

The Lake Report

Vol. 2, Issue 15

Niagara-on-the-Lake's first independent newspaper

April 18, 2019

Protesters not stirring up much support in old town

Business owners and visitors on Queen Street are more tired than angry about horse carriage activists

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Opposing protesters in the horse and carriage debate in Niagara-on-the-Lake made another stand on Queen Street Saturday afternoon. Proponents on both sides of the ethical fence were out in full force in Old Town.

Locals for Carriages, a counter-activist group supporting Sentineal Carriages, arrived at the corner of King and Queen streets early to claim the spot and

ensure the protesters had to relocate, said Jennifer Jones-Butski, co-founder of Locals for Carriages.

Over the afternoon, about 30 members of Locals for Carriages showed up to support the Sentineal family's business and make it clear that they don't want the protesters in town anymore.

Eric VanNoort was dressed in a horse costume for the cause, advocating for the horses by holding a sign with the message, "Let me



NOTL resident Eric VanNoort, a horse carriage supporter and member of support group Locals For Carriages, wears an inflatable horse costume to counter-protest against an activist group that has been protesting the carriages in town. RICHARD HARLEY

earn my keep."

The activist group At War for Animals Niagara has claimed the corner of King and Queen for previous demonstrations as that is where Sentineal Carriages has been picking up riders for more than 25 years.

Members of animal rights

group were seen holding their signs on corners all the way down Queen Street.

Laura Sentineal, owner of Sentineal Carriages, said she has no issue with the peaceful protests.

"Standing across the street with signs, that's fine. A little distance, I would like a little more distance,

but having a bit of a distance makes everyone safer and a little more comfortable," she said.

The Lake Report spoke to visitors, residents and shop owners during the protest, many of whom said they either weren't interested or had no issue with the protest taking place.

Kathleen House and Ian Daley, visiting from Mississauga, said members of the activist group weren't hurting anyone by holding signs and making their point peacefully.

After understanding specifics about speciesism

Continued on Page 3

No cause determined in Colaneri winery blaze

Building undamaged, storage trailer destroyed

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Heavy smoke billowed over Colaneri Estate Winery Tuesday afternoon after a storage area behind the main building caught fire.

No one was hurt and the cause of the fire is not yet

known, according to Niagara-on-the-Lake deputy fire chief Nick Ruller.

Wooden skids in a large storage area outside of the winery caught fire, he said.

Firefighters decided to protect the main building and focus on the large outside storage area, he added.

Fire services arrived at

the scene three minutes after the dispatch and the blaze was extinguished in under 30 minutes.

The owners of the winery declined to comment.

In an interview with The Lake Report Wednesday morning, Ruller said the fire isn't considered suspicious.

A 53-foot tractor-trailer,

which was used for storage, burned out completely as well as another outbuilding, said Ruller.

In a Facebook post, the owners of the winery said Colaneri's main building was untouched and the winery will remain open.

"We wanted to give you an update and express our sincere thanks to everyone who extended their well wishes to us. Nobody was injured and we were very blessed to have the wind on our side," reads the statement.

Photos on Page 6



Thick black smoke rises above Colaneri Estate Winery on Tuesday. PHOTO COURTESY KIM DOUCETTE-PARROTT

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Political expert decries hate posters

Alt-right movement on the rise in Canada, though most citizens still embrace newcomers, professor says

Richard Harley
Editor

While anti-immigration posters being placed around Niagara-on-the-Lake aren't considered hate crimes in a legal sense, Niagara Regional Police and a political science expert both say they are concerning and hateful.

"In my view they are hate-oriented types of posters," says John Shields, a professor of politics and public administration at Ryerson University. "They're here to sort of identify particular groups in society as being unwelcome."

"They probably don't fall under hate laws per se, in that I think hate laws are a little bit more legalistic in how they define certain things, but clearly I think the intent of this is to talk about, you know, the 'threat to white society' and the threat that's posed by the arrival of newcomers through the immigration system."

Another anti-immigration flyer was put up on the kiiosk outside the NOTL post office last week. It's the third time in recent weeks that such posters have appeared in various locations in town.

The latest flyer includes a 2018 Toronto Sun column about Omar Khadr and handwritten political commentary critical of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. It also says: "Multiculturalism" is destroying Canada and its European-Christian heritage. Wake up Canada.

Niagara Regional Police Chief Bryan MacCulloch said a detective who specializes in hate crime investigations has examined one of the offensive posters and determined it doesn't violate the law.

"While the ideology expressed in the poster is certainly anti-immigration in nature, it does not meet the

threshold of a hate crime," MacCulloch said in a statement to The Lake Report.

However, the posters are "meant to be quite unwelcoming to new groups," Shields said in an interview.

"And obviously it can sort of spur certain types of emotions within (alt-right) groups, that could result in negative attitudes towards newcomer groups, and even more unwelcoming kinds of actions or gestures."

Hateful propaganda is not new in Canada, though he said it seems more prevalent today, perhaps a reflection of the political climate in Europe and the United States.

"I think it's always been with us to some degree, but I think we've seen more of it happening in recent years. I think this has been spawned by — especially developments that we've seen in places like Europe, and also in the United States under Trump, where there has been sort of a rise of right-wing populism."

He think it's also "kind of a consequence of many people growing more kind of uncertain about their economic circumstances to some degree."

"You know, it's the process of globalization, the growth of precarious work and so forth, and people are looking for, I guess, scapegoats to sort of blame for the changing situation. And immigration is a fairly easy target, especially if the immigrants look differently from mainstream white society."

Shields recently returned from a research retreat that touched on the topic of "migrant resilience."

"How do immigrants become resilient in this kind of context of changing? Certainly one of the issues is that in order for immigrants to settle in society, we need a welcoming society. You can

have great policies, you can have great programs and so forth, but if you don't have a welcoming society, that's going to make it far far more difficult for immigrants to successfully settle."

Policies can help to some degree, Shields said, and in many cases create a more welcoming environment. "But if you've got a lot of anti-immigrant sentiment, and that sentiment is starting to grow in society, it creates a real sort of challenge in terms of attracting immigrants and successfully settling newcomer populations."

He said what he finds "really interesting" is that in many areas, especially smaller rural communities, there's an increasing attempt to actually attract newcomers.

"And that's because within these areas you get a lot of young people who are moving to big cities. They don't want to stay in the smaller communities any more, the population is aging very rapidly. And this is causing a real question about who's going to be part of the labour force in these communities."

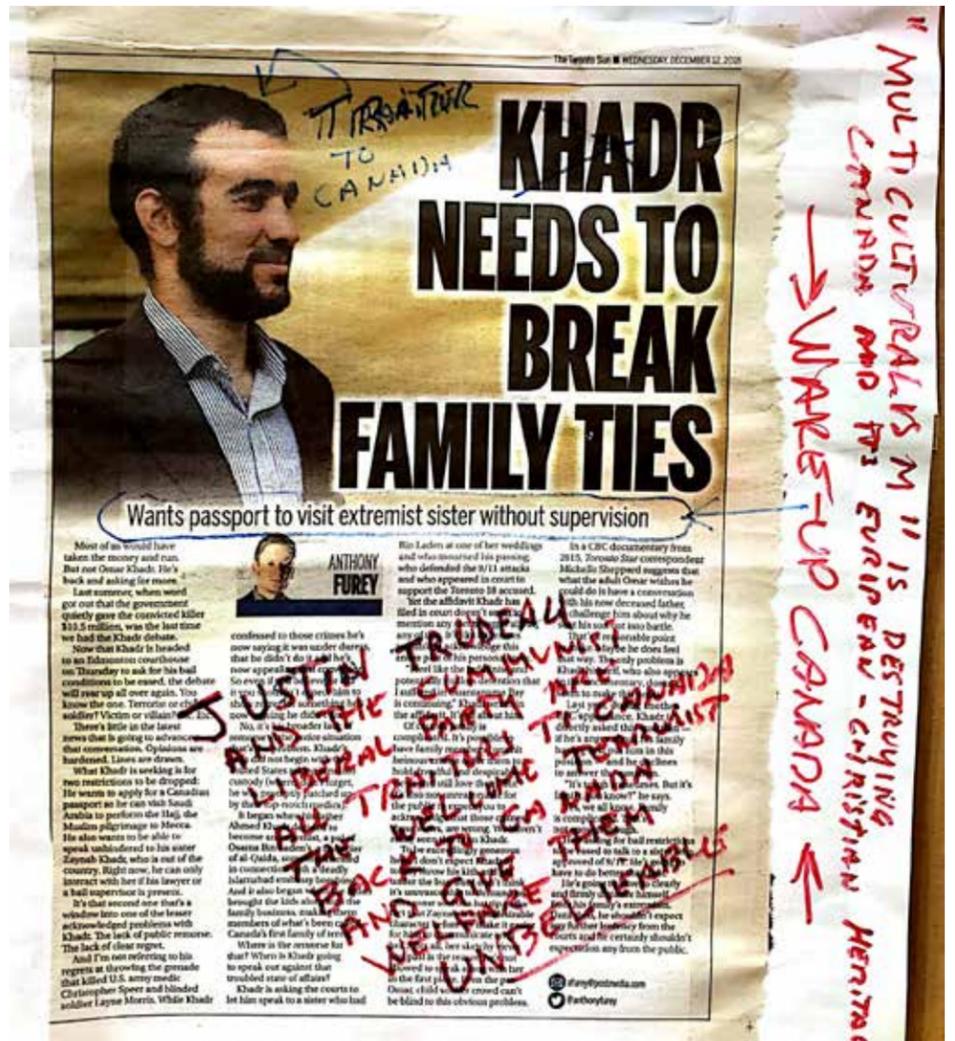
In York Region, police are investigating after similar posters were placed at a high school in Newmarket.

