



25 litres of oil spilled into Virgil reservoir cleaned up

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

What started as an attempt to put out a fire on a street sweeper last Wednesday led to 25 litres of oil being spilled in the Virgil Reservoir.

Now, the province has gotten involved and is monitoring the situation.

The spill happened after fire and emergency crews responded to a street sweeper that caught fire next to the NOTL Hydro offices, the town told The Lake Report.

"As a result of the extinguishment process, some runoff contaminated with oil entered a catch basin and

Continued on Page 3

Sweet, sweet peaches

Hot, dry summer leaves Niagara peach yield smaller, but tastier



Peach farmer Scott Epp explains that while peaches are smaller this year due to excessive heat, they're sweeter than ever. PAIGE SEBURN

Paige Seburn | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

Peach harvest is underway in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where farmers say this year's weather has trimmed yields but boosted flavour.

At Epp Family Fruit Farms on East and West Line, Scott Epp said this year "has been challenging for every grower across the region."

"It seems like it's been hotter than normal," he said.

The hot days and nights have sped up ripening, leaving peaches softer and slightly smaller, which could mean a lower yield this year, said Epp.

But the upside: the heat has also packed the peaches with more of a sugary punch, says longtime farmer Arnie Lepp from Niagara Orchard and Vineyard Corp.

"The fruit is incredibly sweet," he said. "Yields are down a little bit, not a lot."

The season begins with pruning the peach trees in early April, after workers arrive in late March.

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Merger of Glencairn and neighbouring property gets green light

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's committee of adjustment has given its thumbs up to plans to bring together a

portion of the Glencairn Hall property with a plot of land next door, owned by prominent developer Benny Marotta.

During its latest meeting, the committee approved a boundary change merging a portion of Glencairn Hall's lands at 14795 Niagara River Pwky. with its southern neighbour at 14785 Niagara River Pwky., two pieces of land that once had a shared history.

The half-acre, pie-shaped section will bring Marotta's property within 12 metres of the former Glencairn Hall building. The northern property at 14795 is owned by Scott Corbett, who lists an Etobicoke address.

In the meeting on Thursday, town planner Connor MacIsaac, who said staff supports the boundary adjustment, told the committee there are no development plans for the site.

Neither Corbett nor Marotta attended the meeting — representatives appeared on their behalf.

MacIsaac said the town received only one objection to the merge, from a local resident concerned

Continued on Page 3



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Oil spill being investigated by authorities

Continued from Front Page

subsequently flowed into the Virgil Reservoir," said Marah Minor, communications co-ordinator for the town.

"The town's environmental services team responded promptly and has managed the situation."

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks confirmed an oily sheen was observed at the Lower Virgil Reservoir the day after the spill.

They estimated the total number that was spilled as 27 litres.

Minor said absorbent material was placed on the roadway to prevent oil from reaching the basin that leads to the reservoir. She said a "small quantity that entered



Absorbent pads were used to remove oil that entered the reservoir. DAN SMEENK

the reservoir was removed" using absorbent pads.

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority said it is aware of the spill and is working with the province, which it has notified.

"We have also filed a pollution report with accompanying photos," said Erika Navarro, the authority's

communications and public relations supervisor.

She said the "the matter remains" with the environment ministry and that the conservation authority "will continue to work with them as more information becomes available."

Navarro also said the ministry advised it will

follow up with the town and "their local environmental officer."

Minor said the province consulted with staff on the oil spill.

She said town staff will continue to monitor the site "to ensure everything remains in order."

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Merger follows **arson fire** of Glencairn Hall

Continued from Front Page

about potential impacts on heritage features and trees in the area.

All members of the committee voted in favour of bringing the two plots of land together, except Paul Johnston, who raised repeated concerns during the meeting, which he attended remotely.

Johnston questioned the rationale behind the deal, particularly why Corbett, the owner giving up land, applied for the adjustment.

"The applicant is the lot owner giving up property with no indication of why," Johnston said.

He added: "I don't understand why, as an owner, I would give up that much property when I have an adequate sized lot to do what I need to do."

Overall, he said he remained confused.

"That's my feeling right now," he said. "I just don't understand it."

Corbett was represented by two staff members from NPG Planning Solutions, including planner Rob Fiedler.

"I'm not privy to the private arrangements between the property owner and the owner to the south as to why one would sell to the other," Fiedler said.

Other committee members did not comment on the proposal.

The southern property, also known in town records as the Larkin-Dimitrieff property, is vacant except for a chimney and a small stone schoolhouse at the rear.

The schoolhouse dates to the mid-19th century, when entrepreneur John Hamilton owned Glencairn Hall.

Historically, the two addresses were part of one property, but plot #14785 was severed from #14795 in 2009, MacIsaac said.

According to a 2011 document from the Town of NOTL sent to the Ontario Heritage Trust, from 1808

until 1888, the original Glencairn lot was eight acres, but eventually grew to 10.

"A survey completed in 1888 indicated that the lot had grown to 10 acres," the document reads.

"The extra two acres were probably acquired over the years through constant usage. More recently, the southerly 2.58 acres, 14785 Niagara River Parkway, was severed."

The town's document said the schoolhouse was "probably" built in the 1830s as a school for Hamilton's estate workers. There also used to be two other buildings on 14785, according to the 2011 town document.

"The other buildings include the caretaker's house and a large carriage house constructed during John Larkin's ownership of the property," it said.

A stamp on the carriage house indicates that James Calvert constructed and "possibly" designed the

building, the document states, as well as that he "may have" taken influence from magazine features on fireproof houses.

"It is one of a number of buildings that were built of cement on the three large farms established by John Larkin in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

The adjustment follows a fire in April that destroyed Glencairn Hall, a cherished historic structure in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Police are investigating the fire as an act of arson.

In 2022, the municipal heritage committee proposed relocating the schoolhouse closer to the road to allow for residential development.

It is unclear what will happen to it now with the merge being approved.

"All that's left of cultural value is the stone property," said Ben Holthof, who was on the municipal heritage committee at the time.

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Top: Rose, Jemma, Noah and Vincent van Schaik after Noah and Jemma's first day back at St. Davids Public School. Noah is in Grade 4 and Jemma is in Grade 8. Bottom left: Jacob Lundqvist, Eli Pfeffer and Daniel Salvador on the first day back. Bottom right: David Tebbutt and his daughter Norah, who is in senior kindergarten at St. Davids. DAN SMEENK

Back to class excitement fills NOTL elementary schools

Dan Smeenik
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Across Niagara-on-the-Lake on Tuesday, parents and children awoke ready to greet the start of another year of school.

The town's three elementary schools are back in session, and Crossroads Public School principal Kate Fish, who has led the Virgil school since 2021, said she's thrilled with how seamlessly the transition back to school went.

"This was our smoothest first day yet," said Fish. "The school is a well-oiled machine now. The staff all know each other quite well and collaborate amazingly well."

St. Michael Catholic Elementary School principal Emma Fera-Massi shared the same enthusiasm. Even after decades in education, she said the first day still brings her joy.

"I've worked in Catholic education for 30 years, and the first day of school is still exciting for me," said Fera-Massi. "I love seeing the excitement of our students and staff as they arrive at school on the first day."

Parents and students around town were also in good spirits.

Logan Loewen, a Grade 7 student at Crossroads and a competitive soccer player, said he kept up with his studies over the summer by reading curriculum and other books.

Because he's often pulled from class for games, staying ahead helps him manage both school and sports.

"I feel like I can do good and I'm excited for the challenges of this school year," he said. He added that his favourite parts of school are meeting new teachers and classmates.

His mother, Ella Loewen, said she's grateful for the support her son receives at Crossroads.

"I also want to share how grateful we are for every teacher at Crossroads School," she said.

"They have been incredibly supportive and understanding ... we feel truly blessed to be part of such a caring school and the wonderful NOTL community."

Parents at St. Davids Public School expressed similar appreciation.

David Tebbutt said his daughter Norah, who is starting senior kindergarten, had a smooth start to the school year.

"We had a fun morning," he said. "She was excited to go back."

Eric Pfeffer, whose daughter Leah just started Grade 9 in Niagara Falls, was picking up his younger sons, Eli and Niall, at St. Davids.

He said the kids were in high spirits and joked about the change in pace.

