

Taylor's Bakery to reopen as a Dairy Queen franchise

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Taylor's Bakery on Queen Street will soon be home to the newest big name franchise in the historic district — Dairy Queen.

The bakery, which has operated since the 1970s, has been outcompeted by big brand companies such as Starbucks and COWS which have opened on

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Packed Easter at NOTL wineries a hopeful sign of busy summer

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

Guests are once again flowing into Niagara-on-the-Lake wineries for tastings and tours, turning a corner after two years of restrictions, limited capacities and extensive COVID-19 protocols.

Traffic was brisk at NOTL wineries over the Easter long weekend. In some cases, the volume of visitors topped pre-COVID num-

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Saturday's egg-cellent adventure

Bunny Trail and egg hunt were a huge hit, as parents and kids celebrated Easter | Page 4



A child excitedly runs as the Kinsmen kick off the popular egg hunt at the community centre on Saturday. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Pickleball noise sparks legal challenge from neighbour



Barron Walker plays pickleball. FILE/BRITTANY CARTER

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Move over Hells Angels, there's a new breed of troublemaker in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

And they're fanatics about pickleball.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Pickleball club is at the centre of a legal dispute between the town and resident Oana Scafesi, who is claiming the noise from the pickleball courts at the Centennial Sports Park in Virgil has made her NOTL existence unbearable.

Scafesi has filed charges against the town and the club in provincial offences court

for violation of the town's own noise bylaw, specifically section three, which states:

"No person shall make, cause or permit sound or vibration at any time, which is likely to disturb the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of the inhabitants of the town."

"For the last three years I have been tortured by a high noise produced by the pickleball players," Scafesi testified during a trial on the matter Wednesday morning in Welland court.

"This affected my health, affected my work performance and affected, altogether, my life."

Scafesi said her goal with the case is to "have my life

back" and said she believes the town should move the courts or relocate them.

Justice of the Peace Mary Shelley reserved judgment and said she will make her ruling in the case on June 15.

Scafesi said she moved to her home in Lambert's Walk, a townhouse community directly adjacent to the sports park, in 2012 so she could "have a peaceful and quiet life, as any resident deserves and as any hard-working person deserves."

The park had long been home to tennis courts which in 2019 were transitioned into pickleball courts.

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Left: Anastasia, Artur, Tatiana and Oleksandra Tymchyshyn take a family photo in front of Niagara Falls after arriving in Canada from Ukraine three weeks ago. ARTUR TYMCHYSHYN
Right: Jan van Haren and Brian Carberry will be hosting a garage sale on Saturday, April 23, to raise money for Ukraine and the Tymchyshyn family. EVAN SAUNDERS

Weekend sale helps Ukrainian refugee family in Niagara

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A garage sale in Garrison Village this weekend will be dedicating all of its proceeds to organizations in Ukraine and a Ukrainian refugee family living in Niagara Falls.

Members of the Tymchyshyn family – Tatiana, 46, Anastasia, 11, and Oleksandra, 80 – arrived in Niagara three weeks ago, said family friend Daria Zakharchenko, after fleeing their home country due to the violent Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“They’re from Kyiv, the same as me and my family,” Zakharchenko said in an interview Tuesday.

It was no mean feat for the three to make their way to Canada.

“They were going to the west part of Ukraine (from Kyiv). Usually, the drive takes about seven hours. It took them 24 hours to get there,” she said.

“Because lots of people were running, lots of refugees, and they were all going to the west part of Ukraine, it was a tough time.”

The three family members travelled from Lviv to the Czech Republic. Due to Oleksandra’s lack of a visa, they had to wait some time while the appropriate paperwork was put together.

From Bohemia, the family travelled to Paris, where they spent the better part of a week finalizing the details of their visas.

Zakharchenko knows the family through 27-year-old Artur Tymchyshyn. The two met nearly a decade ago at an airport in Amsterdam, both on their way to pursue a new life in Canada.

Due to some exorbitant plane ticket costs and paperwork issues, Artur had to drive from Niagara to Montreal to pick up his sister, mother and grandmother and bring them to Niagara Falls.

Artur’s father is still in Ukraine as nearly all the men in the country have been drafted to defend against the invading Russian army.

Through the Canada Homestay Network, the Tymchyshyns are now living in Niagara Falls.

Zakharchenko said Artur will soon be moving to an apartment in St. Catharines

and his family will most likely move with him.

The family will be at the garage sale on Saturday.

Now the Tymchyshyns turn to some more basic struggles in their temporary home – where will Anastasia go to school and where can Tatiana find work?

Enter Brian Carberry and Jan van Haren, NOTL residents for 15 years and proprietors of Ranger’s Retreat Bed and Breakfast.

The couple can’t provide Tatiana with a place to work but they will be donating a portion of the proceeds of their upcoming garage sale to the family.

“They arrived just with their suitcases and nothing else,” Carberry said in an interview on Tuesday.

Carberry said van Haren was raised just after the Second World War. The current situation in Ukraine has dredged up memories of living in post-war Netherlands.

“The idea that everything can be taken from someone so easily, it’s just a horrible experience. We’re very fortunate over on this side of the ocean that, at this point, it’s not affecting us,” Carberry said.

Carberry and van Haren are both Rotary Club members and said they were partially inspired by the club’s upcoming garage sale to do something similar.

The two both worked in the hospitality industry in the Netherlands and many of the items for sale are things they brought with them after closing their restaurant and moving to Canada.

Van Haren is quite the figure in the hospitality industry in the Netherlands, having been knighted by the King of the Netherlands in 2015 for his contributions to the industry.

Carberry is, understandably, very proud of those achievements.

The rest of the funds will be going to Rotary clubs in Ukraine, he said.

Carberry asks that people attending the sale respect the current situation with COVID-19 and try to maintain social distancing. Masks are encouraged but not required but he said everyone running the sale will be wearing one.

The garage sale will be on April 23 at 19 Colonel Butler Cres. between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Carberry said the items will be coming from his and van Haren’s personal collection, featuring “luxury small items” such as “silver plates, crystal glass, chairs, lamps, full flowers, collectibles, and garden perennials,” to name a few.

Alitura Fine Foods will be providing cookies for the sale.

Zhakharchenko works for PigOut Catering, which will be holding a barbecue at the event. The food will be free but the hosts will be asking everyone to donate to support Ukraine and the Tymchyshyns.

Readers may recall Zakharchenko spoke with The Lake Report in March about her work raising funds for Ukraine and about her mother, father and grandmother who are still living in embattled Kyiv.

She said her family is doing as well as can be in a country under siege, but things have grown more difficult.

“My family, they don’t have their jobs anymore. So I’m sending them money,” Zakharchenko said.

But there has been some rising hope as the Ukraini-

an army pushes back Russian offensives across the country, with the Russian’s recently retreating from Kyiv, the country’s capital city, to focus on offensives in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.

Of particular celebration was the recent sinking of the Russian Black Sea flagship, Moskva, which translates to Moscow.

The ship was allegedly sunk by Ukrainian missiles.

“But the Russians are still saying, ‘No, it was just a fire on the ship. Bombs? What bombs?’ ” Zakharchenko said.

She noted the Moskva was allegedly hit by Ukrainian missiles on April 14, the 110-year anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic.

People on the internet have been busy making comparisons between the two ships, she said, including that the Titanic cost about \$75 million to build compared to the Moskva’s \$750 million.

Zakharchenko encourages anyone who wishes to help Ukraine to donate money, as common items such as clothes are not needed at this time.



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Glendale Notes: Spring **clean-up** in the Niagara on the Green Neighbourhood

Steve Hardaker
Community Correspondent

Residents of Niagara on the Green will gather to celebrate Earth Week by holding a spring neighbourhood cleanup on Saturday, April 23.

The residents will be joined by Lord Mayor Betty Disero, several members of town council, members of the Niagara College Student Administrative Council and college students as well as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club to collect garbage and debris that winter has left behind.

