



Dr. Brown: Vaccine **won't mean** immediate end to distancing, masks, restrictions

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

The last two weeks have brought great news from Pfizer and Moderna for two highly effective and similar RNA vaccines.

Pfizer's vaccine was approved for use in the U.K. last week and on the heels of that very welcome news was an announcement this week by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that the Canadian government has approved Pfizer's vaccine for distribution beginning later this month.

Approval in the United States for both vaccines should follow this week. That's excellent news in



People will still be wearing masks for a while, even when the COVID vaccine starts to roll out. PIXABAY

a pandemic now clearly out of control throughout much of the United States and threatening parts of Canada, including Ontario, with each day's toll of new cases and deaths often ex-

ceeding the previous day's grim tallies.

In the worst affected places, intensive care units are jam-packed with seriously ill patients, sometimes with no alternative slots

available and staff near the end of their physical and emotional ropes and some freely admitting that any more cases could threaten to overwhelm the system, quality care and the life of their patients.

It all seems like a horror movie, except that these days the horror is playing out in real time. And worse – the tragedy is unfolding because of the wilful ignorance and failure of many to socially distance, wear masks and avoid get-togethers with others.

This has especially been so at indoor venues such as bars and restaurants or

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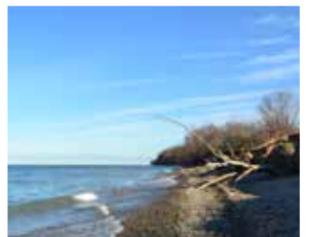
Hundreds of 'friends' **support plan** to reduce Ryerson Park traffic

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

The Friends of Ryerson Park had no idea they had so many friends.

The community group was formed out of frustration this summer after residents near the small, lakeside park grew increasingly upset with a huge influx of traffic, illegally parked cars and large numbers of tourists.

After discussions with Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake officials made it clear they needed evidence that more than just a few vocal residents were complain-



Niagara Shores Park is being suggested as an alternative to Ryerson Park. KEVIN MACLEAN

ing, the Friends organized a blitz.

They went door-to-door in the Chautauqua neighbourhood outlining their suggested solutions and soliciting support.

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Plan to reduce park visitors attracts **hundreds** of 'Friends'

Door-to-door blitz shows widespread support for changes, including resident-only parking, group says

Continued from Front Page

"Nobody said no," noted an enthusiastic John Scott, one of the spokespersons for the group. "The results of this canvassing have been astounding."

The consensus was "it's about time" and "where do I sign," he said.

Before their campaign began, "we thought maybe 90 households would sign up."

They ended up with 183 households backing the petition, representing more than 350 individuals, Scott said – 136 households from the Chautauqua area alone and 47 others from beyond, including people across town who are familiar with what many residents see as overtourism problems across the municipality.

The Friends also worked with the Chautauqua Residents Association, which endorsed the group's plan.

Every summer, Ryerson Park is a magnet for sunset watchers, picnickers and people using the small beach.

There are no washroom facilities and only five designated parking spots along Niagara Boulevard, so the overflow spills onto the narrow neighbouring streets.

With many roads only about 13 feet wide in what was historically a cottage district, the Friends expressed serious worries about fire and ambulance vehicles being able to get through in an emergency.

For their two-week door-



Brian Crow, left, and John Scott are among the residents pushing for changes to parking near Ryerson Park. FILE PHOTO

knocking campaign, the Friends revised their initial pitch from a few months ago – the controversial idea of making Niagara Boulevard one-way eastbound starting at Shakespeare Avenue was dropped – and they settled on a three-point plan.

The ideas, to be presented formally to council in the new year, include:

- * Resident-only parking on all streets in Chautauqua from the lake south to Lakeshore Road. (Each household would be allowed one visitor permit. The HonkMobile app might be used to monitor parking.)
- * Stricter enforcement of

lower speed limits and noise infractions, higher fines, no-stopping and tow-away zones, and closing the park at 10 p.m.

- * Deterrents to through traffic at Queen and Mississauga streets, using street markings, better signs and an adjusted intersection.

As well, in their door-step conversations, Scott said residents highlighted concerns about pedestrian safety and sanitation, congestion and pollution, and emergency vehicle access.

"As one older gent said to me, 'How could anyone oppose this? It's such a good-news story. It's going to

balance the visitors and the residents, and it's going to be good for everybody, not just in Chautauqua but in all of Niagara-on-the-Lake,'" Scott said.

His neighbours Shaun Devlin and Brian Crow, who are among numerous residents involved with the Friends, said they're not looking to drive visitors away.

"From the start, we've been looking to restore some balance," Devlin said, noting the area is not like Crystal Beach or other popular recreational areas.

Located in the middle of a residential area, "Ryerson

Park was never intended as a day park," Crow said.

With only a handful of parking spots and no facilities, he and Devlin said they hope Niagara Shores Park, owned by Parks Canada, could become an alternative go-to site.

Niagara Shores, the subject of a comprehensive documentary film and investigative report about shoreline erosion by The Lake Report in 2019, is about 1.5 kilometres west of Ryerson Park.

Crow said it seems a logical alternative, if the town and Parks Canada are able to agree on opening up the

park to more visitors.

"There's no people living there. It's a beautiful beach. It's got the sunsets, it's got parking, it's got access."

Vehicle and pedestrian access to the area might have to be developed to make that happen. The beach, several hundred metres long, sits below the 20-foot-high sandy cliffs where the endangered bank swallows nest.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero noted that "Niagara Shores was open until a few years ago" and the town's director of operations, Sheldon Randall, is working hard with Parks Canada to have it reopened.

"Parks Canada, as usual, is very co-operative and I believe we share the same goals. I believe it is doable," she told The Lake Report.

Niagara Falls MP Tony Baldinelli is also supportive of seeing the park's use expanded, she said.

"If it does happen, it will be Sheldon's legacy as acting CAO for 2020. We will owe him a great deal of thanks," she added.

Looking ahead at a solution for Ryerson Park's headaches, Scott said he gives the town "credit for being very blunt with us" by telling the Friends they had to show that the community really wanted changes made.

"Now we have the support. Now we have narrowed our ask to very critical areas that we think will be very productive."

Niagara Nursery School receives **\$10K** donation, reaches December goal

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The Niagara Nursery School is one big step closer to reaching its fundraising goal of \$100,000, after receiving a major donation of \$10,000.

The contribution, by the O'Neill and Houghton Family, brings the non-profit preschool's total raised so far to \$19,397.

Candice Penny, executive director of the school, said she's thankful for the help.

"We are just so grateful for all of the support that we've been experiencing with the expansion, whether it's through donation or just in general," Penny said.

Donations have been coming from as far away as British Columbia and people have also been sending in their own class photos of when they attended Niagara Nursery School, she said, adding it's nice to see how far-reaching the impact of the school has been.

The money will go toward a \$2-million expansion of the school at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre, which will allow the facility to accommodate 30 more children, for a total of 69.

Now, the school only has room for 39 children (but no infants and toddlers) and it has more than 140 children on a waitlist.

Once the expansion is completed, the school will be able to accommodate 10 infants, 15 toddlers, 24 pre-

schoolers and 20 school-aged children.

Penny said she hopes more people will continue to support the expansion, to help the school meet its goal.

"We know it's not the easiest of times right now with COVID and it's just so heartwarming. And just even hearing the stories of people who have attended, it's just been so lovely. We love hearing those stories, so please keep them coming."



Nursery School students Delilah Colvin, Leland Bastedo, Walker Meleskie, Amelia Werner with teacher Tanya Tavender. SUPPLIED

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CAO Marnie Cluckie officially **on the job**

Staff
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's new chief administrator Marnie Cluckie officially started her new job on Wednesday.

Cluckie replaces resigned CAO Holly Dowd, whose role was filled in the interim by Sheldon Randall.

Randall has now resumed his role as director of operations.

Town councillors have also appointed Cluckie to the board of NOTL Hydro.

The decision was made during Monday's committee of the whole meeting.

The position on the hydro board came open after a simmering dispute between former CAO Holly Dowd and some members of council. She resigned from the town in August 2019 after working for the municipality for 35 years.

That decision came after months of backroom pressure from some councillors undermined Dowd.

Then, Coun. Stuart McCormack, who has since resigned from council, suggested Dowd was not qualified to be on the hydro board, which she had been serving on for a number of years.