Shields thinks the police in Niagara should be taking the matter seriously.

"I think (Niagara police) should definitely be looking at this and, you know, trying, because (the people who spread similar material) start with this kind of talk and then move quickly into something that's much more pointed and much more threatening in its nature."

But there is also a need to respect free speech, he said.

"This is clearly anti-immigrant, but there is a certain degree — well, more than a certain degree — of free speech here."



A poster taken down last week from the bulletin board outside the NOTL post office.

The Lake Report understands publishing these images may offend some people. We believe it is important for people to see them to understand the full extent of the alt-right movement creeping into Niagara-on-the-Lake. This type of racist propaganda is not condoned by TLR.

People have a "certain licence" to make their views known, Shields said.

"But it's when it goes over another line where it starts targeting people and starts using more threatening kinds of language that it begins to violate the actual hate laws. This is repugnant in my view, but it probably is not within the official definition of hate."

The people behind groups like this tend to walk a fine line between what they can and can't say legally, Shields said.

"I think what you'd find is a lot of people that are behind groups like this may also be engaged in other activities that do push them over the line at times."

He said it is "probably a fairly small group of people who are doing it."

An Ekos research report released Monday said 42 per cent of Canadians surveyed indicated they

think there are too many immigrants of colour coming into the country.

"So, you can see some of this sentiment is beginning to catch on in Canada," said Shields.

"Now, most people don't agree with that. It is also divided by party, so that a large number of people who identify with the Conservative party actually hold that kind of view. And I think in the next run-up to the federal election — and the federal election — that we're going to see a little bit more of this, and certainly immigration becoming a bit more of a political issue that it hasn't really been in Canada over the past 20 or 30 years."

Most Canadians are still welcoming of immigrants, Shields believes.

"If you do general surveys, most Canadians still see immigration as very favourable."

"I think what (hate) does do is ... it begins to put a little bit of a dent into the welcoming environment. I think it depends how the rest of the population reacts to it," he said.

"There was a pretty visceral reaction to what happened in New Zealand, and I suspect that has really pushed some of this stuff more underground actually. There's such a revulsion toward what happened there"

in the anti-immigrant terror attack at two mosques.

"I think we've even seen it to some degree in the election that's been taking place in Alberta. A number of the more conservative candidates running with (Alberta Premier-elect Jason) Kenney have come out with some statements that have been quite provocative, right? And he's had to try to reign them in a bit."

"This kind of stuff can sort of give freer reign for people to say things that would otherwise be unacceptable ... You don't want to kill free speech, because that doesn't help things," he said.

Society needs counter-voices to denounce such behaviour when this happens "and to try to show that this is not where the mainstream of Canadian society is."

"They're trying to cultivate ideas, they're trying to use provocative images to push forward this idea that we're losing control of our country ... so if something happens in society, you know, there's some sort of violent act or something — or perhaps an act of terrorism — they'll try to say, 'Well, I told you so.'"





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NEWS 

Business owners say protesters messages 'getting old'

Continued from Front Page

- defined as discriminating against animals by assuming that humans are superior - Daley said he doesn't agree with the idea, adding he doesn't understand holding protests when the horses seem to be well taken care of.

"Anyone who is interested in (the protesters') viewpoint have had ample opportunity to get up to speed with it, and nobody cares. That's kind of the bottom line. They've made their point. Now they are just being very redundant,"

Laura Sentineal
OWNER OF SENTINEAL CARRIAGES

If it was a matter of mistreatment, House said she could understand the concern, but the speciesism argument just "seems ridiculous."

Kayla Kelman, manager of Allways Antique Photo at Queen and Victoria streets, said she didn't notice the protesters throughout the day, even though some were directly in front of her store. She said she had no problem with the group standing outside with signs.

At War for Animals Niagara has held a number of protests in Old Town, often on busy weekends throughout the summer.

On April 13 the group appeared on the street holding signs urging an end to speciesism and asking that horse-drawn carriages be banned. Vehicles with signs on their doors promoted the cause by driving



Activists from At War For Animals Niagara drove vehicles around downtown NOTL during a protest against horse carriages on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

up and down Queen Street during the demonstration.

Two Niagara Regional Police officers were there but said no trouble arose.

Const. Mike Malachowsky said the activist group informed the department that a large number of supporters were expected to participate.

"We met with both sides before it started ... It's been nice and peaceful, which is what we want."

Malachowsky said the protesters are not required to inform the police department when they will be protesting, but they often do so as a courtesy.

"Whenever something like this happens, they let us know ahead of time. They noticed there were going to be more people today, so they dispersed along the intersection."

He said this is the first time the group has spread out down Queen Street. "Just so they're not congesting."

Sentineal was on scene during the protest. She said the carriage company received a lot of support from residents and visitors, but said the issue is getting old. She said the protests did not appear to be having an impact on the day's business.

"Anyone who is interested in (the protesters') viewpoint have had ample opportunity to get up to speed with it, and nobody cares. That's kind of the bottom line. They've made their point. Now they are just being very redundant," Sentineal said.

She is concerned with the influx of vehicles to town for the protest. She said it's dangerous and thinks



Protesters stood along Queen Street with signs. RICHARD HARLEY



Niagara police Constables Mike Malachowsky and Russ Criddle were in Old Town Saturday during protests. BRITTANY CARTER



Locals for Carriages members like Jen Jones-Butski (co-founder) and Karen Taylor-Jones were still smiling through the day as the carriages operated during the protest. BRITTANY CARTER

the animal rights activists "would love for something to happen to the horses," to further their claims about the use of horses being unethical.

Members of the protest

group were approached several times over the afternoon, but they declined to comment. Volunteers directed The Lake Report to spokesperson Adam Stirr, who refused to respond.



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Editorial: Rooting out the hate in our midst

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

For several weeks now, we have reported on the appearance of nasty, racist, anti-immigrant posters around town.

In the past week, another ranting flyer was put up on the public notice kiosk outside the downtown post office.

Someone, or perhaps several people, small-

minded xenophobes, have surreptitiously gone about Niagara-on-the-Lake to spread their message of intolerance.

Political debate is one thing. Knock yourself out. If you despise Justin Trudeau, the Liberals or Doug Ford (though, we suspect the “folks” erecting these posters would be fans of the premier), by all means have your say.

But the hateful anti-im-

migrant rants, in a country of immigrants for goodness sakes, only serve to show how backward and ill-informed many people can be. Why are you so afraid of people who don't look like you, worship like you or come from the same part of the world as your ancestors?

It is disappointing, to put it mildly, that in 2019 such behaviour still exists. But as anyone who

is non-white or otherwise “different” knows, it isn't surprising.

However, it was gratifying that after our reports of the flyers were published, some NOTL residents spontaneously pushed back, posting their own pro-immigrant notices around town and on social media, and writing letters of support, which The Lake Report published.

The Niagara Regional Police and an expert we interviewed from Ryerson University both say the posters that have appeared in NOTL over the past few weeks do not cross the line into hate speech, as defined by Canadian law. They are abhorrent and repugnant, not illegal.

It's not new that some people hold racist or anti-immigrant views. But it's well documented

that many suspect the rise in right-wing populism worldwide has allowed more people to feel it is acceptable to spew venom against immigrants and people not like themselves.

What has been happening in NOTL might not be a hate crime, but there is no question it is hateful. And regrettable.

editor@niagaranow.com



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: James Tupman's letter on National Defence lands

While the Harmony Residents Group welcomes any discussion of what should become of the Department of National Defence lands (Town Council shouldn't sleep on wetlands, April 4, 2019), we believe that discussion should be based on the facts and the true intentions of our group.

James Tupman seems to believe our group wishes to keep the lands free of human activity to benefit homeowners. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our board fervently wishes that a natural heritage park be created on the lands for the betterment of everyone in town. We want to see refurbished trails on these lands where people can enjoy this unique property that includes the last stand of Carolinian forest on the Great Lakes and is home to

many species at risk. And we want to see school children coming to the lands to learn about everything from the cycles of the seasons to the needs of specific trees and wildlife. We also would like to see the park reflect the human history that has taken place there from the first indigenous people to settlers, to the War of 1812 and beyond. And more importantly, in response to Mr. Tupman, we want to give everyone greater access to the lake and not just, as he seems to fear, “a few well-to-do.”

