

Vol. 7, Issue 46

Canada's most-decorated community newspaper

November 14, 2024

# Carving out a good time

Annual Wonders of Wood competition brings out carvers from across Ontario



Bob Warkington of Virgil displays his wood carvings at the Wonders of Wood competition at the community centre on Saturday. Story on Page 11. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



Remembrance Day ceremonies

remember the sacrifies of Canadians. Page 6

People gathered Monday at NOTL's two cenotaphs to

## A day to remember

#### Purple Poppies honour animals

Animals have historically played roles in wars. Read about how purple poppies remember them. **Page 8** 



#### Victoria Cross recipient honoured

A new headstone is revealed during a ceremony to honour the late Maj. Benjamin Geary. **Page 5** 

## Challenging development is a matter of 'right and wrong,' Burroughs says

Julia Sacco Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Coun. Gary Burroughs says challenging the Ontario Land Tribunal is about more than money, it's a matter of morality.

Discussions became heated during Tuesday evening's committee of the whole meeting as councillors discussed their course of action with the tribunal, in regards to a controversial 41-unit development at 223 and 227 Mary St.

The proposed development requires an official plan and zoning bylaw amendment, which town staff recommended.

In September, a tie vote

from councillors against the necessary bylaw amendments resulted in an overall refusal of the proposal.

The applicant, NPG Planning Solutions, appealed this decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Applications for an official plan amendment and zoning bylaw amendment were considered at a committee of the whole planning meeting and a following council meeting in September.

At the committee of the whole meeting, the applications were approved in principle, they were later lifted for discussion at the council meeting and approved.

Continued on Page 2





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## Have an opinion you want heard?

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## Councillors disagree on merits of OLT

Continued from Front Page

At that same council meeting, the amendments were quashed.

Coun. Maria Mavridis said voting on the bylaw was procedural since the application was already approved.

"To not approve our own bylaw makes zero sense to me," she said.

Tuesday night, councillors voted in favour of settling the appeal. Only councillors Burroughs, Sandra O'Connor and Tim Balasiuk voted against the motion.

Before voting, Burroughs urged councillors to put legal costs aside and act on principle.

"Sometimes there's right over wrong and it's very important that we don't take it casually," he said.

Coun. Erwin Wiens argued that properly managing council funds is a matter of right and wrong.

"Councillor Burroughs mentioned the budget. Last budget meeting we talked about cutting winter coats to our bylaw officers, cutting from our parks and not fixing roads. That's the result



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa argued that fighting the applicant at the OLT would result in a huge price tag. JULIA SACCO

of fighting something (at the tribunal)," he said.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa dismissed accusations that council is simply taking staff direction.

"This was a report that was approved by council," he said, referring to the Mary St. rezoning application shown to council on Sept. 24.

"We have council-approved minutes to confirm that decision."

Some members of council are "politically motivated" when voting against the bylaw, Zalepa said.

"As far as I'm concerned, it makes you suspect to legal recourse," he said.

"We've got a council-

approved report, we have council-approved minutes to approve that decision, but a failure to pass the bylaw to implement."

O'Connor took issue with the accusation of being politically motivated, she said in response.

"I voted the same way consistently on this issue and council did vote to not implement it, so that is a council decision as well," O'Connor said.

Certain council members deny 80 per cent of all development applications, Wiens said during the discussion period.

"I never hear a good argument as to why it doesn't fit with our staff," he said.

Wiens said that Zalepa was right to refer to these actions as being political.

"It sounds good, 'we fought the big bad developer'," he said.

Mavridis gave the chair to O'Connor to share her feelings during the meeting.

The units proposed provide the exact kind of housing Niagara-on-the-Lake is desperate for, Mavridis said.

"Yes it's surrounded by single-family homes, but that's what we have here. That's the only property left to build on— the vacant property we have all have existing homes around them," she said.

Developers have been accommodating at responding to council requests too, she said.

Mavridis was offended at the way things went down in regards to opposing the bylaw, she said.

"I do feel the application was approved," she said.

While the motion to settle and approve the bylaw was approved, final approval will be determined at the upcoming council meeting on Nov. 26.

juliasacco@niagaranow.com





90 GARRISON VILLAGE DRIVE \$749,000

MLS X10413696 Nicole Vanderperk & Christopher Bowron

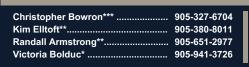


**15261 NIAGARA RIVER PARKWAY** \$2,800,000

MLS X9420137 Viviane Elltoft



**515 GATE STREET** \$1,095,000 MLS X9413857





\$1,149,000 MLS X9411693



**28 PRIDEAUX STREET** \$4,447,000 MLS X9411889 Thomas Elltoft & Viviane Elltoft



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36 THE PROMENADE

\$2,189,000

MLS X9413293 Patricia Atherton

\$2,799,500 MLS X9411093

Cheryl Carmichael\* ..... Linda Williams\* ..... Weston Miller\* 289-213-8681 Ricky Watson\* ...

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\$999,000 MLS X9414862



2 MILLPOND ROAD \$1,998,000 MLS X9415034 Thomas Elltoft & Jane Elltoft



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Christopher Bowron & Nicole Vanderperk

Patricia Atherton\* ...... 905-933-4983

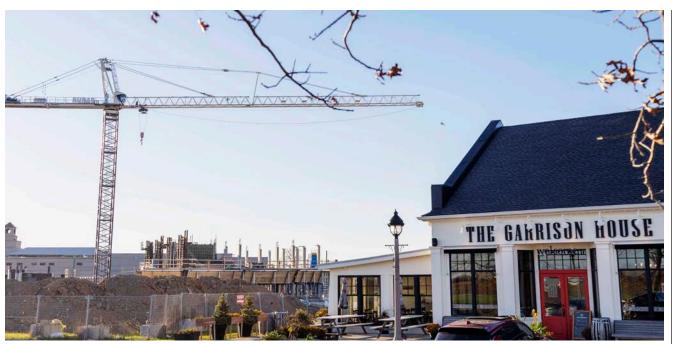
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Open For



The new 14,300-square-foot Foodland store will be right next to the Garrison House, Adam Hawley says. JULIA SACCO

## Foodland coming to the Village next year

Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Come this time next year, there'll be a new place in Niagara-on-the-Lake to pick up everything you need to make breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Set to open late next year, the Foodland grocery store is currently under construction at the Village Centre, 111 Garrison Village Dr.

"That's the address of all of our retailers there, it's going to be right beside the Garrison House," Adam Hawley, vice-president of Traditional Neighbourhood Developments, told The Lake Report.

The store has been a long time coming and the building features a simple design that will fit right into the Garrison Village community, he said.

In a media release made public Thursday, the store is said to feature a "nextgeneration design" that will offer an elevated shopping experience while also supporting local growers and producers.

"From living here for a long time, you get a sense that we could have more food store options," Hawley said.

That feeling was confirmed with a market study, he said.

"As much as we have great options and food stores in Niagara-on-the-Lake already, we can have more. It's going to give us a variety and that bit of competition is going to be great for residents," Hawley said.

The store will be 14,300 square feet, the media release said - Hawley noted it will be larger than the Independent on Queen Street, which he guesses is around 7,000 square feet, but smaller than the Virgil Independent, which

he puts at around 20,000 square feet.

Developers built a basement to help with storage, he said.

"It's going to be full service, but it's not a huge store by any means," Hawley said.

Construction is set to begin soon and residents will be able to track the store's progress and view design concepts through interactive QR codes available outside the site and on social media.

The store will be owned and operated by Niagara resident Lindsey Bridgeman who currently manages Sobeys Niagara Falls. juliasacco@niagaranow.com

maintenance and response

efforts. It features real-time

The town has even taken

to naming its fleet of six

snowplows and two side-

pelin, Buzz Ice-Clear,

Ctrl Salt Delete, Skip the Ditches, Catch my Drift,

"Look out for Sled Zep-

Darth Blader, Snow-be-gone

Kenobi and Scoop Dogg as

they help keep our streets

and sidewalks clear this

information about salting, sanding and snow plowing

operations.

walk plows.

winter."





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## Winter parking and clearing rules in effect

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

It may not look or feel like it, but these are the looming days of winter.

For those who superstitiously dare not speak its name, the town of Niagaraon-the-Lake has gone and done it for you and officially broached the S-word.

"Be in the know when it comes to snow!" reads a Nov. 6 news release penned by communications consultant Marah Minor.

The public service announcement proactively lets the public know that winter parking restrictions and snow removal procedures are in effect.

The communication continues with safety tips for stormwater ponds and general cold weather suggestions.

It also encourages the use of online services to report hazardous road conditions through the town's service request web form.

"Staff is focused on ensuring timely and efficient



NOTL's winter rules are now in effect. FILE

responses to maintain road safety and safeguard the community before, during, and after weather events," said the statement.

#### Snow removal

• Keep snow on your property: Avoid piling snow from your driveway or walkways onto the road. When shovelling, place snow on the right side of your driveway (when facing the street) to minimize the amount pushed back by plows.

• Clear fire hydrants: Keep hydrants visible and accessible, as quick access may be critical in emergencies.

• Garbage and recycling placement: Position garbage and recycling bins near, but not on, the road to allow for smooth plowing operations.

• Snow removal safety: Avoid pushing or blowing snow onto public roads, as this can endanger drivers and may incur a fine under the Highway Traffic Act.

#### Utilize the town's online plow tracker

The online plow tracker is an interactive digital map that keeps the community updated on winter road

safety tips Help neighbours: Offer snow-clearing assistance to

**Additional winter** 

those who may need it. Allow plow time: Under severe weather conditions, please allow at least 24 hours after snow stops for Town

plows to reach all streets. Regional plows are responsible for snow clearing for regionally owned roads.

