



The Lake Report

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Niagara-on-the-Lake's most respected newspaper

August 8, 2019

Legion, Kinsmen offer rain refuge to Irish scouts

Spirits not dampened by storm as scouts prepare to head home from a three-week excursion

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Even Tuesday's torrential downpour couldn't dampen the giving spirit of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

When more than 150 visiting Irish scouts returned to their camp in the Commons after the severe thunderstorm that hit town, they found their campground devastated. Tents were flooded, sleeping bags were soaked, and the rain just kept coming.

Luckily, the night would have a much happier ending, thanks to the kindness of members of the local Legion and Kinsmen Hall, and residents who stepped up to

help out.

Beth Black, a member of the Royal Canadian Legion on King Street, was just closing up for the night when she noticed a couple of soaked scout leaders walking her way.

"I was out tending the plants, and two of the leaders came up and told us about the emergency they had out in the Commons — tents floating, the wind damage," Black said in an interview late Tuesday. "They were all out on day trips, but when they came back they found chaos."

She learned half of the scouts had already found shelter at the Kinsmen Hall, but it wasn't big enough to



About 100 Irish scouts take refuge at the Legion on Tuesday night after their campsite in the Commons was rained out in a severe thunderstorm. JESSICA MAXWELL

hold all four troops, each consisting of 36 scouts and four leaders.

"The Kinsmen gave them the scout camp, but that only held about 60 people, so they came over here and asked us if we could help them out."

Luckily for the remaining troops, Legion president Paul Eramian happened to be in-house and he didn't hesitate to offer them the event hall for the night.

"We said, 'Sure, come on in,'" said Eramian.

Lord Mayor Betty Di-

sero had already offered to open the community centre for the scouts, but it wasn't necessary because the Legion stepped up to the plate so quickly.

NOTL resident Mike Scott, who helped co-chair the World Scout Jambo-

ree, which the Irish scouts attended before visiting NOTL, quickly jumped into action.

The scouts had to send their sleeping bags to a laundromat in St. Catha-

Continued on Page 3

Plans unveiled for new St. Davids pool

Waverly Neufeld
Special to The Lake Report

Elaine Aldridge-Low has been swimming at the St. David's Community Pool since she was 11 and was pleased overall with the plans she saw for the new pool during a community open house last Wednesday. But she also had some concerns.

Instead of a ladder, the new pool will incorporate a "beach-entry," which gradually slopes from the pool deck into the water, making it more accessible for

children and anyone with a disability.

Aldridge-Low, 51, said that will make it easier for the lifeguards to teach younger children. For decades, kids have relied on NOTL's pools to learn to swim.

Families like Rebecca Saylor's have swam at the pool for years. Her grandmother, Vi Mills, supervised the Niagara Pool for over 30 years and taught many generations of kids how to swim. A few years back she retired at the age of 80 and Saylor is now the aquat-

ics co-ordinator at the St. Davids pool.

Aldridge-Low, a competitive swimmer in her youth, said she would visit St. Davids on holiday from Scotland back then. She hopes to see a new pool that's modernized and better for the lifeguards.

"They have to work within real constraints right now," she said.

The pool is too deep in the shallow end, so young children end up sitting on the stairs because they can't stand in the shallow end, she said.

"The shallow end is very deep compared to Niagara-on-the-Lake. NOTL is much more shallow," said Aldridge-Low.

But she has always preferred the St. Davids pool to its Old Town counterpart because of the park-like setting. "It's very peaceful."

"One of the beauties of this model is that it is a hidden gem in a pathlike setting," said Aldridge-Low. "I think if you lose that you're losing something."

The new pool will be built

Continued on Page 2



A rendering of the new pool in St. Davids. SUPPLIED



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Heavy rain causes extreme flooding around town

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Torrential rain Tuesday night caused extensive damage to at least one home on Irvine Road.

The van der Zalm family noticed the excessive water around 6 p.m. but had little time to mitigate the flooding caused by more than three inches of rainfall over an hour and half, Jimmy van der Zalm said.

The family had four or five pumps on the property to remove the excess water, but the damage to the basement, where the water level reached nine inches, was already done, he said.

On Wednesday morning, the family was working with their insurance company to see what options are available to them, said John van der Zalm, owner of the home on 1499 Irvine Road.

"If it's similar to what we've had before, it'll be \$70,000, maybe \$80,000. We experienced similar flooding about a year and a half ago. A decade ago, we had similar flooding as well, the same thing," he said.

He said he has been in contact with the town often



The van der Zalm family experienced heavy flooding in their yard and basement as a result of heavy rain. They estimate the cost to repair the damages will be close to \$70,000. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

for the last year about how it can better manage flooding concerns.

"We've been working with the town for over a year. They're taking their sweet time. Not to be facetious, but it just takes a long time," he said.

Betty Disero, lord mayor, said she was on Irvine Road around 8 or 9 p.m. Tues-

day evening to assess the flooding. She said the water had trouble getting to the lake, and there was a creek which overflowed, causing a lot of flooding in a couple backyards around the Irvine Road, Firelane 12 area.

As the flooding in the area occurred on private property, Disero said the town just provided sandbags.



In an email assessment of the flooding Tuesday night, Disero said she believed the flooding at Joseph's Estate Wines on Niagara Stone Road was caused by a blocked culvert owned by the region.

Maxine Wright, who lives next to Joseph's Estate Wines, said she thinks some of Tuesday night's flooding

could have been avoided if the drains had been properly maintained.

"We took a walk, and it looks like a lot of the drainpipes and all that are not kept clear. As a result of that, the water can't go anywhere," she said.

She was told by the region there was six inches of rain throughout the day, which

would cause some flooding in most situations, she added.

As far as she could tell, she said the flooding at Joseph's Estate Wines was similar to what she experienced on her property, she didn't know whether it had experienced any permanent damage. Any concern on her property was managed with sump pumps, she said, no water made it inside.

Employees at Joseph's Estate didn't comment on the effect of the flooding, and the winery owners couldn't be reached.

Irvine and Firelane 12 was "washed out" with a lot of flooding, Disero said in the email.

"A few skids of sandbags were delivered to the area and private property owners are pumping water off their properties. There was a carbon monoxide alarm and the fire fighters have now cleared it," she said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, Disero said there were no new concerns about the night's rainfall, but town staff were out to check the storm sewers and catch basins to make sure everything is clear all over.

Residents pleased to see investment in St. Davids pool

Continued from Front Page

on the site of the current one and construction is to begin after the 2020 summer season.

That way, the pool can serve the public without missing a season, Kevin Turcotte, the town's manager of parks and recreation, told the meeting.

Representatives from jh Architecture in Burlington led the presentation along with Turcotte.

The presentation featured drawings and maps of the new pool, including a digital tour showing the planned facility. The goal is to

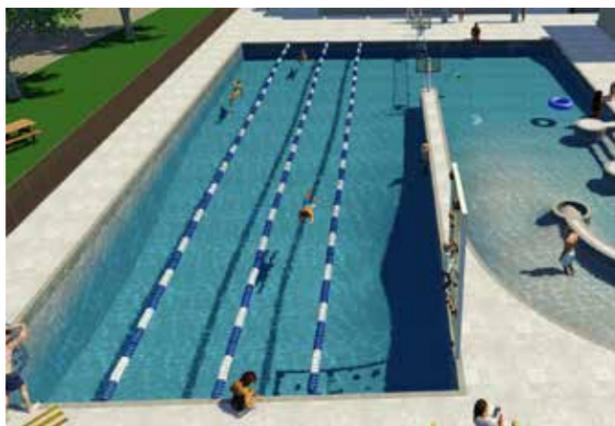
preserve green space, said Turcotte.

Most of the audience agreed on keeping the current location of the pool, near the back of the park and far away from the road.

Gus Koroneos, a resident of St. Davids, liked the design and sees it as something that can bring the community together. "It looks fantastic."

Koroneos has two daughters who take swim lessons at the pool and said it's sad to see the facility falling apart. At just over 50 years old, the pool is well past its prime.

"It's really good to see



A rendering of the design for the St. Davids pool. SUPPLIED

that the community is investing in a brand-new pool," said Koroneos. "It creates a sense of community and brings people together. Our kids know a lot of kids and have met a lot of kids through the pool and will continue to want to do so."

One audience member at the consultation suggested the pool should serve everyone in town. For that

reason, some features to entice youth to the pool include a rock-climbing wall, a water-basketball net and bike racks.

Koroneos agrees that the pool should serve youth, such as his own children as well as the older members of the community.

"Swimming is important for even the elderly of the area who want to have some cardiovascular exercise

through aerobics and swim aerobics," said Koroneos. "I think it's a win-win for everybody."

"My one concern was what was going to happen with the old pool. Were they just going to close it? So, I guess one of those concerns is gone, because it looks like there is going to be a new pool, which is fantastic."

During the presentation, one woman questioned why the new pool would have universal or family change rooms instead of separate change areas for men and women. She was concerned that it could attract pedophiles.

Architect Jim Hettiger explained there will be one large, open change-room with individual locked stalls and no nooks where people could lurk. One of the benefits of the family-style change area is fathers will be able to take their

daughters in to change and mothers can take their sons, the meeting was told.

As a lane swimmer, Aldridge-Low's biggest concern is the capacity of the pool.

"We get a lot of triathletes come into the pool sometimes right before competitions and they basically take over the pool," she said.

Some of the lane swimmers are more leisurely swimmers and get frightened by the splashing and the pool literally can have waves. "So therefore, they get out of the pool."

The current pool does not have lanes so there's no buffer between the swimmers.

"I would rather see more lanes and less extra à la carte items."

Residents can visit the town's Join The Conversation page for more information and comments about the pool project.



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Scouts and leaders have high spirits after Commons camp is washed out

Continued from Front Page

rines to be dried, and a few that were found at the end of the day were dried by Scott's wife Manuela.

Dean Gilchrist, one of the Irish troop leaders, said the whole ordeal was actually kind of exciting.

"When we pitched our tents four days ago it was dry, so we had no way of knowing where we were pitching was going to flood with heavy rain, and that's exactly what happened."

"As soon as we got back and we realized something had to change, the scouts just set about packing all of their gear into their bags, and any wet sleeping bags were brought to a laundromat to get them dried. And myself and one of the other leaders, Michelle, walked over (to the Legion), just to see if we could talk to somebody."

They assumed the Legion might have a function room or a hall and Black was the first person they met when they got there. "She was really helpful, and it was just lucky that Paul, the president of the Legion, was in residence, and we were able to explain the situation. Him and a couple of the other guys that were here were very helpful, and there were no questions asked."

"They were delighted to be able to help."

He said on top of the flooding, a few "strong gusts of wind" also damaged some of the tents.

"The tents that we have are normally meant for timid weather, but not the wind that we saw today."

So as a result, wet sleeping bags, and we had to try to find somewhere indoors to



Four troops of Irish scouts take refuge at the Legion on Tuesday night after their campsite in the Commons was rained out in a severe thunderstorm. JESSICA MAXWELL

stay because the tents were so wet. I believe that a tree was struck by lightning as well, which added to the drama."

The scouts used the same tents at the World Scout Jamboree in West Virginia just a week prior.

"We brought them with us when we moved up to Niagara-on-the-Lake," said Gilchrist.

Eight troops had originally been in town, but four of them left the day before, missing the rain.