The town's new CAO Marnie Cluckie spent her first day the office Wednesday. SUPPLIED

Virtual parade map lets users **track Santa**

Staff
The Lake Report

Santa will be making his way through Niagara-on-the-Lake Dec. 12, instead of joining the Christmas parade.

Anyone interested in tracking jolly old Saint Nick can do so on the town's web page for the event, www.notl.org/santa.

The big man will be making his way through all five communities of NOTL, starting out in Glendale and

working his way down into Old Town, ending in Virgil. Due to COVID-19, the town is reminding residents that the event is meant for residents only.

"While Santa will visit every community, he will not be able to hit every street. Residents are asked to please stay within your community. If you need to drive to get to the nearest point on the route, please avoid gathering by waving to Santa from within your vehicle," the town says on its website.



Aubrey Blake Clements, driver accused in **fatal** July crash, dies at age 32

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Aubrey Blake Clements, the man charged in a head-on collision that killed Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Liz Hawley on July 29, has died.

An online obituary page for Clements said he died suddenly Nov. 30. It notes he was a father of three children with his partner of 10 years, Rebecca Robins.

Clements' sister Megan Ruitter said in a Facebook comment that her brother was "good, kind and loved."

A 32-year-old NOTL resident, Clements had been charged with danger-

ous driving causing death, impaired driving causing death (by drugs, suspected fentanyl) and possession of a drug suspected to be fentanyl.

At the time of the crash, Niagara Regional Police said Clements lost control of his Chevrolet Caprice northbound on Niagara Stone Road near Eastchester Avenue and veered into Hawley's lane, striking her Porsche head-on.

Clements was free on bail and had been ordered by the court to live with his sureties, his parents Linda Clements and Aubrey Clements Sr., at their home in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Aubrey Blake Clements. SOURCED

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Contributed by Patty Garriock
 "Let me have only the company of the people I love, and let me only be where I like and with whom I like." - Jane Austen



Contributed by Norm Arsenault:
 Did you know? Many people do not use their green bin because of the preconceived "yuck" factor. Line your bin with inexpensive compostable green bin bags readily available from your local grocery or hardware stores. (Phil's, Hendri and Home Hardware carry them). Alternatively, use large paper bags. DO NOT USE regular plastic bags in green bins as these do not decompose. Do your part and reduce the amount of waste going to the landfills.

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Editorial: Spreading festive cheer

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor



Not even a global pandemic could hijack Santa's plan to put in an appearance in Niagara-on-the-Lake this year.

The annual Christmas parade will be a drive-by featuring just the jolly old gent.

This year there won't be the bands and twirlers and clowns and floats and local organizations that we're used to seeing march through the streets.

But, as Santa rolls through Old Town and all of NOTL's other communities this weekend, let's give credit to the town and the parade volunteers who came up with an apt alternative that reaches all corners of town and gives the man in red a chance to spread some festive cheer.

As retired parade stalwart Bob Cheriton says in our special Christmas feature about him, this town has an amazing pool of talented volunteers who step up whenever their community needs them.

Let's celebrate each and every one of them.

There is always a lot happening in our little corner of the world. No shortage of good news, positive community activities and people helping others.

So some kudos to:

* The **Niagara Lions** for selling out of Christmas trees three weeks before Christmas. And to everyone who supported the Lions.

* The **St. Davids Lionesses** for collection food and cash for Project Share.

* **St. Davids-Queenston United Church**, which filled six SUVs and a van with donations for the Town of NOTL's Give Back charity drive (another brilliant idea). And St. Davids residents **Judith Atwood, Adriana Vizzari and RONALDA Clifton**, who canvassed their neighbourhood and

collected bags and bags of donations.

* Residents of **The Village** for their award-winning holiday lighting display, a visible welcome to all as you enter Old Town.

* People all over NOTL for seemingly going above and beyond this year with some amazing lighting displays that are sure to lift people's spirits.

* The **NOTL Legion** and all its supporters who made the annual poppy campaign a much bigger success than expected, despite COVID and no street sales.

* The **NOTL Rotary Club** for coming up with a new twist on fundraising in the COVID era, a holiday bottle drive.

* The **O'Neill and Houghton Family** for a very generous \$10,000 donation to the Niagara Nursery School's expansion

drive. And to all the other donors who are supporting this much-needed facility.

* **NOTL Hydro**, the **Chamber of Commerce** and all those who have actively supported Newark Neighbours, seasonal farm workers and other organizations this holiday season.

* The town's director of operations, **Sheldon Randall**, for stepping up as acting chief administrator for the past year, one marked by the mayhem of a global pandemic and challenges no one could have foreseen.

* **Niagara Regional Transit**, for bringing its on-demand \$3 per ride "bus" service to Niagara-on-the-Lake. From all accounts thus far, and our own road test of the service, this might be the future of public transit in small towns.

* And thanks to you, **our readers**, who make so many of these great community achievements possible, and continue to support The Lake Report in our quest to bring the quality journalism and relevant news to NOTL. editor@niagaranow.com



Cat fundraiser proved hugely popular

Dear editor:

Thank you so very much for the wonderful exposure in The Lake Report prior to our cat rescue event, "Fundraiser supports NOTL Cats Rescue." (Nov. 26).

It was a huge success and certainly exceeded our expectations.

A huge thank you to

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents who ventured out Friday night. We realize the weather was damp and rainy.

The donations were incredible, generous and greatly appreciated.

The list includes: \$1,385 in cash and cheques, including \$50 donated

by my friend Lesley, who sold porch gnomes and gave \$5 from each sale Friday night; 350 pounds of food (dry and wet); cat treats; cat toys; litter and litter trays; scratching posts; cat bed and pet carrier.

It was not our usual open house menu, but, regard-

less, I believe the treats were enjoyed. We are very grateful to friends Carolyn and Kaylee, who baked and made Christmas kettle corn. And, of course, candy canes for the children. And we had hot apple cider.

Tanya and Peter Rice
NOTL Cats Rescue

Article on Rand Estate shows historic value of property

Dear editor:

"The famous personages of Randwood," (The Lake Report, Dec. 3), part one in a series on the Rand Estate is an interesting article written by Elizabeth Mason, a historical researcher at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

In providing some of the history of the Rand Estate,

it is also hoped that more historical information will be unveiled in future articles that are intended to form part of the series mentioned.

This article gives an interesting view of the private and historical ownership of the property dating back to 1796 and through its research, I believe, sup-

ports the importance of the historical value connected to the Rand Estate.

Unfortunately, the value of these historical assets has been questioned and disputed by some, which has led to a considerable amount of controversy.

However, this article adds independent credence to the claims of many local

residents and others who value the historical assets of the Rand Estate and believe strongly that any development must recognize its particular uniqueness and be appropriate, as well as being sensitive to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Derek Collins
NOTL

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Is Doug Ford's plan simply to **kill** the Greenbelt?

David Israelson
Special to The Lake Report

Did Ontario Premier Doug Ford think that because we're in a pandemic, nobody would notice how he keeps trying to undermine environmental protection and conservation in this province?

Because if he did, he's wrong.

In fact, they may even notice it more because we're in the middle of the COVID-19 mess — a whirlwind that he's trying to address with decidedly mixed results.

Ford's virus-fighting policies are uneven and inconsistent, but at least he's trying. His anti-environment program is clear though, and it's bad — he's working to make Ontario uglier.

He may even be trying to kill Ontario's Greenbelt.

Ford's latest transgression against Ontario's slice of planet Earth is an item his Progressive Conservative government slipped into the provincial budget, Bill 229, tabled on Nov. 5. Schedule 6 in this bill would disembowel Ontario's 36 conservation authorities, which are supposed to protect the province's watersheds.

Isn't a budget bill supposed to be about the budget? Fair enough, while we're in an unprecedented health crisis, governments need to be creative and nimble, and some additional measures may be necessary to address the economic hardship caused by COVID.

But it's pretty difficult to make a case that sticking a shiv in conservation authorities will help us manage the virus.

Schedule 6 would be a sharp stab against nature. Ontario set up conservation authorities in 1946 to help correct the mistakes made by generations of poor planning that led to droughts, deforestation, erosion and floods.

