



Indigenous Peoples Day | Page 5



## Monuments Men series final story

It has been more than a year since The Lake Report launched its 53-part series, The Monuments Men of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Historian Ron Dale painstakingly researched and documented the very human stories of the men commemorated on the cenotaph monuments in Old Town and in Queenston.

In all, Dale wrote 53 detailed, historical feature-length stories, a triumph of his hard work and research.

The series began with the story of the first NOTL soldier killed in the Great War, Gunner William Currie.

Hurt during the Second Battle of Ypres on May 4, 1915, he succumbed to injuries caused by a German artillery shell.

And the series ends today with the last NOTL soldier killed in the Second World War, Lance-Cpl. Donald Parr. He died April 17, 1945, just three weeks before the end of the war.

Read the entire Monuments Men series at niagaranow.com

**Coming soon:** "Missing in Action," NOTL soldiers who died but are not listed on the town's monuments.

## Town, SORE lose bid to recover legal costs from Solmar

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the resident group SORE have been denied recovery of legal costs totalling more than

\$600,000 in a dispute over plans from 2018 to implement a heritage designation for the Rand Estate.

The town and the group Save Our Rand Estate (SORE) had sought

substantial compensation for legal fees incurred in the dispute with Solmar (Niagara 2) Inc. and Two Sisters Resorts Corp., but on Monday the Ontario Land Tribunal rejected all of the arguments put forward.

The town was seeking compensation totalling more than \$246,000 while SORE sought \$365,000 in costs.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said via email on Tuesday that he "has not yet had a

chance" to read the decision and would comment after fully reviewing it.

In his detailed 57-page ruling, tribunal vice-chair David Lanthier conceded

*Continued on Page 2*

## Pagnotta is forever pitching in

Busy NOTL volunteer coach is forever juggling a wide variety of duties. His latest 'job' was convening Ontario girls high school soccer tourney

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

Joe Pagnotta figures that by the time July comes, he'll be able to take a bit of a breather. Maybe.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake resident has a lot on his plate most days.

He teaches full-time, is head coach/technical director of the NOTL Soccer Club, coaches the club's U8 rep team, assists with his two sons' rep teams in Niagara Falls and is head coach of the girls' soccer program at Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School in Grimsby.

Have we left anything out?

Last summer he was a member of the mission staff for the Canada Summer Games in Niagara and did the same this past February in PEI for hockey at the Canada Winter Games (the men won gold and women took bronze).

And he coached the NOTL Wolves U11 rep hockey team to a provincial silver medal in Barrie in April.

Oh, and earlier this month he oversaw the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association's girls AAA soccer championships in Grimsby. And coached his high school team into the quarter-finals.

*Continued on Page 17*



Teacher Joe Pagnotta loves his role as a sports coach, mentor and organizer. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

## Teenager identified as suspect in crosswalk vandalism

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

A 15-year-old boy from St. Catharines has been identified by Niagara Regional Police as the person

who defaced the town's rainbow crosswalk three weeks ago.

The police released images of a person last week doing burnouts on the crosswalk on an ATV while dressed in pink shorts, no shirt and a

black, full-face helmet.

"The suspect was identified on June 19, 2023, as a 15-year-old male resident of the city of St. Catharines," police said in a news release Wednesday.

Police noted the Youth

Criminal Justice Act requires investigators to consider the use of extrajudicial measures before deciding to charge a young person.

So, rather than charging the minor, police said they have taken measures to hold

him accountable.

Extrajudicial measures, according to the government of Canada's website, take place "outside the formal court process."

*Continued on Page 3*



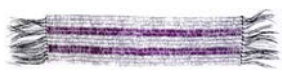
The vandal was caught.

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In honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day, and in consultation with the Niagara Regional Native Centre, our masthead this week depicts a two-row wampum belt. The two-row wampum belt, or the “covenant chain” was created by the Haudenosaunee as a symbol to represent two nations travelling alongside each other, in friendship, but neither interfering with the other nation’s customs, practices and laws. It recognizes the importance of forming agreements to promote peace and prosperity. As a symbol of unity, the belt helped form an alliance between the Haudenosaunee and English. Together they fought to defend what we now call Canada.

# Melville condo ‘does not breathe yet,’ resident says

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report



Jim Reynolds and Paul Shepherd were among the residents who expressed concerns about the proposed condominium’s size and setbacks. EVAN LOREE

Developers should just follow the rules, say residents of the Niagara-on-the-Lake dock area.

A half-dozen came out on Tuesday to share their views on a condominium proposal slated to replace the old King George III Inn at the corner of Melville and Lockhart streets.

While residents seemed mostly OK with the project at the open house on May 17, they were more critical at the public meeting on June 13.

Some said it was, at least, an improvement on developer Blythwood Homes’ first proposal, which the architects described as “dark” and “bulky” at the open house in May.

Coun. Gary Burroughs said the new proposal “looks excellent,” and resident Barbara Worthy described it as “easy on the eye.”

Some residents said it wasn’t quite there yet, though.

Worthy was happy to see architect Wayne Murray on the project, whose design of the nearby Harbour House Hotel “breathed with the neighbourhood,” she said.

She could not say the same of this condo proposal: “The current design of 61 Melville does not breathe

yet,” she said.

Dock area resident Paul Shepherd was not satisfied with the height or bulk of the building. It is set at 12 metres and covers 67 per cent of the lot, above the town’s mandated 50 per cent lot coverage.

He and other residents

pointed out that the average height of the surrounding houses is especially low.

Shepherd, Worthy and fellow resident Jim Reynolds took issue with the property’s short setbacks from the surrounding roads.

“Simply, it is too big and it is too close,” Shepherd

said.

Reynolds pointed out the proposed building was only one and 1.5 metres back from Lockhart and Delater streets, respectively.

The town’s bylaws require a minimum setback of 7.5 metres for most properties.

The developer has also planned for a shorter setback from Melville Street at 2.2 metres, again short of the town’s 7.5 metre requirement.

The developer states in its report that the shorter setback is consistent with the design of the adjacent condominium on the opposite side of Lockhart Street.

“Why are they allowed a setback of one metre on Delater Street when the rule is 7.5 metres? How does a development get this far when they are breaking the rules?” asked Worthy.

She acknowledged it would cost the developer more to go back and revise the plan now, but pointed out the cost could have been avoided had they just followed the rules.

Reynolds also pointed out

that the proposal granted two parking spaces per unit and worried this would facilitate the use of each unit as a short-term rental.

The town’s short-term rental bylaw, however, states new properties need to be used by long-term occupants for at least four years before they can be legally used as short-term rentals.

“These are luxury units and quite often the owners will have two cars,” architect Murray said.

Worthy was the first to bring up the issue of flooding in the dock area.

“2017 taught us all so many lessons in flood planning,” Worthy said, referring to a record-high flood in the neighbourhood, caused by the extreme weather and rising water levels from Lake Ontario.

“If everyone flushes the loo at the same time, are we going to be able to handle that?” she asked.

Worthy asked the town to provide a report showing if the infrastructure in the neighbourhood is ready for the increased density.

# Ontario Land Tribunal sides with developer over 2018 case

Continued from Front Page

it is rare for the tribunal to award costs.

He dismissed the arguments of the town and SORE that developer Benny Marotta’s companies had behaved in a way that would require them to provide financial compensation.

Lanthier emphasized that to order repayment of legal costs, the town and SORE had to convince the tribunal that there was misconduct on the part of the developer – but he summarily rejected all the arguments put forth.

He acknowledged the arguments between the parties sometimes were “heated” and acrimonious, but said the tribunal process is much different than the adversarial “winner and loser” approach common in courtroom litigation.

The ruling favours the developer and is critical of some of the positions and arguments put forth by the

town and SORE.

One main argument was that, after about three years of preparation, in 2021 Marotta’s companies withdrew their objections to a town plan to designate the historic estate just five weeks before a planned Conservation Review Board hearing.

The town and SORE claimed this was an unreasonable move that amounted to misconduct by the companies, but Lanthier rejected that.

The timing was “reasonable, legitimate and not an abuse of process,” he said in his decision.

“The fact that the town and (SORE) have expended significant time and expense to get to the point of the withdrawal is, in and of itself, also not relevant.”

It was one of several points on which he ruled against the town and SORE, including: extensive procedural arguments over the “surviving elements

of the Dunington-Grubb landscape” attributes; complaints that Marotta’s companies are “overly litigious” and have a history of commencing and abandoning appeals in a way that amounts to an abuse of process; arguments that statements were made that maligned and were disrespectful to the town; and intentional delays by the developer that amounted to “unreasonable, frivolous, vexatious conduct or bad faith conduct.”

“The tribunal will only consider exercising its discretion where it is persuaded that the party against whom costs are sought has demonstrated misconduct that is clearly unreasonable, frivolous, vexatious or in bad faith,” Lanthier wrote in dismissing the case.

Considering the evidence as a whole, he concluded both the town and SORE were “errant in their characterization of the

owners, and themselves, within the proceeding. In many respects, the submissions of the town and (SORE) as to costs have adopted a civil litigation viewpoint akin to a proceeding before the courts resting very much upon an assumption that they have emerged as the ‘winners,’ with their time ‘wasted’ in the proceeding.”

He also said the town’s evidence and submissions “belie an authoritative assertion that ultimately their notices of intent to designate the heritage features were absolute and correct. This is misplaced as the owners had the legislated right to exercise their objections to the intended designations.”

He also was critical of all sides for their “entrenched” positions and singled out SORE for its “intent to continue to challenge the owners’ development plans, which include a presumption that (SORE)

will utilize its team of experts to determine what form of residential development would be feasible on lands which they do not own, but which may possess heritage attributes.”

After a detailed review of all the evidence, Lanthier said he concluded the Marotta companies’ conduct “was not unreasonable, vexatious, or inappropriate,” as the town and SORE argued.

“Applying the objective reasonable standard, there is nothing that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the totality of the owners’ conduct in the proceeding was remarkably unreasonable, unfair or such that it is deserved to compensate” the town or SORE with costs.

SORE spokesperson Judy McLeod said the group “is, of course, disappointed, but not entirely surprised” by the ruling on costs.

The tribunal rarely awards costs unless conduct

is clearly unreasonable, vexatious or in bad faith, she said.

“Both SORE and the town believed that this was one of those rare cases where the conduct of the Marotta companies was egregious enough to merit a costs sanction by the tribunal,” she said.

“The Marotta companies argued that the tribunal did not even have the jurisdiction to award costs and further that SORE was not entitled to costs in any event,” she added.

The tribunal rejected those arguments “but held that the conduct of the Marotta companies did not rise to that rare level of entitling the town or SORE to costs.”

She noted the tribunal said “both the town and SORE received significant costs awards for the failed court challenge by the Marotta group of the same heritage designation bylaws. We will content ourselves with that.”

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Left: The 15-year-old suspect was identified. Right: Damage to the Pride crosswalk is now cleaned up. FILE PHOTOS

## Teen faces 'extrajudicial measures'

Continued from Front Page

These measures include formal warnings from the police, referrals to community programs or other sanctions

such as forcing a youth to complete community service, pay for damages or participate in special programs.

Such punishments are used in "all cases where

they are adequate to hold a young person accountable," says the government's website.

These measures are "presumed to be adequate"

where the offender has committed a non-violent crime, even when the offender has previously been punished with extrajudicial measures.

## Rent in NOTL now almost \$175 more than Ontario's average, new data finds

Evan Loree  
 Local Journalism Initiative  
 The Lake Report

Renters in Niagara-on-the-Lake are paying a steep price to live in the historic former capital of Upper Canada.

The average cost of rent and utilities is almost \$175 a month more than the provincial average, according to new data from the Canadian Rental Housing Index.

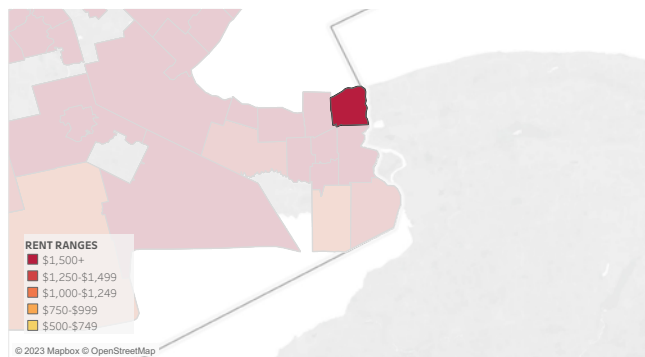
"The data is a call to action that we need to do more to address rental costs," Marlene Coffey, chief executive of the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, said in a press release.

The data says the average cost of rent in NOTL is \$1,584, up from \$1,282 in 2016.

For comparison, the average cost of rent for the wider province is \$1,406, up from \$1,109.

Coffey says the rent is up because operating costs are on the rise for landlords.

"Utilities, insurance, maintenance, taxes, secu-



Almost half of renters in town are spending more than 30 per cent of their income on rent, putting them at a higher risk of becoming homeless. SOURCED

rity, everything related to operations has increasing costs," she said.