This will be the first organized neighbourhood cleanup since 2019. Collections during the last two



Coun. Gary Burroughs and Niagara College student Tee Benjamin teamed up to clean one area of the Niagara on the Green neighbourhood during the 2019 community spring cleanup. STEVE HARDAKER

years were cancelled due to COVID restrictions on public gatherings.

Lianne Gagnon, Niagara College's director of student services and resident of the neighbourhood noted,

"Niagara College has always been keen on being a good neighbour, which is why I initiated these spring cleanups in NOTG and in Welland a few years ago."

"It's an excellent oppor-

tunity to give back to the community while also being good stewards of the land," she said.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is donating garbage bags and rubber gloves, and will retrieve all the filled garbage bags afterward for disposal.

Participants will gather in the neighbourhood park at 10 a.m. before dispersing throughout the area for the cleanup.

In the event of rain, the collection will be postponed till a later date.

Steve Hardaker has lived in Glendale for over 11 years and is active in many community organizations.

See Kyra Simone's Earth Day story, Page 17.

Dairy Queen is only option, business owner says, with **growing competition** from other franchises

Continued from Front Page

Queen Street in recent years, bakery owner Tom Stavropoulos told the town's municipal heritage committee last fall.

During the meeting, on Sept. 14, 2021, committee member Phillip Hoad voiced his frustration with the increased number of big brand companies on Queen Street and his disappointment that Taylor's would become one.

"I am so fed up with these mega-corporations and franchises taking over main street Ontario," Hoad said after telling Stavropoulos he was disappointed with a lack of effort to make the Dairy Queen visage blend in with the Old Town.

But Stavropoulos said he would not be converting his business if it was still viable in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"Taylor's Bakery was an ice cream store since 1973," Stavropoulos said in response to Hoad's comments.

"I would love to have kept that store. It's been operating for 50 years," he said.

"But you know what? When you let in COWS in an inappropriate building ... and you open up four other gelato places and



A rendering of the Dairy Queen plan. SOURCED

three other bakeries on the street in illegal zones, well, guess what happens to Taylor's Bakery? We can't compete anymore and I'm forced to change."

"I can't compete. I couldn't even make ends meet. Everybody was eating away through all my business."

"You let Balzac's (and) Starbucks in — there goes my coffee business. You've got COWS and four gelato places — there goes my ice cream business."

"And now with Budapest Bakery and Fritters on the Lake and on and on, I'm forced to change. My business dropped 75 per cent and that was going into COVID. It's not even operable anymore. So, I've had to make changes. This is just my chance to survive."

Hoad responded, "I sympathize totally with you, Tom, and I'm right on board with you. It's very sad and I'm sorry to see another (independent business) go."

He apologized to Stav-

ropoulos for directing his frustrations towards him regarding the invasion of major franchises on the main streets of Ontario's small towns.

He said he questions what such franchises bring to NOTL and that it seems they are only interested in "their business, their name and their logo. That's all I see now on Main Street, Ontario and it's sad."

"All I really see on this building is another bloody franchise — Dairy Queen," Hoad said in reference to the preliminary drawings.

"I'm just a little bit frustrated with some of the stuff that goes on downtown Niagara. I know it's a heritage district but I just don't see us paying any respect or taking the time to really think about what we're doing."

"I'm not in a position to be able to change things. It's going to be up to the councillors and the politicians of Niagara-on-the-Lake. But we have got to stop this. This is just way, way too much," Hoad said.

Stavropoulos and Hoad were unavailable for further comment.

Dairy Queen said there is no set date for the franchises opening in an email.

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Kids were out at the NOTL Community Centre on Saturday for the egg hunt and Bunny Trail events, hosted by the NOTL Kinsmen and Niagara Nursery School. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Bunny Trail and egg hunt were **huge hits**

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Hundreds of youngsters, collection strategies rehearsed with parents and grandparents, were out in force Saturday morning eager for a chance to grab handfuls of treats during the Kinsmen Club's Easter Egg Hunt at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre.

It's been three years

since NOTL attracted such an enormous youthful influx – the egg hunt hasn't been held since 2019, and that year rain forced it indoors.

Not this time, as large groups of kids three and under, four to six, and seven and over patiently gathered for the countdown to the mayhem that is the egg hunt.

They literally hit the ground running to pick

up the scores of eggs that Kinsmen Club members had just deposited minutes before on the grassy field near the Old Town firehall.

The morning kicked off with the Niagara Nursery School's much-loved Bunny Trail, a fundraiser for the school.

Balloon animals were a clear favourite, as families lined up for half an hour to get their one-of-kind blow-up treats.

Races, bubble blowing, an egg-cellent Easter-themed bake sale and the chance to meet the nursery school's new bunny, "Eggs," were among the other highlights of the day.

But ultimately, it was the thrill of the hunt for eggs that everyone, young and old, seemed to be there for. And, based on the satisfied smiles and children's laughter, it was a mission happily accomplished.



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Niagara Lions collect donations for Newark Neighbours

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara Lions had their arms full Saturday as they collected two truckloads of food donations for Newark Neighbours, thanks to the generosity of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents.

With tables set up outside NOTL's two Independent Grocers – Phil's in Virgil and Hendriks in Old Town – the Lions managed to take in some much needed supplies to help restock the food bank at Newark Neighbours.

"The Niagara Lions are so appreciative of the generosity of our community in their contributions for this year's Easter food drive," said club spokesperson Dorothy Soo-Wiens.



Cindy Grant and Erwin Wiens unload donations. SUPPLIED

Cindy Grant, food bank manager for Newark Neighbours, said the organization is extremely grateful for the help and that shelves are once again stocked.

"There was a full pickup truck load overflowing with food. It was terrific and yet again another wonderful demonstration of the generosity of this community."

Town of NOTL will host coyote information session on April 27

Staff
The Lake Report

Why here? Why now?

These may be some of the questions Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are asking themselves after several weeks of coyote confrontations reported around town, particularly in the neighbourhoods around Garrison Village.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will be hosting a coyote information session to try and provide some further understanding regarding coyotes in the municipality, available for the entire public to watch, on April 27 from 6 to 7 p.m.

"Coyote Watch Canada will be joined by community partners, including the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natu-

ral Resources and Forestry, Lincoln County Humane Services, and Niagara Regional Police Service, to provide a presentation and answer questions," town spokesperson Marah Minor said in an email.

Questions can be submitted in advance for the relevant authorities on the subject by emailing communications@notl.com, messaging the town on any of its social media platforms or calling/texting 905-380-0056, Minor said.

Questions can also be submitted during the session via the same methods.

The session can be accessed at livestream.com/notl, the same resource the town uses to stream all of its council and committee meetings.

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Winery managers hopeful for summer boom

Continued from Front Page

bers. In others, it amounted to about half. Either way, wineries welcomed the activity.

At Chateau des Charmes, director of hospitality Martin Lindqvist said that demand on the weekend was stronger than before the pandemic, adding, "We're incredibly excited, we love having guests at the winery, so we are genuinely excited to welcome people back and to create wonderful experiences for them. It's been a long time."

Tim Coons, regional estate manager for Trius and Gretzky Wineries, said visits there and to Peller Estates, which is part of the wine group, were slightly stronger than pre-COVID numbers, with roughly 30,000 visitors to all three NOTL properties over the four days of the Easter weekend.

"It's been great to see smiling faces and people enjoying being with their friends, and enjoying their experiences at the wineries," he said.

"I sense people have a renewed sense of positivity."

Pillitteri Estates has also seen "a significant increase in local tourism from pre-COVID and last year this Easter," according to Jamie



A full parking lot at Gretzky Estates. DON REYNOLDS

Slingerland, director of viticulture. He says "locals who are dying to get out and do something are visiting and rediscovering what is in their backyard."

Andrea Kaiser, marketing manager at Reif Estate Winery, said things "were very busy this weekend."