"It's freedom again," he said with a laugh.

Vincent and Rose van Schaik, whose children Noah and Jemma are in grades 4 and 8, also had a positive first day.

Vincent noted that the usual preparations went

well, with some added peace of mind this year.

"I really appreciate the town and the bylaw officers to make sure the traffic is safe," he said.

Back-to-school shopping is often part of the annual routine, but rising costs have raised concerns for some families.

A new report by Canadian market research firm Leger found that six in 10 parents said school supply costs were higher this year than the last.

Most NOTL parents who spoke to The Lake Report said the costs weren't a major issue, though some did notice an increase.

"There certainly was an increase in the cost this year," said Rose.

Ella Loewen also said she noticed the higher prices.

At Crossroads, however, Fish said the school provides all required supplies and also offers financial assistance and a nutrition program.

"There's nothing they're required to purchase for school other than a pair of indoor and outdoor shoes," she said.

For most families, the excitement of a new school year outweighed any concerns about cost.

Catherine Lowrey, whose children are five and nine and attend St. Davids, said she'll miss them while they're at school, but she's happy to see them excited.

"They're very happy to be back," she said. "We love the school."

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Taking in the view



The last weekend of August offered a break from the rain and cloudy conditions, with many heading out to enjoy the end of the summer. Doug and Bonnie Krause, from Niagara Falls, sit together enjoying the view of the sailboats going by at the mouth of the Niagara River from Riverbeach Park on Aug. 31. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Residents push back against Rand plan

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” appears to be Solmar Development Corp’s motto when it comes to the proposed Rand Estate development — but many Niagara-on-the-Lake residents remain firmly opposed.

More than 50 people attended a virtual open house hosted by the town on Tuesday, where Solmar presented its latest attempt to rezone land near the historic Rand Estate. Most participants expressed strong disapproval of the project.

“This is a precedent-setting event,” said Gracie Jones, one of the attendees.

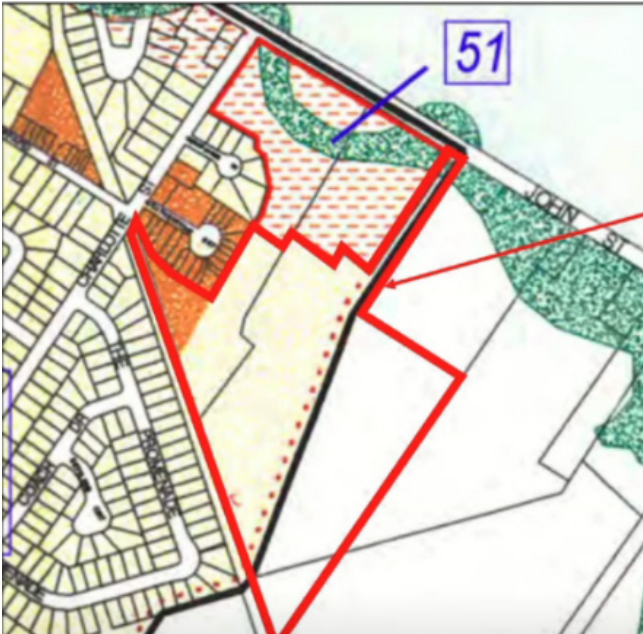
Solmar is seeking to reclassify parcels of land at 200 John St. E. and 588 Charlotte St. from agricultural to low-density residential.

The plan includes, in principle, a private north-south road connecting to John Street, just east of the Rand Estate, with an emergency access point at Charlotte Street.

David Riley of SGL Planning and Design Inc. presented the application on Solmar’s behalf. He emphasized that the current submission is limited to future land use changes and does not include any immediate development plans.

A revised development application would follow “at a future date,” he said.

One triangular section of land currently zoned as agricultural would be brought



Solmar’s reclassification proposal is its latest attempt to make way for development at the Rand Estate. A triangular section of the white agricultural area is being proposed for rezoning into low-density housing. SOURCED

in line with the urban boundary as defined by the Niagara Region’s official plan, Riley said.

Riley also cited the Ontario Land Tribunal’s final order in April, which he said permits the proposed changes related to the official plan. However, some residents challenged that interpretation.

Judy McLeod said the tribunal did not approve construction of a “panhandle road” — meaning, access to the planned development through building a road on a panhandle of land on 200 John St. E. — despite attempts to get it approved.

“When does no mean no?” she asked.

Town planner Aimee Aldermann, who led the meeting, confirmed the proposal met the requirements for a complete application and was therefore eligible to

be presented.

Riley addressed earlier concerns raised by the land tribunal, including road safety.

He said the private road would feature a minimum nine-metre curb radius on both sides before meeting John Street.

He also noted a minimum 14.5-metre distance would be maintained between the western edge of the driveway at 210 John St. and the eastern edge of the pavement.

He added that the impact on trees and heritage property would be “considered” in future development plans.

Lyle Hall, chair of the Niagara Foundation, criticized this aspect of the project.

“(It would) result in the removal of a much larger number of the trees,” he said, referencing town heritage planner Denise Horne’s 2023 report and

the tribunal decision. Anne Halloven raised concerns about the planned emergency access point. She said the local fire department believed it was too narrow for emergency vehicles and widening it could mean damaging valuable heritage features.

Riley acknowledged some of those concerns.

“It would require some change,” he said, adding that those changes “would still be subject to approval” from the town.

He also confirmed that heritage permits would be required for any construction within designated heritage areas.

Solmar’s earlier attempts to develop the Rand Estate came with heavy criticism from both the town in 2023, with Horne’s report, and by the Ontario Land Tribunal last October.

The tribunal sent Solmar back to the drawing board to revise the parts of the plan it said needed to be re-evaluated.

Solmar appealed this decision, which was dismissed by the tribunal in a final order in April.

No planning approvals or heritage permits were granted to develop the estate or alter its heritage features.

The Rand Estate, also known as Randwood, is a historic property named after George Rand, who purchased the land in 1910.

A public meeting on the proposal will take place during the town’s planning committee of the whole on Sept. 9.

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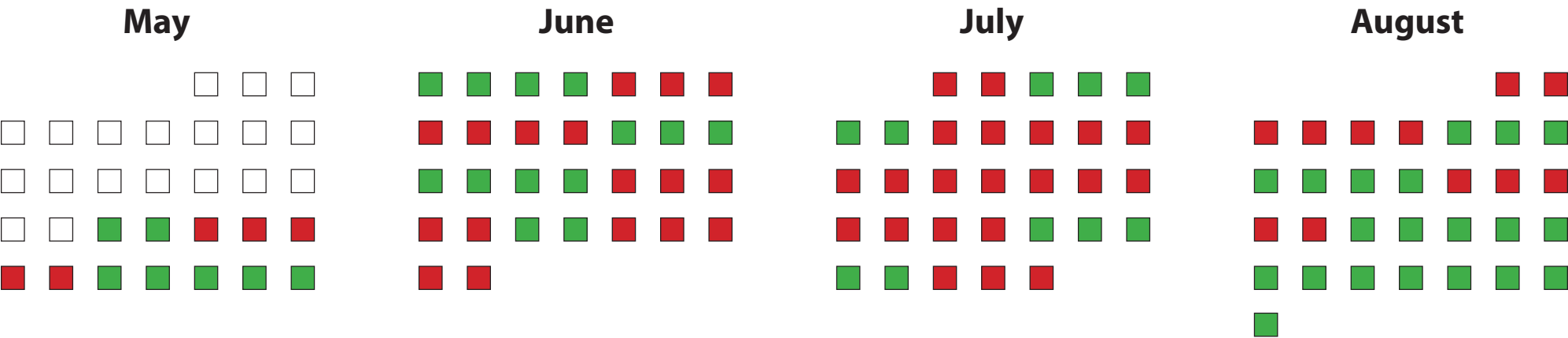


Classifieds

SEEKING BAND MATES
Bass and lead guitar players to join a Thursday afternoon jam near Virgil. Call RC at 289-213-3747



People cool off at Queen’s Royal Beach on June 21, when the region’s tests indicated the water contained unsafe levels of E. coli bacteria. Some beachgoers said the single sign at the beach is not enough to let the public know if the water is unsafe. The current system requires people to check the water’s status on the region’s website. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



Shaw artists and local talent to share the stage Sept. 15

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

An intimate church in the heart of Niagara-on-the-Lake is set to transform into a stage of surprises on Sept. 15.