It's not just a city problem though, she said. The problem is spreading into the suburbs surrounding major urban centres.

The Rental Housing Index uses the same definition as The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which defines affordable rent as "less than 30 per cent of a household's before-tax income."

In NOTL, almost half of its 1,180 renters, 48 per cent, are spending more than 30 per cent of their income on rent.

This puts them at a higher risk of homelessness, according to the BC Non-Profit Housing Association, which published the press release.

About 20 per cent of renters in NOTL are at a "crisis level," spending more than 50 per cent of their income on rent, the press release states.

The data, collected from the 2021 Canadian census, also shows renters are increasingly living in deteriorating, overcrowded conditions.

Coffey says one of the reasons for this is that much of the affordable housing

previously built to house people is getting old.

Province-wide, Indigenous renters especially experienced declining conditions. They were to be living in units needing major repairs almost twice as often as their white peers at 13 and 7 per cent respectively.

Margaret Pfoh, chief executive of the Aboriginal Housing Management Association said in the press release that the conditions "perpetuate a cycle of inequality."

The data also shows that the affordability crisis most affects racialized groups, single-mother families and senior citizens.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, between 63 and 67 per cent of racialized renters were paying more than 30 per cent of their income towards rent.

White renters were also overpaying but at a rate of 46 per cent.

45 per cent of NOTL's elderly renters, 65 years old and up, were also paying an unaffordable rate.

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Left: Troops and residents cheer the liberation of Appeldorn on April 17, 1945, the day Donald Parr was killed in action. LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA Right: Lance-Cpl. Donald Parr. ST. CATHARINES STANDARD

## RiverBrink helps asylum seeker who crossed Niagara River

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

RiverBrink Art Museum's art show on Saturday morning began with excitement over more than art.

The museum's administrator Janet Zylstra told The Lake Report that volunteers were approached by an asylum seeker while setting up for the show.

"It was something that none of us had experienced ever before," she said.

"Luckily, we were there early."

Zylstra said that the man had emerged from the Niagara River and staff at RiverBrink gave him a warm blanket and food before contacting the authorities.

"I thought we'd leave it to the professionals," she said.

Niagara Regional Police Service officers arrived at the scene and spoke with the man, who they said is 50 years old and crossed the river from the United States.

In an email to The Lake Report, media relations officer Const. Barry Ravenek wrote the officers contacted the RCMP, "who attended and took custody" of the

asylum seeker, "in accordance with the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act."

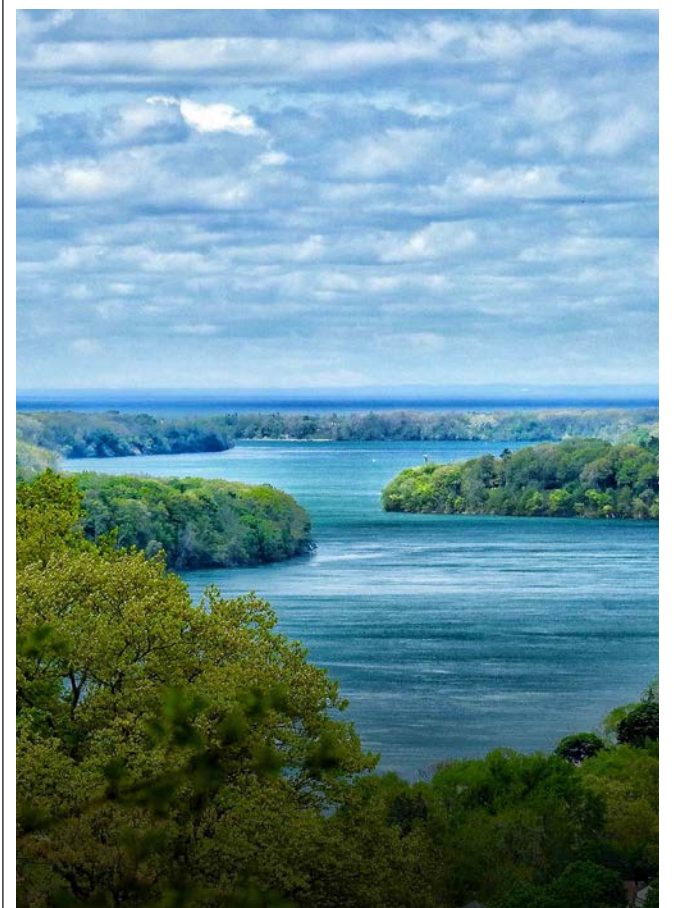
Const. Christy Veenstra, a media relations officer with the RCMP, told The Lake Report via email one of its border integrity officers brought the man over to the Border Services Agency and that further information about his status would need to be accessed through them.

Veenstra clarified that someone being in custody could mean a number of situations, including either detention or simply providing transportation.

Canada Border Services Agency did not respond to requests for comment and information in time for The Lake Report's publication deadline.

Despite an unexpected start, RiverBrink's first-ever juried show carried on without another hitch, featuring 18 vendors, food from Plant No.1 and music from Great Lakes Swimmers.

"We're really looking forward to having this event again next year," Zylstra said.



A man who allegedly crossed the Niagara River to seek asylum in Canada was reported by staff at RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston. FILE/STEVE HARDAKER

# THE MONUMENTS MEN

### Lance-Cpl. Donald Parr, was last NOTL soldier to die

*This is Part 53, the final instalment in our year-long series, The Monuments Men. It's been a century since Niagara-on-the-Lake's iconic clock tower cenotaph was erected. Then, in 1926, the Township of Niagara unveiled its own memorial in Queenston. In recognition of those who fought and died in two world wars and beyond, NOTL historian Ron Dale researched the stories of the people – all men – whose names are engraved on the two cenotaphs. This series of stories documented and remembers the sacrifices of those commemorated on the municipal memorial in Queenston.*

Ron Dale  
Special to The Lake Report

Donald Francis Parr was a 21-year-old apprentice typesetter working for the Niagara Falls Review when he volunteered to go to war.

He was born on March 9, 1921, son of Harold Benson Parr and Ailene McLean of St. Davids, when young Donald attended school.

Parr enlisted in Hamilton on July 20, 1942, and his training seems to have been geared toward a role in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps.

For more than a year, until Aug. 19, 1943, he attended the Canadian Army Trades School in Hamilton and then the Canadian Technical College in Newmarket until

the end of September.

He was then sent to Aldershot, N.S., for the Infantry Training Course, where he qualified in small arms, machine-guns, mortars and grenades.

His training continued in Canada, with Parr learning to operate military vehicles. Finally, considered trained sufficiently to go to war, he boarded a ship in Halifax and arrived in the U.K. on April 18, 1944, reporting for duty to the Number 4 Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit.

He was sent to the Mediterranean theatre of war where the 1st Division of the Canadian Army had fought in Sicily from July 10 to Aug. 6, 1943, and in Italy since Sept. 3, 1943.

Parr disembarked in Italy on May 3, 1944, to join the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, known as the "Hasty P's."

He reached the regiment on May 16 as its members prepared to attack the Hitler Line, a heavily defended German position. For the next 10 months, the Hasty P's fought in numerous large-scale battles and minor skirmishes. Casualties were heavy but Parr came through it unscathed.

On March 10, 1945, the Hasty P's boarded landing ships in Leghorn (Livorno), Italy, and landed the following day in Marseilles, France. The men climbed into a waiting convoy of trucks and headed north to

participate in the liberation of Holland.

The men were in good spirits. The Germans were slowly retreating on all fronts.

Iconic Canadian author Farley Mowat, an officer of the Hasty P's, who wrote about his experiences in "The Regiment," explained that "the end of the war itself was coming close – closer with each mile the convoy travelled."

On March 10, the convoy reached Belgium and the regiment rested there. Mowat wrote that "many believed they would not again see battle." They were wrong.

On April 3, they were ordered to the front to participate in a final campaign to cut off half of the German Army tenaciously defending its positions in Holland.

The regiment's task was to move from Zutphen across the Ijssel River and advance toward Apeldoorn. On April 12, their attack began, with the regiment ferried across the Ijssel in amphibious Buffalo armoured vehicles.

The men suffered casualties in the advance toward Apeldoorn but continued the assault, resisted by pockets of well-armed German defenders. On the night of April 16 to 17, Apeldoorn was liberated. Canadian soldiers could revel in the party-like atmosphere as the long-suffering citizens of Apeldoorn welcomed their

liberators.

There was still more to do. Passing through Apeldoorn, the Hasty P soldiers, riding on tanks, approached the Nieuwmilligen Forest on April 17.

The forest concealed fanatical soldiers of the infamous "SS," in this case Dutch Nazis, who would fight until the last man and not risk capture by their formerly oppressed Dutch neighbours.

The fight was a fierce one, with German anti-tank artillery, mortars, cannons, machine-guns and rifles taking their toll on the advancing Canadians. Casualties were heavy.

Among those killed in action on April 17, 1945, was Lance-Cpl. Donald Parr, the last man from Niagara-on-the-Lake to be killed in the Second World War.

This was the final action fought by the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. Its members were withdrawn from the front on April 23. On May 5, the German forces in Holland surrendered and two days later all German forces in Europe followed suit.

May 8 was declared Victory in Europe (VE) Day. Donald Parr had been killed three weeks before the end of the war in Europe.

He lies buried in the Holtzen Canadian Military Cemetery in Holland and is commemorated on the Niagara Township War Memorial in Queenston.

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# Connection and healing at the centre of Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Phil Davis remembers growing up when there wasn't much about Indigenous culture being celebrated.

He and his sister, Dawn Moughtin, both part of the Niagara Regional Native Centre, discovered their heritage late in life.

Today, however, Davis and Moughtin's ties to their Haudenosaunee heritage are strong – and they were among many celebrating their culture at the Native Centre's drum night on the Monday before Indigenous Peoples' Day on June 21.

"We're no different than anybody else. We just love who we are," Davis said.

Indigenous Peoples' Day was first established as National Aboriginal Day in 1996 in Canada but was renamed in 2017.

However, many Indigenous communities have long held celebrations on or around June 21 because of its significance as the summer solstice, the longest day of the year.

"It's important that we actually have a day that's celebrated across the nation," Davis said. He's the justice overflow co-ordinator at the Native Centre, located in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Davis' sister Moughtin, the Native Centre's program co-ordinator, says her grandparents went into residential school and came out "hardcore Jehovah's Witness until the day they died."

This effectively severed the family's connection to their Haudenosaunee heritage until well into adulthood.

Moughtin, one of 11 siblings, credits Davis and some of her other older siblings who helped the family reconnect to their culture.

For Davis, drumming circles have been an essential part of connecting to his Haudenosaunee culture.

"The drum leads you," he said, adding that "you learn things" when you're responsible for carrying a drum.

One lesson Davis learned



The Niagara Regional Native Centre hosts a weekly drum night where community members can come out and safely practice the traditions of their culture. FILE

is that every song they sing in a circle is a prayer and a "sacred thing."

Drums, he said, are central to any community. In fact, he bets that drums and music were a part of every person's ancestry.

"There's some land out there that you are indigenous to," he said.

"The only difference is you're a little bit more removed from who you actually are as original peoples."

Whereas Indigenous peoples, he said, are only about 100 years removed from their culture.

He compared drumming in a group to performing as a musician.

"It takes a certain amount of inner strength," to sing and drum in front of a crowd and not by yourself.

For his sister Moughtin, who runs the women's drum circle on Monday nights, part of it is about finding your voice, though she laughs and says she was born with hers.

Men and women form individual circles at drum night, Moughtin says.

"Most of the hand drum songs are for women," and the larger drums are for men.

At the end of the evening, they usually come together and form two circles, with the women forming the exterior of the two and men the interior.

Moughtin says the women

form the exterior circle to support the men inside.

"Our job is also to watch them and make sure that they're acting right," she said.

In the event that a male drummer is acting disrespectfully, it's her job to remove him, Moughtin said.

Throughout drum night, Moughtin wanders around the drum circle keeping the beat with her hand-held drum and encouraging people to add their voices to the song.

Meanwhile, Jessica Riel Johns, the second of the centre's two executive directors, sat behind the circle, occasionally lending her voice to the group.

Riel-Johns has only been singing for a few months but she says Moughtin really helped her to find that voice.

The two directors see the Indigenous People's Day as an opportunity for their non-Indigenous peers to, in Riel-John's words, "come out, learn from us, ask questions."

"We celebrate our culture every day," Riel-Johns said of Indigenous People's Day. "We're a rich culture."

And for Moughtin, it's an opportunity to participate in reconciling the relationship between First Nations and Canada.

"If you're a non-Indigenous person, if you want to be part of that reconciliation, and part of that healing, come and talk to us,

come and learn about our culture," Moughtin says.

Sandy Crawford was one of a couple of dozen people gathered outside the Native Centre for drum night.

Crawford says people who frequent drum night will occasionally see people cry.

"The words that you can't get out of your mouth that are like bottled up inside, whether it's pain or sadness, it comes out when you're drumming," Crawford said. For her, it is "extremely healing."

Crawford is Algonquin Bear clan but, like others in the circle, had to go out and rediscover her heritage.

