirected to staff who lack the proper resources to help and feels like the only one speak-

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NOTL business people wary of U.S. tariff threat

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A trade war is no longer on the horizon — or postponed, at least.

On Feb. 1, U.S. President

Donald Trump threatened to impose 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian goods effective Feb. 4. But he and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reached an agreement on Monday which caused Trump to delay the plan 30 days.

Trump said the next month will determine if a trade deal with Canada will happen. Tony Hendriks, owner of Hendriks Independent in Niagara-on-the-Lake, said even with the delay, more

customers are still choosing Canadian-made products. Staff have been hand-labelling all Canadian goods with "Made in Canada" stickers to help shoppers make better informed purchases, he said.

Hendriks said no price changes have happened yet but he expects long-term shifts in buying habits. He sees this as an opportunity to reduce

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Grocers to help identify Canadian products

Continued from Front Page

reliance on U.S. imports and for Canadians to show their patriotism through their purchasing choices. He plans to continue focusing on this approach once the tariff situation is resolved.

"We're proud Canadians and we want to support our fellow Canadians," he said.

Phil Leboudec of Phil's Independent in Virgil didn't want to discuss the steps he's taking with a reporter, but instead took his opinions to social media.

"As we waded through the tariff waters, may I suggest that rather than arguing about how much is made where and or grown where in products. Perhaps we can make our decisions based on two truths. Support Canadian farmers regardless of who packages it and Canadian jobs. If we focus on those two ideals we can keep our economy as strong as possible until this passes," Leboudec wrote.

He also commented on the post and said Phil's is working to help customers easily identify Canadian



Hendricks Independent Grocer's has started implementing labels to identify Canadian-made products to help shoppers make informed choices amid tariff threats. PAIGE SEBURN

brands, like the stickers at Hendricks.

It's not just physical items like groceries that could be affected — housing and other markets are feeling it, too.

Andrew Perrie, NOTL resident and head coach and sales representative for Revel Realty said the housing market is essentially on pause — just like the tariffs.

"There's a perception impact," he said.

Buyers don't want to make a move and sellers are holding off, hoping for better conditions in a few months. Some have even backed out of deals, he said.

One buyer backed out after losing their job and another who works in the auto industry backed out over fears of being let go, said Perrie.

As the CEO and founder of the Niagara 5000 supercar show, Alana Hurov

is concerned about the tariffs, too.

"To be successful, we need tourism," she said, and added that tariffs could impact attendance at the show

But she's staying optimistic and is focused on Canadian products, too.

Things may be uncertain right now but positive outcomes are quite possible for Canadian businesses and internal trading, she said.

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Maele and Harrison Pohorly, 10, and Michael Duc, 12, toboggan at a park along the Niagara Parkway. Fathers Steve Pohorly and Jeff Duc hang out in the back and give a little nudge to get them going. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Candidates **turning down** CAO job in NOTL

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

More than a year after Niagara-on-the-Lake's former chief administrator stepped down from the role, the search for a permanent CAO to take the helm continues this year.

Marnie Cluckie announced her resignation in December 2023 and after several meetings of the CAO recruitment committee, the town has yet to appoint a replacement — in the meantime, interim CAO Bruce Zvaniga remains in the position.

During last week's council meeting, councillors

said they would like an update on where the committee is in the process.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said there is no new information he would discuss in an open session of council.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said she would benefit from an update.

"I would like to know where we're at, if we have a candidate or we don't, what kind of challenges we have with finding a candidate," Cheropita said during the meeting.

Zalepa said councilors have been informed every time there has been notable progress.

"There's been no point during this process where

you have not been updated," he said.

Coun. Gary Burroughs said people who are being offered the position are obviously turning it down.

"The rest of council needs to understand," he said.

In an interview with The Lake Report, Burroughs said he is not sure why candidates are turning down the job.

"What I'm trying to understand is, is it an image of Niagara-on-the-Lake? Is it money? What is it that so many people don't want to come here?" he said.

Burroughs confirmed that someone was offered

the position late last year and turned it down.

"That's why I'm bringing it up. For some reason, qualified people don't seem to want to take the offer," he said.

Originally, the lord mayor had hoped to find a replacement chief administrator before Jan. 1 — after the town failed to secure its top candidate out of approximately 70 people who applied.

Recruitment efforts began in earnest at the start of 2024. The town hired Phelps Group, a Toronto executive search firm, to help identify qualified candidates.

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New owners **can apply** for short-term rental renewal

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The issuance of any new short-term rental licenses in Niagara-on-the-Lake was paused as of Dec. 10, but town councillors have made a limited exception, allowing new homeowners to reapply for licenses for properties that are already being used as short-term rentals.

The bylaw as it stands allows for a new home owner to apply for licensing within

one year of taking possession of the home, Coun. Gary Burroughs said.

"This is for an existing home that has an existing short-term rental license — should it sell tomorrow, the new homeowner can reapply for the license because it's not transferable," Coun. Maria Mavridis said during the meeting.

Coun. Andrew Niven asked staff to confirm that the exception is only temporary, until a new bylaw is enacted.

CAO Bruce Zvaniga and

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa confirmed the exception is only an addition to the temporary freeze.

"This just allows (new owner applications) to continue during this period of time, no additional licenses," Zalepa said.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said in three months there will be a new short-term rental policy.

New short-term rental license applications were paused in December 2024 to allow for the short-term rental committee to come

up with a new draft bylaw.

The freeze is to help council "get a better understanding of what we have and where we're going," said Coun. Maria Mavridis, during the December meeting.

Burroughs told The Lake Report he thinks the current short-term rental bylaw is outdated.

Niagara-on-the-Lake currently has around 400 licensed short-term rentals with 1,000 rooms, making up five per cent of the town's housing supply.

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Keystone Awards recognize best in business

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

George Lepp, owner of Lepp Farms, embodies the spirit of the Keystone Awards, said founder Dean French — and his achievements could soon earn him a chance to chat with none other than Arlene Dickinson, entrepreneur and “Dragons’ Den” star next week.

The Keystone Awards, taking place on Feb. 12 at Peller Estates Winery & Restaurant, celebrate job creators and entrepreneurs. It highlights small to medium-sized businesses, which are the backbone of Canada’s economy, said French.

Tickets, which include drinks, a meal at Peller and a keynote talk from Dickinson for \$150, are sold out. However, a waiting list is available.

French wants to put more focus on the role small medium enterprises play in growing the economy and thinks entrepreneurial spirit is something each riding should pay attention to.

“Entrepreneurship is what



Arlene Dickinson, entrepreneur and “Dragons’ Den” star, will be attending the Keystone Awards at Peller Estate Winery in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Feb. 12. DEAN FRENCH

makes Canada, Canada,” said event producer Alana Hurov.

SMEs are businesses with a small to medium-sized workforce, which play a role in driving a riding’s economy, French said. Keystone awards are exclusive to businesses with at least 50 employees.

The Top 10 employers in four ridings: Niagara Falls, Niagara Centre, Niagara West and St. Catharines — will be recognized at the awards ceremony.

Canada needs SMEs or else we wouldn’t have a tax base strong enough to afford public education, healthcare and programs like the Canada pension plan, he said.

“Without them (SMEs), the math doesn’t work for Canada.”

As one of the main suppliers for grapes at Peller, Lepp’s business employs up to 120 people during its peak season, said French.


“He seems to me like the typical keystone business owner winner that we need.

He gives a lot of credit to his team and to his employees,” he said.

Hurov said Lepp is deeply involved in the community both through his philanthropic efforts and his leadership in the local economy through his farm.

“That’s the essence of the Keystone Awards — to support the people that create jobs. George is one of those people who does it well and has been doing it for a really long time,” she said.

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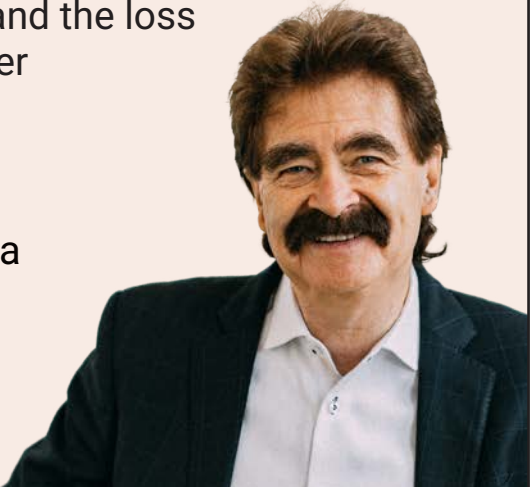
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ELECTION DAY IS FEB 27!

Town, Transport Canada continue building height talks

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The outcome of meetings between town staff and Transport Canada officials was made public after a request from Coun. Gary Burroughs.

With council's approval of a new Glendale Secondary Plan, Burroughs has been vocal regarding his concerns about building heights.

Part of Glendale is under federal airport zoning regulations for the nearby Niagara District Airport, which means restrictions on how tall buildings can be.

Of particular concern is a proposal for four highrise buildings at White Oaks that would be 17, 18, 21 and 25 storeys, respectively.

In a past interview, Burroughs told The Lake Report that Transport Canada was clear about not granting any height exemptions to buildings that exceed the limit.



Transport Canada has not given approval for the heights required to build highrise towers in Glendale. The agency is in continued talks with the town over restrictions. FILE

During Tuesday's committee of the whole planning meeting, council members accepted an information package from the staff meeting with Transport Canada and NAV Canada in October, as well as a follow up meeting with Transport Canada on Dec. 10.

Burroughs, who was present at the October meeting, said the information will help both residents and

planners understand the status of the building heights.

The information package outlined the exemption process that was discussed during the December meeting.

Individual exemption applications would only be communicated with the applicant, the package said.

Transport Canada has offered to arrange a meeting with experts from the province to discuss the zoning

regulation review process further.

The package concluded that staff are working to continue the discussion with both NAV Canada and Transport Canada and will update council "as appropriate."

The Lake Report reached out to Transport Canada for comment and received confirmation that staff are still working closely with the town.

"Transport Canada has been in contact with the building proponent and continues to work closely with them," senior communications advisor Hicham Ayoun said in an email.

