



Halloween in NOTL | Pages 6-8

Leaky sewers **contaminating** NOTL creek with E. coli, town says

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A Niagara-on-the-Lake creek has some of the brownest, foulest water in

the region and the culprit appears to be leaky sewage lines.

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority says Two Mile Creek has the highest

level of E. coli of any water system in the entire Niagara watershed.

"We're well aware of the high levels of E. coli in Two Mile Creek," said Rome D'Angelo,

the town's director of operations, when the issue came up at a council meeting Oct. 24.

E. coli is a bacteria commonly found in human and animal feces.

Town staff first became aware of the issue in 2015, D'Angelo said, when the conservation authority began tracking E. coli levels in the creek.

The conservation

authority's report says it tracked E. coli sources in the Two Mile Creek Conservation Area to a storm sewer drain. The

Continued on Page 2

Mavridis proposes new **hotel and condo** project for Glendale

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A Niagara-on-the-Lake restaurateur has a plan to build hotels and condos in Glendale.

Bob Mavridis, owner of Corks and Orzo, wants to build a mixed-use development on 4.8 hectares facing York Road near the existing Hilton Garden Inn and backing onto Six Mile Creek.

Mavridis is the father of Coun. Maria Mavridis, who told The Lake Report "many will be surprised" to see it's her father's project as she has not spoken about it publicly.

As an elected official, she said she will be declaring a conflict on the issue and removing herself from meetings on the project.

"I take my position seriously and would never

Continued on Page 3

'A debt we can **never** pay back'



Volunteers help raise the Poppy Project display at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum on Wednesday morning. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Richard Hutton | Local Journalism Initiative | The Lake Report

Joan Hill says all Canadians should feel indebted to those who found it within themselves to answer the call of duty during wartime.

But no matter what, she said, enough can never be done. "It's a debt we can never pay back," Hill said, as a small group of volunteers, members of the

Poppy Brigade, helped with this year's debut of the Poppy Project on Wednesday morning.

The installation at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum features

a sea of thousands of crocheted poppies affixed to netting using zip ties.

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Town **tweaks** tax implementation plan for short-term rentals

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake is doing a minor course correction before it extends the municipal room tax to

short-term rentals starting in January.

Staff received a letter from Stay Niagara-on-the-Lake, a bed and breakfast group that advocates for the interests of short-term rental owners, which outlined a

few concerns the association has with the town's plan to extend the room tax to short-term rentals.

The group's president, John Foreman, who signed the letter, said short-term rental operators do not

all use the same booking system.

"Some of these systems allow for the easy implementation of the (room tax), but others do not," the letter said.

"Note that the technology

issues are complicated by the requirement to charge HST (harmonized sales tax) on top of (room tax)," he added.

He suggested operators could collect a fee equivalent to the town's room tax

before adding the sales tax to their guests' bills.

He also suggested the town exempt any short-term rental booking from the tax if it is booked before the

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Group plans independent survey on NOTL housing needs

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

A group of concerned residents is joining forces with Niagara College students to assess the housing challenges faced by seniors in Niagara-on-the-Lake and explore a range of possible solutions.

A comprehensive survey will be conducted from mid-November through early January to gather insights from residents aged 55 and up.

One goal of the survey is to understand the evolving needs of seniors and what is required to maintain their quality of life as they age.

"Many other communities are grappling with the same issue," the group's convener, Cindy Grant, said in announcing the project.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake has one of the highest percentages of aging seniors in the country, many of whom wish to remain in our community, but the options are limited."

Grant said there are "multiple stakeholders" who need to understand the



Cindy Grant is one of the driving forces behind a new group interested in finding out the housing needs of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents as they age in place. FILE

housing challenge and its consequences.

"This includes the town, developers, senior housing companies and more. We want them to hear the needs of our community."

The survey, conducted in partnership with The Lake Report and other media, will be available both online and through alternative

methods for those without internet access.

Last spring, some members of the group began discussing the issue, believing there is a growing demand for senior housing options in the community.

Besides Grant, the group includes Robert Bader, Al Bisback, Fran Boot, Bill Halpenny, Sandra Hardy,

Terry Mactaggart, Sandra O'Connor, Tom Smith, Tim Taylor, and Peggy Walker.

After months of discussions with regional and town officials, the group recognized the importance of measuring the problem to better understand the challenges and identify potential solutions.

Two survey research pro-

fessionals who live in Niagara-on-the-Lake – Steve Ferley and Michael Ennamorato – have volunteered their time and expertise to develop a comprehensive, survey to independently determine NOTL's senior housing needs.

Both men have extensive national senior management experience in building, mounting and analyzing opinion surveys.

To ensure the survey reaches as many seniors as possible, the group partnered with the Niagara College School of Business and a team of graduate students in the business analytics program.

Under the guidance of Prof. Nick Farnell, students will shape the survey questions into an online tool and then collect and analyze the results, working in cooperation with Ferley and Ennamorato.

By April 2024, the collected data and analytics are expected to be available for widespread dissemination and action.

Grant is optimistic. "We're hopeful that we can

both understand the challenge and begin the process of offering solutions to our seniors' housing challenge. But that's just the beginning."

"We also aim to rally the broader community to take action, making it a shared, collective mission."

Here's how the research will work:

- The survey will be available through The Lake Report and other media using QR codes and URL weblinks. Information posters will be placed in high-traffic areas to promote completion of the survey.

- Provisions will be made for seniors without internet access to do in-person interviews or access the survey at the NOTL library.

- The survey will be available from mid-November through early January.

- No personally identifying information will be collected. All data will be anonymous, kept confidential and protected by industry-standard data protection and security mechanisms. Information will be reported in aggregate form only.

Leaking sanitary lines near Garrison most likely source of E. coli

Continued from Front Page

conservation area includes the portion of the creek between Lakeshore and Niagara Stone roads.

Joshua Diamond, the conservation authority's manager of watershed monitoring, told The Lake Report the E. coli samples it collected contained human DNA.

"We should all be concerned with water pollution," Diamond said, adding it can contaminate water used for drinking and recreation.

Two Mile Creek is not used for either purpose, he said. However, it does flow into Lake Ontario.

The drain in question is in Garrison Village, D'Angelo said, but he did not have an exact location.

There are three such drains in the area.

Two Mile Creek meanders through much of Old Town, including Garrison Village, and



The bridge to Butler's Burial Ground crosses Two Mile Creek, which has the highest levels of E. coli of any body of water in the Niagara region. EVAN LOREE

empties into Lake Ontario near Niagara Shores Conservation Area, just west of the Chautauqua neighbourhood.

Staff have done some work to replace the liners in both the storm and sanitary sewer lines in the Garrison Village, D'Angelo told council.

He also said specialized cameras were used to inspect both the sanitary and storm sewer lines for punctures, holes and leaks.

In an interview with The Lake Report, D'Angelo

said when E. coli levels are high, the most likely culprit is a leaking sanitary line.

Repairing such problems can cost the town hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Sanitary lines carry waste from residential areas to sewage treatment plants, like the regional facility on Lakeshore Road

"Typically, it's your sanitary system that, when it starts to leak, that's where you start to get your E. coli levels up," D'Angelo said.

coli can, however, also

get into the watershed through animal waste and agricultural runoff, he said.

GM Blueplan, an engineering company that assessed the sewers in Garrison Village in 2019, told the council at that time it was a combination of "animal feces and sanitary sewer cross-connections" that was causing the high E. coli levels.

A cross-connection is where a storm sewer line connects to a sanitary sewer line.

This can result in sewage from a sanitary line contaminating a storm pipe and draining into the watershed.

The cost of repairing the Garrison Village storm and sanitary sewer system is being spread over a 10-year period, D'Angelo said.

This year alone, the town has set aside \$750,000 in its capital budget for sewer repairs in the Garrison Village.

Coun. Erwin Wiens said

aging infrastructure has come up a lot but it's not "sexy" to talk about it.

"If we want to fix our aging infrastructure, there's a cost to it," he added.

"The rubber meets the road" when council decides if it has an "appetite to fix it," Wiens said.

While Two Mile Creek is the brownest, it's not the only creek in NOTL that has serious problems.

"All of the Niagara-on-the-Lake tributaries have a poor water quality, except for Four Mile Creek which is very poor," Coun. Sandra O'Connor said at the meeting Oct. 24.

The conservation authority's report on the region's water health said the Virgil reservoir, a dammed-off pond on Four Mile Creek, has high levels of copper, chloride, phosphorous, nitrates and "total suspended solids."

The report said suspended solids, like silt and clay, come from

"soil erosion, stormwater, wastewater and industrial effluent."

High levels of nitrate, chloride, copper and phosphorous are all toxic to aquatic life.

Copper tends to enter creeks in the form of blown dust, decaying vegetation, forest fires and industrial wastewater, the report said.

Nitrate, chloride and phosphorus can all end up in the creek through animal feces, it said.

Chloride can also enter the water in the form of road salt or fertilizer, and phosphorus can get in through pesticides.

The report said phosphorus is an "essential nutrient for plant growth" but if there's too much, it can cause organic matter to decompose, which upsets the balance of oxygen in the water.

This places additional stress on the fish that call the creek home.



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A rendering of the three-storey hotels with the eight and 10-storey towers in the background. SOURCED

Mavridis proposes new hotel and highrise condo project for Glendale neighbourhood

Continued from Front Page

compromise it," she said.

The project consists of one 10-storey tower with 216 residential units, an eight-storey building with 154 hotel rooms, two two-storey blocks with 11 more hotel rooms and a fast-food restaurant with a drive-thru.

It is the latest major development to be unveiled for the Glendale area in recent months.

Plans for four highrise towers on property beside White Oaks Resort south

of the QEW have already sparked opposition from nearby residents.

The Mavridis land is on the north side of the highway.

According to a report prepared for Mavridis by NPG Planning Solutions' Aaron Butler, the residential tower will be about 48 metres tall, making it the biggest of the proposed structures.

The hotel tower will be just over 36 metres and the two much shorter hotel blocks will be 10.5 metres tall.

The two towers will be mounted on a shared first floor podium, which would be reserved for retail operations.

"The commercial and retail uses on site will create employment opportunities for residents of Glendale," the report said.

The application also proposes 483 parking spaces, the bulk of which will be distributed in two levels of underground parking.

The property is vacant, except for a section of Six Mile Creek that cuts through it.

The creek is part of a flood plain protected by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, but according to Butler's report, the proposed buildings do not sit on the protected land.

The intent of the proposal is to provide additional housing, while still "protecting and enhancing the landscape and natural features" on the property, Butler said.

Over 76 per cent of the land will be reserved for landscaping and green space.

Mewburn Road repairs will take another two months, town says

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is continuing major repairs to a road leading to Niagara Falls after hitting a snag with construction in late August.

Walker Construction, the contractor on the Concession 6-Mewburn Road project, resumed work Oct. 23.

Town spokesperson Marah Minor said the road should be ready for drivers in about eight weeks, depending on the weather.

Landscaping and final surfacing will not be done until the spring, though, she added.

Walker Construction was forced to redesign one of the road's supporting walls after it found the terrain was less stable than it had originally foreseen.

Minor said the new design will "meet the necessary safety and engineering design standards" and help to "enhance the overall quality of the road."

Minor said the cost of the project should not exceed the \$1.6 million the town budgeted for it.



The \$1.6-million construction project on Mewburn Road has resumed after an August snag stalled work. EVAN LOREE

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More people turning to food banks for help

Richard Hutton
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Food Banks Canada's latest numbers are out and it appears that last year's food insecurity problem has not gone away – it's getting worse.

The organization's 2023 Hunger Count report states that 1.9 million people turned to food banks this past March, a record high for the country.

The report, released on Oct. 25, documented usage at food banks across Canada. This year's number of food bank visits represents an increase of 32 per cent from 2022 and of 78 per cent from 2019.