Crawford explains that her mother was non-Indigenous and her Indigenous father spent the first 13 years of her life in prison, and so was unable to pass his heritage to his daughter.

This is a systemic issue in the Indigenous community, which makes up 28 per cent of the total incarcerated population in Canada, despite being only 4.1 per cent of the population.

Crawford says the people at the Native Centre took her in when she moved to Niagara and provided opportunities for her to grow.

"I went from really no education, to just getting an education. To living off the Ontario work system with absolutely no family supports, to this centre completely changing my life," she said.

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# Ride for Dad raises **\$67K** for prostate cancer research

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

When Tim Borowski pulled up his motorcycle to his first Ride for Dad to raise money for prostate cancer, he had no idea that three years later he would be diagnosed with the disease.

It's "kind of a serendipitous thing," the 58-year-old father of three said on Saturday, during the 13th annual ride on Saturday.

"Did I pick the right charity ride or did the charity ride pick me?"

About 180 riders showed up and helped raise a little over \$67,000 for the cause, one day ahead of Father's Day.

This year's ride was a 170-kilometre guided tour of Niagara. It started at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 in Niagara-on-the-Lake and wended through the whole region, ending up in Niagara Falls.

Borowski and his son, Chris, have been doing the ride together since 2013. And when Borowski was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2016, it became even more important.

He isn't the only rider who lives with the disease, ride co-chair Matt King told The Lake Report.



More than 200 riders joined in on Saturday's Ride for Dad, starting at the Legion and ending at Club Italia in Niagara Falls. JULIA SACCO

"That's part of the reason why we do it," said King.

Borowski, his wife, Kelly, and two of his children have since joined the executive team as a way to get more involved in supporting prostate cancer research and awareness.

Now, as Borowski is about to begin a new trial treatment, the money being raised through Ride for Dad

means more than ever.

"In a way, I'm a guinea pig, but somebody ahead of me must have been a guinea pig too, to get where I'm at," he said.

The ride commenced at 9 a.m. following words from Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and MPP Wayne Gates. Niagara Regional Police Services led the trek until Kingsbridge Park in

Niagara Falls.

The journey ended at Club Italia on Montrose Road with a pasta dinner.

The funds are dispersed locally and support prostate cancer research and awareness campaigns through the Prostate Cancer Fight Foundation. The foundation decides which local organizations to donate funds to throughout the year.

While some of this year's recipients are still being decided, \$25,000 of the funds will support cancer research at Brock University's department of health sciences, King said.

King extended a thank you to the NOTL Legion for lending its space and providing snacks.

"Peameal bacon on a bun was a great donation from

the Legion, as well as Timbits and coffee from Tim Hortons," he said.

Ride for Dad originated in 2000 when an Ottawa police officer decided to raise money for prostate cancer research and awareness.

Now, there are 25 chapters across Canada. King, who is a police officer in Niagara, got involved more than a decade ago.

# NOTLers **release butterflies** to remember late loved ones

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Matt Jeffrey was a Niagara man, through and through – he played football for Niagara District Secondary School and always enjoyed a tour of wine country.

His only sister, Lisa Jeffrey, honoured his life and commemorated his death on Saturday at Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care's second annual butterfly release.

"I was a little hesitant at first because it's still rather fresh," Jeffrey told The Lake Report.

She said her brother passed away unexpectedly at the age of 48 less than two years ago.

"I feel that (releasing a butterfly) is more about his honour. I have to upkeep his

honour and live as he would want," she said.

Before the butterflies were released, jazz musician Juliet Dunn dedicated a performance of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" to her lost loved ones, including her late husband and musical partner Peter Shea, who died last August.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa then read off the names of the loved ones each butterfly was dedicated to and attendees released them into the field neighbouring the Community Centre.

Coming out to the NOTL Community Centre for the release was especially important to Jeffrey as the rest of the family couldn't attend.

Matt Jeffrey's wife and three children live in Louisiana where he settled down after receiving a full schol-

arship and graduating from Kansas State University.

Jeffrey's mother is bedridden with a traumatic brain injury and her father is her caregiver.

"We're a small family. It was just the two of us, just my brother and I so we're really close," Jeffrey said.

NOTL Palliative Care has worked with the Jeffrey family before, offering lender equipment to the family after Jeffrey's mother was released from the hospital.

"They've been such a great organization."

The painted lady butterflies were hatched specifically for NOTL Palliative Care to release and are indigenous to the region, so they will happily reside in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"It's another way to keep (my brother's) memory alive," Jeffrey said.



Lisa Jeffrey releases a butterfly in honour of her late brother Matt. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



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June is Cataract Awareness Month



# Small but supportive turnout for burial ground march

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The march at the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground on Sunday didn't turn out as planned, but supporters kept their heads high.

"I was hoping there'd be more people here but we're here, so it doesn't matter," said supporter Desmond Brown who drove to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Toronto.

Toronto resident James Russell organized the march to try and compel the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to pay for the unearthing of headstones at the gravesite, the final resting place of some of the town's oldest members of the Black community.

The site is also known as the Negro Burial Ground. Those buried there were members of the Baptist church, some of whom fled from slavery in the United States in the 1800s.

Russell planned to march from the burial site on Mississauga and Mary streets to the courthouse on Queen Street. However, he decided not to march.

About 11 people showed up to the demonstration.

Last year, Russell conducted a ground-penetrating radar survey on the grounds and discovered the possibility of 28 graves and 19 buried headstones on the property.

He believes the town has done nothing to protect and preserve the inactive cemetery for 130 years, he's told The Lake Report in the past.

He also believes the town purposefully buried the headstones many years ago and should be responsible for paying the \$59,000 to unearth them, a quote he received from the Archaeological Research Associates Ltd.

"It's a legacy — and the legacy is being not just ignored but blatantly erased," said Brown.

He said \$59,000 isn't a lot of money and the town should pay for it.

"Municipalities waste hundreds of millions of dollars on different projects



James Russell with supporters at the Niagara Baptist Burial Ground demonstration on Sunday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

and different things," he said.

"For them to refuse to do that, it's absolutely disgusting."

Russell declined to speak with The Lake Report after multiple requests for comment.

He said he was upset about previous coverage by this newspaper, calling it unfair and biased.

He complained to the NewsMedia Council about this headline on an April 20 article, "Black cemetery protest called 'publicity stunt' and 'misleading.'"

After reviewing the matter, the council dismissed Russell's complaint, noting the headline was "supported by the content of the article, which included comments from a number of sources with different perspectives, including (Russell's) comment referring to (his) actions as 'a publicity stunt to bring attention and respect back to the folks who are buried there who have been rendered anonymous.'"

At the demonstration, NOTL resident Paul Dolby told The Lake Report he remembers there being more gravestones at the site when he was younger.

He's lived here since 1966.

"There were probably half a dozen (headstones)," he said.

Today, there are only two headstones visible at the front of the plot of land, belonging to John Oakley, a white pastor at the old Baptist church, and his daughter.

"I worked in Niagara-on-the-Lake years ago, and people would sheepishly tell me that they (the headstones) were in the basements of people's homes," said Lezlie Harper from Niagara Bound Tours.

Dolby said it seemed strange that the town never spent any money on the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground.

He suggested putting a headstone with all the names of the people buried there or leaving it natural, like a park.

On Friday, the town released a statement in anticipation of Sunday's demonstration.

The town outlined what it has done to date and how the town is working with a citizen-driven committee, the Friends of the Forgotten, to restore and memorialize the site.

The town has also previously declined Russell's claims that the headstones were purposefully buried, but that they were laid down in order to prevent damage.

"We both want the same things but we bring about it in two very different

ways. And that's been the challenge all along," said George Webber, head of the committee.

He said he is aware this won't be the last they see of Russell, he said.

He said some committee members find what Russell is doing "impacts our work tremendously because residents are unsure and unclear in their mind who the Friends of the Forgotten are, and who James is."

He encourages people to visit the Friends of the Forgotten's website to see what they're all about.

Sarah Kaufman, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's curator and member of the Friends of the Forgotten, said the museum is disappointed Russell is saying the town is doing nothing to preserve Black history.

"It's simply untrue," she told The Lake Report.

Kaufman said the museum has been "actively promoting Black history for a number of years."

She made note of the Voices of Freedom Park, which was the town's idea, and the Voices of Freedom walking tour that the museum offers.

Through fundraising, the Friends of the Forgotten raised enough funds to pay for a stage one archeological assessment. The findings will be presented to the

council next week.

There are four stages to the archeological assessment, as requirement by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario. Stage two would be the next step needed.

Rochelle Bush, owner and guide of Tubman Tours Canada, said the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground is the flagship attraction for Niagara-on-the-Lake on Niagara's Freedom Trail.

Regarding the archeological process at the burial ground, she said there's "no other way around" working with the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO).

"What James is doing, there's nothing wrong with it, he's very passionate about it, but you still have to work with the BAO," she said.

Bush has been working with a group on a project at the Victoria Lawn Cemetery in St. Catharines to unearth the headstones of formerly enslaved people who fled here from the United States in the 19th century.

When it comes to the burial ground in NOTL, she believes the stones should be unearthed.

"What if Herbert Holmes is buried there? What if Jacob Greene is buried there? People suspect they're buried there, but what if they actually have tombstones?" said Bush.

"That would be magnificent because of their involvement with the Solomon Moseby affair," she added.

According to the Ontario Heritage Trust, Moseby was an African-American freedom seeker who fled his enslaver in the spring of 1837, settling in Niagara. However, his enslaver found him a few weeks later with papers calling for his arrest and extradition.

Herbert Holmes and Jacob Green were two Black residents of Niagara who, among over 200 supporters, protested to block Moseby's extradition. They were killed in the protest, but Moseby managed to escape and fled to England, later returning to live in Niagara.

Bush said even if it takes five years to unearth the headstones, they need to just get it done.

Webber doesn't believe unearthing the headstones is necessary, but said there's "an argument to be made for unearthing the headstones and seeing what's written there."

"Just put one foot in front of the other and take it one step at a time," Webber said, describing his approach to the project.

Harper said the names need to be recognized and the town needs to "show respect."

Webber also said that in the new fiscal year, he plans to ask the town for money toward the burial site.

"For the new fiscal year when submissions are being made to town for money to be built into their budget, I plan on being there to make a request of the town to contribute some amount of money (to the burial ground)," said Webber.

During the demonstration, CHCH News reported an incident which involved a woman yelling racist comments at Russell.

They reported a woman in a red sports car pulling up beside Russell and yelling, "Go back to Africa."

The Lake Report didn't hear or see this happen.

"It's a bit unsettling as well to know that exists in the same community that we live (in)," said Webber.

— With files from Julia Sacco



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**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

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and then do your best with whatever it is."  
- Rabbi Rami M. Shapiro

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## Running through NOTL



More than 700 runners and walkers from across Ontario participated in the Niagara Ultra 2023 10 kilometre, 50 kilometre and half and full marathons last Saturday in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The run raised \$3,496 for the Bruce Trail Conservancy. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

### Editorial

## Action needed on Black burial ground

Kevin MacLean  
Managing Editor

As public demonstrations go, last Sunday's march in support of finding graves and restoring the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground was more media event than public show of support.

That's unfortunate and we don't know exactly why the turnout was so sparse.

As much as organizer James Russell seems to have a bone to pick with The Lake Report (he no longer will speak to our reporters; his prerogative, but it won't stop us from reporting on the issue), we commend him on his pursuit of justice for those long-forgotten souls buried at the cemetery near Mississauga and Mary streets.

In fact, in past editorials, we readily have endorsed Russell's efforts — though he has disagreed with some of our coverage and even complained to the NewsMedia Council about a news headline published in April about an earlier

protest in which he briefly chained himself to the historic plaque on the site.

The council summarily dismissed Russell's complaint as without merit. But that's all water under the bridge as far as we are concerned.

Allow us to reiterate: Without sounding holier than though, we refuse to simply be cheerleaders for community endeavours (though obviously we will cheer good works when it is deserved).

And if, when we report the news, some disagree with our content or approach, we welcome them to let us know.

Media at Russell's protest on Father's Day didn't outnumber the small number of folks who turned out to support Russell, but it was close.

Again, not that it really matters. One of the goals was to highlight what Russell wants done on the property, so mission accomplished in that regard.

Meanwhile, members of the Friends of the Forgot-

ten, a group working with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to arrange a suitable memorial or recognition of the people buried on the site, disagree with the hardline and vocal approach Russell has taken.

Frankly, neither side is really wrong but we don't want any disputes or disagreements to sidetrack or derail the long-awaited recognition the burial ground — and those for whom it is a final resting place — deserves.

When we hear tales from longtime residents about some of the stories they knew of over the years (such as headstones from the Black burial ground turning up as "souvenirs" of sorts in some residents' homes), it is just one indicator of how disrespected and how much of an afterthought this cemetery has been over the decades. That needs to change.

Yes, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has been working (sometimes in concert with Russell) on a solution for a number of

years. And Russell, Friends of the Forgotten and others may have different viewpoints about how best to recognize the importance of this historic plot.