Dan Pilon, CEO of the Niagara District Airport told The Lake Report the process is an information-gathering exercise for staff.

"We're in a space where we're waiting for the outcome of our masterplan before we make future comments," Pilon said.

The Niagara District Airport is in the process of updating its masterplan for the first time in more than 20 years, he said.

"The process is really an opportunity for (staff) to understand what's involved from a Transport Canada perspective with airport zoning regulations," Pilon said.

"I think our goal is really to understand the process and be able to report that to council and anyone who has

any interest," CAO Bruce Zvaniga said during the meeting.

Burroughs questioned whether St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, the other municipalities connected to the Niagara District Airport, would participate in funding for the airport zoning regulation study.

Zvaniga clarified that studies would be conducted through the airport itself.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said both municipalities are aware the meetings took place.

Burroughs questioned whether developers are aware of how long the studies would take, noting he understood it would take six to seven years.

"Yes the developers are aware of the process," Kirsten McCauley, the town's director of community and development services said.

McCauley noted that she believes studies will take between three and five years.

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A familiar face is running for MPP

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

When Premier Doug Ford announced an early provincial election for Feb.27, the New Democrats were ready to go with incumbent Wayne Gates.

When it comes to elections, Gates is no stranger, he told The Lake Report.

"I've been doing this now for 11 years," he said.

Gates has represented the riding since winning a bye-election in February 2014.

He was most recently nominated in October by Burt Sisler, a 109-year-old resident of Fort Erie and veteran of the Second World War.

During his time as MPP there have been a number of "big wins" for the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Gates said.

Along with town council, Gates was able to get a nurse practitioner for the town, he was also able to get a 6.1 per cent tax on Ontario



New Democrat Wayne Gates says he's proud of what he's accomplished since 2014. He wants to continue representing the people of the Niagara Falls riding.

wines eliminated after five years, he said.

"The big one for our area is that I stood up loud and clear when fighting Premier Ford to protect the Green Belt and protect our farmers," Gates said.

The NDP has helped raise substantial amounts for

the Shaw Festival and he continues to work alongside festival officials and town staff to ensure patrons on Queen Street can enjoy the theatre for many years to come, he said.

Going forward, Gates said it's important to continue discussion on responsible

development.
"The one thing Niagara-on-the-Lake knows of me is I know their issues. I support them on all the things that are important to them, including keeping an open communication with residents," Gates said.

Gates has been outspoken about his disappointment in Ford for calling an early election, saying he would prefer the money be put toward health care.

"It's obviously costly, it's early and it's for his own benefit," Gates told The Lake Report.

Gates' focus is not only impending tariffs but other important issues facing Ontarians, he said.

"Our health care is in crisis, our housing sector is in crisis, our affordability is in crisis," Gates said.

Progressive Conservative candidate Ruth-Ann Nieuwesteeg has not responded to repeated attempts to reach her since the election was called.

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Celia Taylor is candidate for Green Party

Continued from Front Page

Fraser said in an interview. “They don’t broadcast it until they are accepted,” she said.

Fraser, a member of the Green Party since 2005, has run as a candidate multiple times and was prepared to do it again, she said.

“I know what it’s like at head office during election time. Everyone is on the run. They just haven’t gotten back to me,” Fraser said.

Fraser herself does not agree with the call of an early election, she said.

“I think it’s very self-serving for Ford,” she said.

With such short notice, Fraser said the Niagara Falls riding feels unprepared.

“I myself am a senior, I’m handicapped, so having to go out and get signatures in this weather is too much for me,” she said.

Fraser said the lack of funding and unlikelihood of an election win may have affected the search for a



Celia Taylor has been selected as the Green Party’s candidate for the upcoming provincial election.

candidate to some degree, but believes those who choose to run do it because they are passionate about their beliefs.

“We all know most Greens run by their heart. Anybody who wants to do anything for the Green Party it’s because they totally believe in the environment and the six categories of our platform,” she said.

“I’ve run maybe five or

six times and I know I don’t have the money, I know it takes money to run, but I’m there because I care,” Fraser said.

The difference between the Greens and the Liberals is that level of funding, Fraser said.

“Maybe the Liberals aren’t ready either, but they’re more corporate,” she said.

Fraser could not be

reached before deadline to comment on Taylor’s candidacy.

As for the Liberals, last week Kenneth Gansel, a NOTL resident and president of the Niagara Falls Liberal Association, told The Lake Report the party was struggling to find someone to run.

The Ontario Liberal Party in Toronto will work to find a candidate for Niagara Falls, Gansel said last week.

As of Wednesday morning, some progress had been made.

“There’s someone in mind, but until they’re confirmed by Toronto I’m not making any comment whatsoever,” Gansel said.

By Friday, the Liberals should have a candidate announcement ready, he said.

The New Democrats selected incumbent Wayne Gates and the Progressive Conservatives chose Ruth-Ann Nieuwesteeg, a Niagara Falls councillor and funeral home operator.

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Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa told a group of residents at his Virgil open house that one of the big priorities for this term of council is updating the town’s official plan. He said the town is also focusing in on climate strategies. **PAIGE SEBURN**

Official plan, development, climate were hot topics at lord mayor’s Virgil open house

Continued from Front Page

ing up since residents are intimidated by the town at meetings.

“When I go to council, everybody’s scared and they don’t want to say anything,” Regier said to Zalepa during the meeting.

“I’ve been here most of my life and I’m just really annoyed,” she told The Lake Report.

Zalepa said the town is listening — hence the open house. He outlined plans for 2024-2025, including updating the town’s official plan, which guides a community’s growth.

Cindy Grant asked for clarity on whether it builds on the last term’s version or starts fresh. Zalepa confirmed they’re building on what’s in place, but Regier remained skeptical.

“You need to keep building on that. You can’t just start from scratch,” Regier said to Zalepa.

“Well, that’s what I said,” Zalepa fired back.

Traffic was another concern. Regier asked about a past plan to reroute traffic away from Pleasant Manor in Virgil and insisted on answers.

Zalepa said that plan was under review and clarified it was part of a transportation plan, not the official plan, but Regier didn’t care — she

just wanted to know what happened to it.

“Ingrid, I’m talking to you,” said Zalepa after his sentence was cut off by Regier, who repeated “I want to know what happened to it.”

“(Councillors) weren’t happy with the document,” he said, reaffirming that the plan is still in progress and is being updated due to council’s feedback on the 2021-2022 version.

Turning to questions Regier submitted in writing, he read out loud: “Why do we have rules?”

“I think you’re asking that because you feel that perhaps they don’t get followed,” said Zalepa.

“They don’t get followed,” responded Regier. “Because every little corner has to be developed,” she told The Lake Report.

Zalepa said while rules aren’t changing, planners review requests and recommend approval or denial.

“Therefore, you’ve got an application that’s somewhat not in the rules, but the professional planners think it might be in alignment (with provincial guidelines),” Zalepa said.

Regier questioned if staff visit properties when reviewing applications, to which Zalepa and director of community and development services Kirsten McCauley confirmed they do.

Regier told The Lake Report that the concerns are regarding the new five-story townhouse near Pleasant Manor. She worries it would worsen parking and traffic. McCauley would not speak about the specific property.

Zalepa told The Lake Report the meeting was for updating the town’s plans, not for talking about individual concerns.

For more specific issues, he suggests reaching out to council members or staff, or attending other public meetings (not open houses).

Peter Zimmerman emailed in about a “rumour” circulating that the town will be responsible if the underground garage at Parliament Oak leaks.

“In Peter’s opinion, and I would say I agree, a private builder should be taking on their own risks and benefits of ownership,” said Zalepa.

“If something goes wrong, is it the town that gets sued, or is it the developer?” asked Coun. Burroughs.

“I would think it would be the engineers,” said Zalepa.

Coun. Wiens added that developers leave a money deposit (letter of credit) in case they bail.

“So, if they walk away — we have an amount of money, based on the size,” he said.

Lidija Biro called out the town for not acting on its 2022 climate plan.

Council approved a schedule to implement it back in 2022 but, in her words, “time is running out.”

Zalepa said 27 items from that plan are in the current strategic plan and they just hired a climate co-ordinator to focus on this significant topic.

Wiens pointed out some efforts from the town to be more eco-friendly, like using sand-salt on roads and working with Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and Ducks Unlimited. Zalepa added that council also set aside \$50K for planting trees.

Burroughs asked for a progress report on climate. Zalepa said the co-ordinator just started and that a report would come later.

Biro argued climate action needs to be part of everything the town does, to which Zalepa agreed. He said the town is requesting help from the province to upgrade various infrastructure to lessen impact on the climate.

The next open houses in the series are in Old Town on Feb. 18, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Simpson Room at the community centre and in Queenston on Feb. 20 at Fire Station 4.

If you want to send your questions in advance, you can send them to communications@notl.com.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



NOTICE OF DECISION

What: Notice of Decision for an **Official Plan Amendment** (under Section 22 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13, as amended).

When: **Approved at the January 28, 2025** Council Meeting

Regarding: Official Plan Amendment 99 – By-law 2025-005 (File OPA-06-2022) Glendale Secondary Plan

What is this?

Town Council for Niagara-on-the-Lake has considered written and oral submissions and approved Official Plan Amendment 99 (Glendale Secondary Plan).

The Glendale Secondary Plan applies to the area surrounded by Queenston Road, Concession 7 Road, the Niagara Escarpment and Homer Road (as shown on the map).

The Secondary Plan sets out a policy framework for future development within this area. It is intended to build on the vision of becoming a complete community with a mix of built form and land uses, which protects natural heritage, and supports economic prosperity.

The Secondary Plan work is complemented by urban design guidelines and supported by the following technical studies: natural heritage / subwatershed study, transportation study, infrastructure study, commercial/ employment study; and fiscal impact study.

More information on the Secondary Plan and studies can be found here: <https://www.notl.com/business-development/projects-initiatives/glendale-secondary-plan>.

The last date for filing a notice of appeal is February 26, 2025.

A notice of appeal:

- i. must be filed with the Town Clerk;
- ii. must set out the reasons for the appeal; and
- iii. must be accompanied by the fee required by the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Please refer to the Ontario Land Tribunal website at olt.gov.on.ca for more information.

An appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in respect to all or part of this amendment may be made by filing a notice of appeal with the Town Clerk by one (1) of the following means:

- Through the Ontario Land Tribunal e-file service (first-time users will need to register for a My Ontario Account) at <https://olt.gov.on.ca/e-file-service> by selecting the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake as the Approval Authority; or,
- Through providing physical copies of the appeal materials to Town Hall at the address below; or,
- Through providing electronic copies of the appeal materials to the Town Clerk at clerks@notl.com.

The appeal fee can be paid online through e-file or by certified cheque/money order and submitted to the Town (certified cheque/money order to be addressed to the Minister of Finance, Province of Ontario). Further information and the required forms are available on the OLT website at www.olt.gov.on.ca.

Further notice and appeal eligibility:

Only individuals, corporations or public bodies may appeal decisions in respect of a proposed Official Plan Amendment to the Ontario Land Tribunal. A notice of appeal may not be filed by an unincorporated association or group. However, a notice of appeal may be filed in the name of an individual who is a member of the association or group on its behalf.

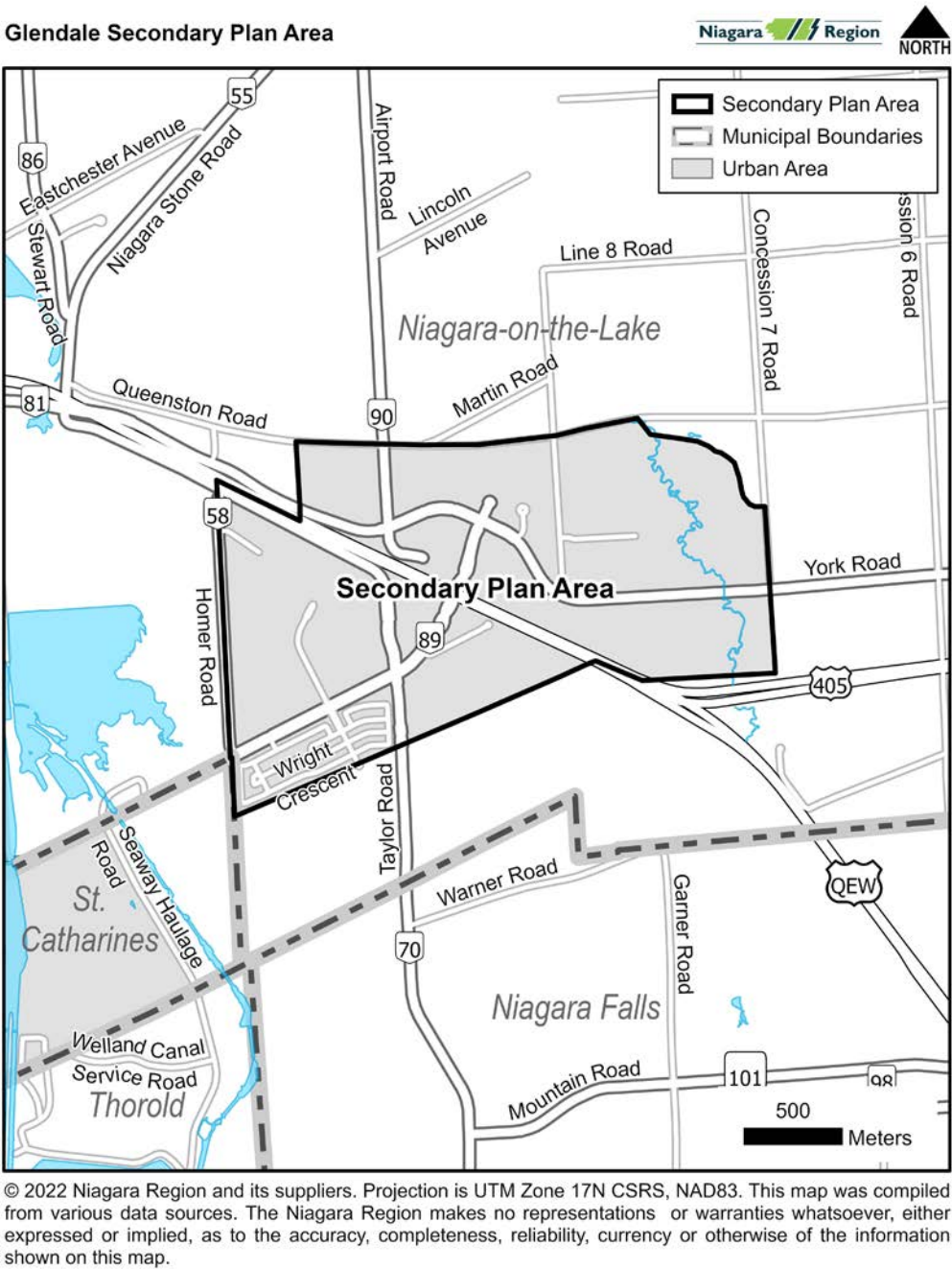
No person or public body shall be added as a party to the hearing of the appeal of the decision of Town Council, unless the person or public body, before Town Council made its decision, made oral submissions at a public meeting or written submissions to Town Council, or, in the opinion of the Ontario Land Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party.

Third party appeals are restricted for these applications as per Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024. Planning Act appeals may be filed by the applicant, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a “specified person” (as defined by the Planning Act 1(1)), and any “public body” (as defined by the Planning Act 1(1)).

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, **February 6, 2025**

Grant Bivol, Town Clerk (clerks@notl.com or 905-468-3266)

Town Hall, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0



Doughvine bakery ordered to remove derogatory sign

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Doughvine Bakehouse sparked controversy in January with its outdoor signs.

It all started with a bold red spray-painted sign that read “Closed” — and led to a sign that neighbours say was vitriolic toward women.

Initially, the problem was with the unattractive spray paint, which goes against town bylaws.

“You will see this is not a ‘grey area’ about artistic integrity,” said the neighbour, who asked to remain anonymous out of fear of retribution.

The town issued a 72-hour notice to the owner on Jan. 16 to remove it, said fire chief Jay Plato. It was issued because the shop violated the sign bylaw, said the town’s communications co-ordinator Marah Minor.

On Jan. 18, the shop owners emailed the town confirming the spray-painted sign was removed and replaced, said Plato.

The sign was then replaced with a sign calling

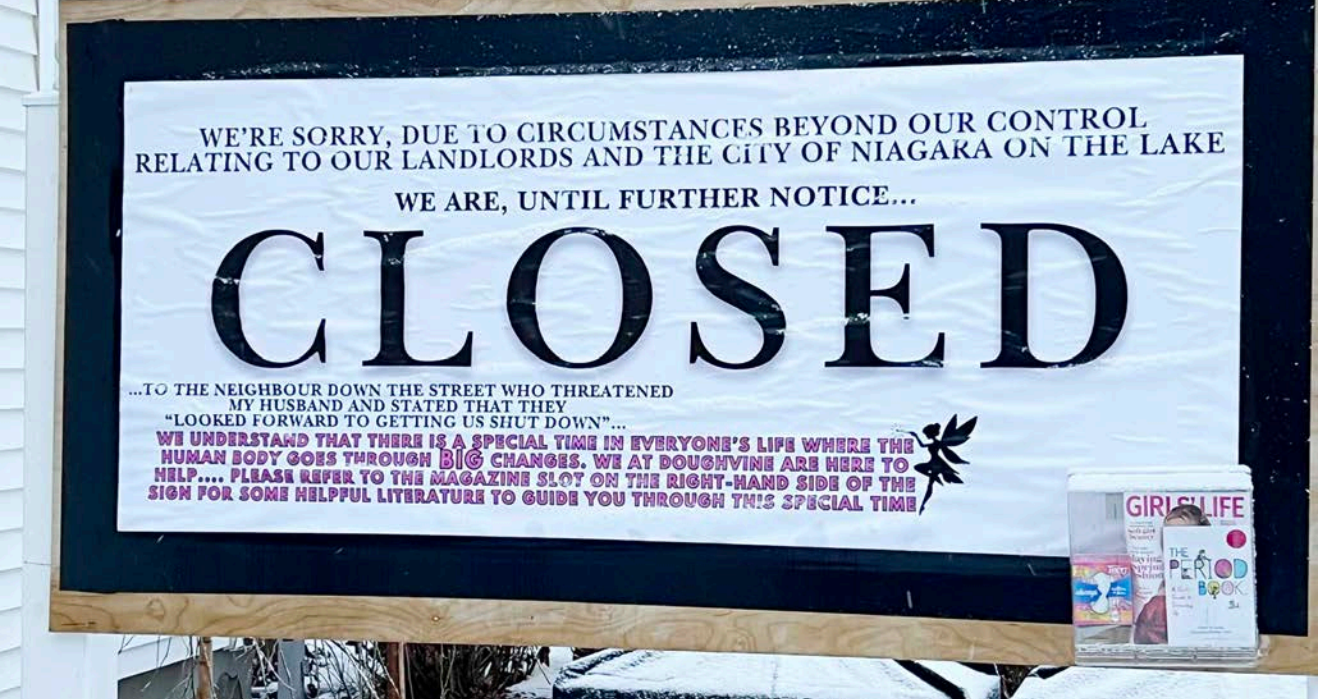
out the landlord and local residents, including shockingly offensive remarks about women, the neighbour said.

It read, in all caps, “We’re sorry, due to circumstances beyond our control relating to our landlords and the city of Niagara-on-the-Lake, we are, until further notice ... closed.”

The sign continued: “To the neighbour down the street who threatened my husband and stated that they ‘looked forward to getting us shut down’ ... we understand that there is a special time in everyone’s life where the human body goes through big changes. We at Doughvine are here to help ... Please refer to the magazine slot on the right-hand side of the sign for some helpful literature to guide you through this special time.”

At the bottom right corner of the sign there was a magazine holder with feminine hygiene products, Girl’s Life magazines and The Period Book.

The display of such confrontational and offensive language in town could hurt



This sign was posted after the town ordered Doughvine to remove a spray-painted closed sign. It appears some of the messaging was done in retaliation to neighbours who complained about the spray-painted sign. SUPPLIED

its reputation long-term, warned the neighbour.