The province's conservation system was enhanced after Hurricane Hazel struck in 1954, killing 81 people and destroying houses that were on flood



Doug Ford is looking to strip conservation authorities of many of their powers. RICHARD HARLEY/FILE

plains. The changes after the hurricane put authorities in charge of flood forecasting and ensuring that development near waterways is safe.

One would think that as climate change becomes more apparent each year, the government would not try to mess with flood prevention and control. One would also think that as urban dwellers in southern Ontario hanker for green space during COVID, protecting natural areas would be a priority.

Ford's proposed Schedule 6 does the opposite. It seeks to weaken or eliminate the ability of authorities to control development and protect greenspace.

The bill would let provincial ministers step in, allow them to issue permits to developers on environmentally sensitive lands, with little or no resistance from anyone. Ministers could also override decisions that conservation authorities make to restrict development.

Actually, Ontario's cabinet has already been stabbing away against conservation through its use of minister's zoning orders, or MZO's. These MZO's allow Steve Clark, the minister of municipal affairs and housing, to put ice on local planning rules and let developers have their way, cut down trees and pave environmentally sensitive lands.

Ford's government has already issued more than 30 MZO's this year. That's about 29 more than the typical yearly rate, and research shows that in the three decades between 1969

and 2000, MZO's were used only 49 times. These orders are not a new thing, but there's an argument to be made that they're now being abused by Ford's folks.

It's true that some of the push to develop is driven by COVID-related imperatives: about a dozen of Clark's recent orders are to speed up the building of long-term care facilities and the province is anxious to add density to areas that are close to public transit, so more people might drive less.

But it's hard to make a case that all of this ministerial meddling is justifiable. It's also hard to make a case that everything the Ford government is up to on conservation has to do with combating COVID-19.

It looks like a sneaky-yet-clumsy attempt to tie anti-environmental measures to the pandemic.

"It will force us to take a step back when we've already made incredible progress," said Brenda Johnson, chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. Her organization has added its voice to the chorus of authorities that oppose Ford's heavy-handed attack on the environment.

David Crombie, Toronto's former mayor, a former federal Tory cabinet minister and until recently chair of Ontario's Greenbelt Council, noticed. He resigned as Greenbelt Council chair at the beginning of December, calling Ford's enviro-busting moves "high-level bombing (that) needs to be resisted."

Six other members of the council quit along with Crombie.

Earlier, in an interview with the Toronto Star, Crombie hinted the Ford government may be up to something darker.

"The way they (Ford and his ministers) are moving on MZO's and the changes to the conservation authorities ... hobbling, undermining them and diminishing the ability of them to do their work will have an impact on the future of the Greenbelt," Crombie said.

Niagara Falls MPP Wayne Gates says the impact Ford and friends seek is simple and alarming: "They want to tear up 80 years of environmental protection and help their developer friends pave over the Greenbelt."

Ford was already caught on video, filmed before he became premier, saying he wanted to open a "big chunk" of protected farmland and wetlands — the kinds of areas that come under the Greenbelt's shield. He said it was because he heard from "some of the biggest developers in the country."

He later recanted — sort of — saying that he listens to what "the people" tell him and they said they don't want to harm Ontario's Greenbelt.

Which people? That's the problem, isn't it? Listening to whoever talked to you last is what seems to be steering Ontario's COVID-fighting policies these days; it's not a good way to decide whether we pave and eliminate forests, wetlands and scenic watersheds.

It's important to shed light on this dark corner of the Ford government's legislative effort to roll back environmental protection. If Ford prizes talking to people as much as he says, he should talk more to all those people who want to save the Greenbelt.

David Israelson is a non-practising lawyer, author, journalist and communications consultant who lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake. You can follow him on Twitter @davidisraelson or on LinkedIn. An earlier version of this article appeared in the Lawyer's Daily on Nov. 26.



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Excellent editorial on short-term rentals

Dear editor:

Good on you and one golden salute as well.

You have reactivated my journalistic background — well not that much, I was a paper boy for the Toronto Star, but that must count for something.

Anyway, I digress. Your editorial, "Rental homes are home to no one," (Nov. 26), on NOTL council's

plans for short-term rentals was superb, well-composed and very meaningful as per rental homes.

Yes, we have approximately seven rental homes on our street and some house employees of various local employers. I must say the houses suffer from lack of care, not all of them, but enough of them to be noticeable. On our street

the average age is ball park about 70 and most of the homes are taken care of with pride.

It's not really the fault of the people renting the homes. They would do better and probably enjoy homes with garden access and more room to boot.

This year we suffered through 10 to 12 people out on the front lawn of one of

the units. They would gather for meetings, kind of scary in these COVID times.

It has truly been good to see people writing in about the rental homes and I also appreciate hearing the side of the B&Bs. However in summation: steadfast neighbours do make the street, not renters.

Keith Lloyd Bullen
NOTL

Operators against owner-occupied short-term rental rule

The following is a letter sent to Lord Mayor Betty Disero and members of Niagara-on-the-Lake council.

We would like to bring your attention to the proposed changes to the short-term rental bylaw that the town is reviewing and amending, specifically on the likely impact some of these changes could have on tourism and the economy in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Overall it is a well-thought-out bylaw and the industry supports a substantial portion of it. However, not the new change to the primary residency requirement.

The NOTL economy is heavily dependent on tourism and while "day-trippers" make important contributions, it is the overnight guests who give NOTL

businesses the biggest boost. They support the Shaw Festival, local wineries and restaurants and, importantly, the Queen Street merchants.

Cottage rentals and villas are an attractive option for visitors with small children and pets, and for those who don't want to eat out two or three times a day.

If those vacation rentals were no longer available, most of that business wouldn't go to hosted rentals in NOTL, but to surrounding cities and towns and other communities that offer these types of rentals.

Consider that the current 185 unhosted short-term rentals conservatively represent 900 individuals per rented night, at four nights per week x 25 weeks in high season.

This represents nearly

100,000 visitors who will no longer have access to the accommodation that fits them best.

What is the impact on all the supporting industries that depend on their spending? NOTL already has a comprehensive short-term rental bylaw that prohibits principal residences from being used as cottage rentals and villas.

Consider the supporting businesses that have made investment decisions based on these existing rules. It is grossly unfair to all who have committed to growing tourism in NOTL to change the rules of the game after they have invested literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in NOTL and met the town's every demand.

Other changes to the bylaw are worth discussing and supporting, however

the radical change of introducing a primary personal residence requirement needs to be removed in order for tourism in Niagara-on-the-Lake to recover and grow.

Respectfully submitted by: Janet Jones, owner, Matisse Bed & Breakfast; Maria Mavridis, owner/operator Bianca House B&B; Bob Jackson, CEO, Lais Hotel Properties Ltd.; Tony Chisholm; David Levesque, past-president, NOTL Bed & Breakfast Association; Jason Clements, owner, Niagara Holiday Rentals; Tim Jennings, executive director/CEO, Shaw Festival; Paul Macintyre, VP operations, Vintage Hotels; Eduardo Lafforgue, president, NOTL Chamber of Commerce.

Niagara-on-the-Lake
Tourism working group

Decapitated deer spotted on nature walk

Dear editor:

I'm a 79-year-old resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I walk the Niagara Botanical Gardens and adjacent hydro corridors almost every second or third day.

I often see deer and carry binoculars to observe them and birds in particular.

Last Saturday, about 3:30 p.m. as I walked along the edge of the Whirlpool Golf Course in a southward

direction, with the bush on my right and golf course on my left, I saw by chance a dead deer in the brush — but almost out on the cut part of the fairway grass.

During the entire year of walking this area I have never seen a dead deer before, but the unusual and disturbing aspect was also that the animal had been decapitated — surgically and quite neatly.

Clearly this is not the

work of predatory animals or Niagara Parks or botanical gardens personnel.

A small purple piece of bunting had been tied to some brush near the body, so perhaps somebody has already taken note of this.

On my way back to my car I saw no personnel of any kind to report this to though I later contacted the Niagara Parks Commission and regional police.

The more I think about

it, the more disturbing it is.

I can conceive of some kind of harmless explanation but given the circumstances and the carcass having been left to be found, harmlessness is unlikely.

Given also several stories about deer killed senselessly here in Niagara this past summer I think this latest event is probably nefarious.

Kaspar Pold
NOTL

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I support Cheropita's questions on 5G safety

The following letter was sent to NOTL town and regional councillors and a copy was submitted to The Lake Report.