We see no reason why that process can't be expedited.

Meanwhile, Russell's hyperbole (such as, the town has done "nothing" to preserve the inactive cemetery for well over a century) does not help his cause, in our view. Especially when it's not accurate.

Yes, the bureaucracy grinds much more slowly than any of us wish.

And yes, the municipality needs to finally take more concrete action.

We look forward to the day, and it can't come soon enough, when the Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground — like already has happened with Voices of Freedom park and historic properties associated with the Underground Railroad — is given the prominent recognition and place it deserves in NOTL's history.

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# A bit of **hidden** Niagara-on-the-Lake building history



**ARCHITEXT**

Brian Marshall  
Columnist

About three years ago, a young lady of my acquaintance purchased an old house in St. Catharines' Yates Street Heritage District. She contacted me asking for some advice relative to rehabilitating the sadly neglected interior of the home and I went over to take a look.

One of the items on her wishlist was to remove the wall separating the kitchen which was in a 1950s back lean-to addition and the adjoining dining room located in what appeared to be the original 1860s structure.

To this end, I suggested that in order to assess the feasibility of this undertaking she would have to remove the old plaster and lathe so we could examine the underlying structure.

They set to and, a couple of days later, I returned to take a look. What had been revealed was the timber frame of the original one-and-a-quarter-storey settler's dwelling circa 1830, complete with the end gable roof trusses and queen posts.

Apparently, rather than demolish the timber frame during the construction of the much larger 1860s house, the builder simply incorporated it into the new two-storey dwelling, building the upper walls directly onto the timber roof trusses.

Needless to say, the young lady got an arched opening rather than the "open concept" she originally desired thereby preserving the original timber frame which was once again hidden within the new walls.

In fact, her experience was not unique since 19th and early 20th Century builders saw absolutely no reason to demo perfectly serviceable existing timber frames and routinely incorporated them into new build-outs.

Similarly, spotted here and there all across Niagara-on-the-Lake, are examples of the town's hidden history.

In some cases, the bones are still on display and, if one uses a little imagination, the historic structure shines through. While in others, just like the Yates Street house, the original is buried within.

So, let's take a little tour around town and visit a few examples of our hidden history.

Standing side-by-side on Gage Street in Old Town are two circa 1880 homes, very likely constructed by the same builder within a year of one another, at numbers 116 and 122.



Beneath the renovations these homes are older than you might think. SUPPLIED

Both of these houses have seen alterations over the years. The main floor facade window openings of 122 have been enlarged, all the windows replaced and the house skinned over with vinyl siding but the through-eave dormers and the general presentation remain largely intact.

Similarly, the wall cladding of 116 has been covered with vinyl but the window openings remain true to the original. However, because the roof pitch of this house has been altered to increase second-floor headspace and create a taller rear wall, it is slightly more difficult to "see" the original one-and-a-half-storey traditional presentation.

Now, out on Concession 2 at number 684 stands a house that one might drive by and assume is a modern New Traditional design but, not so.

It is actually an L-shaped Gothic farmhouse from the latter part of the 19th century, which has been completely recladded with modern brick, its eaves and gables boxed in aluminum while being thoroughly updated. That said, it has retained the tell-tale elements of its original Gothic roots.

Hidden away behind a 20th-century addition to the facade, the old stone farmhouse at 1258 Concession 6 Rd. can still be seen on the side and rear walls of the building.

Very likely, this dwelling was contemporaneous with the stone Gothic farmhouse at 1023 East & West Ln. (ca. 1875) and probably originally had a very similar presentation.

Stepping the "hidden" element up one notch, let's look first at 1503 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil. Constructed circa 1900 by William Ste-

vens, this building served as both his family home (rear) and housed the business that supported his family.

Under the 20th century siding and angel stone is a traditional late-period Gothic form clad in brick. Imagine the positive impact on this portion of Virgil's streetscape if it were restored to its original appearance.

And, while we're in Virgil, let's take a turn onto Four Mile Creek Road to stop by at number 1408. Built circa 1840 in the then typical storey and a-half end-gabled form, in 1945 the owners conducted a massive renovation.

This work completely altered the street view of the house by dropping the roof such that the eaves sat down just above the windows, adding two bays and installing oversized double dormers.

No doubt it added to the interior liveability of the home but it buried the historic house.

Shifting over to York Road and driving towards Queenston, on the left-hand side sits number 1786. And why, you ask, have I pointed you at what appears to be a circa 1970 Ranch bungalow?

Well, this particular ranch is actually built around a circa 1816 three-hundred-square-foot settlement house constructed of stone. Its 16-inch thick walls still form the core of the bungalow.

Then, on to Queenston where roughly in the centre of the village stands 69 Queenston St.

In form, this modest dwelling recalls the Hall & Parlour houses built throughout the latter half of the 19th and into the early 20th century in Niagara-on-the-Lake but, according to an assessment conducted by the restoration architect Peter J. Stokes, its bones are much older.

In fact, it was Stokes' opinion that the original construction was either immediately post-War of 1812 or possibly before that war.

So, when you are out sightseeing around town, take a look at that house and then a second look, it may be a lot older than you think.

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

## NOTL's kayakers just want a **place to launch** their water crafts

Dear editor:

We would like to acknowledge Mr. Simkus for his dedicated efforts in safeguarding his home and neighbourhood against the recurring threat of high waters.

Over the past decades, he has demonstrated a commendable commitment to achieving adequate protection for the community. The parkette restorations he has advocated for serve an important purpose.

However, it is crucial to remember that this parkette

is public property, intended for the enjoyment of all townfolk and visitors, and it can serve multiple purposes.

Prior to the installation of rock reinforcements at Balls Beach, citizens were invited to provide input on its design. Attending as avid kayakers, we were assured that we would have access to the water at Balls Beach for launching our kayaks.

I find it rather perplexing that Mr. Simkus suggests the parkette should be a passive space, expressing con-

cerns people might expect a beach with full-fledged park facilities akin to Malibu.

In reality, all we seek is a relatively calm area where we can launch our kayaks without risking injury.

Not too long ago, the town placed a sign directing visitors to a kayak and canoe launch at the beach. When Mr. Simkus rightfully pointed out the absence of an actual boat launch or any expected amenities, Rome D'Angelo, then the newly-hired director of operations, had the sign removed.

Kayakers and canoeists do not require a formal boat launch or extensive amenities. We simply need a convenient entry into the water from the shore.

While we do not necessarily require picnic tables, having benches available for spectators who wish to watch and support our activities would be greatly appreciated.

It is regrettable to hear that the grass at the parkette is not growing as expected. We hope that the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

fulfills its promise to water it properly.

In conclusion, we urge all stakeholders to recognize the inclusive nature of the parkette and to ensure that residents who enjoy water activities, such as kayaking and canoeing, have reasonable access to the water at Balls Beach.

By accommodating these needs, we can foster a greater sense of community and provide recreational opportunities for all.

Furthermore, we feel it is important to preserve the

historical name of one of the few water access points in town, and continue referring to it as Balls Beach, as it has been known for many years.

Sincerely,

**NOTL kayakers:**

**Frances Boot**

**Kim Childs**

**Barb Coster**

**Linda Cumpson**

**Mary Ann Enns**

**Anne Frost Robinson**

**Shari Hartwick**

**Jeannie Manning**

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# Parliament Oak hotel height would set **dangerous precedent**

Dear editor:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the new hotel development proposed for the former Parliament Oak Public School property at 325 King St.

We understand that development is inevitable in the Old Town and we support good design and appropriate projects that will respect our heritage and build upon and strengthen the existing fabric of our community.

We appreciate the time and effort of our town council in serving our town and hope that our attached comments might assist them in their review of the development proposal for the Parliament Oak School property.

The proposed hotel will have significant impacts on the existing Old Town, a quiet residential community which surrounds the site on all four sides.

The proposed design drawings define the potential of over 700 guests on the ground floor including



Letter writers don't think the proposed height of the Parliament Oak hotel is suitable for Old Town. They say it could set a dangerous precedent for Old Town. FILE

approximately 129 hotel rooms (258 persons double occupancy) plus approximately 100 staff for a total potential of over 1,058 people onsite.

The drawings submitted show underground parking for only 189 vehicles. The potential for severe disruptive street parking and traffic on the adjacent residences seems inevitable without even considering

larger delivery vehicles and associated traffic throughout the day.

The current zoning bylaw for the area has a maximum building height limitation of 10 metres (32.8 feet).

The proposed hotel asks to be permitted to be 18.2 metres (59.8 feet) in height which would make it the tallest building in the town including the Queen Street commercial area.

In fact, at 59.8 feet it is the equivalent of a six-storey building with three-metres (10 feet) floor-to-floor dimensions. The design indicates only four storeys but the ground floor is 6 metres (20 feet) high.

Previous councils have worked hard to preserve the existing scale and fabric of the town and have demonstrated stewardship in this regard having

worked constructively with new developments to respect the existing height restrictions.

The recently completed new infill 124 on Queen Hotel, has been built with a maximum height of 9.6m/31.5ft. This development is surrounded by the existing commercial buildings along Queen St.

The proposed hotel for the Parliament Oak property is 8.6 metres (28.2 feet) higher and set in the midst of existing one and two-storey homes. In comparison, the Prince of Wales hotel is three storeys and 10.6 metres (34.9 feet) high – 7.5 metres (25 feet) shorter than the new proposed hotel.

In fact, the apartment building previously proposed for this same property was contested because it was proposed to be 12.4 metres (40.6 feet) in height, a full 5.8 metres (19.1 feet) shorter than the new proposed hotel.

If this proposal, a six-storey equivalent, is ap-

proved, it will set a dangerous precedent for all future developments.

We applaud former councils for their diligence and stewardship in preventing the height of new buildings from gradually creeping higher than the existing historic building fabric, thus preserving the scale and feel of the town.

Even if they do not fully understand it, this is what makes the town so attractive to the millions of visitors each year. People come to escape the canyons of our large cities and enjoy the human scale of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We urge council to continue to support the respect and stewardship demonstrated by former council's and their efforts to preserve what makes our town unique and the place everyone loves to visit.

Sincerely,  
**Gordon Stratford, architect**  
**John Gartner, retired planner**  
**David Parker, architect**  
**David Anthony, P. Eng.**

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# OUT OF THE DARK: Husband's stroke inspires Jodey Porter to beat blindness

Story and photography by Tim Taylor

At 72, Jodey Porter has finished an illustrious career as a senior Ontario public servant. She has been, among other roles, an Ontario human rights commissioner, a member of the United Nations Council on Human Rights and executive director of the Canadian Diabetes Association.

In her volunteer life, she continues her efforts to enable Doctors Without Borders to serve its medical mandate in conflict zones around the world. She is also part of the group's hostage negotiation team. She has had leadership roles in more than a dozen arts, health, and advocacy organizations.

Just this past month, as reported in *The Lake Report*, Porter received the Rotary

Club's prestigious Paul Harris Award for her service to local, national and international organizations.

Porter has been a longtime resident of Old Town.

Her husband, Ben Buholtz, is recovering from a massive stroke that took his mobility, speech and almost his life, one year ago.

She is currently living alone in a small house in Old Town, working hard toward the day Ben will be well enough to return home from long-term care at Pleasant Manor.

Porter's daily life is split between visiting and nurturing Ben and feverishly learning to cope on her own.

Jodey Porter is blind.

Porter started losing her vision at about the age of five. The doctors believed her blindness was caused by Lyme disease, a result of tick bites.

"That's the theory," she says. "I primarily spent my early days in hospitals all over North America. My dad spent all his salary on just trying to fix my blindness. And it didn't fix, although I had partial sight for most of my life."

Through it all she learned to survive, even thrive, without her sight.

But on her birthday, a little over a year and a half ago, after five surgeries to counteract her diminishing sight, she lost all vision. It literally disappeared.

"I spent my whole life just nursing along," she says softly. "All of my life from the time I was five, I thought, if I lose my vision completely, I'm going to go out and hang myself."

"When it finally went, the bottom went out."

She applied for and was accepted for medical assistance in dying (MAID), federal legislation that allows eligible adults to request the help of a doctor or nurse practitioner in intentionally ending their own life.

"I was really going that way. And then Ben had his stroke and holy cow, I mean, I can't leave Ben. He brought me back," she says. "He gave me the determination to figure out how to

survive."

It's clear Porter's resilience was born in her early childhood family experience.

"I didn't grow up anywhere," she says. "I was born in Hamilton. Because my dad was General Secretary of the Missionary Society of Canada, we went everywhere. We moved around in his clerical career. Hamilton, to Huron Diocese, to Toronto. He just went off to the wide world."

"India, Africa, South Africa—the universe. And I would often go with him."

Porter and her sister, who lives in Brantford, are descended from many generations of Anglican ministry—grandfather an archdeacon, uncles, great uncles.

"My sister and I were in boarding school. We lived in a church-funded home in Toronto."

"Mother was a clergyman's daughter. Bachelor of Science from McGill. She was the director of quality control for Carnation Milk. She came secretary to the Bishop of Niagara."

Porter chuckles when she thinks about her upbringing within the church family.