“Can you imagine the mind set of someone that, in a ‘Me Too’ era, compares actions of someone to a girl/ young woman having her period?” said the neighbour.

“A grotesque message to have on a street front in our lovely town.”

Not only was it offensive, but the neighbours worry

it could drive visitors away from NOTL, too.

Doughvine owner Jessica Millet was not available for an interview to answer questions before press time.

The part about women’s periods was ripped off within days, but the rest stayed up. It’s unclear who took that part of the sign down.

After another 72-hour notice was issued on Jan. 20

for the second sign, Plato said it was restored to its original condition on Jan. 23 and now follows the town’s regulations, said Minor.

Coun. Gary Burroughs said the town doesn’t support the language used by the shop and that the town has “strict rules” in place to govern signage.

He said when somebody reports a problem, the town

is prepared to respond and track it right away, which is what happened here.

“We follow up very quickly,” said Burroughs.

While the sign now complies with town regulations, neighbours are walking away with a lasting worry that this could set a bad example for future community conflicts.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com

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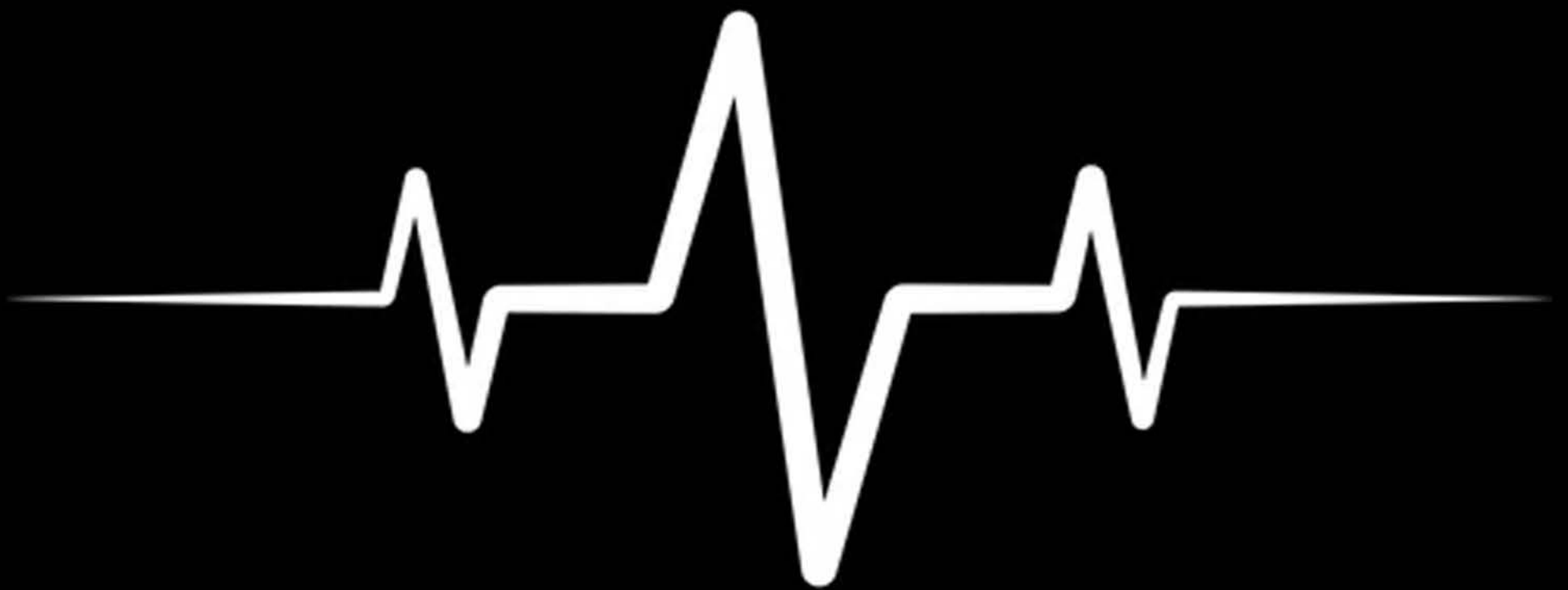
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Canada The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.



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BKind Grateful With Bradley Hamilton
#14: Post a message on a community board inviting people to give thanks to others who frequent that location. It will bring smiles.

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



Contributed by Patty Garriock
“Kindness is always fashionable.”
- Amelia E. Barr

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Enough development proposals – how about a romantic proposal?

Photographer Dave Van de Laar was at the right place at the right time when Steve Kensinger proposed to his now-fiance Anna Price on a snowy day at the Queen’s Royal Park gazebo. She said yes. The couple were visiting Niagara-on-the-Lake from Madison, Ohio.



Opinion

When **Tariff Man** arrives in NOTL



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

Ed from Rochester was walking into the Stagecoach when Cody and I walked out, still chewing a Milk-bone. (Cody, not me.)
“So, why is Trump doing this to us?” I asked after seeing the yellow licence plate.
Ed hesitated. “I’m sorry about the president,” he muttered. “But I’m still going to come and visit here. Maybe even more, now.”
No wonder. As this pathetic column suggested a few weeks ago, the uncertainty Tariff Man is inflicting upon Canada has squished the Canadian dollar and elevated the green-back. We’re pushing into the mid 60-cent range now.
Bay Street economists are forecasting the loonie could be at 56 cents U.S. before this trade war — now delayed for 30 days — evens out, especially if we’re pushed to retaliate.
So, the stores on Queen Street may be forced to offer \$1.40 to the cross-border friendlies soon. Maybe \$1.50 by the spring. Or more.




U.S. tariffs would have a major impact on the GM plant in St. Catharines, if the U.S. follows through. GM.CA

The impact on tourist traffic could be epic. It would be good news for the retail trade, except for the cost of almost everything swelling over the next few months, if the hit comes in March.
Ed — like most Americans — thinks “Canada” pays the tariffs to Washington, so his government would have more money to lower his taxes.
I disabused him. Importers pay, then add the new tax to producer and consumer prices so Americans end up forking over more. Prices go up. The Fed then freezes or increases interest rates. Lousy for Rochester.
Meanwhile, the implications in NOTL and beyond will be deep, if the duties come. Grape growers and wineries, according to a Lake Report story, will be whacked. A tariff of 25 per cent makes sales into the U.S. untenable.
There are fears for the big GM propulsion plant in

which more than a thousand people work and where tooling-up for EV engines is taking place. Everybody in that company’s extensive supply chain is impacted.
Canada cranks out \$50 billion worth of cars a year, with 93 per cent of them headed south. Parts manufacturer Linamar says layoffs would be here within a week. That company is in the process of building a new facility in Welland, just as Tariff Man threatens.
It’s cutting-edge stuff — a process called gigacasting. Immense high-pressure die-cast aluminum alloy moulding machines will make entire EV chassis segments in one step. Unless, of course, a trade war gets in the way.
What to expect if no truce arrives?
A recession. Swelling unemployment. More expensive food, especially with retaliation. The lower dollar and our own tariffs would hike both prices and


inflation. But the Bank of Canada may get the willies in the meantime and drop rates, making mortgages cheaper. Bond yields sure plopped this past Monday morning, suggesting just that.
In the coming weeks, if Trump persists, we’ll be told to gird our loins, shop Canadian, budget harder and turn off CNN. This would hurt a lot of people.
And, believe it or not, there are Canadians who support Donald Trump, thinking this is penance for a porous border allowing fentanyl to gush into America.
Ottawa caved. Now we have a Fentanyl Czar. Even though less than 1 per cent of the drug trade into the States comes from here. The same for folks sneaking across the line. It’s a trickle. Besides, it’s America’s job to keep stuff out — not ours to prevent it from entering. That’s how borders work.
Trump needed a national emergency in order to override the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade deal and bypass Congress with an executive order. So, he manufactured this one. It’s a ruse. It’s deeper than that. This is an existential threat to our country.
Become the 51st state? Fat chance, Ed.
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

Silver lining could increase interprovincial trade

Dear editor:
A tiny silver lining in the current border tariff war is the opportunity to drop provincial barriers to internal Canadian trade. I hope all

candidates in the forthcoming election will support this easy win for Canadians. NOTL has 42 wineries and several distilleries. Now is the time to promote their

products across Canada. Outstanding wines and liquors from here will easily fill the gap left on liquor store shelves by several provincial bans on U.S. im-

ported wines, bourbon, etc. If you love the latter, I'd recommend Spirit in Niagara's exceptional "Brrrbon."
Nigel Napier-Andrews
NOTL

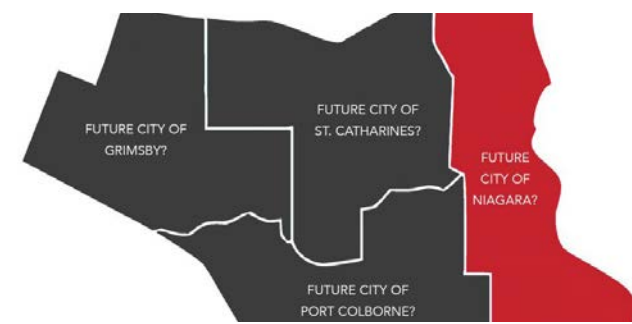
Amalgamation of Niagara's border communities would lead to increased taxes, fewer services

Wayne Gates
Special to The Lake Report

Local Conservative politicians have been pushing for the provincial government to prioritize municipal amalgamation in Niagara. It's a dangerous scheme that is likely to lead to increased taxes and fewer services. And it will strip unique and culturally significant municipalities like Niagara-on-the-Lake of their identity and local decision-making power.

By amalgamating Niagara-on-the-Lake into Niagara Falls, the town risks having no representation in local government, leaving residents vulnerable to losing out on investments and critical services. Council has conveyed these concerns to the province at a formal hearing last year, and I fully back their position.

The economics of municipal amalgamations in Ontario clearly demon-



The Ford government has floated the idea of merging Niagara municipalities into the "City of Niagara."

strates that anticipated cost savings related to amalgamation never materialize and that outlying areas (like Niagara-on-the-Lake) are always the biggest losers.

