



D-Day concert | Page 5

'This all smells:' Advocate wants integrity probe into librarian's firing

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

After being denied the chance to speak to town councillors last week, one of the leaders of a

community group upset about the circumstances surrounding the firing of NOTL's chief librarian got his wish Tuesday night.

However, any references to the dismissal of Cathy Simpson were quickly

declared off-limits by Coun. Gary Burroughs, who was chairing the town's committee of the whole meeting.

But Tony Powell was encouraged to offer comments about the need

for library neutrality, the idea that libraries should embrace a wide range of books and viewpoints, even though some people might find them offensive.

During his presentation and in an interview

afterward, Powell said he wants the town to ask integrity commission Ted McDermott to investigate the circumstances of Simpson's firing.

"This all smells," he said. "The woman stands up

and says there should be library neutrality. It's right in line with the library's own policies. All she did is support exactly what she's supposed to," Powell added.

Continued on Page 6

Walk to School Day a big hit in St. Davids

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A group of students in Niagara-on-the-Lake were treated to a special escort from their neighbourhood to their classes from teachers on Wednesday.

The occasion was St. Davids Public School's first-ever Walk to School Day.

The goal was to promote safety and neighbourhood bonding, says principal Carl Glauser.

"We might get to meet a few dogs, we might get to meet a few parents as well and see where the students live," he said. "It could be good for community-building. Parents can meet each other, and also students can feel safe because they are moving as a large group to school."

"My hope is that we can make this a sustainable thing," he said.

"To be a thing from today, moving forward,

Continued on Page 3

Goats and wine ... ain't it fine?

Enjoy your glass with a side of snuggly cuddles at Lakeview Wine Co.



As a unique Mother's Day activity, John and Alexandra Jennings hang with Nigerian dwarf goats while having a glass of wine at Lakeview Wine Co. on Sunday. The goats are there on weekends, weather permitting. **More Mother's Day stories on Page 7.** DAVE VAN DE LAAR



Ross's Ramblings

Mother's Day downtown was the kindest day of the year

Ross Robinson
Columnist

Thousands of tulips were effulgent, in so many colours, and the people walking on Queen Street were so happy and friendly and kind.

In our stressful world, with so many people suffering so much, how fortunate we were to have such perfect weather in our wonderful hometown.

The continuing horrors in Gaza and Ukraine, so many

hungry and lonely people around the world — and we enjoyed a perfect Mother's Day on Queen Street.

Family members reaching across generations, helping each other along the sidewalks, stopping to take

pictures with the vibrant tulips.

Grandparents pushing cute little ones in strollers and wagons, and little ones helping grandparents using walkers and wheelchairs.

Senior citizens being

treated to lunch or dinner at our unique and varied restaurants.

Agatha, the manager at Corks and Mama Cucina, told me that every one of

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Opponent of approved King Street project plans to **stay vocal**

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A controversial plan to build a three-storey, 17-unit condominium in Old Town has gotten the rubber stamp of approval from the Ontario Land Tribunal after almost a year of public outcry.

The project proposed for land on King Street by developer Butler's Gardens Development Inc. and its owner, Josh Bice, was sent to the Ontario Land Tribunal in January after the town council decided not to approve it.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Endre Mecs told The Lake Report he hopes the town will appeal this decision made by Ontario's arbitrator of land disputes.

The tribunal's rulings can be appealed to a higher court, but only on matters of law, according to the tribunal website's frequently asked questions page.

Mecs said he was not too surprised by the tribunal's decision, but took issue with its reasoning.

He said the project violates the town's official plan, a point Mecs and other residents have made throughout the application process.

"I think it's wrong frankly, both in law and in fact," he said of the decision.

The Planning Act bans bylaw changes that contravene an approved official plan, which means the tribunal erred, Mecs said.

However, the Bice application does comply with provincial policies to boost the housing supply in Ontario: tribunal member Kurtis Andrews said there was no disagreement on this point in his decision report.

When separate pieces of planning legislation — whether at the provincial or municipal level — give competing instructions, the tribunal will do a "balancing exercise" to determine which is more important, Andrews said in his report.

This decision came down to whether the build was "sufficiently compatible."

"Is it compatible or not compatible?" Mecs said.

"How can you possibly have the future of your neighbourhood determined



Endre Mecs compares the condo to an oversized foot being squeezed into an undersized shoe. EVAN LOREE

by such imprecise criteria?" he added.

Mecs said he would not "tilt at windmills," but would remain a vocal opponent of the development so long as it is being built.

He'd prefer to see something that conforms with the town's existing laws,

he said, suggested four townhouses would fit the neighbourhood better than Bice's proposal.

It was "obvious," Andrews said in his decision, that "competing interests exist" between policies promoting more housing supply and those that support compat-

ibility with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Regarding the town's need for more apartments and condos, like those Bice proposed, Mecs said there are some higher-density projects planned in Glendale that would help meet the need for alternatives to single-family units.

Town councillors raised similar points in January when they voted to fight the project at the tribunal.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa was in favour of approving the project when town staff recommended its approval.

"I am not going to tell residents that I'm going to go fight the fight when I know the fight can't be won," he told The Lake Report.

The information available at the time suggested to him the town would not win, Zalepa said.

He was in the minority, though.

"I'm only one vote. And I respect the fact that other members of council have their decisions to make."

"That's democracy," he added.

Residents and town staff disagree that the project is

compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood, but Zalepa said he also listens to professional town planners.

"That's the opinion that I weigh the most," he said.

Part of what makes the project possible is that the town's committee of adjustment allowed Bice to turn the land into a single lot, when once it was three separate parcels.

The committee allowed it on the condition that future buildings only cover 15 per cent of the land.

Town staff have previously said the condition was only applicable to the previous zoning on the land and does not constrain development under the new zoning granted by the tribunal.

Andrews said the town and planning consultant Mark Dorfman "suggested that the pieced-together lot was amalgamated by the applicant covertly and deliberately without disclosing its eventual planned purpose."

The applicant "clearly went through the proper processes" and the formation of the land was "irrelevant," he added.

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Residents unhappy with the **size** of Line 1 condo development

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Some people who have heard details about amendments planned for a condo development near Line 1 Road say the changes go too far.

During last week's town planning and development meeting, senior town planner John Frederici shared an overview of a proposal to redesignate the land to medium-density residential from low-density residential to build 50 townhouses.

Max Fedchyshak from NPG Planning Solutions spoke on behalf of the developer.

The Haven condos in Virgil are planned for near Line 1 and Concession 6 roads, not far from Red Roof Retreat

Carrie Makins lives on Concession 6 Road, with property backing onto the proposed condo land, and her biggest worry is the size of the development.

"We have some major concerns about the density," she said.

The density of the proposed condo is similar to what is happening at another project, Peachtree Landing, Makins added, but it's "certainly not consistent to all the other surrounding properties."

Peachtree Landing is a new 45-unit townhouse development along Concession 6 in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Construction began last year and homes are available to buyers now.

Makins said that with an increase in size — what she says is "verging on high density"— the new development feels forced into its space.

"It's just being squeezed in," said Makins, who included a photo of the Peachtree Landing townhomes in her presentation.

Those homes are bungalow-lofts, with only one storey of windows along the back, she noted.

"If you're going to put a



Carrie Makins is concerned about the size of the proposed Line 1 condo development near her home and how it will hinder the enjoyment of her backyard. JULIA SACCO

dense development right behind a property like ours, I think it's only fair to take this into consideration," she said, telling councillors that 11 two-storey windows will look onto her property.

Elizabeth DeBoer, another resident living adjacent to the proposed development, also said she felt increasing the condo's size is pushing the limit.

"I think the town sets bylaw amendments for a reason," she said.

DeBoer also questioned the limited number of parking spots proposed for those living in the building, saying only two per home is not enough, especially with only 15 visitor spaces.

Sarah Zimmerman, another nearby resident, shared DeBoer's concerns.

"I work in the insurance industry for a living and I'm a professional risk manager," she said.

"That S-shaped road with no walkways and no sidewalks and that amount of traffic coming through is a disaster waiting to happen."

Zimmerman emphasized she supports development generally, but the proposed condos are too invasive.

"We accept reasonable development, equitable development for the property to the rear of our property," she said.

"We are not in support of the number of variances in question, the density in question. It's going to substantially impact us and our family."

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Students and teachers **march** in St. Davids

Continued from Front Page

where students can meet in the mornings then walk to school together in a collective group in the form of a walking bus."

Congregating at the school 45 minutes before the start of classes, teachers broke into groups of five, then headed into the community to meet the students as they made their way to school or as they emerged from their homes.

Sparky's Park, just more than a kilometre away from the school, was pre-selected as the muster point where students either arrived on their own, with a teacher or after parents dropped them off.

"I think this is excellent," said parent Adriana Vizzari, who is also a town councillor. "It really helps and assists parents by showing them that this is a community — maybe meet your



Students march to St. Davids Public School for the first Walk to School Day. RICHARD WRIGHT

neighbours, maybe meet your buddies to walk with. It connects families and really helps the community come together."

Vizzari also pointed out the safety benefits of the walk.

"One of the concerns is walkability in our town," she said. "That is something that we've been talking about with getting the crosswalk, getting side-walks, discussing the safety

of the roundabout. So this is really going to highlight those problematic areas."

On this day, however, there were no immediate issues or concerns, just excitement from parents, teachers and students.

Once Glauser was satisfied that everyone had arrived at the park, the procession made its way to the school. The entire walk took about 10 minutes.

Once at the school, all students — even those who take the bus each day — were invited to attend a pre-class celebration under the school's new event tent.

They were all treated to healthy snacks and given participation bracelets and stickers.

"It is a feel-good community day," said Glauser.

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Smelly pups love dog wash fundraiser

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Every dog has its day. That day in Niagara-on-the-Lake was Saturday, May 11 in Virgil, as a dog wash hosted by the St. Davids Lions and Leos attracted pooches and their owners from around the community.

In total, 11 pets were put under hoses, as part of the Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides, raising \$220 to support the Lions Club's May 26 walk, with another \$130 added from drop-off donations.

While under the auspices of its parent Lions, the event was an initiative hosted by the organization's youth branch, known as the Leos.

"They are volunteering and they are catching on to the values that the Lions are putting into the community," said Bradd Anderson, the club's Leo adviser.

"It's a learning thing for them," he added.

"It's also a learning thing for the Lions to work with youth to help them and to educate them with the hopes that, somewhere along the line, they will become a Lion member or they have the value of giving back somewhere."

Sophia Szewczyk, 13, is a Leo peer leader.

"This is really important to me and many others here, because we are raising



St. Davids Lions and Leos Emily, Carmen and Rory wash Jack, a Nova Scotia duck trolling retriever, during Saturday's dog wash fundraiser. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

money not only for a good cause but to help other people and that means a lot to me," she said.

The beneficiaries from this event are those supported, both here in NOTL and beyond, by the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.

The foundation makes it possible for community members to raise pups out of infancy at no cost before they are accepted into its training facility located in Oakville, said Anderson.

Once they graduate from the centre, a person-in-need is identified and paired with the dog.

Szewczyk added that she is proud to continue the tradition of philanthropy handed down to her by her community and the Lions Club.

"We are very appreciative here in St. Davids and Niagara-on-the-Lake," she said.