"The expectations are beyond human. You are supposed to be angelic and perfect."

"There is no parish on earth that doesn't have insipient civil war at some point. So, you must be

perfect, and your domestic life is rattled by the distant cannon fire of various squabbles."

She studied Victorian English at the University of Waterloo and attended the University of Western Ontario for graduate studies.

**“Together. Against the odds. He can see and I can't. I can move and he can't. It's going from tragic to epic.”**

JODEY PORTER

Porter and Buholtz have been married for six years.

"Our spouses both died of cancer in Florida. The four of us were casual friends—trivia buddies."

"We were devastated by losing our life partners, but along the way, we realized we had our own partnership."

Today, their partnership is weathering an emotional and physical storm.

"Throughout Ben's ordeal, he has said he wants to come home. He's had over a year in hospital, rehab and long-term care. He couldn't speak for almost eight months, not a single word. Occasionally a whisper."

But both are certain he will make it.

"He recently stood up for

the first time. He's now able to come home three days a week. His speech is almost back. His sense of humour is back."

Porter sold their two-storey home in favour of an attached bungalow with everything on one floor.

"If he can just get a little bit more mobile, we can ultimately get him home."

Her confidence and commitment are infectious: "Together. Against the odds. He can see and I can't. I can move and he can't. It's going from tragic to epic."

Modern technology plays an important part in Porter's life—both for what it can do and for what it can't.

Case in point, while attending university, Porter's mother spent long evenings recording her daughter's English texts on reel-to-reel tape recordings, often losing her voice with the effort.

"Now, I can download anything in my phone instantly. It's a whole new world order."

Her use of technology can also have a humorous side. She depends on Nigel (her name for Siri, Google's digital assistant) for helping her connect with the world.

"The other day, I got really frustrated about something and I said: 'O, Jesus Christ!'"

"Nigel informed me quietly that we didn't have Jesus Christ in our contacts."

But in the end, her true

emotional and physical revival depends on solutions very far from technology.

Porter is absolutely convinced her quality of life depends on having a guide dog: a working friend to enable her life.

It was months ago that Porter explored the Canadian system for acquiring a suitable animal.

"Canada only has 34 orientation mobility (white cane) instructors in Canada," she says. Agile white cane use is one of the prerequisites for guide dog ownership.

"In Canada, at my age, I probably wouldn't get a guide dog until I died."

So, with the help of friends, she attended the San Diego School for the Blind for three months.

"It was transformational," she says. "I learned white cane—I can now go out to dinner on my own. I can cook again. I can use my computer again. They gave me sensory awareness. And guide dog preparatory training."

"Their whole objective is to kick you out of the nest." But while the white cane ability is satisfying, it is guide dog ownership that spurs her on.

"With a cane, you are always looking for danger. With a dog, you are not. You are looking for opportunities. The dog will find you the door; make sure you go straight across the street."

To achieve her goal, Porter has completed extensive medical assessments, physical and occupational therapy and even completed a video-taped two-mile independent walk using a white cane.

Six of her closest friends have completed interviews attesting to Porter's ability to be responsible for a guide dog.

"Good news is that I have been approved for instruction at the oldest and toughest guide dog school in North America. Ben says it is because I am old and tough."

In the next couple of months, she will fly to New Jersey to attend a month-long guide dog training session, working with and getting to know, her new dog. At the end of the course, they will fly home together to begin their new life together.

Porter heartily acknowledges that she couldn't have achieved any of this without her community.

"I would not be anywhere without the people who support me. Unbelievable. Dozens of old and new friends. It's been everybody. I have walkers every morning. Help driving everywhere. Everything."

If it takes a village to raise a child, it is equally true that it is their village that will bring Jodey and Ben, and their new guide dog, back together again.



Jodey Porter and her husband, Ben Buholtz are working diligently toward the day when he can come home following a debilitating stroke. Porter is in the final stages of her quest to own a guide dog to regain her mobility lost to blindness.

# Love story highlighted at Ontario farmerettes talk

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Steven Gregg couldn't help but tear up when he heard his parents' love story recounted to the audience at the NOTL Museum last Thursday.

"It's kind of surreal to just walk out of my house and come to a presentation like this," he said.

Gregg's parents met while his mother was working as one of the thousands of women farmers who stepped up to maintain Ontario's crops during the Second World War.

Her story and many others were the subject of a presentation the museum hosted about these women, called the "farmerettes."

Bonnie Sitter and Shirleyan English, co-authors of the new book "Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz," read aloud letters and experiences from their book, describing the experiences of these farmerettes.

In 1941, the Ontario Farm Service Force established the Farmerettes program, which encouraged girls aged 16 to 18 to work in the fields during the summer.

This came at a time when thousands of men's lives were lost during the Second World War.

In the book, dozens of farmerettes tell their story accompanied by more than 200 photos.

The audience got a few surprises along the way, like the never-before-heard love story of Gregg's parents, Dorothy Chantler and Stanley Gregg, written primarily by Steven Gregg's sister, Brenda Murray.



Cathyrne Horne, left, Jean Brett and Shirleyan English were all Ontario farmerettes during the Second World War. SOMER SLOBODIAN

Greggs' mother worked as a farmerette with her best friend, Carmen, in Kingsville in 1946 – the same year his father worked at Camp Harrow.

"On the morning of July 3, 1946, he and his team were assigned to work for the day at the same potato farm with our mother and Carmen," Sitter read to the crowd.

The letter describes the first time his mother saw his father and how she called dibs on the "tall, handsome one."

They met that morning for the first time, a meeting his dad described as "two sweet potatoes in a bag."

They spent the summer together, often spending their weekends dancing.

Their favourite song was "Day by Day" by Doris Day, a song that kept the two

connected even when apart, said Sitter.

Murray told The Lake Report that her parents had nicknames for each other — her father went by "Nats," Stan spelled backwards, and her mother went by "Dimps" because of her "incredible dimples."

This was just one of many stories told that night about Ontario's farmerettes.

However, the story of the two women who wrote the book is full of just as much intrigue.

One day Sitter found a small photo of three farmerettes and, not knowing who they were, decided to do some research.

After learning about the thousands of young girls who helped put food on the table during the Second World War, she wrote an article for a farming magazine

called The Rural Voice in Blyth, Ont.

English wrote a letter to the editor after reading Sitter's article.

Not only was English a former farmerette, but she worked at Sitter's in-laws' farm — and even dated one of her in-laws.

To this day, English describes that time as one of the best summers of her life.

"We were very close to the cadet camp, so they were allowed to come one night a week," English told The Lake Report.

"We took out the jukebox (and) we danced the night away and everything," she added.

Sometimes, she said, the girls would sneak out late at night and even remembers a particular time when she did.

"We managed to sneak

back in (but) because the car broke down we didn't get back to the camp till seven o'clock in the morning," she said.

At 7:15 a.m., the alarm to wake up went off — after pulling an all-nighter, she was back in the field, working.

Two other farmerettes made the trip to NOTL for the presentation and to hear their stories read out loud.

Cathyrne Horne, a farmerette in 1947 in St. Catharines, was one of them.

She told The Lake Report about one of the photos Sitter shared of her and her friends — the photo showed them in long coats after they'd gone swimming.

But there's more to the story: they had gone skinny dipping when a reporter from the St. Catharines Standard showed up looking for a photo for the paper.

"We all looked like we were half put together," she said with a laugh.

She worked at one of the Tregunno Camps in the northern part of St. Catharines and described in her letter how the farmer, Mr. Troup, would pick them up in the morning. They'd sit with their legs dangling from a flatbed trailer.

Her letter described in detail how difficult and back-breaking the job could be, and how much she made at the time.

"I know I made \$10 a week clear after paying room and board for \$4.00 a week," reads the letter.

Many farmerettes made \$0.25 an hour, which was the going rate at that time.

Horne told The Lake Report that many years later

she bought a house, where she lived with her husband and two sons.

It wasn't until one day when she went for a walk by the Welland Canal that she realized only two houses down from her home was where she worked as a farmerette.

She still lives there to this day.

Sitter and English showed dozens of photos of the farmerettes, including photos of them out in the fields and sitting on tractors.

"If there was a tractor on the farm, they had to have a picture taken with the tractor to prove you're on a farm," said Sitter.

There were also a few photos of them hitchhiking, which was a popular way to get around during that time.

"They would hitchhike into town for just a sundae or an ice cream cone, anything to try something different," said Sitter.

To spread the message about the farmerettes, Sitter is trying to get Canada Post to issue a stamp honouring Ontario's farmerettes.

The book is also being adapted into a play and should be on stage at the Blyth Festival Theatre in 2024.

Sitter also has another important project in the works — a documentary.

"I needed to raise \$25,000 because we're going to do a film documentary about these ladies while there's still faces and voices to record," said Sitter.

She's looking for sponsors that are willing to work together on this project.

To buy the book or reach out to Sitter, email [bonnie.sitter@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.sitter@gmail.com).

  
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Tara Rosling and her daughter Eliana are hosting a bake sale on Sunday to raise money for Pride advocacy. SUPPLIED

## Pride-themed bake sale gives back

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

This weekend, you can follow your nose to 23 Shakespeare Ave. to support a cause for Pride Month.

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents Tara Rosling and her daughter Eliana are hosting a pay-what-you-can bake sale this Sunday for a fundraiser to advance human rights for the LGBTQ and two-spirit community.

The bake sale is happening from 10 a.m. to noon. The money will be given to Egale Canada, a Toronto-based advocacy organization.

"I was feeling incredibly disheartened about how the crosswalk was vandalized," Rosling said referring to a defacement of the town's rainbow crosswalk the first week of June.

Rather than, in her words, "going down the rabbit hole of despair," Rosling decided it was better to be productive and hold a fundraiser.

This is the third year Rosling and her daughter have hosted a bake sale for a cause they care about.

Last year, they used it to raise money in support of Ukraine, raising almost \$3,000 with their baked goods.

This year, Rosling hopes they can crack \$2,000.

Rosling says they'll be selling baked goods decorated in Pride colours.

"We are planning to do rainbow lemonade," she said, consisting of six pitchers of lemonade each in a different colour of the Pride flag.

"We're being ambitious at the moment. We'll see how far we get," she said

Eliana will be painting faces throughout the sale, Rosling said.

This year, Rosling is also holding a silent auction. There are several goodies up for grabs, including locally made soaps and ce-

ramics, tickets to the Shaw Festival, a certificate to Willow Cakes and Pastries and tickets to the Foster Festival in St. Catharines.

Rosling is still accepting donated baked goods and items for auction from her neighbours and says she and Eliana would be "over the moon" to have them at their table.

They are also collecting donations ahead of the sale. People can donate through their Canada Helps webpage at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4kup8y>.

As of Wednesday evening, they have collected \$425 in donations, almost a quarter of their goal.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.  
Category: STATE YOUR NAME

**1920s nightclub hostess Texas Guinan was arrested several times for operating these illegal "quiet" establishments.**

Last issue:

Category: "EYE"

Clue: It's a late or overnight airplane flight.

Answer: What is red eye?

Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Gary Davis, Al Brockway, Jane Morris, Claudia Grimwood, Susan Hamilton, Sylvia Wiens, Susan Dewar, Jim Dandy, Pam Dowling, Wade Durling, Marjory Walker, Margie Enns, Patricia Fraser, Patricia Gander, Gordon Yanow, Margaret Garaughty, Nancy Rocca, Howard Jones, Rob Hutchison, Jesse Agnew, Sheila Meloche, Catherine Clarke, Elaine Landray, Bob Stevens

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

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# Niagara-on-the-Lake is toast of the Ontario Wine Awards with 46 wins

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake doesn't mess around when it comes to wine.

Sixteen NOTL wineries took home gold, silver and bronze at the Ontario Wine Awards this June — some winning multiple times.

The awards, judged on May 6 at George Brown College and presented at Niagara College earlier this month, had 558 entries from more than 80 Ontario wineries. NOTL took home 46 awards.

"We're definitely doing something right over here," said Shantal Silverthorne, who has been the head winemaker at Konzelmann Estate Winery since 2021.

Konzelmann Estate Winery won one bronze award, four silvers and two golds.

The Niagara region, especially Niagara-on-the-Lake, could owe its success to its climate, its soil quality and how close wineries, like Konzelmann, are to Lake Ontario.

It's about "planting the right varieties in the right places," said Katie Dickieson, who has been the head winemaker at Peller Estates Winery since 2012.

She took home the head winemaker of the year award, along with four golds and one silver.

Dickieson said there's no such thing as a regular vintage wine in Ontario.

"Every season is a little bit different and we have to be able to adapt," she said.

"2020 was a very warm, very ripe style and that's the vintage we were awarded the gold for the Cabernet Franc."



Shantal Silverthorne, head winemaker at Konzelmann Estate Winery, holds a Chardonnay Barrel Aged 2022, which won gold at this year's Ontario Wine Awards. SOMER SLOBODIAN

she added.

She said she's fortunate to get to spend so much time in the vineyards.

"I do think that's the place where we can have the greatest impact on the final product," said Dickieson.