"The (other) four troops left in the sunshine, got their tents down dry, and there was no issues. The rest of us, some of us were at Niagara Falls today, others were in Toronto, and when we returned, obviously (things were chaotic)."

Gilchrist said they aren't used to such extreme weather back home.

"In terms of the frequency here of thunderstorms and lightning, it's much rarer in

Ireland. We get heavy rain, of course, but we don't always get lightning, so that's kind of a bit exciting for us. When we were at Niagara Falls, we were doing the Hornblower boat tour, and it was thunder and lightning during that, so it was quite epic."

When the group left the Falls, they were already soaked.

"The plan, of course, was get back to the tents and get dry, so it was just another notch when the tents were drowning," Gilchrist said.

In the end, everything worked out, thanks to the generosity of the members of the Legion and Kinsmen Hall.

"We're very grateful to them for giving us the shelter," he said.

Still, with all the chaos and soaked gear, Gilchrist and the scouts were in high spirits, and already looking back with fondness on the whole ordeal.

"It's not that this happens a lot, but when things don't go to plan, it's normally the more memorable experience, you know? The scouts will remember this far quicker than they'll remember taking their tents down dry, and it all being lovey-dovey and easy-peasy and just getting on a bus and going."

He said overcoming obstacles is what scouts are all about.

"It's kind of like, adapt, improvise and overcome — so here we are. So, it really is a good news story and it's kind of a nice end to our trip, to kinda leave on something different."

He said the group is really just appreciative and glad that the guys "took pity" on them.

"And we made sure to tell them that if they were in Ireland and they found themselves in a similar situation, that, of course, we would be there to help."



Dave Ignatzyk, captain of St. Davids Fire Station 2 and Colin Hunter, with the new Tanker 2. BRITTANY CARTER

New tanker for NOTL Fire

A new custom-built firetruck drove into the St. Davids Fire Station 2 in July and, in addition to being safer and more efficient, can also haul more water.

The new truck, a Kenworth T-370, cost \$323,000 according to the town's 2018 capital

project, was "specifically designed for the unique characteristics of Niagara-on-the-Lake's landscape," said a media release.

The new truck is equipped with a 3,000-gallon water tank and an onboard pump which can feed another fire apparatus on scene.

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Go Green Tip of the Week

Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

Make use of your green bin to compost. It's easy and the compost can be reused to improve soil. Paper towels, tea bags, coffee grounds, pet waste in compostable bags, brown cardboard, paper bags, egg cartons, food products including fish, meat, cake, vegetables, fruit peels ... all are compostable.

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"The beautiful thing about learning is that nobody can take it away from you."

- B. B. King.



Editorial: The police and the horse protesters

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Discretion can be a subjective concept. What you think is a reasonable allowance might seem wholly unacceptable to your neighbour. The devil is in the details.

When it comes to law enforcement, police occasionally have some latitude in how the law gets applied, especially in relatively minor matters. Sometimes that speeding ticket turns into a stern warning, sometimes it's better to talk out a solution than to apply a heavy-handed approach.

A story from Crystal

Beach had us shaking our heads this week: A family of beachgoers from Niagara-on-the-Lake, who set up a small shade tent for their children, were evicted from the waterfront by Niagara Regional Police officers because no tents are allowed on the beach. Fort Erie has a bylaw governing ... beach tents.

Ironically, the little tent was smaller than some of the large beach umbrellas that are legally permitted on the beach. This tempest in a teapot attracted Niagara police officers, who forced the family to leave.

Surely members of our police service's senior

command are embarrassed by such a clumsy, ham-handed decision. Maybe the officers could have said: "Yeah, it's a tent, but it's pretty small and it's not causing any real problems. Let it slide."

Contrast this with the same police department's handling of aggressive protesters who have been plaguing Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake for more than a year. As Jennifer Jones-Butski points out in a letter on page 6, there is no comparison in the response.

We respect free speech and assembly, but some of the well-documented acts by the group protesting

horse-drawn carriages in Old Town have deserved a more decisive police response than we have seen to date. Texting while driving, harassing individuals, following people, trespassing on private property are just some of the incidents that would seem far more heinous than having the nerve to set up a modest tent on a beach. To keep your kids cool. On a hot summer day.

We ask that the Niagara Regional Police deal with the complaints against protesters with the same kind of zeal they exhibited at Crystal Beach.

editor@niagaranow.com

Ryerson Park beach water needs to be tested

Dear editor:

Another hot summer — and many people are swimming at our local beaches in NOTL.

But a word of warning: while the water at Queen's Royal Park is analyzed by the Region of Niagara to ensure it is safe for swimming, the water at Ryerson Park is not tested and many people using this popular Chautauqua beach are unaware of this.

Case in point: while out for a walk on July 30, I passed by Queen's Royal beach and noted there was no one in the water. Returning home, I passed by Ryerson Park beach, where there were several people swimming in Lake Ontario.

Is Ryerson Park that much more popular as a swimming spot? Or was it because the water had been tested at Queen's Royal and the beach had been posted, both online at the region's website and in the park, as unfit for swimming?

Was it safe to swim at Ryerson Park beach on July 30 if the water quality was deemed unsafe at Queen's Royal? Something must be done to ensure that the water at Ryerson Park is also tested—or what's the point of doing any testing at all?

It's worth noting Queen's Royal Beach failed water quality tests 14 per cent of the time in July and 18 per cent in June, accord-



Ryerson Park beach was a busy spot over the Civic Holiday weekend. SUBMITTED PHOTO/RUTH DENYER

ing to theswimguide.org, a Canadian-based online app that monitors water quality testing.

The Chautauqua Residents Association has been working for the past several years to have water testing at Ryerson Park reinstated by the region, even taking pictures of the numbers of people swimming at our beach and submitting these to regional staff as evidence of the increased usage.

The recent report showing high E.coli levels at both Queen's Royal Park and Two Mile Creek was alarming to us. Ryerson Park is situated in the middle of both sites.

Add in the unfinished state of the new sewage treatment plant, the amount of new building activity in Old Town, our proximity to the at-capacity sewage lagoons and the high water levels this year, and we

believe we are justified in our concern about the water quality at Ryerson Park.

It should be regional policy to test beaches where people are known to swim—period—not just those that are bigger or busier relative to another. If no one looks at actual numbers of swimmers but only the ranking of one beach compared to another, then there is no possibility of expanding beach testing.

And given the growth of not only Niagara Region, but the whole GTA, the popularity of our Niagara beaches will continue to grow. Yes, we understand there are limited funds, but with the amount of growth across the region, tax revenues have increased — and given the increasing numbers at local beaches, the amount spent on water testing should also increase.

There is no doubt that

Ryerson Park has gone from a quiet neighbourhood park to a destination for those looking to escape the summer heat and enjoy the water. Just ask any resident of Chautauqua.

Some tourists pitch tents, others bring picnics, barbecues and lawn chairs to set up for the day. Many more people, locals and tourists, now swim at the beach in our neighbourhood.

It should be a simple undertaking to sample Ryerson Park water as it is our understanding that a municipal employee collects the water sample at Queen's Royal Park to send to the region for testing.

However, the region remains adamantly opposed to this, stating that our park is too small and there are not enough people who swim there, that they have limited resources and they are choosing to focus on the bigger, more crowded beaches where they will test more often.

Our position is that this is not a well thought-out policy, especially in light of the town's report on the E.coli levels at Queen's Royal Park and Two Mile Creek.

We believe that water quality testing should be reinstated at Ryerson Park now.

John Gleddie
 President
 Chautauqua Residents Association

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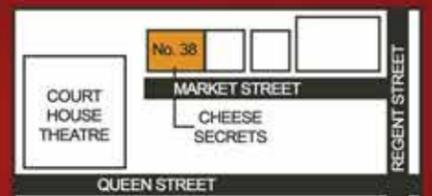
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OPINION



From left, Dave and Bob Rogerson, Flying Farmer Fred Bruinsma, Sandi Johnston, Audrey Baskin, Carol Morningstar and Michelle McKinnon. SUBMITTED PHOTO/J. RICHARD WRIGHT

NOTL liver recipient urges everyone to 'be a donor'

J. Richard Wright
Special to The Lake Report

When my wife, Sandi Johnston, was told by doctors that she had an autoimmune idiopathic liver disease and without a transplant her death was imminent, she confesses feeling disbelief.

But as a veteran charge nurse in Canada's busiest emergency room at Toronto East General Hospital, she knew full well that bad things happen to good people.

"That was more than 20 years ago," she says, "and because someone chose to register as an organ donor, my life was saved."

In fact, Sandi was a "split liver" transplant; she received the right lobe and a child at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children received the left lobe from the same donor.

"When you get the call saying they have a liver for you, it's a bitter-sweet moment," she adds. "You have a chance to live but you know some other family has just lost their loved one."

Like many other transplant recipients, she volunteers to help promote Trillium's Gift of Life program. So, when invited to speak at a recent donor awareness

event for the Life Donation Awareness Association of Niagara (LDAA), and sponsored by the Ontario Flying Farmers organization, she happily agreed.

More than 35 people attended the gathering at the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport in Welland, with many flying in from around the province on their private aircraft. The event was both informative and extremely touching as people told how their lives, or lives of loved ones, had been saved by the generosity and caring of others.

After a lunch put on by local volunteers, Bob Rogerson, a double-lung recipient, related how he and his twin brother Dave both suffered from cystic fibrosis. As the disease progressed

in severity, a lung transplant was needed to save Bob's life. Dave's disease followed a similar path and he received a double-lung transplant as well.

The next speaker was Sandi, who shared her experience of a 14-hour operation and some setbacks until she emerged healthy again.

"We are the lucky ones up here," she reminded attendees. "There are currently 4,500 Canadians needing a life-saving transplant with someone dying every 30 hours. The good news is that in Ontario alone, 388 lives were saved in the last year because of donors."

Audrey Baskin, also a liver transplant recipient, spoke of the incredible kindness of her best friend who, in 2014, donated 68 per cent of her liver in a

"live" liver transplant. Over time, her friend's liver would regrow to all but one per cent of its original size.

Michelle McKinnon told how she was prepped to donate a kidney to her 17-year-old son David when he unexpectedly died. With her pre-op testing done, McKinnon chose to honour David's memory by donating one of her kidneys to a three-year old stranger so the boy's parents would be spared the heartbreak she experienced.

Finally, Carol Morningstar told how her daughter Andrea, although suffering from an idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy condition, was determined to live a "normal" life with an artificial heart prior to her successful transplant in 2010.

Morningstar and a friend chose to spread the word on the critical need for donors by forming the Life Donation Awareness Association and sharing information around Niagara. They do an average of eight to 10 information events each year.

"Organ donor cards are no longer valid so people need to register at beadonor.ca," says Sandi. "Also, talk to your family about your decision. A single donor can save up to eight lives and improve the lives of up to 75 other people."

* J. Richard Wright and Sandi Johnston live in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Youthful **illegal** crossings of the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge



The Queenston-Lewiston Bridge circa 1961. SUPPLIED

Dear editor:
Thank you for a very good story about the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge by Linda Fritz ("Crossing the bridge used to be much simpler," Aug. 1).
The story mentioned how some people were known to make unconventional crossings to the United States, sometimes swimming across the river or climbing across the under-structure of the bridge.