Stay informed: Follow the town on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for real-time weather and road maintenance updates.



## Root of the problem: Neighbour's tree is causing foundation damage

Julia Sacco Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

The roots of Kumari Goonewardene's neighbour's tree have infiltrated the foundation of her home.

And she's not quite sure what to do about it.

She's worried about the state of her home, where she also operates her business, Blue Skies Bed & Breakfast. She says she's tried to resolve the issue with the help of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, but nobody has been able to help her.

The culprit, a large mature tree in her neighbour's yard, is right next to the fence that separates their properties.

The tree has long roots that extend underneath her home, affecting Goonewardene's ability to run her bed and breakfast.

The back deck of her home has been ripped up to deal with the roots growing underneath and she's had people helping her redo her lawn.

Typically, she opens the bed and breakfast for business from April to November — this year, it was closed from April to late June.

Goonewardene said she didn't want to have guests while the outside of her home was unpresentable.

Earlier this year, she tried to get a closer look at the tree's roots.

"I was getting my gardener to dig the roots out and expose the roots," she said.

After this, Goonewardene said her neighbour contacted the town office, which sent over an arborist who said she could not do anything to the roots without a tree removal permit.

Ten arborists suggested that the neighbour simply cut down the tree, which they have refused to do, Goonewardene said.

The neighbour, who lives at 5 Park Crt., refused to comment on the situation.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor visited Goonewardene's home about three months ago.

One of the issues is that while the roots are on Goonewardene's property, the tree they belong to is on the neighbour's land, O'Connor said.

She said the town does not



Kumari Goonewardene steps over the roots of her neighbour's tree, which are affected the foundation of her home. The town has not taken any action and has instead fined her \$500 for cutting the root. The neighbour won't agree to remove the tree. JULIA SACCO

have control over the private tree unless somebody wants to cut it down.

"We are kind of caught in a very difficult situation on the legal side of things," O'Connor said.

If Goonewardene hires a professional to confirm that damage in her foundation is due to the roots, the town may be able to help, O'Connor said.

"We don't have that certification of certainty that that is what is happening. We are caught between two private citizens here."

On Aug. 27, Goonewardene provided a structural

engineer's report showing the damage to town staff and so far has heard nothing, she said.

Cindy Carter lives at 32 Park Crt., across the road from Goonewardene.

"I was the one who advised her to call you," Carter said.

The damage from the tree rooting is obvious and appalling, she said.

"The roots have gone in and it's cracked (the foundation), their weeping tiles. They've had their whole backyard dug up. It's one heck of a mess," Carter said.

She can't understand why the neighbours won't agree to take the tree down, Carter said.

"The world has gotten to be a sad place. If you can do something to help somebody, wouldn't you?" she said.

Carter also noted three security cameras put into place by the owner at 5 Park Crt.

"(Goonewardene and her husband) are now having to endure three security cameras recording all activity and conversations in their backyard," Carter said in an email to The Lake Report. Goonewardene said she closed her business again in late October because guests were uncomfortable with the cameras while using the deck

"Nobody used the deck this year after seeing the camera," she said.

Gonnewardene met with fire chief Jay Plato last month, demanding an exemption letter allowing them to cut down the tree.

She said since the conversation, the town gave her a \$500 fine for cutting a root.

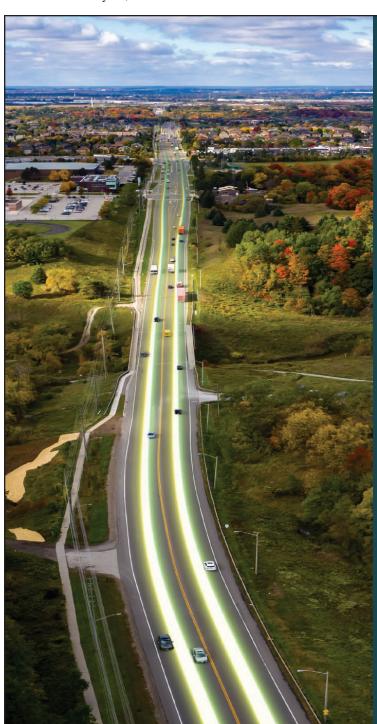
The Lake Report spoke with Plato Friday morning, Nov. 8 and he confirmed that the town is excusing itself from the issue.

"Where we've landed with this situation is that it's a civil issue between neighbours," he said.

The particulars of the situation are not straightforward from the applicable bylaw, Plato said.

"The unique piece here is that through the definition within the bylaw, the tree and everything above ground is on the neighbour's property — we can't permit somebody to cut down their neighbour's tree."

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## Victoria Cross recipient honoured

Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

The resting place of former Niagara-on-the-Lake resident and First World War hero Maj. Benjamin Geary at St. Mark's Cemetery has been adorned with a new monument to commemorate his life and valour.

A dedication ceremony was held Sunday, Nov. 10, the eve of Remembrance Day, on the grounds of the church he attended from 1972 until he died in 1976.

"It is our deep honour to be able to remember him in this way and to bring forth his memory into this present time, and to pledge ourselves to never forget the heroic deeds that he and all those he fought with achieved," said Leighton Lee, St. Mark's reverend, at the ceremony.

Geary was born in London, England in 1891 and served in the English forces during the First World War, where he was awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery and determination on Hill 60 near Ypres, Belgium in 1915.



Members of the public gathered at St. Mark's cemetery Nov. 10 to hear Rev. Leighton Lee dedicate a new stone in memory of Maj. Benjamin Geary who won the Victoria Cross in 1915. RICHARD WRIGHT

It was during this battle that a bullet struck him in the head, wounding him and causing him to lose complete sight in one eye, most of his sight in the other eye as well as some of his hearing.

Despite these wounds, Geary would continue to fight after a stay in hospital.

In the summer of 1918, he was again wounded, this time in the stomach.

"It was while lying on the battlefield, not sure if he was going to survive, that he felt called to the Christian ministry," read a

passage from a biography

presented to attendees at the

Geary would stay true to his battlefield pledge, becoming an ordained deacon in 1921 and a priest the following year.

In 1928, he moved to Canada where he accepted a position "with an organization whose charter was to promote fellowship among the various denominations," continued the bio.

When the Second World War broke out, he enlisted in the Canadian Army with the hopes of serving

overseas, but his superiors decided he would best serve as a commander training troops at Camp Borden, now known as Canadian Forces Base Borden.

After the war, he would go on to serve 24 years as Sergeant at Arms in the Ontario Legislature and retired to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1972 where he became a member of St. Mark's parish.

And now, near the entrance of the St. Mark's cemetery in front of a pair of headstones adorned with the names of Geary and family members, a new stone tells his story.

"This is very special to have a Victoria Cross winner in our cemetery," said veteran and NOTL resident Allan Magnacca, who was in attendance for the dedication.

Magnacca takes great pride in calling Geary a fellow NOTLer.

"He ended up living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, he was a member of St Mark's, one of our readers, and so he just isn't in our cemetery - he was part of us."

wright@niagaranow.com



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## Youth help keep memory of soldiers alive

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

The firsthand perspectives of the two major global conflicts of the 20th century are fading.

With every passing year, fewer and fewer veterans remain alive to tell the heroic and tragic stories of the fallen, and the survivors, as a result of Canada's participation in both world wars.

In fact, there is not a single Canadian alive today who fought in the First World War.

However, it is the purpose of Remembrance Day to ensure those of us still here remain mindful — a mindfulness that recollects the horror and sacrifice of all wars as told by the generations before.

This year on Remembrance Day in Niagaraon-the-Lake, the masses gathered at the Queen Street clock tower cenotaph on Nov. 11 for the annual ceremony.

Among them were the old, the not-so-old and the young — the stewards of the memories many Canadians strive to keep alive.

Of them, Grade 7 students from NOTL's St. Michael Catholic School stood along the curb of the town's majestic main corridor watching the parade of both active and veteran service people, the laying of wreaths and the voices of their leaders.

Huddled in a bunch, they



Mariia Yevtushemko and her mother Tatiana moved to Canada from Ukraine two years ago. On Nov. 11, Mariia read the famous Canadian poem "In Flanders Fields" as part of the Remembrance Day service. RICHARD WRIGHT

were all too young to remember life during the two world wars.

For that reason, every
Nov. 11, since 1919 — one
year after First World War
hostilities ceased in Europe
— those committed to the
cause of honouring Canada's veterans have decided,
annually, to never let them
forget.

For 12-year-old St. Mike's student Luke Simpson, being there on Queen Street created a sense of respect and appreciation for those who gave so much.

One of the first things he

spoke of when asked what this day meant to him was sacrifice.

"It meant a lot because I got to see all the veterans who sacrificed something for their country," he said about the many men and women in attendance who either served or continue to serve in the military.

Simpson was grateful to his school for making sure it didn't let him forget.

"We learn a lot about what they did for us, for us to live and have freedom and that there are others that are still fighting for their freedom," he said.

The service gave him a perspective of just how valuable those freedoms and lives are.

"You see all of us coming together," he said, "signifying that it's a better time than it was."

"It feels like a nation united."

"I'm very proud, and I'm really happy that we live in a country where we can live safely, and we don't need to worry about air strikes or anything," he added.

Hell from above is something that 13-year-old

RD WRIGHT

Mariia Yevtushemko knows

all too well about.

The Royal Oak student, who moved from Ukraine to Canada with her family two years ago to flee the war happening there, was chosen by the NOTL Legion to recite the poem "In Flanders Fields."

