



Alex Hicks brings NOTL cooking to Food Network
Page 12

NOTL woman recovering from COVID-19



Margot Hickson is recovering from COVID-19. Her husband Ian Reece is awaiting the results of his swab test. KEVIN MACLEAN.

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Margot Hickson, chair of the Music Niagara festival, is at home recovering from COVID-19 after she and her husband Ian Reece returned from a memorable six-week vacation to New Zealand and southeast Asia. Ian is now showing symptoms of the virus and is awaiting the results of his test. This is their story:

Margot Hickson Special to The Lake Report

We took every precaution we could given we were travelling to Vietnam and Cambodia for two weeks with a tour group, and it included a cruise on the Mekong River where we would be in close quarters with other people.

We left Canada on Feb. 6 for New Zealand and headed

to Vietnam on Feb. 27. It was only in mid-March, the last couple of days of our trip, that places and attractions began closing all around us.

No one in our tour group was showing any symptoms. Our temperatures were checked regularly (we couldn't enter our hotel or a museum without a fever check), and we didn't go in or out of a room without

using hand sanitizer. We washed our hands with great frequency.

We were given surgical masks to wear. In Hanoi, other tour groups in our hotel were being tested for the virus. The tour leader of one group tested negative but I don't know about any of the other people.

We actually were moved to another hotel to avoid any

issue for our last two nights in Vietnam. And again, this hotel regularly checked the temperatures of people coming in and out.

Our temperatures were always normal and we were not showing any symptoms that might indicate coronavirus.

So, on Sunday, March 15, we left Hanoi.

Continued on Page 3

Town can enforce fines for contravention of emergency orders

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake bylaw officers can now issue a \$750 fine to anyone found in contravention of emergency orders in place because of COVID-19.

Under new powers from the province, the town can enforce emergency orders for the closure of public places and establishments, prohibiting events and

gatherings of more than five people, and prohibiting unfair pricing on necessary goods.

As well, bylaw officers can also issue a fine of \$1,000 for obstructing anyone enforcing or complying with the emergency orders..

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3730

Farmers still in limbo over migrant workers

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Farmers waiting for seasonal workers to arrive are stuck in a state of limbo, Coun. Erwin Wiens says.

Though the workers are said to be coming soon, "none have arrived yet and there's been no word as to when they will start arriving," said Wiens, who is also a grape farmer and is expecting about 10 workers himself.

Foreign Agricultural

Resource Management Services (FARMS) said last Friday that workers would be arriving within 48 hours, he said.

"But today is Monday and there's been no word yet of when that will start."

Wiens said one thing the farmers are sure about is the protocols that will be in place once the workers arrive.

Among the key points are that: Farmers cannot make

Continued on Page 2

Lord mayor begs people to stay home

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Lord Mayor Betty Disero is "begging" everyone to stay at home and maintain physical distance amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Disero gave an update on COVID-19 preparations during a council meeting Monday. The meeting,



Lord Mayor Betty Disero. SOURCED

held via teleconference, was closed to the public but was live-streamed on the town's website.

"To those of you who are not following the recommendations and pleas from all other levels of governments to stay home and practise physical distancing, I'm begging you at this point to stay home for the sake of our community. To be proactive now will be the only saving grace we have as we go through this," Disero said.

"If you're bringing new people to Niagara-on-the-Lake now, even for a weekend, you're putting this community at risk. Shame on you ... And for those people who are not following the guidelines, we cannot regulate stupidity."

The town and Region of

Continued on Page 3

Teddy bears show love

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

It's a message of community: we're here for you during these tough times.

Across Niagara-on-the-Lake, families are placing teddy bears in windows to show a sense of endurance and tenacity amid this global

pandemic, the likes of which has never been witnessed before.

Stephanie Baxter, a mother of three from Old Town, drove around with her children last week to see how many bears they could spot. In total they found about 30

Continued on Page 2



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Canada evacuates NOTLers from Peru

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

They wanted planes, they got them.

Two Niagara-on-the-Lakers who were stuck in quarantine in Peru have arrived home safely, and are now quarantining again.

Scott Robinson and Chelsea Widdicombe, both 23, were flown back Friday by a special Air Canada flight arranged by the Canadian government to bring stranded citizens back home.

Robinson said he's really grateful to the country. Originally, he hadn't thought he and Widdicombe would be included on the initial flights.

The two woke up to the news last Thursday that the Peruvian president would be extending the nationwide quarantine. A few hours later, the Canadian embassy in Lima called to say they'd been selected for a Friday flight home.

The flights cost about



NOTL copes with COVID-19

Scott Robinson at his quarantine house. Family friend and Whirlpool Jet Boats owner John Kinney offered him the place to self-isolate. RICHARD HARLEY

\$1,700 each, including a connecting flight to Lima from Cusco, where the two were staying.

Robinson said they met up with about 300 other Canadians to take a bus to the Cusco airport, and then flew to a Peruvian military base in Lima. From there they flew to Toronto.

Robinson said it's "hard not to be totally grateful" to be back home.

Health measures were taken before, during and after the flights, he said.

Before getting on the plane in Cusco passengers

had their temperatures taken and during the flights they were made to wear masks and given hand sanitizer regularly. Once they got to Canada they had to wait an hour on the tarmac until the customs area was empty.

"Customs was fairly fast. We had to sign an official document stating that we promise to self-quarantine for 14 days," he said.

After that, passengers were left to themselves to get home.

"The responsibility there was that you self-quarantine

when you get home. So those people can take a public bus or they can get a car home, but once they're home they have to stay there for 14 days."

Chelsea's parents left a car at the airport for them, Robinson said, so they were separate from others for the entire time from the airport to back home.

Robinson is now staying at a house on Niagara Boulevard, courtesy of family friend and Niagara Jet Boats owner John Kinney. Widdicombe is staying at her apartment in St. Catharines.

Robinson commended the Canadian embassy for its quick response to getting Canadians out of the country.

"Global Affairs is not a logistics organization, it's a policy organization, but they shifted in two weeks," he said.

Robinson said that as of Saturday there were still about 1,400 Canadians stuck in Peru waiting to get home.