Just to let you know, in my younger days, I illegally walked across the bridge on at least three occasions.

First, I walked through one of the two main girders under the bridge and at least once or twice I walked on a catwalk that was under the middle of the bridge.

The catwalk floor was made of heavy gauge wire, like a chain-link fence,

so when you looked down, the river was directly below and it looked like a thousand miles down.

On two other occasions, a friend and myself slid someone's row boat into the water and in the dark

rowed across the river, went up the steep bank on the American side and went into a bar.

We rowed back and put the boat back where we found it. This would have been around 1959. The

enclosed picture shows the new Queenston-Lewiston Bridge while it was under construction.

This picture would be from around 1961, I believe.

Jim Smith
NOTL

Police crack down on beach tent but ignore law breakers in NOTL ... **Seriously?**

Dear editor:
I want to address an article that I read in the St. Catharines Standard.

It was about a NOTL woman named Courtney Jackson and her family who were removed from a beach in Fort Erie because they set up a tent to provide shade for her son.

I understand that it's a different town, and as such,

bylaws may be handled differently. However, the Niagara Regional Police manage the entire region.

Why is it that here in NOTL numerous laws have been broken and brushed under the rug, yet a simple rule set for Crystal Beach requires immediate action?

There are people texting and driving while following carriages being let off

with warnings. There are people trespassing on private property being let off with warnings.

This family was removed within 40 minutes of erecting a tent, yet there are young women being followed, feeling unsafe and looking to make police reports who are left waiting for hours on end.

This just doesn't seem

right to me.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but are the police not here to serve (the public) and protect (citizens)? Should that not go for everyone, in all cases?

"Unity Loyalty Responsibility" is the Niagara Regional Police motto. If they're not helping us to feel safe, who will?

Jennifer Jones-Butski
NOTL

Water flowing in ditch indication of **drainage problems**



Dear editor:

This photo is clear evidence that One Mile Creek which runs behind and beside Randwood is in fact part of a flood plain which the owner contests.

Plans to build an underground parking lot for the proposed hotel could be problematic.

Sally Miller
NOTL

Thanks to the man who found my wallet, then found me

Dear editor:

I would like to offer a huge thank you to the gentleman who very kindly returned my ID (which included my credit card) last week in Sweets & Swirls cafe at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre.

I had forgotten it on the counter. You walked around the room asking for Linda and just handed it to me.

I didn't thank you properly as it happened so fast and you were quickly gone.

It's wonderful to know there are such kind and honest people here in NOTL.

Thank you, sir!

Lynda Collet
NOTL



SORE should buy Randwood

Dear editor:

I have just a simple question.

If this group called SORE (Save Our Randwood Estate) wants to keep Randwood as-is, why don't they buy it?

Put up or shut up.

Leo Visser
NOTL



We welcome your letters

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.

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Town voices opposition to Four Cities Niagara report

Councillors say Four Cities model could hurt individuality of small communities like NOTL

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors want nothing to do with the controversial Four Cities Niagara report, which proposes eliminating Niagara Region and merging 12 municipalities into four single-tier cities.

NOTL has many unique qualities such as specialty croplands and the town's significance in Canada's history, said Lord Mayor Betty Disero, and the four-city model will not benefit the town in any way.

"I would prefer the ongoing, two-tier model, but with some adjustments," Disero said. "I don't believe joining us up with Niagara Falls and Fort Erie is the answer for Niagara-on-the-Lake. We have the resources and enough quality of service here that we don't need to get joined up."

Local planning issues should stay local, she said, asking why would somebody from Wainfleet, for example, be interested in what's going on in NOTL.

"There does need to be a collective view and vision of the region but I think local planning matters belong in local planning hands," Disero told The Lake Report.

The Ontario government is in the midst of reviewing the province's eight regional municipalities and Simcoe County – and most observers expect the process will lead to several amalgamations.

If a four-city model is adopted, NOTL representatives "will have no say in a

bigger picture," said Coun. Gary Burroughs, adding the town will be used as a way to earn income for bigger cities.

"I think we need to be talking about it. Now, it's probably too late," Burroughs said explaining the public consultation period closed in May.

"I'm very upset about it. Small communities, not just ours, but throughout the region are going to be hurt very badly by this," Burroughs said in a phone interview.

The government has received several proposals, including one-city and multi-city models.

The Four Cities Niagara report was produced by Nicholas Tibollo with contributions from the so-called the Four Cities Niagara group consisting of business owners, government administrators and politicians. Among those who have endorsed the report are Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati, Joel Noden of HOCO Entertainment and Resorts, former regional councillor Bart Maves, the Old Firehall owner Chris Rigas and more.

The group is not a formal committee but just a "loose collection" of like-minded people, said Tibollo.

There is also a website and a Twitter account dedicated to promoting the report, which was submitted to the province in May.

The report, which was privately funded, is meant to "spark general discussion," said Tibollo, who is a principal researcher at North Milestone Research



Chris Rigas, owner of The Old Firehall restaurant, is one of the supporters of the report. JESSICA MAXWELL

and Communications and a former assistant on the campaign of Chuck McShane who ran for the Progressive Conservatives in the Niagara Falls riding in 2018.

"The report was not meant to be an exhaustive research paper," Tibollo told The Lake Report. "It was just meant to be a suggestion to the province. They asked – we provided an answer."

The report proposes ending the status quo by dissolving 12 lower-tier municipalities in Niagara Region and creating four cities – Niagara Falls, Welland, West Niagara and St. Catharines.

According to the report, Niagara Falls would consist of Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and NOTL.

Welland would be comprised of Port Colborne, Welland and Thorold.

West Niagara would include Wainfleet, Pelham, Lincoln, West Lincoln and Grimsby, while St. Catharines would remain whole.

If the proposed model is approved, the number of elected officials across the region would go to 30 full-time representatives from 126. Half of the current elected officials are part-time, the report said. Due to its population, NOTL would have only one elected official representing the town.

Coun. Clare Cameron said the report should have been released prior to May, during the consultation

period, when the public had a chance to provide input.

"Right now, it's more of a public relations exercise, I think, which also makes me challenge its value," she told The Lake Report. She noted there's also no mention of the word "agriculture" in relation to NOTL in the report.

"It also makes very, very large claims about the amount of millions of dollars they expect to save for public taxpayers. That's a big promise to make," Cameron said. "And I'm concerned they would be trying to garner goodwill from the public and would not have to be accountable for actually making those promises."

Coun. Erwin Wiens said he supports lord mayor's viewpoint and, as NOTL is "such a unique town," the biggest concern he has is making sure NOTL has a voice at a council moving forward.

When 11 area municipalities were merged to form one city of Ottawa in 2001, there were no cost savings, said Coun. Allan Bisback who lived in the city of Kanata at the time.

"Our services deteriorated. We couldn't get access to our councillor because the councillor was busy, had a larger territory, and you just couldn't get a response," he said.

He questioned the objective of the Four Cities report, saying if the goal is to save money, the report

should look at the bigger expenditures, which are not local councillors but rather "sit in the huge budgets" such as water, sewage, policing and fire services.

The proposal is "a bad idea," said Coun. Norm Arsenault, adding it will not save saving tax dollars nor will it help NOTL farmers. He said he's not against "cleaning up some services" as there is a lot of "duplication" between the region and the municipalities but added the government is "better at the local level."

"I don't agree with these large cities. It just eliminates the hands-on at the local level," he told The Lake Report. "It's a little bit undemocratic."

Coun. John Wiens said he hasn't studied the report yet and Coun. Stuart McCormack declined to comment. Coun. Wendy Chero-pita couldn't be reached for comment by deadline.

The report didn't come "out of the blue" and the group has no agenda, Rigas said.

"The agenda is good governance. Accomplishing the goals of the province because we know they want to do something," he said. "We can accomplish that, satisfy their goals and still maintain control over that."

He said the region is an "over-bloated bureaucracy."

With one big city, officials won't be accountable, Rigas said, adding he believes one

NOTL councillor would be able to handle all the resident issues.

"The councillors aren't necessarily responsible for every single little issue. They're there to make bigger decisions," he said.

With the four-city model, what will be somewhat beneficial to NOTL is that Niagara Falls would be sharing its revenue, much of which comes from the casino industry, with NOTL and Fort Erie, said Prof. David Siegel, a Brock University expert in municipal governance.

If there was a complete one-city amalgamation, Niagara Falls would have to share the money with 12 other municipalities in the region, Siegel said.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake would be the smallest of three municipalities so we'll have less representation than the other two," Siegel said in a phone interview.

Niagara Region provides major services, such as policing, water and sewage, social and public health services, Siegel said.

"I think the person who wrote this doesn't understand the nature and operation of regional government," he said in a phone interview. "Whoever wants to come up with the idea of abolishing the region has to come up with some other plan to deliver those major services. And I didn't see a serious attempt to explain how those services are going to be delivered."


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The Great **NOTL** Summer Walkabout

Trekking down the Heritage Trail

Welcome to the latest episode of the Great NOTL Summer Walkabout, a summer-long series of stories that will take you to all corners of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Our reporters will trek around the community to meet residents and visitors, attend events, visit area landmarks and tell stories about what they find. Enjoy the Walkabout.

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The four-way stop at King and John streets bustles with bike tours, horse-drawn carriages and hordes of wanderers, locals and tourists alike.

Clearly marked on the corner adjacent to Pillar and Post, signs herald the start of the Upper Canada Heritage Trail, telling the story of a railroad constructed in 1854, one of the first in province to use steam locomotives.

This is the gateway to a historic oasis, tucked away in Old Town. The trail stretches 10 kilometres from King and John to York Road. Though it has fallen into disrepair over the years, the town's Upper Canada Heritage Trail committee has launched a major fundraising campaign to begin restoring it.

Early Saturday afternoon of the Civic Holiday weekend, the intersection is abuzz with activity. But the footpath is tranquil and quiet, in stark contrast to the lively street. Most of the trail is still open to the public and the worn path

is proof of its frequent use by hikers, dog walkers and cyclists.

This day, for about two-and-a-half hours, I am the lone venturer.

The first leg of the route, which pops out at East and West Line Road, is shaded, still and cool. The hot sun barely penetrates the tree canopy. Birds sing as squirrels and chipmunks rustle through the trees, but few other sounds break through nature's stillness.

Farther down the first leg of the trail, the far-off buzz of power tools and lawn mowers from nearby homes intrude on the peacefulness. Through trees, weeds and wildflowers, the path peeks into backyards and gardens of homes and B&Bs. Strolling the trail offers a quick glance into the lives of NOTL natives.

After crossing East and West Line Road, the Heritage Trail breaks from the "secret garden" ambience and opens to behind-the-scenes vantage points of the town's farms and wineries. Continuing up Concession 1 for most of the remaining hike, it's



A series of photos taken along the Heritage Trail Saturday. BRITTANY CARTER

clear why the trail has little traffic during Saturday's nearly 30C heat.

The coverage provided by the tree canopy disappears, making way for fields of fruit trees, farms and grape vines. The sun is unrelenting, beaming down as the trail continues along the 80 km/h road. Aside from guided bike tours, speedy road bikers and sports cars whizzing past, the footpath which runs parallel to the road, sees little in the way of actual feet.

Trekking alongside

working farms, hikers venturing this far along the trail could snag a peach from a tree or grapes off a vine.