She had never heard of Remembrance Day before moving to Canada and was grateful for the opportunity to experience it with her new fellow citizens.

"I'm really thankful for Canada for being here because all the people who are here are really nice," she

It's her experiences in Ukraine, her opportunity to recite the poem and a feeling of being protected in Canada that gives Yevtushemko her understanding of what peace means to people here.

"Everyone is friendly and everything is peaceful," she said of her time in Niagaraon-the-Lake.

There's no fights," she started, correcting just slightly. "I mean, maybe a little friendly fight, but not, like, big. It's safe."

Twelve-year-old Sienna deSouza is a classmate of Simpson's and she was very interested in hearing the names of the many people from NOTL who served in the world wars.

For her, it brought the whole experience of Remembrance Day that much closer to home.

"It's really special," she said. "It's crazy that so many people, even just from Niagara-on-the-Lake, went to war."

"It's kind of surreal." Like Simpson, deSouza s grateful that her school

is grateful that her school has worked so hard to make sure she has the knowledge to tell the stories to others.

"It's a big focus, which is great," she said.

"We just learn about it all and how important it is," she added. "It's so important to keep the memory alive."

wright@niagaranow.com

## Legion's Veterans Dinner honours those who served our country

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As the sun set on Nov. 9, Niagara-on-the-Lake's Royal Canadian Legion hall filled with veterans, community members and local officials for a special Veterans Dinner to honour those who served in both world wars.

The evening began with an opening ceremony, featuring "O Canada" and a blessing, followed by dinner. After a brief break, toasts were made to the king, fallen comrades, the Legion and guests.

The dinner continued with a presentation by Kathryn Jordan and concluded with the closing ceremony and "God Save the King."

Among the evening's highlights was Jordan's heartfelt address. A retired teacher associated with the



People gather for the Veterans Dinner, enjoying a meal prepared by Paul Dolby. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Legion through her father, John Jordan, and grandfather, Jordan shared her family's deeply personal connection to military history

She said her father, a young infantryman, landed on D-Day just days after his 20th birthday. He served

with the Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders.

Today, she is the keeper of her father's military memorabilia.

"It's important to remember," Jordan told The Lake Report. "In today's world, it's more important than ever." Jordan frequently reflects on her father's resilience, who, after witnessing the horrors of war, returned home to lead a life of service. His quiet dedication shaped him as both a father and a role model, she said.

Jordan often recalls her father's reunion trips to Holland, France and Belgium, where he was warmly greeted by communities which still held memories of the soldiers who fought for their freedom.

"The people there remember because it was in their backyard," she explained, referencing the grave realities of war that affected every family. "We need to somehow learn the lessons."

"It's up to us to continue the stories."

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa also attended the dinner. He noted Niagara-on-the-Lake's long military history, which dates back to before Confederation, such as when Butler's Barracks was built to serve as a military training camp for the armed forces.

Today, Legion Branch 124 plays an essential role in the community, not only honouring those who served — some of whom never returned — but also educating younger generations, said Zalepa.

"What the Legion does is really important to our community," he said.

Through outreach efforts, especially in local schools, the Legion helps build awareness of the sacrifices made by veterans, ensuring this knowledge is passed down, he said.

Also in attendance was Andrea Kaiser, NOTL's regional councillor.

"There's always amazing camaraderie here, and it's

great to see familiar faces year after year," said Kaiser. "I look forward to the services on Monday as well."

The evening's meal, prepared by chef Paul Dolby, began with an apple walnut salad drizzled with cider and honey dressing, followed by a roast sirloin with red wine sauce, garlic and olive oil mashed potatoes, and a mix of green beans, peppers, and candied carrots and squash.

Dolby, who has worked in renowned kitchens like the Buttery, said he was especially moved by the opportunity to honour veterans with his culinary skills.

"I (am) a Legion member. My parents were Legion members," he said. "Some of these men and women are my friends. And others, we were in Air Cadets together."



## Sacrifices remembered in Queenston

The Remembrance Day service at the Queenston Memorial Cenotaph on Monday honoured all those who served and lost their lives in battle. Following the service in Old Town, the 1 p.m. ceremony featured words from MP Tony Baldinelli on remembering those from the Niagara area who gave their lives for Canada, along with wreath layings at the monument on behalf of community members and organizations in honour of loved ones lost. Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser recited the names of the fallen. JULIA SACCO

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## Purple poppies remind us animals served our country

Denise Ascenzo Special to The Lake Report

It was around 1100 BC that historic accounts indicated the first use of animals in battle — the great elephants of India.

Centuries later in 331 BC, Alexander the Great of the Roman Empire, during the battle for Babylon, watched as his Roman army froze in shock and fear when seeing elephants charging towards them.

However, it didn't take Alexander the Great long to see the weakness of the elephants' use and eventually the Roman army captured Babylon.

The purple poppy was first introduced by Animal Aid of the United Kingdom in 2006. It was to recognize the contribution of animals throughout history in battles and wars.

The Royal Legion of Great Britain did not initiate the use of the purple poppy but accepted it as a valued way to remember the animals that were sacrificed during times of war.

The purple poppy campaign started in Victo-

ria, B.C. in 2015 and by November 2019, many other cities such as Toronto and Ottawa became involved in the Animal Aid campaign to recognize these heroic victims of war.

The elephant was not the only animal that saw war action. Indeed many others were enlisted to assist in battles, and even to this day are used.

One of these animals we are all very aware of is the horse but you would be surprised by some of the others. As mascots besides dogs, there were foxes, pigs, monkeys and a black bear.

Cats were often taken onto battleships to keep the mouse and rat populations under control and ensure food stocks for the sailors were not contaminated. Some cats during the First World War were also used in the trenches for the very same purpose.

Camels in the African campaigns were used to not only transport supplies but also to carry the wounded from the front lines. Stretchers were slung over the camel's backs and



A few Sentineal Carriages horses in NOTL sport purple poppies this time of year, to commemorate the noble steeds who rode in battle alongside their men. SUPPLIED

each camel could carry two wounded soldiers back to the hospitals.

The Italians used mules for moving supplies as well as wounded men. Great care was given to these animals in keeping them clean and healthy during the battles.

Carrier pigeons were used for carrying messages over great stretches of the battlefield. A little-known fact is that during the First World War, there was a great penalty given to anyone who interfered or killed a carrier pigeon.

Canaries were also used in the trenches. They were the first to detect poisonous gasses. Unfortunately, their method of transmitting the message was their dying.

The dog has been the most constant member of the "animal brigade" having been used by the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Europeans. The earliest

record of dogs being used in warfare is 600 BC with the Greeks using dogs to rout out Persian invaders.

Dogs were used in the trenches during the First World War for "mousing" but also for carrying messages through the trench systems. The Germans used dogs to help lay communications lines past enemy posts.

Over the centuries, dogs were trained as watchdogs, messengers, trackers, attackers and bomb-sniffing.

Dogs were used to locate wounded airmen in the Netherlands during the Second World War, to locate bodies during the London Blitz; to sniff out land mines in the Middle East after the Gulf War and even today they have been trained to sniff out not only bombs but drugs in the war to keep our countries safe of crime.

Julia Murray, the principal of Royal Oak Community School asked the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's Poppy Brigade if their students could help assemble some poppy memorials. The school involved

students from grades 3 to 8 in this project.

Not only did the students work with the red poppies but also the purple poppies. They learnt about the sacrifices that animals have made over the centuries to assist humans in times of battle.

You can see some of the students work in front of their school on Wellington Street and at the carriage stand in town beside the Prince of Wales Hotel.

Sentineal Carriages will have two horses once again sporting purple poppy blankets as well as purple poppy rosettes on some of the harnesses.

The red poppy has been a respected symbol since the First World War to the young men who defended peace, to the doctors and nurses who did not come home and to the thousands of civilians who died during times of war.

The purple poppy is a new addition, to remember and honour the brave animals who have been constant companions to humans through times of war and peace.



# Community Awareness Day puts residents in touch with valuable municipal resources

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Newcomers Club wants to connect NOTL residents both new and established — to the many services, supports and activities the town has to offer.

The goal of the club's Community Awareness Day, being held on Nov. 20 at the NOTL Community Centre, is twofold, says president Megan Wood.

"(Residents) can kind of go up and down the tables and see what is there and maybe they want to volunteer," she said.

"From a mental health point of view, if you've got shut-ins or you have people that aren't connected, this is a really nice outreach," she added.

The club is accepting registrations for display tables from non-profit organizations only.

As of Nov. 8, there were 20 agencies and groups that committed to attend.

They range from recreation groups to advocacy groups, health care services, historical societies and those involved in the performing arts.

Wood said her club will accept as many groups that



People mingle during the NOTL Newcomers Club's Community Awareness Day in 2023. The club is hosting the event again this year on Nov. 20. SUBMITTED

want to take part in the day.

"It takes a lot for some of these agencies to put some people together and come out to the community center to do a public service so the more we have and the more people we have come out, the better it is," she said.

As for the Newcomers Club itself, Wood — who

moved to NOTL in 2022 — added that the club is only open to women and that new faces are always accepted.

"We have an activity every month," she said.

"We'll go out to visit Niagara College, we'll go out to visit the Welland Canal Museum, we'll do

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wine tasting, we've got book clubs and we've got knitting clubs.

"We've got just a ton of clubs ... for women to find out about their community."

The Community Awareness Day on Nov. 20 runs from 1 to 3 p.m. in the main auditorium of the community centre.

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This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style. Category: CHINESE FOOD

A popular ingredient in stir fry recipes, its name means "white vegetable" in Cantonese.

