

Back to work, finally



Ivan Dillon, Baraka Allen, Kentroy McGon and Rojay James are in isolation for 14 days after arriving from Jamaica. The workers arrived at Erwin Wiens Farms on Tuesday at midnight. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

It's the day before farm workers will arrive at the Wiens farm, after much anticipation about whether they even would be allowed in the country due to COVID-19 border closures.

Farm owner Erwin Wiens is full of anxiety, making sure the living quarters are fixed up for his guys.

He's fixing a water leak with a local handyman, while his wife Dorothy and daughter Jessica give the house a final tidy to make sure it's ready to go for

the 14 days of isolation the workers will face as soon as they arrive.

Finally, late Tuesday night, after worries about whether the men would even make the flight, workers Ivan Dillon, Baraka Allen, Kentroy McGon and Rojay James arrive.

When The Lake Report caught up with Wiens Wednesday morning, the sense of relief in the air was palpable. In another 14 days, the work can begin for this year's grape growing season — finally.

"Now I can say to my-

self, it's OK."

Wiens said his workers, who have been working his farm for years, typically arrive 10 days earlier and now they will be 24 days late starting work for the season.

And Mother Nature doesn't wait. In fact, she was a bit early this year.

Wiens has a house with separate rooms for the workers, and they must follow the government's guidelines on isolation. Which means they can't work for two weeks and they have to stay six feet apart from each other, even in the house.

He said the workers fully

understand the situation, and are really just as worried, if not more, than Canadians are about the virus.

"They're aware of what's going on here. They're watching, they're concerned, they're scared. They want you to stay away from them, too," he said.

"They're more worried here than you and I are. We've kind of followed this thing along."

Wiens said he also has three full-time workers, who have been a great help. He trusts his workers to run the farm, even if something happens to him, he said.

Shaw at financial 'breaking point'

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed the Shaw Festival to near the "breaking point" financially and the company has now cancelled all events until after June 30, says executive director and CEO Tim Jennings.

"We continue to work closely with government agencies around the various new programs being put in place and also with our bank, funding agencies and other business partners to do what we can to remain solvent," Jennings said in a news release Monday.



Shaw CEO Tim Jennings. SUPPLIED

"That said, we have stretched our resources nearly to the breaking point and need this outside help

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Town hands out fines to people, businesses



All NOTL parks are closed due to COVID-19. While greenspaces are still open, people should walk, not drive to use them, says the town. RICHARD HARLEY

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Banning farm workers is racial profiling: Brock prof

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Amid pandemic panic, people and businesses in town have been taking extra measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but a few businesses have been doing so in ways that constitute racial profiling of seasonal farm workers, The Lake Report has learned.

The newspaper has received multiple reports of incidents of profiling and some businesses telling migrant workers they aren't welcome. There also have been several postings on NOTL social media pages both ques-



Canadian farm worker Claude Chambers prunes vines at Erwin Wiens Farms. SUPPLIED

tioning the appearance of migrant workers in town and followup posts defending workers and criticizing those who made comments about workers.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she had not heard about any mistreatment of farm workers by businesses, but Coun. Erwin Wiens said he is aware of

two incidents of racial profiling in town.

Wiens, who employs seasonal workers on his farm, said simply not allowing migrant workers into a store is unacceptable and the solution lies in education — for businesses, the public and farmworkers.

Disero and some prominent business leaders have issued statements on social media cautioning residents not to jump to conclusions when they see a migrant worker in town — and to treat them respectfully.

The profiling incidents all

Continued on Page 11

Directives for Niagara

Residents are reminded that the following mandatory directives are now in place:

- Stop all gatherings of more than five people (this includes private gatherings of extended family)
- Avoid all outdoor recreational amenities, including parks, playgrounds, beaches and sports fields
- Close all non-essential businesses
- Stay home as much as possible and only leave the house once a week if required
- Self-isolate for 14 days if you have symptoms or have returned to Canada from being outside the country
- Practice physical distancing and wash hands frequently



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Stratus 'reinvented' during COVID-19

Retail and sales staff have converted to working the vineyard while farm workers quarantine

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

With COVID-19 emergency measures in place across the country, it's a time for wineries to rethink and reinvent, and Niagara-on-the-Lake's Stratus Vineyards is doing just that.

For the last few weeks, the winery's retail and sales staff have been out in the vineyards, cutting and pruning vines until farm workers returning from Jamaica have passed their isolation period.

Estate director Suzanne Janke said Mother Nature can't be put on hold so the field work needs to be done and she's thankful staff members have been willing to help out.

"Agriculture doesn't stop, you know? It has no barrier to what's happening in the rest of the world. The vines are out and they're sort of waking up. And so we have to carry on our business as healthily and safely as possible," she said.

"Some of those workers that were particularly keen on knowing more about wine and vineyards and so on had been willing to take up the challenge of learning how to manage the vines at spring time, and so they've come to the vineyard and we've trained them and they're doing a remarkable job. Great attitudes and they're really picking up the pace and doing a very high quality job in the vineyard."

While the winery typically has a crew of six workers from Jamaica, one of whom lives here permanently now, this year they could only bring in four because of a limit of four people to one house, Janke said.

The workers arrived from Jamaica on Sunday night.

Like many businesses, Stratus has been hit hard by COVID-19. The winery has had to lay off tasting room teams and the bulk of its sales teams, which span from Niagara to Toronto, Janke said.

"We're really running on a skeleton staff."

While normally the winery would be ramping



NOTL copes with COVID-19

Ben Nicks, Devon (Rocky) McKenzie, Nick Bell, Nadia Skorupski, Chase Collins, Kaleigh Andrews, Timothy Shashkoff and Catriona McConnell work the vineyards. SUPPLIED

up for a "very robust tourist season," Janke said this year it has had to cancel all event programs for April and May.

Diana Sangster, vineyard manager for Stratus, is out among the vines doing quality control, and even she is spending more time there than usual, on top of ordering, helping to keep the tractors working and planning of the tourist season.

She was also tasked with training the retail staff to prune the vines early, when it was uncertain whether seasonal workers would even be allowed into the country after the border was closed.

Now it's going on three weeks since they started in the vineyard, she said, with just seven retail staff members in total helping to prune 55 acres of vineyard.

"That's why we kind of had them come out earlier, because we knew there was going to be some extra time required to make sure that they were trained up and comfortable with what they're doing out here as well," she said.

The biggest challenge is that it's not the kind of work everybody is used to, she said.