Teddy bears spread message of hope in community



Continued from Front Page

bears in an hour and a half, she said.

It's a good way to get out of the house while still being isolated in your vehicle, said Baxter, who originally posted the idea to the NOTL 4 All Facebook page after seeing it circulating online.

"I saw the bear hunt posted in a Facebook group and thought how much fun it would be for NOTL kids to look for while out enjoying fresh air," she said.

"In this time of uncertainty, we as parents have to help to keep our kids thriving in everyday life. We as a family have been trying to find new activities to do and keep the kids active, whether it would be bike ride, walk or car ride around town. We went

out that night as it was a beautiful evening to roll our windows down and search for positive things throughout the community."

The kids, Whitnie, 9, Jayden, 7, and Evan, 6, had a "great time looking and spotting all the different teddys in the windows or on front steps," she said.

"Evan says he loved seeing Pikachu in the windows. Whitnie says she had a great time because on our drive we (saw) some of her friends out playing in their yards, so we stopped to say a quick hi."

Jayden enjoyed being able to beat his brother and sister with the highest number of teddy bears spotted, she said. But the main goal was just to show love to your neighbours.

Back from Bali, safe and sound

Gail Kendall
Special to The Lake Report

Home sweet home: 15,835 kilometres, three flights, not sure how many antibacterial wipes and I have never been so happy to touch down in my own country.

As Lake Report readers know, I travelled to beautiful Bali on March 10. The Indonesian province has been #1 on my bucket list for as long as I can remember and when the opportunity presented itself last May, I took it and signed up for the trip. I have never booked a trip almost a year in advance so I was sure to properly insure. I insured the trip and the flights.

COVID-19 was not as prevalent when I left as it is now, but there was concern about traveling and returning. We had a couple of people drop out of our group but the rest of us soldiered on. The woman leading our group is a friend and runs a travel business, so I put all my faith in her, her knowledge and resources.



Photo courtesy of Gail Kendall. SUPPLIED

I was the lone Canadian in the group and always made it known, as I do when I travel. People around the world just love Canadians and Bali was no exception.

While we enjoyed all Bali had to offer, a dark cloud did appear with escalating numbers of people infected with the virus. Travel was becoming affected and fear was beginning to set in. Well-intentioned friends were constantly messaging me with news links and pleas to come home.

I was caught in the middle of cutting an amazing

trip short to return home or continuing on and trusting I would have no difficulty returning to my country.

I told my travel companions that until Justin (the Americans love how we are on a first name basis with our prime minister) called me home, I was staying.

Well, on Tuesday, March 17, that call came in. "If you are abroad, it's time to come home" Trudeau announced.

Read the full account of Gail Kendall's "Eat Pray Sanitize Tour" and journey home from Bali online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3690.

Farmers making quarantine arrangements while waiting for seasonal workers

Continued from Front Page

employees work during the self-isolation period, other than those deemed to do essential work by the Chief Public Health Officer; farmers must pay employees regular pay and benefits during the self-isolation period; employers are responsible for regularly monitoring the health of workers, must ensure all workers have tools for proper hygiene and must immediately isolate any

workers showing symptoms of COVID-19; self-isolating employees must be in different accommodations than non-isolating employees.

The report was clear that no workers can be made to work during isolation unless the work is deemed to be essential.

"At least the protocol is in place so that we have something to work with to understand to prepare for when they get here, number one, and number two is that

we're still being told that they're coming," he said.

"The issue is we need the guys to start arriving. We're told they're coming, and I'm confident that's the case, but it's not so easy as just 'everybody get to the airport and fly down here.' There's so many moving parts."

Read the full story and long list of conditions farmers and workers must follow at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3723.

Shaw cancels all shows up to May 25

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The Shaw Festival has cancelled all public events and performances through May 25 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Festival officials will continue to monitor the situation to see if additional cancellations are needed and will follow the guid-

ance of the provincial and federal governments along with the public health units of Niagara, the province and the country, spokesperson Laura Hughes said in a media statement.

"Until we can be back on stage, we are keeping our art alive and sharing as much as we can on Instagram and Facebook," Hughes said. "It has cer-

tainly been inspiring to see how our artists have found ways to continue to create together despite physical distance."

Hughes also announced that Kate Hennig is now the Shaw's director of artistic development and Kimberley Rampersad is stepping into the role of associate artistic director.



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‘Cannot regulate stupidity,’ Disero says

Continued from Front Page

Niagara have both launched #StayHome promotional and social media campaigns to get people to remain inside.

Disero thanked people for their patience and co-operation.

“To those of you who are staying at home and keeping your physical distance if you have to go out, you’re helping to stop the potential spread in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We’re thankful and forever grateful for your leadership.”

She also expressed gratitude to area hotels for cancelling reservations and rebooking stays at a later date.

The lord mayor said

NOTL copes with COVID-19

she also wanted to assure residents that all the skilled migrant workers who are around town now have been here for 14 days or more – and some of them arrived in January. For any new migrant workers arriving in NOTL, requirements will be posted once finalized.

“I know the farming community has the best interest of our community, their families and their workers at heart. They will not let us down. They will do what needs to be done to keep us safe.”

By earlier declaring a state of emergency, Disero said she wanted to show the provincial government that

NOTL was at risk due to its older population, to show support to the provincial and federal government, and to send a message to community residents.

“We must be proactive now to minimize the potential for community spread, and not be reactive once the virus is upon us,” Disero said.

“So, please, Niagara-on-the-Lake, look after each other and yourself, keep your distance when you’re outside. We will use every possible means to keep you informed and provide whatever you need to stay safe.”

Town staff have not been laid-off because

they’ve been working on backlogged reports and files, Disero explained. If this work isn’t continued now and the town waits until the crisis is over, the financial impact on taxpayers will be significant because staff will be working overtime in order to catch up.

Because seasonal contract workers haven’t been hired yet, the town’s full-time workers have additional responsibilities assigned to them. All members of the staff have also been doing their mandatory online training for their redeployment, Disero said.