The Autumn in the Air concert, now in its third year, will open its doors at 6 p.m., mixing classical selections with unexpected performances, said Nehassaiu deGannes, a Shaw Festival ensemble member in her second season and volunteer with the Boxhill Doherty committee.

Unlike a traditional program, each performer chooses their own piece — usually something meaningful or musically challenging, said deGannes.

“It’s not an event that is curated or directed by somebody,” she said. Starting at 7 p.m. and going until around 8:30, the concert will be performed without microphones at St Mark’s Anglican Church — letting the building’s acoustics carry every note. “The music just rings out in that space,” deGannes said, thanking the church for allowing the event to be held there.

New this year is a 6 p.m. toonie raffle to start off the evening, featuring small art-works and donated treasures from the community.

Attendees will see another side of people they thought they knew, deGannes said — whether it’s an ensemble member stepping into a new



Shaw Festival ensemble member Nehassaiu deGannes welcomes the community to the Autumn in the Air concert at St. Mark’s Anglican Church on Sept. 15. PAIGE SEBURN

role or a neighbour revealing a hidden talent.

Shaw ensemble members David Adams and Shane Carty dreamed up the original idea for the concert, she said, but Adams and

fellow ensemble member Jade Repeta are curating the music this year.

“Folks will have seen them on stage in Anything Goes and the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” she said.

“It’s this lovely, relaxed opportunity to connect with each other as Niagara-on-the-Lake residents,” she said. “For artists to sort of go into the treasure chest of their creative hearts.”

The evening doubles as a fundraiser for the Boxill Doherty Fund, which helps local theatre artists who are in need. It’s deGannes’ first year on the committee.

“I’m going to be there in a support role this year, as well as in the audience enjoying the music,” she said. “I attended the concert last fall, for the first time, and really enjoyed the event.”

She said the show will give residents a chance to engage with the local arts scene — one shared by

community musicians and Shaw ensemble members.

“We’re treated to these amazing vocal selections and instrumental selections,” deGannes said.

But the lineup is kept under wraps until the night of the show.

“You get to unwrap the present of the concert the night of,” she said, clarifying it’s not an open microphone; all musicians were preselected.

“There really are these wonderful surprises,” she added.

Tickets remain \$35 — the same price since the concert began. They can be purchased online at eventbrite.ca by searching “Autumn in the Air.”

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com

Notice of Transition

QEW Garden City Skyway Bridge Twinning Project Niagara Region, City of St. Catharines, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

THE PROJECT

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) retained Stantec to carry out a 30-day consultation process in advance of the QEW Garden City Skyway Bridge Twinning Project located in the Region of Niagara, connecting the City of St. Catharines and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The project will address and improve the structural and traffic safety needs of the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) crossing of the Welland Canal. The purpose of this notice is to inform you that the consultation process has been completed, and the project has transitioned to the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities and Municipal Expressways, 2024* (2024 Class EA). A Transition Memo was prepared for this project and can be found at www.qewgcs.ca.

THE PROCESS

This project will now follow the process for a Group ‘B’ project in accordance with the 2024 Class EA. Transitioning will not result in any changes to the project’s design, potential for impacts, or potential environmental effects. The rationale for transitioning from the requirements of the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities, 2000* (2000 Class EA), to the 2024 Class EA, is to improve the efficiency of the process, and reduce duplication, while maintaining strong environmental oversight and protection. Any commitments made during the 2000 Class EA process will be considered and/or addressed or fulfilled under the 2024 Class EA process.

Information on the project, including the process under the 2024 Class EA, can be found at www.qewgcs.ca. The record of consultation can also be found at www.qewgcs.ca.

CONTACTS

If you have any questions about this notice or the study, please contact one of the following Project Team members:

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THIS NOTICE WAS ISSUED ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2025.



You are encouraged to visit the project website at www.qewgcs.ca where project information including study notices, background information, etc., is available. You can also submit comments or questions to the project team on the project website.

If you have any accessibility requirements in order to participate in this project, please contact one of the project team members listed above. Comments and information are being collected to assist the MTO in meeting the requirements of the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*. Information will be collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. All comments will be maintained on file for use during the study and, with the exception of personal information, may be included in study documentation and become part of the public record.

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Porch music a new trend in NOTL?



This group of musicians came together on Saturday, Aug. 30 to provide a new sort of soundtrack for Niagara-on-the-Lake's farm country. In honour of Play Music on the Porch Day, an international movement held the last Saturday of August, these friends played music together on the porch of Applewood Hollow on Four Mile Creek Road. Here, Colleen Wilder sings with Brian Andres by her side on guitar, Jane Andres on accordion Peter Jellard and Anna Marie Saunders both on the fiddle.

AMBER FARRINGTON

Artists Circle to host free exhibition Sept. 11

Staff
The Lake Report

For the first time, six of Niagara's passionate artists will be bringing their work together for an exhibition in Niagara-on-the-Lake next week.

This group of painters, who call themselves the Artists Circle, will be displaying their work, an

exhibition of original paintings titled "Inspired Impressions," on Thursday, Sept. 11 from 2:30 to 5 p.m. in the NOTL Community Centre's Simpson Room.

This group of creatives, Anne Blackwell, Christine Famula, Myrna Hynes, Laura Jeffrey, Chris Phibbs and Ann Watson, has been meeting monthly for many years to share their work,



Art by Chris Phibbs.

discuss techniques, tour local galleries and create together.

Almost all of them are

from NOTL, save for Christine Famula, who is from Niagara Falls.

"Inspired Impressions," a collection of works in watercolour, acrylic, pastel and mixed media, will be the first time these artists' paintings will be displayed together.

Admission is free. Light refreshments will be provided.

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Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre, 2 hours 45 minutes, one intermission. Ends Oct. 4. By Pearl Cleage. Directed by Kimberley Rampersad.

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

It is a hot, steamy summer night in 1930. We are standing street level outside a brownstone multi-unit apartment in Harlem, New York. Flashing lights and the screeching track noises of the subway rise from a grate underfoot.

Upstairs live four people. They are friends. A costume designer, a singer/dancer, a health-care activist and a medical doctor. They flow in and out of one another’s dwellings and daily lives.

Their shared dreams rise and fall, worn down by circumstances caused by a

multitude of factors. These include the onset of the Great Depression, economic uncertainty, job losses and racism. These are the everyday lives of everyday people who persist aided by conviction, resilience and during Prohibition, alcohol. They are Black.

The Great Migration has brought tens of thousands of Black Southerners north, fleeing bigotry, vigilante violence, exploitation and Jim Crow segregation laws in search of a better future.

In New York, they will become part of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s, an intellectual and cultural movement of music, dance, fashion, literature and politics that will bring the Black experience into American cultural history.

Guy Jacobs makes costumes for nightclub dancers, but he dreams only of Josephine Baker, the undisputed nightclub star of Europe. If he keeps mailing his designs to her, one day



1930s Harlem comes alive in the Shaw’s production of “Blues for an Alabama Sky,” starring Adam McKensy, Mary Antonini, Allan Louis and Virgilia Griffith. DAVID COOPER

she will send for him to join her in Paris.

Stewart Adam McKensy as Guy nails the role as the unabashed gay, at a time when homosexuality is against the law and opposed by Black leaders such as Adam Clayton Powell Sr. at the Abyssinian Baptist Church.

His sartorial elegance doesn’t always protect him from being roughed up. Guy may not make the rent, but there is always champagne at the ready.

Sam Thomas, a compassionate medical doctor, is

overwhelmed by a constant flow of patients at a local hospital. He longs to spend time with Delia Patterson, a health-care clerical activist who, inspired by the famed sex educator Margaret Sanger, is seeking support to establish a local birth control clinic.

Allan Louis is solid, giving an outstanding character performance in a core role. His doctor personifies the elite, educated, conservative, well-dressed and mannered Black man who fits the values of wider society norms.

His Delia, as performed

by Mary Antonini, is alarmingly and curiously paced throughout. She darted in and out of the spaces in an uptight staccato manner, suggesting a prude needing to be let loose. But it became tiring. More nuance in voice and expressions would have been more convincing.