"And knowing where you come from, your background and all the people that have helped the community really keeps me going because I want to be like them."

Events like this one are not only rewarding, she added, but fun for the dogs, volunteers, and pet owners alike.

"This is our second time doing this. We wash the dogs and they are so happy and cute. I find everyone here is so loving and grateful for what we do and the donations are great."

"Everyone here is just having a great time," she added. "We get wet, it

doesn't matter that the dog may be a bit smelly — you wash them off anyway — and they have such a good time.

"I find that this event is just a great one. We should keep doing it every year."

The 24-hour Pet Valu Walk for Guide Dogs starts at 11:30 a.m. on May 26 at St. Davids Lions Park.

Registration takes place at 11 a.m. and supporters can take part themselves or pledge support for walkers.

Checkpoints will be situated around the park where Leos will be giving away draw tickets.

"The more times you walk around the park, the more tickets you get," said Anderson.

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Bake sale this weekend to help a cat in need

Staff
The Lake Report

Prince the cat needs your help.

He was adopted from NOTL Cats Rescue in February and just turned one year old in April.

Around a week ago, Prince's adoptive family noticed a change in his behaviour.

Tanya Rice, a lead volunteer at NOTL Cats, said that, suddenly, Prince stopped walking completely.

"Even aside from vet expenses, they just couldn't care for him anymore because Prince is paralyzed



Prince the cat is paralyzed from the back down.

from the back down," Rice said. "He cannot walk."

Prince is back in the care of NOTL Cats, which has put together a fundraiser bake sale on Sunday for his veterinarian bills.

Prince's diagnosis is

vertebral body angiomas: in other words, a benign tumour squeezing his spinal cord that is causing the paralysis.

With removal surgery, Prince will likely be able to walk normally again: without it, he will lose function in his front legs as well.

The removal surgery will cost around \$20,000 in total.

Rice said the vet told her about three other known cases, all of which are back to a happy, normal life after treatment.

The bake sale to support Prince will be hosted at Husky on York Road from

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"We've got everything from homemade jam, brownies, strawberry rhubarb, coffee cakes, raspberry tarts and more," Rice said.

If you can't make it to the sale this weekend, NOTL Cats are accepting e-transfer donations to NOTL CatRescue@hotmail.com

Coconut Quartz, a handmade jewelry business with a studio on Four Mile Creek Road, will also be donating a percentage of all bracelet sales to helping out Prince.

Find out where she is next at coconutquartz.com/pages/upcoming-events.

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Cora Long D.D.

80 years later, songs of the D-Day era will ring out at St. Mark's church

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's St. Mark's Anglican Church will be the setting for a commemorative event produced by local amateur historians who will recount the horrors and importance of D-Day through music and spoken word.

"Between the readings and the songs, they are going to bring a lot of emotion and a lot of nostalgia," said organizer Ian Russell.

It's four decades later, "so it will be a little bit beyond the experience of the people who are there because it was before (their time). But it will be so visceral."

The Friday, June 7 event — one day after the 80th anniversary of the D-Day invasion — will be presented in three acts, each about 20 minutes long.

Each segment will be orated by classically trained Hollywood actor James Mainprize, who is now a resident of NOTL.

"I have heard him many, many times because he is a



Ian Russell is chair of the St. Mark's Anglican Church Juno Beach concert committee that will present a commemorative D-Day concert on June 7. RICHARD WRIGHT

reader at the church," Russell said.

He's almost 90 years old "and he's brilliant. Anybody can read something but with somebody that is a trained actor and reads something, it is a lot different."

The evening will open with readings from former U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower's speech to Allied troops as they prepared to cross the English Channel to Normandy on the morning of June 6, 1944.

That will be followed by excerpts from Cornelius Ryan's 1962 novel, "The Longest Day," about the first day of the invasion.

The final segment will tell the story of Doug Hester, a D-Day veteran and Torontonion whose diary is an incredible first-person account of life as a soldier on what has become known by many as the Day of Days.

As well, St. Catharines soprano Melissa-Marie Shriner has been secured to accom-

pany Mainprize's narration.

"The readings are going to be interspersed in songs and music," Russell said.

"She is doing all of the music of the time," he added, including songs by such Second World War-era stars as Vera Lynn, Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra.

While being hosted at St. Mark's, the event is being presented as a non-denominational experience, Russell said. "Everyone is welcome."

wright@niagaranow.com

Ambassadors back for another tourist season

Staff
The Lake Report

If you're one of many outsiders flocking from near and far to see what Niagara-on-the-Lake's all about, look out for the friendly folks walking on Queen Street wearing blue vests: they're here to help you out.

Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake's Ambassadors program is back this year, designed by volunteers and tourism officials to welcome visitors to town and help give them a great visiting experience.

The ambassadors are out on Queen Street in downtown NOTL starting this week and will be on-site on Fridays, Saturdays, Sunday and holiday Mondays from May 17, Victoria Day weekend through to Thanksgiving, Oct. 14.

Ambassadors stroll the



NOTL Ambassadors Mandy Shanks and Rosie Deb at the group's kiosk outside the old Court House in 2023. FILE

streets of Old Town and staff a pop-up kiosk by the Court House on Queen Street.

These trained volunteers connect with visitors, answer questions, and provide current information on what's happening every day in NOTL.

This year, the program has expanded from 50 to almost 80 volunteers —

they'll be out and about for 22 weeks during peak visitor season.

This group of ambassadors have already been out pounding the pavement and helping out, supporting the Icewine Festival in the winter and solar eclipse festivities in April.

Last year, ambassadors engaged with over 9,200 people from across Canada,

the United States and more than 60 countries.

"This amazing group of volunteers has been making a huge impact on how our visitors experience Niagara-on-the-Lake," said Andrew Niven, interim president and CEO of Tourism NOTL. "As a local resident, I love their energy, passion and enthusiasm for our town and all it has to offer."

Laurie Harley, the program's co-lead, said its efforts wouldn't be possible without the support of Tourism NOTL, the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and its tourism partners.

"They are our champions," she said. "They host site visits, provide in-kind support, keep us informed and most importantly encourage us to keep sharing the unique NOTL story and create unforgettable memories for our visitors."



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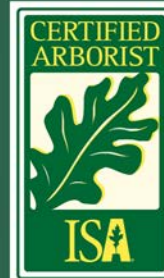
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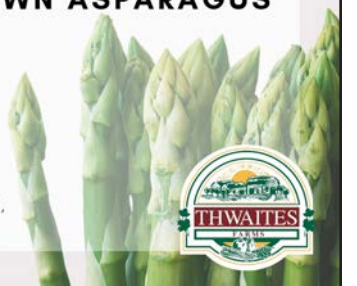
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Speaker feels **council silenced him** to protect library board

Continued from Front Page

The town plans to replace departed library board member Graham Bailey and Powell wants to ensure that whoever is appointed to the post supports the principles of library neutrality.

Powell said repeatedly that he felt “shut down” by council when he tried to provide context about Simpson’s firing.

She was let go in March after her op-ed column about Freedom to Read Week was published in The Lake Report.

The column sparked some complaints from residents and library staff. Some employees reportedly threatened to quit.

However, Powell’s group has gathered nearly 800 names on an online petition supporting library neutrality.

“It’s a little disappointing that from the beginning, (the town has) tried to shut down every presentation,” Powell told The Lake Report afterward.

Last week he asked to speak to council as part of



Tony Powell felt his efforts to speak on library neutrality were “shut down” by council during Tuesday night’s meeting, to protect the library board. JULIA SACCO

a “non-agenda delegation,” but town clerk Grant Bivol said the library board is autonomous and doesn’t report to council, so Powell’s presentation about the library would be outside

the jurisdiction of council. “Which is a load of nonsense. The library board serves at the pleasure of council,” Powell said. This week, because the

library board appointment was on council’s agenda, Powell was permitted to address councillors as an “agenda delegation.” His presentation documents were not

distributed to councillors in advance, but will be now after Burroughs insisted that council members be able to read them.

Powell said it seemed council was “determined to shut down anything that would embarrass the library board.”

When speaking at council, Powell mentioned the termination of Simpson multiple times and was reprimanded by Burroughs.

“The library board needs to believe that the library is not a mouthpiece for any ideology or any point of view. That is critical,” Powell said, adding that this was abandoned when Simpson was fired.

“Mr. Powell, you were instructed that we are not discussing the departure,” Burroughs said.

Powell argued that with a new library board member to be appointed, the background surrounding Simpson’s termination provides important context.

Burroughs again cautioned him, “We still don’t allow personal issues to be brought up that are

not part of this council’s responsibility.”

Powell made it clear he felt council was being unfair.

“Well, it’s nice that you’re shutting me down. I think that’s improper,” he said.

Powell then continued with his presentation, listing some of the fundamental principles that a future library board member should believe in.

He added that the individual should have some persuasive power, in order to avoid what happened to Simpson.

It is clear that Simpson was pilloried because of a differing ideology, he said.

Powell emphasized that the issue of library neutrality will not end with his presentation to council, especially with almost 800 signatures on the group’s petition in support of neutrality.

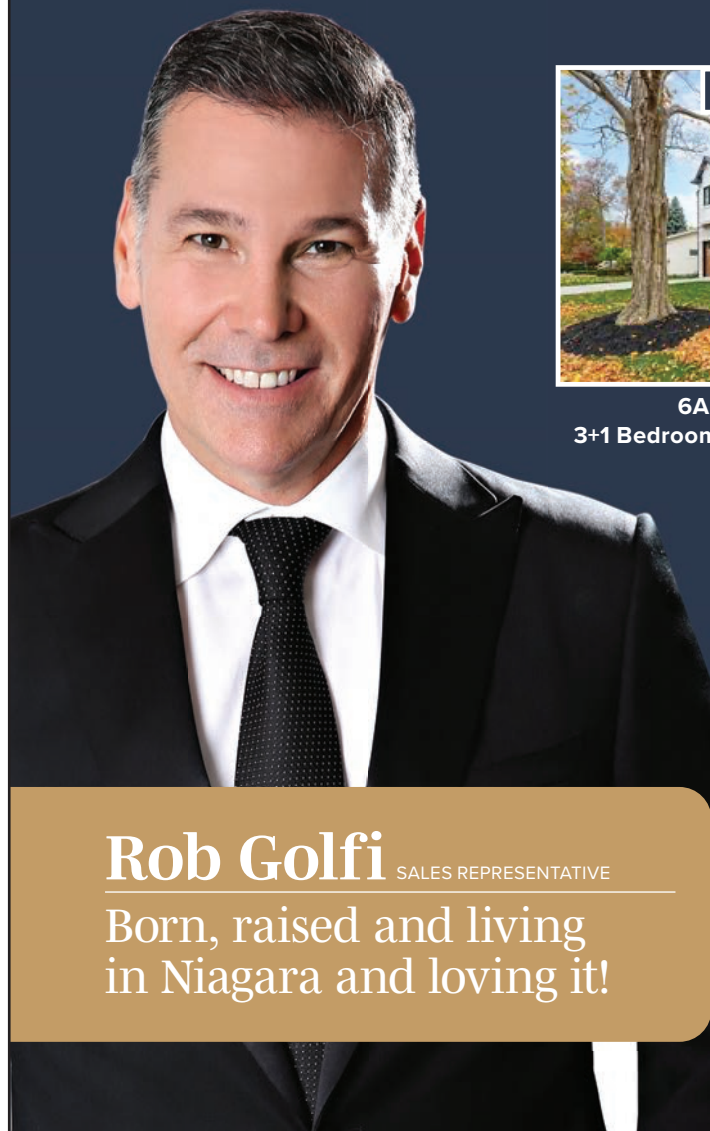
“It’s not going to fall off the table and it’ll be interesting to see who they do appoint,” he said.