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news/phtml/3718

Husband is now showing symptoms of virus, too

Continued from Front Page

To get home, we had changed our flights so as to avoid places like Hong Kong, so our 24-hour day to get home was Hanoi/Tokyo/Toronto.

Throughout the transit, we made sure to sit away from people in the airport, washed our hands constantly and took precautions by wearing the N95 masks that we had brought with us from NOTL six weeks earlier – in case we needed them.

The masks are very uncomfortable to wear, by the way – they dig into your face a lot.

By wearing them, we protected ourselves but also protected other people around us.

On both flight segments, we had no one sitting beside us. Someone was coughing behind me on the flight from Hanoi, so I stuffed a blanket between the seats to block the space and wore my mask!

From the Toronto airport, our preplanned transport took us directly home to NOTL – and during the ride, we wore masks and gloves. That was still on March 15.

It was always our intent to self-isolate for 14 days when we got home. Given our travel history and ages (we are on either side of our

70s), we knew we were at higher risk.

Well, I was really tired that night and told Ian that I felt awful.

“It is like having the worst cold you can imagine but worse. It hit me harder than any cold I have ever had – severe headache, high fever, coughing to the point of pain and total exhaustion.”

MARGOT HICKSON

The next day, March 16 was the start of it: no energy mostly, but that could have been jetlag. Or so I thought.

Then came the headache and the fever of 101F on the Tuesday morning, March 17, St. Patrick’s Day – so I called Niagara Region Public Health and talked to a registered nurse.

She was great – advised me to take Tylenol to get rid of the headache and control the fever. This, in combination with sleeping almost 20 hours daily for the next four days, started to help me.

They had wanted me to come to Niagara Falls for

COVID-19 testing that week but there was no way I was going out.

So, last Monday, March 23, I called the number I was given and they booked my appointment to be tested that day.

They are very well-organized: you are given a specific time to come to a designated facility (in my case it was a public health clinic in Niagara Falls), you sit in the parking lot until they call you on your cellphone, at which time you go in for your test.

The nurses and doctors are fully protected with gowns, masks, face shields and gloves. Thankfully for them.

The test is brief: a large thin swab (it is not a Q-tip) is used to swab your nose, they check your temperature and they put a clip on your finger (called a pulse oximeter, I think) to measure the oxygen level of the blood.

It took five days for the results, but that is understandable given the number of tests being performed. They are working around the clock.

We got the call this past Saturday, March 28: positive.

We have been assigned a case worker, which is great. She checks in on us periodically and we can call her anytime.

Being sick with COVID-19 is like having the worst cold you can imagine but WORSE. It hit me harder

than any cold I have ever had – severe headache, high fever, coughing to the point of pain and total exhaustion.

Almost two weeks later, I still have a dry cough and heaviness in the chest, and get tired very easily. But I am one of the fortunate ones.

After about a week of being home, and several days after the onset of my symptoms, Ian started showing symptoms as well, though thankfully not as severe as mine.

So, when I tested positive, our case worker arranged for Ian to be tested. That happened Sunday, March 29, and it is highly likely that he has the virus as well. We’ll see. We are awaiting his results.

But in the meantime, he will continue to self-quarantine and isolate until April 10. And I’ll be here, too.

I can’t stress enough that anyone travelling home needs to stay at home for the full 14 days. My symptoms appeared fairly quickly upon our return but Ian’s came a week later.

Most places in the world have cases and you have no idea whether you have caught it or not, no matter the precautions that you took to prevent it.

Our friends here in NOTL have been wonderful, bringing supplies and dropping them off at the front door.

We are all in this together – let’s stay safe by following the rules.

Town Update Regarding COVID-19

As the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s State of Emergency continues, we’re asking for your help to make #StayHomeNOTL a community-wide prevention effort.

Show your support and commitment by printing off a #StayHomeNOTL poster (or making your own) and hanging it in your front window. Display it as a reminder to others and a sign that your household or business is doing its part to protect our community. Hopefully, others will see your sign and do the same!

Share a picture of your poster on social media with the hashtag #StayHomeNOTL to show you’ve heard the Town’s call to action!

In a time when many community members feel alone and disconnected, this community-wide collaboration will help to connect us.

Together, we can do this! Together, we can limit the potential spread of COVID-19. For more information and updates or to download your poster, go to notl.com/COVID-19.



#Stay Home NOTL

HELP LIMIT THE POTENTIAL SPREAD OF COVID-19

- Practice PHYSICAL DISTANCING
- Adhere to ISOLATION GUIDELINES
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- ASSIST Vulnerable Community Members & Those in Isolation

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Contributed by Patty Garriock

Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go.

– William Feather.



Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

If everyone in Canada reduce their weekly garbage by 1 lb per week, that is the equivalent of removing 18,000 tons of garbage from landfills! In Niagara-on-the-Lake that equates to 9 tons per week.



Could old NOTL hospital be used during pandemic?

Dear editor:

I am a local artist and 40-year resident of town. I've never been a letter to the editor kind of guy, but today I need to write. I have a show of paintings hung in the library that was recently closed down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I agree with this totally. Our community's well-being deserves priority. Thanks to the folks who saw my stuff and have been generous with their comments.

What motivates is the pursuit of social justice and the preservation of the natural world. Normally, I use paint and wood to convey my thoughts as I am not a particularly articulate person. Today I will try.

Any politician who feels that people who work in the service industry aren't worth a living wage should have seen how hard the cashiers were working on my

trip to the grocery store.

They deserve our praise and support.

Some of our seasonal workers are back and should any of them become ill they deserve the best care and support available. They live in dorms and do their weekly shopping on crowded buses, conditions that are OK in normal times, but not today.

Some could become ill and given their importance to our town we are obliged to do well by them.

While supporting a friend, I saw first-hand recently just how crowded our health system already is. It will be hard-pressed to deal with what is ahead.

We have a decommissioned hospital and elementary school that could be put to good use for people who require isolation.

Thanks again and good luck to all of you.

Joe Favro
NOTL

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often.

Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation.

Please include your full name, street address and a daytime

telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated.

Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published.

Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 724 Mississauga St., NOTL.