Of that 1.9 million, 600,000 – nearly a third – were children.

The numbers at a food bank in Niagara-on-the-Lake mirror that upward trend, said Cindy Grant, the chair of Newark Neighbours.

"We currently have 119 families (as clients) and of that, 54 are new in 2023. That's almost exactly half," she said.

Those families add up to 241 individuals. Of that number, 77 are children



Rapid inflation and inadequate social supports are contributing to an increase in food bank use, according to a report by Food Banks Canada. FILE/JULIA SACCO

under the age of 17, Grant added.

"For some comparison, in 2021 we had 64 clients, 17 of them were new," she said.

More than 4,750 food banks and community organizations across the country were surveyed for the report, a report that Food Banks Canada said shows the devastating impact of rapid inflation and inadequate social

support on poverty, food insecurity and hunger in Canada.

The reasons for the rising usage were varied, said Kirstin Beardsley, the organization's CEO.

"Relentless inflation and a broken social safety net has caused many people who never thought they would need a food bank to walk through the doors for the first time," she said.

Grant, meanwhile, said those factors also fueled the increased use of food banks in NOTL.

"There are several reasons why usage is up," Grant said. "It's just economic. The cost of living is higher. The cost of food is higher."

She added that Newark Neighbours is also seeing 13 families who are refugee claimants, as well as

single-parent families and single individuals working in minimum wage jobs who need help putting food on the table.

"It's the unemployed, the under-employed. They're just trying to get by," she said.

Grant said more needs to be done by all levels of government to help increase food security.

"We need affordable housing, social services need to be improved, including (the Ontario Disability Support Program) and Ontario Works."

That's something that Food Banks Canada's Beardsley agreed with.

"Governments at all levels must respond by focusing on urgent affordability issues and fixing our broken social safety net," she said.

In the report, Food Banks Canada said that was a lesson learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which food bank usage actually dropped.

That was largely due to government support programs such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, which helped with food security by putting \$2,000 a month in the pockets of families and individuals liv-

ing on the edge.

Demand, however, came back and now more people have been turning to food banks since those benefits ceased.

While that is also the case for Newark Neighbours, usage has also risen after the organization moved to its new location on Niagara Stone Road in Virgil, Grant said.

The organization moved to Virgil after 30 years of operating at its previous location tucked away near Peller Estates.

"Since we moved to the new location, we're just so much more visible," Grant said.

People seeking help from Newark Neighbours must have a Niagara-on-the-Lake address.

While there is no means of testing to determine a client's eligibility, new users are interviewed to help assess their exact needs, Grant said.

Newark Neighbours is located at 1534 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil.

The food bank and thrift store are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Saturday while the thrift store offers extended hours until 7 p.m. on Thursdays.

Government funds will provide farmers with more fruits from their labour

Richard Hutton
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Funding from the federal and provincial governments will help tender fruit farmers produce more and carve out a bigger slice of the produce pie, a Niagara-on-the-Lake grower says.

Phil Tregunno, owner of Tregunno Fruit Farms, said an \$8-million investment being made through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership will allow farmers to plant new varieties of tender fruit that would, in turn, lengthen their growing season.

"It's all about import replacement," said Tregunno, who in addition to running his farm on Niagara Parkway, is chair of the Ontario Tender Fruit Growers.

For example, a new variety of peach called early blush will add 10 to 14 days to the onset of the peach harvest.

"We can replace U.S. products with Canadian products," Tregunno said. "In the long term, it will bring down the cost of fruit."

That will take some time, though, as it will take about four years before these new trees bear their first fruit, he said.

Known as the Growing Future Opportunities Initiative, the program will provide eligible producers with cost-shared funding to purchase new plants that will give farmers opportunities to bring more fruit to market.

For wine grape growers, meanwhile, the program will provide producers with

access to the same cost-share funding.

Replanted stock will yield varieties of produce that better meet market demand, increase yield hardiness and are more resistant to pests and diseases.

Eligible producers can apply to receive 75 per cent of cost-share funding for plants, with plantings to be completed by the end of 2026.

Applications from apple and tender fruit growers will be accepted starting Nov. 20 while the wine grape component of the program is scheduled for 2024.

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a part of a five-year, \$3.5-billion overall investment in agriculture being made by the two levels of government.

It includes \$1 billion in

federal funding and an additional \$2.5-billion commitment that is being shared between the federal and provincial governments.

Matthias Oppenlaender, chair of the Ontario Grape Growers and owner of Huebel Grape Estates, said the funding is good news for grape growers, who find themselves dealing with never-ending change in the industry.

"We respond to consumer demand, changing tastes and climate change," Oppenlaender said.

And making those changes comes at a cost, he said.

"When we need to change our varieties, it can cost \$30,000 to \$40,000 an acre," he said.

The new funds will be welcomed when the grape growers begin planting new



Phil Tregunno with a Coralstar peach tree that was planted at the NOTL farm last spring. RICHARD HUTTON

vines in the fall of next year.

"Obviously, it's great that the governments are assisting the grape growers," he said.

Lawrence MacAulay, federal minister of agriculture and agri-food said that producers are "a vital part" of Canadian agriculture.

"This funding will help the sector stay competitive while providing Canadians with access to locally grown, healthy, and

delicious fruit," he said in a news release announcing the funding.

Lisa Thompson, Ontario's minister of agriculture, food, and rural affairs, said that the funding will help position producers for the future.

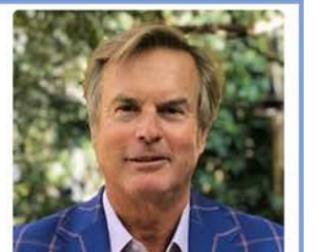
"We're making sure the agri-food sector in Ontario realizes its incredible potential by ensuring product supply aligns with consumer demand," she said.



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Council limits speaking times to **five minutes** at planning meetings

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Coun. Erwin Wiens says it's hard to chair public meetings but the town needs to enforce some of the rules in its procedural bylaw to keep meetings under control. EVAN LOREE

NOTL residents will have to make their arguments twice as quickly at future planning meetings.

In response to higher workloads and shorter deadlines for town planners, Niagara-on-the-Lake council is slashing speaking times in half at public meetings.

This means anyone wanting to speak about planning applications will have five minutes, not 10, to make their case.

Coun. Gary Burroughs was the first to call attention to the trend of late-running public meetings on Oct. 3, after multiple residents dropped out of a meeting that ran until 11 p.m.

In a report brought to council on Oct. 24, Kirsten McCauley, the director of community development, cited several reasons for the change in council's planning meetings.

The report said Bill 109, a new piece of provincial legislation, has imposed tighter deadlines on the town for processing development applications.

The bill, the More Homes for Everyone Act, also levies hefty financial penalties on the town for failing to decide on applications on time.

"Staff have worked with the town's legal counsel to prepare a fee refund waiver," the report added.

The waiver could be used "in good faith," the report stated, to help staff and developers work out a solution that doesn't result in refused applications.

"We're rushing through these applications because the province tells us we have a time limit," Burroughs said at last week's meeting.

Despite this, he was the only one to not support council's decision to shorten speaking times.

His fellow councillors, however, were against adding an additional meeting to the calendar to help deal with planning applications.

Burroughs asked if there is any way for staff to determine the level of interest in an application before going into public meetings. McCauley said it's "hard

to gauge" how much interest there will be in a project before the development application is circulated.

"It does really come down to what the proposal is," she said.

Coun. Nick Ruller noted some other towns that also give residents five minutes to speak instead of 10.

For example, the City of St. Catharines has a five-minute limit for public speakers.

And Bill Matson, the municipal clerk for Niagara Falls, told The Lake Report his city imposes the same limit.

Niagara Falls has "become more strict with the time limits" because of increased interest in development proposals at city meetings, he said.

Coun. Erwin Wiens commented that "Stephen Hawking was able to explain what he does in five minutes," so NOTL

residents should be able to do the same.

As well, council often hears the same concerns multiple times at planning meetings.

"Saying it more than once doesn't mean that it will have more effect on our planners," he said.

One common question Wiens said he hears from residents during these meetings is, "Why was this even allowed?"

In answering this question, he explained that the town is legally bound to hold public meetings on complete applications, even if staff disagrees with the proposed project.

McCauley's report said the town holds pre-consultation meetings with developers and offers advice on all the different studies needed to complete an application.

But staff "can't predict when a complete submission may be received," she wrote in the report.

Upon receiving an application, the town has 30 days to decide if it's complete.

After that, staff have 15 days to notify the public.

The town considers the public feedback when preparing its recommendation report on the project, which is then presented to council for consideration.

Council is not obligated to support the recommendations of staff.

NOTL man charged in two **attempted robberies**

Staff
The Lake Report

A Niagara-on-the-Lake man has been charged in connection with an attempted armed robbery at a St. Catharines car rental business and an attempted holdup at a Wainfleet convenience store.

Christian Adam Edmunds, 28, was arrested at a home on Cole Crescent after a man was seen driving near Taylor Road and Glendale Avenue at 1:25 a.m. on Oct. 31.

Police said the man had

entered a Cole Crescent home and was taken into custody after a three-hour standoff with officers.

A Niagara Regional Police crisis negotiator was able to convince the suspect to surrender just after 4 a.m.

Investigators allege that shortly after 8:30 a.m. on Oct. 30, a man entered Enterprise Rent-a-Car on Lake Street, near Scott Street, armed with a black handgun.

He demanded the store employee give him keys to a rental vehicle and when

that didn't happen the man fled on foot.

In their investigation, police also identified Edmunds as a suspect in an attempted robbery at a Wainfleet convenience store.

In that incident on Oct. 20, police were called to the store shortly after 3 a.m. and were told by an employee that a man brandished a handgun, demanding money and cigarettes.

The suspect then fired a single shot into the ceiling of the store and fled.

No one was injured in

either incident.

Edmunds faces numerous charges, including two counts each of robbery using a restricted firearm, disguise with intent, possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle, pointing a firearm, one count of possession of a restricted firearm with ammunition and nine charges of possession of a firearm, weapon or ammunition contrary to a probation order.

He attended a video bail hearing in St. Catharines on Oct. 31 where he was ordered held in custody.

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Clockwise from top left: The Willowbank School of Restoration Arts, likely as you've never seen it before, all decked out for the Monster Bash Halloween Party.

Willowbank's entrance beckons Monster Bash goers, if they dare.

Is that Gene Simmons of Kiss and ... ? Well, almost. It's Barb Dutchyn and Dan Lantagne all decked out for the occasion.

If you've watched the "Yellowstone" TV series starring Kevin Costner you'll recognize Rob MacInnis' character.

Maria Fratangelo, Moe Bjorgan, Steffani Bjorgan (founder of Red Roof) and Owen Bjorgan.

Pope Joe Wery and nun Susan Wery.

Life's a beach for Carol Perrin, Phil Loforti and Anne Robinson at the Monster Bash at Willowbank.

Party hosts Perry and Shari Hartwick donned elaborate costumes. The bash was all in aid of Red Roof Retreat.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DAVE VAN DE LAAR



PHOTO GALLERY
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It's Halloween on ice



Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Skating Club celebrated Halloween with an on-ice costume party Friday night. It included some games and lots of treats. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Deck the house with bones and bodies



After moving to Canada from Cuba where Halloween celebrations were illegal growing up, Miguel Pumariega makes sure to go all out for the holiday. He and his wife Shanna and two sons Miguelito and Diego are proud of their house which haunts Annmarie Drive in Virgil. Miguel starts working on the display in early September. Featuring a variety of animatronics, it's a popular stop for trick-or-treaters looking for a Halloween spook. JULIA SACCO

Read our full story about Miquel Pumariega's fabulous Halloween decorating online at Niagaranow.com.