We are not a “small, vociferous group.” We are a group that wants all parties involved to consider the importance of this land and how to best preserve it so future generations can enjoy it. Our vision is no secret. Anyone who wants to

read about it can go to our website: harmonyresidents.org to see our complete proposal.

And on the matter of the wetlands, Town Council has supported our idea of keeping the two holding ponds that remain from the old sewage treatment plant as the wetlands they are becoming. We have asked that this method of handling the decommissioning of the ponds be considered instead of filling them in because we want the best option for taxpayers as well as the environment. The wetlands are already important for species at risk, such as the snapping turtle.

We invite Mr. Tupman and anyone else with concerns to come to our annual meeting in the Simpson Room on Wednesday, May 22 at 7:00 p.m. One guest

speaker will be Bruce McKenzie who will talk about the process of transforming similar ponds in Grimsby into the successful Biggar Lagoons, a popular spot for everyone to enjoy.

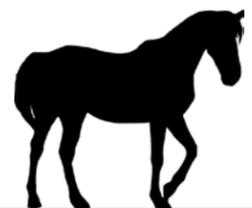
Finally, Harmony Residents Groups is just one of the voices speaking up on what should happen to this land. The Niagara Parks Commission does not own the land, as Mr. Tupman stated. The land will soon be returned from the Department of Defence's lease to Parks Canada. It is Parks Canada that will ultimately make the final decision on the land's use and it's vital that they hear from the community before it is too late.

Debi Goodwin
Harmony Residents Group
board member

Horse quips

By: Stephen Oprici

The foal did shudder,
At his mother's tiny udder
She fed on her fodder,
And she was a mudder.
If you're smiling now,
I'll tell you anudder.
My gelding has colic,
'Cause he's a chronic alcoholic,
I offer to call the vets,
But he'll ignore me, do shots of vodka.
And chainsmoke Saratoga cigarettes.
Whenever my gelding gets real sick,
I bring him to the horsepital.
All the staff are really nice there,
And quite horsepitabile.
I know a horsefly;
His name is Pegasus.
He's quiet during the day,
But is my fly-by night nemesis!



The Lake Report

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A foggy Wednesday morning in NOTL. SUBMITTED BY TONY CHISHOLM



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Back to the future: MacLean joins The Lake Report editorial staff

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Time flies when you're having fun. It's hard to believe that 43 years ago, in mid-April, I was starting my first job as a reporter-photographer for a small community weekly – in the Coldwater, Ont., bureau of the Orillia Journal.

That was the first stop on a community news career that saw me work at more than a half-dozen small, medium and large papers in jobs ranging from reporter to editor-in-chief.

Now, I'm embarking on a new journey, working with the young, energetic and talented staff of The Lake Report.



Kevin MacLean

Despite spending more than two decades in a variety of senior editing positions at Canada's largest newspaper, the Toronto Star, community papers remain close to my heart.

My wife May Chang and I were NOTL "weekenders" for almost 15 years and in 2018 built a new

home in Chautauqua, a wonderfully eclectic corner of town. Over the years we have made dozens of remarkable new and lasting friendships. That's the kind of town NOTL is.

This also is a great place to be a journalist – or a reader. NOTL proves regularly there is no shortage of news in small towns. And no shortage of a need for an independent and committed community medium to keep an eye on things – be they issues of politics, development or goings-on around town. The good, the bad, the interesting, the offbeat and everything in between.

I have closely watched The Lake Report since its inception last spring and

helped out periodically over the past couple of months when my part-time job teaching journalism at Ryerson University has permitted.

Launching a newspaper when the traditional media business model is in tatters takes guts. Ensuring it succeeds takes tons of hard work, but more importantly, readers and advertisers willing to support it. The Lake Report has that in spades.

I believe this paper already has shown it has the heart, pride and desire to bring the best and most diverse hyper-local news and features to you, the residents of NOTL.

Let's enjoy the journey together. It'll be fun.

OPINION: Let's ban protests in NOTL

On Saturday, I made my weekly shopping trip to Queen Street to be greeted by folks with posters and tarted-up automobiles protesting the horse drawn carriages. I met no local taxpayers holding signs.

Those that did were interlopers who probably pay no taxes anywhere! They were objecting to working horses doing that for which they were bred ... working! Something unknown to these protesting galoots.

Work to eat ... novel, right. They have no concept of the cost of maintenance required for food and board of these beautiful animals and their minders.

The alternative would be no need for the horse and extinction would be the ultimate fate of the horse and alternate employment, or unemployment, for their minder where they could party with the sign holders for they too would have no purpose.

It is time for the town to get to work and pass a by-law that bans all protest, for everything on the streets of our town's tourism district. There should be free and unencumbered mobility for



At War for Animals Niagara supporters protested in Niagara-on-the-Lake Saturday. Such demonstrations shouldn't be allowed, says letter writer Bill Cochrane Sr. BRITTANY CARTER

our visitors.

The horses and carriages are part of our heritage and an attraction for tourists and in no way is harmful to the horse. The sign holders are a detriment and a disgrace and will ultimately kill the tourist trade.

The solution is not to forbid the noble horse but the intruding layabout sign holders. Now, will Canada's only Lord Mayor and her councillors get on with their job of protecting the rights of local business owners, residents and the histori-

cal nature of the town or will they shilly-shally and merely rearrange the deck chairs and await the final transformation of our beautiful town into a Mississauga wannabe.

Bill Cochrane Sr.



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Smoke plume could be seen from kilometres away



PHOTO COURTESY OF KIM DOUCETTE-PARROTT



A blaze broke out at Colaneri Estate Winery Tuesday afternoon, destroying a storage unit and a tractor-trailer. The plume of smoke could be seen as far as the Queen Elizabeth Way. PHOTOS BY DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA/THE LAKE REPORT.



Summer's coming: Welcome to construction season

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Summer is on the way and a number of repair projects are set to begin in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

One of the biggest projects planned this year is major water main replacement on Queenston Road and reconstruction of Queenston from Airport Road eastward to Townline Road.

Total cost of the job is \$2,091,908.07, according to a town report.

The work, by Demar Construction Inc., will start in July and take about 18 weeks.

Norjohn Contracting's bid of \$427,715 won the

contract for paving work on another project.

That job includes milling and paving Read Road from Church to Lakeshore Road, Johnson Street from Mississagua to Gate Street, the Butler Street turnaround, Rye Park basketball court, Lakeshore Cemetery, Byron Street and reconstruction of the Niagara on the Green basketball court.

Construction will start in early May and will take around six weeks to complete.

Municipal clerk Peter Todd said the town usually goes with the lowest bidder.

If the town doesn't go with the lowest bidder,

"then we prepare a report to council outlining that, 'This is the reason we didn't take the lowest bidder,'" Todd said in an interview.

A third construction project, scheduled to start in April, includes installing sanitary sewer manholes and paving at Lakeshore Road and Dixie Street.

Among bids received from four construction companies for this project, Demar Construction Inc.'s was the lowest at \$777,295. It will take about nine weeks to complete.

Affected residents will be notified before any of the construction work starts.



A number of construction projects will soon be underway in Niagara-on-the-Lake. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

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A stinky situation



Carrots, sausages and other debris overflowed from a sewer last Friday on Mary Street, in front of RBC, Avondale and Backhouse restaurant. Usually tree roots cause sewer blockage but because there are not many trees on the street, something else caused the spill, said Tom Grundy, of the town's environmental services department. Problems also happen when the seasons change and the ground shifts, he said. The town usually deals with water leaks rather than sewage spills. The sewage blockage might have come from the Backhouse restaurant as produce, sausages and other items spilled out, said Grundy. A resident tipped off town workers about the leak. Operators were unblocking the sewer, re-establishing the flow to make sure the sewage remains underground. Grundy said the town might have to talk to owners of nearby businesses about flushing produce down the drain. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

Red Roof Retreat hosts annual pasta dinner

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Red Roof Retreat will hold its 17th annual fundraising pasta dinner on Sunday, April 28.

Pasta with a Purpose will take place at Thorold's John Michael's Banquet Centre. Doors open at 4 p.m. and the dinner starts at 5 p.m.

Tickets are \$30 per person, \$10 for children aged six to 12 years and free for children under five. Organizers expect the event will sell out again this year.

Established in 2001, the non-profit agency provides a variety of programs and services to children and young adults with special needs, and their families.

Last year's dinner raised over \$74,000. Donations help cover costs of different programs, such as respite care, the day program, summer camp and more.

"All these funds that we raise help keep the operating costs low for the families. That's what we're trying to do with all our



Karen Post, Red Roof Retreat's special events co-ordinator, is preparing for the centre's annual pasta dinner fundraiser on April 28. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

fundraising," said Karen Post, the organization's special events co-ordinator.

The dinner, which started at St. Vincent de Paul Hall in NOTL with about 100 participants, has grown into a regularly sold-out event with 360 guests attending each year.

