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Hyper-local news for Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Lake Report



Busy weekend | Pages 4, 15, 20, 26



HOME SWEET HOME

A group of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents conducted a detailed survey on seniors' housing needs. The results of the survey were sent to NOTL politicians, including Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. The Lake Report met with Zalepa to learn his feelings about the results of the survey. This is the first in a series of stories exploring the survey results and potential solutions to the problem.

Need for seniors housing is real: Zalepa

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's lord mayor says he understands there's a growing need for options for seniors who want to stay in town as they age.

"A lot of the things that are in the report are things that I think I always believed, because I've been in real estate for almost 30

years here," Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said in an interview.

It's more of a "validation" of things people likely already know, he said.

But it's helpful to have a survey done that seems to hold water.

"I felt pretty confident in what I saw. I'm by no means an expert on validating a survey. But it seems to be well thought-out," he said.

The Lake Report sat down with Zalepa to discuss the results of a seniors housing survey, conducted by a group of NOTL residents and overseen by research experts Michael Ennamora-to and Stephen Ferley.

The survey, among other findings, showed that a majority of NOTL residents aged 55 and up want to stay in NOTL as they get older, and maintain as much inde-

pendence as possible.

They had concerns for access to health care, both family physicians and emergency services, and want to have a structured living situation that meets their changing needs.

Most said they would prefer to live at home, or independently, with options for assisted living and

Continued on Page 5



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa says he understands the dire need for living options for aging seniors who want to stay in town and is looking at ways the town can help, including diverse housing options and building incentives. FILE

Tail wagging fun at Palatine winery

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Dogs of all breeds, sizes and experience are welcome to join the Dog Frisbee League at Palatine Hills Estate Winery this summer.

Wednesday evenings starting at 6 p.m. your furry friends can meet at the back-field of 911 Lakeshore Rd.

The league runs in a five-week session, with the next starting in three more weeks.

Kait Ripley, a trainer and assistant manager at Walk, Play Love obedience and guidance school encourages people to come out with their pups to watch the current league and get a feel for it.

The league, led by the school, will feature frisbee games and challenges along with tips and tricks from experienced handlers and a welcoming community for dog lovers.

"It's played all over Canada and the U.S., we work as a team to make points and those are added up as a team and you rank by your location,"

Palatine Hills also hosts a dog-friendly patio where owners and their furry companions can stop for a drink and a bite.

For more information on joining the league, email nikki@walkplaylove.com.

See more photos of pups and frisbees on Page 6.



Maxine Mclellan throws a frisbee to Stormy the German shepherd at Palatine Hills Estate Winery during its Dog Frisbee League, which takes place every Wednesday in the winery's back field. All dogs are welcome. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



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Government crackdown won't fix foreign worker program, advocate says

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Canadian government should look no further than its own backyard to find what's wrong with the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, a NOTL farm-workers advocate says.

Reacting to federal Employment Minister Randy Boissonnault's announcement that his office is cracking down on employer fraud within the system, Kit Andres suggested the minister is missing the mark.

If he really wants to improve the program and ensure the safety and respect of all migrant workers who come to Canada each year to help prop up the economy, the government needs to change how it operates the program, Andres said.

The government is acting in bad faith in how it takes advantage of workers by limiting their rights — rights they can't receive without permanent resident status, said the advocate from the Migrant Workers



Kit Andres says cracking down on employer fraud isn't addressing the human rights issues prevalent within the temporary foreign worker program. SUPPLIED

Alliance for Change.

"It's about a program that allows abuse and exploitation to happen," said Andres, pointing to inequalities such as the lack of regular employment insurance benefits or not being allowed to change jobs while in the country.

"You have good employers here, but the farmworkers are part of an exploitative system."

"They don't have a choice to go to those good employers. The good employers bring them back."

Employment and Social Development Canada said in an Aug. 6 news release that while the Temporary

Foreign Worker Program is intended to fill vacancies for which qualified Canadians are not available, that policy is being side-stepped by many employers.

This is especially true the non-agricultural sector, the release stated, and that "the federal government will take further action to weed out misuse and fraud within the system."

"I've been clear over the last year; abuse and misuse of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program must end," Boissonnault said via the press release.

"Bad actors are taking advantage of people and com-

promising the program for legitimate businesses. We are putting more reforms in place to stop misuse and fraud from entering the Temporary Foreign Worker Program."

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, the majority of foreign workers are employed in the agricultural sector, but Andres said the organization does have members from other sectors provincially.

Good employers in non-temporary worker scenarios attract good employees who will stay with those employers, work hard and buy into the business model of the organization, Andres said.

"But that all goes out the window with migrant workers because (without permanent resident status) they don't have a choice."

Crackdown measures to weed out bad bosses include fines from \$500 to \$100,000 per violation.

"Workers don't see that money," said Andres. "And if it's not for workers, it's for the government to say, 'Look, we are cracking down.'"

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Residents, mostly grey-haired, protest town council's decisions on development last week. FILE/DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Residents and council members look at how to **move forward** after protest

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The rally against development last Tuesday outside town hall brought out scores of residents aiming to have their voices heard.

Some silently held up signs while others yelled and chanted, a few hurled insults and slurs at councillors who were entering the building.

In an effort to move forward after the protest and months of anger directed at council, The Lake Report asked those who were at the protest — both participants and those who were its targets — how the community can move forward.

Coun. Maria Mavridis isn't sure what to do, but emphasized residents need to learn what is and isn't OK to say and do during a rally.

"Everyone has a right to protest. Everyone has a right to speech," Mavridis said in an interview.

"But people are really crossing lines."

Mavridis said she and the other councillors knew the rally was happening beforehand, but weren't expecting some of the behaviour a few residents exhibited.

While she was walking from her car to the council chambers, Mavridis said people yelled profanities at her.

"One man came up to me, brushed my shoulder and said 'fat ass.' "

When she turned around

and confronted him, the resident doubled down on the name-calling, she added.

One of the more disturbing interactions Mavridis had was with a resident who yelled a racial slur toward her.

"There was a line that was crossed. Racial slurs are uncalled for," she said.

Mavridis said she doesn't know what the next steps are for the town's residents and municipal leaders, but hopes people can see that this behaviour is wrong.

"I suppose we (the councillors) have to stick together because we always have. Since day one, none of us have felt the same way: we argue, we all have different views," she said.

"But we respect each other."

There isn't much the council can do beyond this point — besides teaching people kindness, she said.

"Specifically, the Parliament Oak vote is done," she said, explaining that a two-thirds vote would be needed to reopen the issue.

Rally organizer Karen Taylor-Jones's next goal is to gather more information on what can be done to stop developments residents don't want from becoming a reality, she said.

"I've been in touch with (Premier Doug) Ford's office and various different heritage places. I'm just doing research to see if there's any sort of loopholes we can get through" she said.

After having conversations with MPP Wayne

Gates and MP Tony Baldinelli, Taylor-Jones said gathering information from everyone will take time, but she is dedicated.

She even took a phone call with developer Benny Marotta, who said a hotel is going up at Parliament Oak as well as at the Randwood Estate.

"He offered me Parliament Oak for \$20 million. Wasn't that big of him?" Taylor-Jones said.

The rally organizer said she doesn't think council will take any steps to change the outcome of the Parliament Oak vote, but she is prepared to take her concerns to higher places.

"I don't know anything about the Ontario Land Tribunal yet — but I'm learning," she said.

Regarding the behaviour of rally participants, Taylor-Jones said she condemned the inappropriate behaviour of those who yelled insults and slurs, but said it was only two men who did so.

"The whole was blamed for two men. Those two men blew it all for us," she said.

Taylor-Jones added that, before the rally, she spoke with people on the phone who expressed extreme anger and might have leaned toward violence. She told them to stay home.

"We were really ridiculed as a group when let's face it, 85 per cent of us were between 50 and 90 (years old)," she said.

Chrys Kaloudis, a former urban design commit-

tee member, was at the rally and supports residents standing up for their beliefs, but thinks there is a gap in information regarding how residents should communicate and vocalize their questions and issues.

Kaloudis herself was invited to a one-on-one meeting with Coun. Erwin Wiens when trying to gain some clarity regarding council decisions.

She said one of her main questions was around land use and how the Parliament Oak parcel of land was zoned for community use.

Kaloudis commended Wiens on his invitation to meet and talk, but did say she finds councillors to be either intentionally or unintentionally vague when presenting information on how residents can help themselves fight back against unwanted development or converse with councillors in a productive way.

In terms of gathering the information to do so, Kaloudis said it depends on what one is looking for.

"A lot of this stuff is in the public realm, in those meetings on the town website. But what they're not going to get is some of the background. The sort of process and structural procedures of how we got to this point," she said.

Kaloudis said there is a disconnect within council regarding timelines that must be observed when processing things and when resident feedback is observed.



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RACING ON THE LAKE

Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club were out racing on the Niagara River last Wednesday as July wrapped up. Here some young sailors hang their legs over the side of the boat and relax. **See more sailing photos at niagaranow.com.** DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Two peach festivals in town this weekend

Staff
The Lake Report

This weekend is set to be extra sweet with the return of Niagara-on-the-Lake's annual Peach Festival.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Queen Street will be filled to the brim with NOTL peaches and other fruit-flavoured treats.

This year's culinary



delights include sweet experiences like churros with peach ice cream and savoury innovations like paneer and peach skewers

— something for everyone to enjoy.

As always, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church will host its ever-popular annual peach festival on Sunday, Aug. 11 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., located at 73 Picton St.

If drinks are more your speed, the Sips of Summer Drink Patio returns this year, offering NOTL peach-flavoured brews and ciders

to try.

Along with food and beverages, the festival will feature live music, an interactive art project and the yearly peach pie contest.

Those interested in participating in the contest should bring their pies to the white tent near the Courthouse between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Aug. 10 for judging at noon.

ARRIVEDERCI, VENTI

Virgil's Starbucks shutting its doors in October

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Starbucks location in Virgil is closing permanently.

A company official confirmed on Aug. 2 that the last day of operations for the store at 1630 Niagara Stone Rd. will be Oct. 17.

"After careful consideration, the decision was made to close this store," Starbucks Coffee Canada communications manager Leanne Rizzi said in a written statement to The Lake Report.

Store manager Maddi Langelaan, who has worked there for just over 18 months, confirmed 13 employees will be affected but that each one of them has been offered a position at other locations.



The Starbucks on Niagara Stone Road in Virgil is closing its doors. Its last day open will be Oct. 17. RICHARD WRIGHT

"No one will go without a job," she said. "They all already have their new stores confirmed."

Langelaan said in the year-and-a-half she's been at the Virgil store, business has been slow.

"We don't get a lot of people, unfortunately."

Starbucks opened in Vir-

gil in May of 2019.

The fact this was within a year of a complete shut-down due to COVID didn't help the store flourish, said Langelaan, adding other factors also played a role in limiting drive up and foot traffic to the store.

"The construction on Niagara Stone Road really

hurt us last year," she said. "It's just been a series of unfortunate events."

Starbucks Canada has been restructuring in the last few years.

In January 2021 the company announced the closing of up to 300 stores in Canada as an acceleration of its five-year transformation strategy.

The shake-up included adding new drive-thru locations, the expansion of delivery and a pilot of curbside pick-up only coffee shops.

In her statement to The Lake Report, Rizzi expressed her hope that the Virgil closure wouldn't affect customers' decisions to remain loyal to the brand.

"We look forward to serving our customers at our several, nearby locations," she said.

Diverse housing can help seniors: Zalepa

Continued from Front Page

transitions to long-term care at the end of life.

Zalepa wasn't surprised by the results.

He noted private facilities, like Radiant Care Pleasant Manor in Virgil, have already begun to adopt a model which has various living options for people as they age.

He said he's seen it firsthand with his own parents, who are in their late 70s and have lived in NOTL since the 1980s.

They were on a waiting list for the Ina Grafton Stone Road Village, which offers a variety of retirement living options and services that still give seniors independence.

"And so that's the proof of concept in that because they didn't want to go into something that was more senior care style, because they're like, 'Oh, that's not me. I don't need that. I just need something different that doesn't tie me to my yard and my property. And I need more connectivity with other people because they were getting a little isolated.' "

His parents moved into Ina Grafton this summer and he's seen "a tremendous positive change in just their whole outlook and how they feel."