Last issue:

Category: THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU

Clue: Finely chop raw, lean meat, add salt, pepper and herbs, top with a raw egg yolk and you're on your way to a dish of beef this.

Answer: What is tartare? **Answered first by: Margie Enns** 

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Jane Morris, Claudia Grimwood, Lynda Collet, Sue Rautenberg, Bob Wheatley, Mike Gander, Jim Dandy, Rob Hutchison, Nancy Rocca, Wade Durling, Gail Benjafield, Catherine Clarke, Lynda Hosty, Howard Jones, Tuija Johansson, Marla Percy, Katie Reimer, Edna Groff, David Spencer, Sheila Meloche, Daniel Smith

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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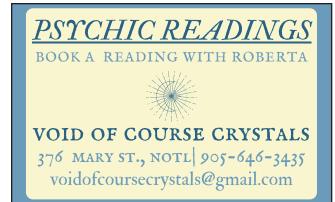




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# Have an opinion you want heard?

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In 15 years, Melissa Achal has grown NEOB Lavender from two acres of leased land and 4,000 lavender plants to 12 acres of purchased land and 20,000 plants. RICHARD WRIGHT

# Award-nominated lavender farm owner talks path to success — amid expansion plans

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

NOTL businesswoman Melissa Achal's entrepreneurial spirit began over 20 years ago right out of high school.

Selling floral arrangements without a brick-andmortar operation using a form of retail called drop shipping, she purchased flowers from South America and sent them directly to stores across Canada.

She was breaking ground on a way of business that was a sparingly-known practice during the '80s and '90s, but experienced a rise in popularity when the world fully connected to the internet

Despite the ease that the online path provided and the good amount of success that followed, Achal decided that any further ground-breaking would have to be of the literal kind.

She moved to NOTL in 2009, dropped the business' original name of Busy Bee Gardens and launched a small lavender-growing operation and retail shop under NEOB Lavender.

NEOB stands for Niagara Essential Oils and Blends.

Today, Achal still owns NEOB Lavender and this year, she's a double finalist in the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce's Women in Business Awards.

The farming business, now located at 933 Niagara Stone Rd., has grown from two acres of leased land and 4,000 lavender plants to 12



Inside the NEOB Lavender storefront on Niagara Stone Road, the business sells lavender-infused creams, body lotions, soaps and more. The business is expanding this storefront from a 600-square-foot building to a new, 2,000-square-foot one. RICHARD WRIGHT

acres of purchased land, 20,000 plants.

On the retail side, NEOB has grown from a single location in NOTL to five locations in Elora, Stratford and Bracebridge and back to NOTL with two storefronts.

And, the growth continues: A new, 2,000-square-foot large storefront is under construction outside the farm, which will replace NEOB Lavender's current store — which is 600 square feet — once it opens next spring.

"It is a complete grassroots startup with only sweat equity that has gone into it," Achal says.

While the business also grows and sells other floral products, focusing on lavender and its byproducts was a choice made almost accidentally.

"We filled the greenhouse

with lavender and nothing else," she says of the beginning.

"So we said, 'All right, what do we do with lavender now?""

"We read up on it, we realized all the properties and developed into essentials from there."

This is when her on-site manufacturing plant came into existence.

Achal started throwing lavender experience parties where she would go to women's houses and sell her products ranging from creams and body lotions to soaps and even a line of cosmetics.

The interest in her services was so great it helped spawn yet another expansion and an opportunity for her husband to join the business.

"(The parties) helped develop the product line so I

said, 'Robert, you go ahead and quit your job.'"

Her husband quit his job and the pair sold their house and moved into a threeseason trailer for two years as the business grew.

"We didn't have kids at the time, so we only had ourselves to take care of," she says, noting that the pair now have two children and lodgings that are a little more stable.

"The good news is that we don't live in the trailer anymore," she said.

Achal's work took her from a computer screen and an order sheet to five brickand-mortar locations and 35 employees.

The Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce has named her a finalist in the Entrepreneurship and Excellence in Hospitality and Tourism award categories.

For Achel, the nominations are enough to be happy about.

"I feel pretty awesome, definitely because all the hard work and dedication we put into the company is now being recognized," she says, noting the "we" in her statement for her husband.

For the message it sends to women, especially young women thinking about a life in business, Achal has a simple message.

"If you truly believe in what you do, you can make it happen through hard work and dedication."

Achal will learn if she has won either of the awards at a banquet on Nov. 21 at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel.

wright@niagaranow.com



## Carving out a good time at Wonders of Wood

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

The Niagara Woodcarvers Association's annual competition Wonders of Wood, held this past weekend in Niagara-on-the-Lake, brought together carvers from across Ontario and beyond to showcase their skill and creativity.

With displays ranging from pine needle baskets to towering sculptural pieces, judges, carvers and curious onlookers were eager to appreciate the art at the competition's new location: The NOTL Community Centre.

Colin Chilvers, president of the association, said the competition goes beyond simply showcasing talent — it's about giving the 50-odd members, who are passionate about their craft, a platform to display their work and connect with others.

"If you do something you enjoy, and it's art, people enjoy looking at it, and you get satisfaction," he said. "The



The best in show winner was given to David Alpearca of Toronto for his carving of an Indigenous woman.

lady at my table makes baskets out of pine needles, and it's fascinating to see how she does it."

"We're about 225 tickets sold and we're open until five, so we're hoping and hopeful to get close to 400 on the first day," said Judy Strathdee, a member of the association.

The competition featured three levels — novice, intermediate, and open — allowing carvers of all skill levels to participate. Judges Barrie Casement, Jim Van Oosten and Neil Cox, all experienced carvers themselves, said the show is an opportunity for growth.

"The competition is intense," said Casement. "But it's also about helping each carver improve."

"After the judging, carvers often ask, 'What can I do to get better?' That's our job — to help them improve and bring their skills and abilities up to increased levels," he said.

The competition isn't the only avenue for learning

— members like Casement also offer carving classes to help participants further develop their craft.

This year, Casement was particularly impressed by the diversity and creativity of the entries. "Some of the sculptural pieces really stood out to me," he said. "It's a great way for people to measure where they stand and learn what they can do to get to the next level."

The show also served as an introduction to the art form for younger generations. Casement said it provides valuable educational opportunities.

At the end of the show, any funds raised are split, with half going to charity, reinforcing the association's commitment to supporting the community, said Chilvers.

Looking ahead, Chilvers hopes to make this venue a regular stop for the association's annual competition.

"We love it here. We will hopefully be coming back next year," said Chilvers.



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



#### Contributed by Patty Garriock

"I am especially glad of the divine gift of laughter; it has made the world human and lovable, despite all of its pain and wrong." - W.E.B. Du Bois

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## And down she goes



Photographer Dave Van de Laar captured this shot of the demolition of Parliament Oak school on Wednesday.

#### Editorial

## Keeping the memory alive

Kevin MacLean Editor Emeritus

Like many small towns across the country, Niagara-on-the-Lake does an exceptional job at paying tribute to those who have served our nation in the armed forces and defended the freedoms we so readily take for granted.

And in NOTL, each Remembrance Day we take time not once, but twice, with solemn ceremonies at the clock tower cenotaph on Queen Street and at the Queenston cenotaph.

Both events attract a large contingent of ordinary citizens — mainly, but not exclusively, seniors, many of whom had relatives who fought during the two world wars.

In NOTL, Nov. 11 is a lot more than two minutes of silence, political platitudes and the laying of wreaths.

Besides the formal ceremonies, NOTL also does an exemplary job of acknowledging its veterans — including through gatherings at the Legion, visits to seniors in care homes and the unique Poppy Project.

This year, the Poppy Brigade volunteers from the NOTL Museum again adorned the Queen Street courthouse, the Legion and the museum with handmade



Remembrance Day ceremonies are at their best when they're a cross-generational event. It was heartwarming to see young people at this year's service, writes editor emeritus Kevin MacLean. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

poppies in a spectacular display.

And as we showed readers last week, they created a poppy garden on the museum grounds, complete with placards containing the names of NOTL soldiers who gave their lives in war.

The museum volunteers have created thousands of poppies for the project.

And they also expanded the project again, bringing their decorations this year to the RiverBrink Art Museum, which is located beside the cenotaph in Queenston.

With luck, perhaps this awesome grassroots project will expand again next year, possibly including a poppy installation on the new gateway wall at Queen Street and Niagara Stone Road.

For people of a certain age, whether they themselves served or grew up knowing some of those who did, wearing a poppy, reflecting on the tragedy of war and turning out to publicly acknowledge those sacrifices is an annual rite.

They join the Mounties, legionnaires, police, firefighters, cadets and others who formally gather for the ceremony.

With the ranks of those who participated in the Second World War diminished, it was heartwarming to have so many young people front and centre at this year's Remembrance Day ceremony.

Kudos to those students and teachers from NOTL schools who took the time to pay their respects and act as a bridge from generations past.

And, as The Lake Report's Richard Wright documented, thanks also to the Legion for choosing 13-year-old Royal Oak student Mariia Yevtushemko to recite the poem "In Flanders Fields."

She moved to Canada from Ukraine with her family two years ago to flee the war there and was a fitting choice to voice John McRae's classic poem.

Modern-day wars in Ukraine and elsewhere serve to remind us that conflicts are still raging, and men, women and children are still dying, in wars in many parts of the world.

Among the many young people attending the Queen Street ceremony, our reporter also found 12-year-old Sienna deSouza.

Like her classmates from St. Michael Catholic School in Virgil, she was on hand to observe and pay her

Perhaps she best summed up Remembrance Day in NOTL and why we need to maintain a strong connection among multiple generations.