Dear councillors:
After reading the headline in the Dec. 3 Lake Report, ("NOTL councillor pushes debunked claims about 5G health effects"), I felt compelled to write my support for Coun. Wendy Cheropita and her motion to get council to explore the latest technology being rolled out (ie. 5G).

I am grateful that council listened to her arguments thoughtfully and didn't immediately dismiss her information as debunked (it is not so, by many scientists).

It was disappointing to find out that she was short one vote to get the issue discussed more thoroughly. We live in times where rapid technological development is often pushed upon citizens and, sadly, the long-term effects are barely investigated.

Politicians are beholden to the people and we expect

that you take the time to do adequate research (beyond biased mainstream sources).

For example, I am linking the latest research questioning the rollout of the polymerase chain reaction test globally for COVID-19. It's very sobering to think that many of the political decisions were based on this flawed technology.

We can't be so naive to think that every development, and every billionaire foundation that funds it, has the best interests of the average citizen at the heart of their decisions. We didn't vote them into power — we have voted for you.

In these polarized times, standing up and questioning the dominant narrative is an act of bravery, as your reputation can be quickly sullied, as The Lake Report article attests to.

Thank you, Wendy, for your courage and integrity. You will always get my vote.

Louise Gazzola
Niagara on the Green



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COVID-19 has taken its toll on Niagara-on-the-Lake, and The Lake Report wants to help businesses during these times. We're offering FREE short stories to help remind residents about local businesses. If you would like to be included, simply send us 150 words about your business and a photo to go with the story. We know everyone is suffering and this is just our small part to give back to the community that supports us. Send stories to editor@niagaranow.com

The Grove

Submitted
The Lake Report

The Grove is a consciously sourced farm shop full of fresh baked goods, prepared meals, local products, drug- and hormone-free meats and, of course, fruit grown on the farm out back.

Owners Steve and Charlie Wharton opened the Grove in July 2019 and love the Virgil community vibes.

"We have loved our journey so far and we're trying not to let COVID get us down. The support and positivity running through this community is strong and we're so grateful for



The Grove in Virgil. SUPPLIED

it. We've built and grown on relationships with so many people, it's been the fuel keeping us going these past few months. If you haven't been by to see us yet, stop in for a quick chat and something tasty!" says Charlie.

A stocking stuffer's

dream, the Grove is stocked up for the holidays and offers take home meals as well as a pre-order for Christmas dinners including meals for one or groups. The Grove is at 1267 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil, <https://www.thegroveniagara.com>.

The Irish Harp Pub

Submitted
The Lake Report

The Irish Harp Pub opened on Aug. 10, 2006, after our founder, Trevor Smyth restored this historic building into the warm, cozy, traditional Irish pub it is today. The moment you walk through the door at 245 King St. you feel like you've stepped into Ireland and you're greeted with a sincere welcome and friendly service.

Trevor's vision and spirit lives on within the pub, since we aspire to offer great food, great beer, great music and, especially, great craic (Irish slang for a great sociable time).



A wintry shot of the Irish Harp Pub. SUPPLIED

Despite these challenging times, we strive to provide our guests with traditional experiences, speciality events and our new breakfast service. Moreover, we continue to provide charitable donations to those in need.

We are proud to be part of the community and appreciate all the support during this time. As Trevor always said, "May the wind always be at your back and the road ahead straight and narrow." Find us online at, <http://theirishharppub.com>.

Edward Spera Gallery

Submitted
The Lake Report

Canadian artist Edward Spera creates breathtaking wildlife creations, inspired by his travels across the globe.

Numerous research trips have taken him across Africa, India, Nepal, Indonesia, southeast Asia, China, Tibet, North, South and Central America and even into the world's oceans. From these adventures, he is able to photograph animals in their natural habitat and turn them into detailed wonders of art.

Edward's passion for wildlife has also led him to support several international conservation efforts,



Edward Spera is an acclaimed wildlife artist. SUPPLIED

such as the Owl Foundation, Tiger Trust and SPCA. Edward has had the honour of working with the Royal Canadian Mint on a series of projects, and his blue jay coin design was chosen to be a part of the specimen

set in 2015.

The Edward Spera Gallery, at 91 Queen St., is open all year from Monday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, please stop by the gallery or visit online at speraart.com.

Bibelot Design Studio

Submitted
The Lake Report

It all starts with the linen. It's the perfect foundation for our hand-printed designs.

Our studio/shop at Bibelot Design Studio is filled with quality linens, subtle colours, that cozy-up-with-a-book-and-feel-relaxed kind of feeling. Surrounded by all the things that you love to help you unwind.

We're thinking of the details for you. Hand-printed door stops, pillows, lavender eye pillows, heirloom holiday ornaments, the list goes on. All the personal touches you like to add to your home to make it just that - your home, your refuge.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

We are also excited to host Tara Rosling www.thelittlegreenshop.com and Judith Bowden <https://sorrel-and-stitchwort.myshopify.com> ... both talented NOTLers!

We think you'll like the

space we have created for your holiday shopping. Visit us at 853 Lakeshore Rd., NOTL or online at www.bibelotdesignstudio.com. Open Saturdays and Sundays, or weekdays by appointment.

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Christmas decorations are shining bright around The Village neighbourhood, thanks to some spirited volunteers. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Village residents **pump up the wattage** this holiday season

Staff
The Lake Report

For nine years now, since the fall of 2012, residents of The Village neighbourhood of NOTL have taken it upon themselves to make the holiday season a little bit brighter.

And considering the unusual circumstances in 2020 – COVID anyone? – there’s an extra effort to increase

the wattage this year.

Usually, in late autumn, a group of friends, neighbours and volunteers start to organize the annual holiday display.

First is a check of more than 250 strings of lights, all of which worked when they came down last January, but-for some reason-reveal some faults out of the boxes in the fall.

After replacements are

provided, neighbourhood teams organize and have two weeks to decorate their trees and lampposts.

In all, the numbers are impressive: 12 volunteer teams, more than 30 neighbours joining in to help, 80 trees, almost 30 lampposts, probably 20,000 lights, plus lots of community involvement and fun.

“Everybody in the neighbourhood seems to love

and look forward to the decorations going up, and I have noticed that in the days leading up to the lights turning on, residents are busy decorating their own homes as well. Everyone wants to do their part,” said Village resident Dale Des Islets.

“I think it would be great if other neighbourhoods in town took up the challenge to do the same thing and go all out to make their streets

as bright and festive as possible, especially in times like these.”

“I can’t count the number of people who have stopped and thanked our teams while they were putting up lights. Some even offered us a beer. It’s just a great community event,” Des Islets said.

The Village lights will shine from Nov. 29, every evening until mid-Janu-

ary and – weather permitting – will be augmented by a one-evening-only display of candle lumieres on Dec. 23.

This display effort won an award from the Niagara Biennial Design Awards recently, among many others for the Niagara region. The residents are very proud of this and happy to do their part to keep the lights shining during this difficult time.



Anne-Marie Warriner, left, with the St. Davids Lionesses during Saturday’s food drive. SUPPLIED

St. Davids Lionesses collect **food and funds** for charity

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The St. Davids Lionesses were out Saturday morning collecting food donations to support local families in need this holiday season.

The group started out at 9 a.m. and by 11 a.m. had filled two vehicles with food and raised \$300.

“We want to be able to help,” said Anna-Marie Warriner, chair of the food

drive committee. “We’re giving it to Project Share, so it means a lot that we can get the community to come together and do this.”

She noted there was a steady stream of traffic coming through with donations.

The food drive is important because there are people in need, Warriner said, adding the Lionesses were “pretty limited” in

the fundraising activities they could hold in 2020 due to the global pandemic.

The drive-thru food campaign was one way to give back safely.

“This way, the whole community gets involved,” she said.

By the end of the day, the Lionesses had collected about \$500 in cash donations and about 800 pounds of food.

NOTL Hydro donates **\$4,000** to Newark Neighbours



Newark Neighbours volunteers are handed a cheque and donations from NOTL Hydro. SUPPLIED

Tim Curtis
Special to The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro is donating \$4,000 to Newark Neighbours.

Other than matching employees in the annual United Way drive, NOTL Hydro typically does not make charitable donations. As a 100 per cent municipally owned corporation, NOTL

Hydro leaves these actions to its shareholder, the town.