"They want that independent living, but as their needs and health care needs evolve, they want to know that it's there and the community for them to transition," Zalepa said.

He has asked some of the region's housing, seniors' services and social services experts to sit down with the survey group to discuss some of the options and next steps they can take to present the results and encourage the creation of more assisted living facilities.

Those experts, he said, can also "third party validate" the survey results.

The survey group asked a question about what can be done to offer incentives to developers who could build these types of facilities, keeping in mind that the affordability isn't the main concern with a significant portion of NOTL seniors.

Zalepa said there are some incentives for developers, such as waiving development charges, but that largely those focus on affordable housing programs, so it's a bit of a

By the numbers: 53% of NOTLers are 55-plus

Niagara-on-the-Lake's population in 2024 is estimated at 20,863, according to Statistics Canada's 2021 census data, together with estimates from the province and Niagara Region, the researchers say.

Of that, 53 per cent (11,028) are 55 and over, while 16 per cent (3,398) are 75 and up.

By 2041, the town's population is expected to grow 24 per cent to 25,850 and those 75-plus are projected to comprise almost one-quarter of the population, at 5,887.

The census shows 79 per cent of NOTLers live in single-detached homes, but 70 per cent of those homes have no more than two people in them. And three-quarters of them have three bedrooms.

In addition, the primary maintainer is 55-plus in 73 per cent of households, and more than half are over 65.

Those numbers highlight some potential problems.

The data, all contained in the report by researchers Michael Ennamorato and Stephen Ferley, "suggests that the existing housing stock may not be sufficiently diverse or adequately serviced to address the increasing wave of age-related needs" expected to wash over NOTL.

Their report analyzes those issues and shines a light on some of the potential solutions.

different animal when asking a private developer to build a high-end retirement community.

The survey results showed roughly 75 per cent of NOTL seniors have more than \$1 million in assets and of that group, the majority said they have more than \$2 million in assets.

"There is not to my knowledge, any type of incentive on the table for any residential development like this that's not geared to affordability," Zalepa said.

He said there are other options on the policy side that could be explored.

"There's some reason we're not getting the private sector running to do this," he said, without speculating as to why.

The group has suggested it could be attractive to developers if they could pre-emptively be approved to rezone some agricultural land with the condition that the development be used for a variety of senior living and services, much like Pleasant Manor.

Zalepa said aside from Greenbelt challenges, which are a "hot potato," but could also be addressed to the province during its upcoming Greenbelt review, there is some pos-

sibility to pre-apply zoning to some of NOTL's various land uses and surplus town properties.

Part of the problem with much of the town's agricultural land is that there are no services (like sewers and water), and the cost of bringing inn services would be a deterrent to developers looking to make a profit.

It would be best to keep focused to urban or built-up areas, Zalepa said.

"We've got some properties that are larger" in the urban area that could be explored for possible zoning changes to allow for a seniors development, he said.

That's something council is already looking at through a housing affordability plan, he said.

"Part of the work that's going to be involved with that is going to be identifying sites and doing an inventory of all our sites and being able to determine best use. So, even though it's our affordability plan, some of the outcomes are going to be this kind of work."

While there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution to housing for aging seniors, another part of the puzzle could be accessory dwelling units, which Zalepa noted are already allowed

What NOTL seniors want

Percentage of NOTL residents 55+ who rate these categories as their top 1 or 2 priority

Quick and easy access to health care	59%
Single residence with access to range of services	50%
Stay in my current community in town of NOTL	24%
Stay close to children and other family	21%
Stay somewhere in town of NOTL	20%
Stay close to leisure and recreational activities	11%
Opportunities to make new friends	2%

by the province and town policies are being updated to align with Ontario's push for such units.

Accessory dwelling units are secondary units on an existing residential property.

Having diverse housing options also helps seniors who want the independence to make their own decisions on where they will age.

While secondary units are a small piece of the puzzle in Zalepa's eyes, another way to increase housing supply is to create a mix of housing in new construction, such as apartment buildings, condos and townhomes.

"Currently, our housing stock doesn't reflect that kind of that flexibility. We have a lot of single-family homes," he said.

Another prevalent concern of aging seniors that the report identified is the proximity of their housing to good health care.

"I think the report has correctly identified that health care services are a key success driver for this," Zalepa said, adding that he thinks the main challenge is getting primary care to people's homes.

"The municipality doesn't deliver that service. Maybe we should, but we don't. Not

even the region delivers that primary care. I think there's a lot of soul-searching the province has to do to determine how it wants to service the public going forward," he said.

"Hospitals aren't the answer. Primary care is — which is your doctor. We're lucky in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We have been able to attract doctors," he said.

"We're not at an acute shortage. We need more, but I think that's a key area — health care delivery. We have to figure out a good way to bring health care to people's homes."

He elaborated that he understands the need for quick access to emergency health care.

"My dad had a heart attack. It's been two years this week. And he got great care. But the first little bit was touch and go."

"He did get great care. And he survived the ambulance to the hospital which was a bit of a ride and then he had to be shipped to Hamilton. But that's a pain point. That's something the province and policy people have got to figure out."

While the province handles health care, the region manages public long-term care facilities, like NOTL's

Upper Canada Lodge, which is slated to close soon.

When asked about long-term care homes in Niagara-on-the-Lake and how the region can justify closing those facilities, he pointed to more beds being built at Pleasant Manor by the private sector and a \$400-million investment by the region in long-term care facilities in Niagara.

Pleasant Manor is constructing an additional 119 beds, while the region is closing close to 60 beds at Upper Canada Lodge, which he sees as a net gain for NOTL.

The region is building "a massive complex in St. Catharines — which is not too far. And also in Fort Erie and they had to consolidate," he said.

"They couldn't have the smaller units all over the place because the model for long-term care, and I'm not an expert on this, but this is the way they showed us, that they can't make those work. They have to bring them together."

As to why the region isn't building those facilities in Niagara-on-the-Lake, he said he didn't really have an answer to that, but that he thinks "it's got something to do with the business model."

Before the town can find ways to offer incentives to developers to build seniors housing that addresses the needs of NOTL residents, "we need to hear from them."

"What's holding them back or what makes them go somewhere else, if they are — and I don't even know if the sector is really expanding in Ontario. I don't know if there's a lot of big investment here. Which is weird. Because why?"

He said a factor could be that it's the toughest real estate market since 2008.

"The condominium sale market in Toronto is the worst I've ever seen it and new housing starts in Ontario are off the chart," he said.

"All housing development is fiscally challenged right now. The banks won't touch it."

Part 2: We'll look at the status of the old NOTL hospital and the mayor's thoughts on what could be appropriate for that location and the possibility of a joint venture with the town to provide assisted living. We'll also examine what's missing in the puzzle and talk about other town assets that could potentially be used for housing.



Frisbee goes to the dogs

Clockwise from top left: Jaclyn throws a frisbee to Mossie the Corgi. Atlas the Australian Shepherd catches the frisbee in mid-air. Leighton Dyck throws the frisbee to Monte the Australian Kelpie. Jeff Riley throws the frisbee to Quin. Dori the Papillon chases down the frisbee. Kirstin Webb and Atlas. Monte leaps to catch the frisbee. Riley throws a frisbee to Dublin the Australian cattle dog.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE VAN DE LAAR



‘Pledge It’ for The Lake Report

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

“When there’s no one there to tell the story, there’s no accountability.”

This simple phrase is one of the main reasons journalism is essential to Canadian democracy and Canadian communities.

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And while The Lake Report is breaking the trend and still able to employ a small staff, most traditional news agencies are suffering these days.

Today, there are more issues to cover than ever in our growing town. More stories of all kinds still to be told. And there’s less money to hire people to cover it.

At The Lake Report, we are looking to the future and want to ensure that this publication remains around to tell those stories for years to come, and as our town doubles its population.

So, we are kicking off a major “Pledge It” campaign and asking the community to invest in NOTL news.



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Another part of the campaign is encouraging you to consider bequeathing donations to The Lake Report.

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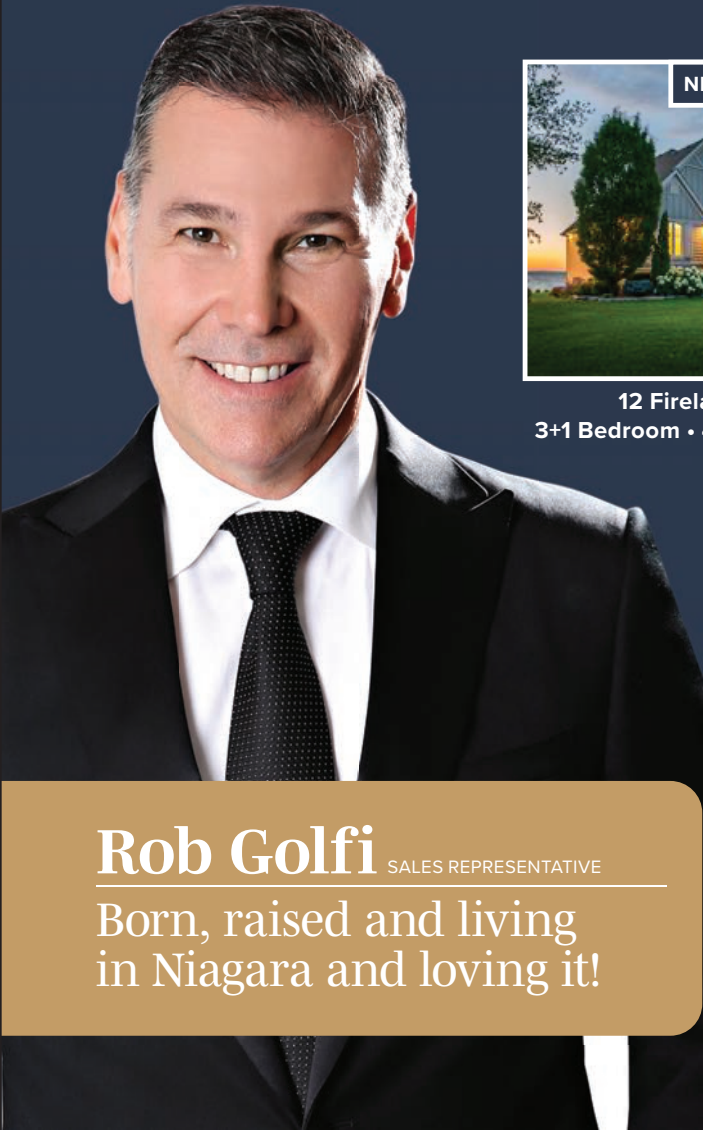
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Heritage festival brings history to life

Paige Seburn
The Lake Report

Sam Gregory and Carol Liu from Toronto were delighted to stumble upon the Past is Present Heritage Festival in full swing this Monday at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum — while celebrating their wedding anniversary during an afternoon stroll.

The museum’s front lawn and the adjacent street block were filled with visitors from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Aug. 5, enjoying a range of historical demonstrations, engaging exhibits and local vendors.

The festival combined entertainment with educational experiences for all ages, with free admission. “It’s fantastic. It’s lots of fun,” said Gregory. “The music’s great. Lots of great vendors. We’re just enjoying ourselves.”

Visitors enjoyed performances by the Niagara Old Tyme Fiddlers and other musicians, which Gregory and Liu said added a lively soundtrack to the day’s activities.

The festival showcased the intricate art of the



People peruse the wares at the museum’s heritage festival on Monday. PAIGE SEBURN

Niagara Handweavers & Spinners Guild, which drew significant interest from Liu.

“They were really cool. I haven’t really seen any of those in action yet,” she said.

Other highlights included a pig roast, blacksmith demonstrations and heritage maps.

“Those were super interesting,” Gregory said of the old maps.

Among the many displays, Susan Bogdanski, an artist from Thorold, showed her specially painted terracotta pots.

She uses various techniques to create different finishes, such as stone-like textures, with designs that

include both decorative and functional pieces, some for outdoor use and others for hanging.

For the festival, she created pots featuring designs with birds, flowers, and text options like “NOTL” or “NOTL Heritage.”

One exclusive design had a beach scene with the lake, while another had wildflowers.