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 **THE NOTL POPPY PROJECT**  

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Crossroads students **parade** in costumes



PHOTO GALLERY
See more pictures at niagaranow.com

On Halloween morning, students of all ages at Crossroads Public School took part in the annual costume parade. From Barbie to Batman, kids showed off their unique and creative looks to friends and family, posing for pictures along the way. Left: Lev Bednenko showed up to the parade with a green friend on Tuesday. Middle: Things 1 and 2, Addison Mayer and Brooke Janzen, led Po, Abby Fromstein, throughout Tuesday's parade at Crossroads. Right: Cowgirls Mia Unruh and Norah Palmer happily galloped along the parade route, followed by Lulu Du in her festive cat costume. JULIA SACCO

'Trunk or Treat' at Central



PHOTO GALLERY
See more pictures at niagaranow.com



Top: Cristina and Charayah Romo rocked some vintage styles, including a jukebox, for Central Community Church's "Trunk or Treat" Halloween celebration on Sunday. Bottom: James and Emily Grabatin brought Minecraft to life with blocks and creepers. JULIA SACCO

Native Centre gets spooky



Meet the Lynchs, from left, son Austin, mom Shannon, daughter Penelope and dad Brian dressed as an alien invasion. Bottom: Charlie Windsor keeps his pail open for candy as he hops from trunk to trunk at the Niagara Regional Native Centre's annual Halloween party. EVAN LOREE

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Contributed by Patty Garriock
 "When you think positive, good things happen."
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The buck stops here



This beautiful adult deer was spotted in one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's rural vineyards. Our photographer's dog's Darby barked incessantly and caught the deer's attention, prompting the buck to stop and stare for a few seconds. He then loped off down the road and through a neighbouring vineyard. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Editorial: Ensuring NOTL will never forget

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

It is important at this time of year that we remember.

Remember the sacrifices and the contributions of those who gave their lives in two world wars and in other conflicts.

It was a different era, one in which young men were eager to fight "for King and country," to ultimately preserve the freedoms and way of life we now take for granted.

And it is important, too, to remember those who are still with us, who have worked to make life better for the rest of us.

Yesterday morning, Nov. 1, as is documented elsewhere in this week's edition of The Lake Report, we witnessed the unveiling of the latest iteration of the ever-expanding Poppy Project, an important and unique undertaking of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

It has grown now to encompass the old courthouse downtown, the museum and now the Legion as the handiwork of dozens of volunteers is put on display – some 7,000 handmade poppies make sure that

NOTL will never forget.

Well done to all involved in the Poppy Project. You ensure that we will never forget.

In a world filled with strife and negativity, we feel it is important to remind ourselves about some of the good that happens in our world and our community. So, a few kudos:

To all those residents who took Halloween seriously with out-of-this-world decorating (Annmarie Drive in Virgil comes to mind), thank you for bringing out the kid in all of us.

On that theme, congrats to Shari and Perry Hartwick, whose Monster Bash at Willowbank was a huge hit while raising money for Red Roof Retreat.

To the Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake, always active in community causes, for raising more than \$22,000 via its Participate for Polio project – and to Cosmo Condina who single-handedly raised about half that total. Astounding work.

We told you in last week's paper about the milestones celebrated by the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Women's League:

a century of community work and dozens of years of individual volunteer work by members. Amazing.

To New Democrat MPP Wayne Gates and Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa for taking a tag-team approach to push the provincial government to improve health care in NOTL by giving the town a long-promised additional nurse practitioner. And to Gates for bringing it up in the legislature last week. Though, predictably, the health minister simply dodged the question.

To the organizers of Doors Open in NOTL, who literally opened the doors of a dozen important and historic buildings and welcomed the public inside.

To hockey player Kaleb Dietsch, a young man making his way in the game and making his fans and family in NOTL proud. He made his debut two weeks ago with the Ottawa 67's of the Ontario Hockey League. Well done.

To McKenzie Wright, an amateur boxer from St. Davids, who arrived home this weekend with a bronze medal from the Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile. She's pursuing her Olympic

dream and showing us all what hard work and determination can accomplish.

And to Cindy Grant and the members of an ad hoc residents' committee who have commissioned an independent research project to determine what the future housing needs are for people who wish to grow old in NOTL. They're taking a thorough, professional approach, gathering evidence and information that will show what the people of NOTL could someday require.

Yes, it is important at this time of year that we remember.

With that in mind, we encourage everyone to revisit The Lake Report's "Monuments Men" series by historian Ron Dale.

This massive, 53-part series documents the stories of the men – and in that era, they were all men – whose names are inscribed on the town's two cenotaphs.

It is compelling reading and you can find it online at niagaranow.com/?s=monuments+men.

Because it is important that we remember. editor@niagaranow.com

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

With expropriations, roundabout could cost **\$10 million** or more

Dear editor:

I would like to share some budget shock regarding Niagara Region's proposed St. Davids roundabout at Four Mile Creek and York roads.

I deal in expropriation matters all across the province and I don't think it is fair that the region is telling the public the estimated cost of the roundabout is going to be around \$3.9 million,

A regional environmental assessment includes just \$200,000 for property acquisition costs. That amount is not even close to what the final cost is going to be for this project.

This roundabout is more likely to cost \$10 million to \$12 million (or more) once privately owned land is expropriated.

The region's \$3.9 million estimate is grossly inaccurate due to the costs associated with property acquisition and property impacts.

The only way to get the attention of both the region and the town on the debate

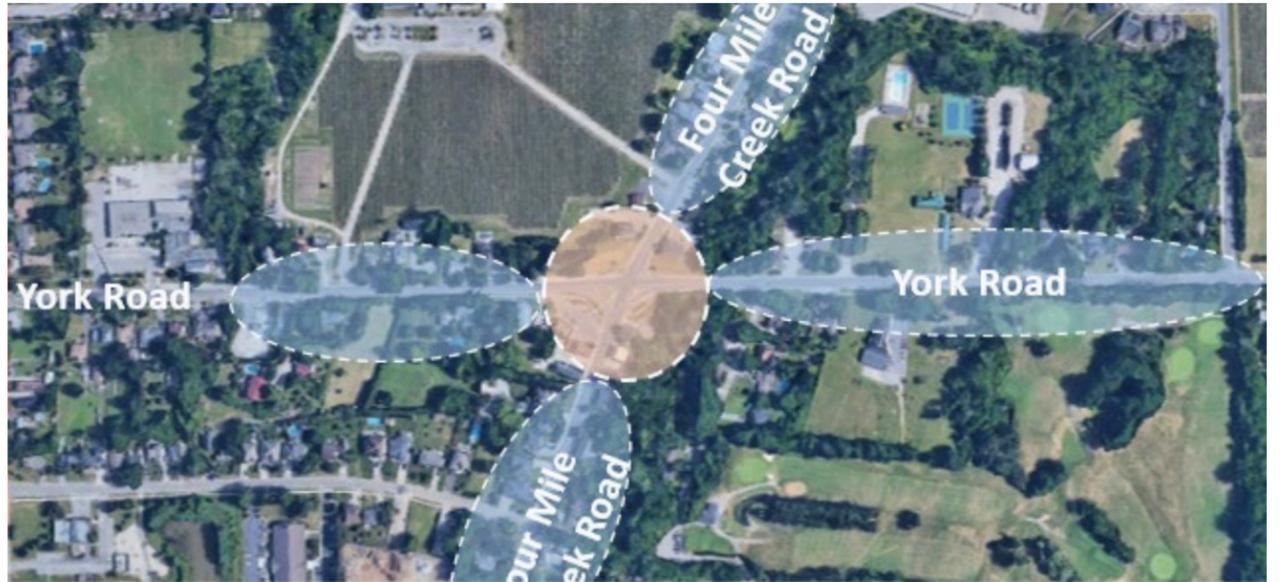
as to whether the roundabout is a go or not, is to raise the transparency of the total cost for the anticipated proposed roundabout design.

There will be formal expropriation proceedings and litigation on most, if not all, of the properties affected.

The Expropriations Act is intended to make property owners whole as a direct result of adverse impacts, which there will be an assortment of, including loss of land areas, injurious affection, disturbance damages and business-related losses.

There could also be potential buyouts of entire properties. In these types of situations, there is no budget cap.

The litigation-related costs (ie. legal, appraisal, planning, engineering, relocation, etc.) in addition to property acquisition costs typically can range between about \$350,000 and \$500,000 or more per property depending on the



A marked up aerial shot of St. Davids shows the areas the region has assessed for development impacts. SOURCED

complexities of each case.

Overall, the current budget costs that are being floated around by both levels of government are a fraction of what the total cost will be.

It would be interesting to see how the region would be presenting its case for the roundabout design if the true estimated costs

were to be considered – \$10 million to \$12 million and perhaps as high as \$15 million, depending on the final engineering and new construction design.

If the town was facing a cost-sharing at this magnitude, would Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa still lobby support behind the roundabout design, or, would there be

some interest to do some sort of hybrid design that nobody has yet discussed.

Because there is a hybrid design that could potentially work and at a significantly lower cost.

The Expropriations Act is silent on budget estimates.

How the region and the town are managing this file is completely misleading the

public interest.

Just imagine having our local politicians and senior government execs agreeing to pay \$10 million to \$15 million for one roundabout in a small town without conducting a thorough study of the options and legislated cost obligations.

Peter Rusin
St. Davids

No opposition to roundabout? **Not a chance**

Dear editor:

So, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa says residents aren't opposed to a St. Davids roundabout, ("Owners worry roundabout will kill St. Davids businesses," Oct. 26).

He doesn't feel there is massive opposition to it. He has talked to hundreds of people about it. I say bull roar.

I live in Cannery Park in

St. Davids: 249 households and not one person I have talked to is in favour of this monstrosity. I have not seen Zalepa's curly little head once in our neighbourhood.

In fact, since he was elected lord mayor, he has been so busy being a part-time lord mayor that Coun. Erwin Weins has done a lot of pinch-hitting for him.

When he was the regional councillor, I reached out to

him about my opposition to the roundabout and never heard back from him.

He is hell-bent on plunking a large roundabout in the middle of a historic village. Yes, there is a place for roundabouts, but not in this spot.

There is no room. Pedestrians will be in danger and local businesses in trouble. How about at York Road and Concession 6?

Any studies on the intersection never went as far as the school to the west or Cannery Park to the east. The cost of it will be monumental.

The landowners don't want to sell. People don't want it. So, Lord Mayor Zalepa, stop having your little hissy fits and start listening to your residents.

Janet Guy
St. Davids



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa has continued to support region staff on the St. Davids roundabout, despite vocal resident pushback — which he claims doesn't exist. FILE

St. Davids voters **backed Zalepa**, who supports roundabout option

Dear editor:

At a recent meeting of town council designed to address a future shared services model between the town and the region, discussion got deflected into uninformed speculation about whether the residents of St. Davids oppose or support the roundabout proposed to be built by the region in the centre of the village.

Although this is an important intersection of two

regional roads affecting most residents of the town, the focus seems to be on the wishes of the villagers.

On the one hand, Coun. Gary Burroughs asserted that "the residents" (some? many? the majority? the vast majority? all?) don't want it.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa countered that, in talking to residents of St. Davids during the last municipal election, he had not encoun-

tered massive opposition to the roundabout. Who is correct?

Prior to the election a resident was quoted in local media that "I do not know of anyone who is in favour of the roundabout."

This is hardly surprising since supporters would be unlikely to go public in such a charged atmosphere. That division is still evident.

In the election for lord

mayor, incumbent Betty Disero continued to express her strong opposition to the roundabout.

Candidate Zalepa confirmed his support for the recommendation of the staff of the region that the roundabout was the best solution for that intersection.

Granted, while how one votes in an election can take into account a myriad of factors, there is no doubt that the proposed round-

about was the number one issue for residents of St. Davids.