While Conservative MPPs and local candidates have framed governance reform as a way to reduce the number of local elected officials, amalgamation is not required to reduce the size of city and town councils. For example, the City of Niagara Falls reduced its council size by a third over a decade ago. There is nothing preventing existing

municipalities from doing the same.

Nevertheless, local Conservative politicians have been pushing Doug Ford and the provincial government to unilaterally amalgamate Niagara's cities and towns in a bid to consolidate power. There's reason to believe that Ford will act on those calls if re-elected, as evidenced by the fact that he has aggressively pursued amalgamation schemes in other parts of the province. In those cases, municipalities experienced significant tax increases

despite the empty promise of cost savings.

Now, more than ever, we need voices at Queen's Park who will stand with the Niagara-on-the-Lake community in opposition to top-down amalgamation schemes designed to wipe out local decision-making authority, increase property taxes and compromise services.

I'm proud to stand with the local community and my NDP colleagues locally and at Queen's Park in opposition to forced amalgamation schemes. The best solutions to governance reform are made in Niagara solutions that respect our local communities, their unique characters, and their local decision-making authority.

New Democrat Wayne Gates has served as MPP in the Niagara Falls riding since 2017. He is currently the NDP candidate seeking re-election.

Criticism of Ford was unwarranted speculation

Dear editor:
Editorials ordinarily serve the readership well by highlighting issues, personalities, experience and history concerning local, provincial and federal elections.

The editors are usually well-versed with events and

the folks running for office. They fail in this responsibility and privilege when they delve into assumptions and motives without any basis in fact.

With regards to the Jan. 30 editorial, "An unnecessary provincial election," to state when Premier Ford

suggests that Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie and the NDP's Marit Stiles would be a "disaster," that he is doing so just because they're women, does a disservice to all and, in my opinion, is solely a figment of the editors' imagination. Pretending that it is just

a just a question and using the words surely he's not suggesting, does not hide your criticism of Ontario's Premier and it should be beneath The Lake Report's standards to do so in this manner.

Bert Dandy
Niagara Falls

Residents should have more say in budget process

Dear editor:
I commend Jonathan Household for his letter on rising taxes. I do not live in Old Town NOTL, but I did once live in an area (I refuse to say where) where the taxes became burden-

some. We are glad we moved away.

City hall must never have carte blanche and the electorate should have a strong voice in the whole budget process (perhaps even an ombudsman).

There really should be rock-solid guidelines which govern rate increases (perhaps tie it to the GDP or the rate of inflation). I leave that to greater minds.

I simply believe that the homeowner should be able

to predict year after year what his costs should be accurately with no surprises.

Jonathan is a voice crying in the wilderness that deserves to be heard.

Joost Vandelinde
St. Davids

We welcome your letters

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



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: ROYAL HISTORY

Mary, Queen of Scots was the mother of King James I, the first king of England from this dynastic family.

Last issue: TATTOOS

Clue: Once banned, kakiniit are traditional tattoos of the women of this group of northern North America.

Answer: Who are the Inuit?

Answered first by: Bill Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by:
Bob Wheatley, Lynda Collet, Sue Rautenberg, Claudia Grimwood, Susan Dewar, Alison Parsons, Katie Reimer, Wade Durling, Jim Dandy, Sheila Meloche, Howard Jones, Jane Morris, Lynda Hosty, Sylvia Wiens, Catherine Clarke, Sheryl Christensen, Edna Groff, Tuija Johansson, David Spencer, Margie Enns, Marla Percy

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

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Maj. David Secord's home — when it doesn't work



Brian Marshall
Columnist

This is the final installment of a four-part series focused on property standards and other defined authority under the Ontario Building Code Act.

This week, I thought it might be informative to present an actual real-life example of what can occur when our property standards by-law and the additional conveyed municipal powers under the Building Code Act are not enforced.

At the end of Paxton Lane, a dead-end street in St. Davids, stands the lost and forlorn home of one of the earliest Loyalists to settle in Niagara.

Built circa 1799, it survived the American burning of Niagara in 1814 and was the home of Maj. David Secord until his death in 1844.

But, who was David Secord and why is he important in the historical tapestry of Niagara?

Secord, along with many members of his family, declared Loyalist and joined the Butler's Rangers in 1777 thereafter continuing his service until this unit was disbanded in 1784.

He saw action in many of the Ranger engagements and is credited with intervening to stop the slaughter of prisoners taken after the Battle of Wyoming Valley.

His service continued with the 2nd Lincoln and, in the War of 1812, fought in the battles of Queenston Heights, Beaver Dam and Chippawa and commanded a regiment in the battle of Lundy's Lane.

During his military service, he was wounded four separate times in action.

He served as a justice of the peace and was twice elected to sit in the parliament of Upper Canada.

Moreover, Secord was an entrepreneur par excellence. His business endeavours have been generally accepted to have underwritten the early commercial development and viability of the



The historic David Secord House is in a state of neglect and disrepair, something the town could change if it would only use its power to do so, writes Brian Marshall.

settlement that eventually became St. Davids (named in his honour).

From his fine stone home overlooking Four Mile Creek, Secord oversaw his enterprises.

According to oral history, it was under his roof that Laura Secord took a brief respite during her famous 20-mile trek to warn British Gen. James FitzGibbon of the imminent American attack.

David Secord is buried in the St. Davids Methodist Church graveyard ... on lands he had given to have the church and school built upon.

Remarkably, from 1799 until 2008 (209 years), the title of Secord's home and surrounding lands was held by only three families — the Secords until 1873, the Hanniwells until 1915 and the Paxtons until 2008.

The house received heritage designation in 2015.

For over a decade now, this once gracious stone home has been owned by a developer and allowed to deteriorate in a fashion that can only be described as a textbook case of demolition by neglect.

This irreplaceable piece of Canadian heritage stands with holes in the roof al-

lowing rain and weather to penetrate the interior.

Large sections of its protective parging (stucco) have peeled away and exposed the old lime mortar — which is washing away.

The exterior entry door — which had been standing ajar for at least a year — has been padlocked shut but, according to a photo I received only a few days ago, the plywood hoarding over one of the window openings on the creek side of the building — the window has no glass — has been removed allowing both weather and all matter of "critters" free access.

I could go on, but you get the picture.

In response to concerns raised by some St. Davids residents, a property standards order was issued to the owner back in 2020 — likely requiring the building to be stabilized and the building envelope rendered weathertight.

Whether this order ever became binding is unknown to me, however, it is very clear that the order was neither fully enforced nor were subsequent inspections conducted to ascertain ongoing compliance and monitor its

condition.

In the four months since the concern was last raised with town staff — who were then "following due process" and "working with property standards" — the only alterations by the property owner have been the padlock on the door and the erection of temporary fencing around the building with signs declaring it to be "unstable."

Unstable?

To a poor country boy like me, that implies "unsafe" — and shouldn't that have triggered the use of the expanded municipal powers defined under section 15.9 of the Building Code Act?

Just sayin' ... there is always more than one way to get something done ... if there is the will to do so.

This is only one example, of many, I could cite across NOTL.

"Out of sight" should never be "out of mind" and can there be any excuse for the glaring issues which affect our built heritage, whether historic or contemporary?

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

How ChatGPT and AI have evolved over the past two years



Dr. William Brown
Columnist

Artificial intelligence hit widespread public consciousness more than two years ago in late 2022 with most of the hype generated by Open AI's Chat GPT — initially GPT 3, then versions 3.5 and in 2023, GPT 4.

It was a souped up version of Google's ubiquitous search engine with a powerful difference.

What made ChatGPT so attractive was that it was possible for users to garner an enormous amount of information about this or that, simply by typing in requests and later by two-way by voice (the "chat" part).

There are hitches with AI, including hallucinations, the fabrication of data and more importantly, limited access to data that is freely available on the

internet unlike corporations, institutions, governments, militaries and other entities, which typically control access for security and other purposes to their own private databases.

It was that ease of communication and access to an enormous database in the public realm that made ChatGPT such an early success.

That was until the New York Times and other companies sued ChatGPT, claiming that their content had been used without their consent and, more importantly, compensation.

Widespread awareness of the power of AI may have entered public awareness recently, but versions of AI have been with us longer in the design and operation of "smart" weapons, such as autonomous and sometimes armed drones in Afghanistan, Africa, Ukraine and the Middle East, analyzing data-rich weather and climate changes, and as powerful tools in science for corraling and analyzing enormous data bases for everything from black holes and the radiation as-

sociated with them, to the shapes and therefore functions of complex proteins and other molecules.

Soon health care institutions such as Harvard University's health care system began to explore and incorporate AI in the business end of health care, the analysis of images generated by CT and MRI and other diagnostic machines and even entered the clinic where AI soon proved to be a useful "partner" for analyzing clinical cases.

Even the venerable New England Journal of Medicine spawned its own AI journal: The New England Journal of Medicine - Artificial Intelligence.

Technological advances in AI evolve. Yes, you read me correctly — AI can evolve much as biological systems do by, in the case of AI, searching huge databases to find alternative, more effective algorithms for analyzing data and choosing the best option, sometimes to the surprise of human software developers. Reads a lot like evolution by natural selection to me.

The Journal Nature, one

of the most trusted science journals in the world and one of the most commonly cited references by Nobel committees, examined the Top 100 institutions in AI in the world.

To no one's surprise, the Top 10 included in the U.S. were Harvard (1), Stanford University (3), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (4), Columbia University (8) and the National Institutes of Health (9). In the U.K., they were Oxford University (6) and Cambridge University (7), in Germany the Max Planck Society (5) and Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres (10) and in China, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (2).

Overall, the United States captured 47 of the Top 100 spots, Europe including the U.K. with 24 spots and China with 16. The rest included Canada with three spots, Japan with two, South Korea, two, Israel, two, and Singapore, one.

The whopping capture of so many spots by the United States is a tribute to American leadership in

technical sciences such as computers, but it's better to look at the U.S. as the centre of a web of multidirectional connections between the U.S., U.K., Canada, Europe, Japan, South Korea and Israel.

Canada AI centres of excellence include the University of Toronto, McGill University and the University of British Columbia.

The University of Toronto was singled out for its AI strategy — according to the Journal Nature's review, invested a modest \$2 billion (CAD) wisely in recruitment in a manner akin to several AI leaders in Europe, including Germany.