“People were really liking the Niagara on the Lake pots that I did,” said Bogdanski, who runs Painted Pots Etc. by MommaBogs. “I thought they represented Niagara-on-the-Lake in some way, you know, with the florals.”

She said that her designs captured the beauty of

Niagara-on-the-Lake and represented the town’s heritage.

“It takes a little bit of a modern twist on what people have been doing for hundreds of years,” she said.

The festival’s spirit of celebrating the past particularly captivated Ana Ley, originally from Mexico.

“As an immigrant, we don’t know exactly what it used to be like here in the past. So, for us, it’s knowing the history of Canada. We are learning a lot,” said Ley.

Ley was amazed by the festival’s ability to vividly bring history to life.

She said it deepened her understanding of Canada, a country whose history she is just beginning to discover.



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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

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

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property at **1823 NIAGARA STONE ROAD (PT LOT 70 RP30R-4849 PARTS 1 & 3)** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

Description of Property

The subject property is located on 1823 Niagara Stone Road. The subject land is located near the intersection of Niagara Stone Road and East and West Line towards the southeast of the Niagara Stone Road. The two-storey structure is located with a moderate setback from Niagara Stone Road. The access to the house is through a narrow gravel driveway from Niagara Stone Road.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property has cultural heritage value or interest for its design and physical values, its historical and associative values and its contextual values.

The residential structure on 1823 Niagara Stone Road is a representative example of Gothic Revival architecture which was built on picturesque taste and revived mediaeval Gothic forms. The structure is two storey red brick construction with wood details. The façade of the subject property is asymmetrical with symmetrical elements. The side elevations of the building are balanced and contain symmetrical elements. The corners of the structure contain protruding brick quoins. Typical of Gothic Revival structures the roof of the structure is gable with overhanging eaves, moulded fascia, cornice and features a gable end on the façade with a centre gable on side elevations. The structure also has a wrap-around verandah with a hip roof, overhanging eaves, wooden dentils, brackets, fretwork and balustrade details. The window openings of the structure are round arched with radiating brick voussoirs, wooden lug sills and moulded wooden frames. The main entryway to the subject property is simple and contains segmentally arched opening with radiating brick voussoirs. The subject property also features protruding bay windows on the façade, northeast and southwest elevation. The roof of bay windows features overhanging eaves with wooden brackets and dentil details on the cornice. The bank barn on 1823 Niagara Stone Road is a unique example of a surviving barn in the Gothic Revival style in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The barn has a raised rubble stone foundation. The barn features a steeply pitched gable roof with a centre gable on façade, a vertically protruding dormer in the centre of the gable roof, wooden finials on gable ends and overhanging eaves with plain cornice. The roof is clad in cedar shingles. The openings in the barn are rectangular.

1823 Niagara Stone Road has physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship. The intricate wood work found on the residential structure holds immense value. The wood work is featured on the wrap-around verandah and the protruding bay windows. It consists of wooden fretwork, dentil details on verandah and bay windows cornice, moulded brackets and decorative wood posts.

1823 Niagara Stone Road has historic association with George Varey. George Varey was an immigrant from England who first moved to Montreal and then to the Niagara Region. He was a successful tailor who supplied clothes to both the military and the civilians. He purchased various properties across the Town and even constructed terrace houses for the workers of the Niagara Harbour and Dock Company. He acquired 15 acres of the original Lot 70 of 1823 Niagara Stone Road in 1841 and practiced farming on the land. George Varey played a role in the development of various property parcels around the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. 1823 Niagara Stone Road also has historical association with James Hiscott. He was a farmer and used to farm on the subject property. He was also an important political figure who represented Lincoln in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. James Hiscott served as the chief magistrate for the Niagara Township and was also the warden of the Lincoln County.

1823 Niagara Stone Road has contextual value because it is important in defining the historic character of the area. Niagara Stone Road streetscape majorly consists of wineries, orchards and residential properties that are one to two storeys high with a large to moderate setback from the road. Most of the building are recent built structures or have been modified. The historic structure reiterates the historic character of the area and connects the context to its historical roots. 1823 Niagara Stone Road is also historically linked to its surroundings as being part of the Corus farmstead. The house structure and the bank barn were once a part of a larger farmstead. The land appears to have since been subdivided but the farms still exist towards the southeast of the subject property.

Description of Key Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that embody the heritage value:

Residential structure

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Two storeys Gothic revival style structure | • Red brick construction |
| • Balanced elevation with symmetrical elements | • Protruding brick quoins |
| • Gable roof with centre gable on side elevations | • Overhanging eaves and moulded fascia, and cornice |
| • Segmentally arched entryway openings | • Round arch window openings |
| • Location along the Niagara Stone Road | • Setback from the road |
| • Historical connection to farmstead on Lot 70 | • Radiating brick voussoirs, moulded wooden frame and wooden lug sill |
| • Protruding bay windows with overhanging eaves, wooden brackets and dentil details on the cornice | |
| • Wrap-around verandah with a hip roof, overhanging eaves, wooden dentils, brackets, fretwork and balustrade details | |

Bank Barn

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Gothic revival style structure | • Raised rubble stone foundation |
| • A steeply pitched gable roof with a centre gable on façade | • Vertically protruding dormer in the centre of the gable roof |
| • Cedar shingles roof | • Rectangular openings |
| • Wooden finials on gable ends and overhanging eaves with plain cornice | |

Objections

Any objection to this designation must be filled no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice of Intent to Designate. Objections should be directed to the Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S 1T0. The last date to file a notice of objection is **September 8th 2024**.

Queries

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

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake this 7th day of August 2024
GRANT BIVOL, CLERK



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and many more members of the community

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Contributed by Patty Garriock

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Joyous pizza at potluck



Hal Taheri was baking up fresh pizza for Joyous NOTL's third-annual potluck last week. The group, which can be found on Facebook, hosts a variety of community events to connect people. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Guest column

The times they are a-changin’



Keith McNenly
Special to The Lake Report

Sixty years ago Bob Dylan released his song “The Times They Are a-Changin’.” That song has never lost its relevance. Like a tolling bell, it calls us still today to look upon our younger generations ability to cope with a very changed world bequeathed to them. The economic policy of the past 60 years simply does not reflect the current world reality. It has the effect of allowing the rich to amass wealth to the detriment of the poor and middle classes. While Western governments espouse the efficacy of the free market system, public policy in its totality, especially with prime interest rate intervention by national banks, ensures the migration of wealth to the already rich and powerful. When the middle class finally get a small raise and begin buying stuff they previously couldn’t afford, the makers and sellers of that stuff make a windfall, which for some piques their greed.

Not content with the increased profits from higher sales, they seize the opportunity to raise prices because there is more competition for their products. Politicians label it inflation, setting the stage for a financial double whammy windfall for the already rich, and the Fed, on schedule, raises interest rates to “fight inflation.” These same CEOs and shareholders with portfolios that include banks and mortgage lenders are now set to receive their part two reward for raising prices. The Fed (or in our country, the Bank of Canada) raises interest rates. Increased interest rates have an almost immediate and predictable impact. On top of barely being able to afford food, gas and other staples due to higher prices, the middle class now starts losing their homes as well, not because they can’t afford it, but because they can’t afford the increased monthly interest payments to the banks and mortgage lenders. The homeowners evicted from their homes must now compete for increasingly rare and costly rentals that are also unaffordable. Rents they must pay after losing their home often exceed their previous mortgage payments, except now the bank owns their home and they have lost their good

credit rating. Inability to qualify for a mortgage renewal in times of higher interest rates is a game changer. How is it that we still rule our economics with this antiquated system of punishments to the middle class when it is corporations that raise the price of goods and services? Economists expound that the way to combat inflation is to curb the buying power of the middle class by raising interest rates. It indeed does that, with a byproduct of increasing profits and incomes for the wealthy, banks and large monopolistic corporations. Is this really the only or best solution? When inflation is quelled, prices never go back down all the way to or even near previous levels. Why is that? Maybe the idea of using interest rate increases to ease inflation held less collateral damage on citizens when the idea was first promulgated, but today’s effect of kicking the middle class out of their homes is too steep a price to pay. Home ownership today is unaffordable to a growing segment of the population and many of our youth have already discounted the idea of ever being a homeowner. The alternative, a life of renting, is also unaffordable, thanks to growing

competition for scarce rentals, and it provides no nest egg for retirement. Dylan released “The Times They are a-Changin’” in 1964 and those of us around at that time can attest to the fact times really were changing. We had the Vietnam war, civil activism, the influential boomer generation getting politically active, hippie and drug culture to cite but a few, but no one grew up thinking they would fall behind their parents in their ability to earn enough to own their own home someday. But that’s where we are today. Many of our kids no longer see home ownership as inevitable, but as unattainable. Since the 1960s food sales competition in Canada has dwindled from more than 50 to only five monopolistic corporations that control our food choices and prices. That is one real cause of inflation, not the middle class owning homes and getting a small increase in salary. In his song 60 years ago, Dylan had some advice: ... Your old road is rapidly agin’, Please get out of the new one if you can’t lend your hand, For the times they are a-changin’. Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Keith McNenly was the chief administrator of the Town of Mono for 41 years.



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Mayor Zalepa's criticism of protest a cynical attempt to 'change channel'

Dear editor:

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa's response to the July 30 protest at town hall ("Protesting residents want council to understand the 'vocal majority,' " Aug. 1), is disappointing in both its lack of meaningful content and its cynical attempt to "change the channel."

Based on the alleged behaviour of "some protesters," he cast the entire group collectively as villains using intimidation as a tactic.

A few facts follow.

The protesters were isolated by police to be "on the grass."

People shouted "Shame," "Liar" and "Resign" from a distance. Councillors were not blocked on their way to the town hall. Protesters who wanted to attend the supposedly public council meeting were prevented from doing so and the viewing of the meeting was blocked by a curtain.

If "some" individuals illegally assaulted councillors, as alleged by the lord mayor and some other councillors, then charges should be laid. The police were on site and available to take



Protester Jean O'Malley discusses her concerns with Coun. Erwin Wiens during last week's protest of council. FILE

action against inappropriate behaviour by any individual protester. No action was apparently warranted.

If shouting "Shame," "Liar" and "Resign" from a controlled venue at a distance is unacceptable protest in the lord mayor's view, then what is acceptable? Silent vigil?

If the lord mayor wants to: "work together to foster more respectful dialogue moving forward," then as a start, perhaps he should refrain from the low road tactic of changing the channel from councillors' behaviour and broken promises to a debate about unsupported allegations of "unacceptable behaviour" by unidentified protesters in a space controlled by the police.

He is using a cynical and well-known public relations strategy: if you don't like the subject — "council votes" — change the subject — "protester behaviour."

While talking at length about the behaviour of "some" unidentified protesters, he said not one word, not one, about the subject at hand which is the implementation, or more accurately, non-implementation, of the town's official plan.

I encourage the lord mayor and the rest of council to take the high road and respect the official plan.

Or if the majority of council believes changes are needed to the plan to foster "progress" and "tax management," those changes should go through

an appropriate democratic planning process and not be subject to council votes that more and more reduce the confidence of the town's citizens in the overall process of local government.

The lord mayor is correct in one respect: this situation is deteriorating. However, he is a major contributor to this deterioration.

As council's leader, it is his narrative to manage. But he appears to have lost control of it.

He will have only a few more chances to change his increasingly confrontational tone that many believe as stems from perceived, if not real, conflicts of interest within council.

The lord mayor and council have the duty, responsibility and opportunity to take the high road and restore confidence in our local government.

They can do so by fostering transparency and accountability and, most importantly, restoring TRUST, which is, after all, the real subject at hand.

Paul Kirkconnell
NOTL

Planning department workshops would help public get the picture

Dear editor:

In Peter Rusin's Aug. 1 letter to the editor, ("Education is solution to anti-development protests in NOTL,") he calls for education as a means to resolving, at least in part, anti-development protests in NOTL.

I couldn't agree more.

To be clear, the town planning department's webpages provide excellent infographics and information explaining the process and clearly illustrating that the official plan, which many believe is set in

stone, is in fact a living document that moves with the times and shifting regulations.

The problem is that people aren't reading it and perhaps more explanation around certain steps in the process is required.