"It's so important to keep the memory alive," she said. We wholeheartedly agree. editor@niagaranow.com



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#### LETTER OF THE WEEK

## Roundabout in St. Davids is poor management

The following is an open letter to Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and Regional Coun. Andrea Kaiser.

Your continued support for a roundabout in St. Davids just amazes me. You were elected to represent and support the electorate of NOTL, which you are not doing in this case.

The council has told the region it does not want this roundabout, yet you continue to go against them and a significant number of the town's residents.

I have a copy of the environmental study for the roundabout. To start with, the study area is flawed, because it only covers the St. Davids urban boundary, yet this intersection affects almost every citizen of the

The report is over 150 pages of fluff, which does not prove one way or another the best solution for this intersection.

It does not address the truck traffic for the grape growers or farmers of the town or the increased truck traffic for the now-expanding again St. Davids Cold Storage.



The roundabout planned for St. Davids is 40 feet smaller in diameter than the one in Virgil, writes Kip Voege.

The roundabout in Virgil is too small in diameter to properly handle a tractortrailer making a left-hand turn. This was reported just after its construction was completed.

The inside rear tires of the trailer have to run up on the skirt or curb of the inner circle. This is extremely hard on the tires and running gear of the trailer. This is poor design.

According to the drawing I have of the proposed roundabout for St. Davids, it is to be 40 feet smaller in diameter than the one in

Virgil. This makes absolutely no practical sense.

A modern traffic circle is not appropriate for the historical community of St. Davids. When you study the history of St. Davids it has as much or perhaps even more historical significance than the Olde Town.

Why did they not put a roundabout at the intersection of Four Mile Creek and Highway 55 in Virgil? I have been backed up to as far as Crossroads Public School from this intersection.

A roundabout does

not slow traffic down, as required in St. Davids, but speeds it up. There are already speeding issues. The reason for the community safety zone and the speed camera at the school.

A four-way stop controls the speed in all directions. Traffic lights control the speed in only two directions. A roundabout controls the speed least of the three choices.

I have travelled through many roundabouts across this country. Many are well designed, some are not. This one is not.

A roundabout is not the right choice for this intersection. All that is required is some improvements to the existing four way stop with bicycle lanes and crosswalks. Add stop signs on the two turning lanes to slow speeders down.

Open Line 9 from Creek Road to Tanbark and Tanbark from Line 9 to Line 8. Re-direct traffic around St. Davids via Line 7 and Concession 6 & 7.

This is not responsible management of our town.

Headstones will not be

Kip Voege **NOTL** 



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#### raised and replaced at 1453 York Rd. St Davids Negro Burial Ground 905-262-5242

Dear editor:

I am writing to update you on the status of the Negro Burial Ground (also known as the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground) on Mississagua Street.

As you may recall, we envisioned raising and replacing the headstones to honour those buried there. The donations for this project have surpassed \$20,000 and this funding allowed us to finance the first phase of the archeological assessment.

We have since determined that the project's costs are higher than anticipated. Our fundraising team has had challenges raising the necessary funds due to the many worthwhile projects within the community competing for funding.

Therefore, the balance of the funds will be used to finance the activities outlined below and set up a maintenance fund for the cemetery.

After discussions with the Bereavement Authority of Ontario and with the support of town staff, we have developed an agreeable plan of action as an alternative to raising the headstones.

Using the generous donations already received, we plan to undertake the following activities:

Delineate the site's property lines to identify the area as a burial ground.

Request the owner of the existing fence to paint it or allow us to paint it, as it is quite worn and needs a fresh look.

Build a memorial to install on the fence with the names of those buried there.

Ask the town to adjust existing signage to provide better site visibility.

I appreciate your commitment to this project. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Friends of the Forgotten at info@friendsoftheforgotten.ca for more information.

We appreciate your support.

> George Webber Friends of the Forgotten chair

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Legion president Al Howse is grateful for everyone who helped out with the Remembrance Day ceremony.

## Thanks to community for Nov. 11 participation

Dear editor:

The General Nelles Branch 124 of the Royal Canadian Legion would like to once again thank the many people throughout the community that assisted, took part in and attended the Remembrance Day services on Nov. 11.

We had a mix up with the list of wreaths and some families were not properly recognized. We sincerely apologize for the mix up, as we know this is an emotional and personal time for

We thank those who read passages and a poem.

We want to thank the

town staff who had the area blocked off, the chairs set up and all the small things you don't notice.

We thank Switzer-Carty Transportation for the free use of a bus.

The sound system provided by Scott Davidson and Christie Hails worked to perfection.

St. Michael Catholic Elementary School's Grade 7 history class attended.

The weather was good and we hope we did the veterans proud.

Al Howse Branch 124 president

On behalf of our mem-



# Of roundabouts and other things



#### ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall Columnist

It's a race. Across Ontario, government agencies responsible for our road infrastructure are running pell-mell in a competition to claim that their jurisdiction is home to the most round-abouts in the province.

One comes across them in the strangest locations — on a recent business trip up to Georgian Bay, I chose to take rural roads to avoid traffic and, in the middle of nowhere, at the intersection of two country roads, with nary a car to be seen for miles, was a brandnew large, sleek and shiny roundabout.

My colleague shook her head and wryly commented from the passenger seat, "Our tax dollars hard at work managing farm tractor traffic."

Could it be that this race to construct these traffic management wonders is significantly influenced by the fact that "sexy" (as defined by the provincial government) projects are most likely to generate infrastructure funding by the Ford government?

This might be a factor in the push to propose roundabouts in a plethora of locations ... even shoehorned into places which are demonstrably unsuitable to take advantage of a roundabout's strengths in managing traffic flows.

Let's consider one of these cited "strengths": In an intersection with balanced traffic flows (traffic volumes on the intersecting roads served by the roundabout are roughly equivalent), a roundabout will slow the speed of traffic through the intersection and thereby reduce most severe types of vehicular accidents, emissions and fuel consumption

(the latter two caused by idling) while moving traffic most efficiently through the intersection.

For a moment, let's accept this posit in its entirety. But, what happens when the traffic flows are not balanced?

Quite simply, the lowest volume interface to the roundabout suffers an access challenge and can (does) result in a significant vehicular back-up on the secondary roads.

This challenge is often seen here in NOTL at both the Concession 6-Niagara Stone Road roundabout by vehicles approaching the roundabout feature from the south on Concession 6, and the York Road-Glendale roundabout if approached from the east on York Road.

So, I must ask the question, if the vehicular back-ups on these two roundabouts result in multiminute idling, does that really reduce emissions and fuel consumption through the intersection?

Now, let's talk about the safety claim.

There is absolutely no question, based upon multiple international studies, that roundabout installations decrease severe vehicular accidents and fatalities resulting therefrom.

However, according to the Injury Lawyers of Ontario website, data gathered and published by the Region of Waterloo — which has the highest density of roundabouts in the province — shows a 35 per cent increase in traffic accidents at intersections where roundabouts replaced traffic lights.

A fact confirmed in the analysis of this data by Yue Zhao in the 2017 thesis presented to the University of Waterloo entitled "Evaluation of safety effects of roundabouts in the Region of Waterloo."

And, as Jeff Outhit pointed out in his article published in the Waterloo Record in December 2014, "Roundabouts crashes, injuries double in five years in Waterloo Region," it isn't a case of drivers just getting familiar with using roundabouts, "But the rate of fender-benders in roundabouts is startlingly



Between 3 and 5 p.m. daily, the tailback on York Road trying to access the Glendale roundabout can often reach all the way to Clare's Harley Davidson, writes columnist Brian Marshall. He wonders if that's solving traffic issues.

high. It's getting worse — doubling in five years. Nonfatal injuries in roundabouts have also doubled in five years."

Let's skip across the pond to the United Kingdom where, according to an article published in The Guardian, titled "Traffic lights are so dictatorial" ... but are roundabouts on the way out?" and published in October 2015, the author, Ian Wylie, reports "The U.K. is quietly replacing roundabouts with traffic lights."

In this article, Wylie quotes the head of transport investment for Newcastle City Council, Graham Grant, stating, "Roundabouts are brilliant at moving car traffic, but not a safe space for people who cycle or are crossing on foot."

Later in the article, Grant goes on to say, "Our cities have been designed for middle-aged men driving cars, but of all the people who need consideration, they're not top of the list."

Furthermore, he points out that roundabouts cause significant tailbacks unless the traffic on each approach road is equal.

Going on to suggest that, "A roundabout doesn't give us sufficient control of the network to control priority and demand." And concluding with, "... sometimes you have to actually intervene. If gaining more control means replacing roundabouts, then that's the way it has to be."

It seems that transportation experts in the U.K.

— given that the nation has

the highest concentration of modern roundabouts per road mile in the world and more than seven decades of experience with them — have decided that roundabouts are not a panacea.

To be clear, no one is suggesting that roundabouts do not have a place in our road infrastructure, but rather, installed only in selected intersections which will take advantage of their strengths while not exposing motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to their weaknesses.

I submit that the centre of St. Davids is not one of these intersections.

Oh, and to the lord mayor's assertion that "There is never a head-to-head collision" on a roundabout (as quoted from The Lake Report's Nov. 7 article "Region seeks ideas from residents for St. Davids roundabout design"), I beg to differ.

Just this past August, a tourist — who was clearly unfamiliar with roundabouts — decided to turn the wrong way on the Niagara Stone Road-Concession 6 roundabout and met another vehicle going the other correct way.

Now, neither vehicle was going fast enough to cause any significant damage but their front bumpers did kiss.