"It's a different type of

labour, a different kind of mindset," Janke said. "It's more just getting them to kind of switch out of what they were doing, which they had been doing for a long time, and kind of change up and get comfortable with the equipment too."

Nick Bell is one of the workers who is helping in the vineyards, working 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. He's normally in logistics and sales.

"The furthest away from a field possible," Bell said.

"This is new work. This is something that I have never done before. It's back-breaking work. It's hard work. You don't realize how hard it is until you're actually out there."

With 55 acres, it works out to be about 7,200 vines for each person to prune, he said, though the biggest obstacle is moving from a desk to outdoor manual labour.

"If you've never done manual labour before and they throw you right into it, it's probably one of the biggest obstacles," Bell said.

Nevertheless, he's enjoying the work.

"It's definitely a lot of fun. It's just that there's a lot of thinking that goes into it. And you don't realize how much thinking goes into it. It's not just cutting. You have to be a little bit more

methodical about it. Diana (Sangster), our vineyard manager, she's been walking us through it, telling us the step by steps. She's fantastic," said Bell.

"I would much rather do this, really, than be at home."

Sangster said being out in the fields offer a "different side of appreciation" for winemaking.

"I think most people just think of the cellar and the production side of wine-making. But we're fortunate here that our vineyard is right on site as well, so it gives them that appreciation of all the work that really goes into it all year round," Sangster said. "It's a lot of work, for sure."

Sangster is also the one in charge of making sure farm workers are properly quarantined. She said the main concern was preparing the house and making sure it had proper sanitation, but other than that it's been fairly easy to meet the government's long list of safety protocols.

"There's luckily been lots of paperwork and regulations sent out from public health and everything, so it's really just abiding by the instructions I've been given and it so far seems pretty easy to follow," she said.

She said there are enough cleaning supplies to make sure that they're able to keep the house sanitized, as well as soap and signage to help the workers "thoroughly understand the level of cleanliness they have to keep in the house."

Workers are also supposed to keep a two-metre distance from each other while they are in the house.

Sangster said she calls them daily to see if anyone is feeling unwell and the workers also have internet and are able to keep in touch.

She hopes they won't go too stir crazy.

Janke said it's great to see staff members still having some form of income during these unprecedented times.

"We're happy because a lot of these folks are dependent on sales for their livelihood, and without that channel, I mean essentially sales to restaurants, bars, hotels have completely dried up so they would have had virtually no income. So, we were honoured that they would be willing and also very glad that we could continue our work family and keep people as employed as possible," said Janke.

"We really consider everybody here a work family and it's a very important part of our culture, before and after corona."

Nonetheless, Janke is staying positive and rolling with the punches.

"People are keeping their chin up and we're looking forward to brighter days and more than anything we're just trying to respect the health safety and the emotional wellness of both our clients and our team," she said.

"We're very grateful that wine is a product that people are still interested in and it's still allowed to be delivered. And so we've just reinvented our business."

"We're thinking differently, we're working differently and that's what you have to do in these times."

The winery is still open for online orders and is delivering to homes across Ontario.

Virgil Stampede cancelled

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The Virgil Stampede is cancelled due to COVID-19.

Marcia Penner, secretary of the Virgil Business Association, which puts on the stampede, said this is the first time in 54 years that the stampede has been cancelled.

"We've had to postpone things because of weather. We've had to postpone the fireworks or postpone an event, but we've never had to actually cancel the full event to my knowledge," Penner told The Lake Report Friday, shortly after the decision was made.

She said it's a sad feeling all around.

"I think it just drives home the point that this is a serious pandemic and that we really all need to be doing our part, flattening the curve, and staying home so we can get back to normal — because until people start doing that I don't think we're going to get a handle on this."

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news/phtml/3733

Backhouse farm stand robbed, vandalized

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Backhouse restaurant's farm stand was robbed Tuesday night.

The thieves broke off the cash bin, which was secured to the stand with four screws, Backhouse owner Ryan Crawford told The Lake Report Wednesday morning.

He said it was "disheartening" to wake up and find someone had stolen from the stand, which operates on the honour system.

"It says pay what you want," Crawford said.

"They could have just taken some food if they needed it."



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NOTL man creates face shields for frontline health care workers

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

From his workshop in NOTL, Rene Bertschi is using his high-tech 3-D printer to produce face shields for health care workers.

“I just saw a need to help our community to protect us from this deadly virus,” Bertschi said.

“So, as an engineer and the owner of 3-D printing equipment, I thought, ‘How can I design a face shield like so many health workers around the world are wearing and can I make it locally?’”

On one of the first iterations of the shields, he used simple design software to



NOTL copes with COVID-19

Rene Bertschi with boxes of the face shields he has created. SUPPLIED

create the face frame and the mounting pegs to attach the protective shield.

One of his main criteria was to make the unit with readily available materials. So he used PLA (polylactic acid) for the frame. PLA is different than most thermo-

plastic polymers in that it is derived from renewable resources like corn starch or sugar cane, Bertschi said.

He also used transparent foils for the protection guard and rubber bands to holding the face shield on the wearer’s head.

Last week, with help from the NOTL Public Library, he supplied 100 face shields to Michael Garron Hospital (formerly Toronto East General) after that organization put out a call for people with 3-D printers to help.

Now, after consultation with health professionals, he has retooled his design and is making more, some of which may go to hospitals in Niagara.

In the meantime, Bertschi said he has distributed several face shields to neighbours on Shaw’s Lane, Willow Bakery, Valu-mart, The Soup Kitchen in Niagara Falls and Simpson’s Pharmacy in NOTL.

Town hands out fines to people, businesses

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

With Easter coming up this weekend, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are being urged to celebrate the holiday indoors.

“We will celebrate together once we’ve wiped this virus,” Lord Mayor Betty Disero said during a virtual council meeting Monday.

“It is so important to stop the spread as quickly as possible. And the only way to do this is to stay home. If you’re walking, walk from home keeping a two-meter distance, wash your hands frequently and try not to touch your face.”

While some residents keep their distance when they’re



Town playgrounds are closed. RICHARD HARLEY

out exercising in the parks, other community members are parking illegally, climbing over fences and driving around the barricades to play in some of the fenced-off areas, Disero noted.

Over the past weekend, the town received 30 phone calls and 23 emails of complaints

regarding properties or incidents of non-compliance with the provincial emergency orders, the town’s interim chief administrative officer Sheldon Randall said at the meeting.

Town bylaw officers, who now work seven days a week, patrolled the parks 65

times on the weekend and issued five parking tickets, Randall said. The officers issued two notices and one fine and had to ask 46 different people to “move along.”