As a solution, I encourage the planning department to provide a roadshow or series of workshops at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre or other venues to provide such education.

Peter Warrack
NOTL

Hydrangea should be official flower of NOTL

Dear editor:

Following gardening columnist Joanne Young's panegyric on the subject of hydrangeas, ("More from the world of hydrangeas," Aug. 1), I propose we adopt the flower in all its glory as the "Official Flower of NOTL."

Here in The Village, where I live, hydrangeas are ubiquitous and deserve the recognition.

Nigel Napier-Andrews
NOTL



Tiny quick fire hydrangea.

Have dreams of being a landlord? Do the math first



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

A nice heritage home sold in Old Town this week. The asking price was competitive, but no cigar. The new owner got it for 14 per cent less.

As mentioned here last week, it's a buyer's market. Lots of inventory. Scant sales. Sticky prices, now (apparently) starting to crack.

What a change from when my dog-walking bud Harold sold his house around the corner a year ago (and sadly moved to St. Catharines).

He got an unsolicited juicy offer and closed at

his convenience with no commission. Now the place has sprouted a fancy French name painted on the front in (of course) fancy script.

We love real estate. On average 55 per cent of Canadians' net worth is in it. When you strip out renters (currently half the Toronto population) that number zooms higher. We also carry \$2.2 trillion in mortgage debt. How much is that? It's bigger than the whole economy.

My neighbour thinks he's a condo genius. Or did. He bought four in downtown Toronto. After all, rents have been steadily rising. Prices always go up. And who can trust the stock market, he asks? Real estate, he adds, is real. What can possibly go wrong?

As it turns out, lots. With condos, more than a lot.

First, rents are falling. Not rising. That was so 2023. In the GTA, the average monthly for both one and two-bedders is down year over year. As interest rates



A fancy French name, in fancy script, has been added to this beautiful home in NOTL's Old Town. GARTH TURNER

roll back, this will ripple through the market.

Second, rental condos are a financial sinkhole. Even the banks who lend the mortgage money to buy them agree. A report from my pal Benny Tal, now chief economist at CIBC, is a stark warning for anyone thinking about being a landlord.

In 2022, for the first time, a majority (52 per cent) of rental condos with a mortgage lost money. Last year it was 77 per cent. So far this year, 82 per cent.

The average monthly loss to owners is \$597, which is 2.5 times higher than two years ago. Condo carrying costs increased 21 per cent last year. Rents went up 8

per cent. Do the math.

Third, condo prices are eroding. Resale inventory is growing fast (almost 12,000) and there are over 17,500 unsold new condos in Toronto alone. Per-foot valuations — which had been as high as \$1,400 for recently completed buildings — have plopped to about a thousand.

So tons of supply and tepid demand means properties are worth less. Not only are investor-landlords in negative cash flow, they own units losing equity and they probably can't sell them.

Worse, if you decide to sell within a year of buying you face the federal anti-flip legislation. Any profit is added to income and taxed at your marginal rate.

But any loss cannot be used as a deduction from capital gains. Unfair — for which you can blame Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland.

But wait. The misery ain't over yet.

If you must turf your ten-

ant, you can't. Non-payment of rent doesn't give you the right to change the locks.

And it could be endless months before the case comes before the overloaded landlord/tenant board. In Toronto now a renovation will require an engineer's report before a notice to vacate can be delivered. And then there may be an appeal.

And if you get fed up and leave the unit empty?

Then face the vacant-house tax in Toronto, even if you decide to stay in the place every weekend to escape the crush of humanity on NOTL's Queen Street.

That tax is a killer at 3 per cent of market value. On an \$800,000 condo, it's \$2,000 a month, atop condo fees, property tax and financing.

Still want to be a GTA landlord? Opt for a root canal instead.

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

garth@garth.ca

Protests and problematic planning reports



Brian Marshall
Columnist

Allow me to begin with a short factual commentary on the July 30 citizen's rally held on the lawns of Niagara-on-the-Lake's town hall and municipal offices.

This protest was attended by about 200 residents who gathered to express their profound disagreement with a series of development decisions the town's council has made during its first 19 months in office.

These decisions, which have and will affect virtually every village and the agricultural lands in NOTL, were represented by people who put boots-on-the-ground in the rally.

As I walked through the gathering, which was dominated by grey-haired folks from the villages and rural sections of NOTL, I was gratified to see strong representation of the town's younger resident demographic.

Several of them brought their children to witness one of the fundamental rights in democracy: the option to come together and express their opinions relative to the actions of their elected representatives.

It was my observation, particularly given the universal opinion expressed to me by those gathered on the lawns, that many of this council's decisions are the antithesis of their campaign promises.

This rally was incredibly civilized — no surprise in light of the predominance of polite and conservative "grey-haired" attendees.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and Coun. Erwin Wiens walked the pathways past the gathered citizens to enter the town hall through the front doors: props to them both for their brave,

but perhaps ill-advised, walk, since that action underwrote and reinforced their commitment to a voting record that the residents in attendance generally viewed as catering to developers at the expense of the town's character.

As they walked, a small component of the crowd expressed their position more vocally, using terms like "shame" and "resign."

I am forced to observe that these calls, expressed by residents tired of being ignored by their elected "representatives," were neither "abhorrent" — as characterized by Erwin Wiens in his comments to The Lake Report's article by Julia Sacco (Aug. 1, "Protesting residents want council to understand the 'vocal majority'" nor "appalling" as he suggested in Kevin Werner's article in the Niagara-on-the-Lake Advance (July 31, "It was appalling: Mob angry about development approvals swarms NOTL councillors").

To suggest that this gathering was anything more than a peaceful demonstration of residents' intent and desire to preserve the unique community of Niagara-on-the-Lake — in all its parts — is the grossest type of mischaracterization.

In fact, as Coun. Sandra O'Connor made her way through the gathering to the town hall doors, she was awarded with a universal round of thunderous applause as a result of her performance in council and consistently voting in accordance with her 2022 election campaign promises.

A record that might serve as an example to others on council as was simply pointed out by the Niagara Foundation's July 25 advertisement in The Lake Report, titled "Promises Made."

It seems the old saying that a person receives the accolades and respect they earn through their actions still remains true.

Oh, and by the way, citizen rallies of this type do work.

In the July 30 council meeting, two contentious issues on their agenda — the



Brian Marshall, who observed the protest against town council's recent development decisions last week, says he finds it hard to take Coun. Erwin Wiens' comments seriously that the grey-haired protesters were "abhorrent" or "appalling." DAVE VAN DE LAAR

severance of the heritage designated property at 187 Queen St. in Old Town and the clear-cutting of more than 800 mature trees in Virgil on the Konik Estate property — were defeated.

Although, it must be said the latter has been "referred back to staff" and remains an issue that must be watched.

Still, it does make one wish for the form of democracy that has been practised in Switzerland since the 19th century.

You see, the Swiss have their elected bodies at various levels and these bodies operate generally in accordance with a typical representational democracy model.

However, alongside the usual voting rights accorded in democracies, the Swiss people also have the right to vote on specific issues.

For example, certain types of legislation may only be enacted into law after a mandatory referendum is conducted which is open to all citizens.

Further, all citizens possess the right to challenge any law approved by the parliament by collecting 50,000 signatures and thereby forcing an "optional referendum" held nationwide — the result of which is the final ruling authority on the law.

They may also, at any time, propose a modification of the federal constitution, requiring a higher threshold

of 100,000 signatures within 18 months to underwrite a referendum ("federal popular initiative") and again, the citizen vote on the matter is final authority.

So, to put this in perspective, the population of Switzerland was, in 2022, 8.78 million with 5.5 million voters. Therefore, 50,000 signatures represents 0.9 per cent of voters.

In that same year, Niagara-on-the-Lake had 15,996 voters and, if we had a similar system, an "optional referendum" could be forced with a mere 143 signature threshold.

This is well below the 1,157 voter signatures registered in just a week by the two petitions currently on change.org ("Reverse town council actions that threaten Niagara-on-the-Lake & its national legacy" and "Urge Niagara-on-the-Lake councilors to uphold town's official plan and respect voters' choice"), not to mention the number of on-paper signatures associated with these petitions.

And, by the way, both petitions are still open, active and ask you to weigh in on this matter.

If you have reasons to agree with recent council decisions on development, I can respect that. However, if you are opposed, the authors of these petitions are still calling for your voices to be heard.

Now, let's turn the page to a recent email I received

from a Virgil resident, who stated "I am reaching out to you for some help on a proposed four-storey building plus rooftop patio next door to my house" and concluded with a plea that read, "Please help us."

While off the top, I am not yet prepared to weigh in on this application, it must be stated that I detest any application that subsumes the total height of a building into the number of storeys.

This is a red herring deliberately introduced in a developer's application to ameliorate and deflect any questions associated with "total height."

Normal and universally accepted convention associated with the design of a multi-storey residential development calculates a "storey" at 10 feet, while a commercial "storey" might vary between a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 15 feet.

So, four residential "storeys" equal 40 feet, while in a commercial overture, the same four-storey building might — in the most extreme and very unlikely case — reach a total height of 60 feet.

In a typical hotel design, the first storey may use the full 15 feet (or more) but "room" floors would not typically exceed 12 feet, therefore, any building suggested to be "four storeys" would, at a normal maximum, not exceed a finished height of 56 feet.

So, both the Virgil overture at 52 feet exceeds and thereby fails this standardized criteria. Moreover, the Parliament Oak overture, at 62 feet (not including any rooftop mechanical enclosures) exceeds the "extreme case" commercial criterion cited above.

It also needs to be noted that both of these applications are well above the maximum height allowance in the town's official plan (bylaws) which establishes the acceptable height in these jurisdictions at no more than plus-or-minus 36 feet.

As a matter of note, the reports produced for Hummel Properties vis-à-vis the Virgil development are significantly superior to those prepared for Two Sisters Resorts (Parliament Oak) since none of the reports to the former absolve the consultancy firm of liability.

That said, in the studies submitted with both of these applications and in various others drawn from the town website as reviewed by this columnist to date, there is a very curious omission.

In no case have the reports I've read to date addressed quantifying their additional sewage/waste water against NOTL's treatment plant capacity.

In straight-forward terms, if our treatment facility is operating at 60 per cent of capacity and the calculated addition equals 20 per cent, we are all good.

But, what happens if the current processing capacity is at 90 per cent and the additional 20 per cent is added?

That puts the NOTL taxpayers on the hook for expanding the treatment plant infrastructure.

As Richard Connelly — with nearly four decades of professional expertise in this field — pointed out, this would normally be a standard and required inclusion in any infrastructure report in all North American jurisdictions.

So, why isn't it here?

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



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Council needs to listen to residents’ concerns

Dear editor:

I was disheartened by the statement Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa released following the July 30 protest outside town hall.

He chose not to address the concerns that led more than 200 taxpayers to go there and demand a change of course.

Not once did he explain his reasons for going against the town’s official plan, and his election promises, by voting in favour of development projects that many of his constituents clearly do not support.

Not once did he express regret that recent development decisions made by council have angered many Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, or explain why he believes those decisions are in their best interests.

The apparent unwillingness of the lord mayor and several councillors to hear and consider the concerns of residents as an integral component of their decision-making process is also problematic: presentations

by delegations have been limited to five minutes or less; the mayor and other councillors have made it clear they rely almost exclusively on staff reports when deciding how to vote on issues; the feedback offered by town’s advisory committees has been largely ignored in several instances; some of the experts on those committees have been suspended, apparently because they spoke out against council decisions; and little or no consideration is being given to the town’s official plan when development decisions are made.

In recent months, council has approved several development projects that will irrevocably change the nature of our town and set precedents that will make it difficult to stop similar projects from being built in the future.

The long-term impacts of those projects on the town’s infrastructure are unclear, as NOTL has not commissioned its own study to determine this,

nor what the cost to taxpayers of addressing those impacts might be.

Instead, it is apparently relying on reports commissioned by the developers themselves, who clearly have a vested interest in the outcome of those studies. And as the old saying states, “He who pays the piper calls the tune.”

In his statement, the lord mayor decries the lack of respect residents have shown to him and councillors. Yet that should come as no surprise, given the lack of respect that the lord mayor and several councillors have shown to residents.