The Lake Report



Thank you to kind neighbour

Dear editor:

This is a letter to the very kind gentleman who picked up the contents of my grey and blue boxes that had blown into the ditch on Friday, March 20, and put them

back on the driveway.

I wish I could have said this in person but I want to offer him a very sincere thank you.

Jean Davies
NOTL

Visit website for more on Workers Welcome program

Dear editor:

The Workers Welcome website provides information regarding welcome kits and the Bikes for Farmworkers program.

Go to www.workerswelcome Niagara.com for full details.

Please use the contact information provided on the website if further clarification is required.

Together we are a caring community!

Sincerely,
Jane Andres
NOTL

Those who don't go home and stay home deserve scolding

Dear editor:

I am writing as a NOTL resident who has been in self-isolation for the last three weeks and has gone out only for groceries.

I would like to be able to say I was shocked when I read the letters and stories in The Lake Report of people choosing not to isolate or about the suntanned friends embracing at a local retailer even in the midst of a pandemic that is killing people every day – but, unfortunately, I am not.

What is more gut-wrenching than this incredibly serious situation is the sheer lack of respect for humanity and the complete and total ignorance to this virus and the detrimental effects

it is having on individuals, families, the economy, health care, our government, education – life!

This virus will not stop if we do not help flatten the curve. The people who are most at risk – the elderly – will continue to die. Plain and simple.

Do you feel good about the fact that you are contributing to the decline in health (and possible death) of some of the same people who fought for our countries through war? The same people who protested injustices and have allowed us to live in the free country we live in today?

Do you realize that there are families who will no longer be able to provide their children with the same

lifestyle because their businesses have closed and their savings have been depleted?

Do you recognize that health care workers are at risk every day? That they have dedicated their lives to helping others and, in a time, when they are asking all of you for help you are failing them for your own selfish reasons?

Do you recognize that first responders are at risk every day? That they are dedicated to saving people's lives and, in a time, when they need your help many of you are blatantly refusing for your own selfish reasons?

Perhaps those of you who continue to go out and socialize and not self-isolate after returning from vaca-

tion, should ask an individual who has lived in a country tormented by civil war every day what it is like to really live under isolation. Where fighting for your life isn't an option but a necessity.

You should all be spoken to like misbehaved children. Shame on you, go to your rooms and stay there until you realize what you've done.

For those of you who are doing their part to flatten the curve (and I know there are many of you) – a genuine thank you. Due to your efforts, this will eventually be over and, in one way or another, you will be rewarded.

Jessica Criveller-Meffe
St. Davids

Safe at home after 30-hour flight

Dear editor:

We have read some wonderful stories of people getting home safely to NOTL as the virus risk intensified around the world.

Our daughter had been in Australia since last October and was visiting Bali when the cases of the virus were dramatically rising globally.

My wife worked diligently to rebook flights and after a long, 30-hour flight, Darcy arrived home safely.

Although she is now in quarantine for 14 days, we all are so happy to have her home and to live in a community that has taken

the threats of this virus so seriously.

I also applaud The Lake Report for your relevant reporting of the issues.

We know local news has been replaced in recent years to focus attention and resources to more national/global reporting.

During these times, it's so comforting to have access to local news that provides such important insights to our community.

I have no doubt, we will be an even better town on the other side. Be well, everyone.

Glenn Young
NOTL

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OPINION

Dr. Brown: Priorities in an overwhelming pandemic



Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

It seems ages ago since the pall of the advancing COVID-19 pandemic descended on the world.

What began in China in late 2019, soon overwhelmed that country, threatened the same in South Korea and not long after, followed with devastating assaults on Iran, Italy, then Spain, the rest of Europe including the United Kingdom and now is rolling throughout the United States with the epicenter in New York City and other American cities to follow.

And who knows what Canada's fate will be – like Italy and NYC or more like Singapore and Korea? I'm guessing the former but hope for the latter.

In the space of the last two to three weeks life changed profoundly in Niagara-on-the-Lake – the streets are strangely quiet, walked by few residents singly or as couples, past closed businesses, hotels and restaurants. Those walks are accompanied by wariness toward others not keeping their distance and the prospect of prolonged loneliness for those living alone, especially older folk.

The challenges of COVID-19 are that it is so highly contagious, capable of making upward of 20 per cent of those infected seriously ill and threatens to overwhelm our health care system.

That's precisely what's happened in China initially, tragically now Italy and Spain and soon I fear, the United States, where, in each case, containment measures were one step behind the spread of the dis-

NOTL copes with COVID-19

ease and thousands became seriously ill, overwhelming the systems.

Slow off the mark initially, China stepped in forcefully and managed to contain the spread of the disease such that new cases are uncommon now. And South Korea, Japan, Singapore and Taiwan in their own ways have all managed to keep a lid on the disease through aggressive measures.

Italy is the poster child for what can go wrong and New York City and other large metropolitan regions in the U.S. look like they're headed in Italy's direction – too many serious cases, too few acute care beds, too few test kits for the virus, too few professional grade face masks, too few ventilators and too few and now too many tired, front-line health care workers. That's the formula for failure. That's Italy and could be here.

Those pressures force the health care system to prioritize care, after all if you don't have enough resources to manage everyone and the pressures threaten to overwhelm the system, then decisions need to be made about who to treat and who not.

That again is the Italian story – they had to make tough decisions. Where and when the staff was overwhelmed and too few ventilators were available, they were allotted to those most likely to survive with the longest life ahead of them.

Those looking after the sick – because of limited human and technical resources, especially ventilators – face choices every day. Do they provide full bore management including a ventilator, should it come to that, for all comers on a first come, first served basis? Or should younger patients who stand a better chance of surviving and a longer life ahead of them, trump the old who have fewer years ahead and less

chance of surviving the acute illness?

Physicians and others have wrestled with these issues for some time and the consensus of international opinion is that the first priority should be given to protecting the nurses, physicians and others in the health care system who, because of their jobs, are most at risk – after all, without them, we're all in deep trouble.