The town ticketed three non-essential businesses for operating in violation of provincial rules, Disero told The Lake Report.

Four contract staff continue to help the officers with the enforcement in addition to backup provided by Niagara Region and Niagara Regional Police. If the number of calls continues to increase, there are two additional contract staff available to assist, Randall said.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3739

Library has a month of programs online

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

The NOTL Public Library has shifted online to provide weekly activities for all members of the community through the month of April.

Although the library is closed to reduce the spread of COVID-19, that doesn’t mean it isn’t here to help.

A variety of weekly

online events have been scheduled through the coming month to keep people reading, creating, learning, playing and exploring what the library has to offer.

Sunday mornings a local chef will be sharing some inspiration for the kitchen during Brunch with Miles.

Monday afternoons can be spent creating with Kasia live on Facebook with a paint-along with step-by-

step instructions.

Kids and families can be part of the Minecraft club, hosted Tuesdays and Thursdays, by joining the online realm set up by the library. Kids can spend time contributing to the open creative world and take part in mini games twice a week. Tuesdays at noon STEAM challenges will also be posted online that require members to use

imagination and creative skill to complete each weekly objective.

Tech Tuesday posts will open a channel for people to leave comments about technology-related questions. IT staff will be available to help with things like where to find ebooks and how to video call your family.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3735



Town Enforcing Contraventions of Emergency Orders Relating to COVID-19

By ministerial designation under the Provincial Offences Act, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s By-Law Enforcement Officers have been authorized to enforce Emergency Management and Civil Protections Act Orders. This action positions the Town to ensure that the Orders set out by the Provincial government are adhered to. Fines range from \$750 to \$1,000.

Three (3) noteworthy Emergency Orders, enforceable by Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Municipal By-law Enforcement Officers, include:

- Closure of Public Places & Establishments
- Prohibiting Events & Gatherings of More than Five (5) People
- Prohibiting Unfair Pricing on Necessary Goods

Community members looking to report a business or individual(s) operating in contravention of Emergency Orders, are asked to contact Niagara-on-the-Lake By-law Enforcement by email (covidcomplaints@notl.com), phone (905-468-3266), or online complaint form at notl.com.

DO NOT call 911 to report these concerns. After hours complaints or urgent issues can be reported by calling the Niagara Regional Police Services non-emergency line at 905-688-4111

To review all Town updates related to COVID-19, read answers to frequently asked questions, and see up-to-date information on the status of Town services, please visit www.notl.com/COVID-19, or call 905-468-3266. Town Staff will continue to assist and serve citizens online and over the phone between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM Monday to Friday.



During these unprecedented times, we all need to do our part and come together as a community. Please stay home whenever possible and when out, practice safe social distancing and wash your hands often. Remember to thank our front line workers and if possible, support our local not-for-profit organizations. We will get through this together!

- Tony Baldinelli, Member of Parliament, Niagara Falls riding

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POSITIVE POWER+

Contributed by Patty Garriock

"I was taught that the way of progress is neither swift or easy."

– Marie Curie.



Contributed by Norm Arsenaault:

When offered a plastic straw or stir stick, just say No thanks! 57 millions straws are sold in Canada each day. Most end up in landfills where they will stay forever. Approximately 20,000 are used in Niagara-on-the-Lake every day. Most end in the landfill!

Editorial: Time to support local news

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

With the threat of COVID-19 in our neighbourhood, it is our sincere hope that you and your families are healthy and staying safe. As most of us know and are taking seriously, right now it's more important than ever for us to follow social distancing measures as much as possible to prevent

the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

But to do that, it helps to know what's going on in our town, to stay connected to our community, and to know the emergency measures being taken right outside your doorstep — not just the provincial and federal outlook.

At this time, accurate, local news is more important than ever. Especially to our

seniors who are most at risk.

We would like to thank chef Ryan Crawford from Backhouse for setting up a GoFundMe campaign to help The Lake Report keep the news coming to the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake during these difficult times we're all facing.

We encourage anyone who can to help with a donation. Anything helps — \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100 or more.

You can find the GoFundMe at, www.gofundme.com/f/gug4y-support-notl-news.

We understand that this global health crisis has created exceptional circumstances for us all. If donating is not feasible at this time, we understand. The Lake Report will still try its very best to bring you the best Niagara-on-the-Lake news week in and week out. editor@niagaranow.com



Isolation insights from NOTL's Susan Hall

Longtime NOTL resident Susan Hall, a warden at St. Mark's Anglican Church, has a home in Brighton, England, where she spends several months visiting with family every year. She is now isolated there due to COVID-19 and has written about her experience.

Susan Hall
Special to The Lake Report

Here I am in the U.K., having arrived just a smidgen before the crisis hit surprisingly fast, suddenly shutting down air travel, shortly followed by the immediate closure of any business deemed non-essen-

tial. And finally, the pubs, clubs and restaurants that surround me were empty and silent.

Probably, like you in Niagara, we are allowed to be out for exercise within a short distance from home, to shop for essential food supplies or to minister to an elderly shut-in, while maintaining a six-foot distance from others.

It occurred to me that people's behaviour worldwide during this coronavirus pandemic rather mirrored medieval behaviour as citizens tried to escape from the plague infested cities during the Black Death in the mid-14th century. In so doing they spread the infection as they went.

Similarly, in Italy, there was an exodus from Lombardy prior to the lockdown, spreading the virus to the rest of the country. In New York City, Americans dashed off to Vermont and other less populous states.

Here in the U.K. people rushed to isolate in what they considered safe, isolated places, no doubt encouraged by an article in the Sunday Times Homes section, entitled "Best Places to Isolate" with photographs, accompanied by tempting descriptions of lovely homes for sale in remote areas.

They flocked to their cottages in Snowdonia, Cornwall and other traditional beauty spots like the Lake

District. Others hitched up their trailers (caravans) and went to a field somewhere or a massive caravan park, acres of which scar what once were beautiful isolated coastal areas.

Likely some brought the virus with them but apart from that when they arrived they were soundly berated by the local residents for putting an intolerable strain on their food supplies and health services. Crowds, which filled parking lots as they congregated in usually deserted spots, had to be broken up by police after they had been monitored by drones.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3751.

Why not hire unemployed locals for farm work?

Dear editor:

I can't help but see a paradox in the farm labour issue of today.

We are struggling to get seasonal farm workers into the country at the same time we are witnessing more than one million Canadians lose their jobs. Why not utilize some of the unemployed people to fill jobs normally taken by imported labour?