Meanwhile, the town will begin a process to solicit applications for the vacant library board position.

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Afternoon treats at Mother's Day high tea

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Mother's Day festivities abounded in Niagara-on-the-Lake last weekend. One of the popular attractions was at the picturesque Queenston Public Library on Saturday afternoon and featured high tea accompanied by a wreath-making session.

Shannon Troupe, owner of Lady Lavender Florals and the afternoon's hostess, had several types of tea and treats ready for her full group of crafters.

Granddaughters, daughters, mothers and grandmothers filled the library and shared smiles over tea and crafts.

Ten-year-old Audrey Martin accompanied her grandma Maureen Adams. The two are no strangers to crafting.

"We do a lot of crafts at



Grandma Maureen Adams is no stranger to doing crafts with her granddaughter, so wreath making during Mother's Day high tea was a fun treat. JULIA SACCO

home, but we've never made wreaths before," Adams said.

Marissa Damude was also new to wreath-making.

She found out about Mother's Day high tea after attending Lady Lavender

Floral's last session.

"I've never done wreath-making, but the last session was wonderful," she said.

Damude was joined by her mother Melissa Collison, along with Felicia Mortensen and her mom,

Tammy Haringa.

Mortensen said this is sort of her first Mother's Day as "almost" a mother: she and her group were celebrating her pregnancy along with the special day.

juliasacco@niagaranow.com

Kindness abound for Mother's Day in NOTL

Continued from Front Page

their hundreds of guests on Mother's Day was in a good and pleasant mood.

Everyone was being kind to everyone else, smiling while they enjoyed their Mother's Day meal. Dressed up so nicely and with extra smiles.

Nobody showed up for my 3 p.m. Walking Tour, so I spent extra time on the front steps of the Court House, people watching, being observant as the world passed by.

So much kindness. Strangers from so many parts of our world, wearing different clothing styles, making way for each other.

Sharing the benches, taking so many pictures of each other in front of the Court House and the tulips, to be sent around the world to friends and family.

Our Niagara-on-the-Lake is a gem. Yes, a world-class gem, especially on one of the first sunny and warm days of this spring.

I noticed how patient people are with family members who need a little extra help to get along: parents of children who require a push or a pull, or an extra bit of guidance and attention.

These moms and dads should be sainted, as they are in it for the long haul.

Unconditional love, not at all transactional. And not for cocktail fodder, like so many parents who seem to live to brag about their kids playing



Caroline and Ryan McDermott from Mississauga were married at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Court House in 2017. Now parents, they returned on Mother's Day to spend some time in town with their son Lachlan and baby Piper. ROSS ROBINSON

travel hockey or top-tier soccer.

Something to talk about at parties and the exciting, expensive weekend tournament in Oshawa or Brantford.

My pal Joe, for example, whose twin daughter Julianne was an absolute joy to watch as she competed in high school parasports, winning medals in various running events.

Where did he and Bernadette find such unending patience and love?

A friend of his once mentioned to him how lucky he and his wife felt to have three perfectly healthy children.

Joe kindly and gently called him out, saying he felt lucky too, having learned a different definition of the word love. Unconditional, forever, as long as Julianne graced their family.

After lots of hours on Queen Street watching happy people being kind and gentle with one another, I wandered over for a cold Oast House Barnraiser on the Butler's Sports Bar & Grill patio.

I had a very pleasant Mother's Day chat with my friend Bashar Haddad and his family.

Grade 3 student Shebl was treating his mother Hala to a special dinner. She told me that Syrian mothers living in Canada are doubly fortunate and loved.

Back in Aleppo, the first day of spring is also celebrated, as mothers give life and hope to the world.

So, Hala enjoyed a Mother's Day dinner treat in April and now again in mid-May.

The good life here in Canada, eh?

So, this is all full of love

and kindness. But I have never lived in a place where I had to pay for gas in advance, or lock my front door or bike.


Even when on vacation from Chautauqua, we left our doors unlocked.

So, what happened on Mother's Day this year?

I left my bike unlocked for 20 minutes in front of The Lake Report newsroom and somebody stole it.


And, in the basket, my very efficient agenda, which has kept me organized since 1979. I overuse it and have been totally lost for the past few days.

The one speed beater bike has been replaced. But if you have found a bright yellow No Frills shopping bag, with my agenda inside, kindly drop it off at The Lake Report newsroom at 496 Mississauga St.



Are Headaches And Dizziness Affecting Your Quality Of Life?

If frequent headaches have you popping painkillers on a regular basis, it's time to see an eye doctor. Headaches that surface after spending hours in front of the computer screen, or following any other prolonged near-vision activity, are often a result of a vision problem. Contact Dr. Hopkins & Associates today to schedule a functional vision evaluation and learn how a program of vision therapy may be just the solution you have been searching for!



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Training for the hot seat



NOTL volunteer firefighters Zack Dingman and Kevin Hnatiw partake in forceable entry training at the NOTL firehall. In teams of two, firefighters used a combination of tools to leverage and pry the door open. All active firefighters perform nearly 100 hours of maintenance training per year. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

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Contributed by **Patty Garriock**

“We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.”
 - Thornton Wilder

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Editorial

Thank a **Virgil Stampede** volunteer

Richard Harley
 Editor-In-Chief

It's time again for the Virgil Stampede.

Dare we say the winter seemed to fly by. Let's just hope the summer seems to last a long time.

The annual carnival is a sure sign of better weather, the end of frost warnings and the start of what is basically summer in our wee enclave here in southern Ontario.

It's a time children and adults alike look forward to, whether it be the rides for kids, a romantic spin on the Ferris wheel for couples or nostalgic back bacon on a bun for old townies who remember the exciting mud bog races, dog shows and horses.

The nickel sale, pet show and bingo are highlights, too.

It's time for children to bust out their piggy banks to play some of the games and win some prizes.

But aside from the thrills, belly fills and spent dollar bills, one thing the Virgil Stampede always reminds us of here at The Lake Report is how many selfless

individuals it takes to make an event like this happen.

Sure, Albion Amusements rakes in a small fortune from the sales of tickets and wristbands and mini games, but the vast majority of everything else going on is done on a volunteer basis. Maybe for a free hotdog.

There are the people who run the gates every year, standing outside for hours to make sure everything goes smoothly.

There are the countless volunteers who help run the food booths, along with generous donations from local businesses like Phil's Independent.

There is Sharon Van-Noort, who has an unwavering dedication to planning new and interesting attractions, like the skateboard show, and who spends countless hours just recruiting volunteers for every other aspect.

There is the Virgil Business Association, which plans the event, pays for it and uses the opportunity to raise money that goes directly back into the community for things like our splash pad in Virgil, or kids sports.

There are the volunteer firefighters, who help plot and plan the always-amazing fireworks display on Monday night.

Just planning the parking spots for such a massively popular event is a huge undertaking — things we might not often think about when we stroll in.

It's a giant community of like-minded and well-intentioned people who keep this tradition alive and growing stronger every year, with many of them working behind the scenes, never hearing a thank you.

So, we'll say it — thanks to all involved for your contributions. That's what Niagara-on-the-Lake is all about.

Now if only that darn rain would hold off just for one Stampede weekend.

Almost as far back as we can remember, rain has plagued the Stampede.

Muddy grass, rides sinking into the ground.

It's almost comical.

But even if there is rain this year (looks like Saturday might be wet), we hope everyone makes it out to enjoy a bit of the fun.

And let's hope good fun is what the people headed there this year are intending on.

There's been a history in the past of violence and fights marring moments of the festival.

It's usually teenaged kids with nothing better to do than start fights, and smuggle in booze or weapons.

It's not something the promoters or volunteers can largely control, though this year might be different, as backpacks are banned and security has been increased.

We'll see how that goes and if the security guards act a little more quickly than last year, when they were recorded simply watching as violence unfolded around them, while teens stepped up and recorded evidence for the police and reported events to their parents.

This weekend, no matter who you are, be sure to thank the volunteers who are giving their time to put on this event for all of the community to enjoy.

They'll appreciate it.
 editor@niagaranow.com

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Be patient and share the road with cyclists

Dear editor:
This is the time of the year when the Amici Per la Vita Niagara cycling club (and a great many other cyclists) take to the roads to enjoy the beautiful playground we have in our area.

Our club is a group of 100-plus mature riders who take our cycling seriously — and that means we hold training classes to bring new members into the club and we teach them how to ride safely.

All ride groups have ride leaders and they keep the group focused.

We have always enjoyed safe roadways thanks to Niagara drivers who are aware of our presence and drive patiently.

However, the tourist season brings increased traffic volumes and patience sometimes wears thinner than normal.

So, here are a few guidelines on how we will cycle so that you can understand how we move on the roads.

On quieter roads, we will ride two abreast and



Members of the Amici Per la Vita Niagara cycling club follow the rules of the road, says letter writer Frank Hayes. He asks drivers to be patient and courteous. FRANK HAYES

change to single file on busier stretches. In either scenario, drivers are obliged to only pass when they can do so with a one-metre gap between their vehicle and our bikes.

If the one-metre gap is not possible, then please slow, stay behind us and wait until it is safe to pass.

A courteous beep to let us know of your presence is great. Blaring the horn is not.

We will ride one metre from the edge of the road and we may weave into the centre of the lane to avoid

dead branches, roadkill, potholes, etc.

We promote safe cycling, so we abide by the law. We do not blow through stop lights or stop signs. We are all wearing club gear, so if you see anyone misbehave, please send an email with details via the club's website and it will be addressed.

Our ride leaders are trained in first aid and all of our riders are insured.

Cyclists do dress oddly, but underneath it all, we are people, mothers, fathers, husbands, wives and we are expected to arrive home

safely after a ride and sit at the dinner table with our loved ones.

We do all that we possibly can to make sure that we do not become a statistic and we truly appreciate your courtesy and consideration with this.

Our bikes all have more than the legal minimum for equipment, including bells, lights front and rear, helmets and many also have front and rear cameras.

We will use hand signals to make our intentions clear to those around us.

We wish everyone a great summer. And if you want to check us out, go to aplvnc.ca and consider coming out for a free group ride with us.

We offer several different categories, A, B, C and recreational. It's a great way to meet new friends.

Most of our rides begin at Firemen's Park at Mountain Road and Dorchester and we often cycle through urban and rural areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Frank Hayes
St. Davids



The Monet gardens at Pillar and Post. FILE

Kudos to Vintage Hotels for beautiful Monet gardens

Dear editor:

We would like to compliment Vintage Hotels for providing an opportunity for the citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake to enjoy their lovely Monet-inspired outdoor space, the Gardens at the Pillar and Post.

It gives us great pleasure to walk through the property.

It goes to show that

providing beauty can be a viable business model.