J.J. Gerber is the man from Alabama named Le-land Cunningham. He is the quiet outlier that doesn’t fit, the weird, unsettling type. He is the man who will pursue Angel, the singer/dancer, because she has the face of his dead wife.

He is the southern Christian Black man who holds deeply conservative values about faith, gender and family. His is another kind of judgmental bigotry.

Now to the showgirl, Angel. Virgilia Griffith was replaced by the understudy, Keira Sangster, on the night I saw the performance. My understanding of the role of an understudy is that the script has been memorized: the understudy knows the

lines, can sing the songs, understands the blocking, the choreography and the intentions.

The understudy glides in and seamlessly performs. Often to acclaim. The other actors need not compensate.

Ms. Sangster is printed in the program as the understudy for Virgilia Griffith. Her name was on the board at the theatre entrance, and she was verbally announced to the audience with a caveat that performances can vary. Uh oh ...

The play begins with Angel careening into Guy’s room at 3 a.m. She is drunk, loud, upset. In this performance, Sangster as Angel held the script in the air and read as she stumbled about. She continued to read the script throughout the play from beginning to end.

This was a disappointment for a play that offers so much.

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



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Parks and Recreation Masterplan

Shaping the Future of Recreation:
Building Tomorrow's Parks Today

The Town has entered the next phase of developing its Parks and Recreation Masterplan. The draft Plan, developed by the Town’s consultants, is now available for public review. We want to hear your feedback on the proposed recommendations!

Review the Plan and Share Your Feedback

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- Visit the project page:
www.jointheconversationnotl.org/parks-and-recreation-master-plan

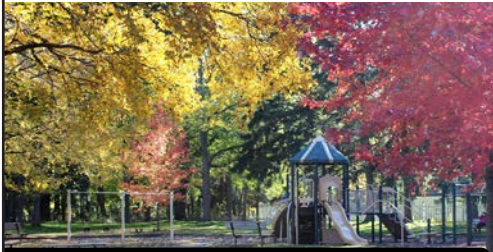
Scan the QR code to review the Plan and learn more.

SCAN





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SCAN





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BKind Grateful
With Bradley Hamilton
#43: If new neighbours moved in, host a 'get to know the street party' by inviting old neighbours to meet the new ones. Great friends start with an introduction.

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



Contributed by Patty Garriock
"There is something interesting in every moment we live." - Mae C. Jemison

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Good dogs cool off
Go fetch! Mia, the fox red labrador, gets some air as she jumps to catch a toy thrown by her owner, Emily Vandelaar, at the Niagara Pool's dog swim party, held on Sept. 1. Pups got to end the summer with a splash at this free event before the pool closes for the season.
DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Opinion
Old Town braces for Benny's big dig



THE TURNER REPORT
Garth Turner
Columnist

The boys finished their prep work a couple of days ago. Now the serious machines can get in. And the Big Dig can start.

"We're going down seven metres," the site super told me. "It's deep, yeah, but we've sure gone deeper. Anyway, there'll be a lot of dump trucks hauling out of here."

You bet. A hole 23 feet deep is no backyard swimming pool. It will consume a good chunk of the Parliament Oak site, rising toward King Street as it transitions from parking garage to hotel foundation and car ramp.

The plan is for two levels of parking with a garage entrance off King. (Loading docks and garbage will be accessed off Gage and Centre streets.) But even with almost 250 spaces, odds are cars will be everywhere in the 'hood when the hotel is rocking and a wedding spills onto the patio.

As you know, the Parliament Oak Boutique Hotel (as it is now called) will be a honking big, four-storey



An excavator is ready to dig a 23-foot hole at Parliament Oak to accommodate underground parking. GARTH TURNER

219-room inn, conference centre and event venue plunked in the middle of an Old Town residential area. Houses on four sides.

Approvals for this thing flowed swiftly through a pro-development council despite a mob of citizens who protested outside town hall.

That stroking of developer Benny Marotta continued a few weeks ago when NOTL councillors voted in favour of the region dropping almost a million bucks in development charges related to the Big Dig. Bumping up underground parking to 248 spaces triggered that extra cost. Our guys blinked. So taxpayers get the bill.

Now the consequences.

Locals with engineering expertise warn about the water that will pour into the dig and the pumps that will be required to forever remove it. Others warn the flooding risk for the 'hood will be increased.

Folks living opposite fear King will have to be widened with a turning lane into the complex. And others just see this as a crowning piece of evidence that those we elected have a vision of this place that is, well, startling.

One brave soul making noise is Hamish Kerr. The longtime local was an Old Town store owner, Chamber of Commerce director and head of the Queen Street Business Association. Now he's just retired and disgusted.

"Please do not think we are Luddites," he said (including Leslie, his squeeze). "We believe in the direction that the wineries, the Shaw Theatre and the hotels have taken (with notable recent exceptions such as the 'Airport Hotel' that you alluded to). However, we do have very serious concerns about Queen Street being treated as an adjunct for buses en route to Niagara Falls, and the support net-

work required to satisfy the appetite of the passengers, thereby ruining the overall ambience and raison d'être of Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Kerr argues the Chamber is pushing for overtourism and that short-term vacay rentals "are so out of control that the Old Town is almost bereft of owners living full-time in their own homes."

Queen Street is corrupted, he adds, as retailers morph into gelato flingers. "The street has become one of 'broken dreams' for too many to count. However, the hordes have to be nourished. There are now around 35 'foodie' places on Queen Street ... are we just a food court for the outlet mall?"

Well, the place was packed this past long weekend. The parks, too. The horses trotted overtime. Gelato and ice cream droppings made the sidewalks sticky. Selfies everywhere.

Hamish may yearn for times gone forever, but the body count on Queen speaks to the appeal of this place in a region where population is exploding, history has been paved over and every politician, plus the provincial government, is singing the same refrain: "Build, baby, build."

They all want to come here. Because we're different.

Oh, wait ...

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

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Lack of scrutiny in planning department

The following letter was sent to Niagara-on-the-Lake's town councillors. A copy was shared with The Lake Report for publication.

Dear members of council,
I am writing to express serious concern with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's planning department and its approach to development approvals over the past three years.

From hotels to rezoning applications, it appears that virtually every proposal brought forward has been approved without visible or meaningful challenge, amendment or denial.

To residents, this looks less like a thoughtful planning process and more like a rubber-stamp exercise.

It is important to recognize that planning policies, regulations, and legislation are not absolutes — they are subject to interpretation and professional judgment. That interpretation should ensure that development aligns with the broader interests of the community.

When every application is approved exactly as submitted, it suggests that the planning department has adopted a one-sided inter-



What this rendering of a proposed hotel doesn't show is the four streets of residential homes that will surround it. Letter writer Allan Bisback asks why councillors are simply giving the green light to developments, despite loud outcry from residents who elected them. FILE

pretation that consistently favours applicants rather than residents, heritage, or sustainability.

Equally troubling is council's frequent reliance on the statement that "staff recommendations are professional" and therefore should be followed. This is a cop-out.

While staff provide professional advice, it is ultimately council — not unelected staff — who are entrusted by the electors of Niagara-on-the-Lake to make the final decisions. Deferring to staff as though their recommendations are binding is an abdication of the responsibility that comes with elected office.

This pattern raises trou-

bling questions:

Why has the town not rejected, delayed or substantially modified a single major application in recent years?

Is the planning department exercising its duty to apply independent judgment, or simply facilitating developers' interests?

Why does council appear unwilling to challenge or question staff advice, when it is council's role to weigh competing interests and make decisions in the best interest of residents?

When approval becomes the default outcome, the credibility of the entire planning system is undermined. Residents reasonably wonder whether applica-

tions are being judged on merit, or whether approval has become automatic regardless of consequences.

This perception erodes public trust in both the planning department and in council's oversight.

I urge council to take immediate steps to:

1. Audit the planning department's approval record for the past three years.

2. Provide a public explanation as to why applications are so consistently approved without alteration and,

3. Re-establish a planning process that prioritizes community values, heritage protection, and 'sustainable' growth rather than unchecked development.

Niagara-on-the-Lake's unique character is being put at risk. If council does not assert stronger leadership and demand accountability from the planning department, the town will lose the very qualities that make it special.

Residents deserve transparency, scrutiny and a planning process that serves the community — not just developers.