Speaking of the lord mayor, in another of Richard Wright's articles published in this newspaper last week ("Engineering reports used to approve zone change for Parliament Oak under scrutiny"), when speaking to concerns raised regarding the Parliament Oak engineering reports, he

infamously declared, "I'm not interested in that."

"We will get the questions answered, but we'll be dealing with actively employed, qualified engineers that will be responsible for the municipality."

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa's dismissive comments could be the result of simple ignorance, but I doubt it.

Both men are citizens and residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Both are "qualified" engineers and have the professional expertise to analyze and comment on this type of engineering report.

In fact, in Richard Connelly's case, for about five decades he and his company actually provided engineering services related to infrastructure in jurisdictions across North America.

Who, I ask, could be better qualified?

Moreover, being in no one's pay allows them a level of objectivity that cannot be bought.

Their bringing the issues in this report forward is purely reflective of the concern that town council has made a decision concerning the rezoning of Parliament Oak based on flawed information.

And, in doing so, has potentially exposed the town—more particularly the taxpayers of the town—to a significant infrastructure liability that could result in a whacking big bill.

I admire the fact that Kirsten McCauley, the town's director of community and development services, "worked with our operations staff, and they reviewed the information and they provided their feedback and the recommendation back to us."

However, she does not employ a qualified engineer on the operations staff professionally capable of properly analyzing the information contained within the engineering report submitted by the developer.

So, I am forced to ask what is their recommendation based upon, other than general opinion?

This is not a criticism of the operations staff, but simply a statement of their lack of professional engineering qualifications to make the type of educated recommendation that should have been required by town council prior to voting on the property's rezoning.

But the lord mayor is "not interested in that" and director McCauley is not concerned.

I wonder ... should it transpire that the infrastructure issues raised by the two qualified engineers who read this report turn out to be the case, will the proposed hotel development not be approved by director McCauley?

After all, the decision will be solely in McCauley's hands, since town council has delegated the responsibility for site plan approvals to her position — a position not directly accountable to the residents of NOTL.

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





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## Hitting the wall in NOTL



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner Columnist

Before Tuesday the 5th, she was apprehensive. After Tuesday, my neighbour down the street was wasting no time.

"Sold my unit," she told me this week, admitting her loss would be a hundred grand. Not in the Greater Toronto Area's deeply troubled condo market, but on Florida's coast.

"I'm never going back there again," she said. "Not now with Trump. This is my home. Thank God."

By the way, the couple putting a spiffy new cedar roof on their place near the golf course have been coming here from Pittsburgh for 30 years. "The next step now," she told

me, "is citizenship."

Are they right to freak out and abandon the land of the Orange Man? Or is this just Trump Derangement Syndrome in full view?

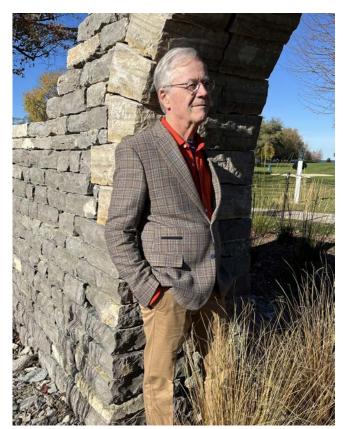
Will the tentacles of MAGA reach into NOTL, which is so dependent on Americans and their dollars?

How much will Canada's economy and your RRSP be whacked by the 47th president? Or, can we just look across the Niagara and stay smug?

Dunno yet. The guy can do nothing until January. This column will give you fair warning when that wall looms.

Speaking of walls, some folks are thinking they've hit a few with local politics. "I hope your last column will be read by at least someone on council," Bill Garriock tells me, "Likely not, but there is always hope."

Bill and others, like Brian Crow, have been warning about the financialization of NOTL — the swelling business of turning houses into mini-



Gerry Kowalchuk handed over \$250,000 in family money to have these stones erected at the entrance to the Old Town. "It just came to me," he says. GARTH TURNER

motels under the town's generous B&B policy.

"Rather than getting better, the cottage short-term rental situation has expanded and become even more commercialized," he says.

He points out that among

registered short-term rentals there are 1,000 bedrooms given over to tourists instead of families who might like to own or rent.

"If fewer families are living here and it is tourists that are now occupying the

thousand bedrooms, one can understand why the community is no longer able to support a hospital or local schools."

And, as detailed here last week ("The Turner Report: The CRA, the B&Bs and thee"), there are another 500 or so local listings on Airbnb that don't appear to be registered. Or legal.

So, the financialization of this place continues. And the old abandoned school will soon rise as a 129-suite hotel and conference centre. Sheesh. Who needs kids, anyway?

But wait. Let's finish with a good news wall story.

Gerry Kowalchuk got his vanity book back from the printers a few days ago. Grandly dubbed the Queen-Mississauga Gateway Project, it's a forever thing for grandchildren from NOTL's own monument man.

I asked him why a private citizen would fork over \$250,000 to build a stone wall going nowhere at the main Old Town intersection.

"I just stopped there at the sign one day," he says, "I looked at this property here. That's it, I said. It just came

to me, and I never looked back after that."

It took four years. Lots of political diddling. Design work. Bureaucracy. Then, being on-site almost every day as the dry-stone craftsman did his thing.

Now, the wall defines the heritage district and looks like it existed forever. "I'm told it may last 500 years," he says.

Yabbut, why?

"I just love this place," he says, "for the same reasons you do."

And it's legacy, of course. The vanity book. The stones. The permanent marker of having been here.

Trump may have his wall. Gerry has his. One is designed to keep people out. The other says come on in, have a gelato, buy a \$600 hat, take a \$90 carriage ride, sleep in a quaint, possibly illegal B&B and leave your credit card on file.

It ain't perfect here. But it's on the right side of the

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

garth@garth.ca

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## Regal Florist hosts holiday open house

Paige Seburn The Lake Report

As Chris Semple strolled through the twinkling lights and festive decorations at Regal Florist & Garden Centre's annual Holiday Open House on Nov. 2, joy spread across her face.

"I saw it in the paper," she said, admiring the hard work behind the exquisite decorations. "They do a beautiful job."

The Niagara-on-the-Lake local praised the team's effort in transforming the garden centre into a winter wonderland.

"They're a terrific company," said Semple.

Jolanda Broekema, who works in retail sales, said the turnout was impressive not only on Saturday, Nov. 2 but also during the open house's kickoff on Friday evening, Nov. 1.

"On Friday, the entire place was lit up — it was very pretty," said Broekema, noting the open house



Festive decorations brought holiday cheer to the Regal Florist & Garden Centre earlier this month. PAIGE SEBURN

mentary dip table featur-

ing in-store mix packages,

and for those interested in

purchasing, spending \$50

in the store allowed them

to receive a \$10 voucher to

be used Dec. 16 to 21, with

some restrictions applying

Visitors were also en-

couraged to bring a non-

perishable food donation

to support their local food

bank Newark Neighbours.

said Lindsey Ireland, who

did the majority of the

"It's been phenomenal,"

decorating. "We had people

to the deal.

ran from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Friday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

Visitors were treated to a delightful array of sweets supplied by Willow Cakes and Pastries, owned by Catherine and Sean O'Donnell, who Broekema wanted to specially mention.

"They're starting a new small business called Simply Shortbread as well, and their stand is near the entrance," she said.

Guests could also sample various dips at a complilined up out the door."

With nearly 20 years of experience decorating at the garden centre, Ireland draws her inspiration from the unique pieces they purchase.

"I just start with a piece and build around it," she said, revealing the monthlong effort it takes to create the enchanting displays.

Owner Darrell Boer said the open house brought holiday cheer to the community.

"It's been really good, both last night and today. It's a Christmas kickoff," said Boer. "We do it every year to encourage people to get inspired."

The open house adds to the festive atmosphere in Niagara-on-the-Lake, enhancing the Christmas feel that Boer said he has always believed they could contribute to.

"It's just one of those things people enjoy — a feeling of getting away and enjoying the atmosphere," he said.





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#### Across

- 1. Farm honkers (5)
- 4. Declares formally (9)
- 10. High-pitched flute (4)
- 11. Happening together (10)
- 12. Safe stores (6)
- 13. Casual tops (1-6)
- 14. W W II turning point (1-3)
- 16. Lowest-value chessmen (5)
- 19. Deciduous timber trees (4)
- 20. Cloth colourist (4)
- 22. Portable music players (5)
- 24. Deep voice (4)
- 25. May contain peas or beans, for example (4,3)
- 26. Shows broadcast again (6)
- 29. Mental analysis (10)
- 30. Woodwind instrument (4)
- 31. Graceless (9)
- 32. Up (5)

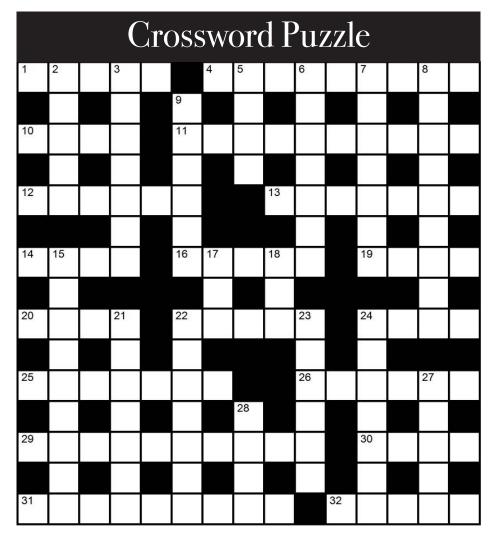
#### Down

- 2. My Fair Lady --- Doolittle (5)
- 3. Author of "Ozymandias" (7)
- 5. Tolled (4)
- 6. Consecutive parts of a meal (7)
- 7. International carrier (7)
- 8. Frequently (4,5)
- 9. Misbehaves (4,2)
- 15. Rainless months (3,6)
- 17. Egyptian cobra (3)
- 18. Indicate agreement (3)
- 21. Profoundly different (7)
- 22. Household chore (7)
- 23. Wanders away (6)
- 24. Obtains temporarily (7)
- 27. Model --- Campbell (5)

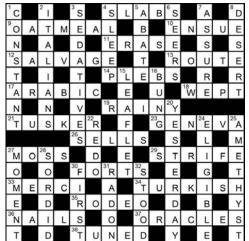
@TheSykesTeam TheSykesTeam.com

28. Stupefy (4)

# Have some fun



#### Last issue's answers



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**CLAIRE MCNEVAN\*** 

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**STEPHANIE FARR** 

## Computers – from the early days to modern times



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown Columnist

In the 1970s, one of my children in public school won a computer with 2k of memory.