This year, due to the pandemic, there will be no parade or Christmas functions so the board of NOTL Hydro decided to make this donation to Newark Neighbours.

Meanwhile, NOTL Hydro is continuing with its annual food and toy drive.

Donations can be brought

to our location at 8 Hengagan Rd. in Virgil until this Friday, Dec. 11. Weather permitting, a bin is available for drop-offs just outside the office for anyone not comfortable coming inside.

Food and cash donations (cash donations can be made as well) are given to Newark Neighbours while the toys go to either Gillian’s Place or Project Share.



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Rotary club launches holiday bottle drive

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake is collecting beer, wine and liquor bottles, and beer and pop cans to raise money for the organization's local and international initiatives.

All money raised over the next month from the holiday bottle and can drive will go toward the various charities the group supports, with a focus on hunger issues, NOTL Rotary president Ken Schander said.

The one-off fundraiser was planned to help supplement some of the events the club normally holds.

Members of the service



The Rotary Club of NOTL is collecting bottles over the holidays to support various charities. PIXABAY PHOTO

club have been branching out in their fundraising efforts this year, planning virtual events and modified fundraisers to adapt to the pandemic restrictions and regulations.

"This time of the year we know that people will have a few extra bottles or cans around, and if they let us cash them in, we would do good with it," Schander said. "We appreciate

what people can contribute and they have our commitment to use it in a way that's going to end up benefiting others."

The bottle drive will take place at various locations around the community: Historic Lyons House B&B at 8 Centre St., in Old Town; 5 Sentry Circle at Garrison Village; Twin Power Financial at 231 Four Mile Creek Rd. in St. Davids; Peninsula Flooring at 13 Henegan Rd., in Virgil and 19-45 Dorchester Blvd., in St. Catharines.

Drop-off locations will accept donations from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Saturdays, Dec. 12 and 19, and Jan. 2 and 9.

Legion poppy campaign brings in over \$16,000

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Despite the pandemic, the NOTL poppy drive raised \$16,527 this year, down about 20 per cent from 2019, but much better than the Legion expected.

Al Howse, a spokesman for the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 in Niagara-

on-the-Lake, said the total was less than previous years, but is happy with the figure, given how COVID-19 made fundraising difficult.

"We did better than expected," Howse said in an email to The Lake Report.

"The overall number so far is lower. We were expecting it to be half of what it was last year" because fewer

stores displayed poppy boxes and there were no street sales.

Last year the poppy campaign raised \$20,641.

Marg Boldt, chair of the NOTL poppy committee, said the Legion is "grateful for all donations from those who gave."

"This surpassed our expectations, given the restric-

tions. We thank the many businesses that allowed us to display our counter-top boxes. We thank the community for their continued and generous support for the Legion and its mission."

In 2019-2020, the Legion donated about \$4,600 to veterans and families, \$4,000 to the air cadets and \$845 to youth education.

Niagara-on-the-Lake

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Residents are reminded that restrictions on snow removal and street parking are in effect during the winter months.

Please be a good neighbour and consider the safety of other road users.

Visit www.notl.com to see full restriction details.

Thank you for your cooperation!

This holiday season needs to be different.

The safest way to celebrate indoors is only with the people who live in your home. People who live alone can get together only with one other home.

Gatherings with friends and extended family can carry an increased risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. Consider celebrating outdoors or virtually with others that are not part of your household.

Know the gathering limits in your area before you choose to entertain with family and friends indoors. Indoor gatherings are not permitted in regions in Grey - Lockdown.

For all gatherings with anyone you do not live with:

- maintain 2 metres physical distance
- wear a face covering
- avoid potlucks or shared utensils
- ensure everyone washes hands regularly, including before and after meals

Self-isolate if you are sick, even if your symptoms are mild and ask guests to stay home if they feel unwell.

Follow provincial and local public health advice to keep you and your loved ones safe this holiday.

Stopping the spread, starts with you.

Visit ontario.ca/celebratesafely to learn more.

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Bob Cheriton bows out after almost 20 y

Still fighting pancreatic cancer, longtime volunteer sings p

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Santa Claus hits the streets of NOTL this weekend for a COVID-friendly drive-by parade, visiting all five of the town's communities.

And it will be one of the rare times in almost two decades that Bob Cheriton won't be out patrolling the route.

If you've watched a Niagara-on-the-Lake Christmas parade in the past 19 years, or ever bought one of the parade buttons, Cheriton played a role in making it all happen.

The 72-year-old, who has retired from the Christmas parade committee, recalls many good times over the years and how it all came to be.

Cheriton moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2001 after retiring from a long telecommunications career at Bell.

He says a "big factor" in him moving to NOTL was that his longtime friend, the late Bruce Pospiech, lived here. The pair met in 1966 in engineering school at Carleton University.

Pospiech was involved with the Christmas parade, so Cheriton volunteered time to help him organize the parade's traditional button campaign.

"We became fast friends and that friendship endured over the years. We followed their kids growing up, they followed our kids growing up. He spent all of his life down here, I spent my life travelling all over the place."

Cheriton fondly remembers how he got started helping Pospiech with the parade.

"In 2001, around about the time we were taking possession of our first home, I wandered into his farmhouse. And he had the kitchen table all spread out with buttons and charts and maps of the parade and all this stuff, grumbling away. And I said, the magic words, 'Can I help?' Well, all that does, especially in a town that thrives on volunteerism like Niagara-on-the-Lake does, that sets the hook and you're done. You're in at that point, and there's not a darn thing you can do about it. So I became the button guy."

In those days, the buttons were more of a memento or souvenir of the parade.

"We sold them through little baskets and retail establishments and stuff. And we didn't make any money doing it, but we did it anyways, and we had a lot of fun," Cheriton says.

Over the years, he gradually became more involved in the parade and when the



Bob Cheriton holds a handful of Christmas parade buttons he's helped with throughout his 19 years of involvement in the annual event. RICHARD HARLEY

committee's former media person retired, he took over as the spokesperson.

"Good or bad, I became a bit of the public face of the parade for the following number of years," Cheriton says.

The buttons were taken over by John Strecker, who Cheriton says figured out how to make them a profitable fundraiser for the parade. Now, the buttons raise about \$4,000 each year, Cheriton says.

In a normal year, through community donations, the parade raises about \$20,000, which helps to pay some of the marching bands.

"The rest is donations from a number of our businesses and private citizen donations and so on. Some people have been donating for as long as I've been associated with the parade and longer."

One of the struggles along the way was trying to figure out when the parade first started. One year, Pospiech and Cheriton figured it had to be at least the parade's 40th anniversary, so they started digging through old newspaper articles to see if they could find out.

"My wife (Rosalie) got involved in that as well. She was over at the library researching it and going through some of the old Advances from way back when and this kind of stuff. Well, we never did finally figure it out ... it's kind of like trying to pin down with

absolute precision when the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club was first started," he says.

"You can get within a reasonable range, but you can't get the exact date. But at some particular point, we encountered an advertisement for the parade in one of the papers in the microfiche, and that got us really close to the 40-year mark. So Bruce said, 'Well, we're going to put a stake in the ground.' And that was 40 years. And then we've been counting up ever since."

This year would have marked over 50 years.

"I do remember from that time I was so impressed with some of the people who worked in the parade and their commitment to the parade and that's probably one of the things that sticks with me the longest, and Bruce was the first example of that. He was a very dear friend, and then Darka Jensen, who also works over at the town, has been involved in the parade for as long as I can remember and she does so many different things."

"Bruce was incredible. He put 30 years, 30 parades under his belt."

"The commitment of the volunteers is one of the things that over my time really strikes me as just quite awesome, to see what they've accomplished and they do it year after year after year after year. It's really kind of special."



Various Christmas parade buttons. RICHARD HARLEY

In all of his time helping out, Cheriton has never watched the full parade from Queen Street. Instead, spending time as parade marshal, he's watched from angles others don't get to see. One of his favourite aspects is watching the marching bands set up by the old Parliament Oak school.

"When the full band comes out and the precision and the skill that they have, if that doesn't send shivers up your spine, I don't know what the heck does. It's absolutely stunning," he says.

The only year he missed the parade was in 2016, after he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He was scheduled to fly to Germany for an experimental treatment a couple of days after the parade, and friends and family told him being in a large crowd wasn't a good idea, in case he got sick.