As it cuts through town, the trail becomes so secluded, it's unclear if this route is even part of the trail. But rest assured, old signs deeming the path a part of the Upper Canada Heritage Trail, (once) maintained by the Upper Canada Equestrian Association, dispell any misgivings.

The trail cuts off where Concession 1 ends and signs declare "The Trail is

Closed: No Trespassing."

Pushing past, the path continues up a steep, wooded "unassumed road" for a 10- to 20-minute hike, until finally popping out at the side of York Road, about half a kilometre from Queenston Heights.

The 10-kilometre path offers a behind-the-scenes view of Niagara-on-the-Lake: from elegant homes, gardens and carefully manicured lawns to farmers, friendly migrant workers and rural road warriors.

Eventually, the Heritage Trail will be clearly

marked, paved and maintained in all the right places. For now, apart from the initial leg up to East and West Line Road, much of the trail is a walk at-your-own-risk endeavour.

Eventually, there will be families and tourists and locals hiking the historical railway path from King and John to the somewhat off-the-grid terminus at York Road.

But on this Saturday afternoon, the tranquil trail is a place of solitude and peace, its path trod only by one lone venturer.



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Irish scouts visit NOTL after world jamboree

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Irish scouts made NOTL their home for four days as they took to the Commons to unwind after a 12-day jamboree in West Virginia, and one scout took notice of the large number of locals with Irish heritage.

Conor, a 16-year-old scout from Ireland, said aside from taking immediate notice of the straight roadways and manicured sidewalks, which differ immensely from the winding roads he's accustomed to back home, he was surprised by the number of residents claiming family ties in Ireland.

"Everyone who came up to us was sort of like, 'Oh yea, my great-granny, twice removed, came over during the famine.' So, they all had Irish heritage," he said.

The world shrinks when countries come together, and the 24th World Scout Jamboree, which hosted 45,000 scouts from 150 countries in West Virginia, was no exception. Irish scouts fully embraced the jamboree's theme, "Unlock a New World," and carried that idea with them to NOTL, said James Murphy, Scouting Ireland's head of communications.

The theme encourages young scouts to



Emma stuck in a tent during tear down Tuesday morning. BRITTANY CARTER

broaden their thinking on climate change, sustainable development and gender inequality.

Taking sustainability a step further, Scouting Ireland specifically adopted another theme, "Going Green," for this year's excursion. The motto had a double meaning, Murphy said. The scouts "went green" in their environmental awareness, as well as in their national pride.

"We go green in two ways. In the environmental way and also to make the site green in terms of the Irish, and make sure everyone knows us," Murphy said.

The scouts spread Irish

pride throughout the jamboree, leaving unique souvenirs in their wake.

"The neckerchief that everyone is wearing, or 'necker,' is one of the most sought after in the world, just because of its design and uniqueness," he said.

The Irish scouts are a relatively small group compared to others around the world, Murphy said, so to get one of their "necker" is quite rare. "A lot of the kids have been flat out swapping them."

Conor said going green is just natural at this point and the whole troop just knows not to leave rubbish behind.

"I think everyone, instinctively, if you see something

on the ground, we just pick it up, without really thinking about it," he said.

The scouts arrived at the Commons late Friday night, setting up half the camp in the middle of the night. By Saturday afternoon, the remaining tents were erected, and scouts ventured off for hikes, scooter tours and general exploration, said Murphy.

The group stayed in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where the World Scouting Jamboree was held in 1955.

The next world event will be held in Ireland, Murphy said. It will be a smaller scale event for the older scouts.

Ireland's scouts could have gone straight home after their West Virginia adventures, but he said they planned the quick stay in NOTL to unwind.

"Because if we just fly home, there's this thing called the Jamboree Blues, where you don't really get closure, you don't get a full wind-down of the event," he said.

After staying in town for a few days, the friendliness and kindness of the locals made a lasting impression on Murphy. He said he'd like to retire here.

"There's a saying, 'We came as scouts and we left as friends.'"

Peach Picker's Picnic returns

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Peaches don't just fall off the trees and into our fruit stands, which is why the Peach Picker's Picnic this Sunday aims to celebrate the hard work and dedication of the Caribbean and Mexican workers who make the peach harvests possible.

From 5:30 to 9 p.m. on Aug. 11, following the weekend's Peach Festival, offshore workers are invited for an evening of live music, bike repairs and free meals at The Market at Garrison Village on Niagara Stone Road.

The celebration is open to all members of the community. Niagara Workers Welcome, the group behind the appreciation celebration, encourages community members to show their gratitude by attending the event and getting to know the workers, as well as donating money to help cover the costs of the free meals.

A \$10 donation will cover one "hearty meal" for a farm worker. Donations can be made via etransfer to niagaraworkerswelcome@gmail.com, with the password welcome.



The band plays at the 2018 picnic. FILE/RICHARD HARLEY



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<p>11</p> <p>St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - St. Vincent De Paul Roman Catholic Church</p> <p>Traditional Sausage Making - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Canadian Food and Wine Institute at Niagara College</p> <p>Kinsmen Car Show - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Kinsmen Scout Hall, King and Mary Street</p> <p>Peach Pickers Picnic - 5 p.m. - 111 Garrison Village Drive</p> <p>Shades of Summer Dinner - 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Queen Street, Heritage District</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Monday Crafters: Clay Sculpting - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Therapy Tails with Jasper - 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p>	<p>13</p> <p>NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sanctioned ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Public Information Centre: NOTL Irrigation System Strategy - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre (Simpson Room)</p>	<p>Maker Club: Woodworking Workshop - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Fresh from the Garden - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>NOTL SupperMarket - 9 p.m. - The Village</p>
<p>18</p> <p>Fife & Drum Muster & Soldiers' Field Day - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George</p> <p>Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park</p> <p>The Canadian Table Culinary Festival - 3 p.m. - Outlet Mall</p> <p>Annual Garden Party Fundraiser - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Community Garden</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Outdoor Yoga in the Courtyard - 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p> <p>Therapy Tails with Jasper - 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p>	<p>20</p> <p>NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Club Code - Noon to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sanctioned ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>Simpson's Seniors' - 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. - Simpson's Community Centre</p> <p>German Conversation - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Simpson's Community Centre</p> <p>Maker Club: Polymers System - 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Simpson's Public Library</p> <p>NOTL SupperMarket - 9 p.m. - The Village</p>

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	8 Maker Club: Wooden Village Woodworking Workshop - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Clare's Bike Night - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Clare's Harley-Davidson Music Niagara's Around Bach: Ilya Poletaev, piano with Emma Meinrenken, violin - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George	9 Science Fun Fridays: Ice Cream in a Bag - Noon to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Friday Flix: Monsters University - 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Music Niagara's Easy Fridays: My Sweet Patootie - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - The Legion	10 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Made It: Artisan Market - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Fort George Annual Boot Drive - 10 a.m. - Queen and Picton, Queen and Mississagua Streets intersections 29th Annual Peach Celebration on Queen Street - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen Street Music Niagara's Season Finale: All Beethoven - 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church
11 Wooden Village Workshop - 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Open House - Noon to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Indigenous Fashion REVOLUTION - 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: Silver Linings Playbook - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George Looking Back, Forging Forward: Trench Art & Ronald Boaks (Opening Reception) - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	14 Wooden Village Workshop - 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Open House - Noon to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Indigenous Fashion REVOLUTION - 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: Silver Linings Playbook - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George Looking Back, Forging Forward: Trench Art & Ronald Boaks (Opening Reception) - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	15 Special Council Meeting - 4 p.m. - Council Chambers Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Indigenous Fashion REVOLUTION - 7:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: Silver Linings Playbook - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George Looking Back, Forging Forward: Trench Art & Ronald Boaks (Opening Reception) - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	16 Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Friday Flix: Monsters University - 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library YDTP Summer Camp Program: Final Performance - 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Yellow Door Theatre Project The Canadian Table Culinary Festival - 3 p.m. - Outlet Mall
17 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Shred.It NOTL Community Palliative Care - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union, Virgil 3rd Annual Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Heritage Woods Golf Course Fire & Drum Muster & Soldiers' Field Day - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George Party in the Vineyard: Wine Country Fare - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery	18 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Shred.It NOTL Community Palliative Care - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union, Virgil 3rd Annual Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Heritage Woods Golf Course Fire & Drum Muster & Soldiers' Field Day - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George Party in the Vineyard: Wine Country Fare - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery	19 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Shred.It NOTL Community Palliative Care - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union, Virgil 3rd Annual Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Heritage Woods Golf Course Fire & Drum Muster & Soldiers' Field Day - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George Party in the Vineyard: Wine Country Fare - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery	20 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Shred.It NOTL Community Palliative Care - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union, Virgil 3rd Annual Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Heritage Woods Golf Course Fire & Drum Muster & Soldiers' Field Day - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Fort George Party in the Vineyard: Wine Country Fare - 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Peller Estates Winery
21 Senior Day - 8:30 a.m. - Son's Pharmacy Senior Group Meeting - 10 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Senior Clay Solar Project - 11 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Open House - 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	22 Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre End of Summer Party - 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Clare's Bike Night - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Clare's Harley-Davidson Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: Bohemian Rhapsody - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant	23 Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Sports Wall of Fame Ceremony - 6 p.m. - Meridian Credit Union Arena Designer Handbag Bingo - 6:30 p.m. - Château des Charmes Proud Mary: The CCR Experience - 7:30 p.m. - Corks Winebar & Eatery	24 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Echoes of Niagara's Past: A Military Timeline Event - 11 a.m. - Fort George Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park

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Made It Artisan Market invades Fort George

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report



A cannon at Fort George. FILE PHOTO/BRITTANY CARTER

The Made It Artisan Market at Fort George this Saturday is a community event in every sense of the word.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., there will be free activities for children and adults, and opportunities to raise money for charity, all in the vein of a typical artisan hand-made market – which will invade Fort George for the afternoon. The event also has free parking and admission.

The NOTL Public Library will host the kid's area from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., featuring a "make and take" craft station.

Bollywood dancing workshops, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., are free and open to everyone. Expert dancers

and novice wannabes can participate in the teachings of Shaw's Krystal Kiran, singer, dancer, arts educator and owner of House of Kiran clothing, which will be on sale during the event.

The dunk tank puts local comedian Joe Pillitteri up for sacrifice. From noon, Pillitteri will offer himself as target to raise money for the Terry Fox Foundation, of which he is a longtime supporter. Each year he in-

creases his target fundraising goal from the previous year.

This year, with cousin Mike Pillitteri, under the team name, "Team Pillsy," the two aim to raise \$100,000.

Food trucks will also be on site throughout the afternoon. The market is hosted by Turquoise Tent Events, and the event page promises "Summer fun for all the family."

Heritage festival raises \$2,000 for NOTL museum

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report



Laurel Minnes and Aaron Berger during a theatrical performance celebrating St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church's 225th anniversary. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

"The Past is Present" Heritage Festival at the NOTL museum raised more than \$2,000 for museum programs on Monday.

With free admission, visitors could watch a rug hooking demonstration by members of the St. Catharines Rug Hooking Guild, talk to blacksmith Neil Blythin and learn about antique firearms. Members of the Niagara Woodcarvers Association and Niagara Handweavers and Spinners Guild also were at the festival.