Allan Bisback
NOTL



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: LET'S BOOZE IT UP

You'll get a bit "fuzzy" if you have too many of this drink that combines peach schnapps and orange juice.

Last issue category: NAMES IN THE DICTIONARY

Clue: Chip a piece of furniture, or cut yourself shaving.

Answer: What is Nick?

Answered first by: Tuija Johansson

Also answered correctly (in order) by:
Sue Rautenberg, Margie Enns, Bob Wheatley, Terry Nord, Mike Gander, Jane Andersen, Jeff Lake, Lisa Traficante, Claudia Grimwood, Lynda Collet, Wade Durling, Esther VanGorder, Jim Dandy, Nancy Rocca, Rob Hutchison, Catherine Clarke, Sylvia Wiens, Danielle Gault, Katie Reimer, Wesley Mann, Marla Percy, Bill VanGorder, Edna Groff, David Spencer, KC King, Heather Hannan

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

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

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Home to office, the commute resumes this fall



BOTTOM LINE

Steve McGuinness
Columnist

Another Labour Day has passed us by. Students are back to school and their teachers have returned to working in classrooms.

But a whole host of other Ontario workers will also be heading back into workplaces this fall, for reasons other than the changing seasons.

By now, the pandemic is just a distant speck in our rearview mirrors. At its outset, while essential (mainly blue-collar) workers were required to remain on the job, those in non-essential (mainly white-collar) jobs retreated back home.

That new flexibility to work remotely has persisted long after vaccines brought the virus under control.

Earlier this year, a num-

ber of larger employers — including those in the telecommunications, financial services and government sectors — advised employees they would be calling more workers back to their offices more frequently.

We now stand poised to witness an imminent and growing stampede of hundreds of thousands of workers returning to Ontario workplaces very soon.

What are the motives for this policy change from the employers' perspective?

We might presume that they are performance management-related. Perhaps supervisory managers detect or perceive a drop-off in productivity with their reports' slacking off at home?

But if you check the external and employee announcements outlining the changes, this concern is not being officially communicated. Supervisors have networked technology tools to monitor employee work output and measure work task completion.

Instead, the reasons cited focus on improving teamwork.

The driving presumption is that more frequent in-person interaction between

team members will lead to better co-ordination and cohesion. But it could just as easily lead to more downtime spent socializing with distracted co-workers around the water cooler.

A myriad of collaborative software tools exist to connect teams working remotely. If more in-person meetings wind up getting scheduled, separating employees from their desks more often, personal productivity drop-offs may actually ensue.

What cost impacts will employers and employees confront? Increases for both seem likely.

Even employers who resisted reductions in their office footprint (for example, by de-leasing excess space) will now have to reactivate workspaces that have been sitting dormant.

Employees working from home absorb their own costs of lighting, heating or cooling their workplaces and powering their equipment.

Although government unions sometimes negotiate compensation for these incremental costs, they were mainly unreimbursed to private sector workers. Home office expenses may

have been tax-deductible to others, depending on their employment terms.

One of the resurgent winners will be lunch spots located close to workplaces, as workers replace midday meals they freshly prepared at home, without brown-bagging it.

Another winner will be landlords seeking commercial tenants, also benefiting investors in real estate investment trusts.

Losers will be residential property owners further distanced from the larger job centres, as employees resist spending more time and money physically commuting, which will place more strain on congested roadways and public transportation, also increasing carbon emissions and air pollution.

On the whole, identifying benefits to justify these added costs is difficult. But the change is happening nevertheless.

Steve McGuinness was a senior adviser to major financial institutions during his Bay Street career and is now retired in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Send your personal finance questions to him at smcgfinplan@gmail.com.

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Hidden rail **uncovered** as turntable restoration rolls on

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Few in Niagara-on-the-Lake know a relic of 19th-century rail history still lies by the waterfront: a hand-powered limestone turntable from 1854, now two-thirds rebuilt.

Sewer work in the 1990s fractured the 60-foot ring at Turntable Way and River Beach Drive, essentially cutting it in half.

Of 40 stones total, 21 originals are still in place and four salvaged in 2016 were reinstalled Aug. 25.

Completion, including road integration, is set for 2026.

Crews exposed a forgotten detail no record had ever shown last week: the original concrete pedestal and a section of curved rail, once used to guide bridge wheels.

The team carefully salvaged it for future display, said Ron Simkus, a director with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Residents Association and longtime volunteer on the project.

The project crew — made up of NOTL residents, Simkus, town staff, Queenston Quarry Reclamation Company president Frank Racioppo and Willowbank School of Restoration Arts



Willowbank School of Restoration students Meghan Rist and Malcolm Williams have been helping out on the restoration of NOTL's 1850s railway turntable. PAIGE SEBURN

students Meghan Rist and Malcolm Williams — has been using 1850s “feather and wedge” techniques to shape stone.

By Aug. 26, the site was capped with soil and seeded, Lockhart Street was cleared of stones and surplus rock from River Beach was stacked under trees — all without disturbing the nearby Cogeco TV cable, Simkus said.

With three more stones in reserve, 13 more will be cut from Queenston Quarry Reclamation rock — where all stone for the ring must come from — made possible by a donation from

Racioppo.

The pledge to rebuild dates to 1991, when the town added underground infrastructure in the dock area, Simkus said.

“At that time, a commitment to residents was made — that the excavated stones would be salvaged and eventually the ring would be reinstalled,” he said. “That didn’t happen.”

While cutting and shaping stones on Friday, Williams said “it’s been better than expected actually.”

The stone “came apart really nicely,” he added.

Rist said the team had to learn some new methods.

“Wedge and feather, or feather and pin, is a new technique,” she said. “We got to do a lot of research.”

“It feels great to actually get our hands on Queenston limestone.”

Working with a natural material — once vital to the area’s growth but no longer available — “is, as a stone person, really cool for me,” said Rist.

Simkus said original stones are about 200 years old and Sharpe said some may still be scattered across town property.

The limestone is “for the most part” exhausted, Racioppo said, but there’s

plenty available for heritage restoration in Canada.

For Williams, the community’s enthusiasm has been a highlight.

“They’re very interested in this project,” he said, which is “really nice.”

Racioppo said it’s unclear whether the quarry will donate the remaining stones or provide them at cost, depending on how much usable material each block yields.

A plan for the Queenston Quarry will be unveiled soon, but he said “it’s completely appropriate” to use the prized stone for heritage restoration for now.

NOTL’s supervisor of roads, Casey Sharpe, said donations underscore the idea of the community coming together to complete this project.

The town’s role “is just implementing and installing the rocks,” he said. “We are definitely not the experts in this.”

A road plan has yet to be finalized, but he said the town is “going to have to redo the road itself.”

Road maintenance adds complications, so factors like snow plowing must be kept in mind — Simkus said his team will respect all town requirements.

The restoration has been termed as a “special proj-

ect” for the town’s 10-person road crew and though only some will be assigned to it, staff are eager “to stretch the limits of what we can do,” said Sharpe.

Simkus praised Sharpe’s team, led by Rick Nauta, for their respect for the site’s history, enthusiasm and heavy lifting, adding they are genuinely keen on the project.

Racioppo said he compliments town staff and council for allowing such “a big undertaking.”

“We’re talking, you know, 20, 25 tons of stone,” Simkus added. “A big ask.”

Nearby resident Pat Hartman, who planted a garden at the site, said the return of the stones makes the story more real, helping visualize what actually took place there.

One of the donated stones at the site holds a plaque, installed by Simkus, to share its history — “but the additional stones will make people (go), ‘Oh really, they really turned the train around here,’” she said.

Sharpe said the project will draw in more residents and visitors.

NOTL is built on history and the turntable is “an amazing part” of it, he said — it’s a site that’s been on the community’s radar for decades.

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



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NOTL Terry Fox Run is Sept. 14

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Since its first Terry Fox Run in 1991, Niagara-on-the-Lake has raised \$1.8 million for cancer research. The run's organizer says the community is ready to add even more when the event returns Sept. 14.

"We like to support those people who are still fighting. We honour those who have won that fight and we remember the ones who've lost the fight," said Joan King.

The 45th annual run inspired by Fox's cross-country Marathon of Hope in 1980 begins at 10 a.m. in Simcoe Park, with registration opening an hour earlier.