"Can I pretend life is perfectly normal? No, of course not. Is it a pretty good quality of life under the circumstances? You betcha it is."

BOB CHERITON

Even in a pre-COVID world, "everybody and their cousin was lecturing me about how it would be totally irresponsible for me to go out on a parade and be exposed to all of these people with their potential germs and all this stuff," Cheriton says.

That year he watched the parade from home through the Queen Street cam above Sotheby's.

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Years of Christmas parades

praises of his adopted community



of volts between these two things,” he says. The procedure disrupts “the surface of the cancer cell so that its ability to hide itself from the body’s immune system is messed around with a little bit.”

Further research put Cheriton in touch with a doctor who told him if he could get the treatment, “it presented a legitimate opportunity to prolong my life.”

The next step was an Air Canada ticket to Germany.

“I had made contact with a surgeon in Germany up in the Baltics, a place called Stralsund,” Cheriton says,

Through a Canadian mayor who also had the surgery, and was vocal in saying it should be available in Canada, Cheriton connected with a surgeon in Stralsund, Germany.

“And so just shortly after the parade in ‘16, I flew over with my wife and we went up to Stralsund and I had the procedure done.”

He was stable for a while afterward, but the cancer flared up again and he’s been on chemotherapy ever since.

“I do chemo now, three weeks out of four, pretty much 52 weeks of the year. And I’ve managed to stay ahead of it with the help of some incredibly talented people for over four years now.”

He says now the treatment has become part of his life.

“It is the normal for me now, and it is the normal for my family. And I have enjoyed tremendous support from the community, whether it’s all the guys at the golf club, or people in hydro” (where he is a longtime board member).

“Can I pretend life is perfectly normal? No, of course not. Is it a pretty good quality of life under the circumstances? You betcha it is.”

He says he’s “been pretty fortunate,” but at the same time has tried to simplify life a little bit.

“I stepped back a bit from some things that I’ve been involved with over time. I used to be on the board of a company called Niagara Regional Broadband Network, a fibre optic network company that the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake owns 25 per cent of. Fantastic company. Boy, if you like working with techies, those are a great bunch of guys,” he says.

And now he has stepped back from the parade to give himself more time to focus on family.

With COVID he’s also stopped going to the community centre gym because of his compromised immune system. However,

a saving grace for him during COVID, he says, has been the NOTL Golf Club.

“The tonic this year was John Wiens’ golf club. I still remember the first day, it was a beautiful sunny day and the golf course is in magnificent shape because Mike Magwood and the boys over there had lots of time to get it in pristine shape ‘cause it opened late this year,” he says.

“I don’t remember how I played and I don’t particularly care. It was such a liberating experience to get out.”

He says he thinks life “serves up things in a funny way.”

“I’m amazingly struck about the important role of volunteerism in this community,” Cheriton says.

“I was nomadic. So I never felt like I had really good community roots. And I was kind of looking for a way to get involved in the community when I retired from the workday work, and I found it here,” he says.

Whether it’s organizations like the Virgil Business Association or the multitude of service clubs doing good things for the community, “These are all volunteers who are committing their time and their energy to make this town better. And to run these events — Candlelight Strolls, Christmas parades, all the stuff that we do in this town — we owe this to volunteers. It’s amazing. And this town has such a pool of talent.”

Even with the Christmas parade, volunteers have also relied on that pool of talent, such as years when artist Trisha Romance designed the parade buttons.

“We asked Trisha Romance whether she’d do that. I asked on a Friday and by Monday I had five designs,” Cheriton says.

He says as you get older, keeping the mind active is important and a lot of people volunteer to do just that.

“You don’t want to shut the grey matter down.”

Cheriton is keeping his spirits high, despite the challenges of living with cancer.

After his diagnosis, “most of the people close to me thought I was pretty much toast. And then I lost Bruce Pospiech,” Cheriton says.

But he keeps looking forward.

“I didn’t know whether I’d ever see the sunny side of 72 so I figured, ‘Well, OK, let’s go for 75 now and if we get that let’s see what we can do with that.’”

“And I know the probability is I die of pancreatic cancer, a very high probability I will. When? Not today is my answer to that question.”

RIDDLE ME THIS

I am the beginning of the end,
and the end of time and space.
I am essential to creation, and I
surround every place. What am I?

Last week: When it comes to me, you go on red
and stop on green. What am I?

Answer: Watermelon

Answered first by: Sheelah Young

Also answered correctly (in order) by:
Kathy Neufeld, Pam Dowling, Katie Reimer,
Margie Enns, Pat Young, Elaine Landray,
Sheila Meloche

Email answers, with your name, to editor@
niagaranow.com
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me this)

recalls what it was like to first get the diagnosis.

“It was really like you ran into a wall. I thought, ‘Oh, dang, you get a cancer diagnosis, and you aren’t really feeling all that bad.’”

“The scariest part was hearing the survival statistics from the pancreatic specialist.

“I started rhyming off statistics. You know there’s an 80 per cent chance you’ll die in a year, if you aren’t dead within a year, you’ll probably be dead in the next year. And there’s only a one or 2 per cent survival rate beyond five years. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So that was exactly the best day on the planet,” Cheriton says.

“When he got home and did his own research, “sure enough, the statistics were pretty grim.”

“I kept on looking further and eventually came across a procedure that piqued his interest.

“I was astonished when I was doing the research how much extraordinary research had been done, broad spectrum, across all of cancer around the world. It was amazing to me how much and how creative these people were.”

“I also learned the course of treatment for pancreatic cancer had not changed much in the last dozen years.

“Survival rates had not moved appreciably either. So, I kept digging and digging and digging, and I came across a procedure called an IRE, which means irreversible electroporation, which intrigued me.”

“It involves taking electrodes and putting them around a cancer tumour and then running super high voltage and thousands

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Shaw workers help launch global site to sell **artisans' wares**

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The pandemic left many gig economy workers struggling to earn a living, but Shaw Festival costume specialist Truly Carmichael joined New York-based Erin Slattery Black to showcase the creative side hustles of theatre workers to help boost sales, just in time for the holidays.

BackstageBazaar.com is a free virtual marketplace built to cultivate the websites of art community members with existing ecommerce shops. The site features more than 120 Etsy shops and personal websites of artists and theatre workers from around the world.

Carmichael says social media posts have encouraged local shopping and promoted small businesses and artists, but posts calling for support quickly become buried in the sea of online chatter. Something more permanent was needed to help these artists garner more traffic and revenue.

"That works for about two days and then it's last week's news. And so, we needed something that was sort of more permanent and stationary, and something that could grow and pick-up momentum as it grew," she says.

The site officially launched on Nov. 15 and Carmichael says the number of featured shops quickly surpassed expectations.



Truly Carmichael, co-founder of Backstage Bazaar creates and sells couture hats as a milliner.. SUPPLIED

"It started out when we had 10 shops in the first hour. And now, we're looking at 123 shops in two weeks," she says.

That number has grown to 126 by press time Wednesday.

As well as Carmichael, Shaw Festival employees with featured shops include Jo Pacinda with Jo Pacinda Designs, Laura Hughes with 98 Hearts Crafting, Tara Rosling with Little Green Shop and Judith Bowden with Sorrel and Stitchwort.

"The important thing is we knew that this was really to promote holiday sales and to be able to get people coming in helping all of these artists out. We needed it up in time for holiday shopping," Carmichael says.

Slattery Black says the idea for the Backstage Bazaar began on a whim as she watched friends and colleagues lose their jobs due to COVID-19 closures of theatres and many facets

of the entertainment industry around the world.

"I work as a costume designer in New York City and I teach costume design at the New York University. As the pandemic started, I felt incredibly fortunate that I still had a teaching job. And I watched friends and colleagues, one after one, struggle as they lost their jobs," she says.

"I thought, 'How are we going to get them through this?' If we want live theatre at the other end of this pandemic, we have to do something to help the people who make their living making theatre weather this crazy storm," she says.

Slattery Black says she was inspired by some recent graduates at NYU who hadn't yet worked in the industry. Though they were all excited to begin their new careers before the pandemic hit, they needed to update their focus to meet this new reality.

"They started doing creative Etsy shops ... It

was such a creative use of their skills and talents on one hand, and on the other hand this is how they are paying their rent and paying their student loans back," she says. "And then I saw friends and colleagues I've worked with in the field for 25 years doing the same thing."