As recipients of the prettiest town award, I hope all developers can be inspired to do likewise.

It would make us proud of their commitment to the citizens by investing and maintaining a livable and sustainable community for all.

Nancy and Peter King
NOTL

Public 'on the clock' and another hotel in Old Town?

Dear editor:
I would like to comment on two aspects of The Lake Report's May 9 lead article headlined "Angry residents storm out of town planning meeting."

The first is Harald Watrus's delegation concerning developer Rainer Hummel's plan for a four-storey hotel at the corner of Queen and Simcoe streets.

Mr. Watrus asked for the clock to be stopped so that he could ask a question.

I wonder whether anyone except for those of us who have spoken before town council in the last three months understand his reference to "the clock."

I spoke to town council on Feb. 8 on the subject of the Randwood character study.

I had heard that because of the many delegations made to council concerning the apartment building at the end of King Street that it had changed the limit on delegations to five minutes



Elizabeth Masson doesn't think council should pressure its passionate speakers with a glaring timer. MIDJOURNEY

from 10.

However, I was very much surprised to find a large digital clock with orange numbers placed below the lord mayor's dais, directly in front of the presenter.

As soon as I began by stating my name and address, the clock started counting down.

It's intimidating enough to try to make a point in

front of nine councillors and numerous staff members without being faced with a sports event clock counting down the seconds.

Fortunately, I was at my concluding paragraph when I looked up to see I only had 10 seconds left before Coun. Tim Balasiuk announced "Time up."

I fail to understand why the present town council

feels that members of the public must race through their presentations in order to beat the clock.

Another aspect of the presentation concerning Mr. Hummel's 81-room hotel is whether there is a need for another hotel in Old Town.

The Pillar and Post received permission for a conference centre and additional rooms in 2008 but has not built them.

The zoning was changed in 2011 for 144 and 176 John St. to become the Romance Inn. It was not built.

Benny Marotta has proposed a hotel for that site on John Street as well as on the old Parliament Oak school site.

Do we really need a hotel with a three-level underground parking garage on Queen Street, facing the Charles Inn and surrounded by private residences?

Elizabeth Masson
NOTL



In the wake of the firing of NOTL's chief librarian, letter writer Samuel Young says NOTL council could cut its funding to the public library. FILE

On council salary raise and library neutrality

Dear editor:

I am fully supportive of increasing our council members salaries to \$30,000, however, without increasing our taxes (editorial, "A fairer wage for town councillors," The Lake Report, May 9).

Prior to our next budget, if outraged residents rebel en masse against the almost \$1 million dollars allocated to our woke library clique, there will be lots of surplus cash to pay councillors more.

One of those campaigning for library neutrality, Jeff Sykes, was right on target when he questioned council's oversight of nearly \$1 million in tax money allocated to the library.

He notes that "council needs to oversee its budget, expenditures and conduct on behalf of the taxpayer. ("Town rejects library neutrality group's bid to address council," The Lake Report, May 9.)

And as library neutrality group member Tony Powell stated, "We are not going away. This does not end the matter."

Council and the library board need to address the community backlash and the desire to greatly reduce or completely defund the library until there is a complete house cleaning and a new direction to satisfy the aspirations of taxpayers.

Samuel Young
NOTL



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Protocol for heritage architecture **needs vision**



Brian Marshall
Columnist

You are sitting in an architect's office explaining your vision for an addition on the historic building you own.

As you explain your concept for an addition that is sympathetic and stylistically in keeping with the original architecture, you see the architect shaking his head.

"What," you ask, "is the problem?"

The architect responds, "Following best practices in dealing with historic architecture, we cannot design the addition in the style of the original building. Such a design would be considered to be diminishing the heritage attributes of the historic structure but, we can develop a modernist addition that will provide all the functional requirements you have outlined."

"Look," you reply, "I've done my homework and understand that any addition to an historic building needs to be subordinate to the original structure and identifiable from the heritage build."

"But that shouldn't be difficult since a simple, dated cornerstone and modern building techniques would serve to identify the new addition from the historic building."

But the architect is intransigent, arguing that those measures will not suffice and a modernist design is the only approach that will "pass muster."

You leave the meeting wondering, where did these best practices come from?

Well, to answer that question, we have to go back six decades and examine a multitude of issues that include French to English translation errors, period prevalent modernist archi-

tectural biases and vested bureaucratic imperatives — which doubled down on the wrongly interpreted criteria for heritage conservation and restoration established during the International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments held in Venice in 1964.

Now, there had been previous guideline charters — most notably the 1931 Athens Charter adopted by First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments.

But, in the aftermath of the Second World War, which destroyed and/or damaged a significant number of historic buildings and neighbourhoods, it was widely believed in the professional community that new guidelines for conversation and restoration were required.

Thus, in 1964, a small working group, the majority of whom were European conservation professionals and decidedly modernist, got together in Venice and wrote what became known as the Venice Charter.

Under very tight time constraints, this working group produced an admirable document. It spoke to many of the overriding concerns of the congress's membership while still offering a measured level of ambiguity that allowed for regional interpretation.

After its adoption by the congress, the charter — originally written in French — was translated into English by UNESCO.

Unfortunately, in several areas, the translation was not accurate to the original but, nonetheless, it was used as the template for subsequent translations into various other languages and serves as a central pillar in the heritage policies of many countries.

It is fascinating to note that almost immediately the shortcomings of the Venice Charter were evident.

In 1962, the University of Leuven (Belgium) commissioned the 10-year renovation/restoration of the Great Beguinage of Leuven under the exclusive direction of



The Royal Ontario Museum's crystalline carbuncle is a direct legacy of the Venice Charter modernist leanings and in no way is it respectful of the heritage architecture, asserting dominance of the Bloor Street facade. MAKSIM SOKOLOV

Raymond M. Lemaire, one of the principal framers of the Venice Charter.

One would think that this project might be a poster-child for the charter but, au contraire. In fact, Lemaire often set aside the articles of the charter when those directives conflicted with the reality of the heritage.

For example, Lemaire is generally credited with Article 9 of the charter which reads, in part: "Any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp."

In the Beguinage, while some of the additions are clearly, but discreetly, identifiable, others, replacing demolished houses or annexes, are reconstructed using the style of the former without any "contemporary stamp."

Claudine Houbart of the Université de Liège — KU Leuven (Belgium) in the paper entitled "Deconsecrating A Doctrinal Monument" writes: "These deviations clearly show that reading the Great Beguinage renovation through the Venice Charter's prism would be absurd, leading to the merciless condemnation of a project that was

considered, even before its completion, to be a model by experts all over Europe."

"Rather than an illustration of the application of the charter's principles, the project has been an early challenge for the document, almost immediately negating the evolutionary preservation principles it established."

In fact, as early as 1971, Lemaire, Piero Gazzola (also a contributor to the charter) and many others began arguing for significant revision of the Venice Charter.

To this end in 1976, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) established a working group led by Lemaire, who was the council's president at the time.

The revised charter was rejected by the ICOMOS general assembly in 1978 and additions (as opposed to revisions) to the charter were written but the documents were never adopted.

Instead, the 1981 general assembly in Rome under a new president doubled down by reaffirming the validity of the Venice Charter despite widespread opposition.

It should be noted that, by this time, a significant

number of countries had enshrined the precepts of the Venice Charter — duly clarified by the prevailing government experts' opinion — in their national heritage policies. This constituency alone would have underwritten a weighty influence on the direction of ICOMOS.

In her paper, Claudine Houbart also writes, "In southern Belgium, at least, the over-simplified application of the charter's principles is one of the major causes of heritage exhaustion. This effect stands as the reason why we wonder whether, facing the inability of the charter to clearly display its intended meaning without ambivalence, we should not dare to rewrite it, in order not to betray the spirit of its fathers."

Of course, the call to revise the flawed Venice Charter and its "over-simplified application" continued within the professional heritage preservation community.

In 2006, the International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture & Urbanism held a conference in Venice with the broad objective of providing theoretical underpinnings for creating new buildings and

additions that are in greater harmony with their historic surroundings.

This included a deep delve into the text of the Venice Charter, a full examination of contemporary preservation work and an exploration of how new traditional design might be used in historic contexts.

This conference has been captured in the book, "The Venice Charter Revisited: Modernism, Conservation and Tradition in the 21st Century," (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2008).

In its 64 essays — authored by internationally recognized heritage experts — there is a common thread among all those who have committed their professional career to heritage.

A thread expressed in architect Steven Seames' essay, states: "The charters and standards guiding professionals should prohibit — instead of encouraging or requiring — new development that displays unnecessary contrast with the historic fabric."

Then he adds: "Modernist architects have plenty of opportunities for exhibiting their theories and sensibilities elsewhere. They should leave historic settings alone."

So, at the beginning and end of day, we have a flawed document driven by mid-20th century modernist principles, incorrectly translated, enshrined by governments worldwide and taught as the "truth" to architecture students at universities around the globe.

It is a "truth" that has been contested by experts, including those who originally framed the document.

It is way past time for a new vision and charter.

But that new vision sits firmly in the hands of you, the architect's customers. You can accept the limitations of the Venice Charter or find an architect who will design sympathetically. The choice is up to you.

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



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A tale of two towns – and **inconsistent rulings**

Dear editor:

The Ontario Land Tribunal renders decisions that greatly affect communities and has the power to green-light a project rejected by a municipal council.

The tribunal has the authority to determine all questions of fact and law for matters within its jurisdiction.

How can two recent tribunal decisions come up with two totally different approaches and decisions in what are quite similar situations?

Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake have striking similarities. Both have a proud place in Canadian history and both cherish their traditions and culture.

Both are development-oriented and ready to meet the new building unit goals. Both towns' councils are aware of the need for new housing units in the province.

Both have official plans and comprehensive zoning bylaws setting the vision for present and future development.

Fort Erie has a lakefront area designated in the official plan as a "special provision residential zone."

In NOTL, the official plan recognizes Old Town as unique, a special area where "a desire to preserve the existing character of the area has resulted in the plan not proposing major expan-



A 3D rendering of the three storey condominium that is now approved on King Street. SOURCED

sions for growth." NOTL has intensification areas but the proposed development is not in these areas.

NOTL is implementing a plan for hundreds of new apartment units in the Glendale area. It will provide a community setting for the new residents.

On April 26, the tribunal allowed the appeal in the Butler's Garden Development condo proposal and consequently, the NOTL project can proceed in Old Town.

On April 29, the tribunal dismissed the appeal over the Crystal Bay Cottages Inc. development, meaning the Fort Erie project cannot go ahead.

Like the two towns, the cases have much in com-

mon — except the end result.

In Fort Erie, the developer wanted to build five single-detached homes and three townhouses. The area is almost exclusively a waterfront-related residential zone, mainly seasonal cottages or secondary holiday homes.

The proposal had a net density of 16 units per hectare, lower than the allowable density in that area.

The only amendment requested by the developer was a zoning change. There were no requests to amend either the official plan or the zoning bylaw.

In NOTL, the developer asked to build a three-storey, 17-unit apartment building in a one- or

two-storey single-family residential zone and sought four amendments to the official plan and four to the zoning bylaw.

Notwithstanding NOTL council's rejection of the project, the tribunal approved it.