"People are happy to get out and about. People seem to be feeling lighter and happier, I love to see their smiles."

Kaiser says they still had just about half of normal traffic for this weekend in pre-COVID terms, at least in part due to the fact that "international visitors, including from the U.S. are just trickling back slowly."

"Border traffic from the U.S. is increasing, and hopefully it will rebound to previous levels, but right now it's at about one

third of traditional levels," explained Coons.

Lindqvist said "international tourists aren't here in numbers yet, but they're booking. We have bus tours and lunches booked from May right through to October. We had our first Japanese tour booking already."

Chateau des Charmes has erected its events tent in anticipation of about 50 weddings already booked.

"This is going to be the busiest wedding season in our history," said Lindqvist.

Coons notes that events are returning to Niagara, and adds "corporate businesses are booking again, as they return to meeting in person with their teams."

The biggest challenge for the wineries is staffing in the current competitive job market.

Pillitteri has reduced its hours due to staff shortages, and Slingerland notes they have 12 part-time positions open right now.

Lindqvist said "we started recruiting in January, knowing there's a limited workforce, so we are in good shape, though it's been a challenge. Our relationships with Brock University and Niagara College have been crucial."

All eyes are on the summer season, and hopes are pinned on a busy one.

"I feel there's a pent up appetite to travel and be out and about, so I expect an extremely busy summer. I think it will be super exciting and fulfilling, as people reconnect, I think we'll be seeing a lot of friendly faces," said Kaiser.

Also pointing to that pent up desire, Slingerland is optimistic, and expects the summer months to heat up, both weatherwise and tourist-wise, especially in July and August and beyond.

"We're feeling great, and looking forward to summer. We can see a light at the end of the tunnel," said Coons.

Anticipating perhaps the busiest summer yet with evident relish, Lindqvist says, "it's been two long years of limitations, so it's great to go full throttle again."

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Canada The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 122
Region active cases: 1,963
Region deaths: 531
Region total cases: 38,436

**April 20 data per Niagara Region Public Health. Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.*



Contributed by Patty Garriock

"Gratefulness draws on the human spirit in all of us. It renews and refreshes ourselves, and best of all it is contagious." - Amy Edelman

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NOTL resident Helen Ferley captured this photo of a spring bee inside a daffodil.

Calling all NOTL photographers: send us some of your interesting, evocative, quirky images of life around town and we'll consider them for this space on our editorial page. Email images (1 MB or more) to editor@niagaranow.com.

Spring is abuzz



Editorial

COVID is making the rounds ... again

Richard Harley
Editor-In-Chief

It's a similar story no matter who you talk to — it seems everyone knows someone who has had COVID-19 of late.

As testing reaches an all-time low, as Doug Ford's government continues its pattern of ignoring science and medical experts, we're seeing more and more infection spread in our communities.

The true number of infections is wildly above the number of reported cases, especially now that people are choosing to test at home, then tough it out if they test positive and aren't letting public health know about their infections.

It's sort of worrying, but luckily the death toll isn't spiking like it did at the

beginning of the pandemic.

The Lake Report was no exception, with some cases of COVID sweeping through our newsroom.

We're all healthy and better now, thanks to multiple vaccinations, but it brought up some serious questions.

If anything, it showed us that, despite covering COVID for more than two years, there are still a lot of unanswered questions.

For example: When you test positive, how long should it be before you test negative again?

How long are you actually contagious?

Why are we only isolating for five days?

Where do we report cases? Do we need to report cases?

Where is the PCR testing?

Where are the mask mandates?

It's a confusing time for anyone, not to mention stressful and lonely when you need to isolate.

As our columnist Ross Robinson wrote last week about his own experience, it can get really lonely, really quickly.

And seeing more and more infections makes you realize: the masks were working.

But instead, we have a province that wants to open up, despite the best interests of the public.

Ford should be ashamed of his government's handling of this pandemic since Day 1.

It's not often a premier can equally anger both his own party and his opposition through sheer incompetence.

So as we move closer to the June 2 provincial

election, let's remember the party that continually failed us during the pandemic.

The party that is sitting on millions of dollars of funding but ended PCR testing against the wishes of doctors.

The party that ended mask mandates out of political expediency.

And let's also remember that just because we have an incompetent leader at the helm of an incompetent party, it doesn't excuse our obligations to protect each other.

Mask up. Sanitize. Do your part to protect your neighbours.

Because as he has shown, despite his "for the people" bumper sticker politicking, all Doug Ford really cares about is staying in power.

editor@niagaranow.com



Proposed winery looks like a mausoleum

Dear editor:

In reference to Christopher Allen's comments about the proposed new monstrosity for the Stone Eagle Winery, I absolutely agree, ("Proposed winery design is overpowering," The Lake Report, April 14).

But looking at the photo once more, I realize that

there is perhaps foresight in the design.

Should the wine not be as excellent as the Two Sisters claim, the building can swiftly be turned into the mausoleum it is trying to emulate.

We are an aging population, after all.

Marla Percy
NOTL



A rendering of the proposed Stone Eagle winery. SOURCED

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Baldinelli: Disappointing federal budget **shortchanges** tourism and winery sectors



Tony Baldinelli
Special to The Lake Report

Only a week after the first NDP-Liberal budget unleashed an avalanche of uncontrolled spending, failed to present a fiscal anchor or a plan to control inflation, the Bank of Canada has now hiked interest rates by 50 basis points.

Further, the bank has also warned that it will likely raise rates again to combat out-of-control inflation that is driving up the cost-of-living, which is impacting us all.

Canadians badly need relief from these heavy costs. Instead, federal government spending is now 25 per cent higher than it was pre-pandemic. According to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, each Canadian's share of the national debt is now \$31,128 and growing quickly.

Despite all this new spending, there was no support announced for our

hard-hit tourism sector. There was no mention of repayment extensions for CEBA or the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund, or an extension to the Tourism and Hospitality Relief fund, which is set to end in May.

These were key requests of the government by the tourism industry, yet they were ignored.

Instead, the Liberals found an additional \$25 million to continue supporting the unnecessary and cumbersome ArriveCan App, which is mandatory for travellers to use at our borders when entering Canada.

Rather than help facilitate tourism recovery, ArriveCan has been an unmitigated failure and deters tourists from coming to Canada.

Budget 2022 also contains many more questions than answers for our local wineries and grape growers.

On July 1, Canadian wineries will be slammed with a new excise tax on 100 per cent Canadian-content wines, because of the Trudeau government's failure to protect the sector in a recent trade dispute with Australia at the World Trade Organization.

We are only about 10 weeks away from this

new tax being implemented, yet the industry is still waiting to learn details on what any replacement program to the excise exemption will look like, and how it will work.

In last year's budget, the federal government promised \$101 million to assist the sector in the first two years of having to operate with this tax in place. Yet, Budget 2022 forecasts the federal government receiving \$135 million over these same two years, and in fact, the new tax will generate \$390 million for the government over a five-year period.

Will these revenues be returned to the sector in any new replacement program? As well, what will happen to the inventory of wine produced and bottled before July 1? Will it now be subject to the excise tax?

If you were hoping for a return to some form of fiscal responsibility in this budget, then I am sure you were disappointed, as I was, when the Liberals revealed \$452 billion in spending plans on April 7.

These urgent and important questions need to be addressed by the federal government.

Since the excise exemption was first introduced in

2006 by the former Conservative government, the Canadian wine industry has flourished, growing from some 400 wineries to over 700 today.

That means many of these new wineries across Canada will be faced with remitting this expensive excise tax, for the first time, starting this July.

At risk are potential winery closures and lost jobs across the sector, especially if tourism continues to be hindered at our borders by ArriveCan.

While we live in uncertain times, three things are certain under the NDP-Liberals: government spending will continue to rise, Canadians will continue to get less for every dollar they spend due to inflation and, ultimately, we will be the ones left paying for these expensive budgets through higher federal taxes in the future.