As Red Roof's biggest fundraiser, the dinner will feature silent and live auctions as well as raffles and table auctions.

Post said there haven't

been many challenges while preparing and organizing for the dinner.

"We are very fortunate in the Niagara Region because we're near and dear to so many people's hearts. And everybody is very good to us," she said. "We have many supporters and they're always very generous."

Post says she loves the energy of the evening most.

"Everybody is there to have fun and to raise the

money and knowing the good that's going to come out of it," she told The Lake Report. "It's such a good-feel event because everybody is there to raise money. Everybody wants to see Red Roof Retreat offering the services that it does."

Among other fundraising events, Red Roof also holds a croquet tournament in June, Wine Run, Sunshine Express BBQ and more.

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We'd love it if you could include pictures of the food where possible, and of the family member who might have passed the recipe down. If there is any family folklore associated with the recipe, we'd love to hear that too. Maybe there's a certain occasion when it's always made, perhaps there's a funny or sad story to tell that relates to that particular recipe, or certain traditions that accompany it.

We will publish selected recipes regularly, and at the end of the year we'll compile all the recipes together as a book of NOTL family favourites. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to a local charity.

Please send your recipes, pictures and stories to: recipes@niagaranow.com

The top recipes will be published in an annual paperback book which will be available (in limited supply) to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake at The Lake Report office. This year's book (title uncertain!) will be released in the coming months!



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Tourism industry hates hotel tax, but others see it as essential

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake, like several other Ontario municipalities, is considering imposing a municipal accommodation tax.

And the idea of a hotel tax has provoked a strong negative reaction from local business owners and industry leaders.

However, in some jurisdictions that have implemented a hotel tax, there is a much different attitude.

Gordon Orr, chief executive officer of Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, said because half on any hotel tax has to be reinvested in local tourism, his organization is seeing a big boost in funding.

He also doesn't believe the tourism business will suffer immeasurably because of a municipal accommodation tax.

"People are going to come to your destination because you offer compelling, authentic experiential tourism assets," Orr told the Lake Report in an interview.

"As a matter of fact, I think it puts you at a disadvantage if you don't collect it," he said. "Because if you don't have the extra money to market the product or the destination, then that puts you at a disadvantage because there are other communities that do have those extra financial resources."

A number of Ontario municipalities have implemented a tourism tax. Niagara Falls, Windsor, Kingston, Belleville, Peterborough, Barrie, Huntsville, Timmins, Sault Ste. Marie, as well as larger cities like Toronto, Mississauga and Ottawa have approved or are already imposing the tax.

Provincial legislation allows municipalities to levy an accommodation tax

on hotels and short-term rentals and then share the tax revenue with a not-for-profit tourism agency. The tax money has to be spent on promoting and growing tourism.

NOTL has established a subcommittee of three councillors – Wendy Cheropita, Allan Bisback and Norm Arsenault – to revisit the hotel tax idea and recommend whether one should be instituted. Council has debated the issue a number of times in recent years but always rejected adding the levy.

Arsenault said if a tax is implemented, the town wants to spend the revenue on tourism-related infrastructure.

"It's a serious matter. We are taking income, hard-earned income out of the pockets of citizens,"

CARLO ROBAZZA
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER FOR
LAIS HOTELS PROPERTIES LIMITED

"Road construction, perhaps washrooms ... So it goes to specific purposes that would have benefits to the tourism industry as a whole," Arsenault said in an interview.

He said the town wants to have an open discussion on how the hotel tax could be implemented, if one is approved.

"Is it going to be a percentage, is it going to be a flat rate? A lot of details and whether we even need it, so we want to go down that road," he said. "We want to have a discussion with all the players."

Janet Johnson, president of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Bed and Breakfast Association, is strongly



The owners of the Prince of Wales Hotel are among those opposing any plan for a hotel tax. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

against the tax idea, saying the town hasn't done enough research on the matter. Johnson also said an independent agency should be in control of the other half of the tax revenue.

"It just doesn't feel well thought-out," Johnson said. "Until that changes, there is no way we would support it at this point."

"We feel that there's room for the town to get a little tighter on the way they operate. Let's do that, let's clean up our house," Johnson said, adding it's not a "them" against "us" issue.

The NOTL Chamber of Commerce hasn't changed its position on the matter since last year when Janice Thomson, the agency's executive director, voiced her opposition at a council meeting in August 2018.

"At this time, the introduction of the tax wouldn't be seen in a positive way by the Chamber of Commerce or its members," Thomson said this week.

While the number of tourists won't necessarily drop, it was the "immediate thought on the part of the town that this was money they could use for other things" that concerns the chamber, said Thomson.

"The first thing they need to consider is, is it the right thing to do and what would the benefits be locally and to the visitors as well," Thomson said.

For Tony Chisholm, president of the Friends of

Fort George and a cottage owner, categorizing all short-term rentals as Airbnb accommodation isn't right. He also suggested the town focus on enforcing a bylaw on unlicensed rental accommodations and if the town needs more money,

"As a matter of fact, I think it puts you at a disadvantage if you don't collect it,"

GORDON ORR
CEO AT THE TOURISM WINDSOR
ESSEX PEELE ISLAND

it could instead increase its licensing fee.

"If there is a tax implemented, it should be to pay for an extra bylaw officer to take care of the unlicensed cottages in town because that's a big problem," he said.

Chisholm said he doesn't believe tourists will stop coming to the town if the tax is enforced, but believes they won't stay for too long and won't shop as much.

When the idea of hotel tax was brought up last year, it was "disappointing," as neither the previous council nor town staff had done any research, said Bob Jackson, chief executive officer of Lais Hotel Properties Limited.

"Many of the conversations have been about 'How we are going to do this', not 'Why on earth would we do

this?'" he said.

Jackson also said the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis was hired before the first tax discussion was brought up to council to do research on how an accommodation tax would affect NOTL.

The report concludes that if a three per cent hotel tax was implemented in NOTL in 2018, the town would have 8,400 fewer visitors for the year.

"A hotel tax in one region may provide a good source of government revenue that does not cause much change in tourism, while a hotel tax in another may provide revenue, but simultaneously cause a decrease in demand for accommodations by reducing tourism in the area, thereby negatively impacting the accommodation industry," the report said.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake is one such region where a negative impact could occur, tourism for pleasure accounts for 72 per cent of their tourism."

In Windsor, a four per cent hotel tax came into effect on Oct. 1, 2018.

Orr, of Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, said there are indications his organization will see an increase in its base funding thanks to its share of the tax.

"The benefit of what we're doing is we are not going to the general taxpayer to ask for more money to do marketing for

the region. The hotel tax is being paid for by the consumer of the product," said Orr. "They're not going to not come because of the four per cent, as a general rule."

Orr said Windsor didn't come on board with the tax implementation right away, but even smaller communities now are discussing the idea or are looking into implementing it.

Carlo Robazza, chief financial officer for Lais Hotels Properties Limited, said NOTL is "somewhat unique" and can't be compared to major urban centres.

"It's far more discretionary spending here and that extra tax certainly changes decisions. In a smaller economy, the impact of these changes is felt far greater than in large urban centres," said Robazza.

In Mississauga, the four per cent tax kicked in on April 1, 2018. The city collected \$8.9 million in tax revenue from April 1 to Dec. 31, 2018, said Shari Lichterman, director of recreation for the city of Mississauga.

"The revenues support the Tourism Master Plan and allows the city to fund tourism staffing, programs and grants through (the tax) instead of using property tax-based funds," Lichterman said in an email to the Lake Report. "No formal complaints have been logged pertaining to the (tax)."



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Many Hands Project's huge donation helps many children at Pathstone

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Pathstone Mental Health received more than \$40,000 from the Many Hands Project on Monday, enough for eight years of play therapy programming for the children it helps.

The 30 students from the event management program in Niagara College's Hospitality, Tourism and Sport department raised \$35,858 by planning events as part of the program's experiential learning mandate.

Canadian Tire Bank, a sponsor and supporter of the Many Hands Project, donated \$5,000 – pushing the total amount raised to \$40,858.

Many Hands is a student-driven community project in operation since 1998.

Each year, the college takes applications from local non-profit organizations to find a donor recipient for the term. Faculty narrows the list of eligible applicants, and then once event management students begin classes in September, they make the final decision as a class.



Holly Calbert, Olivia Johnson, Christine Blane and Kim Rossi with donation cheque on Monday. BRITTANY CARTER

years.” Rossi said she was “blown away” by the effort put in and the money raised by the program.

Students surpassed fundraising targets for each planned event, said Prof. Christine Blane, co-ordinator of the event management program.

The two highest earning projects were Designer Handbag Bingo and Turntable Trivia, she said, both raising more than \$11,000 each. The two events both took place on March 29 and brought in a combined 475 attendees.

Students also hosted Taps, Apps and Laughs Comedy Night on April 4 and Rise and Shine Yoga on March 24, both of which she said were also a “big success,” attracting 150 and 130 people respectively.