Local, unemployed people would not have to self-isolate, would not require farm accommodation and would likely be grateful for an opportunity to be employed.

There could be hundreds of people in the service industry that would be interested in such an initiative.

Of course, training and orientation would be required, but I would view this as an investment rather than a cost. In addition, the benefits to both farmers and the local economy would be great.

I believe the logistics of getting seasonal farm workers here from other countries will be difficult and fraught with concerns. Why not utilize the labour that is already here?

*Mike Della Rossa
St. Davids*

Keep in mind those less fortunate during pandemic

Dear editor:

I am writing to echo previous letters imploring people not to hoard goods during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are many people who are dealing with chronic illness or pain that live off a very small disability allowance every month. I am one of them.

I was stunned when I went to Walmart a few weeks ago and discovered there was absolutely no toilet paper of any kind.

In fact, the only thing I was able to buy was a store brand package of one-ply party napkins for \$6.47!

I had to cut each napkin in half to use as toilet paper (not supposed to flush napkins, paper towels, etc). I truly needed to purchase this, I had a quarter of a roll and I have four children.

Also, there was almost no meat of any kind available for purchase: no chicken, no turkey, no steak or beef of any kind other than a mixture of pork and beef ground together.

This means I had to stop my medically directed

diet and I am sure I am not alone.

For an area with so many people already struggling, I am very concerned about people living below the poverty line already being able to buy staple items.

I am saddened that during a state of emergency anyone would hoard items needed for living. Now is the time to think about our neighbours and not just ourselves or we will not get through this situation without significant hardship.

The class distinction of this region is already creating housing shortages and we are still dealing with the ongoing opiates pandemic.

I am begging everyone to consider the needs of those far less fortunate. If we don't support one another now, the consequences will be felt for a long time to come.

I know everyone is afraid, but that means poor people as well. We must do better.

*Catherine Lee Randall
NOTL*



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OPINION

Dr. Brown: No life-saving measures if I become breathless with COVID



Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

I'm 80 and just days ago had a conversation with my children about what they could realistically do if I become sick with COVID-19.

My wife has dementia and lives in a long-term care facility nearby. Because of provincial rules, I am unable to visit her – because, even if at this stage when she lives mostly in the present, we enjoy visiting with one another, often laughing again and again over the still-fresh video clips of grandchildren doing what grandchildren do and reminiscing, although mostly on my part, about days gone.

I have two children, one an upper-airway surgeon in Halifax and the other an orthodontist in Alaska – both out of reach – and three grandchildren, one in Alaska and the other two in Halifax.

Both children are at high risk for acquiring the disease because their jobs involve working close to the airway. So, I worry about them, although my son more so, because he'll be

NOTL copes with COVID-19

on the front lines whereas orthodontics can wait.

What's the issue? In this pandemic those at highest risk of acquiring the disease and highest mortality rate are in people in their 50s or over, those with one or more chronic diseases at any age, and those in professions, working closely with infected patients, whether identified or not, such as dentists, dental hygienists, respiratory therapists, paramedics and others.

This is a disease that primarily attacks the lining of the respiratory tract, from the nasal cavity to the far reaches of the lungs, which explains the sneezing and coughing and if severe, the shortness of breath.

It is the latter that is most worrisome because it is in those far reaches of the lung where gas exchange takes place in tiny sacs where oxygen and carbon dioxide in the airway come closest to the circulation and any significant flooding by inflammatory fluids and swelling of cells is most likely to impair life sustaining oxygenation of the blood.

This is where things get messy, because if oxygenation of the blood become impaired, the heart and especially the brain's functions may become impaired, possibly beyond recovery. The latter is especially so,

in later life where pre-existing conditions, some known about and others clinically silent (such as cerebrovascular disease, dementia in its early stages or both), reduce the reserve of the brain to recover from hypoxia.

The solution for patients suffering from pneumonia and hypoxia is oxygen to begin with. But for those when that isn't enough, intubation of the airway and possibly tracheotomy, and artificial ventilation may be needed.

However, my experience with ventilatory support in the elderly hasn't been an encouraging one – patients in their 80s and beyond, often don't fare as well as the young.

Beyond the physical discomfort associated with artificial ventilation is the fact many older patients become disoriented by the lights, noises and routines, to the point that some become delirious, from which cognitively speaking, they may not fully recover.

I for one, wouldn't like that. Figuring into this discussion is my take that that I've had a very good run at life, lucky in my parents, wife, children and grandchildren. I was fortunate, too, in my career for much of which was a "Camelot" period in my life, and many dear friends, too many of whom have died in recent years. So,

yes, I've been fortunate. For all those reasons, I've made the decision that should I develop this disease and be so short of breath, that at a younger age, I would have called 911 and ended up in hospital and possibly ventilated – this time around I want to die in place rather than go through the rigmarole of ventilatory support in a health care system where resources will surely be stretched beyond the limit.

Some might disagree with me, but in the greater balance, the efforts of the system should be directed toward the young with responsibilities for parents, children and partners. And my dear wife will be taken in hand and moved closer to one of the children, should something happen to me.

That's the discussion I had with my children. Of course, nothing may happen to me and I'll carry on as before. But I think it's worthwhile to have these discussions with those you love and who love you. Don't leave important discussions like this to chance, especially in the evolving storm.

That's my take -- what's yours?
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.

Old Town bank victim of yet another car crash

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

A 33-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake man crashed his Chevrolet Tahoe into the entrance of the Royal Bank of Canada on Mary Street on Sunday.

The incident took place at about 7:20 a.m., little more than four months after an 86-year-old woman did the same thing, causing about \$20,000 in damages.

Sunday's crash was a result of "human error" and caused in excess of \$10,000 to the bank and another \$1,000 to the SUV, police said in response to questions from The Lake Report.

No charges were laid under the Highway Traffic Act, as the crash happened on private property, police said.

The driver was alone when the crash happened and no one was injured.



A Chevrolet Tahoe crashed into the entrance of the Royal Bank of Canada on Mary Street on Sunday. JESSICA MAXWELL

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The Lake Report

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

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Stranded on **cruise ship** for a month

Jessica Maxwell
 The Lake Report

NOTL copes with COVID-19

Niagara-on-the-Lake travelers Fran and Eric Harman spent the beginning of March in their "Azamara bubble" worlds away from the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation.

The Harmans did their homework before leaving Canada to board the Azamara Pursuit cruise ship in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

"We'd heard about the Diamond Princess obviously before we left and people said, 'Why are you going?' and we said, 'Well, we've checked with the Canadian government and they said it was safe to travel.' The airlines were flying, and the cruise lines were going," Fran said.