Hard-working Canadians and their families deserve so much better, and I will continue to advocate for us all on these and other important matters.

Tony Baldinelli is Conservative MP for Niagara Falls riding, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.

Congrats to The Lake Report for a **job well done**

Dear editor:

Having recently moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake, and finding myself contemplating the prospect of retirement, I decided to start a podcast series called "BOOM! We broke it, let's fix it," wherein I challenge BoomXers (Boomers and Xers) "to deliver on the big ideas needed to save the world by 2035."

Consequently, I interview guests to share their big ideas and calls to action on a variety of topics.

My most recent interview was with White House correspondent Brian Karem, discussing his thesis that the media model is broken, in which he calls on his 38 years of reporting to frame the problem, and then to



share his thoughts on prospective remedies.

The discussion drew heavily on the substance of his recent book "Free the Press: The death of American journalism and how to revive it."

He made the point that in

the United States there is a newspaper "desert" in most communities – the result of media consolidation that effectively kills local news and commentary.

I believe the same to be substantively true in Canada, where hundreds of community newspapers have closed in the last decade.

However, I found myself telling Karem that I am fortunate enough to live in a community well-served by a community newspaper, The Lake Report.

That in my short time here I had been impressed not only by the quality reporting, but that within earshot each week I heard the newspaper being talked about.

As Karem notes, such papers are incubators for young journalists and thus play a vital role in the media ecosystem. He also notes that most national stories start at the local level – which only works if there is pressing investigative reporting at that level.

As I reflected on my discussion with Karem, I realized that The Lake Report is as good as it gets in North America, and that we are lucky to be served by such a strong voice, one that as the rare standout that it is, deserves the support of the community.

So this really amounts to a thank-you note – for a job very well done.

*Bob Westrope
NOTL*

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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO PASS AMENDING ZONING BY-LAW TO REMOVE HOLDING (H) SYMBOL

What:

Notice of Intention to Pass an Amending Zoning By-law to Remove Holding (H) Symbol (under Section 36 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 as amended).

Regarding: File No: ZBA-03-2022

Line 1 Road & Concession 6 Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Konik Estates (Phase 1) Draft Plan of Subdivision

What is this?

The Zoning By-law amendment application proposes to remove the Holding (H) symbol that applies to the subject lands through site specific Zoning By-law 4316DU-20.

The Holding (H) symbol requires environmental matters for the residential use of the land to be addressed to the satisfaction of the Niagara Region. Upon removal of the Holding (H) symbol, the subject lands may be developed for a draft approved residential plan of subdivision.



The Council for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake may pass the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment to remove the Holding (H) symbol from the subject lands no earlier than the **April 25, 2022** Council meeting. However, Council may consider the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment at a later meeting.

Under Section 36(3) of the Planning Act, only the applicant has appeal rights with respect to the removal of a Holding (H) symbol. There are no third-party rights to appeal the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment.

As permitted under Provincial legislation and the Town's Procedural By-law, Council and Committee meetings are being conducted with electronic participation since in-person meetings are cancelled at this time due to COVID-19.

If you wish to participate and make an oral presentation or ask questions at the Electronic Council meeting, you must register in advance with Ralph Walton, Town Clerk (ralph.walton@notl.com or 905-468-3266 ext. 228). On the date of the meeting, you will receive an email with instructions to connect to the meeting on your computer, tablet or telephone.

If you wish to view the Council meeting for information purposes, registration is not required. The meeting will be available for viewing at the following link: <https://livestream.com/notl>

For more information:

Please contact Scott Turnbull, Development Coordinator, at 905-468-3266 ext. 322 or via email at scott.turnbull@notl.com if you require additional information. A copy of the application and supporting documents for the proposal may be obtained on the Town's web-site, www.notl.org/content/public-notices-under-planning-act or at the Community and Development Services Department within Town Hall (1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, ON). Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, April 21, 2022

Ralph Walton - Town Clerk

Canada is powerless to help stop carnage in Ukraine

Dear editor:

If, like me, you have been watching the war in Ukraine unfolding then your heart is breaking with every passing day.

Inhuman acts are being perpetrated on these people who never wanted such a horrible event to take place in their country.

Vladimir Putin unleashed his troops with tanks, rockets, bombers and a horde of depraved killers who have murdered the young and old, children, grandparents in the streets or in their homes.

They have raped and taken whatever they find of value from the people left behind. The country has been bombed into piles of dust and rubble and might never be the same.

For two days I watched "The Voice" television show, with children from all over Europe.

Some were from Ukraine and my heart ached for those children who today are homeless or, worse, dead at the hands of depraved men who have no right to be in this country of innocent civilians.

The sickest of them all is their leader, Putin, a man without an ounce of decency. He lied to the world and worst of all to the people of Ukraine, and to his own people.

We all knew what he was up to, but prayed we were wrong. When the invasion began we hoped someone would take his life and those who report to him



PIXABAY PHOTO

would stop this insanity before too many people were murdered in Ukraine.

We can't send the weaponry they need to defend their country because we don't have the weapons to even defend ourselves.

Our government has continually cut our armed forces, leaving us without what we would need in case a foreign country were to attack us.

How can we help our NATO allies? Our military is a sad joke. We have money for numerous insane things our lame government chooses to support, but not what is important to help our country or our allies.

We should be ashamed of the mess our country is in. It has gone downhill ever since the Liberals under Justin Trudeau came into power.

High unemployment, higher and soon to be much higher taxes, debt that no country should ever be in and a leader who knows nothing about economics or how to run a country.

He is a man who has never held a real job and does not have the slightest idea of what it is like to be homeless or in poverty.

I fear for the younger generations who will inherit this broken economy and land.

We live in a land of plenty, but much of it has been sold off to the Chinese and other nations. What is left of our country, which had so much promise?

I have always been so proud of our land, but with what our leaders did to our Indigenous Peoples and continue to do to this day, I am ashamed.

They have been promised clean drinking water for years and still do not have what our governments have been promising for way too long.

Can we be a proud country with this history? I think not. How about you, my fellow Canadians, are you happy with our current state of affairs?

Tom Thornton
NOTL

Real estate industry should ban blind bidding

Dear editor:

I have been a real estate broker for over 40 years and have witnessed the change from the occasional blind auction to it being the predominant way realtors operate today.

To suggest in any way that an open auction conducted by an auctioneer is less ethical or supportable than the current blind auction system of the real estate industry is simply ludicrous.

The current system, wherein buyers are encouraged to bid blindly against others and overpay to inflate the market even further beyond the current hyperinflated and unsupported values, is bad for everyone involved.

It's also a large part of the reason why the market is, simply put, constipated.

Until we get back to treating real estate as a home to live in and a reasonable investment for

the future for Canadian families instead of a commodity for speculators (foreign and domestic), or for companies and investors to trade in like cryptocurrency or tulips, we will continue to have the social upheaval of homelessness, poverty and lack of affordable accommodation for young families.

The real estate industry should ban blind bidding.

Robert Bader
NOTL

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NOTL Realty Salesperson Ricky Watson not only learned to golf at these camps but also taught these camps for many years. Ricky encourages all kids to try golf and see how the game can not only teach you lessons for life and business but that golf is a game that can be played for a lifetime.

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COLOURING CONTEST



Easter contest winners!

The Lake Report is delighted to announce the winners of our 2022 Easter Colouring Contest. Congratulations to Tucker Wiens, 7, for his detailed colouring of the Easter egg to the top left, and to Mason Vidal, 5, for the colouring of the bunnies and egg at the bottom left. A big thanks to all who submitted their works of art. We'll see you again next year! This year's winners will be contacted by the paper to claim their prizes. Right side photos by: Claire Wiens, 10, Charlotte Mannella, 8, Victoria Nickerson, 8, Jack Hoffman, 9, Addison Kostecki, 5, Adelyn Rate, 7, Addison Kostecki, 5 (again) and Madelyn Josiak, 9.