Second priority should be given to those in mid-life and younger whose overall prognosis is better and even if severely affected, stand the best chance of recovering compared to those over 60 or perhaps 70, especially if the latter have one or more chronic diseases. Those are rough guidelines, recognizing that some healthy young die, no matter what is done to save them, and some severely affected older patients recover. Such is the nature of this disease and chance.

What about the trade-off between near full lockdown and serious damage to the economy? Keeping the economy going isn't simply a matter of feathering the nests of the one percenters and protecting the investment portfolios of others but trying not to destroy the jobs of many who struggled to make ends meet even when the economy was humming along.

The trouble with locking down so many businesses for too long is that many will go under and not recover once COVID-19 is a memory. There's the social cost too, for as much we might busy ourselves streaming movies and connecting on social media, there's a limit to isolation, especially for those living at home in solitary confinement, whether they're electronically wired to the outside world or not.

Humans are after all a very social species, and my guess is that the seen and

unseen toll of too much isolation will be high should physical social isolation go on too long. After all, some prison systems use isolation to punish inmates. Even in the Battle of Britain at its worst, people weren't isolated from one another, except for children who were farmed out to the countryside from London and other prime targets, for much of the war.

Their cities might have been destroyed, but as long as the people could see that they were in it together, it was hard to break their morale, even with the worst of repeated bombings in Europe and Japan on both sides in the Second World War. I'm not sure social media would turn the same trick – are you? So, the trade-off is prioritizing the sick while risking the health of the economy and the community. Those are questions to seriously talk about.

There's yet another issue. In our mad dash to protect ourselves from this coronavirus, we're jeopardizing the health of many because of mass cancellations of health care appointments and surgical procedures. Again, that may work in the very short term, but is no solution for the long-term.

If it took a year for a joint replacement three months ago, what will it be after six months of prioritizing the pandemic over these and countless other health and dental care issues? Or perhaps we'll find out that we really didn't need to see our doctors so often, or even that we don't need to see them at all, except by phone or electronically!

The experts tell us that COVID-19, like the flu, may become a recurring problem, albeit muted by herd immunity and an effective vaccine – we hope.!

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the Info-health series held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

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TO TAY O MME O TTL

The
Lake Report



The Lake Report

The Lake Report's community calendar is postponed due to a mass cancellation of events due to COVID-19.

RIDDLE ME THIS

I'm orange and sound like a parrot.
What am I?

Last Week: I do not speak, but there is no word I cannot make. What am I?

Answer: The alphabet

Answered first by: Margie Enns

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Kathy Neufeld, David Steele, Margaret Garaughty, Sylvia Wiens, Mike Davies, Katie Reimer, Peter Rod

Email answers, with your name, to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.

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Let's listen to our frontline heroes when they say 'Staying HOME means Saving Lives!'.
I also want to say a big thank you to everyone who is working during this time to keep our community safe - we will not forget what you've done for us.

Wayne Gates MPP Niagara Falls representing Niagara-on-the-Lake & Fort Erie
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Have some fun

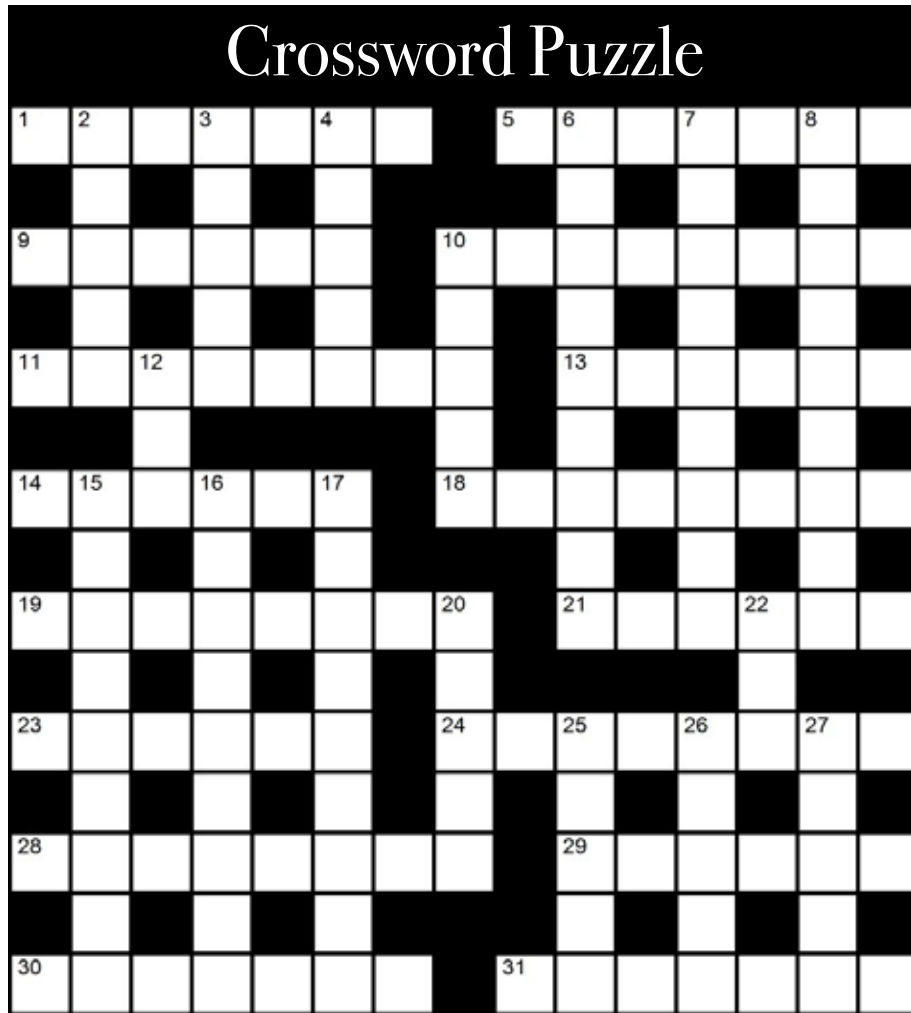
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Across