AI is here to stay and likely to expand its reach into most facets in life from health care to civilian industries to national defense and science in general.

Many projects, such as the study of weather and climate change, black holes and their energy emissions to the properties and development of novel proteins, would be impossible without AI.

In my view, AI is slated to become immensely more

capable, almost beyond our imagination, especially when it becomes coupled with quantum computers in the future.

It all sounds scary, but it may be the only technology capable of truly mastering the complexity of the bee's brain and eventually the human brain, with its many billions of neurons and trillions of connections and, well beyond those projects, much of science in the future.

The hype surrounding AI in the last two years may have been over the top, but the future of life as we know it will become increasingly dependent on AI, itself a child of the digital computer and as much a future game changer — hopefully for the good, but with the potential for risks to security at every level, misinformation and yet more deadly weapon systems.

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.

Other nations beware, **Canada is a test** for Trump



Keith McNenly
Special to The Lake Report

Humanity is entering a new era in the dynamics of self governance. With the United States embracing authoritarianism, dismissing the concept of rule of law, threatening allies while cozying up to enemies of democracy, we are on the cusp of, well, something very different.

In the face of threats against our sovereignty, now is the time to temporarily set aside our political party differences and fight as one Canadians, all Canadians.

In this period of crisis, coincident with the resignation of the prime minster, we find opposition parties eying an easy path to fiefdom through a vote parliamentary non-confidence. We see Premier Ford of Ontario calling a unnecessary early snap election, not to work with the other 70 per cent of Ontarian's who aren't conservatives, but to

pick off another four-year mandate.

A first economic step must be to repeal the ridiculous trade restriction that exist between Canadian provinces. This would have immediate impact in Niagara on our wine industry, an industry expected to be impacted by new American tariffs.

International Monetary Fund data reveals, "Canada could increase its GDP per capita by as much as 4 per cent — or \$2,900 per capita estimated in 2023 dollars through liberalization of internal trade in goods."

The world is now facing economic warfare from a powerful authoritarian and should respond by declaring united economic warfare back. Even though their own nations are not currently the target, they will be soon enough. Canada is not the end game. Canada is an experiment.

A tariff victory destabilizing Canada's economy would probably be followed by attacks against more nations having significant assets. It's all about the money. The grift is the goal. Authoritarianism and oligarchy is all about making your money their money.

If any sovereign nation tries to rein in propaganda



Keith McNenly writes that Canada must open up free trade between provinces.

posted by an American oligarch's social media platform, by legislating content regulations, they will face the prospect of punishing economic retaliation from the U.S.

Meta (Facebook/Instagram) has gone total "anything goes" regarding posts on its platforms. In its final capitulation to the new administration.

There will be no fact-checking. This means in every country, algorithms will push the biggest lies designed to get readers angry

and to maximize advertising income. Meta controls two thirds of global social media, while Google controls 90 per cent of search.

An oligarch with 400 billion dollars could spend a million dollars a day for more than a thousand years and would not be able to spend even just the principle amount. In fact with compound interest alone it would be hard to spend just the interest at the rate of only a million dollars a day, and yet they want more, much more.

Might Canada lead the formation of a global trade alliance? Built on the NATO model, if one of the member countries is attacked, it would be considered an attack on all members and all would join in economic retaliation. An Economic NATO.

Long-term diversification of trade is required by Canada.

I am confident Canada will abide. We will come out stronger with a more diversified economy. Canadians are riled up. Most

importantly we are in the right, smart and strategic.

I hope freedom loving Americans will rise four years from now at their next presidential election, but it is on Canada and the rest of the world to lead the resistance and hold out until then, perhaps longer.

Canadians have the instinct that if you're sleeping next to an elephant, it's good to know if it sleepwalks, and so, many of us are more than passingly familiar with the American constitution and system of government.

Were the American founding fathers asleep at the quill when they wrote the constitution? They established three co-equal branches of government in an attempt to backstop one another and to protect their citizens from a future "king": The congressional, the administrative and the judicial branches of government.

Much ballyhoo is made about the founding fathers brilliance in writing the constitution, only to find some 250 years later — has a "king" outwitted the lot of them after all?

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



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Canada should limit retaliation to potential Trump tariffs

Ted Carmichael
Special to The Lake Report

How should Canadian governments and citizens respond to the Trump administration's threatened tariffs? Even if Canada's commitments on fentanyl and border security put the threats on hold, they are not withdrawn.

My views are not the consensus, but my opinions are based on a lifetime and career that has involved Americans both as close friends, colleagues and business partners.

I have worked in economic policy research, in the Canadian oil industry, for U.S. and Canadian financial institutions, and for a large Canadian public sector pension fund. In all these positions, I have benefited from working with Americans.

The Trump administration is obviously headed by a bombastic man. He has, however, surrounded himself with an economics team that is accomplished and intelligent, including Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, Commerce Secretary How-



Taking a more level-headed approach to U.S. tariffs might be in Canada's best interest, writes economics expert Ted Carmichael. We should expand in other areas, he says.

ard Lutnick and the head of his Council of Economic Advisers, Stephen Miran.

This team agrees with President Donald Trump that the United States has not benefited from the multilateral trading system put in place in the post-Second World War period.

They believe the U.S. has given tariff-free access to countries that do not provide similar access to America. They also believe the strength of the U.S. dollar derives from its role as the world reserve currency and that this penalizes U.S. exports and contributes to large U.S. trade deficits.

These views are very debatable, but they are the views of a president who has won a historic election victory and whose party controls (narrowly) both the House and the Senate.

Many Canadians see Trump as a bully, but it is perhaps better to see him as a high-stakes poker player with a big stack of chips. The Trump administration is moving quickly to begin to restructure the global trading system while it is in a strong position to implement change.

They intend to do that by raising the U.S. effective tariff rate from about 2 per

cent to perhaps 15 to 20 per cent. To accomplish this, they must tariff their largest trading partners, Mexico, Canada and China, and all their other trading partners as well.

They know that doing so will create short-term economic disruption, both for trading partners and for U.S. businesses, but they believe that companies will adjust, and the result will be worth it for the American people in the years ahead.

So, how should our government respond? Lecturing Americans that this policy will cause them short-term pain won't work. They know that.

Retaliating with counter tariffs and threats of cutting off Canadian energy may put some pressure on Trump but will hurt Canadian consumers and workers, perhaps even more than Trump's tariffs.

In my opinion, Canadian governments should limit retaliation and focus on building a more competitive economy with greater access to domestic and global markets.

This would mean breaking down interprovincial trade barriers. It would mean providing incentives for business investment to boost productivity and building infrastructure, such as pipelines and ports, for moving Canadian goods to our coasts for increased access to global markets and diversification of our trade.

At the same time, our governments should take U.S. complaints seriously. They should work strenuously, alongside our U.S. counterparts to improve border security, to limit the production and flow of illicit drugs, and to combat money laundering.

They should move quickly to negotiate other trade irritants, including restrictions on dairy trade and rules of origin in auto trade. They should act fast to get the Trump administration to the table with Canada's outstanding trade law professionals and negotiators for another redo of NAFTA.

The objective should be to secure mutually beneficial, tariff-free access for trade within North America. Can-

ada is an affluent market with rich, abundant natural resources and human capital that greatly benefit the U.S. economy. These are our best bargaining chips.

And what should Canadian citizens do? Boycotting U.S. products and travel can easily backfire if Americans do the same to us. Instead, let's reach out to Americans and actively inform them of the essential Canadian goods and services that help make their economy work efficiently.

Here in Niagara, let's open the eyes of our American friends to our world-class wine, hospitality and lifestyle. Let's not allow feuds between our political leaders to become feuds between our citizens.

Ted Carmichael was formerly the director of research at the C.D. Howe Institute, the chief Canadian economist at JP Morgan and managing director at OMERS Capital Markets. He is also a proud, seven-year resident of NOTL and an avid member of the WOOFs at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

Can NOTLers learn about wine tariffs from history?



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

As Ross the weekly Rambler in little old Niagara-on-the-Lake, I am usually hesitant to stick my toe into anyone else's bath water. As I have attempted to age gracefully, it has been my long time policy not to speak or pontificate about subjects unknown to me.

When I have broken this policy, the results were often "not so good."

Attempting not to spread my knowledge wings too wide has served me well, so I hesitate to take a big leap for this weekly edition of Ross's Ramblings.

The Lake Report on Jan. 23 featured front-page reporting about the likely devastating effect of U.S. tariffs on Canadian wine ("U.S. tariffs on wine would

be 'devastating,' says export manager").

My colleague Julia Sacco quoted Jared Goerz, the export manager at Pillitteri Estate Winery on Niagara Stone Road, and his blunt comments were easy to understand.

Imagine if the world's largest consuming market for Canadian wineries decided to slap tariffs on Niagara wines.

History bluntly tells us, "Folks, this is not new stuff. History will teach us, if we will study it."

Calvin Sandborn is a retired professor who now writes about environmental and justice issues. Specifically, in a recent copy of the Globe and Mail, he discussed the increased tariffs levied by U.S. legislators in the 1930s that destroyed global trade and poured fuel on the fires of the Great Depression (Jan. 20, "The U.S. tried Trumpian tariffs before — almost 100 years ago — and it was a disaster").

Economic hardship was widespread.

Economists were alarmed, and many petitioned then-president Herbert Hoover to veto the tariffs, which they feared would drive inflation.



Ross Robinson writes that U.S. President Donald Trump is gambling if he decides to tariff Canadian imports. FILE

Indeed, auto magnate Henry Ford strongly encouraged Hoover not to proceed with this "economic stupidity."

Hoover turned a deaf ear and approved 20 per cent tariffs on thousands of imported goods.

And in 1890, President William McKinley increased average tariffs from 38 to 49 per cent. He earned the sobriquet "the Napoleon

of protection."

These examples remind us there is precedent to the theory of tariffs, and new President Trump is not inventing the wheel. Surely his advisors will do their best to educate him.

If the new U.S. president proceeds with his threatened tariffs, it will certainly be his biggest financial gamble since he took a lead

role in Atlantic City casinos. History teaches us the results could again be dire, costly and uncomfortable.