Blane said the community has been benefiting from the Many Hands Project for more than 20 years.

“The not-for-profit sector is always struggling to make ends meet. It’s amazing to be able to help the community. Every time we write a cheque each year, we’re helping to further their program.”

On Monday morning, students and supporters gathered at Branscombe Mental Health Centre for a community celebration and to present Rossi with the cheque announcing the total raised for the first time.

“It’s so appropriate the



Olivia Johnson, student of the event management program, presenting a banner to Pathstone Mental Health. BRITTANY CARTER

Many Hands Project came on board with us this year,” Rossi said. “You guys have giant hearts. I knew from the first meeting that you were buying into what we do – and believe in what we do.”

Students start with no money, using skills learned in the program to negotiate, plan and hold fundraising events.

Working diligently throughout the year, the students secure venue space, acquire sponsorship money and gain support from community sponsors to make each event a success.

A leadership team of the students is formed for each event, working on planning throughout the year, while the remaining students help run the event as part of the volunteer process in the program.

Two students, Ashley Dykun and Andrey

Shornikov, from the event management program, each received a \$1,000 faculty award provided by the Many Hands Project in recognition of excellence throughout the term. The winning students were chosen based on overall academic performance, dedication to the cause and championing of the program, Blane said.

The program benefits both the students and the community, she said, by providing real-world, hands-on experience while at the same time helping organizations in need. The community celebration event on Monday morning was an effective way to conclude the term, she added.

“It’s nice to have that wrap-up and to have the community and media there to share in this success with us. Onward we go to next year.”

“You guys have giant hearts. I knew from the first meeting that you were buying into what we do – and believe in what we do.”

KIM ROSSI
DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY
PATHSTONE MENTAL HEALTH

This year, the recipient was Pathstone, which provides a comfortable environment for children to address mental health through play therapy.

Kim Rossi, director of philanthropy at Pathstone, accepted the cheque on behalf of the organization, thanking the students, Canadian Tire Bank and Niagara College for their contributions.

“I can tell you that this amount of money will more than fund play therapy at Pathstone for the next eight

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<p>COMMUNITY FAVOURITES:</p> <p>Legion Fish Fry every Thursday - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>St. Davids Lions Club Fish Fry, April 5, April 19 - 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge at the Community Centre, Tuesdays and Fridays at 1</p>			
21	22	23	24
<p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>Easter Sunrise Service - 7 a.m. - Living Waters Wayside Chapel</p> <p>Easter Service - 8:30 a.m & 10:30 a.m - St. Mark's Anglican Church</p>	<p>Famous & Infamous with Betsy Masson: Hannah Peters Jarvis - 2 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p> <p>Niagara Regional Native Centre: Little Red Tail Hawks - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p> <p>Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p> <p>Monday Night Teen Hang Out - 6 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>Tumble Tots - 10 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>NOTL Horticultural Society: Monthly Meeting - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Paint Nite - 7 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery</p> <p>NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>Conspiracy of Hope About Breast Cancer - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Trivia Night: Exchange (Spring League Week) - 7 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery</p> <p>NOTL Toastmasters - 8:30 p.m. - Niagara Community Campus</p>
28	29	30	1
<p>Family Friendly Art Studio - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p> <p>Teen Literary Alliance - 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Celebration of Heritage: Special Council Meeting - 6 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p>	<p>Tumble Tots - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Urban Design Committee - 5 p.m. - Council Chambers</p> <p>NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Children Painting Nunavut's Future - 7:30 p.m. - Mori Room, NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>NOTL Hearing Show - 7 p.m. - NOTL Community Campus</p> <p>Movie: Green Book - 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Trivia Night: Exchange (Spring League Week) - 7 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery</p>

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	18 Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Spring Opening Reception at RiverBrink Art Museum - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Social - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Back to the Future-the Museum and Deaccessioning - 7:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum	19 Good Friday Good Friday Dinner at Caroline Cellars - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Caroline Cellars Winery	20 Niagara Nursery School Annual Bunny Trail - 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Discovering Herbs - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens Daddy & Me - 10 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library Lawn Bowling - 1:30 p.m. - Mori Room, NOTL Community Centre Easter Junk Food Pairing at Konzelmann - Konzelmann Estate Winery Easter Vigil - 7 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church
24 The Truth Screening - NOTL Public Brewery (Week 5) - 6:30 - 7 p.m. to College, NOTL	25 Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Open House: Tree By-law - 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. - Town Municipal Offices Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	26 Mahjong Game Drop In - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	27 Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Quick Garden Design Fixes - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens Daddy & Me - 10 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library Artist Workshop: Distant Edges with Lenore Walker - 10:30 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum Etsy: Made in Canada Spring Market - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - The Hare Wine Co.
1 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Brewery (Week 6) - 6:30 - 7 p.m. to College, NOTL	2 Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Customer Experience and Technology Committee - 3 p.m. - Council Chambers Opening Reception of Living Desert Exhibit: Robert Herman - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	3 Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Queenston Volunteer Firefighters Association - Spaghetti Dinner - 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Queenston Firehall Yellow Door Theatre Project: Coffee House Youth Series - 7 p.m. - Yellow Door Theatre Project	4 Daddy & me - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Live Well Health & Wellness Fair - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - White Oaks Resort

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Spaghetti dinner returns to Queenston fire hall

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

For Rob Copeland, spaghetti dinner at the Queenston fire hall is more than just a fundraiser.

The all-you-can-eat dinner is returning to town on Friday, May 3, and Copeland is busy getting ready for the big night.

"After the long winter, getting people out in nice weather, getting villagers to see and meet everybody, it's a real community get-together. That's what we emphasize," said Copeland, president of the Queenston Volunteer Firefighter Association.

Volunteer firefighters have been holding spaghetti dinners since 1996.

"It's just really enjoyable to help build on community spirit and that's what we do," Copeland told The Lake Report. "It's not strictly a fundraiser ... It's

really nice."

The event takes place twice a year and money goes toward different local charities and organizations. Last year, about \$1,000 was raised at each dinner.

Over the past few years, the association has donated money to such organizations as Newark Neighbours, Niagara District Firefighters Association, Royal Canadian Air Cadets, Niagara Youth Orchestra, St. Davids Public School library as well as NOTL minor soccer, minor lacrosse and minor softball associations.

When a wildfire destroyed much of Fort McMurray in 2016, volunteers donated money there as well. They also helped a St. Davids boy who was in need of a guide dog, said Copeland.

"If there is a specific cause for that year, then (money) goes into our general fund which is donated out through request," Cope-



land said in an interview.

For the last couple of years, raffle prizes for the evening were provided by Graham Keene, owner of the Canadian Tire store on Welland Avenue in St. Catharines.

The dinner is from 5 to 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for an adult and \$5 for children aged 12 and under.

This year, the draw prize is a Magellan Explorist hand-held GPS navigator and a Schwinn Wayfarer bicycle.

"Hopefully, we get a lot of people out," said Copeland. "We've got a good draw prize."

Two NOTL restaurants among OpenTable's Top 100

Arjun Saroy
Special to The Lake Report

Kitchen76 at Two Sisters Vineyards and Treadwell Farm-to-Table Cuisine in Niagara-on-the-Lake have made it onto OpenTable Canada's list of 100 Best Restaurants for a Big Night Out 2019.

The list, part of a promotion to encourage people to dine out at high-calibre Canadian restaurants, was generated from 550,000 diner reviews on OpenTable's website in the 12 months prior to Feb. 28.

Jannine Lavoie, food and beverage director at Kitchen76, said she was excited to be among the top 100.

"We are making a lot of innovative changes. We have gone through a bit of growth here at the restaurant. Each year continuously gets busier, but we're still staying true to our



OpenTable's Canada's 100 Best Restaurants for a Big Night Out 2019 list is out and has two of Niagara-on-the-Lake restaurants included. SUPPLIED

rustic Italian culture and roots," she said.

The restaurant is usually on the list of top 100 patios as well, she said. "We're known for our spectacular patios."

James Treadwell, sommelier and co-owner of Treadwell Farm-to-Table Cuisine, also is delighted.

The restaurant had a

challenging year, but its inclusion on the list of best restaurants is a testament to the team's passion, dedication and professionalism, said Treadwell. "It's a wonderful accomplishment for our team."

Three other Niagara Region restaurants made the list: Brasa Brazilian Restaurant and Copacabana Brazilian Steak House in Niagara Falls, and Lake House Restaurant in Vineland.

Sade Bezjak, a freelance artist and NOTL resident, said she and her husband have been to Kitchen76 and Treadwell a few times.

"The ambience and food in both the places is marvellous. I'm not shocked to hear they are among the top 100," she said in an interview in Old Town.

Bezjak said she hasn't dined at the other three Niagara restaurants on the list, but hopes to try them out.