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Shalamar was a family affair for the Sheppards

Second in a series

Linda Fritz
The Lake Report

The Shalamar Lake resort might have been the brainchild of Bert Sheppard, but it really was a family affair.

Bert's daughter Cynthia also notes her mother's contribution to the family enterprise.

When Shalamar was moving from dream to reality in Shep's head, his wife Edna, who went by the name Billie, was a head nurse at Niagara Falls General Hospital.

As the business grew, she joined the enterprise full-time. A keen gardener, she planted trees all over the site. The mature trees on the property today add to the ambiance of Shalamar's successor, Vine Ridge Resort.

Thanks to Bert Sheppard's acumen, his family's belief in the project and all their hard work, Shalamar was a huge success.

Sheppard fell ill and died at age 57 in 1970. Although he achieved many of his dreams at Shalamar, he had hoped to do more.

A mini golf course, an arcade and winter ice skating parties were dreams unfulfilled. Although a new general manager was hired, the Sheppard family's heart was no longer in Shalamar. The property was sold soon after.

Kimberly Legros's family owned Shalamar from 1978 to 1987, as well as Log Cabin Trailers in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

There were four brothers. "Two ran Log Cabin and two, Shalamar," Legros says.

At the time, the people



Bert Sheppard gets ready to raise the Shalamar camping sign. SUPPLIED

who camped at Shalamar also often worked there.

Jen Cunning and her family camped at Shalamar during the latter part of this period.

"I was about 13 or 14 when we started going to Shalamar," Cunning says. "We would camp from April till October, basically when the park opened for the season, until closing."

They stayed there even though the family lived nearby in St. Catharines.

"Back in the day, most of us that camped there were pretty fearless. We would walk to Queenston Heights all the time. Some of us even walked all the way to the Pen Centre one summer, just for something to do," "I think it was more or less to see if we could walk that far. A bunch of us would even walk to Niagara Riding Stables and go horseback riding quite a bit."

"We would spend a lot of time going to the Falls as well, especially to Maple Leaf Village, the place to

'hang out' and have some fun."

She also recalls hanging out poolside, chilling at the arcade, movie and dance nights at the pavilion, Christmas in July, the Winterfest ("where some of us would meet back up there in the off-season amongst all the snow for a day").

There was also "the St. Davids Carnival, the Virgil Victoria Day carnival. Seeing how far up the Brock Monument you could get, after walking up the hillsides to get there. There wasn't anything not to like."

Cunning met and hung out with a lot of Americans and to this day, she keeps in touch with them – more than 30 years later.

Longtime camper Emily DeSantis confirms Cunning's memories of Shalamar.

"My mother Cheryl Loughlin began camping at Shalamar in 1978. She took her two boys to the campgrounds and upgraded her trailer as her family grew," she says.

"She has loved and cherished the spot for so many years, as did I as a child."

Shawna Robinson Jones adds, "As far as activities, there was never a dull moment. Most events centred on the pavilion – Saturday night movies (bring your own lawn chair), bingo, ceramics, horseshoe tournaments."

One of her favourite pastimes was baseball. They played against teams from other campgrounds, including one from Ransomville, N.Y.

The summers at Shalamar provided memories that last a lifetime.

Next: Shalamar now operates as Vine Ridge Resort.

Author's acknowledgment: I'd like to thank all of those who responded to my request for information about Shalamar Lake. All of you loved your time there. Because there were so many of you, I had to pick and choose the information I used, but I'm grateful to all of you.



You can put me in a bucket to make it weigh less. What am I?

Last issue: A man calls his dog from the opposite side of the river. The dog crosses the river without getting wet, and without using a bridge or boat. How?

Answer: The river was frozen

Answered first by: Howard Jones

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Mary Drost, Laurie Skarja, Susan Hamilton, Rob Hutchison, Margie Enns, Dennis Blake, Sheila Meloche, Wade Durling, Pam Dowling, Maria Janeiro, Kevin Etherington, Joan Moore

Email answers to editor@niaganow.com, with your name, for a chance to win a \$20 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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Resident tells court that noise from pickleball is ‘torture’

Continued from Front Page

The pickleball club has been using the courts ever since, its membership quickly growing to more than 200 people.

“The approximately 240 pickleball club members, understandably, have a wide variety of opinions on this situation, ranging from head-shaking incredulosity to outrage,” club president John Hindle said in an email to The Lake Report.

In response to the court case, which began more than a year ago, the town recently closed the outdoor pickleball courts and opened six courts inside Centennial Arena as replacements.

“The temporary relocation of the pickleball courts is in response to identified noise concerns associated with the use of the outdoor pickleball courts,” says an email from the town to the club.

Scafesi said the sound from the tennis courts and other park activities never bothered her and her problems began with the onset and growth of pickleball as a popular community sport.

The noise produced by

the racquets and balls has greatly affected her mental health to the point where she can hear the noise even when nobody is playing, she told the court.

“It’s a serious thing when you hear things which are not real,” Scafesi said.

“Every single morning when I wake up I was thinking about another torture day. I have been tortured every single day.”

“My life is not peaceful. It’s a tortured life.”

Scafesi is represented by J. Patrick Maloney during the trial, a lawyer with Sullivan & Mahoney in St. Catharines. She was cross-examined by Terrence Hill, a lawyer representing the town.

Maloney also called witness Todd Busch, an engineer specializing in acoustic sound for more than 25 years.

Busch visited Scafesi’s property in October 2020 and took sound decibel recordings to determine the noise level of the pickleball players.

Busch said the noise level of the sound of the pickleball striking a racquet

measured 77 decibels on Scafesi’s balcony.

Busch utilized a provincial document, the Environmental Noise Guideline – Stationary and Transportation Sources (NPC-300), to explain his findings.

Under this document, an acceptable decibel volume on a residential property is around 50. The sound of the pickleball exceeded that by 27 decibels, Busch said.

Every extra 10 decibels equates to a doubling in perceived loudness, meaning the extra 27 decibels are nearly eight times the acceptable volume under the noise guideline, Busch said.

Hill questioned Busch’s use of the NPC-300 as an authoritative document in this case.

He cited a section that states what noise sources are exempt from the NPC-300, specifically “noise resulting from gathering of people at facilities such as restaurants, fairs and parks.”

Busch agreed that this exemption creates a space to doubt whether the sports park facility should be held to the standards outlined in the NPC-300.

Further, Hill argued that Busch’s report states he assumed the NPC-300 to be applicable in this situation and had no definitive explanation as to whether it was.

Busch agreed that he based his report on the assumption of applicability but defended his decision to use the document.

“I think the fact that there’s a regulation that’s effective widely in Ontario that attempts to quantify and provide a more black-and-white type of dividing line between what might be considered generally acceptable and generally unacceptable is valuable,” Busch said.

“There’s a clear violation. That’s an intrusive noise.”

Ian Langden, lawyer representing the pickleball club, also argued against the validity of Busch’s sound recordings.

The recordings were allegedly made on Oct. 24, 2020. Langden pointed out that the club did not operate during that period and was closed down due to COVID-19, meaning anyone using the court was merely a member of the public.

Maloney argued the club has stewardship of the courts since it advertises the code needed to unlock the gate and contributed financially to the installation of a lock on the court and paid for windscreens.

Hindle testified that the code was widely accessible and known throughout the town and that the club was always welcoming of any members of the public who wished to use the courts.

Hill defended the town by claiming that allowing pickleball to take place should not be construed with allowing violations of the noise bylaw.

“Permitting an activity does not equate to permission to emit an excessive noise. That in essence is the position of the defendant,” Hill said in his closing submission.

He also argued that making a conviction based on the fact that one individual does not like a sound is a slippery slope.

“I hate whistles blown by referees, it disturbs me. Is that enough to get a conviction? I hate those parents that yell for their

children. There are soccer games out there every night, seven days a week during the spring. It just drives me crazy. Is that enough to get it?” Hill asked the court.