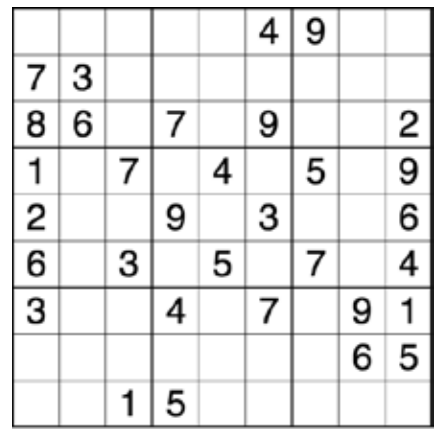
- 1. Goblet (7)
- 5. Devour (7)
- 9. Biased (6)
- 10. Typo (8)
- 11. Main roads (8)
- 13. Likenesses (6)
- 14. Respect (6)
- 18. Roomy (8)
- 19. Belongings (8)
- 21. Locomotive (6)
- 23. Sucking fish (6)
- 24. Noblewoman (8)
- 28. Unfortunate happening (8)
- 29. Fictional ape-man (6)
- 30. Crisp (7)
- 31. Outlaws (7)

Down

- 2. Capital of Vietnam (5)
- 3. Strap (5)
- 4. About (5)
- 6. Firmly adhering to a purpose (9)
- 7. Hollering (9)
- 8. Dummy (9)
- 10. Spars (5)
- 12. Obtained (3)
- 15. "A --- Named Desire" (Tennessee Williams) (9)
- 16. Detonation (9)
- 17. W Moroccan city (9)
- 20. Vessel used for private cruising (5)
- 22. Fury (3)
- 25. Extremely (5)
- 26. Exhausted (5)
- 27. Point of view (5)



Last issue's answers



First person account: A mountain of **uncertainty** in Nepal

NOTL native Connor Crickmore is stuck in Nepal amid the pandemic and says while other countries have helped citizens return home, Canada has been "totally unresponsive" to his plight.

Connor Crickmore
Special to The Lake Report

CENTRAL NEPAL – It's 3:30 a.m., pitch black outside in Nepal, and my feet are in freezing rebellion. Waking up that morning, I was filled with the exuberance of challenge and a thirst for a little adventure and danger. We were to hike nine hours in -20C weather from 4,200 metres up to the Thorong La Pass at 5,416 metres, and then down to 3,900 metres on the other side of Mount Annapurna.

At that altitude there is only 10 per cent oxygen and many of us were already dealing with symptoms of acute mountain sick-



NOTL copes with COVID-19

Connor Crickmore looks over the tenth tallest mountain in the world in Nepal. He is hoping to get home. SUPPLIED

ness. The route, terrain and altitude were all known. What was not known were the hurdles that waited for us on the other side of the mountain.

After making the pass and arriving in the small mountain village of Muktinath, we were escorted by local villagers into a COVID-19 quarantine room to have our temperatures read. We then had to wait while the town decided to either accept us or to banish us to a yak shed on the outskirts of town.

Once we began our 21-day trek through the central Nepalese Himalayas, Nepal discovered one case of COVID-19 which then, quickly escalated to four. The government cancelled all road and air transportation within the country, which we learned about when we came off the mountain.

We were left abandoned with no local support, so the various members of our small group were forced to involve their own individual governments for help. Amazingly, all of our group members except myself, found sympathy and immediate action when their home nations were contacted.

Sadly, my own emails to my country were left unreturned and unanswered in any way. Canada, totally unresponsive, was not there for me in any way. I was forced to improvise, quickly becoming "Wolfgang" from Munich and used a copied transit letter from a fellow trekker from Germany in order to gain passage on the bus to Kathmandu.

Traversing innumerable single-lane mountain switchbacks, fording endless rivers and streams, and straddling death-defying cliff edges, 24 hours later our indomitable bus finally arrived in Kathmandu. However, any relief was to be short-lived.

It seems that most Nepalese view foreigners as the cause for the spread of

the virus and with looks askance, their developing antipathy toward strangers quickly became obvious. As well, food and water accessibility are becoming a concern. In too many of their minds, not only are we the cause of this debacle, we are about to consume products of their salvation.

And now we wait. I am not alone here, there are hundreds of Canadians feeling this same abandonment. Our fellow travelers from the rest of the world are being airlifted out daily. Even Afghanistan sent an airplane. I wasn't even aware Afghanistan had an airline.

We and the rest of our international community are shocked that a leading G7 nation like Canada, one that apparently prides itself as a paragon, a veritable beacon of reliability and respect among world nations, is proving little more than a

"paper tiger," all talk, no action ... actually, no talk, no action.

While I am not so quick as to label our situation dire, each passing day brings greater uncertainty and a small glimmer of recognition for our plight from our government would go a long way to allay much of our anxiety.

No world traveller who I know ever embarks on a path other than one of self-reliance. One's nationality is something of pride, but nothing to feel smug about or rely on. We relish being a part of the whole, a citizen of the world, so to speak, beyond a single nation.

This is the binding quality we seek and the ultimate salvation of the planet, we believe. To achieve this, every nation – even Canada – must also recognize its own role, its own responsibility to both its citizens and the world at large.

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Always and forever, Tony, James, Michael and Jen.



The Kinsmen Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake provides flowers to Pleasant Manor and Upper Canada Lodge. Kinsmen Jim Van der Zalm (right) from European Planters delivers the flowers with Kinsmen Brian Litke (left).



With parties being a no go, Emilia Wiens' parents decided to improvise. The family spent the afternoon outside on Sunday as cars honked to say, "Happy Birthday." From left: James, Emilia, Jonah and Cathrine Wiens.

This is history: Museum encourages journaling

Richard Harley
 The Lake Report

NOTL copes with COVID-19

During this time of constant change and uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there's one thing that's guaranteed: this will go down in history.

That's why the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is encouraging people to journal their time in self-isolation, which could be used in future museum exhibits.

"We are living through a future history class today," said Sarah Kaufman, managing director of the museum, in a news release.

"In 50 or 100 years we may just have an exhibition on the COVID-19 pandemic and your journals will help us tell the stories of how Niagara-on-the-Lake made it through."

The campaign is a way for people to "highlight the local stories that will help to tell our history in years to come," Kaufman said.