The goal with the virtual marketplace is to help the many artists and talented behind-the-scenes-workers in the theatre community continue to live their passion and keep creating, while staying afloat financially through these unprecedented times.

The site features the shops of anyone working in any aspect of the arts and theatre industry, whether as artists, actors, stagehands, costume designers, etc., she says.

Slattery Black says one fear is that these workers may need to find full-time employment in another industry. If they are forced to leave the arts community to find financial stability elsewhere, their absence will be felt by all.

"As an audience member, if we do our jobs right, you don't think when you sit in that audience and let the story wash over you. You don't think about the thousands of people who turn on the lights and draw the curtains and sweep the floor and are back there telling the lightboard operator to make it dark so that sud-

denly we're at night. It sort of magically happens."

"The reality is there are thousands and thousands of people on every show to make that magic happen for the audience," she says.

"The fear is that all these amazing musicians, artists, theatre people have to leave and say, 'Well, I guess even though my passion is storytelling, I'm going to become an accountant, because I have obligations.' And then, when we as audience members are so ready to get back to theatre, a fundamental need of storytelling, there's nobody left to make it."

This rising to meet the needs of theatre workers is built into the foundation of the community, Carmichael says.

"I almost never in my theater career, heard theatre people say, 'That's not my job,'" she says.

"The other thing you never hear them say is, 'That's impossible,'" Slattery Black adds. "It's also kind of the way the theatre community works, which is part of what inspires us to give this kind of help, is that people in the theatre community will always help each other."

And why do all of these theatre workers make their living in such an uncertain, pieced-together industry of gig and contract work, even in "normal times"?

Slattery Black says the answer may vary for each, but she's certain

many would say the same thing: "I think you do it because you can't not do it," she says,

"It's what I'd always rather be doing," Carmichael agrees.

For creatives in this industry, shifting their talents to making and selling art in any form is a natural progression. Carmichael says many of these workers already had existing shops and side businesses to supplement their "cobbled together" employment. Now more than ever, she wants to help spotlight those shops.

Both Carmichael and Slattery Black create and sell items on their own as well.

Slattery Black, who has worked as a costume designer for "Sesame Street" at the Jim Henson Company, created a line of plush monsters called Lyla Tov.

Carmichael, who is the wife of Shaw Festival executive director and CEO Tim Jennings, is an award-winning costume designer and milliner. She has a shop called Truly Carmichael Couture Millinery.

Both of their shops can be found through the Backstage Bazaar, as well as the shops of many other artists and creatives from around the globe. Shoppers can search by item, shop, name or theatre if they would like to support the work of employees of a specific company.

Marathon skate at Gretzky winery encourages donations to Alzheimer's societies

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Steve McNeil is prepping for a 19-hour skating marathon at Gretzky Estates Winery.

On Tuesday, Dec. 15, McNeil will skate for 19 hours and 26 minutes to boost research into Alzheimer's disease.

McNeil, a 59-year-old mailman and recreational hockey referee, has done the marathon skate 18 times in cities across Canada in rain, blizzards and -40C temperatures.

He does it as a tribute to his mother, who died of the

disease. She was born Dec. 15, 1926, thus the name and the skate time.

McNeil says his 19-hour and 26-minute effort is just one day in his life, but caregivers for people living with dementia spend that much time each day looking after their loved ones.

"COVID-19 has been devastating for seniors and their families," McNeil said in a news release. "More and more families are going to need the assistance that their local Alzheimer Societies can provide. That's why this fundraising skate is so important."

"More Canadians will

want to keep their aging parents at home with them rather than placing them in a care facility. After what happened with COVID-19 this year they won't want to have loved ones in a residence where they can't visit them."

This year McNeil has declared Dec. 15 as "National 1926 Skate Day for Alzheimer's."

He is encouraging Canadians across the country to take the "1926 Challenge" and skate, or do whatever they love, for 19 minutes and 26 seconds wherever they live and donate \$19.26 or whatever they can to

their local Alzheimer Society.

Alzheimer's societies offer programs and support services for people living with dementia and their care partners.

McNeil also asking people who participate to tell their story and send a photo to his social media listed on his website www.1926Skate.com and use the hashtag #1926Challenge.

This will be McNeil's ninth year skating. He starts at 12:01 a.m. Dec. 15 and skates until 7.26 p.m., on the outdoor rink at the Gretzky Estates Winery.



Steve McNeil will be skating for 19 hours at Gretzky Estate Winery on Dec. 15. SUPPLIED




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NOTL Gives Back sees loads of donations

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

NOTL has given back to the community this year in a big way.

On Saturday, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake hosted a 3-in-1 charity drive, collecting clothes, food and Christmas presents for a variety of charitable organizations.

By 11 a.m., almost the entire Simpson Room at the community centre was filled with donations.

Beth Audet, assistant to Lord Mayor Betty Disero, said the day was an outstanding success.

"I'd say the perfect word is overwhelming," said Audet. "But a very good overwhelming."

Her colleague, Lauren Kruitbosch, noted, "People are just being so generous and so kind. And we've seen a consistent flow of traffic coming through, and people are just so happy to give, which is great, it's an amazing community initiative."



Matthew Cater helps bring in donations during the town's 3-in-1 holiday drive. RICHARD HARLEY

Audet said people were donating even before the official drive started.

"Honestly, what's amazing is that we started off the day already with half a room full of stuff. People were already bringing in donations before we even started. So the fact that now we have so much more rolling in is just, I mean we cannot say thank you enough."

Some local organizations

banded together to bring in truckloads of donations.

"St. Davids-Queenston United Church filled six SUVs and a van full of donations to drop off at the community centre," Audet said.

"Also, St. Davids residents Judith Atwood, Adriana Vizzari and RONALDA Clifton took it upon themselves to leave a flyer and paper bag on the doorstep of the

houses in their community, promoting the drive, then picked up the filled bags and delivered them for everyone."

Donations of food and Christmas gifts will support Newark Neighbours' Christmas food hamper and gift programs, new or gently used warm winter clothing was collected for Newark Neighbours, Community Care, Hope Centre and Open Arms Mission, and Christmas gifts were also collected for children and families admitted to the McMaster Children's Hospital during the holiday season.

"More individuals and families than ever need help making ends meet this year," said Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

"We want to help ensure that everyone is warm and fed and that every child has a gift to unwrap this Christmas. Despite this year's unique struggles, we want to help make this a magical holiday season for all."