The rejection of the Fort Erie project can be summed up in this passage from the decision: "The proposed form of development is not reflective, does not complement, and ultimately does not conform to the town official plan or the Crystal Beach secondary plan."

The tribunal said the NOTL case "rests on whether the proposed development is sufficiently compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood." There is

no law that mentions, let alone defines, "sufficiently compatible."

Nevertheless, the tribunal ruled the proposal is "sufficiently consistent" with provincial and municipal policies and constitutes "good planning."

The NOTL decision acknowledges the Planning Act says no bylaw "shall be approved by the tribunal that does not conform with an applicable municipal official plan."

However, notwithstanding this prohibition, the decision orders the amendment to four specific requirements of the NOTL official plan, including almost doubling the allowable density.

The decision accepted the opinion of the developer's

expert who said the density "is appropriate as there are no anticipated adverse impacts to cultural heritage resources."

What about adverse impacts on nearby residents due to an apartment building that will more than double the population on the block?

How does this decision conform with the official plan? And how is the protection provided to NOTL's Old Town in its official plan any different from the protection provided by the Fort Erie official plan to its waterfront?

Is an eight-unit project in Fort Erie less "sufficiently compatible" in a waterfront environment than a 17-unit apartment building in a neighbourhood of single-family homes?

The fate of a neighbourhood should not depend on whether one tribunal gives effect to the wording and spirit of the official plan and another sets aside the official plan and makes its decision solely on the flexible criteria of "sufficiently compatible" and "sufficiently consistent" — and totally disregards the town's official plan.

Fort Erie's official plan is alive and well and respected, while NOTL's is, for all intents and purposes, unofficially dead.

Endre Mecs
NOTL

Tribunal erred and town needs to **appeal condo ruling**

This is an abridged version of a letter to town council about a condominium proposed in Old Town.

We vigorously encourage the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to appeal the decision of the Ontario Land Tribunal in favour of the developer of 733 King St.

In reading the comments of the developer's witnesses, it seems town staff did not have the opportunity to present a complete picture of the impact of such a development on this neighbourhood, including numerous submissions and discussions about high-density, traffic impact and

conformity with existing dwellings.

Before any kind of alternative property use was discussed with the town and the community, the developer submitted the proposal to the tribunal simply based on the town's rightful decision to not allow a zoning bylaw change.

A similar development proposal in Crystal Beach, which was opposed by the Town of Fort Erie and the community, had a totally different result after the municipality outlined how the plan did not conform to Fort Erie's official plan.

The tribunal ruled that

project "was not consistent with the character of the surrounding established residential neighbourhood," wasn't intended for infilling and intensification, wasn't within convenient walking distance of the elements of a traditional neighbourhood and didn't include adequate open space.

Each of those points is identical to concerns expressed regarding the King Street proposal in NOTL.

The tribunal also concluded the Fort Erie project didn't conform to the town's official plan or vision for the waterfront area.

Had NOTL presented similar evidence the decision could easily have been different.

Council is well aware of many developers' greed to maximize building on every vacant piece of property, regardless of its impact on the existing neighbourhood or the community at large.

With the ruling on the King Street site, no properties are protected by the official plan nor the influence of those we elect or employ to carry out those mandates.

NOTL has an official plan and residents were in-

involved in creating it. Part of council's job is to represent the majority of the community for current and future development plans.

The official plan amendment ordered by the tribunal clearly contravenes the Planning Act, which even the tribunal noted dictates that no bylaw shall be approved by the tribunal if it does not conform with a municipal official plan.

Accordingly, the tribunal decision is an error in law and thus subject to appeal by the town because the imposed amendments violate provisions of the official plan.

If council accepts the tribunal's decision, it will establish a precedent affecting all developments already under discussion and future ones being concocted by those who view open space and vistas as an opportunity to increase their personal wealth.

We look forward to your choice in this matter. The future of our town is in your hands and history will view this time as the pillaging of Upper Canada's first capital, our unique community, architecture and landscape.

Jim and Erika Alexander
NOTL

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Physician assistant would enhance health care

Dear editor:
Physician assistants are comprehensively trained medical professionals who work in collaboration with physicians and other team members to provide patient-centered care.

They can work in any medical specialty, including family medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics and general surgery. Within their scope of practice, physician assistants can diagnose and treat patients, prescribe medications, perform medical procedures and assist in surgery.

So, why does Niagara-on-the-Lake need to implement physician assistants?

NOTL has nearly double the percentage of citizens aged 65 and older at 36.2 per cent compared to the provincial average of 18.5 per cent, according to Statistics Canada data for 2023.

Along with the senior population, the general population is growing exponentially. We see a health care crisis arising with the expanding and aging population coupled with the shortage of family physicians.

Most family physicians in NOTL are either not accepting new patients, relocating to other areas, switching specialties, or retiring.

This makes it difficult for newer residents to find a family doctor.

Some senior residents who have lived in NOTL for years, or who have moved to town for retirement, have



been unsuccessful in finding a family doctor, forcing them to make trips back and forth to their previous place of residence, as noted by reporter Julia Sacco in The Lake Report on April 25, ("Room to grow: Niagara-on-the-Lake urged to do more for aging residents").

This is problematic, especially for individuals with chronic diseases who are now more likely to end up in the hospital due to inconsistent care. Physician assistants can help ease this strain on our healthcare system.

According to the Canadian Association of Physician Assistants, in primary care settings, PAs can be used for about 75 per cent of visits without the need to consult a physician.

When doctors were asked about working with a PA, 95 per cent reported that the

PA increased their own efficiency in providing care.

Physician assistants allow doctors to increase the number of patients they can treat in a day, which means that more residents in NOTL will receive care.

This will ensure continuity of care, so that those with chronic conditions do not end up admitted.

Senior residents will finally receive care where and when they need it, without having to travel back and forth to their old neighbourhoods. New residents will not have to wait months or years to find a family physician.

The physician assistant profession is growing, with more education programs opening across the province and seat numbers rising in existing programs. There is already more demand for PAs than the number of

graduates each year.

Although PAs can work in any specialty, they are trained as generalists and graduates are often drawn to primary care due to the diversity of patients.

There are several funding models in Ontario for physician assistants, including the Physician Assistant Career Start Grant, family health team funding and private pay.

Ontario Health releases the grant annually and it covers half of a PA's salary up to \$46,000 annually for a maximum of 2 years. This grant is available to solo physicians, physician groups and hospitals. Family health teams are not eligible.

As part of its budget submission to the province, health teams can apply for renewable funding for a PA annually.

Lastly, PAs can be paid privately by a solo physician or group of physicians.

The family health team and family physicians in NOTL will greatly benefit from adding a physician assistant to their practice.

Doing so also would help reduce physician burnout and increase the number of patients treated daily.

More importantly, residents would receive more efficient patient-centered care, feel listened to and cared for, and would be less likely to end up in our already overflowing hospitals.

Lara Fluri
Physician assistant student
University of Toronto

Ford's Tories block program to pay family caregivers



Wayne Gates
Special to The Lake Report

Across Niagara-on-the-Lake and Ontario, we all know someone who has been an unpaid caregiver — and many of us have been or are unpaid caregivers ourselves.

Many of us have had to be there for our moms, dads, grandparents or our aunts and uncles as they are getting older, or for our kids and grandkids when they are sick, or when we have a family member who lives with a severe illness or disability.

And the reality is, our caregivers are really suffering. Out of the more than 3.3 million Ontarians who have reported that they have done unpaid caregiving work, nearly 300,000 (almost 1 in 10) have reported financial hardship because of their caregiving responsibilities.

In fact, 90 per cent of people say their caregiving was a source of stress. We also know that women are 50 per cent more likely to say that caregiving was a source of stress, and women are 50 per cent more likely to leave their employment versus their male counterparts.

That's why last week I was proud to put forward a motion at the Legislature to create a direct financial benefit for unpaid caregivers in Ontario.

A direct, paid financial benefit for caregivers in

Ontario would make life better for unpaid caregivers in Niagara-on-the-Lake and across the province.

But it also would help to relieve the burden on our health care system, our long-term care system, our retirement homes and our social service sector.

A cost-benefit analysis by the Ontario Caregiver Coalition found that a caregiver allowance of only \$400 per month could replace 7.8 per cent of Ontario's long-term care beds, for an immediate cost-saving of \$480 million.

I was also proud to have the support of numerous advocacy organizations for the motion, including the Canadian Cancer Society, MS Canada, the Alzheimer's Society of Ontario, the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence, Community Living Ontario, among others.

I was pleased to have the support of my colleagues in the NDP, as well as members of the Liberal and Green parties.

It's a common-sense, win-win-win, for caregivers, our seniors, our kids and grandkids, for Ontarians living with disabilities, and for our health care and long-term care system.

That's why I was so disappointed when this Monday, May 13, Premier Doug Ford and his Progressive Conservative caucus voted down my motion to create this benefit.

But rest assured, I am going to continue to work to ensure that we build a fairer, more compassionate system for our caregivers, both here in Niagara and across Ontario.

Wayne Gates is MPP for Niagara Falls riding, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.

Celebrate long weekend at **Virgil Stampede**

Staff
The Lake Report

One of Niagara-on-the-Lake's most anticipated community celebrations of the year, the Virgil Stampede, is back in town starting this Saturday.

Held at the Virgil Sports Park, the annual festival features an amusement park and midway, pony rides, an outdoor food court, kids pavilion and much more fun for the whole family.

It runs daily through to Victoria Day on Monday, ending with fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

Again this year, there will be pre-event wristband sales for \$35 if purchased before the weekend. Sales are open now.

If purchased at the fair, they will cost \$45.

The bracelets are good from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Monday and can be bought online via the Stampede's website, virgilstampede.ca, or at Your Independent Grocer in Virgil.

Gates open on Sunday at 11 a.m.

It is important to remember that backpacks will not be allowed into the park this year.



Early bracelet pricing ends on May 17. Get yours for \$35 at Phil's Independent, or \$45 at the carnival. FILE

Tickets on sale for annual **White Effect Dinner** party

Staff
The Lake Report

The season of sunny celebrations is upon us, and coming just around the corner is one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's largest annual dinner parties, where guests all take joy in adhering to a strict dress code.

The highly anticipated White Effect Dinner will make its return on Friday, June 7, at the picturesque Reif Estate Winery, clad in all-white clothing.

Participants dress will gather to enjoy a night of

dining, entertainment, and the unique atmosphere that defines this world-class event.

In a twist on traditional dining experiences, guests are encouraged to bring their own gourmet picnic baskets, packed with their favorite culinary creations.

Attendees are invited to showcase their culinary creativity and share their passion for food with fellow guests.

"The White Effect Dinner is more than just a dining event: it's a celebration of community, creativity, and



The White Effect dinner returns June 7. FILE

local landscapes," said Reif's board chair, Andrew Niven. "We're thrilled to welcome guests from near and far to join us for an unforgettable evening under the stars."

The event will feature live entertainment, enchanting ambiance and opportunities for guests to mingle and connect with one another.

Whether you're a seasoned food enthusiast or simply looking to experience something truly unique, the White Effect Dinner promises to captivate and delight all who attend.