Some suggestions on where to start are to write letters to family that you are unable to see while in isolation, describe how daily

life has changed, list what you are doing to have fun at home and track how the pandemic is affecting the town and the region.

It's also "a great way for kids to get involved and contribute to history," Kaufman said.

People who want to participate can share journal entries, letters and thoughts with the museum by using #deardiaryseries-NOTL on social media.

When things return to normal, Kaufman encourages

people to donate those journals and letters to the museum.

The museum has also been sharing content on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to help keep people engaged and entertained during self-isolation. Activities include history quizzes, video tours and highlights from the collection, as the museum ramps up its online presence to continue serving the community.

You can find the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum on social media using @NOTLMuseum or online at www.nhsm.ca.

COVID-19 and casinos, a match made in hell

J. Richard Wright
 Special to The Lake Report

When we look back a couple of weeks and realize that casinos were among the first businesses to be closed by the Ontario government, it doesn't take a stable genius to figure out why.

If there is an ideal environment for the COVID-19 virus to congregate, flourish and spread, it had to be Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp.'s casinos. And, realizing these same casinos, along with other OLG endeavours, routinely deliver more than \$6 billion in revenues and \$2 billion

in profits annually to the province, it's obvious it was a serious move.

However, the alternative was also unthinkable since public health recognized that casinos are rabid breeding and transmission grounds for the virus. And this was long before terms such as social distancing,

self-isolation or mandatory quarantine were being bandied about.

Here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, residents had good reason to applaud the OLG's swift action in the face of new realities.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/opinion.phtml/3713.

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STAY HOME NIAGARA

A JOINT MESSAGE FROM NIAGARA'S MAYORS AND REGIONAL CHAIR

DEAR NIAGARA RESIDENTS,

As we all know, COVID-19 is here in our community. As a response, we have one simple message: **STAY HOME.**

By staying home, you will help keep everyone safe. By limiting how much we leave our homes we are helping to protect our loved ones, vulnerable neighbours and the health care workers who are working around the clock to keep us all safe.

We also need to listen to our public health experts:

- Wash your hands frequently and disinfect high-trafficked surfaces and areas
- Practice physical distancing: keep 6-feet apart from others and do not gather in groups
- Physical distancing does not mean social isolation: check on your loved ones with a phone call or email
- Isolate yourself for 14 days if you are returning home from being anywhere outside Canada (this includes the United States). This is mandatory under the federal Quarantine Act.
- **And please, stay home unless you are an essential service**

We know that many of you have already been following this advice and we thank you. If you have not been, it is not too late to do the right thing to protect our community from COVID-19. None of us are invincible. Now is the time to do your part: this is not a time to go to parks, take your kids to playdates or host parties.

We know these are challenging times for all of us. If you are feeling stressed, anxious or confused, reach out to Niagara Region Public Health for accurate information. Mental health supports are also available for children, youth and adults across the region by phone and online.

We have been hearing amazing stories of how many of you are supporting one another. It is during some of the most challenging times that Niagara proves it is one of the best places to live, work, raise a family and do business.

As your Mayors and Regional Chair, we want to assure you that when we emerge on the other side of this crisis we will be a stronger, and more resilient Niagara.

We are all in this together, and we will get through this together.

Sincerely,

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FOR MORE INFO GO TO [NIAGARAREGION.CA/COVID19](https://niagararegion.ca/covid19)

Niagara  Region

Businesses making hand sanitizer

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Several NOTL businesses are making their own hand sanitizers to help area residents protect themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Simpson's Pharmacy started compounding and selling sanitizers last week.

A 50 ml bottle, made of hydrogen peroxide, water, glycerin and isopropyl alcohol, costs \$1.99, while a 100 ml bottle goes for \$2.99. There is a limit of one hand sanitizer per person.

Owner Sean Simpson said an opportunity to make sanitizers arose after he was able to source alcohol from the Minor Bros. store. The first batch, with 75 per cent of alcohol, was put up for sale last Wednesday.

"It's more of a liquid texture but it works," Simpson told The Lake Report.

"The good news is I think the commercial manufacturers are ramping up their ability to produce sanitizers. So we're starting to see some of our suppliers notify us that they're going to have a supply, which is a positive sign. And we also know that other supplies that have been short are starting to come back."

The pharmacy's team is constantly working on making new batches, Simpson said, but as they're running short on raw material and



Dillon's 65 per cent alcohol. SUPPLIED PHOTO

have issues getting bottles, the team may start looking at other formulas.

Residents are also encouraged to make their own sanitizers. By purchasing Nature's Aid skin gel, they will receive free alcohol from the pharmacy.

"Our community has been very receptive. We've got a lot of positive feedback," Simpson said during a phone interview. "There's a lot of anxiety out there amongst people throughout the town. Totally understandable given that we live through the pandemic."

The pharmacy also donated 45 bottles to Newark Neighbours last Friday.

One Old Town business, One Earth, sells a hand sanitizing lotion. Using the store's traditional sodium lauryl sulfate- and paraben-free lotion base, the team created an anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-microbial lotion with 68 per cent of alcohol in it. Some other ingredients include glycerin,

avocado oil, D-Limonene, sweet almond oil, carmober, orange blossom oil and cetyl alcohol.

There are currently 500 ml and 30 ml lotions available for purchase at the store's online website.

"When we realized we had the ingredients and the machinery and there was a shortage, we retooled our entire operation to use our traditional lotion base instead of aloe gel and started making (the lotion)," the store's co-founder Terri-Lynn Woodhouse said in an email response. "For first-line folks, we offered it at no cost. We have supplied NOTL businesses, doctors, nurses and police across North America in that manner."

The store offers free porch delivery in Niagara and free worldwide shipping.

Sanitizers are also made by Danny Keyes and Jennifer Miles, who opened Limited Distillery in

Virgil last fall. For the first batch, the duo made 700 to 800 bottles of basic, tea tree citrus or lavender sanitizers with 70 per cent of alcohol.

The distillery received 13,000 litres of beer from Bench Brewing Company and is working around the clock to make more sanitizers. The use of high-proof alcohol, such as beer, helps to speed up the process as the alcohol doesn't have to be fermented and can just be distilled, Keyes told The Lake Report.