Peller won gold for its Private Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 2021, Signature Series Cabernet Franc 2020, Private Reserve Late Harvest Vidal 2021 and its Andrew Peller Riesling Icewine 2019.

When it comes to winemaking, she always remembers a specific motto from Gordon Russell, a winemaker at Esk Valley Winery in New Zealand and one of her mentors.

Russell would say: Winemaking is about avoiding compromises.

"If you want to pick at a certain time, you do everything you can to pick," she said.

Dickieson was honoured, and shocked, to win so many

awards, but said it's definitely a team effort.

From the vineyard to the bottle, there's a lot of people involved in the process, she said.

Just like Dickieson, Silverthorne was shocked when she found out she won not one, but two golds.

"Winemaking is really like an art," said Silverthorne.

"To actually see the wine that you've created be successful and be enjoyed by others, it's a really nice feeling," she added.

Konzelmann won gold for its Chardonnay Barrel Aged 2022 and for its Legacy Meritage 2020, a wine that hasn't been released yet.

The Legacy Meritage 2020 holds a special place in the hearts and minds of employees at Konzelmann.

It was made in 2021 in honour of Herbert Konzelmann, who died that year at 84 years old, said Silverthorne.

"It's a nice wine because kind of everyone was involved with that wine," she said.

Konzelmann was a fourth-generation winemaker who came to Niagara from Germany in 1984 and founded Konzelmann Estate Winery.

When the winemaking team pulled the Legacy Meritage 2020 barrels out in 2022, they tasted all 45 barrels and narrowed it down to the top 15, then narrowed it down to the top 10.

When they tasted the top 10, they involved the owners and even some members of the sales team who were close with Herbert.

"We involved everyone who was close to Herbert to together as a team pick the best barrels that we thought Herbert would be most proud of," she said.

She's hoping it will be released sometime this year.

Other NOTL wineries that took home awards include Bella Terra Vineyards, Chateau des Charmes, Hinterbrook Estate Winery, Inniskillin, Jackson-Triggs Winery, Niagara College Teaching Winery, Palatine Hills Estate Winery, Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, Reif Estate Winery, River-view Cellars Estate Winery, Strewn Winery, Trius Winery and Wayne Gretzky Estates.

Silverthorne said the wine community plays a huge role in the success of its wine industry.

"It's nice to see everyone as a whole doing so well and you know, everyone congratulates each other (and) helps everyone," she said.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake is really making itself a destination not just for tourism, but a wine destination as well."



Kathy Hunter, left, and Lillian Brooker help sell jam at Saturday's Strawberry Festival. SUPPLIED

## Volunteers help make Strawberry Festival extra, extra sweet

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

Jam certainly doesn't make itself — which is why dozens of volunteers were present and ready to help out at Saturday's Strawberry Festival.

Hosted by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the annual festival features farm-fresh fruit for sale, along with thematic treats including homemade fruit jams, baked goods and frozen yogurt.

Preparing for the celebration was a lot of work, festival co-chair Fran Anderson told The Lake Report.

"This morning we had probably 30 people hauling in strawberries," she said.

Volunteers in the church kitchen made all the jams on sale during the day, and the church's members donated baked goods — a variety of cakes and bread, plus ready-to-eat snacks like strawberry shortcakes and crepes.

"All of the home baking was sold out within two

hours," Anderson said.

This year marked her first time helping to lead the festival. She said it was a great opportunity to get to know other people in the church.

People like Mary McHoull who worked alongside a busy team of volunteers to sell quarts and flats of farm fresh strawberries.

McHoull said this year was her first time working the outdoor booth after typically helping out with the antiques.

"I used to sell strawberries as a kid, so I thought, 'Why not?'" she said.

Along with snacks and shopping, festival goers could enjoy the musical stylings of guests including children's musician The Singing Chicken, take a tour of the church or enter the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's "Tiny Museum," a small but elegant mobile home parked next to the berry stand.

All proceeds from the festival will benefit St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and its functions.

# Spirit in Niagara earns international honours at 2023 SIP Awards

Julia Sacco  
The Lake Report

They opened only two years ago, but Spirit in Niagara has already taken home numerous awards — the latest being international honours.

At the 2023 San Francisco International Spirits Competition and the prestigious 2023 SIP Awards held in Irvine, California, gold medals were awarded to the distillery's juiced-up gin and the juiced-up vodka in their respective categories.

In the whisky category,

their Canadian whisky received gold at the SIP Awards and bronze at the San Francisco Spirit Competition and the Canadian Whisky Awards.

The Bartender Spirit Awards also announced silver across the board for the distillery's juiced-up vodka, juiced-up gin, juicy peach eau de vie, sweet pear eau de vie, mixed mash Whisky, Canadian whisky, and sweet vermouth.

The SIP Awards is held every year judging spirits from around the world — and unique in that it's a panel of average consum-

ers that judge and rank the competition.

"I think it's the quality of the products that we start with," said the distillery's founder Arnie Lepp.

"A lot of (the spirits) feature soft, overripe fruit with exceptional flavours. The Canadian grains and the corn that we use. And on top of that, we've got the best master distiller in the industry."

Joshua Beach, Spirit in Niagara's master distiller, has a background in whisky distilling, beginning in Vancouver with his own distillery and working as the

original distiller at Wayne Gretzky Estates.

He now works solo at this distillery.

"It's just me back there, toiling away," he joked.

With fruit sourced from Arnie Lepp's sorting facility, preventing overripe products from going to waste, these spirits are not only tasty but environmentally conscious too, Beach said.

"We don't waste, but also with the quality of the spirits, when you start with a good quality raw ingredient, it really creates a delicious product," he said.



Spirit in Niagara president Arnie Lepp. FILE PHOTO

# Grace United Church's popular jam-boree sale returns June 24

John Sayers  
Special to The Lake Report

Another day, another breakfast. Ho-hum. Boring.

If your days begin like that, it's time to spark your mornings with exciting jams and marmalades from the Jolly June Jamboree at Grace United Church, in town and just around the corner from the Shaw Café, on Saturday, June 24.

Herewith our guarantee that we have enough varieties of jams to brighten every day. Say goodbye to ho-hum.

Why a guarantee? Well, some people have a cooking hobby. Others collect stamps or create beautiful gardens.

At Grace, we have congregation members with decades of experience producing new and wonderful jams, jellies and sauces. It's as much a treat for them to create as it is for you to consume.

A brand-new addition, strikingly Canadian, is a



A limited quantity of "strikingly Canadian" Saskatoon berry jam will be available at Saturday's jam sale at Grace United Church. JOHN SAYERS

limited quantity of Saskatoon berry jam. If your heart belongs on the Prairies, or you want to try a rare and unusual Canadian jam, you might want to get near the head of the queue at the appropriate table. Look for the bright red sign in the rows of jars.

The jam gourmet will want to savour a morning launched with Saskatoon berry jam if they want to

imagine they woke up to a day on the rolling Prairies.

For the gourmand with fond memories of childhood breakfasts with old-fashioned red currant, quince or crabapple spreads, these will bring back your treasured memories of a toasty breakfast before trudging off reluctantly to school.

Of course, there are all the old favourites if your jam cupboard is running

low. Strawberry, peach, raspberry, cherry, apricot and a host of other mouth-watering fruits await your needs, in both traditional and sugar-reduced versions.

Or maybe spicy peach, spicy apricot or spiced pear will be the right fuel for a tangy launch to your morning? Bet you've never tried those before.

And for the venturesome jam-lover seeking a new

experience, you will want to grab jars of chocolate, fig, or golden Plum and other exotic jam treats. As they say, life is short so be daring.

If marmalade is your spread of choice, that's there too, including a lemon gin version.

Sauces? We hope that we will have enough of the legendary colonial sauce because we were sold out of the 22 cases produced last year.

Some sauce aficionados buy an entire case of 12 rather than just one or two jars. They seem to realize that there is nothing better than having enough friendly, comforting sauce to brighten up a long, cold winter.

The availability of other exciting sauces depends upon the inspiration of our creators, just like what you plant in your garden can vary each year.

But a sneak preview reveals that there are more than a dozen different sauces including old

favourites such as mango chutney, peach salsa, and hot red pepper which are waiting for your passionate embrace.

And if you like it hot, hot, hot then you need to try pineapple habanero, for a fiery dip you will remember and lust for.

And there's home baking. When you come for jams and sauces, you're going to find that you are enticed by an array of homemade baked goods produced with loving care by the women of the church.

With the advent of so many machine-produced pastries in the stores out there, it's a real treat to the taste buds to enjoy treats like your mother used to bake in the oven, accompanied by the seductive aromas of her kitchen labours.

Needless to say, these memories of the golden days of baking sell out fast, so note the 9 a.m. start time on Saturday, June 24. See you then at Grace United Church.



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# Men can't repeat Taylor's Canadian Open magic despite 100 tries

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

In the wake of British Columbian Nick Taylor's victory in the Canadian Open – ending a 69-year drought since the last time a Canuck won the national tournament – members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's Thursday men's league tried to replicate his mammoth winning putt.

To no avail. Despite 100 golfers attempting it, no one was able to sink a 72-footer the way Taylor slammed it home on the fourth playoff hole.

The gents "realized that even without the immense pressure it is still nearly impossible," noted club pro Keith Vant.

There were some big shots made out on the course, however.

Jim Panetta, a former men's open and seniors club champion, shot even-par 36 to be low gross winner.

He, Jim Meszaros, Harry Huizer and Derek Merza were tops in modified Stableford scoring, with 20 points each.

Other winners were: Devon Neudorf (longest



Jim Panetta, seen in a previous outing, shot an even-par 36 in men's league action to lead all competitors. FILE/Kevin MacLean

drive #1), Paul Jacot (closest to the 150 on #2), David Gagne (closest to the pin #4), Merza (longest putt #6), Huizer (longest putt #7) and Neudorf (closest to pin #9).

Net skins winners were: Don Stewart #1, Earl Shore #5 and Robert Lowe #6.

Gross skins, all birdies,

went to Neudorf on #2 and #9, Stephen Jenkins #3 and Ricky Watson #5.

In Friday's Couples league scramble, the podium was crowded as four groups tied for first with scores of 1-under 35.

Through the magic of retrogression, the winners

were: first – Sheilagh and Larry Blight, Val and Rob Chubey; second – Nikki and Stephen Jenkins, Julie and Bill Smethurst; third – Cheryl and Rob Yamamoto, Lenore and Rick Janes; fourth – Janice and Jim McMacken, Eileen and Jack Hanna.

Last Tuesday's 18-hole women's league played a game involving blind and mystery holes. Scores were only counted for holes #1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15 and 17, then half of each player's handicap determined their net score.

The top three finishers

were: Louise Robitaille (38), Martha Cruikshank (41), and Lisa Allen and Yolanda Henry (44).

Top gross scores were: Robitaille (84), Cruikshank (89), Allen (94), Henry (97) and Cathy Murray (100).

Net scores winners were: Cruikshank (74), Robitaille (76), Allen (77), Murray (78), and Val Chubey and Janice White (79). Fewest putts: Henry (30), Patty Garriock and Allen (32), Cruikshank (33) and Christine Earl (34).

And members of the women's 9-hole league also were putting for prizes last week.

Prize winners for the most putts were Sheilagh Blight (in her first time out with the league) and Lynne Heaman. Diana Dimmer had the fewest putts, with 15.

Dimmer was a big winner on the week, with longest drive on #2 and a birdie on #6. Judy Wright had the longest drive on #6.

Top net scores were: Dimmer, Victoria Interisano and Ruth Dowsett. Top gross scores were: Dimmer, Suzanne Watson and Susan Horne.



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# NOTL soccer aims to **reduce abuse** of referees

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

The president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Soccer Club is “fully supportive” of Ontario Soccer’s decision to use bodycams to try to reduce abuse of young soccer officials.

The decision by the province’s governing body is a necessary step to determine if it reduces “inappropriate behaviour” by players, coaches and fans, says Carrie Plaskett.

Part of a pilot project by the Ontario organization, the bodycameras won’t be used in NOTL.

However, with soccer associations across the province having trouble retaining referees because of the backlashes they face on the pitch, “the Niagara Soccer Association has stressed the importance of supporting our referees,” Plaskett told The Lake Report.

“It is important to note that it is not just the older age groups that the referees are having trouble with,” she added.

In the Niagara region, coaches have received suspensions for inappropriate conduct toward referees as young as 13 during games with players on the field that are nine and 10 years old, she said.

“What sort of example does that set? There should be zero tolerance of any sort of abuse.”

“I am fully supportive of seeing if officials wearing cameras will reduce this type of inappropriate behaviour.”

She noted the NOTL Soccer Club is excited to have



Left: Soccer officials want fans and coaches to enjoy the games, like these spectators, and avoid harassing referees. Above: Carrie Plaskett supports Ontario Soccer’s decision to use bodycams on referees to try to reduce abuse. Though they won’t be used in NOTL quite yet.  
JULIA SACCO

a team of eight referees this year, all 12 to 14 years old who are either rookie officials or have one year of experience.

“Refereeing is a great opportunity for these young individuals to support local soccer and earn some excellent wages,” Plaskett said.