"We've learned so many good qualities from Terry," said King.

"The run celebrates Terry's spirit, his determination — and it inspires millions to participate and to donate."

Participants can walk, run or roll along King and Queen streets, with distances clearly marked and the route accessible to



Joan King, organizer of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Terry Fox Run, kneels beside the event sign and a plaque installed in Simcoe Park a decade ago in Fox's honour. This year's run begins there at 10 a.m. on Sept. 14. PAIGE SEBURN

wheelchairs, bicycles and rollerblades.

"A beautiful walk or run," King said.

This year's theme, "Finish it," highlights Fox's unfinished dream of finding a cure, she said.

Proceeds raised by the Terry Fox Foundation support the Terry Fox Research Institute, which funds world-class cancer research

across Canada and beyond — bringing cancer "closer to a cure," King said.

Almost \$50,000 has already been raised through the NOTL donation page, run.terryfox.ca/92906.

"We've done very well as a community," said King.

The amount raised "shows that people believe in Terry, what he's done, what he's created," she added.

"It's just so admirable." King is optimistic about surpassing the run's \$122,800 goal, she said.

"We're already halfway there and the run hasn't even happened," she said, but added that "you never know what people are going to contribute or donate."

"I hope we do," she said. The most powerful part of the event, for King, is the way it unites the town.

"It just warms your heart to see people supporting each other, a community believing in what this is all about," she said.

"It's just a good feeling."

Those who can't join the run can still support by donating online, directly or to a team or participant, on the town's donation page. Supporters can also donate at terryfox.org.

Terry Fox T-shirts will be for sale at the run, with some also available at Grape Escape or by messaging King directly at [facebook.com/joan.king.7587](https://www.facebook.com/joan.king.7587).

Residents are encouraged to check the event webpage for updates leading up to run day.

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Young NOTL golfers **play well** in U15 Canadian championships

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Golf can be a cruel game. One day you're up, playing the game of your life, and the next day the golf gods throw you a curve or two that can leave you wondering what the heck happened.

For St. Davids youngster Kaige Zhu that was one of the tough lessons learned last week at the Canadian under-15 championships in British Columbia.

He only turns 13 this week, but playing on the national stage last Wednesday against kids more than a year older, Zhu started the tourney in stellar fashion.

He fired a 5-under 67 over the 6,300-yard layout at Pitt Meadows Golf Club near Vancouver and was atop the leaderboard.

On Thursday, his final round started well with



Above: Eli Perng of St. Davids put together two strong rounds in last week's Canadian U15 championships, shooting 77 and 75. Below: St. Davids golf Kaige Zhu turns 13 this week. Last week he finished fifth in the championships. CHUCK RUSSELL GOLF CANADA

two birdies in the first four holes. But he ran into trouble on his middle six holes and finished with a 6-over 78, good enough for fifth place.

His St. Davids Public School classmate Eli Perng, 13, also competed and, with rounds of 77 and 75, finished in a tie for 34th in the field of more than 50 golfers from across the country.

For both young players, just starting Grade 8, the tournament was an important learning experience.

Zhu's day 1 score was his best round ever, his mother Jane Zhu told The Lake Report.

Everything seemed to go his way as he had just one bogey and four birdies. Then, for good measure, he finished with an eagle 3 on the closing hole, a 458-yard par 5.

"It was his best score in his whole golf life so far," his mother said.

On Thursday, that all changed and between the sixth and 12 holes he carded a bogey, a double and a triple to slip out of contention. But that's golf.

Having the lead on such a big stage, he was under some pressure, his mom said, but the day was "a great lesson" and learning experience for him.

Perng was steady and consistent, though his dad Richard, who caddies for Eli, said he played well but "not great" during the competition.

"There were probably six loose shots over the two rounds that cost him heavily. His driver and putter were his best weapons during the tournament," he told The Lake Report.

He didn't three-putt any greens and missed very few



fairways off the tee.

"All in all, it was an excellent experience and he knows that he will have one more chance at this competition next year," he said.

Both boys, who also play on their school's golf team, have been competing in youth tournaments in Canada and the United States this summer.

And Perng won the junior club championships at both Eagle Valley Golf Course in Niagara Falls and Cherry Hill in Ridgeway.

Last summer, they both played in the Notah Begay Junior Canadian Golf Championship in Kahnawake, near Montreal, in the age 10-11 division.

They finished first and second that time, with Zhu two shots ahead of Perng.

They're also multi-sport athletes: Zhu is a talented tennis player and Perng plays hockey at the AA level.

Travis Glass, the head teaching pro at Eagle Valley and coach of the Brock Uni-

versity team, has coached Perng since he was three.

On occasion, he said, he's also advised Zhu, who plays out of Royal Niagara Golf Club in NOTL and is coached by his dad Mike, who also handles caddy duties.

Glass, who grew up in St. Davids, is proud of both boys and the success they've had at such an elite level.

Glass is director of the U.S. Kids Niagara golf tour and he noted Zhu and Perng were among about a dozen young boys and girls from the tour who qualified for the Canadian championships.

Richard Perng said his son and Glass "plan to work hard over the winter, focusing on consistency and distance."

And while Zhu focuses a bit more on tennis this fall, Perng will soon be trading the links for the rink and playing right defence for the Niagara Falls Canucks U14 AA team.

kevin@niagaranow.com

Virgil goalie uses skills to fight cancer

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

In honour of his late grandmother, a 12-year-old soccer goalie from Virgil is using his athletic success to join in the fight against cancer.

Logan Loewen is one of five finalists in the Youth Athlete of the Year competition, a fundraiser hosted by the Colossal platform and sponsored by Sports Illustrated. The competition began with 20 athletes and narrowed to 15, then 10, and now the final five.

The winner receives an ad in Sports Illustrated and \$25,000 in American dollars.

Logan is raising money for two charities: the V Foundation for Cancer Research and the Why Not You Foundation. His campaign honours his grandmother, Maria Loewen, who died of cancer in February.

First diagnosed with gastrointestinal cancer in March 2023, Maria went through six months of chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

She was doing well until last December, when she began to feel sick again — the disease had spread to her lymph nodes.

Two months later, she passed.

Ella Loewen, Logan's mom, said she began to feel sick again in December after doing "very good" in a lot of the year prior.

Maria lived in Germany, so visits with the family in Canada were only about "once a year." But they maintained a close relationship through regular virtual conversations.

The family also remem-



Logan Loewen in his Toca Pro FC jersey, with a medal from his team's win in Miami, and holding a picture of his grandmother, who died of cancer in February. He and his family are looking to raise money for two cancer charities in her honour. DANIEL SMEENK

bers Logan's grandfather coming to one of his games during a family visit in April 2024. Her grandmother had also come to Canada, but wasn't feeling well and couldn't come to the game.

Nevertheless, she was supportive and loved by her family.

"She meant a lot to the family," said Logan's mother, Ella Loewen, a sentiment that Logan echoed.

While not yet in his teens, Logan's soccer resume is already extensive. He currently plays goalkeeper for Toca Pro FC, a year-round travel team based in Mississauga.

He previously played for two years with Club Roma in St. Catharines and began playing soccer in the Niagara-on-the-Lake house league.

While in St. Catharines, he started playing with kids a year older than him.

In May, Logan helped Toca Pro FC win a tournament in Miami featuring international competition, which he called his proudest moment so far. He has

also attended three training camps in Italy and will return again in October to train, attend school and study Italian.

"If he continues to do well and develop, there is a chance he can get signed in Italy when he's 15," said Ella, referring to the possibility of entering a professional system.

Outside of his team's regular schedule — games on weekends and practices during the week — Logan dedicates extra time to training.

"During the summer, I wake up in the morning and go for a 10-to-20-minute jog," he said. "Then, I like working out downstairs ... I have a mattress downstairs and a rebounder, so I like to dive there."

Logan trains three to four times a week, doing one-hour sessions of strength and technical training in virtual sessions with his coach in Italy.

He also works with a dedicated goalie coach in Niagara Falls twice a week during the winter and he did

swim fitness twice a week in St. Davids during the summer.

During the school year, Logan goes to school in the morning and afternoon and then it's a similar routine.

Despite the heavy schedule, his parents say he "never ever complains," and credit his work ethic, commitment and resilience.