Cassandra Swan and Natalie Pikula of the Niagara Old Tyme Fiddlers Association provided live music.

The museum raised over \$2,000 through its bake and treasures sales, and all proceeds will go toward supporting the museum programs.

"It's just a good way to bring people off Queen Street and come see the museum and bring things

outside the museum," said Amy Klassen, of the Niagara Historical Society & Museum. "A lot of people think museums are just places with old stuff inside so the (festival) brings it alive."

As St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church is celebrating its 225th anniversary this year, the museum developed a short theatrical performance about the church's history.

The play, "A Kilt, A Kirk and A Strawberry," was written and directed by Barbara Worthy with Aaron Berger, Edwin Conroy Jr. and Laurel Minnes starring in it. The funding for the play, \$7,875, was received

through the regional Niagara Investment in Culture program.

The first performance of the play was during the heritage festival.

"It's a big milestone for the community and we wanted to talk about the importance of the church in the community and how churches were used by the communities historically," Klassen said.

The play will be staged again on Friday, Sept. 13, at 4 p.m. at St. Andrew's Church. The next shows will be on Wed., Sept. 18, at 7 p.m. at the NOTL public library and on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at 2 p.m. at St. Andrew's Church.

Three NOTL wineries among Top 10 in Ontario

The Lake Report

Three Niagara-on-the-Lake wineries were named among the Top 10 Ontario wineries at 2019 the WineAlign National Wine Awards of Canada.

Trius Winery, Peller Estates Winery and Marynissen Estates Winery made it into the Top 10 Ontario category. Peller and Trius wineries were also named among the Top 25 Wineries in Canada. The results for these categories were announced on Aug. 1 and 2.

With 1,815 entries from 259 wineries, the WineAlign Nationals is the largest wine awards competition in the country.

In total, Trius Winery won one platinum, five silver and three bronze medals.

Peller Estates Winery took home two gold, four silver and one bronze medals while Marynissen Estates Winery received two gold, two silver and two bronze medals.

The Niagara College Teaching Winery has also won a gold, three silver and three bronze medals.

Here is a list of NOTL medal-winning wines:

Platinum Sparkling

Two Sisters 2016 Blanc de Franc

Platinum White

Trius 2017 Showcase Clean Slate Sauvignon Blanc Wild Ferment

Gold Red

Stratus 2014 Syrah

Stratus 2016 Red

Marynissen 2015 Heritage Collection Red

Marynissen Platinum Series 2015 Pinot Noir

Gold White

Jackson-Triggs Niagara Estate 2017 Grand Reserve Chardonnay

Peller Estates 2017 Andrew Peller Signature Series Riesling

Peller Estates 2018 Private Reserve Sauvignon Blanc

Gold Sparkling

Niagara College Teaching Winery 2014 Balance Blanc de Blanc Brut

Gold Icewine

Inniskillin Niagara Estate 2017 Vidal Icewine

Inniskillin Niagara Estate 2017 Cabernet Franc Icewine

Inniskillin Okanagan Estate Series 2017 Riesling Icewine

Peller Estates 2017 Andrew Peller Signature Series Riesling Icewine

Reif Estate 2017 Grand Reserve Vidal Icewine

Silver Red

Creekside 2016 Broken Press Syrah Reserve

Creekside 2016 Syrah Iconoclast

Creekside 2017 Syrah

Jackson-Triggs Niagara Estate 2016 Grand Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Marynissen 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon

Marynissen 2017 Cabernet Franc

Niagara College Teaching Winery 2017 Marmitons Gastronomy Pinot Noir

Peller Estates 2016 Andrew Peller Signature Series Cabernet Franc

Peller Estates 2017 Private Reserve Cabernet Franc

Peller Estates 2017 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Peller Estates 2017 Private Reserve Meritage

Stratus 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon

Strewn 2015 Terroir Cabernet Sauvignon

Silver White

Inniskillin Niagara Estate 2017 Chardonnay

Niagara College Teaching Winery 2017 Marmitons Gastronomy Chardonnay Ziraldo

Queenston Mile 2017 Mile White

Southbrook 2017 Heather's Home Vineyard Riesling

Southbrook 2017 Organic Triomphe Chardonnay

Stratus 2016 Botrytis Affected Sémillon

Stratus 2016 Chardonnay Unfiltered & Bottled with Lees

Strewn 2017 Terroir Pinot Blanc Strewn Vineyard

Trius 2017 Showcase Riesling Ghost Creek Vineyard

Silver Sparkling

Queenston Mile 2015 Blanc De Noir

Trius N/V Showcase Blanc de Blancs

Silver Rosé

Trius 2018 Rosé

Silver Icewine

Inniskillin Niagara Estate 2017 Gold Vidal Icewine

Inniskillin Niagara Estate 2017 Riesling Icewine

Niagara College Teaching Winery 2017 Dean's List Prodigy Icewine

Peller Estates 2017 Andrew Peller Signature Series Oak Aged Vidal Blanc Icewine

Peller Estates 2017 Andrew Peller Signature Series Vidal Blanc Icewine

Trius 2017 Showcase Vidal Icewine



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Missing NOTL woman inspires drone search team Wings of Mercy

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

NOTL's Ashley Simpson, "the girl with the pink suitcase," who disappeared in 2016, inspired the creation of a software program to analyze drone images of searches for missing people.

After Ashley vanished, Alberta's Shane Michaels leapt into action to assist the search for her and others.

That has grown into Wings of Mercy, a volunteer service enlisting the help of drone pilots all over the world to search remote areas for any signs of missing persons and sending any useful images to the authorities.

"Search and rescue is kind of an exciting thing for a lot of people because it's right now, you're trying to go out and save a two-year-old kid, and that's great," Michaels

said in an interview.

"But there's not a lot of people interested in search and recovery – where you're trying to go out and bring some closure to the families," Michaels said, which is why he volunteers his time to scan remote areas for anything vital.

He said he's had an interest in missing persons cases since the early 2000s, but Ashley's disappearance pushed him to create a program to analyze the drone footage being sent to his website, which called attention to missing persons cases. He's since shut down that site to make way for Wings of Mercy.

Ashley Simpson was born and raised in St. Catharines, and the Simpson family was living in Niagara-on-the-Lake when she went missing.

Ashley's mother, Cindy Simpson, said her daughter, 32, travelled to B.C. for camp and was coming home

when she vanished. Her disappearance was reported in April 2016 and, in May of that year, the case was deemed a homicide.

"She was originally working in B.C., living here. She met a guy and went to see if she'd like to move. Ashley loved the outdoors, so the thought of the mountains (drew her to B.C.). But when she did go missing, she was coming home," Simpson said.

At this point, she said all the family can hope for is some closure.

Simpson is happy to support Wings of Mercy, which is why she said all the proceeds earned during the annual golf tournament held in Ashley's name will go toward the drone search service.

"Anyone who has a missing loved one goes through what we go through. It's not a good feeling and if we can help anyone else out, to bring closure to anyone,

ourselves included, that's one less person that has no answer," Simpson said.

"If one person gets an answer, their loved one gets found, it's all worth it."

Michaels said his website was receiving drone images and "I was looking through them and thought this was a big job – to try to find things in drone images," he said. With a career background in electronics and robotics programming, he said he created software to make the search easier.

"And Ashley's case really spurred me in that. She was really the inspiration for the software. We were looking for the girl with the pink suitcase, and we were looking through images and trying to find this pink suitcase, because it would be the most obvious things in the trees," he said.

As the organization is all volunteer, drone pilots and search teams cover any costs incurred during a



Shane Michaels, Wings of Mercy founder, with John Simpson, father of Ashley Simpson, who vanished in 2016. SUPPLIED

search, which could include hotel stays, gas and food bills. The group relies on donations to help cover some of the expenses.

Closure and a sense of peace is what Michaels is trying to provide, he said.

The third annual Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament benefiting the Wings of Mercy Drone Search Group

will be held at the Heritage Woods Golf Course on Aug. 17. The tournament runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and tickets are \$50 for one or \$75 for two. A buffet-style dinner will be served.

For more information, search for Ashley Simpson Golf Tournament on Facebook or go to the event page.

NOTL library to hold annual garden fundraiser with gourmet eats

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The fifth Annual Garden Party, which helps to support the community garden behind the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, is back.

Starting at 6 p.m., the fundraiser will run rain or shine on Sunday, Aug. 18, with about 60 people expected to attend the event.

Featuring three Vintage Inns chefs – from the Prince of Wales, Pillar and Post and Queen's Landing hotels – and a chef from Zees Grill, the event will also provide wine donated by Pondview Estate Winery and Palatine Hills Estate Winery.

There will also be a silent auction with donated items such as a golf cart, wine products, golf lessons and Shaw Festival tickets. Live music will be provided by a female duo, The Blythes.



Debbie Krause, a community engagement coordinator at NOTL public library. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

All proceeds from the fundraiser will go toward the maintenance and care of the garden. Last year, the library raised \$1,100 through the event.

"(The garden) extends our space. It's an extension of the library itself," said Debbie Krause, community engagement co-ordinator at the library. "The services we provide in the building, we also provide outside of the building. We also do a lot of programming out there."

Vegetables harvested from the community garden are also free for pick up, though the library welcomes any donations.

"(The garden) just adds to the atmosphere of the library, which we want to be very welcoming and home kind of place. And home has a garden so even if you're inside, you're looking out into your backyard ... and it's a community garden. Like everything else in this building, access is for everybody," Krause said.

NOTL Guides head to camp

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Four Niagara-on-the-Lake girls are en route to "life-changing" experiences at the provincewide LEAP camp for Girl Guides Canada at Doe Lake Camp near Huntsville this week.

Megan Gilchrist, contact guider for the 136th LEAP Patrol, said the camp builds leadership skills while introducing new experiences and activities.

"It's a chance for them to do things they wouldn't normally get to do, like a drone academy. There's axe throwing, there's a whole bunch of different out-trips that they get to go on just to explore the area," she said.

The group set off early Sunday morning for the weeklong excursion, which cost each girl about \$1,000, Gilchrist said.

Fundraising played a large role in camp preparation leading up to the trip, she



Girl Guides prepare for camp. BRITTANY CARTER

said. While each girl is required to cover 10 per cent of the cost, they are encouraged to raise money for the remaining 90 per cent.

She said the girls have worked "incredibly hard" to raise as much as possible for the trip. They brought in \$1,400 through Girl Guide cookie sales and decorated tea light holders. Various individuals and community organizations stepped in with donations totalling \$1,800.

The camp hosts up to 2,500 campers from nine to 17 years old, and adult volunteers and rangers,

from Ontario and Nunavut each year.

Gilchrist said when she was a young guide, she attended a similar camp.

"It was truly a life-changing experience," she said.

Gilchrist said a big takeaway for the girls is opening them up to a host of experiences.

"Going through something like this sort of opens up your window for what's available and what's possible, and you get to meet with girls from all over the world," she said.

"It opens up their horizons, and when they come back, they're able to show those experiences."

"They take that energy and bring it home, and then apply it to their group or to their school and to their communities, and to see other people volunteering. It really has long-term impacts on them and what they carry into adulthood," she said.