Find Reynolds & Regier's Golden Egg in one of NOTL's local parks Saturday April 20 and take home \$500

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Wild time: Hands-on environmental learning at college's BioBlitz

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Snakes and turtles and bees, oh my.

Niagara College took BioBlitzing to another level on Saturday, adding a range of free activities, games and prizes to the family-friendly full-day event.

Typically, a BioBlitz is a comprehensive biological survey recording all living species in a designated area over a set time-frame. The college's blitz took the core concept a step further by including hands-on experiences and inviting the 150 people in attendance to interact with and learn about a variety of local species.

Now in its fourth year, the spring BioBlitz is hosted by the college's Office of Sustainability in the teaching greenhouse, but is mostly run by the students, said Taryn Wilkinson, a sustainability adviser at the school.

"They're the ones that help the staff pull it together. It's very much a student-run organization."

The faculty tackle the administrative duties, leaving the planning to student volunteers who engage the community, look for experts, organize activities and handle the marketing. "We rely heavily on that," Wilkinson said.

She added that the program is fortunate the students are willing to give their time to help with the event.

"This is co-curricular, so they do this as a volunteer. We recognize the importance of building those skills that happen outside of the classroom, that help complement the more technical academic work inside the classroom. This is very much volunteer."

This year the blitz saw more families and community members than previous years, Wilkinson said. The department tried to make the event more family-friendly, she said.

"We think it's really important to use this as an opportunity to engage our community, to showcase



Glenys Robinson, a commercial bee keeping program at Niagara College, and Joanna Paul, a graduate from the program, during BioBlitz Saturday. BRITTANY CARTER



Helen Toner, education co-ordinator at Scales Nature Park, during the BioBlitz at Niagara College Saturday. BRITTANY CARTER

different components of our campus."

Scales Nature Park, a conservation centre in Oro-Medonte, Ont., with a focus on reptiles and amphibians and their habitats, was on-site throughout the day, adding to the applied learning aspect. Visitors had the opportunity to hold and learn about a variety of local species of snakes and turtles.

Representatives from the college's commercial beekeeping program were also on hand, providing an inside look at beehives and the work beekeepers do daily.

"We partnered with our Student Administrative Council, and (lunch) was provided in the student armory," Wilkinson said.



Taryn Wilkinson, of the Office of Sustainability at Niagara College, during the Bio Blitz on Saturday. BRITTANY CARTER

The BioBlitz is run to coincide with Earth Day, which this year is on April 22, "to really bring people on campus and to showcase what we have here and get

our students involved."

Wilkinson said the college plans to continue hosting the BioBlitz, as well as a smaller scale blitz that is planned for the fall.

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- Across**
- Clap (7)
 - Priest (6)
 - Benefit (9)
 - Unwarranted (5)
 - Floor coverings (4)
 - Rounded mass of steamed dough (8)
 - Seedless raisin (7)
 - East Mediterranean democracy (6)
 - Involuntary muscular contraction (3)
 - Dusky (6)
 - Least difficult (7)
 - Knockout punch (8)
 - Sicilian volcano (4)
 - Compel (5)
 - Dutch master (9)
 - Work over (4,2)
 - Soon (7)

- Down**
- Scaremonger (8)
 - Crucial (7)
 - "Black Beauty" author --- Sewell (4)
 - Faculty head (4)
 - Biased (10)
 - Statue-maker (10)
 - Bygone (3-4)
 - Prevail (5)
 - Legislative assembly (10)
 - Rickety vehicle (10)
 - Furtive (8)
 - Edge of the road (7)
 - Permanently inactive (7)
 - Fly-by-night (5)
 - Yuletide (4)
 - Group of three (4)

Have some fun

The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Crossword Puzzle

Last issue's answers

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Sudoku

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		1	5	2				

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NEWS 

Nyanyas of Niagara helps grandmothers in Africa

Arjun Saroy
Special to The Lake Report

The Nyanyas of Niagara, (Nyanya means grandmother in Swahili), are hosting a spring lunch to raise money and awareness for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

The event will be held on May 9 at 11:30 a.m. at the Old Winery Restaurant and Zahra Mohamed, interim executive director of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, will be the guest speaker.

Terry Mactaggart, a member of the steering committee of the Nyanyas of Niagara, said the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign brings together several grandmother and "grandmothers" groups across Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The motive is to help ease the struggle grandmothers in 15 sub-Saharan African countries face to care for their own grandchildren who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

Since 2007, the Nyanyas of Niagara have sent more than \$100,000 to the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, Mactaggart said.

"The raised money reaches Africa in about two weeks. We have our people (in Africa) who verify the legitimacy of people who need help and then provide them with money or whatever aid is necessary."

There are more than 240 groups of grandmothers in Canada alone, who have raised more than \$33 million in just over a decade of its existence, she said.

"It's quite extraordinary to see the bond that has devel-



Zahra Mohamed is the guest speaker May 9. SUPPLIED PHOTO

oped between grandmothers on both sides of the ocean," Stephen Lewis, founder of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, said in a news release. "They are as one."

The Stephen Lewis Foundation is a non-governmental organization that works mostly with HIV/AIDS-related campaigns in Africa.

The foundation has been going strong since 2003 and has funded more than 1,700 initiatives, partnering with more than 325 community-based organizations in the 15 African countries hardest hit by the global AIDS pandemic.

"Through the support of the Canadian 'grandmothers and grandmothers' groups, the African grandmothers have been able to feed, properly house and put their grandchildren through school, create support groups to manage grief, and deliver comfort and hope through home-based care," said Mactaggart.

"They have been teaching others about HIV prevention and treatment."

The event offers a luncheon, cash bar and door prizes. Admission is \$45. To buy tickets, contact Terry at 905-468-2438 or Linda at 905-937-1354.

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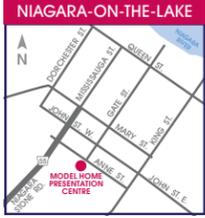
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Corporal West's Adventures

By: Richard West

Corporal Dick West served in the British Army, Royal Artillery during the Second World War, while his wife Winnifred (Winn) struggled with the war in London, England. They were my parents. These short stories are derived from them telling me what it was like in those times. All the characters except for Corporal West and his wife Winn, are fictitious.

Dick was first called up in 1938 during the Munich crisis. He returned to civilian life in 1939 only to be called up again in late summer as the Second World War broke out. He was finally de-mobbed early in 1946. These stories are in chronological order.

Editor's note: This story will be published as a series of 10 short stories. This is part five. Check the paper weekly to keep up with the series.

WEEKEND LEAVE

"Corporal."

"Yes, Jonesy."

"I'll volunteer to stay in camp this weekend. No point me going on leave. It's too far to South Wales for me to get there and back. I'll only spend the time in a pub."

Dick looked at Jonesy for a while before replying.

"I'll try to get them to save up the leave for you Jonesy. Not sure they will though. At least come out to the pub here in town and meet the misses."

"OK, Corp."

Most of Dick's lads were from around London and so they could get back to "the smoke" by train easily. A number of them had the same idea as Dick and had invited their wives or lady friends down to the Sussex countryside. That way the ladies get a break from the city and the lads get to be with them.

Everyone was getting smartened up to meet the train. All the boarding houses in the village were booked solid. Those that couldn't find a place to stay had left for London instead.

Dick assembled his lads and they marched off to the railway station as if they were the Grenadier Guards. Not a bunch of squaddies in the Royal Artillery.

Sandy kept hopping from one foot to the next as they waited on the station's platform.

"Calm down, Sandy. You'll wear yourself out."

"We're only engaged Corp. I can't think what she told her Ma."

"Then don't think about it."

"Yes, Corp."

"The train's late."

"Aye."

A nervous bunch of soldiers stood forlornly on the platform waiting for the errant train.

The Station Master came on to the platform and informed the gathering that

the train had been delayed but did not say why.

Half an hour later he came out and announced the train had resumed its journey and should arrive in twenty minutes.

Again Sandy hopped from foot to foot.

Dick rolled a cigarette. I'm four or five years older than most of my lads. Having married before the war makes me feel like an old timer compared to these boys.

Twenty minutes passed. The train did not appear. Even Dick started to get nervous. Then a private yelled, "There it is."

A green suburban Southern Railways electric train with four carriages came around a bend and blew its air horn.

As it rolled into the station the soldiers jubilation disappeared. Three of the carriages had bullet holes in them and smashed windows.

The train stopped. The men hesitated, afraid of what they might find.

Suddenly carriage doors flew open and out stepped the ladies. They immediately started to sing, "Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner, that I love London town ..."

The men cheered and rushed forward. Dick saw Winn and marched over to her.

"You all right?" he whispered.

"Course. We all lay on the floor when the plane came at us. Silly pilot, he shot too high. The bullets went a long way above us."

"You could have been killed. It must have been scary."

"Dick. The buggers will start bombing us soon. Now that will be scary."

"But you could have been hurt."

"I wasn't. Now let's get this lot organized and have a party."

"You don't much like parties."

"After being shot at by some German plane, I think I can do as I damn well please, Dick West."