Who, then, did the voters of St. Davids support? It turns out that Zalepa secured significantly more votes than did Disero.

Politicians, in my view, pay too much attention to vocal opponents, since those in favour are unlikely to step forward, especially in regard to a highly contentious issue.

Since we elect councillors at large, one would hope that those elected would practise leadership rather than followership in making decisions for all of the town.

In the case of the St. Davids roundabout, the ballot box and not the soap box is a far more reliable gauge of the wishes of those residents.

Ron Fritz
Queenston



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Cora Long D.D.

Questions about the province's 'red tape reduction' efforts



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall
Columnist

Were you aware that Ontario has a Ministry of Red Tape Reduction headed by cabinet minister Parm Gill? And yes, that is the ministry's actual name.

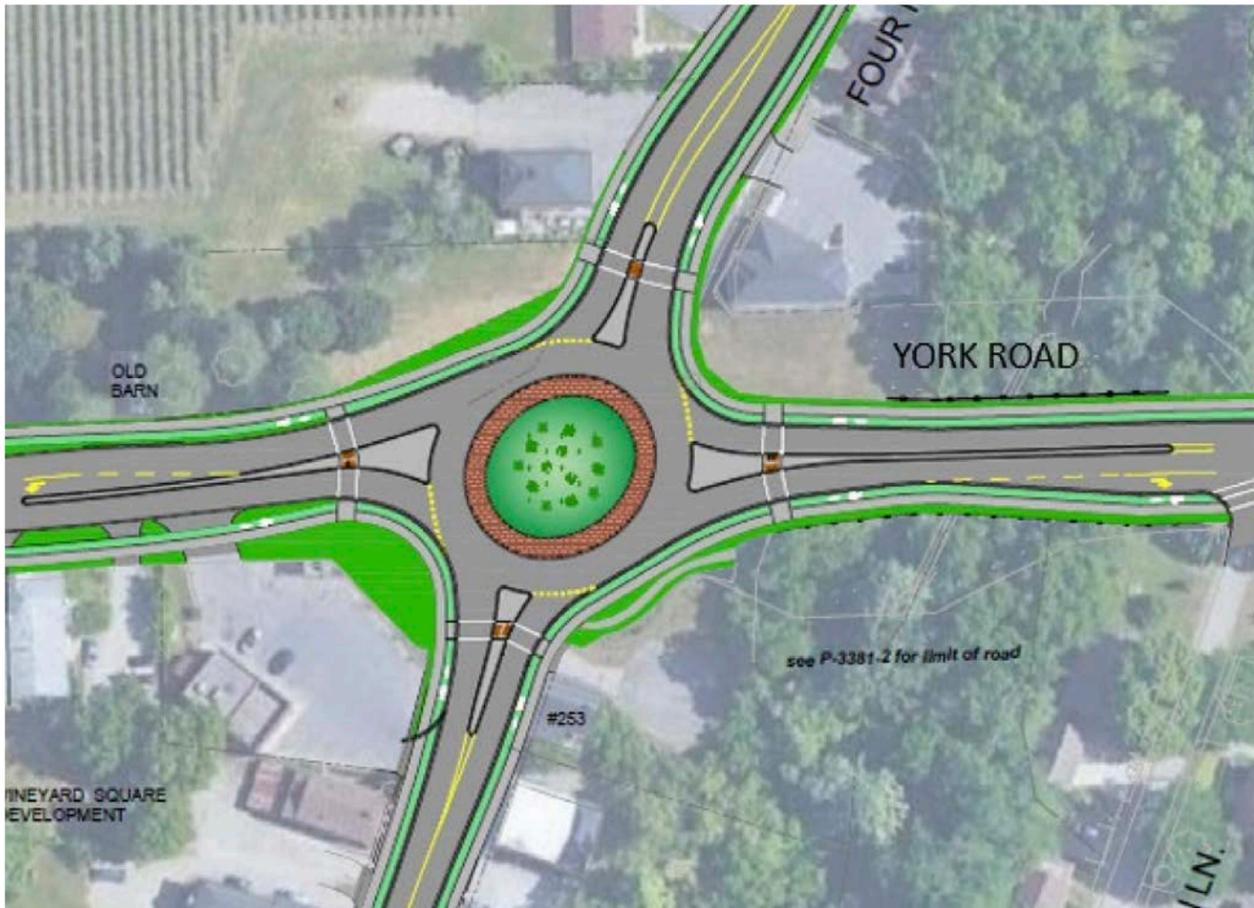
Apparently, since 2018, we have had an entire government cadre of bureaucrats devoted to reviewing all existing provincial legislation to identify provisions they can eliminate in the quest of "improving services for people, reducing costs for businesses, and making it easier to work with government."

The minister claims to have achieved "more than \$939 million in gross annual compliance cost savings" since 2018, although, one suspects that the annual cost (paid by taxpayers) of operating an entire government ministry easily outstrips these "savings" by a goodly margin.

Of course, these cost savings are a fun-with-numbers estimate regarding the savings enjoyed by "tangible time and cost savings for businesses" (a quote from our provincial government's webpage: ontario.ca/page/ministry-red-tape-reduction), which, of course, was in no way influenced by any public relations agenda.

So, the taxpayer costs to underwrite this provincial ministry are not considered, nor are the additional financial expenses that have devolved upon the lower tiers of government required to be "compliant" while still attempting to do their job for their local constituency.

As a point of clarification, I am a huge fan of lean government and believe that existing in-force legislation is overly cumbersome, complicated and far too intrusive into the fabric of our society.



A sketch of the proposed roundabout to replace the four-way stop at Four Mile Creek and York roads. SOURCED

That said, it is also my opinion that any partisan overture to reduce "red tape" and government oversight (responsibility) will be intrinsically flawed by the ruling party's political agenda.

In this, I am reminded of former Ontario premier Mike Harris' legislation that gutted the province's environmental legislation and laid off over 37 per cent of the frontline staff, thereby directly contributing to, and resulting in, the Walkerton water supply E. coli disaster during the early months of this century.

Again, it is impossible for any party who forms government to simply "pay their pipers" without unanticipated (or sometimes, understood and acceptable "collateral damage") impact on the people and province of Ontario.

All that said, on Oct. 19, the first reading of the Ministry of Red Tape's new omnibus Bill 139 — labelled the "Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act" — was introduced into the House. A week later, on Oct. 26, this bill passed a second reading.

One of the three dozen or so items included in this piece of legislation were

changes to Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act and O.Reg. 385/21, "which would require that municipalities consent, without terms and conditions, to proposed alterations to buildings on designated properties, where the building is primarily used for religious practices, the heritage attributes to be altered are connected to religious practices, the alterations are required for religious practices and all other conditions of the proposed legislative and regulatory amendments are met. The proposal would also reduce application requirements and shorten decision-making timelines."

The government's stated objective for making these changes, as described in the proposal details on the Environmental Registry of Ontario's website, "is to provide certainty and shorter timelines for religious organizations, Indigenous communities and Indigenous organizations to move forward with proposed alterations required for religious practices, in situations where the requirements of the provision are met."

The proposal details continue: "The changes would ensure that they can

continue their religious practices or Indigenous religious or spiritual practices with limited interruptions or complications should they need to alter a property designated under the (Ontario Heritage Act)."

Now, here is the interesting thing: of the over 5,000 historic "places of worship" that the Ontario Heritage Trust (a section of the province's Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism) has inventoried to date, only 790 are heritage designated. Further, only a tiny fraction of these buildings may be suggested to have a principally Indigenous congregation (despite the government's generous sprinkling of "Indigenous" throughout their justifications).

Finally, I have not been able to find a single case of an application to renovate one of these designated places of worship — which was holding regular religious services — that was denied in the last ten years.

I confess to being unable to understand why tax dollars have been spent to alter the Ontario Heritage Act for a comparative handful of buildings which have not encountered a problem vis-à-vis applications to renovate.

Is there an agenda here which is not readily evident to the person on the street?

I am aware that, due to steadily shrinking congregations, many religious organizations are finding it difficult to maintain these places of worship.

Many are exploring potential adaptive reuse options for a portion of the buildings to generate operating revenues (the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa commissioned a study by Queen's University, for example), but the provisions of the changes to the Ontario Heritage Act do not encompass this.

Being a cynic, I suspect it is the "thin edge of the wedge" by a government that wishes to weaken the act and the authority this legislation devolves upon municipalities.

Keep in mind that Premier Doug Ford's government has, amongst other things, made it more difficult to designate a building and effectively eliminated the ability of municipalities to "list" buildings of historic value (a process that helps to expedite designation).

Consider that this change would "require municipalities to consent, without

terms and conditions" to an application.

In a broader sense, if used as a legislative precedent, requiring consent removes the authority of the municipality to make a decision, nor can the municipality establish any limiting criteria (such as preservation of a heritage attribute) associated with consent.

Should this be a precedent and used as such for future modifications to the Ontario Heritage Act, heritage preservation in this province would be a thing of the past (and sincerely, no pun is intended).

On June 30 of last year, the Arch-i-text column was titled "Marching backward on heritage protection"... something tells me this is another step backwards in that march.

On another note, there is the ongoing assault on the St. Davids settlement area by the region's drive to get provincial infrastructure funding to build a roundabout.

Although it will adversely affect local businesses, expropriate land, impinge on surface water flows, make simple crossing of York and Four Mile Creek roads a somewhat scary undertaking and create either a concrete hub or another feeble flower bed the town will have to maintain and etcetera, those considerations do not seem to matter.

I travel both of these roads through St. Davids on a regular basis and have yet to encounter "congestion" of more than three cars lined up to go through the stop sign.

A lot like that diverging diamond mess in Glendale which, two weekends ago created a lineup of cars attempting to take the Glendale cutoff that stretched well back onto the QEW itself, and simply confuses the blazes out of most visitors (and a few locals too).

Our tax dollars "at work" in ways that simply make me wonder.

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



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Heart of St. Davids doesn't need a 'one-size-fits-all' solution

Dear editor:

As a concerned resident of St. Davids, I am deeply troubled by the "part-time" approach being adopted by our lord mayor and regional councillor toward the proposed roundabout in our historic heartland.

St. Davids is a tapestry of memories, traditions and cultural heritage. It deserves a more thoughtful and comprehensive evaluation before such significant infrastructure changes are made.

It was disheartening to hear our lord mayor say at a committee meeting that only 10 individuals were reportedly against the roundabout.

This statement not only seems detached from the actual sentiments of our community but also feels dismissive of the numerous voices that have risen in concern.

The statement is false. St. Davids deserves representatives who are in touch with its people's pulse and emotions. This isn't something



Land would need to be expropriated at the four corners in St. Davids to make room for a roundabout. EVAN LOREE

to consider "part-time."

I am not inherently against roundabouts. When utilized thoughtfully, they can be a solution to traffic woes and improve efficiency.

However, every place has its unique needs and

character. Implementing a "one-size-fits-all" solution without taking into account the specifics of an area can lead to unintended negative consequences.

The heart of St. Davids is not merely a junction of roads: it's where generations

have come together, where history speaks through every brick and stone, and where our community's spirit thrives.

The potential disruption and transformation of this space require more than a "part-time" consideration.

I'd like to urge my fellow citizens from Niagara-on-the-Lake to voice their opinions not just on the roundabout, but also on how the money earmarked for this project might be better utilized.

Could we perhaps invest

in preserving our historical landmarks, improving public spaces or enhancing community programs?

Our collective imagination can indeed find more fitting and beneficial avenues for this investment.

This is not a debate fuelled by a podcast episode or a passing trend. This is about the very essence of St. Davids.

I urge our lord mayor and regional councillor to engage with the community genuinely and to ensure that our beloved village is treated with the respect and care it deserves.