“So we have to be careful about the slippery slope that we go on when we’re talking about regulating recreational and sporting activities.”

Maloney countered this point by citing the frequency of the noise of the pickleball racquets striking a ball compared to the sound of whistles during a soccer game.

“You don’t hear the referee’s whistle 43 times in two minutes,” Maloney said, citing evidence from Busch.

Maloney also looked at the wording of the town’s bylaw to support Scafesi’s case, noting section three states a noise is against the bylaw if it is merely “likely” to disturb the peace of NOTL residents.

“‘Likely’ is the subjective test, according to the bylaw,” he said, claiming the lack of a quantifiable sound level in the bylaw leaves it open to legal interpretation.



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NOTL Horticultural Society to hold annual plant sale May 14

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake-Horticultural Society is planning its annual plant sale for May 14.

Cindy Grant, chair of the group's popular Garden Tour event, said it will be the first annual sale in three years.

"You've been planning great things for your garden during our many lockdowns (between binges of Netflix movies and the Food Network). So now is your chance to swing into action and get started on making your perfect garden for 2022," she said, in an email.

Grant said the sale will have annuals, ferns, tomatoes and herbs from local growers.

"The perennials will be from our members' own gardens, and there are always some specialty



Plants will be on sale May 14 from 9 a.m. to noon.

items. Bring your favourite pruner or shovel to be sharpened at the same time. We hope to see you there."

The cash only event will take place rain or shine from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Meridian Credit Union Arena, 1565 Four Mile Creek Rd.

Homemade jams, jellies a big hit at Grace United Easter sale

John Sayers
Special to The Lake Report

What do you associate with Easter Saturday? Well, if you're at Grace United Church it's the Jam Sale.

Crafted lovingly in the church kitchen using traditional time-tested recipes, these are the kind of jams and jellies that Grandma used to make.

So on Saturday morning, the public flocked to the church in what was not the nicest weather to buy a supply of strawberry (the world's favourite), sour cherry, peach, blackcurrant (this writer's favourite), marmalade, and other jams and jellies to stock up for the coming weeks.

And as well as the jams and jellies there was a wide range of sauces (people buy the famous Colonial Sauce by the case) for those who want to add a homemade touch to their meals.

Folks find that even a "heat and eat" dinner microwaved in a hurry is elevated several notches by adding the right sauce.

This all happens only because congregation members David Greaves and Heinz Probst make it happen, with hours spent in preparation for each delight.

In corporate business circles it's called sweat equity.

Another expression is "value added," and in this case the value is added by taking ingredients such as juicy strawberries and luscious cherries and spending hours in the kitchen to craft and bottle the product.

Last year that amounted to some \$18,000 in church funding from sales of jams, jellies and sauces courtesy of David and Heinz.

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Niagara-on-the-Lake



VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION - COYOTES



A Virtual Information Session is being held about coyotes in Niagara-on-the-Lake on **Wednesday, April 27, at 6:00 p.m.**

This will be held online via Livestream and recorded for those unable to attend. Registration is not required. Watch the Virtual Information Session at livestream.com/notl.



A presentation will be provided by Coyote Watch Canada, and a panel of community partners will be in attendance to assist with answering questions following the presentation.



Questions can be submitted in advance or during the session via the following methods:

- **Email:** communications@notl.com
- **Social Media:** Facebook (@Town.of.NOTL), Twitter (@Town_of_NOTL), Instagram (@niagara.on.the.lake)
- **Phone (Call or Text):** 905-380-0056

For more information, please visit
notl.com/coyotes.

Not in the antipodes, but the Stanley Cup has been **missing in action**



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist
The Lake Report

Let's get back to our Canadian roots, and talk some hockey. I'm distressed by what has happened to "our game."

Between 1948 and 1998, the first 50 years of my life, we Canadians could argue that we dominated hockey. In fact, 29 of the 50 Stanley Cup winners during that half century were teams based in Canada. Oui, oui, my Montreal Canadiens won 18 or those 29 Cups. But who was counting?

Then, the great majority of NHL players were Canadians, from such hockey towns as Kirkland Lake, Cochrane (Tim Horton.) Rouyn-Noranda, Moose

Jaw, Winnipeg and Sault Ste. Marie. This is a bit off topic, but if someone from Montreal is a Montrealer, does it follow that someone from the Sault is a Sewer? Hey, just kidding. We need a laugh or two these days.

Which brings me to my query: Why has the Stanley Cup essentially disappeared from Canada? No Canadian based team has won The Cup since 1993. That's 29 years! And yes, the Habs won it that year, with Patrick Roy "standing on his head," as the talking heads would have been saying.

During those 29 years, 13 different U.S. based teams have won The Cup, including teams from Florida, Texas and California. Hey, it can't be that hard, eh? I know, I know, there are only seven teams based in Canada now, and 25 in the States. Still, so many of the skill players are not Canadian, including some nine of the current top 20 scorers.

Yes, I really did a deep dive into the NHL online, to prove my point that the game of hockey is leaving us behind. I ramble, but I really am flummoxed by the



A Canadian team hasn't won the Stanley Cup since 1993. SPORTSNET

state of the world's fastest game.

Not too many years ago, a good Canadian lad had to "play Junior A" to get to the NHL. Draft 16-year-olds, take them away from their families, billet them, and hope for the best. Sheesh, the temptations.

Now, neither of the two most discussed NHLers played a game of Junior. They did it their way.

Auston Taylour Matthews was born in California,

and his family moved to Scottsdale, Arizona when he was an infant. His main coach in Arizona was Boris Dorozhenko, a Ukrainian who had played professional hockey in the former USSR, and then spent several years as the director of the Mexico Ice Hockey Federation. Do you think Boris thought outside of the box or boards? Not exactly the traditional route, but there is obviously more than one way to skin a coyote.

Auston decided to bail on the NCAA or Junior A hockey, playing in the USA Hockey National Team Development Program. Then, he played for a year in the Swiss National "A" League, for the ZSC Lions near Zurich. Betcha didn't know their rink held 11,200 flag waving fans, loving "our" great game with no fights and only the odd scrum after a whistle.

Where am I going now? How about some

chatter about the Great 8, Alexander Mikhailovich Ovechkin? He was born in Moscow, to a very athletic father and a mother named Anastasia Shubskaya who won Olympic basketball gold medals in 1976 and 1980. This magnificent, gap toothed lover of "our game" just might break our Great Gretzky's all time, impossible to surpass goal scoring record. And wasn't it so classy when Ovy discreetly took time to welcome Carey Price back to the NHL the other night?

Let me awkwardly ramble to a conclusion, by mentioning standards of appearance in the NHL. I am not saying they should pick it up a notch, but these players are paid good money, and have time for a nap most days. Why not get Gillette or Schick to become the official razor blade supplier to the NHL, and ask all players to take five minutes for a shave?

Really, most of them look like they just got off a canoe trip in Algonquin Park, or some other great Canadian wilderness.

But I digress.

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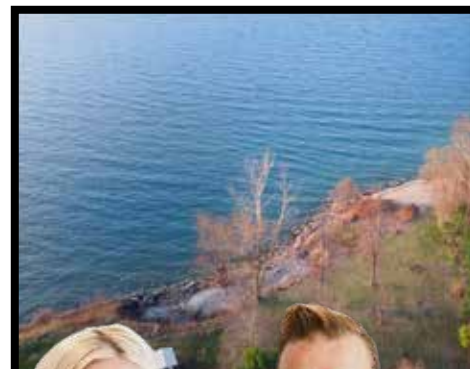


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People dance at the gala. SUPPLIED/CARSON TUCKER

Purple Ribbon Gala raises \$100,000 to fight epilepsy

Staff
The Lake Report

This year's Black Tie Purple Ribbon Gala brought in a whopping \$100,000 to go towards helping fight epilepsy.

Organizer Carson Tucker, who holds the annual event, said "We're pretty happy. Exhausting. A lot of work but we got it done."