The NOTL officials are all under the mentorship of head referee Lucas Mitchlick, an experienced official and student at Brock University.

Plaskett said the club’s

philosophy is to try to help young referees feel part of a supportive team.

“It can be very intimidating going into matches for the first time and making any calls,” she said.

“They don’t need the added stress of potential backlash from coaches, players and spectators.”

Joe Pagnotta, the NOTL club’s head coach and technical director, echoed those sentiments, though he’s a bit saddened that it has come to this point.

“Soccer should always be about having fun, even at the rep level,” where competition can be intense, he said.

Emotions on the pitch – and on the sidelines – can run high and games can get chippy as a result, Pagnotta said.

As a coach and a parent, he worries about player safety and wants referees to not hesitate about taking charge. No one wants a child to get hurt

But it can be tough for

a young teenager to do so when they’re relatively new to officiating and people are yelling and complaining.

That’s why it is important for everyone to support referees and recognize the job they are trying to do, Pagnotta said.

He recalled a competitive U10 game last year in which NOTL was up 3-0 by half-time. Then emotions took over and the other team got really physical in the second half.

That’s when coaches need

to focus on sportsmanship and not intimidation.

When the game ended, one of his players came to him and said, “Coach Joe, that wasn’t fun. And that’s not what sport and soccer is supposed to be.”

“I’ll never forget it,” Pagnotta said. “A 10-year-old said that.”

The player had it all figured out. Now, it’s up to parents and coaches on the sidelines to recognize what children’s sports are supposed to be about.

## Joe Pagnotta is a soccer coach, hockey coach and a teacher

*Continued from Front Page*

The provincial tourney was a huge undertaking – “20 schools from across our province, approximately 450 athletes and coaches. It’s a massive event,” he said a few days before competition kicked off.

His Blessed Trinity team made it to the OFSAA tourney last year and when no one else stepped up to bid to host this year’s event, Pagnotta offered.

But rather than just sail into the event as hosts, the undefeated Thunder qualified the old-fashioned way: They won the southern

Ontario championship by beating Ancaster a week before the June 8 to 10 provincial finals.

Pagnotta seems to embody the maxim, “If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it.”

But he’s quick to point out he was one of a team of at least 15 school staff and friends who worked hard to pull the whole OFSAA tournament together.

Having a strong committee of helpers was essential.

“I’m kind of overwhelmed this week, but I’ve had a lot support,” he said in an interview leading up to the tournament.

“As much as you get caught up in the organizing work, there’s still a team I have to coach,” he said.

After last year’s OFSAA experience, the team’s goal was to bring home a medal, Pagnotta said. But going in, the players recognized the competition would be tough.

Pagnotta had his hands full all weekend, he said last week after the tournament wrapped up. “Lots of action,” between coaching and convening.

The Thunder had a solid tournament, losing 1-0 in the quarters to Christ the

King from Georgetown, which went on to take the silver medal. Holy Names from Windsor won gold.

So, OFSAA is done, the school year is wrapped up and now Pagnotta can slip into the relaxing rhythm and routine of minor soccer coaching and volunteering.

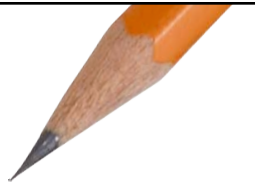
Anything else? Well, hockey season is just a few months away, but as vice-president of the NOTL Minor Hockey Association (did we forget to mention that?), there’s always something that needs doing.

But come July, he’ll get a bit of a breather. Maybe.



Joe Pagnotta is the coach of Blessed Trinity school’s Thunder soccer team. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

*Have some fun*

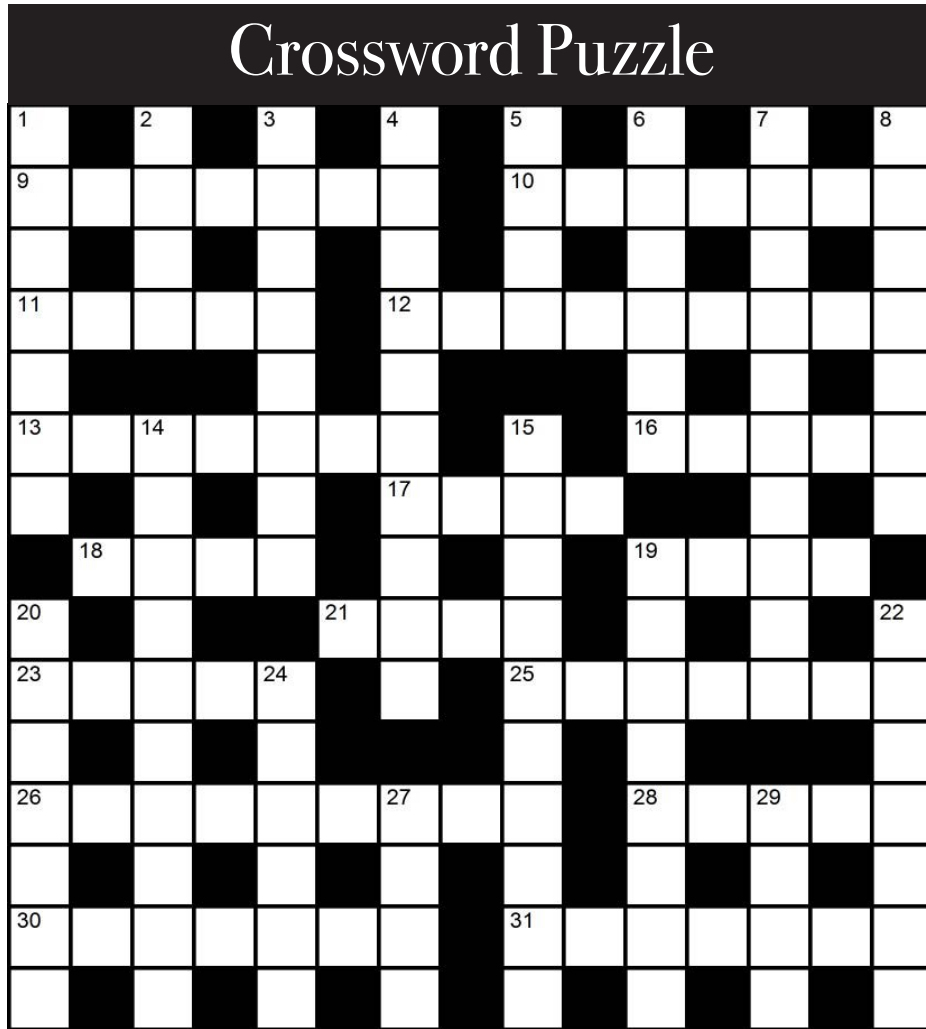


**Across**

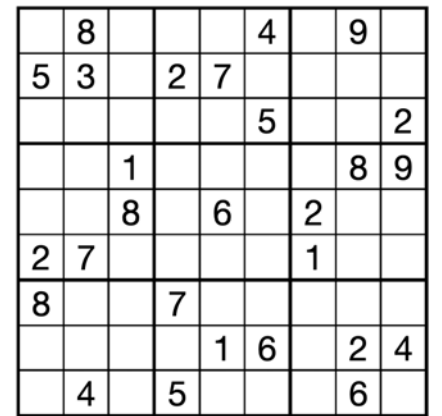
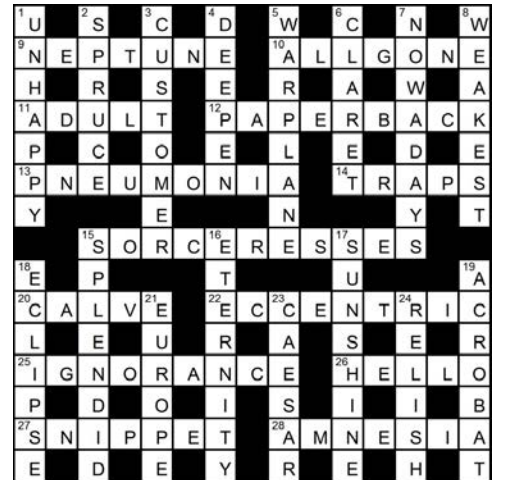
- 9. Highland (7)
- 10. Burst violently (7)
- 11. Tennis tie (5)
- 12. Clogged (9)
- 13. Keeps (7)
- 16. Welsh castle, fortress and stately home (5)
- 17. Butt (4)
- 18. City in NW France (4)
- 19. Fortune (4)
- 21. Purchases (4)
- 23. Follows orders (5)
- 25. Republic containing the northernmost point in Africa (7)
- 26. Discouragement (9)
- 28. Intended (5)
- 30. Cap attachment (7)
- 31. Thrash (7)

**Down**

- 1. Long and thin (7)
- 2. Hawaiian island (4)
- 3. Excision (8)
- 4. Prosperous (10)
- 5. Skinny (4)
- 6. Maintenance (6)
- 7. Short nap (5,5)
- 8. Rosy (7)
- 14. Path of a projectile (10)
- 15. Replace (10)
- 19. Monasticism (8)
- 20. Pongo (7)
- 22. Tack maker (7)
- 24. Move up or down through computer text (6)
- 27. Spot (4)
- 29. Flat-bottomed river boat (4)



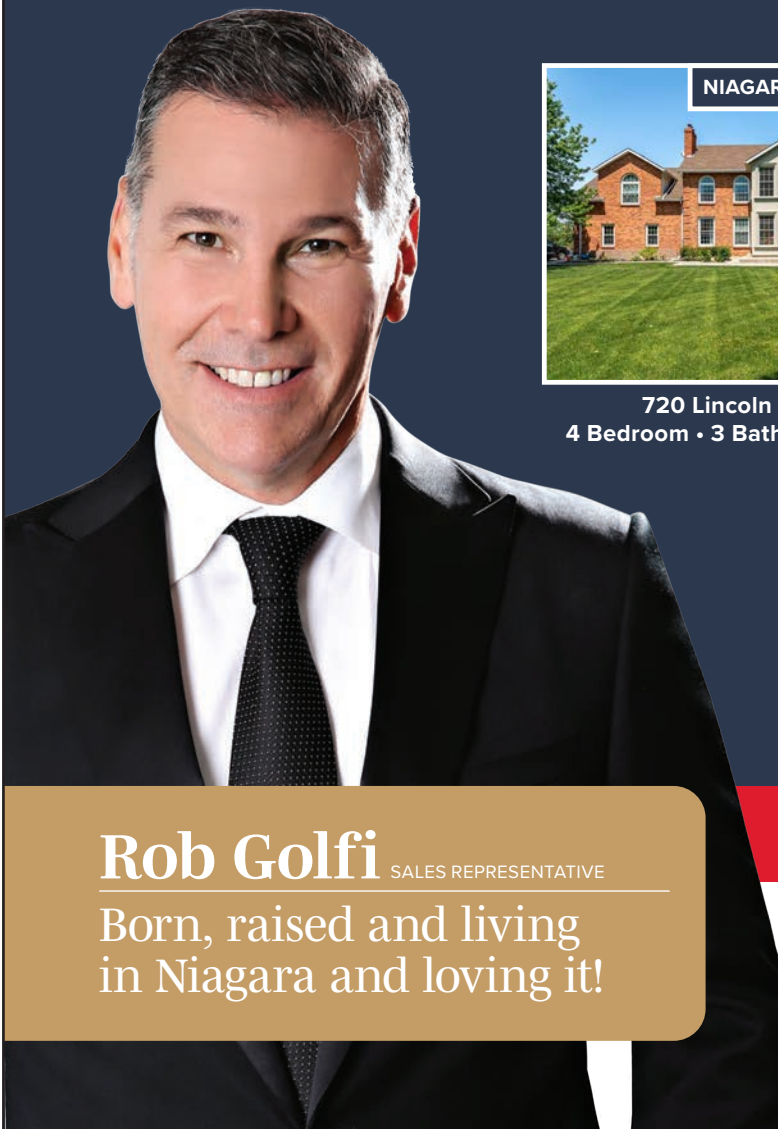
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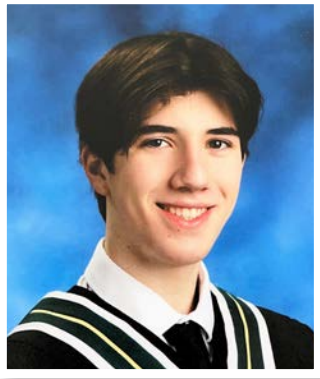


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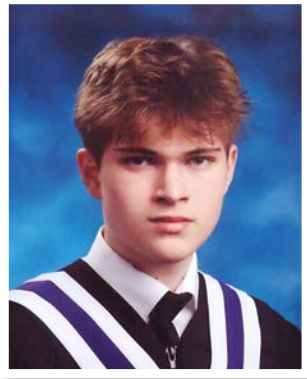
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# CONGRADS!