In a world ever-leaning toward rapid urbanization, let's not lose the charm and soul of our unique spaces. Let's be thoughtful, inclusive and sensitive to the needs and emotions of our community.

Let St. Davids be an example of how progress and preservation can harmoniously coexist.

Chris Salvatore
St. Davids

Oops, a sign of the times

Dear editor:

I came across this bent over street sign while riding my bike one day last week.

I have no idea when it happened or who did it, but it appears that both the stop sign and the street signs on the corner of Chautauqua Park were victims of a hit-and-run.

A neighbour, who lives on Circle Street, alerted the town to the damage and it was quickly repaired.

Gabrielle Jones
NOTL



vehicle apparently bent over this street sign in Chautauqua but the town made it right quickly. SUPPLIED

Why not unite the Jewish and Muslim communities?

Dear editor:

I am neither Jewish nor Muslim, but I applaud the attempt of Alana Hurov to form a local Jewish community, ("As war rages, Jewish woman seeks solace in her community," The Lake Report, Oct. 19).

However, think how much more beneficial it could be if she formed a Jewish/Muslim community.

Because parents all want the same for their kids: peace, safety and freedom to practise their religion, while children just want to play, have fun and make friends with everyone.

Many years ago, we were on a hiking holiday in Turkey when we were stranded in a remote mountain village.

We were able to find tea, which the local men of the village shared with us on a rough wooden trestle table beside the wood-burning stove.

The local imam, who was invited to join us, offered to lead us through a Muslim service in the local mosque.

After they had found a variety of head scarves for the six women and we had all abandoned our hiking boots, we were proudly led

into the mosque.

With our bilingual English guide as interpreter, we followed a typical service.

The theme of the message was that we could all live together in harmony if we just listened and tried to understand the other point of view.

In our free, multicultural country, maybe we could establish a Jewish/Muslim movement where we could "listen and try to understand the other point of view."

Why not lead the way in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

Hazel Milne
St. Davids

Direction of Glendale development will affect town of NOTL forever

Dear editor:

I want to applaud Brian Marshall for his Oct. 19 column, "Embracing Glendale through a more inspired design," where he questioned the rationale of approving four highrises up to 25 storeys high on the White Oaks property.

He went on to ask how equitable it is to have Niagara on the Green serve as a "sacrificial lamb" for this type of metropolitan development.

He recognized how such changes will inevitably alter the Niagara on the Green neighbourhood and landscape.

As he said, it will stand out as an "island of typical GTA urban suburbia isolated from the rest of the town by its completely different character and severed from the rural/natural landscape of Niagara-on-the-Lake by dint of the development's dominant, up-thrusting, inner-city design."

Not only will this design alter the Glendale neighbourhood, I believe it will permanently alter all of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This issue is not isolated to just the Niagara on the Green area. It impacts us all.

As we see NOTL's population increase in size and expand in future years, the



A rendering of the proposed highrise condo towers at White Oaks in Glendale. FILE

settlement areas in NOTL will eventually blend together where the borders will be indistinguishable, just as we have witnessed elsewhere in the Niagara region.

So we need to ask ourselves if this is how we want to grow.

Similar to Mr. Marshall, I am not opposed to development in Glendale; however, the White Oaks proposal, in my opinion, significantly conflicts with the collective cultural and tourist-focused reputation on which our community thrives.

Town leaders have an opportunity to envisage and approve a future for all of Niagara-on-the-Lake that preserves the historical feel of our buildings, fosters community pride and encourages further tourism as a destination that differs

from other communities.

Furthermore, they need to ensure that future development is aligned with the Glendale secondary plan to "establish a preamble to Old Town that reinforces and enhances Niagara-on-the-Lake's image to visitors."

As Mr. Marshall wrote, development should "integrate Glendale into the general NOTL community that reaches out into the natural and rural character of our landscape" that we know and love.

Anything that deviates from this is shortsighted and detrimental to our whole NOTL community.

These monumental decisions will impact the future of our town forever. Let's do it right.

Lianne Gagnon
Niagara on the Green

With Pan Am bronze, St. Davids boxer continues Olympic quest

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

St. Davids boxer McKenzie Wright arrived home from the Pan American Games on the weekend with a bronze medal and a promise to herself that she will do everything possible to land a spot on Canada's 2024 Olympic team.

When she left for South America more than five weeks ago, her goal was to finish in the top two at the Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile, and automatically guarantee herself a spot in the Paris Olympics next summer.

She fell just short of her quest, losing in the semifinal to a U.S. fighter, but making her mark for Canada in just her second appearance on the international stage.

"I was so close at these Games that I have to keep going. I've evolved so much in such a short time," she told The Lake Report. "I believe I can qualify."

"Right now, the goal is Paris. I have no other sights right now, it's only Paris."

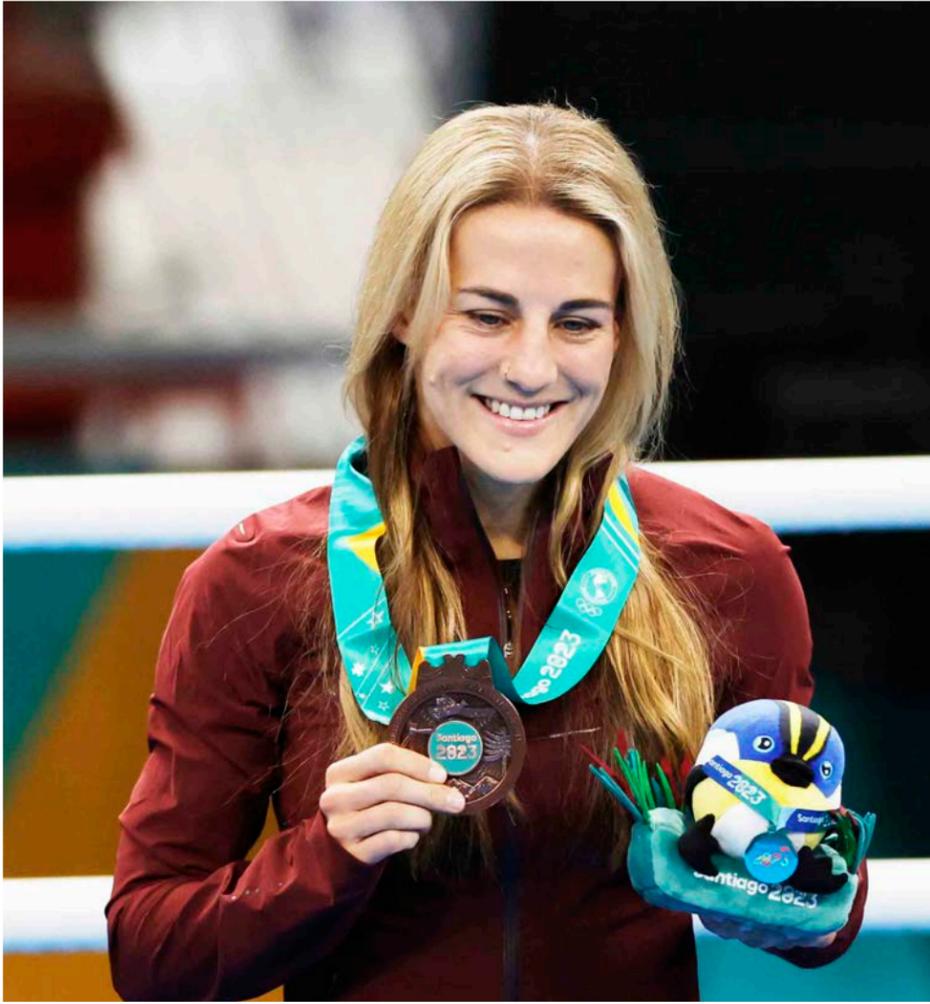
Wright, 33, who graduated in nursing from Niagara College last spring, feels ready to compete at the top international level.

"I have the boxing skills, now I just have some fine-tune adjustments to make," she said.

"The only way for me to keep improving is to keep competing at the highest level in the most challenging fights."

"If I can keep gaining this international experience I will continue to thrive."

She noted her 50-kilogram division had the largest pool of athletes, so to come away with bronze



Bronze medallist McKenzie Wright of Canada celebrates during the medal ceremony at the Santiago 2023 Pan American Games. She has her eye on competing in a March tournament in Italy to try to qualify for the Paris Olympics. ANDRES PINA/SANTIAGO 2023

was a major accomplishment.

"In this game, anything can happen. I feel like I was a bit of a dark horse and may not have been expected to make it too far" because of her limited international exposure.

And to come home with a medal "was a great milestone for me."

There are still two more international tournaments at which she could qualify for Paris, starting with one in Italy in March. The top four fighters there will earn Olympic berths.

But before that happens, she must retain her spot on

the Canadian team.

"It's pretty cut-throat. Even though I won my spot on the national team only in June and with my great showing at the Games, I already have to defend the title in five weeks."

That tournament is in December in Montreal. "These are 'Olympic team qualifiers,' meaning they are used to choose our Olympic team," she said.

The Canadian championships aren't until next year, but they wouldn't be Olympic qualifiers, she said.

So, she's looking forward to Montreal. "I feel like I have evolved

so much in the last five weeks that I'm excited to bring this elevated version of myself to the ring."

"It gives me good, competitive ring time, which only keeps preparing me for the world qualifiers."

She still has her nursing "board exam" to write but expects to put that career on hold while she pursues her Olympic dream.

So, for now, her life will focus on training and preparation.

Prior to the Pan Ams, Canada's boxers spent three weeks working out at altitude in Bogota, Colombia.

"Training with what

felt like no oxygen at high intensity was tough but what I found even more challenging was the mental game," she said.

Every other day there were sparring matches "that felt like full-out fights" against world medallists and past Olympians.

"It was a huge learning curve and there are times where you feel pretty discouraged, but pushing past those moments and taking the lessons was the most valuable experience I could ask for. I learned so much."

All those challenges were worth it to have the chance to fight for Canada at the Pan Ams, she said.

And when she got to Santiago, she made sure to absorb and enjoy the experience of representing her country.

Among her cherished memories: Waiting in the tunnel preparing to enter the arena.

"I've had close to 100 ring-walks. It's always a little nerve-wracking but nothing could have prepared me for this one," she said.

"I'm standing there with my coaches and the usher to walk me to the ring reciting my affirmations, trying to stay focused."

"Then, the stadium starts roaring for the fighters to come out, the lights are going, there's smoke, the announcer is speaking in Spanish, music is blasting."

The excitement helped calm her nerves so she could enjoy the moment.

"I'm giving my team high-fives all around because I'm ready. As soon as I hear my name and walk out to the crowd I couldn't help but crack the biggest smile," she recalled.

"It was the most excited

and most alive I've ever felt in my whole life."

Her parents Judy and Dow Wright travelled to Chile for the Games.

Wright said she felt lucky to have them on hand to share the experience.

"They understood that I could be out in the first round so I was really happy to have gotten three fights for them to come to, instead of one and done," she said.

"They really got into cheering for the whole team."

Wright also heard from a lot of people back home who followed her progress.

"The support from back home is huge. I was away for almost six weeks so to hear from home just makes me feel like people care and it's exciting that they're on this journey with me," she said.

"I'm representing Canada, but I also feel I'm representing Niagara, so for everyone to send their messages was really encouraging."

"All of Niagara and NOTL believed in me and fundraised for this opportunity so I'm really proud that I could have a medal to show for it."

As a woman competing in a tough sport, she has some advice for other female athletes, whether in boxing or other pursuits.

"Take advantage of every opportunity. Women's sports have come so far in the last 10 years, especially in boxing. So there are a ton of opportunities I never had that are helping girls to develop themselves," she said.

"Sparring camps, inter-club sparring, every tournament – be as busy as possible and it'll help you make connections in the sport and also make friends."