It was useless but, then again, it was cheap.

However, as my career as a neurophysiologist progressed, my team became increasingly dependent on computer devices to extract tiny signals from background noise by averaging hundreds of responses, which made event-related signals stand out while unrelated signals cancelled one another out.

Later still, a closely related off-shoot of our group in London, Ont., led by Mark Davis and his new company developed the first computer-based system in the world for analyzing electrophysiological data in the clinic and operating room and was a great success in laborato-

ries like mine for the better part of a decade.

Even so, most computers in the 1980s and 1990s were strictly rules-based.

We knew precisely what we wanted the computer to do and there was no expectation that the computer would do anything other than obey the embedded carefully scripted programs (algorithms of the day) for doing this or that mandated task.

However, change was in the wind with the introduction of what was called machine learning and neural networks by this year's laureates in physics, John Hayfield and Geoffrey Hinton, who modelled their computing devices after the brain.

Single cells in the nervous system integrate signals from a variety of sources, but only when the aggregate signal exceeds a certain level does the neuron respond by generating a signal that it sends to other neurons.

Neurons are also arranged in functionally related groups: Nuclei, layers and/or columns

Repeated similar signals are strengthened and infrequent signals weakened, a process that underlies memory and signal recognition That simple neural model was adopted by Hayfield and Hinton in the 1980s to illustrate how machine learning might work to analyze data.

Still, the fields of machine language, neural networks and deep learning faltered until 2011 and Google.

That year, Google's Brain project was used to extract images from YouTube videos and fed them into a network of 1,000 computers, with a combined total of only one million neurons (nodes).

Crude and underpowered as it was, the project worked and with each passage through successive layers of nodes and networks, more and more defining features began to stand out, until finally, in this case, recognizable faces appeared.

This was the first concrete demonstration of deep learning at work.

Even then, what held the field back was the need for far more computational power, much higher processing speeds and much larger databases on which to learn before challenges such as nearinstantaneous translations of language or facial recognition would be possible.

Last year, a series on artificial intelligence was hosted at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, triggered because of enormous public interest in ChatGPT and its various versions.

Whatever the pros and cons of ChatGPT and loo-kalikes by other companies, machine learning, neural networks and deep learning have been a godsend to scientists.

One example is the challenge of forecasting rapidly evolving weather changes such as hurricanes, flooding events and tornados and on the other end of the time scale, is the challenge of identifying trends and causative factors in long-term climate changes.

Both generate enormous amounts of data that must be analyzed to make sense of the numbers.

That's why modern highpowered machine languagebased computing devices are so essential.

They have the power to crunch the numbers and identify patterns in the data far beyond human computational limitations.

Then, there were the spectacular triumphs in the last few years by Dennis Hassabis and John Jumper for their development of AlphaFold2 and David

Baker's similar RoseT-TAFold, both designed to unravel the mystery of how linear strings of amino acids fold into 3D molecules to do whatever their particular job is in biology.

The three men shared the Nobel Prize in chemistry this year in what was a triumph of integrating basic physics, chemistry and computer science.

Finally, to close, some of my readers may have followed in this newspaper the struggle of patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis to express themselves.

One of the triumphs of machine language is its ability to extract relevant signals — in this case, signals in the brain's neocortex related to the choice of words and articulating those words when the related systems have been affected by the disease.

The signals are recorded from the appropriate regions of the brain but mixed with a myriad of other signals — making it all but impossible to make sense of what's going on without much-updated versions of machine language.

Only a few years ago the best that could be hoped for was 10 words a minute with

an error rate of 30 percent and a vocabulary of about 100 words.

The latest version has a vocabulary of thousands of words, at least 30 to 50 words a minute and an error rate of less than five per cent.

That's real progress and not because of improvements in the electrode array, but because of the latest programs, which learn to cull the brain's electrical signals for those essential for choosing the right words quickly and precisely — in so doing — restoring working speech to someone who has lost it.

That's only one example of the transformative power of AI and machine language.

The physics and chemistry Nobel Prizes this year are a tribute to the five scientists who helped to develop the tools that underlie AI and the subject of the annual series on the prizes beginning with physics on Nov. 6 at 2 p.m. in the NOTL library. Please sign up with Debbie Krause.

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.

## Remembrance Day ceremony did our town proud



**Ross's Ramblings** 

Ross Robinson Columnist

Niagara citizens turned out in force this year to remember NOTLers who put their lives on hold to defend democracy, often in distant parts of the world. We gathered around the refreshed Cenotaph on Queen Street, with perfect weather swelling the crowd.

Coun. Gary Burroughs noted it was grand to have a live bagpiper, telling me how Norm Haig often struggled bravely with frozen chanters and pipes.

My pal Randy Klassen, a dedicated member of our local Civil Search and Rescue Association, told me he had just returned from the Thunder Bay area after searching for a missing hunter in the wilderness. The lost hunter was wearing a camouflage jacket. Huh?

It was chilly and overcast. I always think of the lonely Canadians who spent endless days and weeks with no known "going home" date. Far from home, eating cold and basic rations, losing mates on drizzly days, receiving only an occasional letter from home.

How did they possibly keep their morale up? Lest we forget.

Too many had their lives cut short, or suffered life-altering injuries. Or invisible mental wounds that would never be understood back home. One lost life was one too many.

The ceremonial parade was enlivened by the presence of a good number of military veterans of Polish background. Proud, well-drilled and colourful. Then, four dramatic members of our Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

This year, regional councillor Andrea Kaiser recited the list of Niagara area citizens who made



Ross Robinson says we cannot forget the sacrifices of Canadian soldiers.

the supreme sacrifice after volunteering for overseas service. The length of her list was shocking, from a relatively low-population area like Niagara.

So many familiar names: Dietsch, Nelles, Grimwood. Some families lost multiple loved ones.

I thought that Andrea was the perfect reader. At a measured pace, with a strong voice amped through an excellent sound system, hesitating appropriately after she read each name. Dignified. Respectful. Strong.

The list continued. Every single name was a family tragedy, rivers of tears,

sleepless and lonely nights back here in Niagara, mourning the deceased. Some still teenagers. Families ripped asunder.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa spoke emotionally about one Mr. Wright, the local Niagara High School principal, a husband and father who felt compelled to enlist and serve our country.

Mr. Wright went off to war and he didn't return. We must not forget.

My mother had two brothers from Cochrane serve in the army in the Second World War. She told me about the awkward, pregnant pauses that made so many conversations awkward for the few years following Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

She would meet a friend on the street, and after the normal small talk about the weather and sports and their jobs, people would be hesitant to ask her about her brothers, Bob or Joe.

Too often, the reply would be heartbreaking, news of a death or an injury or a new address in a veterans' hospital. Did we learn the necessary lessons? Only two decades after the end of the First World War, the war to end all wars, we decided to do it all again. Young men who didn't know each other fighting the wars for men who knew each other. Why?

Millions of repetitive headstones, now in military cemeteries around the world. Have we learned anything?

Indeed, this year's Remembrance Day ceremony in our town had a good feeling. Are we giving the necessity of war more thought as the years slide by? We seem to want to gather with friends to reflect on the necessity and the futility of sending people to die in overseas combat.

Let me now awkwardly ramble over to a completely different thought process. Understand that I love and respect the folks who work for Canada Post here in Niagara. Over the past 30 years, I have observed and admired their efforts to deliver our mail. Through rain, snow and hail and on the hottest and sunniest days.

But may I ask them to carefully consider their potential Canada-wide strike action. Do they have rocks in their heads? The times they are a'changing.

Their organization has been on life support for many years. Thousands of millions of dollars in losses, with an unsustainable business model.

Think long-distance telephone operators. My aunt Agnes up north was a supervisor, one of the thousands of people deftly transferring our calls across Canada and around the world.

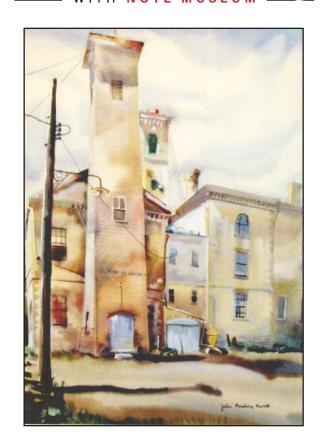
Technology changed, and I don't pretend to be an expert. But I do know that there are no longer any long-distance telephone operators. Aunt Agnes got out with an early retirement package.

The good employees of Canada Post are risking it all if they elect to go on strike. There must be a better idea because public sentiment will not be on their side.

Have at it, and I will delicately ramble to this week's conclusion.