Tickets for the White Effect Dinner are now on sale: for more information and to reserve your spot, visit niagaraonthelake.com/white-effect-dinner-2024.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: THE GENERAL WELFARE

Trimming your nails is part of "good" this, sometimes called sanitary science.

Last issue:

Category: IT'S A SCIENCE

Clue: Atmospheric sciences include climatology and this, the study and forecasting of the weather.

Answer: What is meteorology?

Answered first by: Susan Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Lynda Collet, Susan Rautenberg, Bob Wheatley, Brian Narhi, Susan Dewar, Catherine Clarke, Pam Dowling, Jim Dandy, Hedy Wiebe, Tami Lepp, Claudia Grimwood, Nancy Rocca, Wade Durling, Marla Percy, Howard Jones, Sylvia Wiens, Margaret Garaughty, Katie Reimer, Sheila Meloche, KC King, Edna Groff, David Spencer, Elaine Landray, Daniel Smith, Tuija Johansson, Jen McGowan, Jane Morris

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

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

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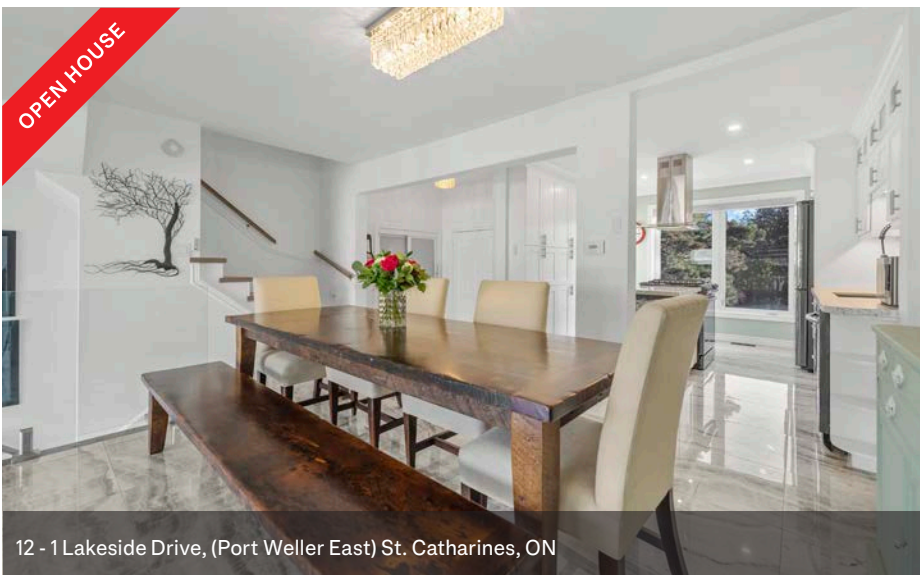
It was a pleasure to work with the Seller for the second time to help him with his objective to move back to the UK. Coincidentally, the people who purchased the house are moving from the UK to Niagara-on-the-Lake. It is also worth mentioning what a pleasure it was to work with Christine McIntyre from Bosley Real Estate to accomplish both families' needs.

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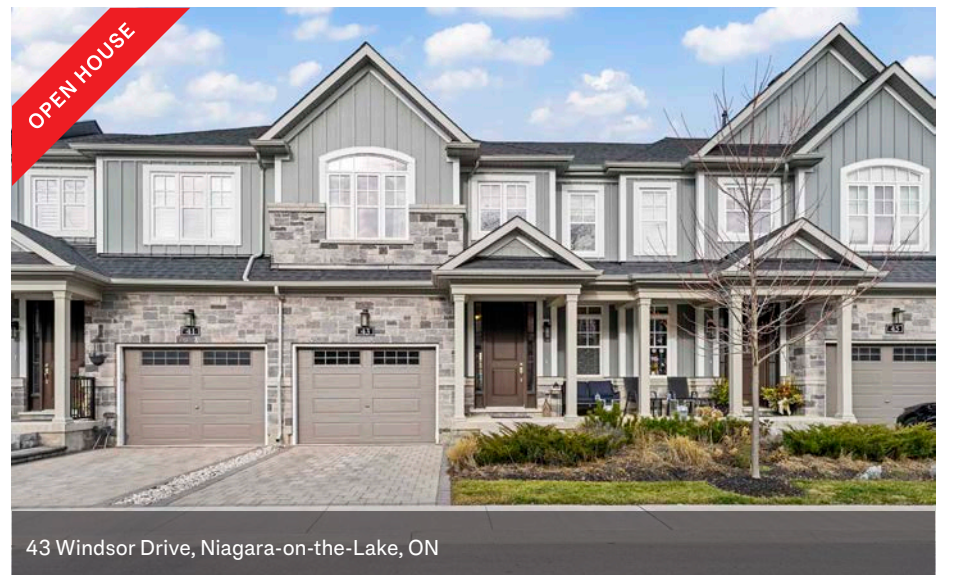
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Cooking club ends season with **all-star cast**

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Friends, family and food make for a good time, especially when you bring in one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's best-known culinary names and cookbook authors to set the menu.

The Niagara chapter of Les Marmitons mens social cooking club ended its season on Monday with a spousal dinner at Benchmark Restaurant on the NOTL campus of Niagara College.

Les Marmiton is a French phrase that means "kitchen boy" or "chef's helper."

The club has its origins in Europe and was introduced to North America by a group of Montreal men in 1977.

The Niagara chapter invited Garrison House chef David Watt to oversee the preparation of dishes made from recipes published in his cookbook *Feast of Friends*.

Chapter president Mike Berlis pointed out that the club's tagline is "friendship through gastronomy," so recipes from Watts' book were more than fitting.

"The whole idea is a group of guys who enjoy camaraderie but who also



Les Marmitons member Albert Pasqua prepares mushrooms on toast with morels for the club's final event before breaking for the summer. The social club made up of local chefs meets once a month to cook and create memories. RICHARD WRIGHT

want to learn something new," said Berlis.

Keeping that in mind, the setting could not have been better for the purpose of learning.

The college features one of the best culinary programs in the province, featuring the fully functional Benchmark Restaurant, which is only open to the public Wednesdays through Fridays.

Watt brought with him chefs Mike McColl, Dre Griese, David Watt, Jonathan Dubon, Breadan Mann and Patrick Engel to help prepare the meal.

Each of the men have either worked with Watt or

are professionals he calls friends.

"They added a lot (to the experience)," said Berlis. "It gave us the opportunity to show off our skills. Each one of them took one of the courses and then took some of us aside and helped us with that course. It worked really well."

The menu consisted of fish cakes, lettuce wraps and Morel mushroom toast paired with Niagara College Gastronomy Sparkling wine as the hors d'oeuvres.

The first course was grilled asparagus gem Caesar salad paired with Meldville 2021 Barrel Select Sauvignon Blanc.

The second course was Pasta all'Amatriciana paired with Bachelor 2022 Kirby Gamay Noir.

The main course was steak with chimichurri paired with MW Cellars 2021 Cabernet Franc.

For dessert: ice wine marshmallows with rhubarb paired with Peller 2019 Vidal Icewine.

"The menu was great and every course was delicious and the wine pairings were fantastic," said Berlis. "We were able to pull together a really good meal."

Les Marmitons and are off for the summer until their next season starts in the fall. wright@niagaranow.com

Horticulturalists **plant sale** had something for everyone, even the first-time gardeners

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Kushal Bhandari didn't know much about home gardening before the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society's yearly plant sale.

Now, he's got a wealth of knowledge.

The new homeowner was one of hundreds of people who flocked to the Meridian Credit Union Arena in Virgil on May 11 for the annual event, picking through everything from floral arrangements, herbs, hanging plants, potted plants and much more.

"The team here is wonderful," he said. "They told me a lot about how to start gardening, which plants are easy to plant for a new gardener, which plants would need the sun, which plants would need the shade."

"It was very helpful to understand the plants. I really enjoyed talking to them."

His yard will appreciate



Joanne Young helps Kushal Bhandari select a plant during the annual garden sale at the Virgil arena. RICHARD WRIGHT

his beautification efforts as well.

"I have a bunch of weeds right now so I am looking forward to getting rid of them and having some plants there," he said, looking over his haul. "I have flowers and I love to have different colours."

Joy Janzen was another happy shopper on Saturday.

Where Bhandari may have needed some help in discovering his green-thumb, Janzen came in knowing exactly what she was looking for.

"It is so great to get these plants because most of them have hardied several Niagara winters," she said, speaking about the selection of perennials. "So you know that once you plant them that they are going to grow well."

Janzen was also quick to give props to the sale's organizers who put in a lot of work to make it enjoyable for everyone as well as affordable.

"It is so fantastic. All the volunteers and the effort that they put in," she

beamed. "And the pricing is so amazing."

Opening with wall-to-wall offerings, all available products were nearly cleared out within just a few hours of opening.

For those who missed it, while there may not be another chance to purchase in such a variety for another year, they will be able to see the results of the sale come July.

The society's annual Gardeners Garden Tour, which allows people to move through the community and stop at a number of pre-planned homes, is set for July 6.

Most of the money raised from the plant sale, the garden tour and another event at Kent Heritage Farms at the end of July will go to support two scholarships, one at the Niagara College School of Environment and Horticulture and the other at Niagara Parks School of Horticulture.

wright@niagaranow.com



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Lawn bowling season begins with bagpipes

Richard Wright
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

With all the history Niagara-on-the-Lake has, one of its outdoor pastimes that goes back the farthest is the sport of lawn bowling.

The NOTL Lawn Bowling Club held its official season-opener on Saturday, its 145th time hosting this event in the community.

While many sports feature opening day or casual traditions such as the opening day pitch or the ceremonial puck drop, lawn bowlers bring out the band — or, in this case, the pipes.

Following greetings from club officials and an address from Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, the annual parade over the playing surface at the community centre took place to officially welcome in this year's season.

Bagpipe player Gary Cooper led the parade, and not the ghost of one of Hollywood's finest of yesterday — although from an



Bagpiper Gary Cooper of Port Colborne led members of the NOTL Lawn Bowling Club out in style May 11 to officially kick off the 2024 season. RICHARD WRIGHT

historical point of view, that may have been fitting.

No, this Gary Cooper hails from Port Colborne and fit right in with the club's members, who believe the game in town is more about fun than it is about competition.

"It's more of a social club," said membership and promotions co-ordinator Judy Allen.

"We like to have tea between games every Saturday, we have tournaments, there is a pairs league on Friday nights, and there is another thing called 4-3-2-1 on Tuesdays, which is basically you playing against yourself."

With that said, more participation is always welcome at the club, said Allen. "We are doing a big

advertising campaign to try and get some more people in this year. It is a lot of fun," she said.

"I like it because of the spirit of the game, and I am not a great bowler, but it doesn't matter."

The NOTL lawn bowling season runs from April to October.