Combined with the election promises that were made and subsequently broken, it’s easy to understand why many residents’ trust in the lord mayor and council has been eroded, and why so many felt compelled to protest outside town hall on July 30.

NOTL’s official plan was and is intended to guide future development in our town. It has been care-

fully thought through and researched, with the intent of ensuring that our town continues to thrive be a great place to live, work, play and do business.

Changing it willy-nilly at the whim of developers makes no sense and is simply wrong.

The current situation in NOTL reminds me of the film “It’s a Wonderful Life.” We need a George Bailey to stand up for what is right. I commend everyone who participated in the protest at town hall and particularly Karen Taylor-Jones for organizing it.

But one protest will not, I suspect, be enough to win the day. We need to continue to make our voices heard.

My message to the lord mayor and the councillors who have supported what I believe are bad development projects for our town remains the same: Reconsider or resign; respect our official plan.

Terry Davis
NOTL

People are angry and frustrated with council

The following letter was sent to members of NOTL council. A copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

People are angry. In fact, they are very angry and frustrated that their voices are not being heard by their representatives (“NOTL protests town council,” The Lake Report, Aug. 1).

There has even been a call for certain members of council to resign since they no longer have the

confidence of many of the people who elected them.

They are also accused of breaking election promises. As The Lake Report comment in its editorial in the same edition, (“Anger, division and the future of NOTL.”), it is very unusual for NOTL residents to take to the streets in protest of council.

This simply shows the depth and dimension of an issue that is very important to the residents of Old Town and others in

NOTL — and should not be ignored.

The heritage, history and look of Old Town are fundamental and extremely important issues to its residents. Old Town is unique and should be protected by council.

Common sense says that Parliament Oak is a special and unique case and resident input should be seriously considered before any decision is made by council.

It should not be left solely

up to those elected. However, this was not done.

The level of residents’ anger at the time of protest led to some displays of offensive conduct, according to the mayor.

While such conduct is not condoned, this is not surprising since many see the conduct of council and its refusal to listen to the residents on this important and special issue as even more offensive.

Derek Collins
NOTL



We welcome your letters

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

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Cora Long D.D.

NOTL protesters shouted but kept cool

Dear editor:

Although I realize it was not your newspaper that published such a negative article about our rally outside town hall, I felt it best to write to you while acknowledging the obvious bias of NOTL's other publication.

Once again, the "Local jokel" has done an injustice to the people.

They stood behind our local government and supported them by falsifying information, leaving members of what they called the "angry mob" looking like criminals who have, in the words of developer Rainer Hummel, "tarnished NOTL."

I suppose it makes sense, though, as that publication has often misquoted people and not corrected the record.

Not only did I, as the organizer of the protest, feel that everything was rather calm considering how angry we all were, but so did my crowd control volunteers and the police officers who were there the entire time.

The bullhorn was used for chanting, for reading off the lies of our elected officials pre-election, for advising people to stay on the grass and for letting everyone know when councillors and mayor had arrived.

Not once did anyone suggest that people swarm the entrances. I've also read online and in the paper that vulgar language, racial slurs and inappropriate insults were used by members of our "mob."

We have since determined that two men took part in such goings on behind the town office, while councillors were entering.

If we are able to identify these men, we will make it clear they are no longer welcome as part of our group.

Everyone else who showed up was respectful. They followed the requests

of the town and Niagara Regional Police to stay off the path, which allowed councillors and others to enter town hall without any issue.

People chanted "liar," "resign" and "shame," but not once did I hear anything one would consider inappropriate.

The other publication also stated that no protesters entered the chamber and that's inaccurate as well. I went in with a friend who had business there.

When we left, four other people were still inside. Two women later came out while we were cleaning up signs that were left behind.

Overall, I thought our rally was successful. It was great to see all of those people show up to voice their concerns and support our town.

Police estimated that 350 people were in attendance. That is huge.

I'm so proud of everyone for being there and keeping their cool. Just because things are reported one way, doesn't mean that's the reality of things, especially when it's coming from a biased publication or a mayor and council who know they're going against public opinion.

Furthermore, they're going to have to find a way to change the decisions they've made, specifically regarding Parliament Oak, or we will keep coming back.

We will keep gaining momentum. We will keep pushing for their resignations. We WILL save NOTL. We WILL save the heritage of the first capital of Upper Canada.

It's a shame that 350 people were blamed for the ignorance of a few. Let it be known that during our fight to save our town that anyone who is with our group will be held responsible for their actions.

Karen Taylor-Jones
NOTL



Buddy Andres says councillors must be living on Mars with the things they've been approving recently. MIDJOURNEY

Council decisions are out of this world

Dear editor:

It is obvious to me and many Niagara-on-the-Lake residents that some members of town council and our planning department seem to reside on another planet.

Let me get this straight: We approve the zoning for a four-storey, five-star hotel in a residential area, another four-storey hotel along historic Queen Street and now we agree to rezone a historic property on this same historic street — a property that received historic designation 22 years ago.

It's my understanding that all three of these decisions are not consistent with the town's official plan or strategic objectives.

If this is the case, then we as residents must initiate an impeachment process.

Why is this council and Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa intent on destroying the cultural heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake?

I should add that Couns. Gary Burroughs, Sandra O'Connor and Tim Balasiuk have consistently voted against these developments. Kudos to them.

The decision to rezone 187 Queen St., is the last straw. The applicant is proposing to sever this historic property and build a garage with an apartment above it.

That will certainly go a long way to solving the housing crisis in this town.

But the most unbelievable aspect of this whole affair is the fact that town staff worked with the applicant to revise his application in order to make it more palatable.

If our council insists on destroying historic properties and pandering to developers, why not remove the historic designation of Fort George and thereby allow for hotels, condos, etc. on that sacred ground?

Imagine our increased tax base.

I trust that this council will wake up, return to Earth and heed some of the excellent advice that gets reported in our weekly newspaper from professionals like Brian Marshall, Jim and Erika Alexander, the Lake Report staff, and many others.

Buddy Andres
NOTL

Town should have fought Parliament Oak plan

The following letter was sent to members of NOTL council. A copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

Although councillors didn't think they had a chance of convincing the Ontario Land Tribunal to halt the Parliament Oak five-star hotel development, at the very least, they should have challenged the planning decision on behalf of the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake and objected to the approval for the change of use, which flies in the face of the official plan.

Who in their right mind builds a hotel in the middle of residential housing?

The town does not need another hotel, we don't need more tourists, as NOTL is overflowing already.

Most of our councillors failed in their total lack of effort and concern for the residents and official plan.

The next big concern is traffic routing for the project.

Are we to have thundering trucks down King Street through a quiet residential area or should there be restrictions? These should not be made in favour of developers and contractors for their convenience.

NOTL already has swaths of land, bought by developers, that are sitting idle, creating unsightly areas near the entrance of NOTL.

The old Mori Gardens property has looked like a bomb site for the last two years. Does the town not impose a time limit for areas to remain fallow?

The Marotta lands could have 200 or more homes, instead of the original 169. What happened?

Councillors and the planning department have failed in their task of maintaining any support from residents.

The submissions from developers may have met planning department requisites but have ignored the residents' concerns and the very reason NOTL is a preferred area to live, not just visit and buy an ice cream and leave the garbage for taxpayers to clean up.

Jean O'Malley
NOTL

Town residents could start heritage defence fund

Dear editor:

In your Aug. 1 story, "Protesting residents want council to understand the 'vocal majority'," Jeannie Manning is quoted as saying that, if the justification is that taxes would increase for everyone if development does not occur, "to lose our heritage and to build hotels in residential areas, then a lot of us would be happy to pay more taxes."

She does not indicate how much more each year that she was prepared to pay in taxes or how those who disagreed could opt out.

This should be contrasted with Peter Rusin's letter, "Education is solution to anti-development protests in NOTL."

He wrote, "I am not willing to pay higher taxes because somebody doesn't like something."

To address both points of view I suggest that the town should create a Municipal Heritage Legal Defence Fund. All those who feel that money should be spent defending heritage before the Ontario Land Tribunal could donate money to the fund.

The money collected could be used to hire legal counsel and experts in cases that have no chance of succeeding. Once the money is depleted in any year no further lost causes would be funded.

The added attraction of such a fund is that the donors would get a charitable tax receipt that can be used when filing their annual tax returns, something that can't be done with taxes paid to the town.

Ron Fritz
Queenston



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.

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Hot rods and cool wheels at NOTL's three car shows

Staff
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake is the place to be this month if you love admiring beautiful cars — from high-end Porsches, to old-school hot rods.

Three car shows are taking place in town over the next two weeks, starting this Friday, Aug. 9 with Niagara 5000, a luxury vehicle show in downtown NOTL.

In partnership with McLaren Toronto, the Niagara 5000 will see about 50 cars — including McLarens, Porsches and rare, luxury vintage rides — lined up and down Queen Street, which will be closed to regular vehicle traffic for the show, from 1 to 5 p.m.

Several thousand car enthusiasts packed Old Town for last year's inaugural McLaren show.

Earlier on Friday, starting 9 a.m., there will be a kids car rally for youngsters to come out and rent mini



NOTL's three car shows will offer a look at super cars, classic cars and more. The Kinsmen Show and Shine is on Sunday, the Niagara 5000 is Friday and the St. Davids Lions Club Show and Shine is next Sunday, Aug. 18. FILE PHOTO/DAVE VAN DE LAAR

electric cars they can take for a spin down the road. For a sneak preview at some of the featured McLarens, Peller Estates is hosting an opening

night party the day before, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m., featuring a three-course dinner, fine wines, live music and dancing. This weekend, as the

Peach Festival takes over downtown NOTL, the Kinsmen Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake will host its annual Show and Shine car show on Sunday, Aug. 11.

It's in partnership with Parks Canada and runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Attendees can expect to see hundreds of shiny, souped-up vintage rides outside the Kinsmen Scout Hall at the King and Mary streets and enjoy barbecued food and drinks at the beer/wine tent, take part in the 50/50 draw and pick up a car show T-shirt.

Tickets are \$5 for spectators (and free for children under 12 years old), while the entry fee for show cars is \$10. Last year saw more than 500 registrations.

Proceeds from the car show will go to support the Kinsmen Club's local community projects, most notably Cystic Fibrosis Canada.

Finally, on Sunday Aug. 18, the St. Davids & District Lions club will host its Show and Shine from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. — another dazzling display of vintage cars, with featured vehicles in the past, includ-

ing Chevys, Jaguars, Fords and more.

It's at the club's park on York Road.

The entrance fee for anyone who wants their ride in the show is \$15 the day of the event, while spectators can both enter and park for free.

Like the Kinsmen Club's show, there will be food, a beer tent, music, a 50/50 draw and more.

All proceeds from the Lions Clubs' show will go to Food4Kids Niagara, which provides healthy food packages for elementary school students who need it during the weekend and throughout the summer months.

Details:
Niagara 5000, Friday, Aug. 9, 1 to 5 p.m., Queen Street

NOTL Kinsmen Club Show and Shine, Sunday, Aug. 11, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 430 King St.

St. Davids and Lions Club Show and Shine, Sunday, Aug. 18, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 1462 York Rd.



Volunteers will help people unload the papers from their trunk into the Shred-It truck on Aug. 17. The fundraiser will support NOTL Palliative Care efforts in town. FILE

Shred those unwanted papers at fundraiser for palliative care

Staff
The Lake Report

There are less than two weeks left until Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care's "Shred-it" event on Saturday, Aug. 17.

The popular annual fundraiser is a chance to have your confidential papers properly destroyed — and an opportunity to financially support the palliative care service's work in the community.

Volunteers will be in the back parking lot at Simpson's Pharmacy at 1882 Niagara Stone Rd. from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

They will grab the papers from your vehicle and carry them to Shred-it trucks for destruction and disposal.

The fee is \$8 for the equivalent of a banker's box or \$20 for three boxes. If you do not have a banker's box, volunteers will estimate how much paper you have on site. Banker's boxes are not needed to drop off your documents.

Please note the organizers will not actually be selling banker's boxes.

The fundraiser is sponsored by Meridian Credit Union and Hummel Properties, with all proceeds going to NOTL Community Palliative Care Services.