#### EXPLORING HISTORY WITH NOTL MUSEUM .



## Hose Tower, 1948

This watercolour, by John Freeling Hunt, shows the back of the Queen Street Court House. If you stood near the public washrooms or the back of Balzac's Coffee on King Street, you would be in almost the same spot. The tower in front was used by the fire department to dry its hoses and stood 65 feet tall. That is almost 25 feet higher than the Court House building. After a fire, the firemen would hook six lengths of hose to a round wooden hook and then hoist them up to the top by using the fire engine. The water could then drain out and the hoses could dry, hopefully before the next call. The tower no longer exists — more on that next week. The door to the right is the entrance to the Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake welcome centre.



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

## Use fresh greens for holiday decor



#### GROWING **TOGETHER**

Joanne Young Columnist

Can you believe that we are already heading into the third week of November? Christmas is only five weeks away. When did that happen?

This fall has been especially warm and sunny - it does not feel possible that we are halfway through November. This past week, I started making up Christmas planters at a local garden centre.

There is nothing like working freshly cut evergreen boughs as you make planters, swags, garlands and wreaths. The fragrance of pine and cedar seems to revive memories of Christmases past.

There are so many ways you can incorporate fresh greens into your outdoor holiday decorating.

Using evergreen boughs and trees is one of the longest Christmas traditions. The year-round green foliage provides us with a sign of hope to carry us through the winter and into the new year.

Outdoors, there are countless uses for greens and one of the greatest things is that you do not have to compromise your style to do so.

Whether you enjoy the more contemporary, simple lines of design, a more classic look or a very natu ral, woodland look, you can losing moisture as quickly.



achieve the style you desire with fresh greenery.

There is the traditional use of porch planters at the front entrance, the wreath on the door and garlands around the door, windows and trim of the house.

Also, think of other areas where you might be adding a little extra holiday cheer — areas that are still focal from inside the house such as outside the patio door or an area visible from the kitchen window.

The greenery used in planters with soil will usually stay fresh-looking well into winter — sometimes as late as March.

Other outdoor decorations not placed into soil, such as wreaths, swags and garlands, will dry up a little quicker than the greens in the planters.

If you can spray the wreaths and swags with some water periodically, that will help them last a bit longer.

There is also a product called Wilt-Pruf, an antidesiccant that, when sprayed on the evergreen boughs, will help the greens from

Here are some tips to consider when thinking about using fresh greenery this season:

Before shopping for your boughs, you may need to take some measurements first to make decisionmaking easier and to avoid repeated trips to the store. Some measurements you may need to know are: The size of the door or wall area where you are hanging a wreath; the distance around a doorway or along a railing or fence where you want garland; and, the size of existing decorative pots, so you know what pot size will fit inside.

Do you want to coordinate colours and types of greenery across your home or opt for unique decorations in each area?

What style do you want to convey? For a modern look, choose strong bold lines and keep the lines and selection of greenery simple.

When shopping for your boughs, make sure that the foliage seems fresh to the touch. If the foliage feels dry and you are starting to see a bit of browning, these boughs or garlands will not

last very long. If you see a lot of needles dropping when handling it, this is also a sign the greenery is drying out.

Rehydrate your greenery. Making sure your greenery has adequate moisture is the key to them lasting longer. A lot of the boughs you purchase are cut weeks in advance of you buying them. If you are using boughs to make an outdoor planter, make sure you make a fresh cut on each stem before inserting them into the soil.

Keep the soil moist until it freezes up. For wreaths, garlands and swags, it is best to spritz them every three to four days to keep them green longer.

So, if you are "pineing" to "spruce" up your décor "fir" the holidays (pun intended ... I know, kinda sappy), add some live greenery both outside and inside your home this Christmas.

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











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Karen Csoli is director of Niagara College's health, wellness and accessibility services. She says new funding for student supports will go a long way to helping them when they need it the most. SUBMITTED

## Niagara College to expand mental health and addiction services

Richard Wright Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Student mental health and addiction support is being boosted at Niagara College's NOTL and Welland campuses.

The expanded services, officially announced by the college on Nov. 6, are a result of funding the provincial government pledged in May. They will be introduced in the coming weeks by the college's health, wellness and accessibility services and Indigenous education departments.

Director of health, wellness and accessibility services Karen Csoli said the college is excited about the ability to evolve in such a way that will help students well into the future.

"We were very focused on what are the better ways that we can support the student," she said.

"As the students themselves change year by year, generation by generation and program by program, we need to be looking at what services we offer, how we structure supports, how we staff our supports and change to meet their needs."

Directly, the funds will support reduced physician wait times on campus, creating culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous students, addressing complex mental health needs of all students and direct channels to external addiction counselling.

The college will receive \$868,625 over two years.

At the spring announcement, the Ontario government pledged \$5 million in funding for 10 post-secondary institutions across the province.

wright@niagaranow.com

#### **Obituaries**

## Beverly Griffin-Munkley



GRIFFIN-MUNKLEY, Beverly Anne —

It is with profound sadness that we share the news that Beverly Griffin-Munkley passed away peacefully after a short illness on Nov. 8 with loved

She was predeceased by her beloved twin sister

ones by her side.

Barbara Griffin who was deeply missed and with whom she shared a lifetime of adventures. Bev would say at times that twins are "two separate beings conjoined at the heart". She is survived by her sister Sandra Griffin-Reading, her brother-in-law Herb Reading, her former husband and lifelong friend Doug Munkley. Bev will be dearly missed by many other people she touched in her very full life. She will be missed as well by her cat and "darling boy" Cocoa.

Bev was a very caring soul and a high school summer job at a nursing home led her to a nursing degree and to treating patients in need for many years at St. Catharines General Hospital. Also in her teens she began going to antique auctions and this hobby later became a career. It provided an outlet for her creative side, turning vintage into treasures. She and Barb often teamed up as "Ephemera Too" for antique shows, Flamborough being their favourite, or at their booths at the Cookstown Antique Market. Most recently, in her hometown of Niagara on the Lake she kept a spot at Antiques on Creek which she loved and where she had many friends who will miss the sound of her laughter. She had a unique style and an artistic flare specializing in vintage quilts and textiles, often on furniture she had reupholstered. Bev was a woman with many talents, amazing creativity and bubbling with a fun energy: from relocating and restoring an 1830's home, to creating magical gardens and fabulous family celebrations, to caring for Barb when she struggled with a lengthy illness. Sadly, her bright light has gone out.

"If there ever comes a day when we can't be together, keep me in your heart. I'll stay there forever."

A celebration of life for Bev will be held in the new year.

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

## Lynne McKay



MCKAY, Lynne Marie
— 1953 to 2024.

A loving, brilliant, gentle and caring woman who enriched the lives of all who were fortunate enough to have known her has died. Her passing leaves those closest to her to mourn and turn to cherished memories for solace. Her life partner

and soul mate Fred Stark, her sister Jan McKay Chaloner, brothers Cam McKay (Gwen) and David McKay (Marian), Fred's daughter Jessica Draper (Kevin) and son Nathan Stark (Sarah). Also remembering wonderful times with Lynne are her grandchildren Tryston Stark, Desirae Stark and Alexander Stark.

Lynne was born in the UK. Hers was a military family that moved often, spending time at various bases in England as well as in Germany. Her experience of forever being the new kid is where she honed her exceptional social skills. Encountering new people either individually or in groups delighted her, and her charm and grace endeared her to her new acquaintances. On her father's retirement, and at the age of 17, the family relocated to Calgary, where the McKay family has deep roots. She had heard stories about Canada, Calgary and the Rocky Mountains, but this was a totally new environment that would take some getting used to. So she did just that, finished her schooling and embarked on what would be a decades long career in Financial Services. Her career took her to the coast where she had many happy years living and working on the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. In 1987, on a business trip to Toronto, she met Fred, and all of a sudden the stars were aligned, as they had both finally met the one they were meant to be with. Lynne soon relocated to Toronto and shortly thereafter she and Fred left long-term employers, formed their own business and travelled extensively all over the world. Retirement in 2015 allowed additional time for personal travel and time in the garden that Lynne tended with joy. She loved family, friends, colleagues, poetry, photography, sport (tennis, golf and skiing in the Rockies), fashion, bridge, gardening, nature, animals, music, art, fresh green veggies, martinis and sashimi. Oh yes, and Marmite on toast. Oh dear one, we will miss you so.

A gathering to celebrate Lynne's life will be planned for a later date. Should you choose to make a donation in her memory, her favourite charity was Covenant House. Memories can be shared through the Morgan Funeral Home website.

#### Classifieds



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#### **PUBLIC NOTICE:**

Hear ye, Hear ye, RE: Nov. 5th 2024 A.D.

Ten deeds done, for full viewing, visit:

https://public-notice-board.blogspot.com/p/public-notice-renov-5th-2024-ad-ten.html



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

#### Grant Belau



BELAU, Grant Eric — Grant Eric Belau, aged 65, passed away peacefully in Alberta on Aug. 24, 2024.

Grant grew up in Niagara-on-the-Lake where he attended Niagara District High School and obtained an Engineering degree from McMaster University in 1980. He settled in Alberta, working initially in oil and

later with solar energy and Hostelling International. Grant had a love of the environment, travel and peoples, visiting over 50 countries in adventurous fashion.

He is predeceased by his parents Erwin and Brigitte, and survived by his wife Arisa, sister Marianne (Daryl), brother Ken (Rima), nieces and nephews Ben, Cheryn, Elena, Luisa and Tomas, many cousins, and greatest friend Ray Stevenson.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, Dec. 28, from 3 to 7 p.m. in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For details, please contact the family at 705-730-3788.

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



Saturday, Nov. 30 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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