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Inconsistent effort mars Preds' weekend

Kevan Dowd
The Lake Report

A mixed-bag of on-ice efforts saw the Jr. A Niagara Predators finishing Sunday afternoon with three out of a possible six points from their first three-game weekend of the season.

The Predators started strong Friday night, crushing the Northumberland Stars 7-1, but it wound up being their only win of the weekend.

A 4-2 loss on the road to the Tottenham Railers followed on Saturday, but Sunday's game proved to be the weekend's biggest surprise.

Facing the North York Renegades in Virgil Sunday afternoon, the Predators held their own against the top team in the Greater Metro Hockey League's south division. While unable to capture a W, the team took the Renegades into overtime before suffering a disappointing loss.

They still skated away with one point.

"It was a good game and I think the fans enjoyed it so that's good for the support. I said to the guys, this is the best team in the league and you guys played with them," said Predators head coach Kevin Taylor.

"The biggest disappointment about this game was (Saturday) night's performance. We could've come out of this weekend with five points."

Niagara's Ethan Culp opened the scoring halfway through Sunday's game, but the Predators remained in the lead for just three minutes. Luca Fernandez put his team back out front at the 7:21 mark of the third



Niagara Predators and North York Renegades react very differently after the home team's Luca Fernandez scored to give Niagara a short-lived 2-1 lead. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

period and the Renegades tied it late.

The three-on-three OT proved the Preds' undoing. With North York's top players all on the ice, it took just 26 seconds for them to notch the winner.

"Their top three guys are the three guys. They have speed," said Taylor. North York also has a full bench, he added.

"Our top three guys, you can tell they're a step behind because they're tired. We've been short-benched all weekend."

As early as Friday Taylor was talking about their eventual match-up against North York.

"We can't bring any little bad habit. We have to be perfect," he said. "They have a guy (forward Christopher Rende), who in nine games has gotten 35 points. We can't allow them to walk around like they have been with other teams."

Niagara dominated the first period Friday night against Northumberland, with goals from Jakov Shevchenko, Shane Kaplan and Culp.

Reese Bisci and Cameron Savoie kept things rolling well into the second period before Northumberland got their only marker. Gehrig Lindberg netted his team's sixth of the night and Bisci finished things off with seven minutes to go.

"We had the game from start to finish," said Taylor. "But it's tough because when you dominate the game like we did, bad habits come up. I'm trying not to be negative but there were things I saw tonight that can't happen."

Perhaps those bad habits came out the following night where two second-period tallies from Fernandez were not enough to secure a second victory. The 4-2 loss to Tottenham left Taylor

with no explanation for what went wrong.

"I don't know, I really don't know," he said. "Our top guys didn't come to play and our guys who don't see as much ice time didn't prove that they wanted to be there."

Still, Sunday's performance was likely the highlight of the weekend for the Predators, even if the OT loss was a hard one to stomach.

"I just said to them, hold your heads up high, this is the best team in the league and we battled with them."

With the NOTL Wolves Harvest Classic minor hockey tournament on all this weekend, the Predators will hit the road for Saturday and Sunday games against Northumberland and the St. George Ravens.

They are back at the Meridian Credit Union Arena Friday, Nov. 10 to host North York again.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY

Extensive renovations were required after this residence outside London caught fire in 1992.

Last issue:

Category: THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY

Clue: Extensive renovations were required after this residence outside London caught fire in 1992.

Answer: What is Windsor Castle?

Answered first by: Bill Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Claudia Grimwood, Lynda Collet, Margie Enns, Susan Hamilton, Jane Morris, Bob Wheatley, Pam Dowling, Sheryl Christensen, Wade Durling, Jim Dandy, Richard Maxwell, Sylvia Wiens, Catherine Clarke, Nancy Rocca, Gail Benjafield, Margaret Tarnowski, Sheila Meloche,

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

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Poppy campaign a **tribute** to true freedom fighters

Continued from Front Page

Hill became involved with the project at its onset back in 2021.

She figures she has crocheted hundreds of poppies that are a part of installations at the museum, the historic courthouse on Queen Street and the Royal Canadian Legion branch 124 on King Street.

While her family has no direct connection to either the First or Second World Wars, her parents, having lived through the latter, instilled in her and her sister the importance of honouring those who served.

"They passed it on to us," she said.

The poppies, all 7,000 over the three installations, were crafted by a group of around 40 volunteers over the last three years.

About a dozen or so of those volunteers were on hand to help with the installation at all three sites. Workers from Davey Tree Expert Co. helped with the installation.

Hill is proud of what she brought to the table to help bring the project to life.



Volunteer Sue Henry says she didn't do any of the crocheting or knitting, but her hands have fixed hundreds of poppies to the netting. EVAN LOREE
Right: Volunteer Ann Lorenc helped hang the poppy displays at the Court House, NOTL Museum and Legion on Wednesday. RYAN BOISVERT

"Back in 2021, I actually taught someone to crochet," Hill said. "She wanted to help, but didn't know how."

Fellow volunteer Terry MacTaggart's father was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War and she takes part in the Poppy Project to remember him and all other veterans.

"His squadron was the first to go inside (the Nazi concentration camp) Belsen," MacTaggart said. "The pictures he had were unbelievable."

Her father did not talk

about his wartime experiences often, although when her grandson was tasked with a project for high school that involved speaking with a veteran, it was a different story.

"He talked about it to my grandson," MacTaggart said.

Sue Henry has been volunteering with the brigade for the last three years.

And though not much of a crocheter, she said she's probably affixed hundreds of poppies to the mesh curtain in her time with the brigade.

Much of Henry's family

has served in one war or another, including her 67-year-old brother, Donald Henry, who was a navigator in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

"I don't think thousands of young men would sign up the way they did in (the Second World War)," she said.

Henry added that she wants to see more funding for veteran support services, as many soldiers have come back from the war in Afghanistan and have had trouble adjusting to civilian life.

"Like everything, you've got to fight for every cent,"

she said.

Janet Guy agreed with Henry that there might not be as much support for a war effort today as there was in the 1940s.

"They don't know war," Guy said of today's youth.

She said war seems to exist only on the news now.

While today it's drone strikes and proxy wars, it was once more personal, with armed combat, she said.

Barbara Worthy, the museum's community engagement co-ordinator, spearheaded the project since its

inception.

She said the community has come to appreciate the group's efforts.

"It's amazing the support we have had," she said.

The installations will remain in place at all three sites until Nov. 13.

Along with the three installations in town, horses from Sentineal Carriages will be wearing blankets adorned with purple poppies to honour animals who served.

- With files by Evan Loree, Local Journalism Initiative, The Lake Report

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Room tax could net town cool **\$1.24 million**

Continued from Front Page

bylaw changes in January.

In a staff report, chief administrator Marnie Cluckie suggested staff implement some changes to the town's bylaw to address Foreman's concerns.

The changes give exemptions to short-term rental users who have booked before January 2024.

They also allow operators to apply the room tax as part of the room rate in order to get around the technological shortcomings of their management systems.

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn said operators will have to make it clear they are collecting a room tax for the town, regardless of how it appears on the receipt.

After some discussion, council voted in support of the proposed amendments.

Coun. Maria Mavridis suggested council defer the bylaw amendments until the short-term rental committee could start meeting in November.



It was Coun. Maria Mavridis's idea to levy the room tax on short-term rentals as well as hotels. EVAN LOREE

She backtracked after learning it would set back tax collections on short-term rentals.

Coun. Gary Burroughs shared her concerns that the amendments were not going through the committee.

Cluckie explained the short-term rental committee had a "different mandate" and would only be commenting on the town's short-term rental bylaw, not

the room tax bylaw.

Burroughs also raised concerns about a requirement for operators to maintain records that the town could audit.

"The town doesn't have the right to go and review their calculations of room rates," he said.

Freeborn said it was a "standard clause" and staff could solicit a legal opinion if necessary.

The decision to extend the room tax to short-term rental operators at the beginning of next year was first proposed by Mavridis at a meeting on May 23.

Under the current bylaws hotel operators collect a 2 per cent nightly tax from their guests on behalf of the town.

That rate is expected to rise to 3 per cent next year and to 4 per cent in January 2025.

The tax is shared equally with NOTL Tourism, which markets the town to tourists, and can be used to pay for infrastructure that supports the industry.

When the tax was first implemented in June 2022 most short-term rentals were exempt.

"It would be fair and consistent to apply the (tax) to all accommodation establishments," said the bylaw amendment in May.

According to Cluckie's report, the town could earn an additional \$1.24 million by applying the tax to all short-term rentals.

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Former diplomat embraces her **Niagara roots**

Margaret Huber helps Niagara Symphony Orchestra in latest collaboration

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

Margaret Huber is perhaps the only person in the region who could have given the Niagara Symphony Orchestra the counsel it needed.

The question: How can the Niagara Symphony, one of Canada's oldest orchestras, go beyond just the music, to attract new audiences to its upcoming concert collaborating with the renowned Japanese Canadian Taiko drum ensemble, Nagata Shachu?

"We are interested in exploring ways to present more diverse kinds of music to more diverse audiences," says symphony board chair, Larry Bourk, a well-known supporter of the arts in Niagara.

"When Brad (Thachuk,

the NSO's music director) arranged for the Taiko drummers to play with the symphony in November, we saw an opportunity to attract new patrons."

To make it happen he pointed his organization to his longtime friend and former colleague on the board of directors of Music Niagara, for guidance.

"Margaret Huber has a perfect combination of skills and experience to point us in the right direction. And we knew Margaret Huber had spent many years as both a trade commissioner and consul general in Japan. She is completely fluent in Japanese," Bourk says.

"A perfect person to help us, right in our own backyard."

After four decades on the front lines of Canada's

foreign service, Huber has become a firm believer in the power of cultural diplomacy to bring people and nations closer together.

So, she was pleased to nudge the NSO in the right direction.

"I'm delighted that the NSO is presenting a concert involving Japan, involving leading Japanese musical figures. These drummers have won many awards."

"I was asked to provide background on diplomatic practices. I was happy to do whatever I could."

It worked. The cultural consul from the Japanese consulate in Toronto, Masahiro Matsui, will attend the Nov. 19 concert and the NSO plans other Japan-focused activities to help celebrate the occasion.

Huber, 75, has called Niagara-on-the-Lake home



Wayne Gretzky and Margaret Huber in Prague, part of a large Canadian delegation that was vying to bring the 2010 Olympics to Vancouver. SUPPLIED

for almost 30 years. But her roots in Niagara go much deeper.

At the age of four, the youngest of six siblings, she arrived with her parents, fleeing the world war, from what is now Croatia.

The family settled with relatives in Port Colborne, her father working for a family shoe company.

Huber believes it was her early upbringing that pushed her toward diplomatic service.

"I had a foreign background," she pauses thoughtfully (as diplomats often do), considering her response to the question: Why the foreign service?

"And as a student of history, I was aware of the importance of international relations. That was appealing."

She started during the era of Prime Minister Lester Pearson. "It was a very interesting time."

Huber says it was not necessarily a career meant to be.

After degrees in history at McGill and the University of Ottawa, and a gap year teaching English in Japan, she successfully applied to work in Canada's trade commission service.

"I thought I would stay in the job for five years," she says with a smile. "I retired 40 years later."

"Can you imagine, in my first job my travel budget was larger than my salary. I was in heaven."

After a posting in the trade commission in Manila, she spent two years of extensive full-time training learning the Japanese language. It led to early diplomatic positions in Ja-

pan, and later in her career, to the role of consul general of Osaka.

Along the way, she took on ever more senior roles, including ambassadorships in what is now the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Jordan, Iraq and as high commissioner in Pakistan.

Huber recalls one amusing highlight of her illustrious career.

"I was ambassador in Prague, and Canada was putting a bid forward there, to the IOC, for what became the Vancouver Winter Olympics."