For years, Atlantic City has been a very cheap place to enjoy an ocean-shore vacation. Lots of available hotel rooms, even at rock-bottom room rates. Magnificent ocean views, without a lot of sunbathers cluttering up the beach and the boardwalk.

Rambling way back to NOTL, and a reminder that some well worn suggestions are simply beyond belief. Last Saturday, I witnessed a very bad fall on the Queen Street sidewalk. It was a classic winter afternoon, with blue skies, no wind, cold weather, snow and some ice. A bewdy day during the Icewine Festival.

An older gentleman was enjoying some window shopping in front of NEOB Lavender, when just like that — crash! He was on the ground, looking up. He had slipped on a patch of ice that was under some white powder snow. I scurried over to assist.

Unbelievably, his loving wife was scolding him. "You should have gone limp, and not tensed up trying to break your fall.

Happily, he was shaken but not broken, and they continued on their leisurely winter stroll toward Cool as a Moose and points west. I reflected on this long heard advice. "If you are falling, and may break a bone or two, go limp. This will mitigate the damage.

Several times during my eventful life, I have slipped, tripped or fallen for another reason. Each time, I did my darndest to tense up and try to break my fall.

Several stiff wrists have resulted, and a stiff neck or two. Never did I slap the person who told me I should have gone limp. Was it not a natural reaction to tense up?

Frankly, I cannot imagine a sillier chunk of advice to offer to someone who has just experienced a fall. Or is about to fall.

In summary, let's study history, learn from history, and avoid repeating many historical mistakes.

Our world will be a better place in which to spend time.

Neighbours, friends, enemies and countrymen, let's be kinder.

And, be careful on your bracing winter walks in wintry Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Lord mayor's dinner helps support student jobs

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The evening ended with a bang — literally — as a cannon fired outside Navy Hall on Saturday night.

It wasn't the beginning of a war with the U.S., don't worry — it was to commemorate the last one.

The cannon firing was the finale of the Friends of Fort George's second annual War of 1812-themed charity dinner with the Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa.

With more than 50 tickets sold and over \$1,000 raised from the auction alone, the dinner raised around \$5,000 to fund summer student jobs at Fort George and Brock's Monument, said executive director Amanda Gamble.

For \$160, guests were provided a three-course meal, local wines, a hands-on artifact presentation and a chance to join a silent auction. And, a chance to fire the cannon, said Gamble.

"Just such a great way to end the evening," she said.

Coun. Tim Balasiuk, once part of Fort George's Fife and Drum Corps, had a full-circle moment after winning the cannon-firing auction. It brought him back to his time at the site and reminded him why keeping its history alive for years to come is so important, said Gamble.

"To bring that forward to today's generation is great," she said.

In attendance was Gavin Watson and Andrew Laliberte, two students part of the youth staffing program at Fort George.

Watson and Laliberte were there as living proof of the program's success and the opportunities it offers, said Gamble.

"Watching them grow and giving them all these ad-

ditional opportunities where they can hone their skills and really thrive in the position — to me, is what it's all about," she said.

The youth staffing program was designed to hire more students, particularly university and high school, to work during the summer.

It offers several different positions for students and provides them with uniforms, training and work experience in history and tourism.

President Tony Chisholm said things like this dinner are the main way this program is funded.

On top of gaining valuable experience, the students — skilled in areas like firing black powder muskets — also support Parks Canada with events and programs, such as the Battle of Fort George this summer, he said.

Not only do organizers have positive things to say about the program, but the students do, too.

"When I started working as a student at Fort George, a colleague informed me that this would be 'the best job you'll ever have.' He could not have been more correct," wrote youth staff member Craig Burney on the event program.

Chisholm said the crowd was different from guests the Friends of Fort George are used to.

Zalepa's connections within the community helped attract more politicians and encouraged newcomers to come, which they might not have otherwise, he said.

Zalepa was equally pleased to be personally involved.

"I've seen the importance," he said. "People that I've known who are students here — and now they're professionals working at our municipalities — it's



Top: An evening of history and camaraderie at the Battle of Queenston Heights Dinner with the lord mayor. Bottom left: Gavin Watson, left, and Andrew Laliberte from Brock's Monument stand with Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa at the dinner. Bottom right: Homemade soldier bread by Kristen's Catering pays homage to bread soldiers would eat. PAIGE SEBURN

just a great start for young people."

Gamble made sure the Friends of Fort George stayed local.

"One of the things that we wanted to do with this event too was really make sure that we were partnering with local things," she said.

For dinner, she reached out to Events by Kristin's,

an NOTL catering service, after a committee member recommended her.

"It all just kind of fell in place," said Gamble, who was also pleased to have also secured a local sponsorship from Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake — a conglomerate of 23 wineries in town.

The meal included chicken

and leek soup served with soldier's bread and butter, followed by braised beef brisket with potatoes, onions and demiglace. It finished with an apple tart with vanilla gelato. Each course had a vegan option, too.

Soldier's bread was a deliberate and meaningful choice by the caterer, said Lindsay Taylor, who

assisted with rolling out the food.

"It's a non-leavened bread that they can make around the campfire," she said.

Made without yeast from basic ingredients, she said the bread reflects what soldiers would have prepared while cozying-up around the campfire during the War of 1812.



Town provided no information on impact of heritage designation on home value, despite interest in designating my home

Dear editor:
I read with interest and considerable fellow-feeling the article by Paige Seburn about NOTL "heritage designations."

I have had a similar rather negative experience with the NOTL "Heritage Commission".

Despite inquiry I have yet to receive clear information about what it actually means and what my rights are vis-a-vis such a designation.

In principle I am personally not against the concept of "heritage homes" or assorted buildings maintained for posterity and as historical artifacts.

So I agreed to a visit by a Heritage Commission person to "assess" my house for heritage designation.

The person came and went — I have heard nothing from the person in terms of my house

and whatever report was prepared and filed. This is bizarre. It's my house and I should be entitled to see the "report."

The people I dealt with only over the phone did not share any information about what was to be considered "heritage" on my house and what was not.

The person was interested solely in the outside of my house. No mention was made to me at any point of

what the person found and reported. My house has inside heritage aspects also but there was absolutely no interest in these. My question about my house re-sale value after heritage designation was met with a bland response about "minimal effect." No statistical data was provided to exemplify this.

So far in almost 20 years of ownership of my home I have put in over \$200,000

in upgrades, repairs and renovations, inside and outside. I have no idea whether my outside upgrades were included in the "report." I do not want to see this investment go down the drain with a "heritage designation" which reduces my chances of selling the home for a proper price.

I am now an 84-year-old widower and I may well have to sell and move

to an in-town dwelling since I can no longer do the upkeep my property requires. This may mean having to sell sooner rather than later.

So I am forced to conclude that the Town of NOTL "heritage designation" may serve "town" purposes, but so far I have not seen that it serves the homeowners purposes.

Kaspar Pold
NOTL



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‘Barely Local’ student film captures NOTL’s small-town charm

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A new film project is giving local seniors a unique way to explore their hometown.

Jean O’Malley and Trudi Watson took part in an adventure around Niagara-on-the-Lake as part of the filming of a pilot episode for a lifestyle television show, “Barely Local.”

The show is a project from fourth-year media students at Toronto Metropolitan University, which features seniors exploring small towns across Canada and checking out all the popular spots.

O’Malley said getting to work on the project with her granddaughter and producer Hannah Barker was a great experience.

“It was super. Very enjoyable,” she said. “We weren’t quite sure what to expect. But we all enjoyed it tremendously.”

The seniors visited the Shaw Festival Theatre, Fort



Crew members set up their microphones outside of Fort George to film the pilot of “Barely Local.” From left to right, Madie Cueva, Hannah Barker, Tyrell Alexander, Hannah Fife and Thomas Dalton. SUPPLIED/ALEX DASHWOOD

George and Reif Estate Winery.

“The main three things: Wine tasting, the theatre and Fort George,” said Watson, who had fun taking part in the play re-enactment in the park — a playful nod to the Shaw theatre, she said.

“Shaw would not let them film anywhere in the theatre,”

she said. “So that’s when they decided, ‘Well, we’ll do our own play in the park.’”

They borrowed uniforms from a high school one of them attended. It made for a good, lighthearted time, said Watson.

Barker said the team paid a \$50 rental fee to film outside the Shaw Festival The-

atre using the outdoor band shell and approximately \$450 to film at Fort George for the day. Their visit to Reif was a trade-off — the students provided footage in exchange for a tour and wine tasting.

She often visits her grandparents Jean and Ken O’Malley, said O’Malley.

“(Barker and her friends) come down for the weekend, spend time, wander around the town and go for walks,” she said.

Through these frequent visits and her media studies, Barker said she noticed a gap in Canadian media.

“None of us, really, could think of a show that talks

about Canadian small towns,” she said.

Watson said the project successfully captured the essence of NOTL, especially through its filming of the main street and historic houses.

She said it could help someone who’s new to town learn to appreciate its beauty and know where to go and what to see.

Once the pilot is edited, the team will pitch it to TV broadcasters with the hopes of it getting picked up and potentially inspiring other projects, said Barker.

The episode will then be available to view either on the team’s Youtube page or through a broadcaster or external company.

To keep up to date with where “Barely Local” will go next, you can follow the team on their Instagram, @barelylocaltv.

The cast of NOTL residents includes Jean O’Malley, Ken O’Malley, Trudi Watson, Earle Waugh, Glenna Collins and Derek Collins.