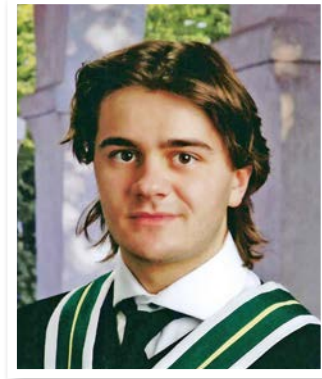
Jack Marotta, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Blair Burland, Grade 12,  
A.N. Myer Secondary School



Samuel Walker, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Ethan Peters, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Luke Skubel, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Jack Parker, Grade 12,  
A.N. Myer Secondary School



Liam Dietsch, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Noah Simonics, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Liam Gatt, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



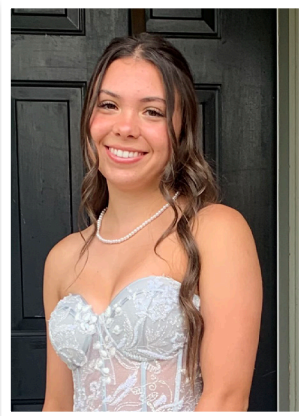
Evan Harlund, Grade 12,  
St. Francis Catholic Secondary



Amélie Merrill, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



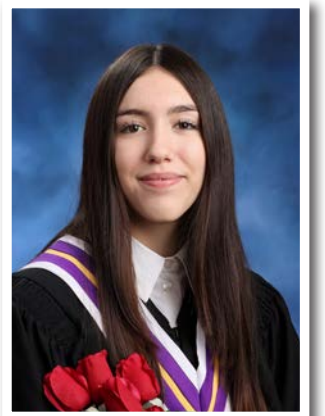
Janiece Stangroom, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Madison Giampa, Grade 12,  
Holy Cross Catholic Secondary



Aoibhin Davidson, Grade 8,  
Crossroads Public School



Camille Williams, Grade 8,  
St. Davids Public School



Roc Mastromatteo, Grade 8,  
St. Michael Catholic Elementary



Trenton May, Grade 8,  
St. Davids Public School



Joshua Adam, Grade 8,  
St. Davids Public School



Gwynn Tregunno, Grade 8,  
St. Davids Public School



Gracie Cherney, Grade 8,  
St. Michael Catholic Elementary



Landon Archibald, Kindergarten,  
Crossroads Public School



Nevyn Reid, Kindergarten,  
St. Davids Public School

Congratulations  
to all of this year's  
grads, whether it's  
Grade 12, Grade 8  
or Kindergarten. We  
wish you the best in  
whatever comes next!





## EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



### Military hospital at the Commons

This painting by local artist Francis Granger was completed in 1864. It is an image of the military hospital on the Niagara Commons. It is also the former Indian Council House. The council house served as an embassy and a meeting space for the British Indian Department and the local Indigenous people. Annually, they would meet to discuss treaties, alliances and concerns and to provide gifts to the Indigenous people. The original building was destroyed during the War of 1812. It was rebuilt and used until 1822 when the British Indian Department was no longer active here. June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day when Canada celebrates the history, heritage, resilience and diversity of Indigenous people. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum has a temporary display with our Indigenous collection in our upper gallery – we invite you to come and learn more.

## The effects of **big strokes** and what to do about them



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Columnist

Ischemic strokes, those caused by an obstruction in a feeding artery, are more common than hemorrhagic strokes.

Small ones, the result of obstructions in small arteries or arterioles, are common enough and most often related to hypertension. Many are asymptomatic or cause minor symptoms and perhaps, neurological findings.

That was the case with my sister. Her CT scan revealed six so-called lacunes in the base of her brain, only one of which was associated with a loss of balance for a few days. The cumulative effect of many such “small strokes,” however, may be cognitive decline.

Larger, sometimes mas-

sive ischemic strokes are another matter.

For example, should the middle cerebral artery at the base of the brain become blocked by a thrombus or embolus, the clinical outcome can be devastating. This can mean severe weakness on the opposite side, and if the speech area is affected, loss or severe impairment of speech is common.

Following the obstruction of a large artery like the middle cerebral artery, there are two regions of the brain. For regions where the obstructed artery is the sole source of blood, the affected region dies – some say within minutes.

Recent experimental studies of pig brains suggest the time interval before the death of nerve cells may be much longer – several hours at least, provided the circulation is re-established within four hours in the pig brains.

Outside the “dead” core is a wider region in the brain where the blood supply is reduced downstream from the blocked arterial branch, but not entirely so. A life-



line of arterial blood may reach the threatened region from neighbouring regions of the brain if supplied by unobstructed arteries.

The threatened region of the brain is often referred to as a “brain at risk.” Nothing can be done about the “dead” region: management is therefore directed toward salvaging the brain which is at risk.

For some patients, thrombolytic therapy works but with clots the size of the proximal middle cerebral artery, lysis alone isn’t usually enough to break up the obstructing clot.

That’s where embolec-

tomy comes in – plucking the clot out using a catheter threaded up from one of the distal forearm arteries to the obstructed middle cerebral artery. It works well in most instances.

Doing an embolectomy is not a one-man or woman show: it requires a team on call in a major medical centre with the expertise to do the job. For us in the Niagara region, that means visiting the Hamilton General Hospital an hour away.

The initial assessment is done in this region by the stroke unit at the Niagara Falls hospital and the patient is transferred as needed.

Often the presence of an embolus or clot in the middle cerebral artery can be spotted in a CT scan which is urgently carried out as part of the stroke protocol as is an initial trial of thrombolytic therapy.

Clinical trials in Japan, China and the West recently compared patients who received an embolectomy following a major stroke caused by a clot or embolus obstructing the middle cerebral artery, versus those

who did not receive an embolectomy.

The protocols were very similar, as were the results, which an editorial published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* summarized: Clinical outcomes were better with embolectomy than thrombolytic therapy for patients.

However, these are large strokes, and many patients have moderate to severe disabilities with or without embolectomy: That’s what bothers me.

I’m not sure I want to be around with such severe disabilities as many of these patients have, regardless of the statistical data showing better outcomes following embolectomy.

It’s an area where spouses and families need to have the best information their physicians can provide about risks and expected real-world outcomes for their spouse, partner or parent.

It’s not a conversation that can be held with some patients should their understanding be very impaired.

These days, high-tech medicine has become com-

mon, but sometimes the patient and family don’t understand what the implications are for this or that treatment and what realistic outcomes might look like.

The latter isn’t in the MRI – it’s measured by what patients can and cannot do.

Try to resist the temptation to use Google as a surrogate source. Excellent information is available online from the Mayo Clinic, Harvard-affiliated hospitals, the National Institutes of Health, and other trusted sites.

However, they are no substitute for talking to the health care professionals in charge of your care or others.

Normally, pictures are worth many words, but there’s no way to do that with such a brief article. In the fall, I hope to cover this topic and selected others in health care as a way of broadening and deepening the conversation.

*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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Left: Japanese beetles eat the leaf tissue of more than 300 species. Right: An adult box tree moth. JOANNE YOUNG

# What's **bugging** your garden?



**GROWING TOGETHER**

Joanne Young  
Columnist

No one ever said that gardening is without its challenges. If it were all easy-peasy, well, where is the fun in that?

It is the challenges that keep us invested in our gardens, keep us learning and keep us persevering while trying to conquer all that nature has to throw at us.

The key to winning the battle over any insect or disease problems in the garden is to be constantly monitoring your plants – at least on a weekly basis.

If you can catch the issue early on – nipping it in the bud, so to speak – it is much easier to get ahead of the insect or disease damage before the health of the plant is compromised.

By catching it early, it also means that you can possibly treat the problem with the need of using strong chemicals which should never be your first method of control.

Here are a few insects that I have been seeing as I visit different gardens in the area.

The **box tree moth** (*Cydalima perspectalis*) is a relatively new inhabitant in Ontario. As the name indi-

cates, it is primarily found on all species and cultivars of boxwood plants, although there have been reports of them on pachysandra as well.

The box tree moth is native to eastern Asia and made its Canadian debut in 2018 with the first report of it in the Etobicoke area and first spotted in the Niagara-on-the-Lake area in 2021.

The adult moth is medium in size, with a wingspan of about four centimetres. It has white wings with thick, dark brown borders around the entire wing. The body of the moth is also white with a few dark brown specks on it. The larva form is a caterpillar that can reach up to four centimetres in length.

When the larvae first hatch, they are greenish and yellow in colour with a shiny black head. As the larvae mature, they become more green in colour with thick black and thin white stripes along the length of the caterpillar.

It is the larvae that cause damage to the boxwoods as they devour the leaves quickly, just leaving the midrib of the leaf in place. In a matter of a couple of weeks, your boxwood can go from a healthy green to brown or defoliated.

There can be two to three generations per year. The adult moth only lives for about two weeks, but before they die, they lay eggs on the underside of the boxwood leaves in clusters of 10 to 12 eggs. The eggs hatch in three days and the young larvae feed on the underside of the boxwood leaves and start to form webs between the leaves.

It takes about 14 days for the larvae to mature and pupate. Pupae live about 14 days before becoming adults. The box tree moth overwinters in the larval stage, by spinning a silky cocoon between the leaves.

Routinely examine your boxwoods for signs of chewed leaves, caterpillars, webbing, and frass (a fancy term for caterpillar poop). The best times to check for larvae and to spray the caterpillars are May 15 to June 15, July 15 to Aug. 15 and Sept. 1 to Sept. 20.

Use a biological control called BTK (*Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*) for best control. If you are still seeing caterpillars feeding five to seven days after the first spraying time, repeat the application of BTK. You can also hire a professional to spray for you.

The **Japanese beetle** (*Popillia japonica*) is a species of scarab beetle. If you haven't been seeing them yet in your garden this summer, you will be seeing them in the next couple of weeks.

The beetle has an iridescent copper-coloured body and a green thorax and head. The adults measure about 15 millimetres in length and 10 millimetres in width.

Whenever an insect finds its way to a different part of the world, it usually becomes a big problem quickly because there are no known predators here to keep them under control.

The adult beetles are known as skeletonizers, meaning they eat away all the leaf tissue until just the veins remain. They feed on

more than 300 species of plants with some favourites being roses, grapes, lindens, birch, cannas, hibiscus, rhubarb and Virginia creeper.

This will not kill the plants, but it does make them unsightly. However, the grubs (larvae form) can play havoc with your lawns. If you have ever had a lawn to look after before, you will be familiar with white grubs which are the larvae of the Japanese beetles, which feed on the roots of grass, killing patches of your lawn.

The larvae overwinter deeper into the soil and will then pupate four to six weeks after breaking hibernation. The adult beetles typically appear mid to late June and will be visible for 30 to 45 days.

The best control for the grubs is applying nematodes to the lawn. Nematodes are microscopic organisms already present in the soil that feed on and reproduce inside the white grubs.

The next best time to treat your lawn with nematodes would be late August to early September. The best way to treat adult beetles is hanging pheromone traps. If you have just a small number of beetles present, one of the easiest ways to deal with them is to hand-pick them and drop them into a pail of soapy water.

Remember, not every bug in your garden is a bad bug. Take some time to learn about them before resorting to sprays that will kill beneficial insects as well as harmful insects.

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

# Bells of St. Mark's come alive Sundays of long weekends

Tim Taylor  
The Lake Report

For 195 years, the bells of St. Mark's Church have been heralding important events in Niagara-on-the-Lake, marking disasters, tragedies and celebrations.

This summer, on the Sundays of the three long weekends, the chimes will ring with free contemporary music concerts, performed by Bernadette Secco, an accomplished local chimer.

The free concerts will begin at noon, rain or shine, on July 2, Aug. 6 and Sept. 3, in the church's yard, located at 41 Byron St.

The audience is encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets for the casual concert.

St. Mark's rector, Leighton Lee, couldn't be prouder.

"The bells of St Mark's are a unique treasure and we're delighted to be able to offer these summer concerts. There's something magical about sitting in St Mark's beautiful churchyard while listening to the bells," she said.

Jim Bourne, St. Mark's music director, said Secco played a chiming concert at the church for the coronation of King Charles III in May.

"The response was remarkable. People loved

it. Everyone was perched on the stone wall, or on a blanket. It felt so good," he said.

Each Sunday will highlight a different repertoire, Secco said. July 2, after Canada Day, will feature songs by Canadians, about the country and its people. August will have music about summer and summer activities. Labour Day Sunday, she said, "will be music that's just plain fun."

"My chiming philosophy is, 'Make the bells swing, let people sing,'" she said.

Secco chimes bells every chance she gets. Her varied and extensive repertoire encompasses hymns, show tunes, traditional and patriotic songs and classical music.

The bells of St. Mark's have grown in number and stature to become one of the three largest chimes in Ontario and among the largest of any of the province's small parish churches.

From the original bell in 1828, the chiming set has grown, with the addition of a final bell to commemorate the War of 1812 in 2012, for 19 bells total.

The total weight of all 19 St. Mark's bells is 5,852 pounds — almost three tons. The largest of the bells is 1,240 pounds, while the smallest is 92 pounds.



Chimer Bernadette Seco admires the 19 bells high in the belfry of St. Mark's Church on Byron Street. She will be performing free chiming concerts on the three long weekend summer Sundays this year.



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