"It was not a done deal that we would get it. In fact, it was a very close vote. We had a large delegation — including Wayne Gretzky.

"The picture that was taken at that time of me with Wayne Gretzky as the only one of hundreds I've taken with celebrities and leaders around the world, but it was the only picture that impressed the children in my family."

Toward the end of her foreign service career, Huber did a three-year stint as chief of protocol for Canada, a role in which she was responsible for all incoming and outgoing delegations and links with the diplomatic community in Ottawa.

"Throughout my career I got real pleasure in getting to know people," she says. "It is only by getting to know people that you can find common ground — how you can work together for common goals, either individually or with countries."

Throughout it all, Niagara was her anchor.

"When people asked what

my favourite part of Canada is, I would diplomatically name a number of areas across Canada. But my heart was in Niagara."

"Having a supportive family when you are traipsing around the world, it is like an anchor. Terrific to have that balance."

"I always called Niagara home, no matter where I lived."

Huber talks fondly of her large family, most still in Niagara. Of returning often for Fish Fridays at Minor Brothers, always eaten with friends and family in the park or by the canal. Of her memories of Port Colborne High.

(As a Port High alumna, Huber recently attended the 100th anniversary of the school and created a Century Scholarships and Awards Fund for deserving students.)

Since 1994 she has had a quiet, historic home in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"For a student of history, Niagara-on-the-Lake is absolutely fascinating," she says with enthusiasm.

"And for a student of diplomacy, we're right here on the border. You can practically throw a stone and hit the U.S. It helps you understand that geography matters."

Now, in her spare time, she tends to stay pretty close to home.

She is a strong supporter of the Canadian International Council, a platform for all Canadians to engage in global affairs, helping shape Canada's place in the world. She is on the board of a global health company. And she has spent a lot of time and resources on youth engagement.

She admits she feels very lucky to be where she is and having done what she has.

"Niagara has an amazing diversity of people. I find it fascinating. When the weather is good, I walk around this beautiful community. I like starting and ending at the museum."

It's clear that well-ordered thoughts of the world, of her life's experiences, are never far from Huber's mind. But you can also tell she's at peace, here in Niagara.

• For more information about the Niagara Symphony concert: *Taiko + Bolero*, a collaboration with the taiko drum ensemble, Nagata Shachu, Sunday, Nov. 19, at 2:30 p.m., at the Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines, go to niagarasymphony.com or call 905-688-0722.



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Comedian Ron James' mockumentary **seeks treasure** in NOTL



Ron James with Paul Sun-Hyung Lee at their Airbnb in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Sun-Kyung will be a guest in season two of James' comedy series "1 Man's Treasure." SUPPLIED

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

Ron James strikes comedy gold in Niagara-on-the-Lake with season two of "1 Man's Treasure."

Set to release in the spring of 2024, James and his crew began filming in Niagara in early October.

"Last year I had to carry the entire series myself, save for a couple of guest spots from people who live in Nova Scotia," James told The Lake Report.

The show "1 Man's Treasure" stars James as himself, a long-time comedian, who gives up his life of making people laugh on stage in search of a long-lost treasure.

"The main premise of the show is that I'm Ron James - the comedian that everyone knows - and I've hit the wall of midlife while being on the road. It's tiring and exhausting and I've caught the treasure hunting bug," he said.

Moving film production to southern Ontario for the second season opened up the doors to a wider talent pool and more opportunity, he said.

With a background in history too, Niagara proved the perfect place for James to explore.

"So I'm looking for what I believe is a legend that has some legs: the Golden Grail of Niagara. Two British soldiers deserted in 1813, stole the gold, buried it, were caught and before they were hanged gave out some clues about it," James said.

When it comes to filming in the region, NOTL is important to the season's main storyline.

"This treasure is unique to the War of 1812 and the Niagara Region so we couldn't shoot it anywhere else," James said.

While in town, James and the crew filmed around the area of Fort George and at Brock's Monument, but one stop in particular stands out to him.

"The Angel Inn, I think that was the best meatloaf I've ever had in Canada and I've been travelling the country for 25 years," he said.

Food aside, the beauty of NOTL caught his eye while filming.

"The view from Brock's

Monument is absolutely spectacular. I mean, it's got to be one of the best views in Canada," he said.

James added his admiration for the Niagara Parks Commission and all the work they have done at both preserving history and honouring Indigenous people in Canada.

Viewers can look forward to an excellent second season of the mini-series, featuring laughs and a good dose of history, James said, thanks to the help of a dedicated team including writer Thomas Conway, executive producer Lynn Harvey and director Mike Sycora.

"We're able to be funny in the way that we want to be funny. Networks — sometimes in their efforts to please all the chefs in the kitchen, some spirit is gone from the funny," James said.

Instead, James said, their spirit has not been reigned in: he compared the show to American comedy shows such as "Veep" and "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

Season two of "1 Man's Treasure" will be available to stream on Fibe TV in spring of 2024.

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Pumphouse exhibit shows the 'Power of Water'

Staff
The Lake Report

The untamed wilderness of Ontario, where waterfalls, winding rivers and vast lakes flow in all their might, will be brought to life at a new exhibition this November at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.

"The Power of Water," by artist Janet Horne Cozens, will run at the arts centre from Nov. 1 to 26 at the Joyner Gallery.

It is an homage to the beauty of the bodies of water in Canada, blending influences such as the Group of Seven and First Nations artists with the artist's print-making background.

"I draw profound inspiration from the heart of the wilderness, coupled with an acute sense of responsibility," Horne Cozens said in a media release.

Through her work, using colour, texture and form, she aims to show the consequences of climate change on these



"Cooling" by Janet Horne Cozens is one of the exhibit pieces. SUPPLIED

untouched landscapes, which she said are "invaluable" ecosystems. "Each brushstroke tells the story of water: a tribute to the natural world and a reminder of its fragility," she said.

Horne Cozens hopes the exhibition will encour-

age attendees to talk about conserving the land, sustainability and humanity's collective responsibility to the environment.

"Together, we can ensure future generations inherit a world where the wilderness waters continue to flourish," Horne Cozens said.

The public is invited to the opening reception on Sunday, Nov. 5 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Attendees can personally interact with the artist, view the artwork, and connect with fellow art enthusiasts while enjoying refreshments and appetizers.

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Across

- 1. Pulled a face (8)
- 6. Deeply felt (6)
- 9. Business combination (6)
- 10. Rain gently (8)
- 11. Orts (9)
- 12. Hangs around (5)
- 14. Undiluted (6)
- 16. Units of sound intensity (8)
- 18. Weird things (8)
- 20. Charge with a crime (6)
- 21. Expect (5)
- 23. Stopped (6,3)
- 26. Fighting axe (8)
- 27. Scheduled (6)
- 28. Public address (6)
- 29. Rule out in advance (8)

Down

- 2. Returned to office (2-7)
- 3. Power (5)
- 4. Murderous painter of "The Supper at Emmaus" (10)
- 5. Craved (7)
- 6. Calvary inscription (1,1,1,1)
- 7. Retired (4,2,3)
- 8. Team race (5)
- 13. Providing grounds for a lawsuit (10)
- 15. Bring into being (9)
- 17. Midlands cathedral city (9)
- 19. Conceited and snobbish (5-2)
- 22. Shout with joy (5)
- 24. Whimsically funny (5)
- 25. Sprint (4)

Crossword Puzzle

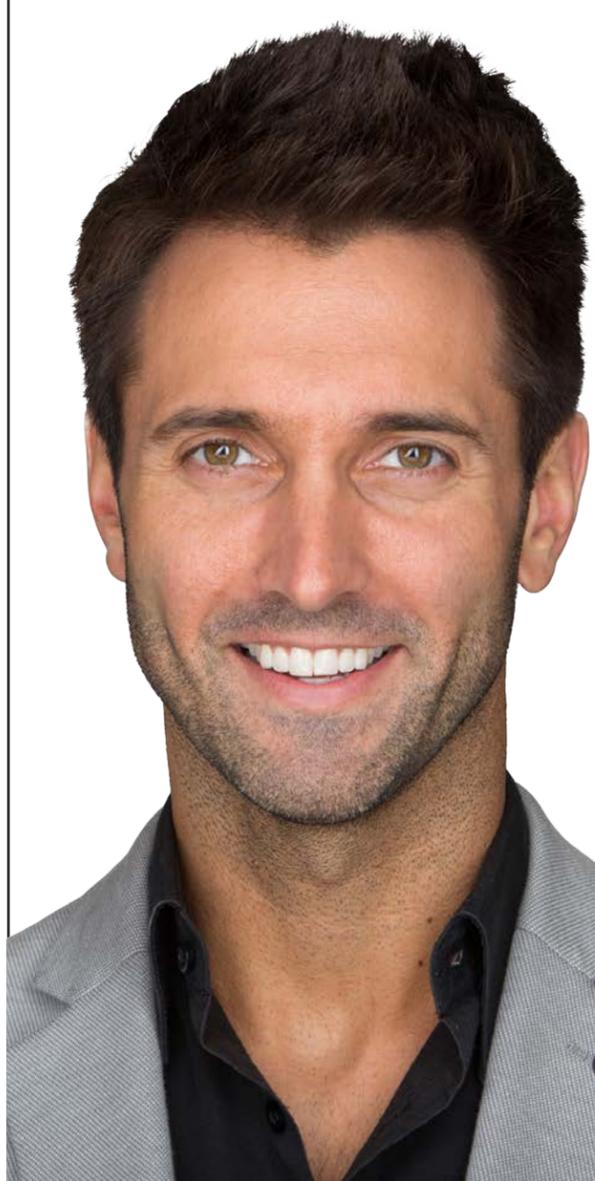
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Last issue's answers

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		3	2		1		
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Tracking electrons: The Nobel Prize in physics



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

In 2018, Canadian physicist Donna Strickland received the Nobel Prize for physics, alongside French scientist Gérard Mourou, her doctoral supervisor.

Her contribution was related to successfully increasing the power of brief pulses of laser light without destroying the laser in the process.

To do so, she stretched the wavelength of the laser beam and increased its amplitude (energy) before shortening the beam to its original wavelength.

In a sentence, it all sounds so easy, but as with most scientific and engineering ventures, the devil was in getting the details right.

Almost a hundred years earlier, Werner Heisenberg

was awarded a Nobel for his uncertainty principle as a fundamental property in quantum mechanics.

He showed it was impossible to determine both the position and momentum of an electron at the same time because the energy of any illuminating beam designed to determine those properties would destroy the electron.

Since 1927, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle has been widely accepted as one of the core properties of quantum mechanics.

His theorem was at the heart of last year's Nobel in physics. It was awarded to John Clauser, Alain Aspect and Anton Zeilinger for their work that proved entangled particles, such as electrons, remain entangled, whatever the distance between them.

This marked the triumph of quantum mechanics over Albert Einstein's challenge to this field of study: more than five decades prior, Einstein made his strongest claim that uncertainty and other weird properties of quantum mechanics made no



Physicist Anne L'Huillier was part of the team that won the Nobel Prize in physics in 2023, for creating ultra-short wavelength light beams. WIKIPEDIA

sense, even if the practical applications of quantum mechanics worked brilliantly.

This year's Nobel might well challenge Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, for if single electrons can be tracked in atoms and molecules, what was uncertain might prove to be certain.

But that's not why this year's laureates launched their studies.

Their goal was to develop illuminating beams with wavelengths short enough to identify and understand the behaviour of electrons, and hence the bonding properties, which bind atoms together to form molecules.

Until their studies, that goal seemed impossible.

The 2023 Nobel in physics was awarded to Anne L'Huillier, Pierre Agostini and Ferenc Krausz for creating ultra-short wavelength light beams, brief enough to illuminate electrons in atoms and molecules.