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- 9. Health worry before COVID-19 (4,3)
- 10. Officially not working (2,5)
- 11. Bay of Naples isle (5)
- 12. Not subject to Government levy (3-6)
- 13. The lowest form of wit, so it is said (7)
- 15. Old fare on the air (5)
- 16. Disposed (3)
- 17. Doctor with an evil alter ego (6)
- 19. Fish eagle (6)
- 22. Intention (3)
- 24. Upturned (2,3)
- 26. Publishers (7)
- 28. Bright idea symbol (5,4)
- 30. Run up (5)
- 31. Castle cooler (7)
- 32. Easy on the ears (7)

Down

- 1. Swollen inflammation (7)
- 2. Cloth merchant (6)
- 3. Usefulness (8)
- 4. Chopped-up tuna a gleam in Central America (10)
- 5. Cajole (4)
- 6. Tonic (6)
- 7. Where to get a date, maybe (4,4)
- 8. Fate (7)
- 14. Cause of big bang? (6,4)
- 18. Coming into view (8)
- 20. Not out of the question (8)
- 21. Crash (7)
- 23. Largest bird (7)
- 25. Responsibilities (6)
- 27. Make unreadable, for security (6)
- 29. Ash containers (4)

Crossword Puzzle

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
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Last issue's answers

1	R	E	M	O	V	E	S	5	P	A	C	K	7	A	G	E
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21	H	E	N	C	E	22	L	E	A	24	M	A	C	A	25	O
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	5	7			8		9		



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Was Lucy an **ancestor** of modern-day humans?



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

The evolution to where we are now as a species began five to six million years ago, with the last common ancestor to what would eventually become modern humans emerging 150 to 200 million years ago, and the other branch that led to chimpanzees and, later, bonobos.

Between then and now, there were extensive adaptations, the most important of which, overall, was the transition to full bipedalism and the associated suite of adaptive changes in the feet, especially the great toes, ankles, knees, hips, pelvis, spine, and an upright position of the foramen magnum at the base of the skull to support what would become an upright head with a forward-facing face.

Taken together, those changes favoured a stable upright stance and fluid,

well-balanced walking and running, while freeing the forelimbs for more precise manipulative skills such as making and using tools, and eventually doubling — even tripling — the size of the brain, linked to organizational changes to the nervous system, to support bipedalism and repurposing the hands and arms.

There were other changes, too, in the jaw and teeth that reflected dietary changes, and to the brain, to favour greater specialization between the hemispheres to reflect increased dominance of one hemisphere over the other for different functions such as speech, emotional control and cognitive functions.

Many functionally related adaptations tended to evolve together, given for example, that the spine, pelvis, hip, knee, ankle and feet function as a unit.

Along the way, the evolutionary paths toward more highly developed species were often marked by the appearance of several closely related species who might have shared the same territory and time period, but not necessarily similar dietary habits or behaviours.



Looking back at the fossil record, the broad trends — bipedalism, increasingly dextrous arms and hands and bigger, more asymmetrical brains — stand out.

What's not so clear is what specific roles were played by the 20, so far, identifiable interim species in the emergence of modern humans — that is, which species were favoured most by chance and climates?

Climate affects vegetation, food resources, water supply and temperature and there were many climate shifts in the six million years since the last common ancestor, each which would have favoured the evolution of specific functional, behavioural

and anatomical features and could change in response to changes in climate.

Of the 20 or more identifiable species variants, three stand out: Lucy, neanderthals and modern humans.

Why Lucy?

Because she's the one australopith (Australopithecus afarensis) who caught the world's attention when she was found in Ethiopia with the most complete and oldest skeleton to that date.

She was discovered by Donald Johanson and his student, Tom Gray, in Ethiopia in 1974 and was given the name Lucy after the Beatles' song, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

Overnight, she became a sensation, viewed by human celebrities including former U.S. president Barack Obama, and placed in the direct line toward modern humans.

She was dated to 3.18 million years ago and despite her kind's bipedal walk, her brain was chimpanzee-sized.

That was 70 years ago. Since then, other australopiths with differing features and time periods, but all variants on an australopith model, have been discovered, muddying the evolutionary

lines to modern humans.

Skipping ahead roughly 2.5 million years in Africa, three lines diverged 600,000 years ago from a species with an almost human-sized brain (late erectus I call him): one line led to what became neanderthals in Eurasia 400,000 years ago and in Asia to the denisovans; another line led eventually to modern humans 200,000 years ago; and, a third line to a ghost species for which we have genetic evidence, but no fossil evidence so far.

Throughout the long evolution of hominin species, several species often coexisted at the same time if not place.

For example, 100,000 years ago, neanderthals, denisovans, modern humans, late bigger-brained versions of erectus and Pygmy-sized versions existed in at least three separate locations.

Now, as Chris Stringer wrote in his wonderful book "Lone Survivor," only one species remains.

Of all the species variants who preceded us, by far, we have been the cleverest and most destructive of all — killing off large animals on every continent we entered and continue to kill in

Ukraine, the Middle East, Lebanon and assorted places and a wide variety animal and plant species these days.

That's a short evolutionary picture of human evolution and certainly not the straight-line evolution popularized not so long ago.

Our evolution by natural selection and chance was far messier and complicated affair, which given repeated patterns of migration, divergence and convergence, and sex between different species, would be what we might expect.

What's obvious is that the fossil and genetic records are very incomplete.

If that were not enough drama, our prehuman ancestors 900,000 years ago almost went extinct during a prolonged intense glacial period.

They, and therefore we, survived. I, for one, will continue to marvel at Lucy: she's the star, if not the central character, in the story of human evolution.

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.

Take a look for NOTL's spring **white flowering plants**



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

We live in such a beautiful area. Spring in Niagara has to be one of the most amazing places to be.

There just seems to be an explosion of colour as the weather begins to warm up. I must admit that for an avid plant lover, it can be quite distracting to be out driving while trying to see and identify everything in bloom.

So, if you happen to be following me down the road, just know that I am OK, but distracted by plants.

This past week, while I was out and about, I noticed that there are a lot of white flowering trees and

shrubs blooming at this time, some which you may not recognize.

So, I want to introduce you to a few of them now.

Although there are still a lot of trees in bloom at this time, such as crabapples, ornamental cherries, there is one that stands out to me as being different: that is the white redbud tree (*Cercis canadensis f. alba*).

You may be familiar with the native redbud tree that is more commonly seen.

You will start to notice trees blooming now with fine, delicate purple-pink blossoms that flower all along the older branches and not just at the tips of the branches.

Of course, the white redbud opens up early spring, before leaves emerge, with tiny white blossoms.

The leaves are a medium to large size, heart-shaped leaf. They prefer a sunny to part shade location with good, well-drained soil. The redbud will grow approximately 20 feet tall by 15 feet wide.

There is a broadleaf evergreen to make special mention of that is also blooming



Fothergill gardenii.

currently.

Along with rhododendrons and azaleas is a plant named Japanese pieris (*Pieris japonica*), also known as lily-of-the-valley shrub. There are a couple of special features of this plant to make mention of.

As the common name suggests, the pieris has

trusses of small white bell-like flowers that resemble lily-of-the-valley. The flowers even have a sweet-smelling perfume.

As the flowers begin to fade, the plant begins to push out new bright red leaves. The leaves will then fade to a dark green colour.

You will usually have at least two to three flushes of growth a year and each flush of growth will emerge a bright red.

So, it is always changing from season to season.

As with rhododendrons, pieris also prefer a well-drained soil in a part shade location, preferably morning sun and afternoon shade.

One of my favourite flowering shrubs is fothergilla — you might remember that I have written about them before.

Fothergillas have very unique white, bottlebrush-like flowers and bloom for two to three weeks starting early in May.

The is no other shrubs like it.

I love having plants in my garden to provide a couple seasons of interest.

In the fall, the fothergill-

la's leaves turn from vibrant golds and oranges to a deep, crimson red.

Fothergilla is a slow growing shrub reaching only four feet in height, no pruning required.

Another family of white flowering shrubs that are in bloom now, or will be blooming in the next couple of weeks, are the viburnums.

In the viburnum family is a large selection of plants that will grow to all different sizes.

Already in bloom are the fragrant snowball viburnums (*Viburnum carlesii* and *Viburnum carlcephalum*).

These viburnums put on an amazing display with their large, white, ball-like clusters of sweetly fragrant flowers.

Following their bloom period, Korean spice viburnum and fragrant snowball viburnum produce berries in the summer and the beautiful wine-red fall colours.

There are some varieties of viburnums that are lace cap type (flat, lacey clusters) with white, spring flowers.

One of the lace-cap vari-

eties is the native highbush cranberry viburnum (*Viburnum trilobum*).

Besides its large, lacey clusters of white flowers are its clusters of bright red berries ripening in fall into winter, attracting many birds.

Then, there are different varieties of doublefile viburnums, including the smaller growing summer snowflake viburnum and Marie's doublefile viburnum — so many wonderful species and varieties of Viburnums to look at.

Viburnums can tolerate full sun to shade. They are one of the best flowering shrubs for a shady location.

You can find some viburnums that will only grow four feet by four feet and some varieties that can grow all the way up to 10 to 12 feet high and wide.

As you are out and enjoying the beauty that is around us, make sure that you take some time to enjoy some of these white flowering plants.

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

EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Fort Mississauga

On May 24, the Friends of Fort George and Parks Canada are providing a rare glimpse of the interior of Fort Mississauga. This fort, built on Mississauga Point, is located at the mouth of the Niagara River, and residing directly across from this is the American Fort Niagara. From a strategic standpoint, it was an ideal location in times of war for preventing enemy shipping from entering the river. The British erected the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes here in 1804 and constructed a small gun battery nearby for defensive purposes. When the Americans declared war on the British during the War of 1812, the British underestimated the threat and did little to strengthen their defences in Niagara (now Niagara-on-the-Lake). During the Fenian uprisings (1865-66), it was occupied by militia, but was considered obsolete by that time and was little used until being abandoned in 1867. During the First World War, the golf course (built in 1875) was closed and the Canadian Expeditionary Force used the grounds for training. Note the tips of a few tents on the right and the graffiti on the sides of the abandoned fort.