"That's my Winn."

"Get away with yer."

Local snaps



Tim and Heather Arnott walk their dogs in the pouring weather Sunday afternoon. EUNICE TANG



Holding out for the catch of the day. EUNICE TANG



Kim Blackley, proprietor of a bed and breakfast in Niagara-on-the-Lake, says, "It's great weather for a walk." ARJUN SAROY



Tony Chisholm, president of the Friends of Fort George, says, "It's unseasonably cold, but this is April in Canada. I'm looking forward to May myself." ARJUN SAROY



From left, Meher Kaur, Raghubir Singh and Saheb Singh, visitors from Japan, walk along King Street. ARJUN SAROY

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FEATURED

Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report

OLD BAKERY AT EASTER



Easter brings the sweet smell of baked goods from the Niagara Home Bakery. Paul Albrechtsen, one of the former family owners, decorated the bake shop spectacularly, as he did on all special occasions. The picture shows some of their baked goods in the front window during the Easter season.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH

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The Lake Report would also like to acknowledge and thank those who have made financial contributions to the paper, whether through our donate button online or by mailing us a cheque. The paper encourages all residents to support the paper through a "voluntary subscription" annually. For those interested in supporting us, we suggest \$1 per issue, per household, at 52 issues per year. That's only \$52 — less than most people spend on pizza and wings. Larger donations are also greatly appreciated. For transparency, donations of more than \$1,000 will be published in the paper (with a big thank you) and donors will receive an exclusive limited edition Lake Report mug, as well as a copy of the first edition of the paper signed by staff. (Limit of 20 special mugs) To support The Lake Report, mail cheques to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Post Office, L0S1J0, PO Box 724. Please make cheques payable to Niagara Now Ltd. and note it as a donation.

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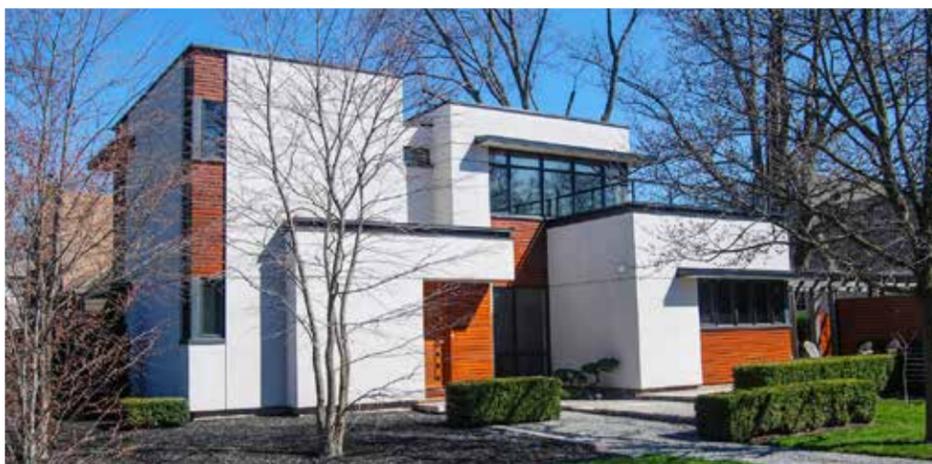
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ARCHITEXT

When done right

Brian Marshall
Featured



A fine example of 21st-century Modern design. SUPPLIED PHOTO/BRIAN MARSHALL

The role of architect carries with it a heavy responsibility, for their design will become a permanent fixture in the lives of their clients and the broader community. Bluntly, if the architect fails in the execution of their craft, the result will assault everybody's sensibilities for decades.

While design integrity must be guarded in every new commission, the straight-lines and apparent simplicity of the 21st-century Modern style can lull the uninitiated into believing it easy to design. In fact, nothing is further from the truth. To work successfully in this style, the architect must possess

true creativity, an intuitive grasp of materials and iron discipline in adhering to key design principles. Without these qualities in full measure, the result will be a design which at best will appear odd, uninspired or out-of-place and, at worst, will be a jarring collection of unconnected elements that is in continual conflict with its site and neighbourhood.

Properly designed, this style will enhance the neighbourhood. Consider

the home in our photo. Set on a corner lot 'island', its cantilevered portico, flush-set metal framed windows topped by clean, relatively thin visors and broad white stucco expanses, show the style's international roots. Naturally coloured horizontal wood planks break the white stucco planes to introduce an organic element. These boards are installed in a shadow gap method (a ¼" to 1" space left between each board to create shadow lines). This, combined with

the horizontal relief lines incised in the stucco in line with the top of the window frames, produce a subtle yet very effective three-dimensional patterning across the facade. Privacy screen fencing, echoing the shadow gap cladding, merges the landscaping and facade to complete the overall composition while gently heightening the 'island' lot effect. The gestalt blends with and enhances its neighbourhood.

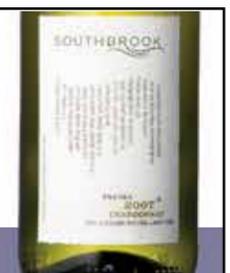


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Before 1812

Denise Ascenzo

Niagara's History Unveiled
Exclusive/The Lake Report

Most of the Niagara Peninsula was a battleground during the War of 1812 in particular Newark, now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake. In fact from May of 1813 to December 1813, the town was occupied by American forces.

Then on December 10, 1813, under the order of General McClure, commander of Fort Niagara, the American troops retreated from the town. Upon their retreat, Newark (NOTL) was burned to the ground with only two buildings in the entire town surviving.

The town we see today shows the strength of the founding residents in how quickly they recovered from the destruction of the war. It does not resemble what the first town looked like.

Initially the town was situated at the foot of King Street where it meets the Niagara River. There were private homes, inns, warehouses, and commercial enterprises along the river. Further away from the town, around present day Mary Street, farms were located. The huge forested area at 407 King Street was actually referred to as the "wilderness" at one time. The golf course that we now know was all farm land with the lighthouse standing on Point Mississauga.

The town of Newark (NOTL) that was destroyed was not a primitive outpost but a bustling community thriving on the trade of goods being transported from the Great Lakes region to Kingston, Montreal and even New York City. There was a thriving middle class in this town from the businesses set up, who, like the upper class enjoyed a civil life with genteel social occasions of teas and card games. Crops grown in the region were plentiful and harvest time was a great celebration. Even the farming community enjoyed a good living.

In 1811, John Mellish a traveller gave a colourful



Image courtesy of the Niagara Historical Society & Museum.

description of the community he came upon when he was in Newark (NOTL). He wrote that the town "contains about 500 inhabitants, many handsome buildings of brick and stone, two churches, a jail, an academy, six taverns, and about twenty dry goods stores where every article may be procured on as good terms as any store in Montreal."

Michael Smith (an American visitor) wrote in 1812, just prior to the declaration of war between Britain and the United States, a glowing report on what he saw and experienced while in the Village of Niagara, now NOTL.

"Niagara is a beautiful and (prosperous) place of much trade inhabited by a civil and industrious people...there is a Council House, Court House, jail, and two houses for public worship. There are several squares in the village adorned with almost every kind of precious fruit; the village on the East looks towards the fort over a beautiful plain of nearly one mile wide."

The two houses of worship that Smith is speaking of are St. Mark's Anglican Church built in 1792 and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church built in 1794. The fruit trees were probably

planted long before even Lt. Gov. John Simcoe and family arrived as Mrs. Simcoe noted in her diary the wonderful abundance of fruit from the trees. The court house and jail were located at Prideaux and King Streets.

Many other visitors to the town were impressed with the spacious streets, the lighthouse, the profusion of fresh fish (white fish and black bass) from Lake Ontario.

Although records and stories varied over the years with just how many buildings might have been here prior to the war of 1812, a map from 1810 shows about 100 structures. They varied in size with 60 per cent found in the Front, King, Mary and Simcoe streets square. The others could be found in the blocks between Queen and Front Street.

A year after the original town plot was finalized Augusta Jones built the first structure in the early part of 1792. By the fall of 1792 amongst all the buildings, three significant structures had been added to the community. These were the homes of Dr. Kerr (on Prideaux Street), Rev. Addison (corner of Front

and King) and Mr. Dickson whose home is said to have either been built illegally on military land or in the swamp area that was at the foot of King Street. Other structures built in the earliest days of the town were considered hovels not worth being noted.

During the visit of the Duc de La Rochefoucauld in 1796, there were at least 70 homes, with many of them being considered "very excellent dwellings". In fact de La Rochefoucauld claimed that many were superior to those he found in Kingston!

One mansion noted was G.W. Smith's grand Georgian style home located on a four acre lot bounded by King, Regent, Queen and Johnson streets. It was 80' x 40' boasting 4 fireplaces, landscaped gardens and fruit orchards.

Another notable home was that of Peter Russel who built a "Springfield design" home, which was a 70', two story structure, with outbuildings, orchards and a formal garden.