Success came first with L'Huillier's discovery in 1983 that an infrared laser light illuminating a noble gas, excited electrons in the gas, generating short wavelengths, which corresponded to harmonic frequencies of the laser light's fundamental frequency.

The trick was to combine those harmonic frequencies in such a way that wavelengths as short as several hundred attoseconds in length were created – short enough to study electrons.

That goal was reached independently by Pierre Agostini and Ferenc Krausz, with similar results.

(One attosecond is a millionth of a trillionth of a second in duration – the number of them in one second is the same as the number of seconds since the universe began – staggering and numbing numbers.)

Summing up the reasons for this prize, the Nobel committee stated that L'Huillier, Agostini and Krausz "demonstrated a way to create extremely short pulses of light that can be used to measure the rapid processes in which electrons move or change energy."

"L'Huillier discovered a new effect from laser light's interaction with atoms in a gas. Agostini and Krausz demonstrated that this effect can be used to create shorter pulses of light than previously were thought possible," the committee concluded.

The committee was less forthcoming about what practical results might come from these discoveries, except to measure the "tightness" of bonds in molecules.

Beyond the official comments on the achievements of the laureates is the potential to study, what for almost a century, was considered uncertain by Heisenberg.

That, for me, is the big but unstated story with this prize.

Will frame-by-frame resolution at the subatomic level ever reach a level at which two or more properties of electrons can be studied?

If that happens in the future – and the tools are getting better and better – perhaps what was uncertain may become certain with much better tools for observing electrons in real-time.

The seventh annual review of the Nobel Prizes began Nov. 1 with the physics prize. Chemistry, medicine, economics, peace and literature will follow.

Sign up with Debbie Krause (dkrause@notlpl.org) at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

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‘Solid Comfort’ at Niagara Camp

This photograph is captioned with “Solid Comfort: Lieutenant Cochrane after a busy day.” It shows the interior of a canvas tent that the officers and soldiers would have lived under during their training here during the First World War. There would be one to two officers per tent, unlike the tents for the regular soldiers who would sleep eight to a tent with their feet toward the central pole. They would be awakened by a bugler’s Reveille at 5:30 a.m. and the side walls of the tent would be rolled up tightly. After a quick wash and shave in troughs of cold soapy water, the men would fall in at the battalion’s parade group for officers’ report followed by a chaplain’s prayer for King and empire. After breakfast, there was an hour of bayonet fighting and physical training. At 9:30 a.m., they were dispersed for lectures, hands-on instruction and drills. At noon they were served a substantial hot meal followed by a 2 p.m. rest period and more training shortly thereafter. A light supper at 5 p.m. would be followed by free time until the first post at 9:30 p.m. By 10 p.m. all lights (candles) and cigarettes would be out by the sound of the bugler’s Last Post. Monotony of camp was broken by various special events such as manoeuvres, tattoos, VIP visits, visiting days (Sundays) and occasionally men were granted leave for three days. Various parades also included the Church Parade (Sundays), Bathing Parade, Sick Parade, Foot Parade, “Short-arm parade” or long route marches.

A few things that **confuse** me in NOTL and beyond



Ross’s Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

The days come and go, and the seasons gently change. We somehow manage to keep up with the many shifts, technologically, socially and geopolitically.

Occasionally, I just go with the flow, trusting our leaders to be right and to be good people. I hope they have our best interests at heart.

Our ever-changing media offerings are confusing, and with social media and the internet, how can we possibly keep up?

Are Taylor Swift and Britney Spears really the same person, just with different press agents and labels?

I thought an app was something to eat at a cocktail party, complemented by a nice glass of Inniskillin Pinot Grigio.

Upper Canada and Lower Canada confuse me. On a map, Quebec is above Ontario, but it is Lower Canada. Ontario is below Quebec, but our province was once Upper Canada. Maybe it has something to do with the St. Lawrence River system.

I recently had a surgical procedure and thank goodness the surgeon remembered my confusion about the medical words positive and negative. Positive is bad and negative is good.

When Dr. Cranford phoned me with my results, he kindly advised me that he had “good news” for me. Whaddagoodguy.

From the state of Maine, we hear reports of 58 rounds being fired. Why use the word round, instead of bullet or shot?

And here in our pretty little town, how do the talented servers at Dairy Queen get the vanilla and chocolate ice cream to make a delicious two-flavoured swirl? Magic. And then they can turn it upside down without dunking it in the chocolate sauce.

Over at Stone Road Pharmacy, how do Julie Taylor and her co-workers



Bring on the leaves! Longtime NOTL resident John Percheson declares “I love raking leaves.” Maple, oak, whatever. What a sense of achievement, and a sense of temporary triumph over Mother Nature. At least until the next big wind. ROSS ROBINSON

get stripes in the Stripe toothpaste. Beats me.

When we ask a young person if they would like a ride, they respond, “I’m good.” I don’t care if they are good or bad, just if they need a lift.

Will the new welcoming gateway at the corner of Queen and Mississagua be officially unveiled before the first winter snows fly? Let’s cut the ribbon soon.

And every day I go past the old and decaying

Parliament Oak Public School site. It gets sadder by the month, even though somebody is being paid good money to cut the large lawns every week or two.

C’mon, let’s make a decision. Progress awaits and demands political will.

Watching the Rugby World Cup final game at the Sporty with friends, we loved the total lack of gambling (not gaming!) ads as the All Blacks of New Zealand and the Springboks

of South Africa battled it out.

Speaking of pervasive gambling ads, how can we expect anything else from the National Hockey League. As my colleague at The Lake Report intuitively noted, the surname of the president of the NHL is Bettman. Get it?

And not a word of whining when the referee made a bad call. It happens and the game goes on. Good calls and bad calls even out over

a season.

Watching the world’s best rugby players, I wonder where are the tattoo sleeves and gold chains. And why are there no weird end zone celebration dances?

The big unknown to me was the advertisement selling Guinness 0.0 Non-Alcoholic Beer. Please, folks, is nothing sacred?

Mess with many things, but don’t mess with Guinness.

But I ramble.

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Perennials – to leave them or to **cut them back?**



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

Sometimes, too much information can just make things more confusing. It can leave you wondering: which way is the right or the best way? How can two opposing opinions both be right?

Over the past few years, gardeners have been increasingly encouraged to leave more “debris” (perennial leaves and stems) in their gardens over the winter months. There are several reasons for this.

The first reason is that leaving the existing stems of your perennials in place helps to protect the crown of the plant for the winter.

The second reason is that allowing the perennial leaves to decay into the soil over winter provides nutrients and food for the plants.

The third, and most important, reason is that many perennials provide winter food and shelter for birds and beneficial pollinators, therefore protecting them throughout the cold winter.

We have become much more aware of and sensitive to the need of pollinators in our world. It only makes sense, doesn't it?

Now, enter the Asian jumping worms: another newer invasive species in Ontario.

The first documented case in Canada was in 2014, in the Windsor area, but instances of these feisty worms have increased sharply since 2021, especially in the Toronto area.

There are at least 16 known species of jumping worms (a.k.a. snake worms) currently in Canada.

So, what makes these



A jumping worm. HELEN PHILLIPS/ERIN CAMERON/CANADIAN COUNCIL ON INVASIVE SPECIES

worms an invasive species?

Invasive species are introduced species whose introduction or spread negatively affects the environment, economy and/or society, including human health.

These worms have travelled far from their origin point in Japan and the Korean peninsula and have spread at an alarming rate since making landfall in North America.

From November to April, they are in the cocoon/larval stages before emerging in a wriggling mass in May and June as juveniles.

From July to October, they continue to grow longer and plumper than most earthworms and can reach a length of up to eight inches long.

Their name comes from their ability, when threatened, to thrash wildly from side to side (also giving them their nicknames the snake worm or the crazy worm).

These invasive worms are heavy feeders and out-compete other earthworms. Because they are heavy feeders, they also poop a lot.

This is one of the main ways to determine if you might have jumping worms: the surface soil will have a texture resembling coffee grounds rather than soil.

This type of worm can be found in the top four inches of soil. Its castings degrade soil quality, leaving it inhospitable to many native plant species and susceptible to increased erosion.

As they are voracious eaters, jumping worms quickly consume the top layer of organic material, making it difficult for plants to remain rooted and allowing nutrients to be washed away by rain.

They upset the nutrient balance in the soil over time and they disrupt forest and garden ecosystems by displacing native organisms and by making the topsoil where they live less favorable for native understory plants.

Because they live near the surface of the soil, they are most often found in gardens, lawns and wooded areas where there is a lot of decaying, organic matter, such as fallen leaves or mulch layers.

One way of controlling the spread of jumping worms is not to leave too much decaying leaf debris in your garden.

This is where it gets confusing. Pollinator advocates recommend we leave as much debris in our gardens over winter as possible, while those studying jumping worms are telling us the opposite.

So, what should we be

doing this fall in our gardens – cutting our perennials back or leaving things be?

Here is what I suggest:

If any of your perennials had disease or pest problems this past season, it is best to cut them down and totally get rid of those leaves and stems. Example: peonies or phlox that had mildew on the leaves.

For perennials that still have their seedheads in place, leave these ones as is, so that they provide food and protection for the pollinator, especially native varieties. Example: coneflowers, black-eyed Susans and gaillardia.

Some pollinating insects will overwinter in the stems of the perennials. Instead of cutting the remaining perennials completely down to the ground, cut these plants back halfway and compost the top half. Therefore, you are still leaving some protection for those insects, but limiting the amount of debris on the ground. Cut down the bottom half of these perennials in the spring just before new growth begins emerging at the base.

No one ever said that gardening is easy!

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

Obituary

Deborah Eke



Eke, Deborah
October 29, 2023

With her family by her side at Hospice Niagara, Debbie passed peacefully into heaven on October 29, 2023, after an illness. She is survived by her soul mate and husband of 50 years, David. She was the loving mother of son Darren (Carmen) and daughter Sarah (Michael) Pillitteri, and cherished grandma and

gemma to Rosie, Anais, Lucas, Leo and Sophia. Debbie was born in Nottingham, England and moved with her family to St. Catharines as a child. She is predeceased by her mother, Elsie, and her father, Dennis. Her devotion to her family and faith in God were the centre of her life. Debbie had many life passions and pursued them to the fullest. A love of flowers and her garden led to Debbie's 'second career' upon retiring from General Motors, after a successful 28-year career. She worked at both Regal Florist and Garden Centre, and with the Van Noort Flower Studio. Debbie's passion bloomed into the establishment of her Niagara-on-the-Lake Flower Company, during which time she brought joy and comfort to the community at large with her creations, supporting many weddings and celebrations of life. Debbie's love of people rooted her in community and volunteerism. She was a life-long member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church where she served as a Sunday school teacher, church Elder and Clerk of Session. During her time as a volunteer at Upper Canada Lodge, she recognized the growing need for seniors' and palliative care. This led Debbie to return to school, where she earned certificates in both Palliative Care (Niagara College) and Thanatology (Centennial College). Debbie felt blessed to have been a volunteer member of the team in 'Day Hospice Care' in St. Catharines. Working together, with the support of many in the community, the team was able to establish the residential portion of Hospice Niagara. She was a passionate volunteer of Hospice Niagara for 20 years, during which time she served as a board member and chair of the annual 5 Car Draw fundraiser. In her final days, embraced by the compassionate care of the Hospice Niagara team, Debbie was at peace. Comforted in her belief of living with "faith over fear", she remarked how life comes full circle and how no good deed goes unrewarded. In keeping with her wishes, Debbie's family will receive visitors at Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St. Niagara-On-The-Lake, on Thursday November 2nd from 5pm – 8 pm. A private family funeral will follow at a later date. The family would like to thank the oncology team at Juravinski Cancer Centre, the teams at Greater Niagara General Hospital and Niagara Health, and Hospice Niagara. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to Hospice Niagara would be greatly appreciated. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.



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