She said that the Azamara Pursuit has "an extreme measure for cleanliness and within being on board for two days they had gone to what they call a level three risk."

Fran explained that this meant, "nobody was allowed to touch serving utensils, you couldn't serve your own coffee, you couldn't touch anything related to food servicing and our room attendant called us to sanitize our room twice a day with special chemical cleaners."

"Doesn't matter what the conditions were because we've sailed with them before. You can't serve yourself for the first 24 hours, no matter what," Eric said.

"So, that was going on immediately. I think there was one day we got to serve ourselves, and then boom, it was back to no you can't serve yourself."

Because this standard of cleanliness was not entirely foreign to the Harmans, just an enhanced version, the vacation continued normally for a while.

"We never thought what

was going on in the world was really going on because we call it the 'Azamara bubble': In a perfect little world where nobody was sick, and the food kept coming and the wine kept being poured."

Then things started to change as the crew of the ship adjusted to an enhanced cleaning schedule and sanitation measures.

"Azamara Pursuit is a little unique in that it's got a passenger load of around 650 passengers and I'd say about 350 crew. So, in cruise ship terms, it's small," Eric said.

"The interesting thing about being on a small cruise ship is you start to realize something's going on when you get up in the morning and the piano player from the night before is now serving you porridge because there's not enough staff on the small ship,"

Fran said.

Twelve days into the cruise, a stop in Chacabuco, Chile, was where Eric said they got "the first slap in the face if you will. Saying, Wake up. Something's happening in the world."

After entering the harbour and dropping anchor, passengers waited for tender boats to take them in to the dock and then there was an announcement. Chile is not allowing any passengers on its territory. Eric said this was a real wake-up call for passengers.

This was the beginning of missed ports for the cruise ship. After two days at sea, the ship spent four days anchored in Valparaiso, Chile, where the country was debating whether it would be provisioning the ship, which was "a little low on fuel and a little low on food," Eric said.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news/phtml/3756.

Walk, **don't drive** to the park, town says

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Walk, don't park at the park.

Because parking lots are now closed to deter visitors and promote physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

That's the message from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, which has extended its state of emergency until June 30, meaning all in-person events and gatherings are cancelled.

The green spaces at town-operated parks and area walking trails remain open, but all play structures and other outdoor recreational facilities are closed.

That includes playgrounds, sports fields, basketball and tennis courts, beaches, skateboard parks, picnic areas, outdoor community gardens, park shelters, outdoor exercise equipment, condo parks and gardens, and other outdoor recreational amenities are closed.

Town officials emphasized they really just want everyone to #StayHomeNOTL.

As well, the municipality has taken other steps:

* NOTL Transit will stop operating as of Thursday, April 9. Residents requiring assistance with grocery delivery and shopping support are encouraged to visit the town's website, www.notl.com.



Ryerson Park sunset worshippers. KEVIN MACLEAN

org, to take advantage of the Community Assistance Program.

* Bylaw officers are working seven days a week and are authorized to ticket and fine people contravening any emergency orders.

They already have given out five fines.

* The Senior Citizen Strawberry Social, typically held in June, has been cancelled and the Step Challenge will be postponed until further notice.

During this time of uncertainty, please remember to support the local businesses.

RIDDLE ME THIS

I go up and never come down.
What am I?

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

Answer: A carrot

Also accepted: Donald Trump (Submitted by Brenda Bartley)

Answered first by: Kathy Neufeld

Also answered correctly (in order) by: David Steele, Margaret Garaughty, Pam Dowling, Sadie Willms, Sylvia Wiens, Gary Davis, Margie Enns, Katie Reimer, Sue Davies, Susan Hamilton, Howard Jones, Brenda Bartley, Kara Bartley

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

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Simpson's workers get fabric masks

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Simpson's Pharmasave staff are feeling a little safer at work thanks to the efforts of Calhoun Sportswear in St. Catharines.

Pharmacy owner Sean Simpson said he ordered about 60 masks from Calhoun after seeing a news story about the company converting sportswear production to mask production due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

After bringing the masks to the pharmacy on Friday he said he posted pictures of them online to let people know they are available.

Right now the pharmacy is getting a lot of requests from people looking for masks, he said, and the cloth masks, while not as effective as an N95, can help prevent aerosol transmission, and prevent taking critical supplies from front-line workers.

"You know, certainly

there is a huge shortage for people on the front lines and health care providers, which is why we've been encouraging people to let the health care workers get their hands on masks before the general public, but these cloth masks are good for both," he said.

"They're not as effective as an N95 or a surgical mask, but we know that anything that can reduce respiratory droplet transmission can be helpful."

He said for people looking for masks, he has 150 more on order, but encourages people to try to bundle together and order from Calhoun directly.

There is "scientific data" that shows even cloth masks can be effective, he noted.

"N95 is the gold standard and reduces transmission most effectively," he said. "But, at the end of the day, if you look at some of the graphics around how aerosols are formed even just from talking, coughing and other

stuff, they're pretty helpful."

He said the company also has descriptions of how to properly put on and remove the masks.

Simpson said the store has already made adjustments and limited the store to curbside pickup and delivery because it was "a hard message to get through to the public" about distancing.

"Our staff has felt much safer as a result of those early measures, but there's still face-to-face interaction when we do go out to people at their cars, or for delivery drivers, and so I think it's just an extra level of safety that we can provide. Everybody has a different opinion as to whether they want to wear one or not, but at least, for those that feel safer, we now have that option."

Simpson said he's not sure when his order of masks will arrive, but he said they "may have some available."

He said the blessing and the curse right now is that more and more people

are calling, but it's been a struggle keeping up with the phones.

The masks will be marked up, so if people want to get them at a reduced cost, he encourages going directly to Calhoun.

"As much as we love being able to distribute everything for people, it's become a challenge. Working our phone every day has been a huge challenge, which is why we're encouraging people to contact us electronically."

He said people should contact the pharmacy through the store's Facebook page or email him directly at sean@simpsopharmacy.ca.

"And we'll get to them in due time."

He said he wants to let people know to stay home and stay calm.

He also thanked the community for doing a good job of social distancing and for the countless volunteers that have stepped up to help.

Niagara volunteers stitching and sewing

Sean O'Donnell
Special to The Lake Report

During this time of uncertainty and medical supply shortages due to COVID-19, a group of nearly 60 do-gooders from Niagara-on-the-Lake is working tirelessly, day and night, to sew and stitch together masks for Niagara's frontline workers.