"It's been difficult opening (the distillery), trying to make brands and products and then all of a sudden switching gears to making hand sanitizers," Keyes said, adding the community's support has been great.

The distillery welcomes donations of alcohol and offers free local delivery on orders over \$50.

Beamsville's Dillon's Small Batch Distilleries also stepped up to help fight the crisis by providing thousands of sanitizers and alcohol disinfectants to first responders across the province.

Magnotta Winery also made more than 15,000 bottles of hand sanitizers that are available for purchase at all of the winery's retail stores, including one in Beamsville.

Brock offering supplies, expertise to fight pandemic

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Brock University is joining the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic by contributing supplies and utilizing research facilities.

Supplies of gloves, masks and chemicals have been made available to Niagara Region Public Health.

Brock researchers have also begun discussing ways to use the university's level 3 containment laboratory, which has been approved by the Canadian government for COVID-19 research.

Laboratories are ranked from one to four depending

on the potential threat of organisms or agents being studied.

At Brock's level 3 facility, professor of biology Fiona Hunter is studying the Zika and West Nile viruses. A statement from Brock said Hunter and her students will put those studies on hold if the facility is required to conduct research on the virus causing COVID-19.

Brock's vice-president of research, Tim Kenyon, said the university is preparing for requests that may emerge for testing and research.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3716.

Niagara College produces disinfectant, donating protective gear

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Niagara College is stepping up to provide support for local health care facilities struggling with COVID-19-related demands. Both campuses in Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake are working toward creating and securing supplies earmarked for local health care.

The college's teaching distillery has been operating throughout the campus closure – but not to create its signature artisan small-batch spirits. The distillery has been producing

a 70 per cent alcohol disinfectant, which can be used for hand sanitizer and surface wipes, since March 16.

The research lab at the Walker Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre is producing 2,000 face shields using laser-cutting technology and computer design tools.

Thousands of masks, including N95 and procedural masks, and hundreds of gloves and face shields will be contributed.

Read the full story at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3715



Alex Hicks brings **NOTL cooking** to Food Network

Food inspired by Niagara-on-the-Lake farm life, chef encouraged by friends and family, ends in top prize

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Alex Hicks is Niagara-on-the-Lake's newest celebrity chef — though she doesn't cook professionally.

Yet, Hicks, 30, took home the first place prize during a Food Network cooking show, winning \$10,000, notoriety and memories of an experience she won't soon forget.

The series, called Wall of Chefs, is for home cooks who don't have a red seal.

"I can't believe it happened. I feel like it was just yesterday I got the email saying I made it through the preliminaries," says Hicks of her win.

She says she saw previews for the show last year and thought it might be a good thing for her to do. But it was actually her friends and family who encouraged her — and applied on her behalf.

"They had so much faith in me," she says.

Hicks says she's been



Alex Hicks on Wall of Chefs. FOOD NETWORK CANADA

cooking "pretty much" her whole life, and learned mostly from her family.

"My mom's a great cook, my grandparents are, my dad's a great barbecuer. I've always been kind of incorporated into the kitchen. I made my first grilled cheese when I was four-years-old and burned myself. And you know, I've always tried to help my mom."

After that she took a hospitality course at Niagara College where she says she really developed her interest in cooking and learned more techniques.

"Once I got out of college I actually was really sick," Hicks said. "I was sick for about three months, bed-ridden. I couldn't really do much but watch TV, so I kind of just started writing ideas down. I started trying recipes. I realized a lot of recipes can be very different but it does come down to the same technique ... so I just kept practising and practising and watching the Food Network. I had people over for dinner. I started really taking it seriously."

She said she's interested in taking the culinary course at Niagara College,

"It kind of sprouted out of nowhere, but it's something I do every day. I feel like the kitchen is my stress relief. It's kind of my therapy," Hicks said. "It's just become a part of my life now."

Now she says she's still cooking for her husband Neil Wachs, using him as a guinea pig for new techniques and recipes, but she's thinking about using her win as a bridge into the culinary industry.

She says she's been experimenting a lot with different ingredients and trying to highlight what's grown in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"I'm buying different cuts of meats and trying new things, and trying bone marrow and cooking pork belly, and doing all these things just to see what happens," Hicks says.

"I am looking into some opportunities, especially after the show, of course — kinda showing myself that I could do it."

She said she's interested in taking the culinary course at Niagara College,

or starting to apprentice under a head chef. But the longterm plan is to open a bed and breakfast with her husband on their farm — she would also love to be on the Food Network as a host. Farm life in Niagara-on-the-Lake has been a huge influence on Hicks. She's constantly thinking about which local ingredients she can use that can show off the area.

"I really want to instill how proud I am to be from NOTL. We are so lucky to live in such a bountiful, diverse microclimate known for farming, culinary and viticulture."

Even on the show she tried to bring Niagara into the mix, using a Niagara cabernet in a reduction for one of her dishes and Niagara peaches in another.

"The ability to have the produce in our backyards and utilize a lot of different ingredients within my reach really got me inspired and gave me the opportunity to cook so often."

Now she's thinking about

how to take the next steps in her culinary journey. And her friends and family are right behind her.

"(I'm) getting messages from family saying, 'You know what Alex, you have to pursue this. You love it, it's your passion but you're good at it.'"

She's excited about the \$10,000, of course, but says she also won in other ways.

"I feel like I've won as far as building confidence and just showing myself I could do it. So many other things I've won, I think."

She says she's ready to "get her hands dirty" and start learning with some chefs.

The biggest win for her, she said, was just getting her "feet wet" in the kitchen and a sense of pride.

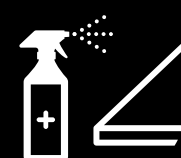
"I think the best thing that's coming from it is just the outpouring of love and the confidence that came with it."

The season finale of Wall of Chefs airs April 6 at 10 p.m. on Food Network Canada.

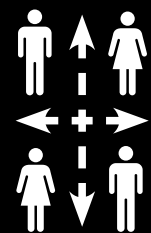
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