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Have some fun

- Across
- 1. Disreputable (6)
 - 5. Fraught with danger (8)
 - 9. Like most lunch breaks (4-4)
 - 10. Longtime Zimbabwean leader (6)
 - 11. Sticky snares (4)
 - 12. Sparsely distributed amount (10)
 - 13. She saw deserts ranged below (10)
 - 17. Imperial field measure (4)
 - 18. In the proper manner (4)
 - 19. Group who stick it to the ball (6,4)
 - 20. Grandstanders (10)
 - 24. Eliot's were practical (4)
 - 26. Landing places (6)
 - 27. Develops and utilizes (8)
 - 28. Character sketches (8)
 - 29. Raised the roof (6)
- Down
- 2. Residence (5)
 - 3. Sheers off (5,4)
 - 4. Often bought with emulsion (5)
 - 5. Communicator before texts and smartphones (5)
 - 6. Recall past experiences (9)
 - 7. Within the rules (5)
 - 8. Inner city, perhaps (5,4)
 - 14. Like Gabriel, for example (9)
 - 15. Dry run (9)
 - 16. And so on (3)
 - 17. Scholar to sort out where to learn to paint (3,6)
 - 21. Bluff (5)
 - 22. Bakers? (5)
 - 23. Mawkish (5)
 - 25. Right of ownership (5)

Crossword Puzzle

1	2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
9									10					
11						12								
13	14					15		16				17		
18						19								
20			21				22		23		24		25	
26							27							
28										29				

Last issue's answers

1	O	B	S	T	A	C	L	E	S	6	U	S	A	G	E				
	A	O		A	M					9	U	H	O						
10	I	N	C	A		11	U	N	E	M	P	L	O	Y	E	D			
	D	S		G	R		F		L	O									
12	S	W	I	T	C	H	E	S		13	O	B	L	O	N	G			
	I	E		T	O		R												
14	A	D	O	R	N		15	A	N	T	I	P	A	T	H	Y			
	T						17	F		T									
16	S	H	E	D	T	E	A	R	S	20									
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24		25								26									
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	D	E	B		K		A			R									
27	R	E	C	R	E	A	T	I	O	N					28	Y	V	E	S
	A		V		D		N			N									
29	U	L	C	E	R					30	A	G	R	A	R	I	A	N	S

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

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*Based on unit sales and \$ volume of closed transactions in RAHB Jan 1, 2020 - Dec 31, 2023.
**Source: Google Trends and Google Reviews †Source: RE/MAX LLC rankings for Large Team Residential, 2023. ††Source: REDATUM Agents by units - listing and selling combined performance in TRREB Jan 1 - June 30, 2024. RE/MAX Escarpment Golf Realty Inc., Brokerage. Independently owned and operated.

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EXPLORING HISTORY

WITH NOTL MUSEUM

Local barber Lewis Ross

The month of February is for celebrating Black history. This week we learn about local businessman Lewis Ross, who had a barbershop on Queen Street. This image shows an advertisement he issued in the Niagara Mail Newspaper in 1865. He was the town’s only barber on Queen Street in the late 1800s. Ross managed to survive a fire that destroyed his barbershop and house. According to a report in the Niagara Herald on March 4, 1886, “his building was insured, his valuable household effects were mostly saved with slight damage.” He moved his barbershop to a new location on Queen Street closer to King Street.

Saturday Gardening Classes with Joanne Young Start March 1, 2025

Avoid disappointment, class sizes are limited for this unique opportunity to learn from Niagara-on-the-Lake’s garden coach and expert. Joanne offers over 30 years experience making thousands of gardens more beautiful. You will learn many aspects of gardening in these classes.

EVENT DETAILS

Niagara on the Lake Horticultural Society
hosts Gardening Classes Saturdays

March 1st to May 31st
10:am to 11:30am
Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre,
14 Anderson Lane, NOTL

ALL CLASS DETAILS AND BOOKING LINKS MAY BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE

notlhortsociety.com/classes

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New **perennials** worth planting



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

In the world of horticulture, there is one thing that you can always count on — there will always be new plant varieties coming out on the market.

Every year, there are countless numbers of new plants being released to tempt us gardeners. These new and improved varieties have been tried and tested for several years before being released for sale.

They will be tested for several reasons.

The plant breeders are looking for varieties that will bloom longer than others.

In recent years, there has been a call for more compact plants. Since properties are getting smaller, people are looking for smaller growing plants.

There is also a constant hunt for plants that are more disease and insect-resistant and plants that are more drought-tolerant.

This keeps the nurseries in constant search for these winning, new cultivars.

Just in the world of perennials alone, so many new cultivars are released each year. Learning about all these new plants is an ongoing task.

Here are just a few of the exciting new prospects that



Blazing Glory daylily is a reblooming cultivar, putting on quite a show that will last the summer. JOANNE YOUNG

have come out over the past few years.

Pink Pearl hummingbird mint (Agastache 'Pink Pearl')

Agastache has been making a large comeback over the last three to four years. It is also known as anise hyssop and has that beautiful anise (licorice) fragrance to its foliage.

As its name suggests, and because of its tubular flowers, it is a great plant for attracting butterflies.

Pink Pearl is different for its large, light pink blooms, densely arranged in a spike form. Pink Pearl delivers an extended bloom period, blooming from June to September.

It grows fast and easily in well-drained soil. It features larger and denser blooms compared to previous cultivars and has excellent disease resistance and drought tolerance. It is very rarely bothered by deer.

Pink Pearl grows about 16 inches high and wide.

Serendipity Ornamental Onion (Allium 'Serendipity')

This new cultivar of Ornamental Onion is sure a win-

ner. These plants are covered with globe-like, rosy-purple, fragrant flowers.

The flowers attract many pollinating insects as well as butterflies. They bloom repeatedly from summer to fall.

The globe flowers are held above blue-green foliage that when crushed smells like onion.

This award-winning plant is both heat and drought-tolerant once established. They also resist deer and rabbits. It looks great massed planted.

Serendipity will grow 15 to 20 inches high and 15 inches high and prefers full to partial sun.

'Blazing Glory' Daylily (Hemerocallis hybrid)

Just when you think they couldn't possibly come up with a different daylily, here comes Blazing Glory daylily, a six-inch golden-yellow flower with a dark red center and a dark red picotee edge that extends the entire length of the petal.

This cultivar reblooms as well, putting on quite a show that will last the summer. Like all daylilies, this one prefers a full-sun location

with a minimum of five to six hours of sun each day.

It grows up to 32 inches high and about 18 to 24 inches wide.

Little Red Fox little bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium 'Little Red Fox')

Some of the varieties of little bluestem grasses are some of my favourite grasses. My favourite up to this time has been Standing Ovation little bluestem grass.

Now, a shorter and more compact cultivar (and less prone to flopping) has come out on the market. It is named the Little Red Fox little bluestem grass.

It still provides a season-long texture of fine blades and great fall colour. Gray-green spring foliage changes to silvery blue early to mid-summer then develops red streaks in mid-to-late summer, deepening as fall progresses.

It prefers a full-sun location and well-drained soil. It grows from 24 to 30 inches tall and 18 inches wide. It is cold hardy to zone 3 USDA.

So, if you are looking for some different to add to your gardens this spring, these are a few of the wonderful new plants to choose from.

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

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society is pleased to be hosting a series of Saturday morning gardening classes, available to the public. They will be facilitated by Joanne Young starting on March 1 and will run until May 31. Join us for the classes that interest you. For all the details and to pre-register for the classes, visit nothortsociety.com/classes.

Obituaries

Charles Salter



SALTER, Charles Ralph ('Chuck') of Niagara-on-the-Lake — Born Dec. 8, 1932, in Welland, Ontario; died peacefully, with family at his side, on Jan. 28, 2025, after a brief illness and from the effects of old-age.

Chuck was a Latin teacher, a football and basketball coach, a principal

and a superintendent of education. He was a judo instructor, a one-time marathon runner and a frequent traveller to Europe and Asia. In retirement, Chuck and his wife Annabelle enjoyed operating a small, Thai-silk import business from their home in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In later years, with the support of his wife Annabelle, Chuck continued to be active, happy and independent, despite the onset of Parkinson's. He remained in his own home and enjoyed music, good food and wine, and spending time with his family.

Chuck is survived by his much-loved wife of 70 years, Annabelle; his children Dave, Laura (Mike) and Bob (Louise); and grandchildren Arthur, Joe, Camille, Anna, Kelton, Molly, Vicky and Charles. He is predeceased by his sister Shirley Levay of Fonthill and his parents Lambert and Vera (Sherk) of Welland.

His family would like to thank the staff at St. Catharines and Welland hospitals for their excellent care this past month. Commemoration will be a small, family gathering. Donations in Chuck's honour, if desired, can be made to Parkinson's Canada or a charity of your choice.

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com



Gary Pearson



PEARSON, Gary Bruce, 1957 – 2024 —

It is with profound sadness and warm memories the family announces the passing of a beloved brother, brother-in-law, and uncle.

Gary, passed away peacefully Oct. 25, 2024 in Niagara Falls. Dearly missed brother of Frank

(Barb), Cathy (Pam), Amy White (the late Bill), Diane Robert (Roger) and Donna Rotondi (Elio). Predeceased by his parents Sheila and Franklin Pearson and by his wife Janice (2019).

Lovingly remembered by his nieces and nephews. Gary grew up in Niagara On The Lake and moved to the Kitchener Waterloo area as a long time employee of the Toyota Motor Corporation, Cambridge Plant. He recently returned to the Niagara area.

We will all miss his quiet sense of humour and his infectious smile. Gary enjoyed fishing, woodworking, music and family gatherings.

As per Gary's wishes, cremation has taken place and a family service will be held in the spring.

Condolences for the family and donations to the Kitchener Waterloo Humane Society may be arranged at www.erbgood.com.

Have an opinion you want heard?

Send a letter to the editor to
editor@niagaranow.com

Pie sales help buy **new TV** for Legion



Ladies Auxiliary member Margaret McGilvray presents Legion president Al Howse with a \$1,000 cheque from Thursday pie sales. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Members of Niagara-on-the-Lake Legion Branch 124 can socialize in style thanks to the Ladies Auxiliary.

On Monday afternoon, head "pie lady" Margaret McGilvray presented Legion president Al Howse with a \$1,000 cheque, raised entirely through pie sales.

The cheque helped purchase a brand new 75-inch TV, mounted on the Legion's ground floor for patrons to enjoy.

The TV will enhance community gathering like the weekly fish fry and hopefully attract big crowds to calendar events like the Super Bowl, auxiliary member Karen Taylor-Jones said.

"It was well accepted," Taylor-Jones said.

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- Angelika previously owned a highly successful marketing/media business in Toronto for over 20 years. Built relationships with Fortune 500, big banks, CTV, Global, Olympics, Film Festival. Over 10 years of real estate business.
- Abundance of knowledge in all aspects of real properties (waterfront, residential, agricultural, commercial and leases)
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