The view is absolutely breathtaking

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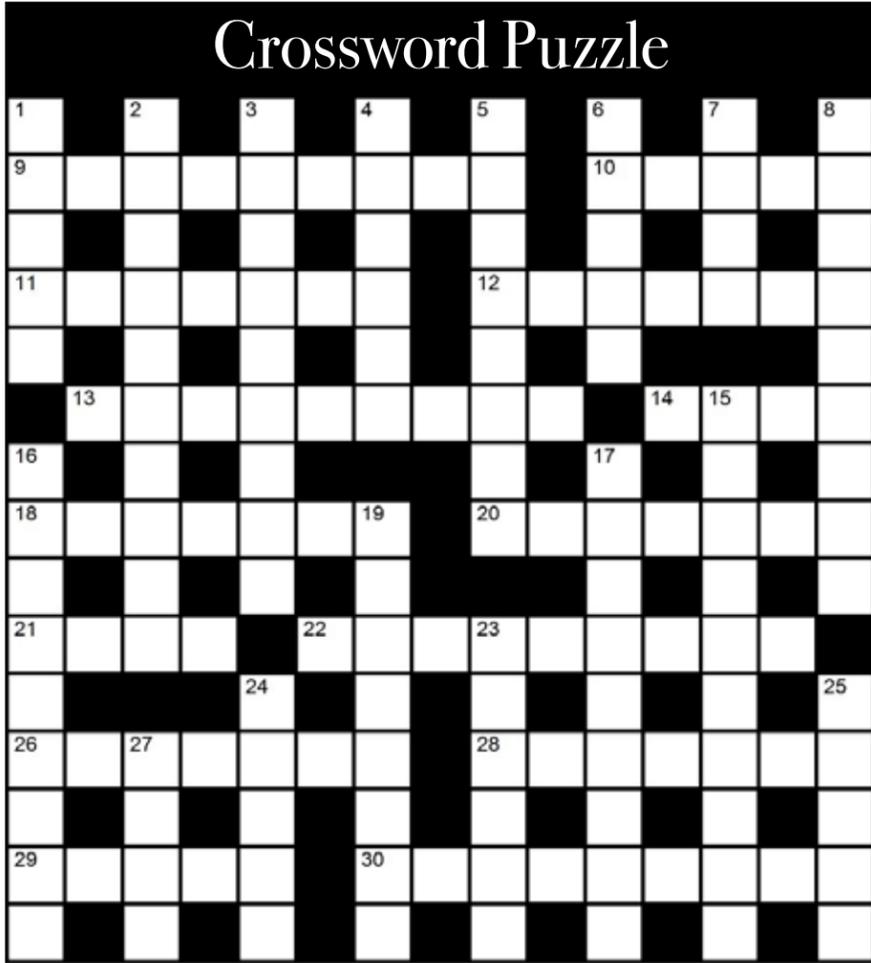
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Have some fun

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

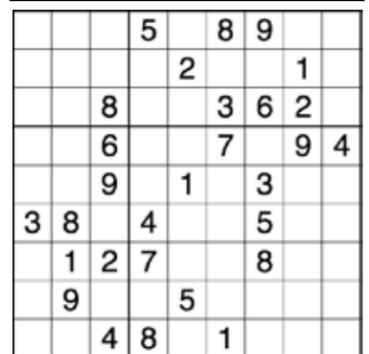
- Across**
- 9. Playwright (9)
 - 10. Moor (3,2)
 - 11. Space surrounding an altar (7)
 - 12. Quickly (7)
 - 13. Runner (9)
 - 14. Cougar (4)
 - 18. Distinct sort or kind (7)
 - 20. Surgical knife (7)
 - 21. A great deal (4)
 - 22. Herald (9)
 - 26. Hedge (7)
 - 28. Books of maps (7)
 - 29. Young hooter (5)
 - 30. Abbreviated (9)
- Down**
- 1. Decree (5)
 - 2. Executives (10)
 - 3. Biting (9)
 - 4. Fiddle (6)
 - 5. Old liners (8)
 - 6. The Roman Empire's home country (5)
 - 7. Large mass of floating ice (4)
 - 8. As thumbs are (9)
 - 15. Disagreeable (10)
 - 16. Psalter (5,4)
 - 17. Moon (9)
 - 19. Astonishment (8)
 - 23. Lea (6)
 - 24. Threescore (5)
 - 25. Stage whisper (5)
 - 27. Depend (4)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku





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25 LORETTA DRIVE, NOTL
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15 CHARDONNAY PLACE, NOTL
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181 WALL ROAD, NOTL
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Jo-Ann Cudmore*

4 CRIMSON DRIVE, NOTL
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NOTL Golf Club prepares for **championships**



Billy Simkin. SUPPLIED

Billy Simkin
Special to The Lake Report

It's August and that means one thing to many of the 270 members of North America's oldest golf course: the club championships competition.

Imagine having the chance to have your name placed in the lobby of the Niagara-on-the-Lake clubhouse, where thousands of tourists each year gaze at the names immortalized on the wall. Many wonder "Who is this Mark Derbyshire?" who won 30 consecutive men's championships or marvel, "Wow, Martha Cruikshank won eight championships in 10 years."

Since becoming head professional in 2007, I have

really prided myself on making the event special for members. Over the years, the championship has grown from 40 competitors to as many as 78 players and we're looking to see that expand even more.

The 2019 club championships on Aug. 10 and 11 will feature a big barbecue on the Sunday afternoon along the 18th hole, where fellow members, family and people from our community can watch competitors play the tough finishing hole. And, they'll have a front row seat if a playoff is required, as has happened in several categories in recent years.

PREDICTIONS:

The women's championship is truly wide open, with many players capable of great rounds. Cruikshank is always a threat as she is a great pressure player and has the experience of her past wins. Defending champion Louise Robitaille is a strong and steady player who uses her power off the tee to set up easy approaches. This could make her a favourite to repeat.

In the Tuesday Morning Ladies League, we have seen some scores in recent weeks that suggest there may be more dark horses. Barbara Ahluwalia, who has more cumulative wins at the club than any other woman in the field, posted a

score of 84 just a few weeks ago and showed us that she truly is remarkable and could rise to the occasion. Michele Darling, Cathy Murray, Ginny Green, Patti Garriock, along with past winners Lisa Allen and Yolanda Henry, are all serious contenders. May Chang has been one of the club's most improved players over the years, starting in the D flight and working her way up to find herself among the big hitters and has a chance to improve once again.

On the men's side, what was often a two-horse race in past years has turned into a full-on "derby." Mark Derbyshire's 30 past wins always place him in the mix, but with a recent membership boom the club has seen a wave of new, very talented golfers added to the field.

Jim Panetta, defending champ and two-time winner, is never fazed and knows the course inside out. Stephen Warboys, another past winner, has incredible patience and a game that is simply brilliant. Lefty Jim McMacken has a solid game and if he gets the putter going, watch out. Joe Doria, an energetic golfer who plays very fast, could be a threat. Doria, runner-up last year, will need to adapt to

a more traditional four-hour round, so his patience could be his biggest challenge. Rob Reimer, another past champion, who hasn't played a lot lately, is always lurking close to the top of the leaderboard. Two other names to watch: Harry Huizer and Brodie Townley.

I encourage everyone to come out to watch and cheer on our competitors, enjoy the barbecue and see the trophy presentations on Sunday afternoon.

Men's league, Aug. 1: Dragan Racic had low gross with an even-par 36, took a \$40 gross skin for a birdie on #2 and was A flight winner with 24 points. Martin Vagnars won B flight with 22 points. Other winners: Closest to pin: Warren Tutton (#4 & #6), Kevin MacLean (#2), Stephen Warboys (#9). Gross skins: Don Allen. Net skins (\$118): Ken Willms, Tom Wiley. Long drive: Keith Dexter, Tutton. 50/50: Sean Simpson (\$220).

Couples league, Aug. 2: First: Cal & Marilyn Cochrane and Kevin MacLean & May Chang (31), Charlie & Suzanne Rate and Joe & Cathy Taylor (32), Dean & Lyn Sanders and Rob & Valerie Chubey (32). Closest to pin: Dean McCann, Valerie Chubey. Most honest: Larry & Joan Bourk and Bernard & Sharron Marlow.



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Pumphouse unveils art **competition winners**

Jessica Maxwell
Special to The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse was bursting with art and celebrations this weekend, as the arts centre continued to celebrate its 25th anniversary by hosting two events — the 14th Annual "Art at the Pumphouse" event and an awards ceremony for the Walker Industries Art Competition Exhibition.

The Pumphouse show saw 63 Ontario-based artists showcasing sculptures, paintings, jewelry and other hand-crafted works, while the Walker competition featured 25 artists from across Canada.



Athina McConkey paints at the Parks Canada tent.
JESSICA MAXWELL

Event co-ordinator Sandra Stokes said the Art at the Pumphouse event has seen exponential growth over the past few years.

"It's changed as things have progressed," she said. "We used to have only about 30 artists at one time. We've expanded hugely,"

said Stokes.

"It used to be quite a lot of traditional art and it seems to have grown and changed to different types of art and different type of work. We try and sort of go for the public for all different price points as well."

Expansion of artist booths across Ricardo Street last year, as well as accommodating artists indoors, were factors in allowing the event to grow from 30 to over 60 vendors, she said.

Clive Kay, who was showcasing his art at the show, said he was pleased with the number of people who showed up during the day. "(I was) impressed with the traffic. That's what artists

want. The organizers can bring the people in and then it's up to the artists to make a sale and do some business," he said.

During the event, visitors were also able to have a bit of lunch, provided by the Waterfront Bistro and Pig Out catering, as well as musical entertainment by Gerry Kowalchuk, Grant Ritchie, DJ Moose Mike.

Winners of the Walker competition were announced Sunday, with Beverly Barber taking home first place and Lorena Ziraldo winning second.

Julie Ponesse, a NOTL resident, took the People's Choice award.

She said she's thrilled to

be part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake arts community.

"Arts are not just tolerated (in NOTL), they are embraced and celebrated and supported... They are woven into the fabric of the place," Ponesse said in an interview before she knew she was the winner.

"(The Walker competition) is done fantastically, it's gotten a lot more people for our gallery, It's opened us up to a bigger audience," said Stokes.

Donald Campbell, another NOTL artist, who paints at the Pumphouse weekly, said NOTL has a "really well-established art community and the quality of this show is just excellent."



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On Stage: Shaw alumni stellar in Foster play

Mike Keenan
Special to The Lake Report

Joseph Campbell, an American professor of literature, worked in comparative mythology and religion. His most well-known work is "The Hero with a Thousand Faces." I fancy Campbell because he advised us to follow our bliss.

I think Canadian playwright Norm Foster heartily agrees with Campbell. The third work in his annual summertime trilogy just opened, another premiere – "Beside Myself" – at the Recital Hall inside the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

And, of particular interest to Niagara-on-the-Lake residents and Shaw Festival fans, is that the annual Foster Festival has been augmented by some talented Shaw Festival alumni.

"Beside Myself" is a musical, book & lyrics by

Foster, music and lyrics by Steve Thomas. I wondered if Foster could pull it off, combine his chatty humour with heart and music. No fears. Under Patricia Vanstone's smooth and capable directing, the words become fluid and the singing blends perfectly with four capable actors operating on Peter Hartwell's set, a musical trio sitting behind, composed of Steve Thomas (keyboard), Mike Allen (guitar) and Ian Copeland (drums).