He was inspired to host the event to help his friend

and fellow NOTL resident Eric VanNoort, who has been living with epilepsy.

Van Noort had major brain surgery in 2020 and has since begun his own fundraising to support the epilepsy monitoring unit at Toronto Western Hospital.

The funds from the gala will go towards purchasing software that will improve physicians' abilities to detect seizures and analyze data effectively.

New church will serve as a community centre for region

Staff
The Lake Report

It looks more like a community centre than a place of worship, but when the mammoth Central Community Church on York Road officially opens in May, it will be a facility that people from across Niagara Region can make use of.

After weathering the COVID pandemic and enduring several years of construction, "the wait is finally over," lead pastor Bill Markham said in announcing the official May 1 official opening.

Central Community Church "is inviting residents from all over Niagara to join them as they kick off a Day of Community at their new home" at 680 York Rd. in Niagara-on-the-Lake, he said.

Religious services are planned at 9 and 11 a.m., following which visitors can tour the 74,000-square-foot building, have coffee in the café, dine at food trucks on-site and entertain their children with some family activities.

Registration is not required.



The new church will be a community hub for religious people. SOURCED

Described as "a state-of-the-art facility," it includes a large auditorium with multiple basketball and volleyball courts.

The church hopes to rent space to different community, sport and corporate groups during the week. There is parking for 730 cars.

"The goal was to develop a multi-use building that would function to develop community through sport, social gatherings, and unique experiences," Markham said.

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Earth Day reminder: Greater than the sum of our parts



Keeping it Green 

Kyra Simone
Special to The Lake Report

In the last few years, we've been able to spend more time outside and deepen our connection to nature. By pausing and exploring our surroundings during the pandemic, many of us gained a better appreciation for both the beauty and vulnerability of wildlife in our yards and neighbourhoods.

I experienced firsthand how individual interactions with nature build up to a strong sense of gratitude, and how, eventually, this shared mentality culminates in collective action when we work together in support of our community.

Being immersed in nature made me observant of local environmental issues, and more inclined to take action to improve them. My regular walks at Niagara Shores Park became intentional litter cleanups because every time I went back, I found more plastic washing up on the beach.

I loved being outside, but I became aware of the number of trees being lost to development, even though NOTL has the lowest tree cover in the Region — only 10 per cent. Environment Canada recommends a minimum of 30 per cent tree canopy to support wildlife and counteract urban heat islands.

Individual gratitude for the environment can spark collective action in such situations. For example, by participating in public meetings and holding development to sustainable standards, more progress can be made to preserve the community's charm and natural heritage.

Speaking of collective action, as an administrator for the town Buy Nothing



Like these fused plastic beads found on the beach, individuals are stronger when they work together. KYRA SIMONE

group, I've been delighted to see this "circular economy" blossom over the last few years.

This group has helped more than 2,000 people in NOTL to appreciate what we have, or even see the potential in something damaged. We've kept so many items out of the landfill and reduced carbon emissions from manufacturing new products and trips to the store.

On the environmental advisory committee, I feel encouraged to see the town making environmental issues a priority. Through collaboration with town staff and Brock University, the committee has proposed updates to bylaws, low-impact development standards to improve local water quality, and measures to prepare NOTL residents for more severe weather due to climate change.

Beyond the formal, regulatory aspects, the environmental committee supports innovative new programs and community outreach. We organized the first World Cleanup Day event in NOTL, and are currently proposing two new pilot studies to reduce cigarette litter in town and prevent bird window collisions during migration.

Thanks to those that work to keep the environment top-of-mind, NOTL residents are continually inspired to get involved. When Jo-Ann Fraser and Dawn Orr organized the first Jane's Walk in Chautauqua, the local history and ecology tour drew a quite the interested crowd — this year's walk is planned for August 25.

Locals like Mary-Clare Lamon and Beth Macdonald have written impassioned letters to the editor about their own litter cleanups. Beth, discouraged at the amount of local plastic litter, urged readers to shop more consciously to avoid packaging.

There are so many local opportunities to put indi-

vidual motivations to good use, whether through personal cleanups, joining the NPCA's volunteer network, Friends of One Mile Creek, or lending time to larger initiatives like "bio blitzes" or the Love Your Lake program, which is looking for volunteers to clean up NOTL beaches on May 1.

This Earth Day (and beyond), if you find yourself feeling grateful for the stability and serenity of the outdoors, take it one step further and share it with those around you. You'll soon find that many others feel the same way, and you might even be inspired to get your hands dirty and give back.

If you do your own cleanup, be sure to wear gloves! Please share your own Earth Day efforts with us at editor@niagaranow.com

Kyra Simone is a green-at-heart NOTL resident with master's degrees in biology & science communication. In her spare time, she advocates for sustainable change, picks up litter, makes recycled jewelry, and transforms furniture bound for the landfill.

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Fort George golf course, 1902

I bet many of you are itching to get out on the golf course now if you haven't already. Here is a 1902 plan of the former Fort George golf course on the Niagara Commons. To orient yourself you can see the remnants of Fort George drawn on the left and the River Road cutting through the middle is now referred to as Queens Parade. One of the former racetracks on the Commons is also shown on the plan. Golf began in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1877 and a few practice holes were laid out on the Fort George Commons by a returning officer of the British Army. The next year on the Mississauga Common, a 9-hole course was laid out. The Niagara Golf Club was organized in 1881 based only on the Mississauga 9-hole course. In the early 1890s, golf became a fashionable sport again and a 9-hole course was added on the Fort George Commons. In 1895 the first international Golf tournament was held in Niagara, nine holes were played first on the Mississauga course,

then nine holes played on the Fort George course. The next year the Fort George course was converted to an 18-hole course. From 1895 through to 1914 an annual golf tournament was held by the Niagara Golf Club on the Fort George course up until the eve of the Great War when the course was converted back into a military camp. The Fort George course never reopened. As an 18-hole course it was 4,755 yards long, a score card states that it is a bogey 82 (no mention of par). Some of the names of the holes were: Rifle Pit, Magazine, Half-Moon Battery, Fort George, Hawthorns, Oaks, Officer's Quarters, and Barracks. The longest hole was #13 at 448 yards, the shortest was #12 at 99 yards. The club house was the former Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters.



ARCHITEXT

Capturing a sense of place

Brian Marshall
Columnist

For many reasons, I am a huge fan of adaptive reuse of our old buildings. Not only does this practice preserve the history and architecture of our shared built heritage, it makes sense from both economic and environmental considerations as well.

Here in Niagara-on-the-Lake we happen to have two superb examples of what can be done.

Let's start with the Old Cottage Hospital at 175 Queen St.

Around 1820, the local watchmaker, Tenny Peabody, had a house constructed that was a design "step-apart" from anything else in town. Point of fact, he chose a form with its roots in the half timber



The Cottage Hospital (Peabody House). BRIAN MARSHALL

houses built during the Stuart period in the United Kingdom — something that was very uncommon in North America, with only a few examples being built along the colonial northeastern Atlantic seaboard.

With one exception the building might be considered a period 5 bay clapboard Georgian, but that one exception totally informs the house — the projecting frontispiece with a second storey overhang of the main entry. We can only imagine why Mr. Peabody might have made the substantial investment required to make this architectural statement (the glass for the six double-hung windows alone would have been very expensive), but make it he did and the building served as dwelling for families through

the 19th century and then shifted to institutional use (hospital) from 1920 to the 1950s.

Somehow over nearly two centuries, while all other examples of this expression in North America were lost, Mr. Peabody's house survived. Then, in the first decade of the 21st century, a developer purchased the property but, rather than demolish all the buildings on the site, they elected to restore the original Peabody building and sympathetically integrate the condominium complex behind.

The result is a unique (perhaps the only surviving example of this form in North America) piece of built heritage preserved within a streetscape and visually integrated to the condo behind.

Simply, a superb example of contextually appropriate 21st century development.