Here are the details of how the disposal process will work:

Organizers will have traffic cones and people stationed all around the clearly marked parking

lot to take the money and direct to people looking to shred documents to the trucks.

There will be no need to leave your vehicle: volunteers will take the boxes out of the vehicle for you, reducing chances of injury.

Volunteers will be working in shifts at the site from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., or when the Shred-it trucks are full.

Note that they will not be shredding papers earlier. The large trucks require a clear pathway to the parking lot the day of, so organizers discourage early-bird arrivals.

For more information, visit notlpc.com/event/2024-shred-it-fundraising-campaign.

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Pumphouse festival celebrates the **bonds between art lovers**

Paige Seburn
The Lake Report

For many artists, like illustrator Caitlin Wooll, Art at the Pumphouse is an opportunity to connect with the community of artists, artisans and art lovers from the region and beyond — while gaining valuable exposure.

Dozens were at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre the weekend of Aug. 3 and 4 for the annual show in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which featured a diverse array of original works, including paintings, photography, sculpture, and pottery.

Wooll, who was participating for the first time, was pleased with the turnout and the town’s support for its artists.

Specializing in ink drawings of anthropomorphic scenes, she said she valued the visibility and the chance for connection.

“It’s good to have stuff like this in town that the locals can participate in. It’s drawing a lot of tourists too, which is great,” she said, adding that she looks forward to returning next year.



Left: Pete Malaguti demonstrates watercolour painting. DAVE VAN DE LAAR Right: An aerial view of the festival. RENE BERTSCHI



Tim Sullivan, who has been part of the show for four years, was similarly excited about its influence on local artists and community involvement.

Involved with the Pumphouse for around six years, Sullivan is primarily known for his landscape paintings.

In his opinion, the occa-

sion serves as a spark for enhancing connections in the community and bringing attention to artists from NOTL and beyond.

“You get people co-operating on these shows and you get to know the other vendors. And many of them are from this area,” Sullivan said. “It’s very good exposure.”

The event also offered attendees a chance to partake in several festivities: many purchased artwork directly from the artists, enjoyed drinks from the bistro and listened to melodic performances by local musicians in the rose garden, all while strolling through and exploring various artists’ booths.

Indoors, guests made donations, viewed more art in the gallery, participated in a silent auction and retrieved a “Family Friendly Days Art Kit.”

Manuel Trujillo appreciated the focus on local art, viewing it as an excellent platform for artists to gain visibility and present their work.

He also enjoyed the lively interactions between the artists and attendees, which added to the event’s vibrant atmosphere.

Trujillo felt the event’s celebration of creativity and community was truly impactful.

“It’s beautiful. I love it.”
paige@niagaranow.com

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“THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOT STAND”
★★★
(out of five)

Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre, 2 hours 30 minutes, one intermission. Ends Oct 12. Writer: Marcus Gardley. Director: Philip Akin. A drama about the free women of colour in New Orleans, 1813.

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

New Orleans. Its name conjures up languid, hot, steamy nights, Delta blues, African drums, gumbo, jambalaya, folk Catholicism, voodoo, ethnic ease, French refinements and Latin sensuality.

The famed port on the Mississippi was to become the third-largest, most cultured and wealthiest city of America. But in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Louisiana Territory was a pawn of European powers with France, Spain and Britain at war and America with an expansionist ambition.

Napoleon, beset with his army’s defeat in Saint-Domingue (Haiti) and a huge loss of West Indies income, plus a pending war with Britain, decided to sell, abandoning New Orleans and America.

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 gave the Americans New Orleans and a



Rais Clarke-Mendes as Maude Lynn Albans, Ryann Myers as Odette Albans and Deborah Castrilli as Agnès Albans, with Sophia Walker as Makeda and Nehassaiu Degannes as La Veuve in “The House That Will Not Stand.” DAVID COOPER

vast territory west of the Mississippi to Wyoming and Montana, and north to southern Saskatchewan and Alberta.

In Marcus Gardley’s play of major societal change and uncertainty in 1813 New Orleans, the house of controlling matriarch Beartrice Albans must remain standing.

The certainties of French and Creole culture, a way of life entrenched since 1718, equalities achieved within the Napoleonic Code and the future life of her family are now threatened by her husband’s death and the Yankee north.

Inspired by Federico Garcia Lorca’s 1936 classic, “The House of Bernarda Alba,” where a widow in a Spanish village enforces eight years of mourning on her daughters, Gardley places the house of Beartrice Albans in Faubourg Tremé, a racially mixed area of New Orleans.

Beartrice, a domineering, free woman of colour and recent widow, imposes a repressive six months of mourning on three daughters, her mad, confined sister and a Black female servant.

The realistic corpse laid out in the drawing room is

Lazare Albans, common-law husband and father of her daughters, who may or may not have died of unnatural causes after eating her sweet potato pie.

He is a white, married man with a white family, but under the unique formal system of *plaçage* he also supports and lives with his mistress and children.

Beartrice and her family can inherit one-third of his property, but the laws will change with the imposition of different American moral and racial values.

She wants to keep her daughters close, dependent on her not the *plaçage*

system, which she views as a type of slavery. But the young daughters are resistant and rebellious.

They want freedom and love, to meet young men and dance at the Quadroom Balls. Spirits within and without the house must be invoked to resolve the unfolding conflicts that threaten stability of the house.

Monica Parks as the iron-willed Beartrice capably conveys toughness, contempt and fatigue. She keeps a wary cool when her frenemy, the wealthy concubine, La Veuve (Nehassaiu deGannes) visits to spy and gossip.

For years, Beartrice’s sister has been locked up as punishment for passionately falling in love with a Black drummer. Cheryl Mullins plays Marie Josephine in a convincing whirling dance of longing, her long rasta dreadlocks swirling wildly around her, a symbol of defiance.

As the daughters, Agnès (Deborah Castrilli) wants to be a *placée* for love. Meek, pious Maude Lynn (Rais Clarke-Mendes) is too weak when she needs authority. The risk-all Odette escaping for a sexual fling is given an excited, edgy performance by Ryann Myers.

The star of the show is Sophia Walker as the servant Makeda who strives to buy her freedom. Her

solid acting throughout achieves high believability as she performs the divining voodoo rituals to reach the West African spirits who will give necessary guidance.

In the altar preparation, invocation and possession in which she trembles, convulses and writhes on the floor to an exhausted aftermath, she is superb.

Hairstyles and costumes are true to the time, especially the tignon headwraps, simple white dresses, Spanish black lace shawls and dark mourning gowns.

The staging in the round with the Louis XV fauteuils and the Neo-classical *récamier chaise-longue* indicate the refined taste of Beartrice.

Evocative lighting and lightning, music, claps of thunder, faint chirps of birds all give life to what lay outside the walls of the house.

Gardley has written a remarkable play of discovery, a tribute to his New Orleans mother and grandmothers, commissioned for the Berkeley Rep Theatre and since performed in New Haven, Chicago, London and New York.

The Shaw has given us a very fine first professional production in Canada.

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

Creative retreat focused on art, community and relaxation

Paige Seburn
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Gate Street Studio hosted a rejuvenating artist workshop retreat Saturday, offering a vibrant space for creativity and community.

The gathering, led by artist Sandra Iafrate, welcomed participants from near and far, including some from the United States, who came to explore art and relax.

Held each August, the retreat attracts both experienced and inexperienced artists who dive into a range of mediums.

“The retreat is about addressing mind, body and soul and relating on canvas colours and gestural brushwork, which speak to each participant’s unique personality and vision,” Iafrate told The Lake Report.

This year, the day began with local expert Nancy Drope guiding a peaceful meditation, setting a tran-



The artists show off the fruits of their labour from Saturday’s retreat. They created vibrant works depicting flora of all kinds. Right: Working on a large 16-by-20-inch canvas, the artists experiment with mixed media, incorporating elements like newspaper, textile and personal images. SUPPLIED

quil tone for the creative process to unfold.

Participants then enjoyed diverse workshops, which included charcoal drawing, Dutch floral sketches and expressive painting techniques.

Working on a large 16-by-

20-inch canvas, the artists experiment with mixed media, incorporating elements like newspaper, textile and personal images if they wanted to.

This hands-on approach allowed them explore their creativity without the pres-

sure of perfection, Iafrate said.

The community aspect of the retreat is important, she added.

“It’s just about engaging with other creative people. Learning, meeting people and spending a really nice,

relaxing day in the studio,” she said.

The retreat offered not only a chance to create but also to connect.

Iafrate said the day’s blend of artistic instruction, relaxation and community-building ensures that

participants depart with new ideas, a unique art piece and a renewed sense of inspiration.

She is planning an artist talk at her studio this coming weekend. It will focus on her current body of work.



TEAMS OF THE WEEK

U9-10 Sandtrap and U11 Between The Lines teams



The **U9-10 Sandtrap team** is one of The Lake Report’s featured Teams of the Week. Pictured with coach Nick Boissonneault are, front row, Madelyn Bergen, Serenity Bayne, Anniston Kruitbosch and Iris Broome-Gulley. Back row, Michael Kamatovic, Dario Danesh, Zenen Boissonneault, Liam Allen and Humza Hamed. Absent are Dyalco Danesh, Kurt Quinones, Holly Neuhof, Edis Benic and coaches Dayton Kruitbosch and Audrey Neuhof. The **U11 Between The Lines team** is one of The Lake Report’s featured Teams of the Week. Shown with goaltender Eli Pfeffer in front are Zoey Achal, Noah Kassam, Avery Warren, Leo Pillitteri, Edwin Shepherd, Forbes Dick, Sebastian Rezza, Skielor Reese and Nathan Reid. Back row, coaches Mike Pillitteri and Eric Pfeffer, Matt Keda, Micah Penner, Noah Wertsch, Declan MacNeill, coach Mack Pickett, Jack Friesen and Conor MacNeill. PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE VAN DE LAAR

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NOTL teen brings home the gold in Royal Canadian Regatta rowing

Zahraa Hmood
The Lake Report

Six seconds made a world of difference for Kennedy Bartel and her rowing partner at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta.

Pushing hard last Thursday, the Niagara-on-the-Lake rower and her teammate, Isabella Essig, crossed the finish line in the women's under-17 doubles race, beating five other teams and earning gold in St. Catharines.

The world-famous regatta, which ran July 30 to Aug. 4 at the Martindale Pond in St. Catharines, featured more than 100 rowing clubs from across Canada and the United States in dozens of racing events.

Bartel competes as a member of the St. Catharines Rowing Club.

The 16-year-old, who lives in Virgil with her family, scored her first gold in the regatta with a six-second win over rivals from Niagara Falls.

She also helped her club claim second place in both the women's under-17 eight and cox four races.

This summer's Royal Canadian Henley Regatta is a celebration of the rowing championship's 140th anniversary and it was Bartel's third time racing in it since she started rowing two years ago.

Her gold in the 2,000-metre race was the culmination of two years of practice and training with her rowing club and competing in several competitions each year since 2022



Kennedy Bartel says the feeling of coming in first in the women's under-17 double race – with a considerable lead on the competition – was “pure joy.” SUPPLIED

— but never placing first in the Henley championship.

“The feeling crossing the finish line was probably one of the best feelings I’ve ever had, just because I’ve been waiting for that moment for so long,” Bartel said.

Her expectations were high for both this race and the eights race, and she felt they could clinch the win in either one.

The St. Catharines club faced plenty of competition during the regatta for the under-17 doubles category, with 63 teams taking part in races from July 30 to Aug. 1.

“I think we knew we could, inevitably, pull out and be on top when it came to the final,” Bartel said.

From the moment everyone left the start, it was an intense race, she said. Bartel and Essig, who are coached by Richard

Moreau, fought to get out ahead of the pack.

“The first 1,000 metres of the race, I was just making sure that we were staying out in front and that we maintained our pace,” she said.

Then, at the midway point, the five boats behind them started speeding up. From there, it was all about keeping ahead of the other teams — and keeping their heads.

“It was really hard to stay calm,” Bartel said. “I had to make sure that we stayed out and kept calm, cool and collected.”

As they crossed the 1,500-metre point, the sprint for the finish line was on: their competition was going full steam ahead to catch up. The St. Catharines Rowing Club duo kept pushing.

In the final 250 metres, something came over Bartel.