The action starts off on a negative note as Paula (Gabrielle Jones) and Sam (Jonathan Whittaker) have decided to pack it in as a couple after 35 years of marriage. They divvy up their remaining treasures inside two boxes and wonder what would have happened if they'd never met. Would their dreams and ambitions come true?

From one box, Sam pulls out a "wishing stick," a long-forgotten wedding gift (from



The cast of the Foster Festival's play *Beside Myself*. SUPPLIED PHOTO

friends deemed "cheaper than homemade wine"), which magically transports them back to their college days and the opportunity to rewrite their history together. Haven't we all dreamed of that possibility?

Paula and Sam pretend to be university "liaison officers" as they try to drasti-

cally alter the pre-ordained paths of younger Paula (Breton Lalama) and younger Sam (Griffin Hewitt), determined to not allow them to make the same silly mistakes. But in this complicated process, their staleness is transformed into a sound partnership, once they learn to accept Joseph

Campbell's advice.

Congratulations to Emily Oriold, executive director of the Foster Festival, as she acquires more seasoned vets and rising stars in the cast and crew. Gabrielle Jones spent 12 seasons with the Shaw, six seasons at the Stratford Festival and five more with Drayton

Entertainment. Her co-star, Jonathan Whittaker, boasts myriad credits and they worked flawlessly together.

Youngster Breton Lalama was excellent in her Foster Festival debut, back in St. Catharines where she first began her acting career with Garden City Productions. Griffin Hewitt, from Saskatchewan, displayed a fine voice as did all the others.

The program indicated that Peter Krantz was an assistant director. He gave the finest performance I have ever seen in Shaw's "Faith Healer." If you are counting, that's Krantz, Mezon, Jones, Hartwell and Guy Bannerman (star of Foster's "The Writer") – all from Shaw. Not too shabby for St. Catharines. And don't forget Norm Foster, whom I saw sitting in the rear of the hall and as I passed, I just had to say, "Thanks for writing so many great plays."

"Beside Myself" plays until Aug. 17.

Writers' Circle: *The Gift* – Magic in The Commons

Hermine Steinberg
NOTL Writers' Circle

We've all heard that Niagara-on-the-Lake is considered one of the most haunted places in Canada but there are many more spirits here that no one ever talks about.

I met Irma, Maggie, Ellen and Beth at my Thursday afternoon yoga class. We hit it off almost immediately. Whenever we got together, time just flew by. It first started with us going to coffee after yoga.

Coffee then turned to dinner and soon we went out together regularly, sometimes with our husbands but mostly enjoying our own company. Among the many things we found we had in common was our love of dogs and started meeting Friday afternoons to walk them together.

We fell into a weekly ritual in which one of us would pick up coffees for the group – large cups not



filled to the top in order to make room for the Bailey's. We normally made our way along the trail in The Commons to the ancient boreal forest where after drinking most of our cups, we proceeded to sing and dance. It was our secret weekly revelry, which ended with us raising our cups to the setting sun, throwing back what was left of our drinks, and then quietly going home to our unsuspecting husbands.

On this particular Friday afternoon, it was

exceptionally cold and damp, with a bitter wind blowing off the lake. Maggie arrived with our usual tray of coffees but after taking my first sip, I realized there was far more Bailey's than coffee in my cup. She told us that she thought we needed the extra punch to endure the winter chill.

We knew we would be sheltered from the wind once we reached the forest so walked quickly down the tree-lined dirt path. The weather must have frightened all the other dog walkers away. There was no one else in sight. Halfway to the entrance to the forest we noticed a strange mist rising from the ground. Ellen laughed nervously as she reminded us that this is how most horror movies begin. It didn't help that the dogs seemed more excited than usual, running around the trees and barking, even howling at one point at something they seemed to

have spotted in the fields surrounding us.

The closer we got to the woods, the less solid the ground felt under our feet, turning mucky as we passed the commemorative teepee at the end of the path. The thought struck me that I was sinking into the earth, merging with the history of this ancient place.

Once out of the wind and with a belly filled with liquor, we slowed down to enjoy the beauty of the forest. The previous night we had our first snow fall of the season and the trees sparkled. We stumbled through the woods, stepping over branches of fallen trees. Beth began singing. "Do you believe in magic in a young girl's heart?"

It was an old song by the Lovin' Spoonful we belted out often. Ellen was the first to join Beth.

"How the music can free her whenever it starts,"

And then we all jumped in. "And it's magic ..."

We began running around the trees, the dogs chasing after us and barking. The cold air pinched our cheeks and mist now rising from the forest floor rolled over us. We felt young and free and far away from the outside world.

We then came upon an enormous oak tree, appearing to reflect an intense white light behind the veil of mist. We impulsively joined hands and danced around it, continuing to sing.

"I'll tell you about the magic, and it'll free your soul..."

We then heard a strange sound ... like a door creaking. I stopped in my tracks and looked over to Irma who was quieting her dogs. "Did you hear that?"

"I heard something but I'm not sure what that was," she responded.

Beth and Maggie were still holding hands, looking around and appearing to be waiting to see if the sound

would repeat.

"Horror movie. I told you guys." Ellen giggled until she heard her dog's fearful whine from behind the giant oak.

My shepherd was already by my side, sitting in protective mode, staring straight ahead at the tree.

Large double doors suddenly materialized on the trunk of the tree. They swung open to reveal a tall, strangely thin woman with long wild red hair and shimmering green eyes.

She stepped forward and floated down to the ground. Her skin was pale and glowing. She wore a long translucent gown that flowed behind her.

The woman looked at each of us in turn. We were silent. Even the dogs were now quiet. The forest was so still I could hear flakes of snow dropping to the ground. I wondered if I was drunk or had been drugged. It felt like time had stopped.

To be continued ...

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Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report



Yanick's Shack

Brian Yanick, on the far right in this 1970s picture, is seen with many friends hanging out at his family boat house, which he inherited. The boat house was converted for year-round living with a coal oil space heater. There were endless parties at Yanick's Shack, which was just one of a number of private boat houses along River Beach Drive. Brian was also a talented guitar player and singer whom I remember entertaining in the Prince of Wales Hotel.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH

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Calling all cooks!

Local recipe book planned for 2019

The Lake Report is calling on all cooks, chefs, bakers and food enthusiasts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We want your favourite family recipes, and the stories that go with them, to share with the community. Whether it's a special stew, soup, or salad; the best bread or muffins; or a decadent dessert, we'd like to hear from you!

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

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

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

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




Contemporary style is still influential

Brian Marshall
Featured



An Eichler-based Contemporary design. BRIAN MARSHALL

After the 1929 stock market crash, the business of being an architect became a tough row to hoe. Even those of significant stature, like Frank Lloyd Wright, faced a precipitous decline in their income. In Wright's case, the response was to develop an economical design specifically oriented to the needs of those with more moderate incomes. Coined Usonian houses, Wright stripped away all "unnecessary" complications, such as hips and valleys in the roofline, basements, interior trim, plaster finishes and so on.

Garages were replaced by carports and the build became a simple construct-and-assemble process of modular units installed on a geometrical grid lifted from his standardized plans. While "simple," the designs meticulously enfolded what he perceived as "gracious living" within the context of 20th-century American society and domestic life. The open plan of the house was centred on the kitchen, while the relatively modest interior square footage was augmented by exterior "rooms" accessed by glass window/door walls.

Despite achieving both beauty and maximum livability at a very reasonable cost, the first Usonian house was completed in 1936 at a total cost of \$5,500 (about \$99,359 in today's dollars); but its radical departure from the norm failed to capture broad public acceptance. However, many of the key elements Wright incorporated in Usonian homes were adopted into other contemporaneous designs. Certainly the most commercially popular of these "Contemporary" designs were created for Joseph Eichler, a Californian real estate developer.

Eichler, inspired by living in one of Wright's Usonian houses, was an aggressive advocate of the Contemporary and he built more than 11,000 homes in the style. Certainly the most widely seen (and imitated) of the Eichler designs is the L-shaped-with-carport set under a low pitched A-framed roof with wide overhanging eaves. Pyramidal plate glass window walls, which rise to the eaves with integrated doors that give out to defined exterior "rooms," are typical. Post-and-beam elements are often exposed both on the interior ceiling and under the eaves. Finally, warm natural cladding materials serve to emphasize the horizontal, ground-hugging lines of the home. Too often dismissed as faddish, the design expressions of the Contemporary style still have a pivotal influence on today's architecture.

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How Brock became a Canadian hero



Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

We Canadians sometimes have trouble acknowledging a Canadian hero, let alone one who wasn't even born in Canada, but that is just what we have done with Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock.

Brock was born in Guernsey, part of the Channel Islands in the middle of the English Channel between France and England, in 1769. It was an auspicious year that also saw the birth of Napoleon Bonaparte, Arthur Wellesley (the Duke of Wellington and commander and chief of the British Army) and Tecumseh (the Shawnee chief).

The eighth son of a moderately wealthy family, Brock's education started in Guernsey and at the age of 10 he was sent to Southampton to continue his schooling. He also spent a year in Rotterdam to learn French.

In his early years, Brock excelled in sports such as swimming and boxing. However, it was also noted by his many teachers that he had a sharp mind along with a kind and gentle temperament. In 1785, at the age of 15, Brock started his military career, purchasing an officer's commission as an ensign in the 8th Regiment of Foot, following an older brother who was in the same regiment. (A "Regiment of Foot" was a division of infantrymen in the British Army.)

In the British military, purchase of a commission was a common practice that spanned almost 200 years, from 1683-1871. There were no set requirements for a man to purchase an officer's rank; in fact, many had never had any military

training at all.

The purchase system was to ensure that officers were from wealthy families, well-educated and loyal. It is interesting to note that an overly large number of these officers were killed or wounded in war, creating vacancies that urgently needed to be filled. This need saw an increase in men being promoted to a higher rank without a purchase agreement.

Brock's military career escalated through the years between promotions and purchases. In 1790, he was promoted to a lieutenant but, later in the same year, through a government program, he gained his captaincy by raising a full company of men.

He then transferred into the 49th Foot in 1791 and that is where he stayed for the remainder of his military career. In 1795, Brock purchased his commission as a major and two years later he purchased his lieutenant-colonel rank.

Brock saw his first battle experience in 1799 against North Holland under the command of Lt.-Gen. Sir John Moore. As the North Holland campaign continued, Brock served under Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, who was part of Lord Nelson's fleet. These two commanders greatly advanced Brock's military training.

In 1802, under the command of Lt.-Col. Brock, the 49th Foot were sent to Canada. Brock, it is said, felt he was being sent away from the battles of Europe and was not happy with this development. It was in 1803 that Brock moved to Upper Canada and was headquartered in Fort York. His second-in-command was Lt.-Col. Roger Hale Sheaffe, who was stationed at Fort George in Niagara (Niagara-on-the-Lake).

Brock's first major problem was desertions from the Fort George garrison. At one point, upon hearing that a mutiny was

about to take place, Brock himself set across Lake Ontario to put a stop to the desertions. It came to light that many of the men in the garrison did not trust Sheaffe as a commander.

Sheaffe was born in Boston prior to the American Revolution. He attended a military academy in England and then served in Ireland with the British for several years before coming to Upper Canada with the 49th Foot.