Turning to our second example, we'll head to John Street.

Since the earliest days of settlement agriculture has been a mainstay of Niagara's economy and associated industries were founded to handle the produce of the farmers' labour. As a part of this industrial development, during the latter part of the 19th century, a cannery was built on John Street principally to process peaches and tomatoes.

The building itself was typical of late Victorian era industrial construction — solid brick walls rose to support timber framed rafters. The walls were pierced by ranked segmentally arched openings in regularly placed bays holding operable windows that flooded the interior with light and provided ventilation.

Some of the brands produced within its walls have been lost to time, but others (like Aylmer and Maple Leaf) would still be recognized today. The cannery operated for more than six decades, finally closing in the late 1950s during the first wave of sector consolidation.

Looking to the Stars



Positive health or medical news may come for some

This week we see a recurring challenge and magic from Venus.

Thursday, April 21: The moon in Capricorn isn't the only serious sign in the sky today. Saturn makes a square connection to the north node of the moon, indicating a desire for security working out more spiritual needs as in "what is real security for my lifetime goals?" It was April 21, 1918, that the Red Baron was shot down over France. The kill is credited to Canadian Arthur Roy Brown.

Friday, April 22: Again, the moon in Capricorn is busy and serious. And, again, also spiritual as the connection today is a conjunction with Pluto, ruler of our deepest motivations. Happy birthday #85 to one of Hollywood's leading actors, Jack Nicholson, famous for his neurotic roles in "The Shining," "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest," "Chinatown" and more.

Saturday, April 23: Today is the third quarter moon in Aquarius. It's a day where panic may set in over unfinished business. Perhaps even over unstarted business. It's time to get back to a list that is achievable. The man most often named the greatest writer in the English language, William Shakespeare, was born on April 23, 1564. He died April 23, 1616.

Sunday, April 24: Mercury in Taurus has centre stage today and even though there is an undeniable pragmatic quality to Taurus' thinking, today it is imbued with the influence of mysterious Neptune and also makes full contact with the north node of the moon. The north node is the point where the moon appears to cross the equator on its journey around

Earth. It's a point where we see our future desires more clearly. It was April 24, 1942, that Lucy Maud Montgomery passed. In addition to "Anne of Green Gables," she wrote 20 novels as well as 530 short stories, 500 poems and 30 essays.

Monday, April 25: Expect a friendly start to the work week with positive health or medical news for some. The man who voices Moe, the bartender from the Simpsons, turns 58 today. Hank Azaria also is the voice of Chief Wiggum and others.

Tuesday, April 26: Venus begins her five-day leading role in the cosmos today with a connection to the north node. This sets the stage for a connection with Neptune tomorrow and then with Jupiter on April 30. Famous bird painter John James Audubon was born April 26, 1785.

Wednesday, April 27: Today, Venus conjuncts Neptune and three days later Jupiter, for a few days of magic. Jupiter and Neptune are collective planets. Venus is a personal planet. If the influence of the Jupiter-Neptune conjunction has been somewhat abstract, this is your opportunity to understand what it means for you. With Jupiter's help, Venus will translate Neptune's foggy messages and make the intangible, tangible. Listen to your heart — it will give you all the answers. This is not a Uranian moment of clarity. Instead, this is a deep knowing of what's right, of what makes you truly happy, what kind of person you want to be and what kind of life you want to live going forward.

Check out Bill Auchterlonie's podcast, Looking up to the Stars, at www.lutts.ca.

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GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Gardening Columnist

We don't often think about it, but some edible, berry-producing plants can also add an ornamental element to your garden.

When the pandemic began, there was a notable increase in people's interest in growing their own vegetables and fruit.

Most of the time we think that our vegetable or berry plants must be in their own separate space and our shrub and flower gardens in a different area. Some berry plants, though, are both usable and attractive and can be easily incorporated into your ornamental gardens.

Blueberries

For blueberries to thrive, the soil must be well aerated, moist, high in humus, and most importantly, very acidic.

They are best planted in soils with a pH range of 4.6 to 4.8. Enrich the soil in each planting hole by mixing in a bucketful of composted leaves or pine needles, which will help maintain acidity and provide optimum nutrition, aeration and moisture.

Blueberries produce more and bigger fruit when planted with at least one other variety to allow for cross-pollination. The berries don't reach their full flavour and aroma until a few days after they turn blue. To check whether they are ready for harvest, just tickle the clusters of berries and only the ripe ones will fall off.

Not only do the plants provide you with the yummy berries, but they can also be attractive into your ornamental beds.

In spring, you have a mass of small, white, bell-like flowers. The clusters of



Top: Ripening blueberries. Bottom: Strawberries.
JOANNE YOUNG PHOTOS

blue, edible fruit in summer will attract birds into your garden, so you may have to beat them to the berries.

In fall the dark, glossy leaves turn a nice wine-red colour. Most highbush blueberry varieties will grow to four to five feet high and wide.

Strawberries

What's more delicious than freshly picked strawberries?

There are basically three types of strawberry plants to choose from: June bearing, Everbearing and Day Neutral.

June Bearing strawberries give you a single, large crop each year during a two- to three-week period in June and provide the largest fruit of the three types.

Everbearing strawberries yield two to three harvests of fruit intermittently during the spring, summer and fall.

Day Neutral strawberries will produce fruit throughout the growing season.

Strawberries are best planted in the spring as soon as the soil is dry

enough to be worked, or in late fall. They can be grown in most garden soils, however, they do best in well-drained, sandy loam soils rich in organic matter like compost.

When planting, make a hole large enough to spread the roots out.

Instead of limiting the location of your strawberry plant to the vegetable garden, why not include them in the border of your garden as a groundcover?

The white flowers in early spring turn into bright red fruit in the summer months.

In the fall, the leaves turn a bright reddish orange colour. Its low, sprawling habit makes it a great edging plant.

Haskap Berries

Haskap berries, also known as Blue Honeysuckle, Canadian Honeyberry or Blueberry Honeysuckle are one of the newer berry plants on the market in Ontario.

The dark, bluish/purple berries look like a cross between a blueberry and a grape. Their sweet-tart

flavour is like a cross of blueberries and raspberry with a kiwi-like texture.

They have a higher level of antioxidants than blueberries and ripen in mid- to late June. Use the berries as you would use blueberries – good fresh, or freezing, in baking, jams, jellies or juice.

It is always best to have two different varieties to cross-pollinate for better fruit. Check the inside flesh colour of the berries to make sure that it has changed from green to completely purple before picking.

The four- to five-foot shrub originated in Siberia, so you know that it is cold tolerant. Haskap berries can be used as a decorative shrub or hedge in your garden. The plants prefer an evenly moist but well-drained soil and do well in both full sun and shade.

Saskatoon Berries

The Saskatoon berry plant is a hardy growing, large shrub that tolerates full sun to part shade. It was an important food source for both indigenous Peoples and the early pioneers.

It was also a source of wood and as a medicinal plant. The clusters of dark blue berries are used in a wide variety of ways from pies, jams, jellies, syrups, ice cream toppings, wine, liqueurs and flavoured concentrates.

They may be used fresh or frozen and can be dried to yield raisins or fruit leathers.

The Saskatoon berry is also an excellent ornamental shrub for the garden, growing eight to 12 feet high and six to eight feet wide.

It produces masses of fragrant, frilly white flowers in early spring before leaves emerge. By mid-summer, the blueberry-like fruit ripens and will attract birds from far and wide. In the fall, the leaves turn apricot-orange in colour, giving you three seasons of interest in your garden.

Including some of these plants and others will guarantee you have a "berry" beautiful garden.

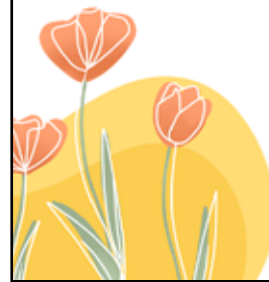
Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.



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