By the turn of the 19th century the town of Newark (NOTL) boasted 6 hotels; Hinds, Wilson's, Thompson's, the Ferry House, Yellow House and Weir's Sign of the Lion. The first news-

paper of Upper Canada, the Upper Canada Gazette (1793-98) was located at King and Front Streets. The first circulating library was built beside the newspaper.

By 1799 there was a race track on the Fort George Commons, an agricultural society, apothecary, two doctors (Kerr and Muirhead), blacksmith shops, silver and gold smiths, leather shops, the Ancient Free and Accepted Mason had their own lodge (on King) as well as several wine, beer and liquor outlets.

Newark was a thriving metropolis at the turn of the 19th century. New settlers arrived finding they could purchase all matter of goods to help them settle in Upper Canada. Pounds sterling, Halifax dollars and New York dollars were all accepted currency of payments.

Credit though was an accepted part of life. "Hard cash" was not always available, even within the British forces, so the barter system was widely used. Merchants would extend credit waiting for a farmer's crop to be harvested or people would get credit in exchange for labour provided.

Something we do not even think about today was the prevalence of malaria

in Upper Canada. Often thought of as a tropical disease, the fact is that the building of settlements near marshlands often saw people being plagued with malaria. Malaria was most rampant in the Rideau Canal region but was also found in Newark. Today we have good medicines to thwart the ravages of this disease but at the turn of the 19th century the best cures were gin-laced tonics.

From 1792 when the first homes were built until the War of 1812 was declared, Newark (NOTL) was the commercial hub of the Great Lakes. Anything a resident wanted was available from shoes to chocolates, fine dinner wear to good riding saddles. Ladies could buy fine cloth from around the world; gentlemen could complete their tailored suits with a good top hat.

On June 18, 1812, the United States declare war on England. Their target was Upper and Lower Canada and Newark (NOTL) was a prize goal to capture. The town's people suddenly saw their world totally changed. The able-bodied men were enlisted in the Canadian Militia while the women, children, elderly and infirmed were left behind to keep their homes and farms safe.

In December of 1813 all of this changed forever. Newark was totally destroyed; gone were the lovely homes, the businesses, the schools and even the churches. Just smoldering ruins and devastated people remained when the British Army and Militia returned to the town.

The town's people though did rally; they rebuilt their homes, businesses, churches and schools. Today we can enjoy the fruits of their labour and the love they had for their community in our beautiful town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

More Niagara's History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at: www.niagaranow.com

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COMMUNITY

We invite you to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section. Send your submissions to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to be featured.



April showers



Artifact of the Week:

Judge's Bench from
Town of Niagara Courthouse, 1817



Answer: This week's artifact was a key to room 320B at the Queen's Royal Hotel. Built in 1868, the elegant hotel was considered one of the best in North America. Every year, thousands of wealthy tourists, mostly Americans, would travel to the area to enjoy such a luxury. The area surrounding the hotel offered various leisure activities such as boating, swimming, tennis and golf. In the evening, the social scene was lively as well. On October 12, 1901, the hotel received its first taste of royalty from the future King and Queen of England, George V and Mary. A gas leak, however, forced the royal party to sit on the balcony until 3 a.m. during their visit. Similar keys would have been provided to guests staying at the Queens Royal Hotel until its closure and demolition in 1930.

The Artifact of the Week column is submitted by the Niagara Historical Society & Museum, exclusive to The Lake Report.



Can you guess next week's artifact? >

Clue: I keep things dry



SPRING FLOWERS



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms:
The Pie Plate



The Pie Plate accepts its Golden Plunger award.
PLUNGER PATROL

We were there to check the water closet. Of course, that could wait until Betty finished her coconut iced cake. If you've ever visited the Pie Plate you know it was fabulous. After we tore ourselves away from the dessert case of fresh baked goods it was time to see what they had to offer by way of their washrooms. They have a couple unisex washrooms that are well appointed, clean and elegant. They are both compact but still manage to convey an atmosphere of the classic size bathrooms. They have the added bonus of being able to reach the sink to brush the coconut from your teeth while still sitting on the toilet. We enjoyed our visit and know you will too. You'll also enjoy their Gold Plunger award-winning facilities. The Pie Plate received 3.5 plungers.

The Pie Plate
3.5/5 Gold Plungers



Cory Cruise performs at Yellow Door Theatre's Greatest Songwriters You've Never Heard event on Saturday.
SUBMITTED BY FRANCE MERRILL



A man fishing the Niagara River on Sunday. EUNICE TANG

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Featured local story



The brew crew: Megan Kanstantonis, Dale Barn, brewmaster John Legassicke and Joe Emburgh, at Silversmith Brewery in Virgil. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

A business is only as good as its team, which is why Silversmith Brewing Company's brewmaster John Legassicke insists he isn't the sole reason for the coveted craft beer's popularity.

For four years, Legassicke, 33, has led the brew team at Silversmith, located in a repurposed church in Virgil, bringing his attention to detail, tireless planning and organizational skills to the table to enhance the already smoothly run brewery.

Quick to give creative credit to the three other members of the brew crew — Megan Kanstantonis, Dale Barn and Joe Emburgh — Legassicke says his own strengths lie in the practical side of brewing.

"The strangest thing about me as a brewer is that I'm not very creative, which kind of goes against what people think about craft brewing. Lots of creativity and always doing different things." He says practical, organized and on-task sum up his skills a

little better.

"I really like the processing side: controlling the process, looking for ways to improve the process, making things consistent, time after time. That's really what I enjoy about the job."

It's important to him that recipes remain consistent, ensuring that when you have Silversmith's popular Black Lager one day, it'll be the exact same when you come back months down the road.

"So that you know what to expect. I know as a consumer, that's what I'm looking for. When I'm going to spend money on beer, I want to make sure that it's going to taste the way I remember it."

That practical attitude and stress on consistency make him well-suited for the position.

His appreciation for the team and the idea that working together strengthens the products extends to his view on the brewing community as a whole in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Instead of seeing neighbouring breweries as competition, Legassicke says they

all try to work together.

"There's a pretty good working relationship among everybody. We did a couple of brews for the Exchange before their brewery was up and running."

He recalls times when staff from Niagara Oast House Brewers sat at the bar at Silversmith and they talked about beer, the industry and anything else that came up.

"We see the guys from Oast, who were actually in here last night having a beer, so I sat down and chatted with their brewers for a while. Everyone seems to get along pretty well."

He began his brewing career at Neustadt Springs Brewery in Neustadt, Ont., north of Guelph, and stayed on staff there for six years before wanting a change of scenery. After meeting with Chris Pontsioen, president and CEO of Silversmith, Legassicke says it was the right move for him to take the position.

"It was a good opportunity. I knew people who had worked for Chris in the past and spoke highly of him as an employer, and

just as a good guy."

Appreciative of the people he works with, he says the brewing industry is "a lot of fun."

"It's like any other job. It's not like it's a cake walk every day. You don't come in doing cartwheels because it's so much fun. It's hard and things go wrong, and there's stress and all of that that goes with any job. It just sort of attracts a good group of people."

People work in the craft brewing industry for the right reasons, he says, adding, "It just attracts a good personality."

Immediately out of high school, he wasn't sure what he wanted to do for a living. He let his practicality guide him toward education in the food science field because he says there's an abundance of job opportunities in that industry. Through that path he was introduced to brewing as a career.

"I kind of specialized in brewing after that. That's sort of how it came into place, it was never a plan when I started out. It just started channelling that way."

Happy to have broken

out in the craft beer field, he says his beer preference leans toward easy-drinking styles. His favourite beer, outside of Silversmith's brands, is Anchor Steam Beer.

"It's one of my favourite beers to buy, when I can find it ... a California Common."

A California Common is made with a special strain of lager yeast and brewed at warmer temperatures.

Within Silversmith's brands, Legassicke says he's partial to the smoked lager, which he says the whole brew team is eager to see more of. His hope for the brewery is to see more of his favourite Silversmith brands in the LCBO.

More production for licensees and retailers will be a possibility once the brewery's expansion is completed. The project began in January 2018 but has been halted due to concerns with the foundation, says Kate Brzozowski, Silversmith's vice-president of sales and marketing.

Though there's no specific date set for the continuation of the expansion, she says it will wait until after

summer's busy season.

"We're definitely going to hold off for the summer. The impact is too great with traffic through the summertime, so we're going to hold off at least until the fall," she says.

Hailing from Welland, Legassicke also works as a volunteer firefighter when he's not whipping up brews in NOTL. He also enjoys weekend cottage trips and ski vacations when he can tear himself away.

"It's an industry that's hard to step away from in the busy season."

He's developed an appreciation for NOTL since he started working in the area. Initially, he says he had a different perception of the small tourist town, adding that it's much more relaxed than he anticipated.

"I knew very little about Niagara-on-the-Lake when I first came here. Maybe it got kind of lumped in with Niagara, with a tourist draw," he says.

"It's obviously quite different from other parts of Niagara. The atmosphere here is just a little more laid back than I might have thought."

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