“I kind of had a little bit of a feeling in my head that we were going to finish up ahead, so I kind of just let out a call during the race, just saying, ‘Go!’ ”

That final push in the home stretch paid off. “We kind of just flew away from every single person in the race.”

Her boat crossed the finish line first, with a time of 8:10.070, beating the Niagara Falls Rowing Club, which took silver with a time of 8:16.030, and the Calgary Rowing Club, with 8:18.050.

For Bartel, it was a moment of “pure joy,” she said.

Before this win, she had come second at Henley four times in prior races and was still looking for “that Henley gold.”

“As we crossed the finish line, all those feelings kind of went away. It was an amazing feeling,” Bartel said.

As the regatta season comes to a close, Bartel said she’s proud of how the year went.

“I’m closing out my U17 chapter being really happy for myself,” she said.

Her family is sharing that joy with her, including her mother, Lesley Bartel, who was at the regatta and said it was a “very proud moment” watching her daughter and Essig win the doubles race.

“She’s amazing, she really is,” Lesley Bartel said of her daughter. “She’s very determined. There’s nothing I can say to her to inspire her: she’s self-motivated.”

For complete results of the regatta, go to henleyregatta.ca.



This week's riddle is “Jeopardy!” style.
Category: NATIONAL ANTHEMS

One of its anthems includes the lyrics, “iwi Maori, pakeha, rupeke katoa.”

Last issue:

Category: IT GETS OLD

Clue: V.S.O.P., standing for very superior old pale, is a premium grade of this liquor aged at least four years.

Answer: What is cognac?

Answered first by: Lynda Collet

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Bob Wheatley, Pam Dowling, Wade Durling, Daniel Smith, Esther VanGorder, Katie Reimer, Nancy Rocca, Lynda Hosty, Elaine Landray, Marla Percy, Marjory Walker-Barone, Tuija Johansson, Catherine Clarke, Sheila Meloche

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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T-shirt sales help Terry Fox’s message live on

Paige Seburn
The Lake Report

Joan King has been keeping Terry Fox’s memory alive this summer in the lead-up to what will be the 44th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run this fall. She was at the NOTL Community Centre on Sunday, Aug. 4, selling this year’s edition of Terry Fox T-shirts to support the Terry Fox Foundation.

Through the T-shirts, she said she motivates the community with Terry Fox’s spirit.

“These shirts have a great message: No matter what. And that’s what Terry Fox said. No matter what. No matter any condition, he kept going and kept running,” she said.

She previously sold T-shirts at Phil’s Independent Grocer on July 12, marking the anniversary of Fox’s visit to NOTL during his Marathon of Hope 44 years ago. And she was at Hendriks Independent Grocer on July 28, on what



Joan King will be selling Terry Fox T-shirts at the Peach Festival this weekend, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

would have been Fox’s 66th birthday.

Her sales help fund cancer research and honour the late Candian hero’s legacy, building momentum for the annual run on Sept. 15, she said.

The back of the T-shirt displays what King says is an important message: “No matter the distance, no matter the obstacles, no matter the journey, no matter the odds, no matter what.”

The Terry Fox Foundation’s online timeline notes that Fox, driven by his cancer battle and the

need for research funding, began his Marathon of Hope in 1980 with the aim of running across Canada to raise money for cancer research.

After 143 days, he had to end his run on Sept. 1 because of the return of his illness, which led to his untimely death at the age of 22 less than a year later.

Niagara-on-the-Lake holds a special place in Terry Fox’s story, King said. On July 12, 1980, he made a memorable stop in the town, taking a break from his run to visit.

He was welcomed at the Prince of Wales Hotel, where there was a reception for the community to show its support for his journey, she said.

“We want to remember him and all those special times in his life,” she said. “And in our life, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, as well.”

The town planted a tree and added a plaque to a bench in Simcoe Park to honour him, she said, and her ongoing T-shirt sales help preserve his spirit in the community.

King hopes the T-shirts will encourage more people to join the Marathon of Hope and come out to Simcoe Park on Sept. 15.

She will also be selling shirts at the Peach Festival this weekend, on Aug. 10, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

T-shirts are \$25 each, while long-sleeved versions are \$35.

It’s great to get your shirts early, she said — wearing them before the run helps spread the word and cultivate enthusiasm.

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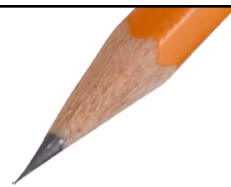
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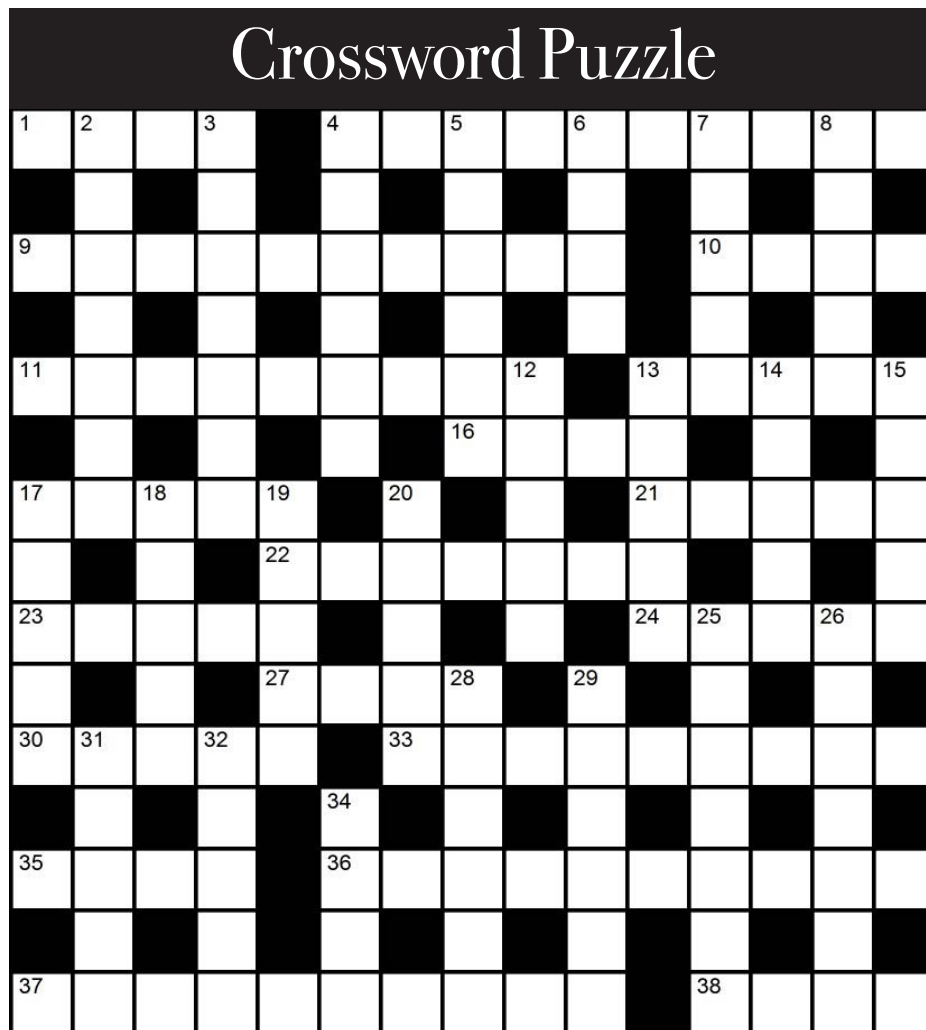
1. Egg-shaped (4)
4. Occurring after one's death (10)
9. Kind of engineer (10)
10. First son of Adam and Eve (4)
11. Six (4-5)
13. Also-ran (5)
16. Garment of ancient Rome (4)
17. Nobles (5)
21. Accustom (5)
22. Sailor (7)
23. Caterpillar (5)
24. Paces (5)
27. Harmonize (4)
30. Plot of ground (5)
33. Monarch (9)
35. Old Peruvian (4)
36. Immeasurably deep (10)
37. Overstate (10)
38. Indifferent (2-2)

2. Small community (7)
3. Satan (7)
4. Portion of time (6)
5. Small bag (6)
6. Consecrated (4)
7. Former Portuguese territory in S China (5)
8. Join (5)
12. Name of a thing (5)
13. Dens (5)
14. Gravy (5)
15. Staggers (5)
17. Coral builder (5)
18. White heron (5)
19. Shatter (5)
20. Golf clubs (5)
25. Lattice (7)
26. Winged horse (7)
28. Against (6)
29. Previously (6)
31. Addition (5)
32. Loud, resonant sound (5)
34. Showing unusual talent (4)

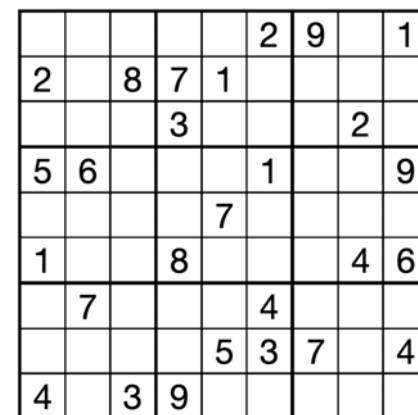
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Crossword Puzzle



Last issue's answers



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The **nocebo** effect – when pain becomes psychological



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

A few weeks ago, we discussed the surprising power of the placebo effect. You may recall that pills with no known beneficial effect can work miracles to relieve symptoms, especially pain, provided patients are convinced of the effectiveness of the pills. The effect is well-described and, in some instances, has been shown to work because suggestion can release naturally occurring opioids in the brainstem. But if the release of the opioids is blocked by naloxone, so also is the placebo effect.

That was convincing evidence for a biological explanation for at least some placebo effects. But you might not be so familiar with the nocebo effect, which suggests that beliefs can make us sick. The nocebo effect refers to the occurrence of harmful effects from consciously or unconsciously anticipating symptoms, one example of which was the June bug incident of 1962. Employees at a United States dress manufacturing plant developed symptoms such as faintness, nausea, abdominal pain, headache and fatigue, for which no toxin in the water or air, or infectious agent, were found to explain the mass illness. Then, there's the example of the Havana syndrome reported in U.S. embassies around the world, in which employees reported similar symptoms, as well as difficulties concentrating and focusing — what would now be called brain fog. Yet, despite claims that

adversaries were subjecting employees at embassies and some military installations that some form of high-tech sound waves or electromagnetic radiation were the cause of the symptoms, no evidence was later found to substantiate those claims. Recently, a five-year study by the National Institutes of Health, reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association, found no evidence of injuries to the brain volume, structure and white matter and no significant differences in cognitive function between those reporting the symptoms and healthy subjects. Similar mass events have been described in school-children at the same school and usually of like age, although the symptoms often spread to younger children in the same school. These few examples speak to the many examples of dramatic mass illnesses with similar symptoms, for which no obvious plausible medical cause could be found.

But if no medical and scientific plausible causes have been found for the foregoing examples, what explains the phenomenon? Some experts suggest that the symptoms are entirely functional — that is, they're all in the patients' heads and fabricated in some fashion. Possibly, but much more likely, is the probability that the symptoms are physically real, even if not caused by an identifiable agent. After all, fear and anxiety are contagious, as are their accompanying symptoms and behaviours. Similar group symptoms have been reported in high-stress situations such as mass shootings, and civilians and troops under continuous bombardment. Lack of sleep and inability to get away are common these days in Ukraine and Gaza, where stress-related symptoms are very common. Why would we be surprised? That doesn't explain the spread of like symptoms to

other members in a group, except that in primates such as chimpanzees, some members of a troop will literally "ape" or copy symptoms and behaviours of others in the troop. Such mirrored behaviour may be explained by the observation that some neurons in the brains of observers, sometimes "mirror" the firing patterns of neurons in those primates carrying out specific tasks — we are neurally wired to literally "ape" the behaviour and presumably feelings of others in groups. Recently the Mayo Clinic released a book on the subject, written by Michael Bernstein, Charlotte Blease, Cosima Locher and Walter A. Brown (no relation) titled, "The Nocebo Effect: When Words Can Make You Sick." It's worth a read and a reminder, if readers need reminding, that the Mayo Clinic is one of the best medical facilities in the world, where the quality of the staff is uniformly high, well-coordinated, and their approach to patients is very user-friendly, to which almost anyone who has gone there for care can usually attest. I know several of their staff, many of whom are now retired and one of their past CEOs — all are terrific examples of the clinic's high standards. This may sound like a plug for the Mayo Clinic, and it is for the very sound reasons I've mentioned, and the high quality of care they provided to patients I referred to Mayo from northern Ontario when I was a visiting physician in Thunder Bay's multiple sclerosis and general neurology clinics. They were always a great help even if they, like the rest of the profession, didn't always have the answer. Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.