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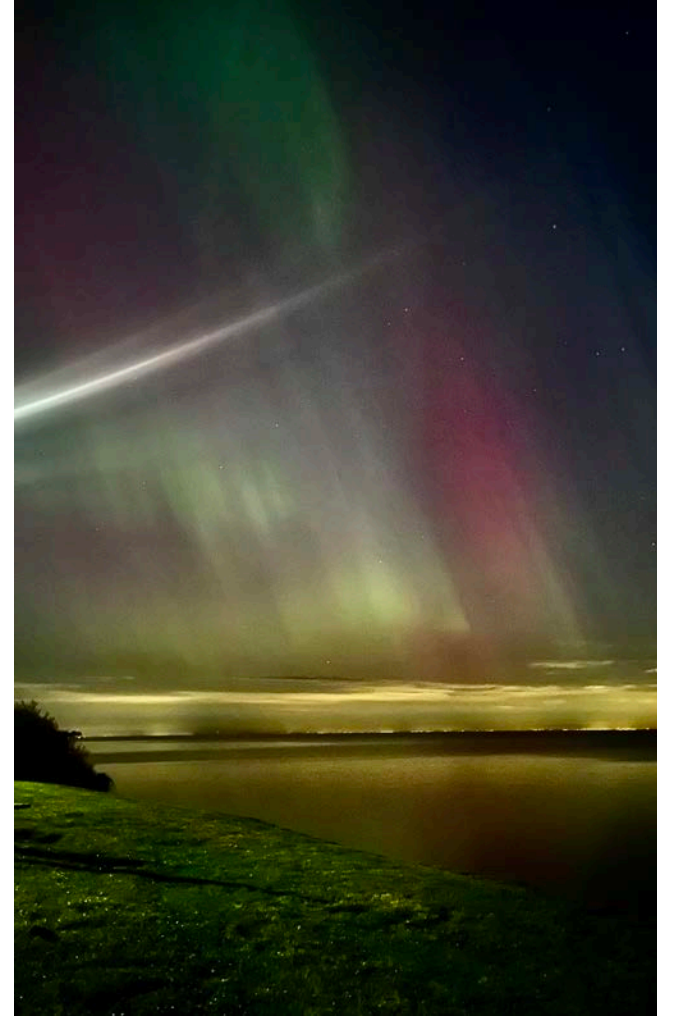
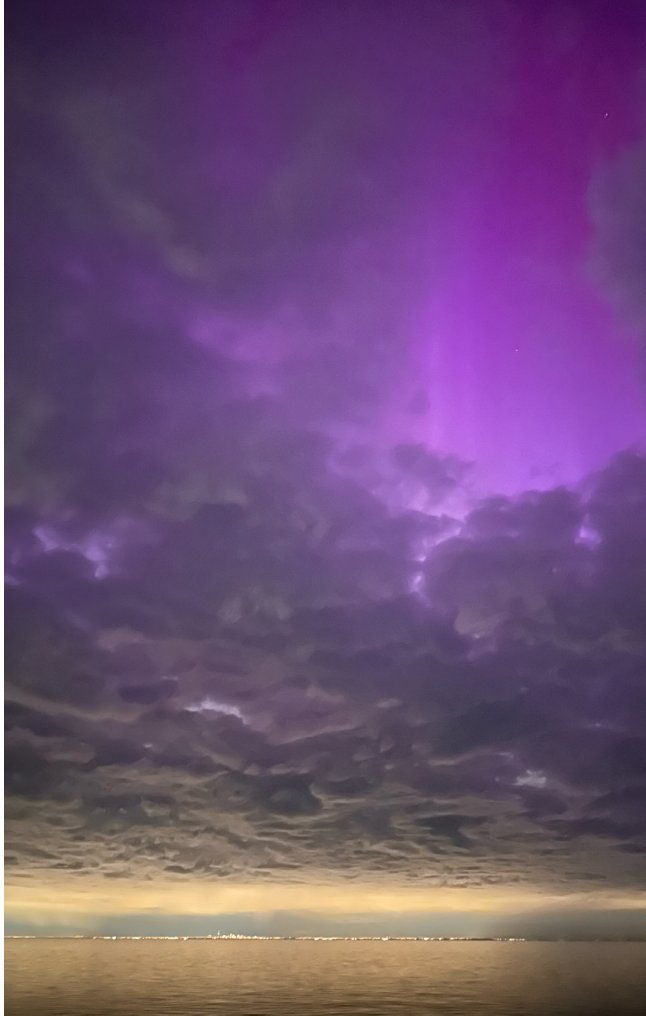
The Irish Harp is hosting an exciting Father's Day Giveaway from May 15 to June 15. It's a fantastic opportunity to celebrate your dad and win some amazing prizes!

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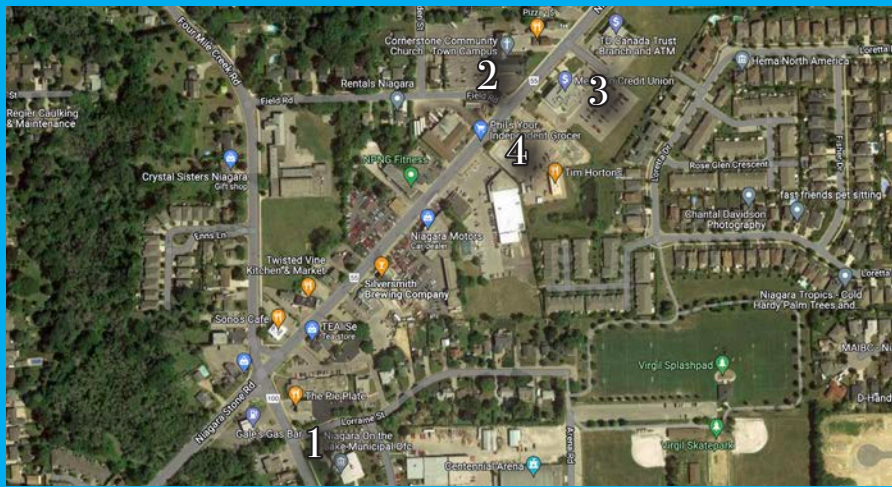
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- GET A BALLOT:** With each pint purchase, you'll receive a ballot for the prize draw.
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Niagara-on-the-Lake gets a glimpse of the **Nothern Lights**



The Northern lights were visible early Saturday morning from various spots in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Here are photos submitted by Erica Lepp and Camden Davidson (centre and right).



Virgil Stampede Parking Plan

Gate # 1, Main Gate: Entrance off Creek Rd.

Handicap parking and drop-off only!

Gate # 2: Pedestrian entrance only. Dead end off Lorraine St. Foot traffic only, (No Vehicles).

Lot # 1.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Hall. 80 spots. Saturday, Sunday, Monday. 1593 Four Mile Creek Rd. 2+ minute walk to both Gates 1 & 2.

Lot #2.

Cornerstone Community Church 100 spots. Saturday, Sunday, Monday. 1570 Niagara Stone Rd. 5-7 minute walk to Gate # 2.

Lot # 3.

Meridian Credit Union. 80 spots. Sunday and Monday only! 1567 Niagara Stone Rd. 5 minute walk to Gate # 2.

Lot # 4.

Phil's Independent Grocer Virgil. 100 spots. Monday overflow only! 1551 Niagara Stone Rd. A 5-7 Minute walk to both Gates 1 & 2.

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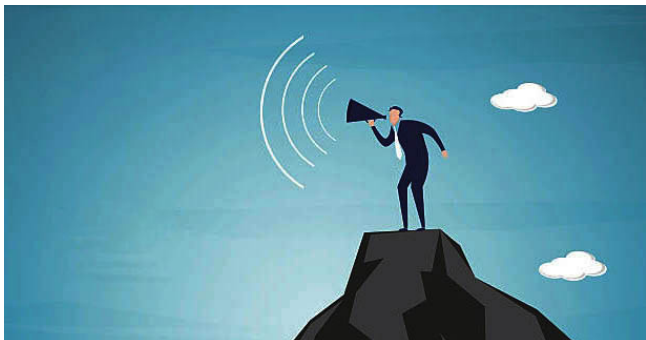


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Obituaries

Henry Dirks



Henry Dirks was born on July 6, 1929 in Gretna, Manitoba to Peter and Katarina Dirks. He was the youngest of 5 children; Mary and Tina, his older sisters, died in Mexico in 1924, while the family was on their way to Canada from Ukraine. Henry is also predeceased by his older sister, Erna Dirks-Rowe, who died in 1989. Henry's

older brother, Peter, is living in St. Catharines, Ontario.

Henry spent his childhood in Manitoba where his father was a minister, teacher, farmer and bee-keeper. The family moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1941.

Henry and Tina met at the Niagara United Mennonite Church, dated for two years and were married on May 10, 1952. Henry worked with his father at Niagara Press in Virgil for a number of years before Henry and Tina left for the mission field in the Congo in August of 1963 with their five children.

Henry served and helped to develop a printing and publishing centre called LECO for the Protestant missions in the Congo. Their 6th child was born in the Congo.

In the early 1970's, Henry established a printing and photography centre at a government run hospital in Kinshasa, Zaire (Congo).

In 1976, Henry and Tina returned to their home in Virgil. Henry taught Graphic Arts at Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology in Welland until 1982, when they returned to Zaire, where he began serving as the Director of IMPROKA, a printing and publishing centre in Kananga, Zaire.

In 1985, Henry and Tina, once again returned to their home in Virgil, where he began his own printing operation, called Niagara Graphics. However, they were once again called back to Kinshasa, Zaire in 1986, where he again served as Director of LECO (now called CEDI), until they retired.

Henry and Tina retired from their work in Zaire in 1993 and returned to their home in Virgil. They lived on Henry Street in Virgil until they moved to Radiant Care Pleasant Manor in 2015.

Henry died peacefully at home, surrounded by family, on May 11, 2024, one day after their 72nd Wedding Anniversary!

Henry will be lovingly remembered by his wife, Tina; children Mary (Tibor, deceased), Dave (Jan), Fred (Gwen), Rudy (Sharon), Ruth (Rick), Joel (Dennis); Grandchildren Ryan, Leigha, Jillian, Megan, Kevin, Steve, Dana, Julie, Andrew, Matthew, Nathan, Shawna, Stephanie, Ian, Brian and Elise; and 44 Great Grand-children.

A private funeral was held.

Online condolences at tallmanfuneralhomes.ca.



Robert Dingman



DINGMAN, Robert Astley Corbett. September 13, 1933 - May 12, 2024

Died suddenly at home in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Always a force, even when his eyesight and his back failed him. He filled the room. Passionate and curious about the world - finance, politics, nature, people. Always the entrepreneur, an inveterate

list-maker, a hard taskmaster (hardest on himself), a stealthy doer of good deeds. And a storyteller in the grand manner, most of them true, with the resounding voice to make them all memorable. He discovered fly fishing late in life, but he made up for lost time with countless trips to the Miramichi and around the world in pursuit of salmon. He will be remembered as well for an old-world politesse, balanced in part by a touch of the rogue.

He leaves behind more friends and admirers than he ever realized, and Marnie Collins, his partner in all things for over 50 years, his daughter, Chris (Michael White), sons Eric (Kay Hall) and Mark (Sarah), grandchildren Thomas, George, and Isabel Dingman, step-grandchildren Sophie and Ella Geraerds, his sister-in-law, Virginia Brooks, and her daughter Laura Brodeur, and our very dear relative and friend, Alexander Bruce Davidson. Predeceased by his mother, Margaret Christian Edwards, father, Robert Eric Dingman, and brother, Matthew Boyd Edwards Dingman. Our enormous gratitude for his medical team, but most especially, Dr. Karen Berti. Donations would be most welcome at OVC Pet Trust or Dying with Dignity.

Mato 'Matt' Pavlakovich



Mato "Matt" Pavlakovich passed away peacefully at Joseph Brant Hospital, Burlington on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at the age of 91.

Beloved husband of Nada for 61 wonderful years. Cherished father of Karen, and Wendy (George) Franz. Predeceased by his parents Nikola and Maria, and 13 siblings. He will be

lovingly remembered by Kumovi Joe and Mary Bubas and many nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews, extended family and friends in Canada, Croatia, and the U.S.A. Matt was born in Vukova Gorica, Croatia on November 13, 1932. He came to Canada in 1958 and met his wife, Nada in Schumacher, Ontario. They married July 7, 1962 and relocated to Hamilton, then to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1976 where they raised their loving family. Matt owned and operated The Anchorage in Niagara-on-the-Lake from the mid-70's to the early-80's, as well as the Colonel Butler Inn & Butler's Sports Bar in the 90's until he and Nada retired in 1999 and moved to Burlington. He enjoyed travelling with Nada to many destinations, especially Acapulco, Mexico and Croatia. Matt will be dearly missed by all of those who knew and loved him.

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