It all started when NOTL resident Fran Boot spoke to her daughter, an EMS worker in Toronto. Knowing that the supply chain of personal protective equipment was running short, her daughter asked her to use her sewing skills to create a simple mask

that had a pocket in it for a filtration insert.

Boot did one better — she reached out to her sister Donna Feddema for help and together they founded Niagara COVID Masks on March 19.

With the help of social media and volunteer Julia Buxton-Cox, as of Wednesday the group had made and distributed about 1,000 masks free of charge to frontline workers in the Niagara region.

"This is 100 per cent to say thank you and show our appreciation for everything that (frontline workers) are doing," said Buxton-Cox. "If you know someone in the frontline workers

industry who is short on masks, please give them our website. Tell them to leave a comment, order, or order for them."

The masks are all made in the volunteers' homes under strict rules of maintaining a clean atmosphere and maintaining one's health, said Buxton-Cox. If the volunteers have even a slight cough, they must stop working and isolate themselves until they are able to continue.

There is also a strict vetting process for people receiving masks, she said. Only frontline workers such as doctors, nurses, police, firefighters, paramedics and pharmacists are

eligible. The groups offers two types of masks that can be found on its website, www.niagaracovidmasks.ca.

The delivery of all masks is contactless, Buxton-Cox said, and after each mask is made it must be washed and quarantined for a minimum of 24 hours before it can go to any frontline workers.

She said the project has really shown the kind spirit of Niagara.

"Our community has really pulled together. This is really a Niagara region-focused effort and people are really showing up and helping. (It's) just an amazing outpouring of support."

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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**
- Cavalry soldier (7)
 - Sawbones (7)
 - Middle Eastern bread (5)
 - Game show player (9)
 - How bidding goes in bridge (9)
 - Topic (5)
 - Unintended discharge of a fluid (7)
 - Green-eyed (7)
 - Live together (7)
 - Offensive (7)
 - Money bag (5)
 - Where dolly mixture can be bought (5,4)
 - E.g. the DUKW (9)
 - Harvests (5)
 - Convent (7)
 - Packed (7)
- Down**
- Average (7)
 - Bone manipulator (9)
 - Long flat piece of timber (5)
 - Contemptible person (7)
 - Genuine (7)
 - Kinsfolk (9)
 - Best of a group (5)
 - Chats (7)
 - Lake Windermere town (9)
 - Picked up accidentally (9)
 - Skipper (7)
 - Bear witness (7)
 - Maritime (7)
 - Laid open to view (7)
 - Mature (5)
 - Trunk of the human body (5)

Crossword Puzzle

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
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13				14				15				16		
17						18		19						20
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25										26				
27										28				

Last issue's answers

1	C	H	A	L	I	C	E	5	C	O	N	S	U	M	E		
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COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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The Government of Ontario is providing **temporary 45-day** emergency relief to support Ontarians impacted by the global COVID-19 outbreak. As of Tuesday, March 24, 2020, households, farms and small businesses who pay time-of-use electricity rates will be charged off-peak rates 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week until May 7th. Rates will be updated on May 8th and are set by the Ontario Energy Board.

The current off-peak rate is 10.1 cents per kWh and will replace the mid-peak rate of 14.4 cents per kWh and the on-peak rate of 20.8 cents per kWh. NOTL Hydro customers will see this rate reduction on their next bills which will be mailed mid-April. For more information or to answer any questions, such as to see if this rate reduction applies to you, please call NOTL Hydro at 905-468-4235.

LOCAL CHANGES AT NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE HYDRO

SERVICE LEVELS

As an **essential service**, Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro (NOTL Hydro) is committed to staying open during the COVID-19 pandemic and keeping the electricity flowing. Safety and keeping you connected remain our priorities. However, during this pandemic, our service levels are being reduced in the following manner:

- Our outdoor service personnel are at a 50% level due to changes made to limit the risks of infection.
- No non-emergency services are guaranteed at this time. With the reduced staffing the focus will be on services required for safety reasons or to provide customers with access to electricity.
- The office is closed to all visitors. Our drop-box is still open for anyone wishing to hand deliver.
- NOTL Hydro customer service staff can still be reached by phone at 905-468-4235 or by e-mail at billing@notlhydro.com.

MONTHLY HYDRO BILLS

NOTL Hydro will still be issuing its bills monthly in the normal fashion:

- You can continue to pay your bills online, at your local financial institution or by dropping a cheque or cash in our dropbox at the office. Envelopes are available in the mailbox by the door. No payments can be accepted by hand and no change can be provided.
- No interest or late payment charges will be added to the bills that will be mailed in the third week of April.
- All our rates are set by Provincial authorities and we are not allowed to change them without permission. Rates will be changed if that direction is received.
- If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please call our office at 905-468-4235. There are financial assistance programs we may be able to direct you to and payment deferral arrangement may be made. NOTL Hydro is unable to write-down or write-off any balances owing.




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Obituaries

Edith Staines



STAINES, Edith Laura (nee Gammon)

Edith died peacefully on Monday, March 30, 2020 at the Greater Niagara General Hospital, at the age of 75. Beloved wife of Alfred William Staines, for 42 years. Cherished mother of Christine (Terry), Michael, Karen (Ted), Doug (Jean), Heather and Sheila (Gord). Loving grandma of Jennifer, D'Arcy, Angel, Mike, Allyssa, Kailyn, Caleb, Dustin, Joseph, Daniel, Emily, Evan, Steven & Stewart, as well as many great-grand-

children. Dear sister of Ed (Carole), Carol (Roy), Elizabeth (Dennis) & Victor (Norma). She will be fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Edith was predeceased by her parents Dorothy & Arthur Gammon, as well as her grandson Caleb Hare. Edie has always enjoyed traveling the world. Her favourite cruise was through Alaska and her top destination was Hawaii. In her early years she worked as a draftsman for Provincial Crane. After retiring from The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake she enjoyed her time as a snowbird in Texas. Edie being an avid fisherwoman, once won 1st place in the Women's Salmon Derby. She could always be found with a book in hand or enjoying an episode of Coronation Street. In keeping with Edie's wishes, cremation has taken place. A visitation and service will take place at a later date, to celebrate Edie's life. Arrangements have been entrusted to MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St. Niagara-on-the-Lake. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.

Jeffrey Andrew Spurek

SPUREK, Jeffrey Andrew – It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Jeff (Spureky) on April 5th, 2020 at Niagara Falls General Hospital at the age of 57.