"I enjoy it because I'm getting better with every practice," Logan said.

While Logan is no stranger to competition, this fundraiser is about more than soccer — it's about making a difference in memory of someone he loved.

Ella said she isn't sure how much they've raised so far, but is encouraged by updates on the number of votes.

She hopes to raise "as much as possible."

If he wins, Logan said he plans to use some of the \$25,000 prize to help fund his training trip to Italy. The rest, he said, would go toward cancer-related causes.

While winning is the goal, Logan and his family say the money raised for charity — and the chance to honour his grandmother — are what matter most.

"It's a bit nerve-racking, because I know there's other people who want this as much as me," said Logan. "But it also feels good because I know it's for a good cause ... I want to give back."

Voting closes Sept. 4, and the winner will be announced Oct. 17. Each U.S. \$1 donation counts as one vote — U.S. \$25 equals 25 votes, and so on.

To donate, visit athletoftheyear.org/2025/logan-79a1.

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Sharpshooters earn prizes in golf leagues

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

There were prizes aplenty Tuesday as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's 18-hole women's league competed for closest to the pin and longest drive.

Each proxy prize was worth \$5 and Maria Townley grabbed two, closest to the hole on #4 and longest drive on #5.

Other sharpshooters were: Yolanda Henry (closest to the pin in two on #7), Margot Richardson (closest to Trevor on #11) and Lisa Allen (closest to the pin in two on #18).

Henry also had the best



Margot Richardson.

low gross score, with 88, one shot better than women's club champ Louise Robitaille. Ginny Green was third with 94.

Christine Earl scooped the low net honour with 67, followed by Carolyn

Porter (71) and Henry (73). Robitaille carded a birdie three on #1.

There were some tough pin placements but that didn't deter Mary Powers, who needed just 32 putts over 18 holes. Richardson, Marie Ellison and Cathy Murray were next with 33 and Henry, Green and Allen were third best with 34.

In Tuesday's nine-hole women's league, Penny Green shot 47 to edge out Suzanne Watson, Lyn Sanders and Deborah Williams by a shot.

Low net winner was Julie Smethurst with 29, followed by Joan Maida (34), and Patty Garriock, Shelley

Sansom, Suzanne Rate and Sanders all tie at 35.

Watson had the longest drive on #2, Green sank the longest putt on #5 and Sanders outdrove all others on #8.

Last Thursday weekly men's league was rained out but the Tuesday Woofs league players basked in sunshine.

Glen Murray was top dog, shooting 1-over 37, two shots better than Gary Stugins, Randy McCartney and Mike Mott, all at 39.

Joe Interisano won low net with 34 and birdies on #3 earned Brian Ridgeway and Jeff Jacques the hidden hole prize.

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Junk, furniture, bush, snow, hornet, pest removal, home installations (grab bars, railings, toilets, vents, lights, TVs), wall mounting, furniture assembly, painting, household cleaning and repairs (eavestroughs, windows, taps), organizing, hoarding help, power washing (house/driveway/polymeric sand, patio, sealants, brick-levelling), yardwork, weeding, tree/bush trimming/cutting, car, truck, boat detailing, polishing, battery boosting, moving services, house checks.

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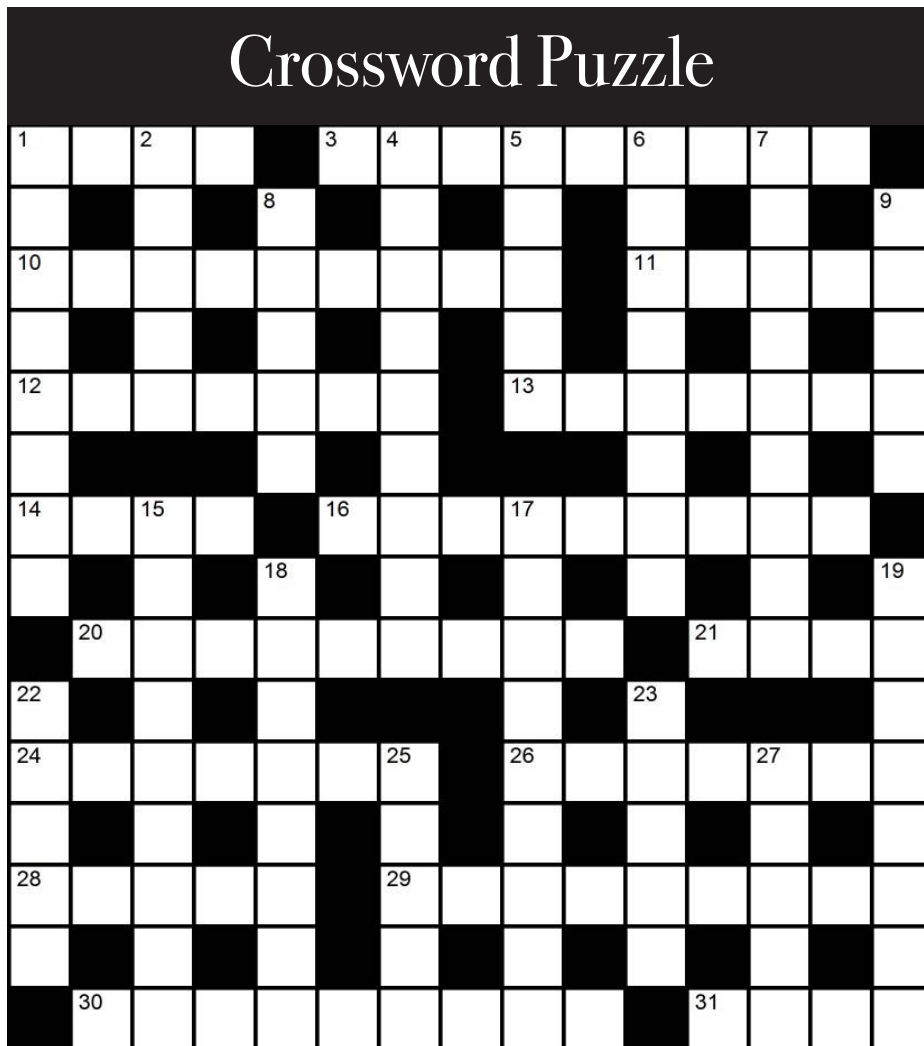


Have some fun

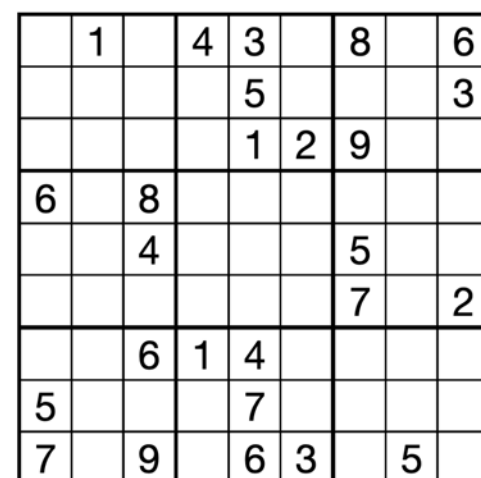
1. Relating to aircraft (4)
3. "The Hay Wain" artist (9)
10. Moving stairway (9)
11. Joanna (5)
12. Hopelessness (7)
13. Among (7)
14. Back of the neck (4)
16. Poisonous mushroom (9)
20. Custom (9)
21. Doing nothing (4)
24. Pear-shaped fruit (7)
26. Breakfast flatbread (7)
28. Dull yellowish brown (5)
29. Professional personal car driver (9)
30. Observe with festivities (9)
31. Irritate (4)

1. Removing faults (8)
2. Speed contests (5)
4. Farthest from the centre (9)
5. Rub vigorously (5)
6. Desire for food (8)
7. Type of impermanent tenure (9)
8. Communion table (5)
9. Injury (5)
15. Rectory (9)
17. Air-freshener (9)
18. Put on a pedestal (8)
19. Investigate (8)
22. Small nails (5)
23. Rigid (5)
25. Happen (5)
27. Wide-awake (5)

Crossword Puzzle



Last issue's answers



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EXPLORING HISTORY

WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Ready for school

Welcome back to the school year, young ladies and gentlemen, who are heading back to elementary school, attending high school out of town or embarking on the glory days of university or college. As you start this new chapter, your parents are starting a new one, too. If they want to take a cheesy photo of you with a wooden chalkboard documenting your annual life decisions, let them. If they want to help set up your dorm room, let them. If they need to give one, or three, more goodbye kisses, let them. Wayne Gordon seems pretty proud to be showing off his bike for the first day of school here in NOTL in 1949. Good luck to our students and to our dear parents who may be struggling with these big changes, too.