His style of leadership, though, was brutal as he was an overly severe disciplinarian and a stickler for detail. Although his actions in the Battle of Queenston Heights were exemplary, his later failures as a leader in Upper Canada overshadowed this victory.

Brock could see, though, that his quiet provincial life as a commander in Upper Canada would soon be over, that war was brewing.

There had been a continuous unrest between the United States and England after the American Revolution. Brock worked with his officers to develop a strategic plan should the United States declare war on England as he recognized that Upper Canada and Lower Canada were vulnerable to invasion.

For five years Brock repaired fortifications and built new ones while stationed in Upper Canada. Although there were 5,200 British regular soldiers who had been sent to British North America, only 1,200 were stationed in Upper Canada under his command.

There were about 11,000 militia volunteers in Upper Canada but Brock questioned their loyalty to Britain. The militia was comprised of men aged 16 to 60 who were poorly trained and ill-equipped for battle. Many had come from the United States just for the land opportunities and Brock worried that when war broke out, they might not be loyal to Britain.

By this time the people



A portrait of General Issac Brock by George Theodore Berthon, circa 1883.
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

were losing all confidence in Britain ever properly defending Upper Canada against a military assault by the Americans. The despondency was so severe that many commanders were on the brink of discouragement. Brock thought otherwise.

He sent his full war plan to Lt.-Gen. Sir George Prevost in December 1811, declaring the importance to a successful outcome would lie not only in well-trained troops and militia, but also in the co-operation of the Indigenous nations, who were loyal to England. It was a bold plan.

Unfortunately, Prevost was not encouraged by Brock's plans and advised that all care should be taken to avoid aggressive action. Prevost's fear was that any aggression might cause the new American settlers to unite with the United States against the British in Upper Canada.

On June 18, 1812, the United States declared war on Britain and decided to invade the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.

Brock's first battle success at Fort Detroit as well as the surrender of Fort Michilimackinac by the Americans boosted the confidence, not only of the regular British forces but also the Canadian militia and the Indigenous allies. The militia members realized that they could defend their homes and they could beat off the aggressions of

the United States. The naysayers were silenced.

However, the war was not over and Brock knew full well the Niagara border would be the next point for the United States to attack.

Brock, it is said, sat on the shore of the Niagara River planning his next steps for when the United States attacked. The big question was where. He had his regulars spread out very thinly along the Niagara River. The militia and the Indigenous allies were all at the ready.

On Oct. 13, 1812, Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer, with 3,000 American troops, crossed the Niagara River attempting to land in the town of Queenston. Just 300 regular British troops were stationed in the small town, however they managed to keep the Americans pinned down at the landing site and saved the town. Not to be thwarted, the American troops found a path up the escarpment and took Queenston Heights.

Brock was awakened by the sound of the gunfire and quickly galloped from Fort George to the town of Queenston. He rallied the British troops and organized an attack to take the "redan battery" (a two-sided fortification) which was halfway up the escarpment.

(Note: On the Niagara Parkway, halfway up the escarpment from Queenston, is a parking area. You will find a sign and a set of stairs leading to the "redan gun."

There are several historical plaques on this path.)

Standing out in his redcoat uniform with gold braid, Brock was an easy target. He was killed at the base of the escarpment even before he could lead the attack on the redan. Brock was shot through the heart and died instantly.

His aid-de-camp, Lt.-Col. John Macdonell reorganized the troops and mounted a second charge up the escarpment, but he, too, was shot. He died several hours later. Both men are buried on Queenston Heights, entombed in the base of Brock's Monument.

There are few who are ever given the chance to change the course of history. Sir Isaac Brock was one of those people. He gave Upper Canada the confidence and the determination to defend our country against aggressors.

Throughout the remainder of the War of 1812, even during the occupation by the Americans of Niagara (NOTL), his bold spirit remained very much alive.

Brock gave Canadians a true hero.

References: Ron Dale, renowned historian; Niagara Historical Society and Museum; Canadian Biography Dictionary; history on JSTOR; Canadian Encyclopedia.

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

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COMMUNITY



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



Yacht in the distance

Kinsmen to showcase 400 classic cars

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Close to 400 classic cars will cruise into Niagara-on-the-Lake for the Kinsmen's 21st annual Show and Shine Car Show on Sunday.

From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Aug. 11, at Kinsmen Hall, 370 King St., members of the NOTL Kinsmen hope to raise at least \$8,000 for community organizations it supports, said Bob Forbes, club president.

"We're an all-Canadian service club. We get all kinds of requests for funds from different groups in the community, so we pass on the money raised through the car show," he said.

The 50/50 draw attracts the most people, he said, which usually gives up to a \$1,600 payout.

Participants are also entered into a random draw for peaches, which are donated by Thwaites Farms, Lepp Farms and Konik



Ken Bartel shows off his 1948 Dodge Business Coupe during the 2018 Kinsmen Show and Shine Car Show. FILE PHOTO/RICHARD HARLEY

Farms.

"We used to give out bottles of wine, and we found people would rather have the peaches," he said, which coincides nicely with the 29th Annual Peach Festival held on Queen Street the same weekend.

The cars will all be parked on the grass of the Parks Canada property around the Kinsmen Hall at

370 King St.

There's a lot of shade, so people won't have to wander over hot pavement in "desert conditions" for the show, he said.

The family friendly event will have a barbecue, refreshments and a DJ playing all day. Car enthusiasts can check out a variety of muscle cars, classic cars, and a 1976 GMC camper,

which Forbes said will be on scene this year. "The guy said it's beautiful," he said.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinsmen will be celebrating their 50th anniversary in March, and the Canadian Kinsmen as a whole will celebrate 100 years, Forbes said. The club is already beginning the planning for their anniversary celebration, he said.



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
"Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms."

Peller Estates Winery



Kristen Horne accepts the Gold Plunger on behalf of Peller Estates. PLUNGER PATROL

You'll want to join the growing group of enthusiastic oenophiles who have discovered that when it comes to wine and food, Peller Estates Winery is one of the places to be in Niagara. Whether you consider yourself an oenophile or a vinophile, you'll love the wines at Peller. What's better than sitting in the sunshine enjoying delicious wines and taking in spectacular vineyard views? Well, being connoisseurs of a different breed, we were there for views of the bathrooms. They did not disappoint. They were most spacious, accessible and luxurious. Practical mirrored counter space greets you upon entry. In the main part of the washroom, generous counters have ample sinks for washing up. You'll also find healthy plants and tasteful accents. These two toiletphiles gave Peller Estates Winery's award-winning bathrooms a rating of 4/5 Gold Plungers.

4/5 Gold Plungers



'Not far from the tree'



Lincoln Thwaites harvests a peach. SUPPLIED

Throwback Thursday



Last August local resident Sandra Nass spotted three owls in a tree in her yard. "Perhaps another consideration for the Town to have an urban tree by-law? Our century old mature trees are a natural habitat for these beauties!" Nass wrote to us in 2018. Since then the controversial tree bylaw was passed in NOTL. Other municipalities, such as St. Catharines, have said no to a tree by-law, after doing research that suggested such a bylaw could actually have a reverse effect with regards to the intention of preserving trees. SUPPLIED PHOTO

RIDDLE ME THIS:

Turn me on my side and I'm everything, cut me in half and I'm nothing. What am I?

Last Week's Riddle: I am an ancient invention that lets people see through walls. What am I?
Answer: A window

Answered first by: Katie Reimer
Also answered correctly by:
Cheryl House, Margie Enns, Tamara Vassiliev, Lynda Collet, Louise Rogalski, Marion Briston, Sadie Willms
Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.



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FEATURED LOCAL STORY

Heartbroken but **thankful** for community's help in search for Jethro

Kim McQuhae
Special to The Lake Report

This is a thank you to the citizens of NOTL and beyond.

I live on Larkin Road and on Saturday, July 20, I lost my dog Jethro.

Some of you know me from the NOTL Farmers' Market where I sell my jams and jellies and that's where I had been all morning.

When I came home Jethro was not in his pen and the gate was still closed. Not terribly unusual as he had gotten out before and was always on the deck wagging his tail when I got home. But this time he was not there.

I started searching his usual haunts and my immediate neighbours informed me they had seen him two hours earlier near their grape rows. Now I was beginning to panic because Jethro never wandered off for long. I walked the neighbourhood, drove around with my boyfriend Jens Gemmrich asking people if they had seen him and – nothing.

And then I posted Jethro's picture on Facebook, a recent photo of him on my deck with details about his being 15 years old, deaf, partially blind and prone to seizures. Also no collar or tags because he has a skin condition.

And people of Niagara, you responded.

The photo was shared about 300 times in the first few hours. People came out in droves to

help search for him. There were people on ATVs and dirt bikes – I saw you. People driving by in all sorts of vehicles calling out for Jethro – I heard you. I even got to meet some of you.

I received hundreds of messages informing me where people were searching: around their homes, their garages, their orchards, their grapes. I got phone calls. People sent me pictures of dogs at shelters, one of which looked so like him it gave me a jolt until I saw that he had been there a couple of weeks.

So many messages: people wishing me the best, sending prayers and love, people informing me that the wine and bike tours were on the lookout as well, and others telling me the areas they had searched. I had offers of help from all over the region.

People offered to make flyers and organize search parties. Friends from Burlington came down to search because I had to work that night, which was psychologically hard but they let me go early because they knew – so thank you to everyone at Zees Grill because you covered for me even though it was a busy night.

Sunday came and the Facebook post had over 1,200 shares and still going. I now was clinging to the hope that someone had picked him up since it was so hot that day, but in my heart I felt he had to be close by and something

had happened to him.

I searched all day and so did all of you. I saw you on foot, in vehicles, on bikes. I never felt alone in my desperate search because there were so many of you helping.

Monday morning came and I took the day off work so I could check the humane societies. And then around 7:30 a.m. my neighbour Derek Muste pulled into my yard in his pickup truck and I knew. His dog Moose had found my Jethro dead in their vineyard not 20 feet from where I had searched twice.

And I was heartbroken.

I relayed the sad news to all of you by posting that he had been found and you all grieved with me.

So much love.

In the end Jethro apparently knew his time was near and chose to leave on his own terms.

I retraced what I believe to be his last journey: it appears that he went for a walk across the road, waded through my neighbour's pond and went into the grapes. He found a lovely shaded spot where the vines came down to the ground on both sides of him and he lay down and passed away from natural causes.

He was found in his usual sleeping position in a peaceful, tranquil setting and for that I have some closure. I thank Derek for bringing him home to me in the gentlest way possible.

Although my story doesn't have a happy



Top: Jethro on a sailboat. Bottom: A plaque given to Kim McQuhae by her sister Samantha, in memorial of Jethro. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

ending it has shown me how our community came together over my little lost dog. I was blown away by the amazing outpouring of love and effort.

My friends, my neighbours, and new friends and neighbours I didn't know before braving the impossible heat, two rain storms and ticks. Special men-

tions to Nancy and Dave Perkins, Laura and Sean Sentineal, and Shireen and Tito Santana, who all went above and beyond. And to my sister Samantha for agonizing from Indiana that she couldn't help in the search.

To everyone who wouldn't let me give up hope I appreciate every-

thing you have done for me and for Jethro. So much community support. I thank each and everyone of you from the bottom of my heart.

And to Jethro, RIP my little buddy. I hope wherever you are is a wonderful place where you are as loved as you were here. Miss you lots.

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