Jeff was a kind and generous soul, he worked and lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake his entire life. He loved the outdoors, helping people and had a genuine kind heart. He worked many years in the boat industry which he loved. For the last 15 years Jeff worked for Dawland Farms and considered Donnie, Judy, Mark and the entire staff his friends and family. He will miss you all. Beloved fiance of Joanne Mattei. Dear brother of Joanne Spurek-Nemeth (Steven), Brad Spurek (Elaine), Lisa Neudorf (Kevin). Jeff was predeceased by Brenda and James Driedger and parents Henry and Jane Spurek. He will be fondly remembered by Margaret Nicholson, Rick and Janis Corvino, Ralph Corvino, Eric, (Edwina) Amanda, (Alec)Mike (Kara), Jeff (Karl), Ashley, Jayson (Brooke), Corey, David (Jordan), Jonathan (Jess). Cremation has taken place. A service to celebrate the life of Jeff will be held at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Canadian Cancer Society. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com

Shaw crippled by necessary COVID-19 cancellations

Continued from Front Page

to come very soon if we are to maintain that solvency.”

The Shaw said it will keep paying the almost 400 company members who are on payroll through April 19 and will continue to evaluate the situation weekly.

However, the festival announced it will not be recalling four dozen company members who were scheduled to start right after Easter. They won't return until the Shaw is back on the stage.

“These increased measures and the loss of so much of the season are deeply upsetting,” said Jennings.

The Shaw's latest cancellations coincide with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake extending to June 30 its declaration of a state of emergency and ban of all public events and meetings.

With the first three months of shows cancelled, it's not known yet if the Shaw will be able to

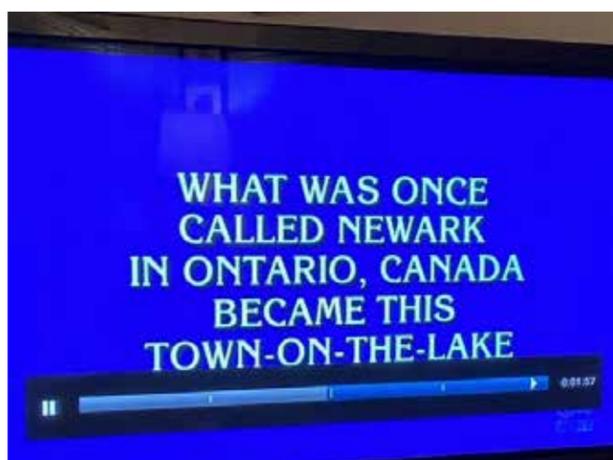
stage any plays this season, but the company remains hopeful.

“You wouldn't believe how much great work this company is still doing, in spite of all the obstacles and uncertainty,” said artistic director Tim Carroll.

“Of course, it is frustrating to be pushing back the date when we hope to perform, but I know we will be ready with deeper and better artistry than ever before. And I also know, because they tell me every day, how happy our audience will be to share it,” he said.

The troubling financial concerns come less than a month after the festival celebrated its most successful fiscal year ever.

At its annual general meeting in March, the Shaw announced that in 2019 it saw a 13 per cent increase in gross operating revenue. That resulted in an all-time high of \$34.1 million in revenue, with one-third of all revenues coming from donations. In 2018, revenue was \$30.2 million.



Town of NOTL stumps contestants on Jeopardy!

Kathryn Hinchley
Special to The Lake Report

In case you missed it, Niagara-on-the-Lake was given the auspicious honour last week of being the correct question to an answer on Jeopardy!

It was the \$1,200 Double Jeopardy! question on the Thursday, April 2, show in the category of “Old Names on the Map.”

Likely much to the chagrin of the show's Canadian-born host, Alex Trebek, none of the contestants were able to come up with the

correct question.

Historically there have been several reported name changes to our area (including Butlersburg, West Niagara) as the settlement evolved over time.

But it was Lt.-Gov. John Graves Simcoe who is credited with calling the town Newark in the late 18th century and it became the first capital of Upper Canada. Newark was later renamed Niagara and ultimately Niagara-on-the-Lake, to assist in distinguishing from Niagara Falls for postal address reasons.

ATTENTION

You are not alone

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service is servicing clients with life-limiting illnesses. We are bringing much needed Mobility Equipment Aids and Prescriptions to our vulnerable clients, as well as doing grocery pick-up (pre-ordered and paid) and wellness checks. Visits can be made by Skype and FaceTime. We are also offering bereavement telephone support. Our organization is here to say **“You are not alone.”** Our Services are **FREE OF CHARGE** to anyone experiencing a life-limiting illness.

If you or a loved one are experiencing a new illness or are in a self-isolation situation, please reach out to see how we can help.



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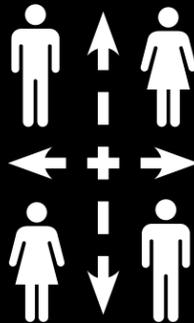


STAY HOME NIAGARA

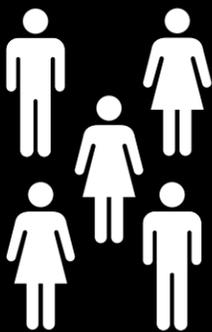
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It's a time to **advocate**, not discriminate

Continued from Front Page

happened in late March and early April, long before the main wave of seasonal workers from Mexico and the Caribbean started arriving in Niagara.

Simon Black, an assistant professor of labour studies at Brock University, said the incidents aren't surprising, but that people should know such actions violate Canada's human rights code.

"Migrant farmworkers in Niagara experience racism during times when there's not a pandemic, so the fact that there's racial profiling now in a time of heightened xenophobia and anxiety around a global pandemic is not at all surprising," Black said in an interview Saturday.

"If there are businesses in Niagara-on-the-Lake which are refusing to serve migrant workers, then that is a violation of the entire human rights code. I mean that constitutes racial profiling."

Wiens said people who might be worried should just ask when the workers have arrived. "The same way I would ask questions of anybody, if I saw a deep, deep tan on a friend of mine, I'd be like, 'Hang on a sec, where did that tan come from?'"

"It's a two-fold issue," Wiens said. "One thing is that everybody now, farmworkers included, have to understand social distancing and that we have to work together so that we don't send busloads of guys to the bank or to the Valu-mart."

"But the other thing is understanding that once they've gone through the quarantine or the self-isolation, there is going to be one or two people coming who are going to be getting big orders, because they're going to be getting orders for six or seven guys. So, they're not hoarding. So we have to all work together to understand to do what's best for everybody," he said.

"I'm confident that we can get through all of these things with proper education and proper knowledge," he said.