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FOOD DRIVE

Newark Neighbours, together with our partners from the NOTL Rotary, NOTL Kinsmen and St. David's Lions Clubs, are holding a porch pick-up food drive. On **Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025**, teams are available to pick up your food donations anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

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

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FOR THANKSGIVING HAMPERS:

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

ITEMS REQUIRED ON AN ONGOING BASIS:

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



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To register and more information
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Left: Japanese anemones begin to bloom in mid-to-late August and continue throughout September. Right: Toad lilies, a late summer-to-fall bloomer, are known for their small but speckled, orchid-like flowers. JOANNE YOUNG

Summer’s over, but you can fill up your garden with these **fall plants**



Joanne Young
Columnist

Sometimes, as summer is coming to an end, our gardens can start to look tired. All our strong summer bloomers are fading, and some have been overtaken by black spot or powdery mildew.

But this does not mean that our gardens are done for the season.

In fact, you can add the following perennials and enjoy flowers for the next month or two.

Turtlehead
(*Chelone obliqua*)

Let’s start with a native perennial — turtlehead. Turtlehead is a clump-forming perennial native to eastern North America. The name “turtlehead” comes from the shape of its flower that resembles that of a turtle’s head emerging from its shell.

Turtlehead plants grow best in boggy areas but can optionally grow in part-shaded home gardens with about four hours of sunlight, rich, moist soil and temperate climates (USDA zones 3 through 9).

The dark green, toothed leaves are oval-shaped

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society will host a series of public Saturday morning gardening classes with Young at the NOTL Community Centre from Sept. 6 to 27. All classes start at 10 a.m.

Sept. 6: Fall and Winter Plant Show-Offs
Sept. 13: Starting From the Ground Up
Sept. 20: The World of Bulbs
Sept. 27: Putting Your Garden to Bed

Pre-register at notlHORTSOCIETY.COM/classes.

and have upright-standing stems that feature blooms from mid to late summer to fall. Turtlehead is available in white or pink flowering varieties as well as dwarf varieties.

Interestingly, the genus name “Chelone” dates back to a story in ancient Greek mythology. The nymph Chelone did not attend the marriage of Zeus and Hera, so she and her house were tossed into a river, where she transformed into a tortoise who carried her house on her back.

Asters

When the garden’s summer show starts to fade, asters steal the spotlight. These native, daisy-like perennials don’t just brighten your borders — they’re buzzing with pollinator drama.

Bees, butterflies and even birds can’t resist these late-season stars, making asters the must-have finale for any garden.

Cold-hardy perennials with daisy-like flowers, asters are the pollinator stars of the garden from late summer through fall.

Growing one to six feet tall, depending on variety, these upright flowering plants bear cheerful, star-shaped flower heads ranging from purple to white to blue. They perform best in full sun.

Joe Pye weed
(*Eutrochium purpureum*)

Joe Pye weed is a native plant that grows in erect clumps up to six feet tall. It can make a wonderful backdrop to a garden border.

Tiny mauve blooms appear in round clusters or florets in midsummer to early fall. Each plant has around five to seven of these florets, and the flowers give off a light vanilla scent.

To prevent the plants from becoming overgrown and flopping over, cut them back in late winter. These full-sun lovers will tolerate dappled shade and well-draining soil, but can also tolerate damp soil. This plant is hardy from zone 4a to 9b.

Joe Pye weed is a great plant for attracting pollinators and it is deer-resistant.

Toad lily (Tricyrtis)

Toad lilies are one of those plants that very few people are aware of. This late summer/fall bloomer may have small flowers, but the details included in each speckled, orchid-like flower are amazing.

They thrive in partial to full shade gardens with consistently moist soil. There are several species of toad lilies available to the home gardener.

Tricyrtis formosana “Autumn Glow” is one of these species, with yellow and green variegated leaves and dark pink speckled flowers.

Tricyrtis “Blue Wonder” is another spectacular variety with blue flower petals and pink freckling. A great addition to the shade garden.

Japanese windflower
(*Anemone*)

There are many cultivars of Japanese anemones available on the market — too many to mention.

They range from white to light pink to dark pink flowers, both single and double flowering.

Japanese anemone prefers growing in a full sun or part-shade location with moist but well-drained soil.

The height of the different cultivars ranges from dwarf (one foot) to three or four feet high. They begin to bloom mid-to-late August and continue throughout September.

Sweet autumn clematis

While its fragrant, snowy blooms are beautiful, sweet autumn clematis (*Clematis paniculata*) is an aggressive, woody, seeding perennial vine that is considered invasive in some states.

The flowers attract pollinators, and songbirds use the vine as a nesting site. This plant can be cut to the ground in fall or spring because it flowers only on new wood.

This hardy (zone 3) vine prefers dappled shade or full sun and moist but well-drained soil. An extra bonus is the fact that it is also deer-resistant.

These are just a few of the perennial plants that will extend the length of your gardening season and give it continued life throughout the fall.

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

Obituaries

Anna Andres



ANDRES, Anna Elisabeth (Janzen) — April 3, 1952 - August 28, 2025.

Passed away peacefully at home on Aug. 28, 2025 in her 74th year. She will be deeply missed by her husband Richard, children Rich (Trish), Jeremy (Vinciane), Andrew, Jamie, Julie (Rob) Douglas, Mark (Victoria), and 13 treasured grandchildren. Also mourning her passing is her half sister Sende (Willi) Kuskova and their family in Germany. She will sadly be missed by brothers and sisters-in-law Wendy Janzen, Elsie (Wallace) Clement, Reg (Cheryl) Andres, Fred (Pat) Andres, Sam Hildebrandt and many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her parents, Dietrich and Katharina (Paetkau) Janzen, brother Peter, half sister Siena and brother-in-law Peter Hildebrandt.

Visitation was held at Niagara United Mennonite Church on Tuesday, Sept. 2 from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 7:30 p.m. Funeral service was held at Niagara United Mennonite Church on Wednesday, Sept. 3 at 11 a.m., followed by a reception. Tallman Funeral Homes has been entrusted with the arrangements. Memorial donations may be made to the Mennonite Central Committee. Online condolences at tallmanfuneralhomes.ca



Terrence Tucker



TUCKER, Terrence “Terry” –

It is with great sadness and much love in our hearts that we announce the passing of Terry Tucker, at the age of 78 years, on Aug. 28, 2025, at Hospice Niagara in St. Catharines, peacefully, surrounded by his immediate family. Beloved husband of Janet

(“Jan”) for 55 years, devoted father to Emma (Mark) and Rachel (Ernie) and adored Poppa to Joseph, Dylan, Jack, Charlie and Zoey. Terry will be remembered as a loving and kind soul, courageous and optimistic, who enjoyed his British comedies and telling a good joke.

Born in 1946 to parents Nellie and William, and brother to John, he immigrated to Canada from England in 1953. He grew up in Toronto but travelled back to England in 1969 where he met his future wife, Jan. Married in 1970 they settled back in Toronto and later raised their two girls in the suburb of Thornhill. Terry worked in the energy industry for the latter part of his career, and in 2001, settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake for his retirement a few years later where he and Jan made many new connections. Together they travelled in their retirement to places throughout Europe, especially falling in love with Ireland along the way.

The family wishes to thank the wonderful staff at the Stabler Centre, Dr. Cameron Phillips, Dr. Steve Durocher, the Shoppers Drug Mart NOTL family, and many friends that have supported Terry and his family during some of the most difficult yet most beautiful moments over the past months. In keeping with Terry’s wishes, cremation has taken place. If you wish to raise a glass of Guinness in Terry’s honour, the family will be at the Sandtrap Pub & Grill in NOTL on Wednesday, Sept. 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. to commemorate what would have been his 79th birthday. In memory of Terry, memorial donations can be made to Hospice Niagara.





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