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EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Niagara Canning Company Ltd./Strewn Winery, 1945

As we all savour this fruit season, many of us like to take the opportunity to preserve local fruit so we can continue to enjoy it in the winter as well. There used to be a number of canning companies in Niagara-on-the-Lake and this image shows the Niagara Canning Company in September 1945. The building was located on Lakeshore Road and is now Strewn Winery. Each year the Mennonite community found themselves with a surplus of fruit that was ripening quickly. Peter Wall solved this issue with the creation of the “Niagara Canning Company Limited” in 1940. Shareholders in the company had the privilege of being the first in line to deliver fruit but also to see return on the profits. During the canning season women from the community, and even some travelling in from Mennonite communities out west, would work long hours in the cannery. A boarding house, which accommodated 60 people, was located nearby where the women would be picked up and dropped off daily. By 1945 wages were 37 cents an hour for girls under the age of 16 and 42 cents for those over 16. Due to several factors, including flooded markets and competition, the cannery closed in 1948. Recorded stories about the canning history of Niagara-on-the-Lake can be found on the museum’s “Memories of Niagara” oral history website at www.memoriesofniagara.wordpress.com.

Marvel at musical talents right here in NOTL



Ross’s Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

So, my peripatetic and confident daughter and a few of her friends from Parliament Oak went to the Taylor Swift concert in Lisbon earlier this year. Including Easyjet airfare from London and three nights in a safe and fun hostel, the total cost was less than the ticket price for Swifties to go to the upcoming concert in Toronto. Celebrity culture has taken over, whether it be in the arts or professional sports. It’s a weird weird world out there. Taylor Swift packs 70,000 fans into her concerts and they all agree it was a semi-

nal event in their lives. Top celebrity athletes pack arenas and stadiums at outrageous prices — and do they ever gouge for beer and pop and hot dogs or sushi. Here’s another way to get some culture. Subscribe to Music Niagara or Jazz Niagara or the Shaw Festival or any of our local arts providers. They work so creatively and hard to entertain us, and to coax us out of our comfort zones. In late July, I went out to the Ironwood Cider House on Lakeshore Road for the Odin Quartet concert, “Beethoven in a Glass House.” Four young musicians playing violins, a cello and a viola. They are true professionals, passionate and certainly understand how much talking between pieces is just right. For \$40 plus tax, with reasonably priced charcuterie and ciders and wines, I marvelled at the talent and dedication of the four musicians. Excellent acoustics and a view of the peach orchard and the setting sun. Two



The Toronto-based Odin Quartet put on a great show, says Ross Robinson.

hours in a comfortable chair, in the front row due to my suspect hearing and short attention span. Country music and old Beatles tunes, with some Elvis thrown in, is my comfort zone. The Odin Quartet live in a different world and speak a different language. Still, I was riveted, as they talked about a cello concerto as well as George Augustus Bridgetower and his piece, “Henry: A Ballad.” A mixed-race sonata, by a mixed-race violinist with a mixed-race composer. Whew!

Samuel Bisson from Quebec talked about the Odin Quartet’s next “cool piece” and delighted in telling the audience that they hailed from the heart of Toronto’s musical scene. The other three musicians were educated in various countries: Serbia; Italy and Hungary; and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I discreetly nibbled on my charcuterie bowl, as Bisson effortlessly talked about the mechanical use of notes, minimalist music and how a small change can effect a big change.

All of this knowledge shared with we musical mortals in Niagara and never once did he seem condescending or pedantic: an art in itself, by such a talented and passionate performer. All four of the Odin Quartet looked so sharp, with shiny shoes, dashing shirts and snug vests. Tanya Charles was elegantly presented in a dress and stylin’ shoes. This was a totally first-class evening. Again, for \$40. Why then were there only about 45 people in the audience?

It’s a mystery to me, and only thanks to sponsorship from Ontario Creates and several other generous sponsors, is the musical table set here in Niagara. Try as they might, the various local musical groups struggle to attract sizable audiences. Trust me and the other folks who were at Ironwood that evening, the level of entertainment is superb. They will continue to present fabulous and thought provoking musical evenings for us. Please, neighbours, commit to the arts. Don’t let Yogi Berra’s famous malaprop be proven here, as he famously said, “If people don’t want to come to the ball game, you can’t stop them.” Go online, or search out the ads in The Lake Report. Step out of your comfort zone and be amazed right here at home. The prices are right, the variety is unbelievable and the evenings are inspiring. It just feels so good.



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Museum lecture explores history of Virgil

Staff
The Lake Report

It's been called many things: Four Mile Creek, Lawrenceville and the Crossroads.

Today, the community of Virgil is one of five villages that make up the tapestry of Niagara-on-the-Lake, which, like villages such as Old Town and Queenston, has a long and storied history exemplified in its heritage homes.

The early houses of Virgil are the subject of the NOTL Museum's upcoming lecture on Aug. 15, in which writer and genealogist David Hemmings will explore heritage homes of Virgil and its occupants.

The houses to be explored date from the 1790s to the early 1900s and Hemmings will highlight some of the lesser-known residents of those homes and their accomplishments.

The lecture is part of museum's summer lecture series, complementing its



Locust Grove is one of the homes that will be explored in the museum's Aug. 15 lecture on Virgil's history. SUPPLIED

current exhibit "The Prettiest Town: Beyond the Bricks and Mortar."

Some of the oldest homes in the village of Virgil were rebuilt in the first decade after the War of 1812, and many others were built in the late 19th century.

"Virgil is a fascinating study," said Hemmings in a media release. "It had two

distinct phases in its development, beginning with its early Loyalist settlers, like George Lawrence, arriving after the American Revolution. And then in the 1930s, the Mennonite community chose Virgil as a place of refuge, and truly boosted its vitality and population."

Hemmings is the author

of eight books and more than 50 documents on local history, with a strong focus on family origins and ancestry.

He has received the Paul Harris Fellow Award from Rotary International, and a 15-year Ontario Volunteer Service Award. He is also the past chair of the Niagara Historical Society.

Hemmings has found Virgil to be of special interest for his research.

"Virgil is a true cultural village, with no physical geographical boundaries, because of its large tracts of farmland," he said. "And over its history, the banks of Four Mile Creek have offered a fertile place to build homes — and a very strong community."

The lecture will be held at the museum, 43 Castlereagh St., starting at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$10, or free for museum members.

To reserve a seat, call the museum at 905-468-3912. Registration is required as space is limited.

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Grand cascade butterfly bush and pink perennial hibiscus can help add a tropical feel to the garden. JOANNE YOUNG



Time to explore tropical gardens



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

When you think about sitting and relaxing in the perfect summer garden, what comes to mind?

For me, I envision a full, lush garden filled with oversized flowers and mammoth leaves.

There is just something to be said about a more tropical look in the summer.

Here are four of my favourite summer beauties that will add some “wow” to your garden.

Butterfly bush (Buddleia)

Butterfly bushes are summer-blooming, deciduous shrubs that have been around for some time.

Their claim to fame is their arching, fragrant flower spikes, four to eight inches long, ranging in colour from white, to yellow, and through all shades of

pink and purples.

This sun-loving shrub starts to bloom mid-to-late July and continue to bloom into September. As the name suggests, they do indeed attract butterflies.

There are some new, exciting cultivars available. There are now many dwarf varieties available in the “Pugster” and “Lo & Behold” series that only grow two to three feet tall.

Another variety that has caught my attention is a cultivar called “Grand Cascade,” sporting 12-to-14-inch-long fragrant lavender flowers starting late July.

Bear’s breeches (Acanthus mollis)

This perennial plant is probably more widely known for its large leaves than its flowers, but both its leaves and flowers pack a punch in the garden.

The large thistle-like leaves have long been used by the Greeks since the fifth century BC on temple roof ornaments, wall friezes and the capital of the Corinthian column.

One of the best examples of its use in the Corinthian order is the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens.

Not only do the leaves add a certain lushness to the garden, but it also has tall, architectural spikes of

purple and white flowers that will grow anywhere from four to six feet tall.

Bear’s breeches grow best in part shade and enjoy a soil rich in organic matter. They are hardy to zone 5.

Perennial hibiscus (Hibiscus)

Another summer blooming perennial that will add fullness to your landscape is the perennial hibiscus.

Many of us have a tropical (indoor) hibiscus or know of rose of Sharon, which is also in the hibiscus family, but there is a perennial form that is hardy to zone 5.

Sometimes you will hear it being referred to as the dinner plate hibiscus as the flowers are about the size of a dinner plate (eight to 10 inches across).

There are many varieties of perennial hibiscus in shades of whites, pinks and reds. Most cultivars will grow three to four feet high and wide. There are also some dwarf varieties available as well.

Perennial hibiscus plants prefer a sunny spot in the garden. Although they can tolerate a moist to wet area, they also do well in regular soil.

Each flower only lasts for one day, but as the plant matures it can produce at least 80 flower buds.

They all do not open at once, but gradually over three to four weeks, giving it a long bloom time.

Hostas

Shady gardens are always a bit more challenging to design. It does limit your choices of plants.

One sure way of getting the full look is the use of hostas. They can make a hard-to-landscape area a lush paradise.

There are some amazing large-leaf varieties to choose from. One of the largest growing varieties is one called “Empress Wu,” which will grow four feet high and six feet wide.

Another hosta that I use a lot in designs is “Sum & Substance,” which is a lemon-yellow in colour and grows two to three feet tall and three to four feet wide.

Some large, blue leaf hostas are “Elegans” and “Big Daddy.” There are many different varieties to choose from.

So, if your garden is lacking that summer lushness, consider adding plants that offer large blooms or leaves to add some “wow” into your landscape.

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



A deep phalanx of jars of the freshly made Colonial Sauce that awaits at Grace United this weekend. JOHN SAYERS

Grace United will be jammin’ with rare treats Saturday

John Sayers
Special to The Lake Report

To a bird enthusiast, a rare bird is (in Latin) a rara avis.

To a Niagara-on-the-Lake food lover, a rare bird is either of the two features of the Saturday, Aug. 10 special Peach Festival Sale at Grace United Church.

Rare bird #1 is Saskatoon berry jam. Last year, an experimental patch of 100 Saskatoon berry bushes, planted several years ago, was discovered on an area farm.

The bushes had thrived, but the berries were little known. Something of a cross between a blackcurrant and a blueberry, these berries have a flavour all their own.

Made into jam, they provide a refreshing change of taste for breakfast on one of those mornings when you are, well, bored with your normal fare and want a special treat.

Picked by hand in limited quantity, the berries morph into a handmade jam in the busy kitchen at Grace United. Quantity is, by definition, very limited.

The second rare culinary bird, standing out among a plethora of choices of jams and sauces, is the famous Colonial Sauce, created from a recipe reportedly handed

down locally from the Empire Loyalist era.

If you have driven past the Field House on the Niagara River Parkway, you have passed the genesis of the Colonial Sauce recipe.

Unlike Saskatoon berry jam, the ingredients of Colonial Sauce are a closely guarded family secret.

It is made lovingly by only one person in the Grace United kitchen and spectators are definitely not invited. Each of the few years he has laboured to make more and each year the entire production of the sauce has sold out quickly.

This year, the sale also honours the Peach Festival with peach jam and peach chutney. That’s logical because the sale takes place during the annual Peach Festival, but it’s also a reminder that you can get peach and a whole range of other flavours and styles of jams and sauces at the handmade jam “action central” location in town.

The sale offers not only two rare birds but also several of their spreadable nestlings.

So, if you want to attain the apex of homemade goodness, check in to Grace United Church on Saturday between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. to catch some rare food to spread on your breakfast toast or dinner treat.



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