One source, whom The Lake Report agreed not to name, said she witnessed an incident at an Old Town

store two weeks ago, during which an employee tried to enforce what she called a "management policy" that farmworkers couldn't shop in the store. According to the witness, the migrant worker had already been in the country for several weeks and gone through isolation procedures.

That policy has since been rescinded, but the witness called the scene "heartbreaking."

"The employee was trying to write him a letter to give to his employer to let them know that (the) manager had in fact made the decision not to serve any migrant workers," the witness said.

She said the migrant worker didn't speak English, but coincidentally a woman who speaks Spanish was in the store and able to communicate the message to him.

"It ended up being that this person had been back in the country over a month, and had been working and gone through all of the policies and procedures," she said.

The witness called a local grower shortly afterward to express her concerns.

"There needs to be more done on the community's part to protect them if they have gone through all of the self-isolating scenarios. But, I mean, to go into a store, not be able to speak English and be refused service is just terrible."

She said the man, who had a mask on, finally ended up getting served. She hopes other stores in town will not try to implement similar policies that violate human rights out of fear.

"We're all terrified and I get it, but they're choosing to stay open, and if they need to adjust their protocols to be able to serve the public, then do that. Don't just refuse service."

Black said this should be a time to advocate for migrant workers, not a time to divide the community.

"If you look at the importance of migrant workers to the Niagara economy — \$1.4 billion I think the GDP impact from agriculture in the Niagara region — without migrant workers there is no agricultural economy in the region, full stop," he said.

"This is a moment in which you have an already

vulnerable work force who is coming into the country. You have a federal government and local health authorities which have not adequately planned to provide adequate access to health care for migrant workers in the context of this pandemic," he said.

"So you have a moment in which residents of Niagara and the Niagara-on-the-Lake community could be advocating for these workers who are so central to the well-being of the local economy. And it's unfortunate that some residents have turned — whether through fear or whether just through outright racial bias or discrimination — to engaging in ... racially profiling these workers."

He said employers operating farms, greenhouses or wineries should be speaking out on behalf of their workers if they hear about racial discrimination.

"If there are workers who, through the seasonal agricultural worker program, are there on your farm — who are contributing to the local economy, who are essential to your business, then you need to be advocating for them. And if those workers are experiencing racial profiling when they're downtown in Niagara-on-the-Lake, then those employers should be calling the Ontario Human Rights Commission to investigate."

Black said his hope is for people in Niagara to "recognize how essential (migrant) workers are to our local economy."

These workers are vulnerable, he said, and it's not the time to allow "fear to turn us against each other" but instead to "take the time to advocate for these workers who are so essential to that economy, and when these workers experience racial profiling or racism, to call that out amongst our community members."

The witness to the store incident said she'd like to see stores and farmers work together so store employees know if a worker has been through isolation.

She suggested one way for farmworkers perhaps to show they've quarantined is for farmers to provide cards that say, "Yes, I've passed quarantine."

"Put different protocols in place in place as opposed to just saying, 'You're not of whatever variety of person. I'm not serving you,'" she said.

With many snowbirds returning — and several reports of some of them not self-isolating — it's possible someone who lives in town is visiting stores and spreading the virus.

"There's people that have travelled back from Italy and Spain and Florida and everywhere else to come back to Canada that are walking around, but because they're of this country nobody questions them? That's absolutely ridiculous ... Either stay closed or put protocols in place where you can serve the public, and all of the public, not who you deem to not be eligible for service," she said.

She commended the farmers going to great lengths to do shopping for their employees.

Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS) has put out information to help employers, Wiens said, "so that we don't have three or four or five guys going to the Avondale."

He said one person should do the shopping for a group of workers on the farm.

"(They need to) go and pick up five phone cards or pick up enough for everybody. We can't have everybody going together because it is a whole new world order right now."

While banning all farmworkers is "not acceptable," Wiens added, "I'm going to give a lot of leeway in these times of stress that people might say inadvertent things or they may misunderstand."

Retail workers are on the front lines and they're going home to families, "so they're concerned too. So we have to work together. We don't want to see people discriminated against but at the same time I understand where the front-line workers are concerned with these things," he said.

Education is essential because "pointing fingers and fighting right now (won't work). We cannot divide," Wiens said. "This is all for one and one for all."

NOTL hockey star drafted to **OHL** team



Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

No matter where Niagara-on-the-Lake phenom Tai York's hockey career goes from here, the day he was drafted into the Ontario Hockey League will be one he never forgets.

It was a real family affair. In anticipation of the Niagara North Stars winger being selected in last Saturday's draft, 15 members of his family — and one dog — gathered in the parking lot near the Walmart at MacLeod Road in Niagara Falls.

In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, all social distancing rules were followed. They sat in four vehicles from 9 a.m. until after 1 p.m. when York was chosen, 109th overall, by the Barrie Colts.

For years the OHL's Priority Selection draft of under-16 players has been

conducted online. So, York and his relatives stayed in their vehicles, constantly refreshing their phones as teams chose the 300 top young players who will get a crack at playing major junior hockey this fall.

"It was nerve-racking," the 15-year-old left winger said in an interview. "I saw a lot of my friends go (in the draft), guys I played against or played with and I was just hoping to see my name."

With dad Justin, mom Susie and brother Austin, 17, all sitting in their truck, everyone was "super excited" when York was selected in the sixth round by Barrie.

The Walmart parking lot was chosen as a central rendezvous point for the festivities so the clan could meet up with Susie's brother, who lives in Welland.

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3755.

Compassion for Niagara long-term care residents

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Niagara has bonded together through the crisis of COVID-19 to show support for the community in many ways.

The staff and residents at NOTL's Niagara Long Term Care Residence (formerly Chartwell Niagara) are grateful to have received donations of flowers, coffee, hand sanitizer and gift bags as a show of support.

Niagara LTC Residence's acting executive director Kim Widdicombe says there are "lots" of flowers in the residence now which, "brought a smile to all the residents faces, they loved that."

"Hydrangeas sent by Up-

per Canada Animal Hospital went all over the home, into residents' rooms and into common areas — dining rooms and lounges," Widdicombe said. "There were a few left over for staff to take and they were thrilled."

Niagara LTC Residence wants to make sure the community knows how much the support it has received is appreciated. Donations have also been made by Tim Hortons, the Watering Can Flower Market, Dillion's Distillery and Prince of Wales Hotel.

Widdicombe said the support is "very heartwarming and it means a lot to our staff and residents."

Read the full story online at www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/3750



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