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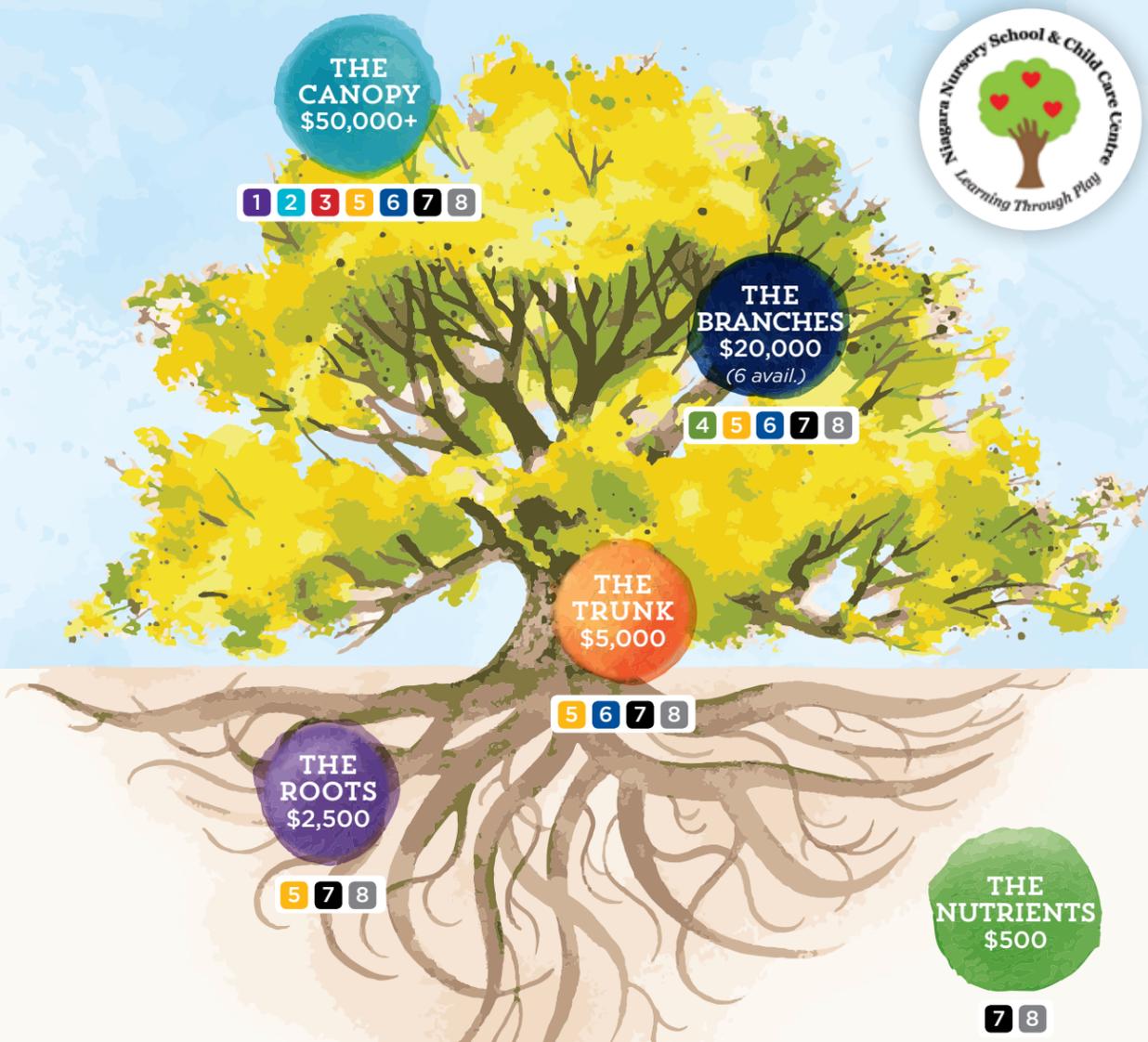
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- 3 Your name and logo on all materials at our donor reception
- 4 Naming rights to one of six interior rooms
- 5 Your name and logo on the NNS website and social media channels
- 6 Listed in a local newspaper article
- 7 Listed on our sponsor sign at our donor reception
- 8 Your name on our Tree of Recognition (to be located in the new NNS space and published in a local newspaper)

NOTL forts get improvements and upgrades

Tony Chisholm
Special to The Lake Report

The Friends of Fort George asked Parks Canada about the latest information on the Federal Infrastructure and Investment Projects at Niagara National Historic Sites to see what has been accomplished to date, and here is their report.

At Fort George, extensive work to Blockhouse 1, 2 and 3 is nearing completion. The blockhouses now have new clapboard, as well as repairs to the windows and doors.

The Octagonal Blockhouse, just outside the main palisades, has undergone foundation repairs, landscape work, repairs to the log structure and the installation of a new roof and siding. In addition, a new electrical distribution panel was installed for the electrical system in the tunnel, Octagonal Blockhouse, and powder magazine.

The rehabilitation of the stone powder magazine began in June 2020 and is now complete. This building is arguably the oldest military building in Ontario, and the only building in the fort to



New cladding at Fort George. SUPPLIED

survive the War of 1812.

The powder magazine had its stonework repaired and its masonry cleaned and protected. There was also landscape work to improve drainage, the application of metal flashing, the installation of new copper gutters and roofing, as well as repairs to the copper entrance door.

At the Junior Commissariat Officers' Quarters at Butler's Barracks, asbestos

and lead paint have been removed, and the building deemed safe. Work will progress toward the stabilization and is likely to begin in the winter of 2021.

Parks Canada will continue to follow the advice of public health officials to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and assess the feasibility of carrying out this work closer to that time. The goal of this project is to preserve as many of the

original building materials as possible while ensuring that the structure is adequately stabilized.

At the Fort Mississauga national historic site, the work on the stabilization and preservation of the central brick tower is complete. This restoration work included the installation of a new roof, which represents an earlier style and will allow the walls to dry out over the coming years.

Repairs were also made to exterior and interior walls. Lastly, solar panels were installed on the roof to charge a battery system that feeds the new interior and exterior lighting systems.

Near Fort Mississauga there was extensive shoreline protection to address erosion and the installation of 600 metres of break wall.

Parks Canada, in conjunction with its lessee, the Niagara-On-The-Lake Golf Club, also planted over 400 native Carolinian tree species and shrubs along the shoreline. Parks Canada will maintain these plantings and ensure they successfully take root in the next few years and replace any dead trees and bushes with new ones.

The slope and earthworks of Fort Mississauga have also seen the removal of non-native and invasive plants to protect the earthworks and archeology, and open up historic views to highlight the fort's prominent position at the mouth of the Niagara River, opposite Fort Niagara.

Parks Canada is finishing up the work of removing

stumps and planting grass on the slopes. The final phase of the project also included the construction of a new walking trail for public use, providing a safe route for pedestrians along the shoreline while accessing the Fort Mississauga tower and earthworks. This work is nearing completion. The trail should be open to visitors in early 2021.

These major projects will help restore our precious national historic sites in town well into the future and preserve our history for the enjoyment of all.

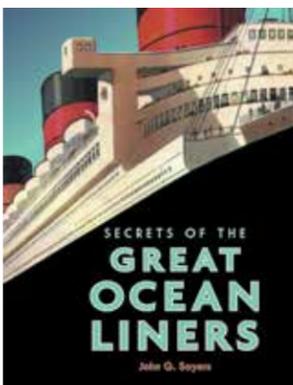
The Friends of Fort George is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with Parks Canada to preserve and promote the heritage of Niagara's national historic sites. Through special events and the operation of two gift shops, the Friends of Fort George generate awareness and funds to support summer student employment at Fort George and Brock's Monument at Queenston Heights. Please consider becoming a member of the Friends of Fort George. See www.friendsoffortgeorge.ca.

NOTL's John Sayers releases new book on life aboard ocean liners

John Sayers
Special to The Lake Report

A picture is worth a thousand words, so here are a few pictures from my new book, "Secrets of the Great Ocean Liners," published by the Bodleian Library at Oxford University. We are featuring only a few of the images here because there are more than 200 illustrations in the book!

This book is all about letters, brochures, photographs and other ephemera and what they tell us about ocean liners, and particularly life on board, ranging from steerage passengers playing deck games over 100 years ago on the Canadian liner Royal Edward, to the elegance of life on board the Queen Mary in her earliest days, when fashion magazines did pictorial spreads of elegance on board.



A series of photos from the book. SUPPLIED



clad Miriam. I guess that is their image of the interests of the average British reader.

Behind the glamour was a lot of hard work and when ships were coal-fired that included replenishing the coal supply on board. A postcard image of that process at Nagasaki makes one weep for the workers clambering up the side of the ship with baskets of coal – if their backs didn't give out first, the coal dust



would eventually get them.

And if you've ever had a coal-burning furnace in your home you remember vividly what coal delivery did, depositing a film of coal dust throughout your house despite your best precautions. The same thing happened on board your ship.

In two world wars, ocean liners carried millions of troops to the various fields of battle, crammed like sardines into tight accom-



modation, such as the one pictured on the massive Leviathan in the First World War.

Ironically, such ships were easily converted to troop accommodation because there were large open spaces that had been used for carrying steerage passengers in quarters only slightly less cramped than what was provided to the soldiers.

All this has the added benefit of letters and post-



card messages which have been built up in my collection over 50-plus years. And there's a lot of secrets in that information about traditions, risks, disasters, romances and all the other aspects that make ocean liners such an exciting topic.

Living here in Niagara-on-the-Lake it is a pleasure to be able to share some treasured highlights of my collection with book readers around the world.

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The Ruffino's team. SUPPLIED

Ruffino's gift cards help feed families in need

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Chef Ryan Crawford of Ruffino's Pasta Bar & Grill is once again finding ways to use his love of cooking to give back to the community.

This year, for every gift certificate purchased at Ruffino's, Crawford will donate a Christmas meal to a family in need with the help of Newark Neighbours.

Crawford said the idea is that instead of offering extra value to certificate buyers, he wants to pass the discounts on to needy families this season.

"It's been a difficult, challenging year for all of us, some more than others, so instead of giving that little extra gift to people when they purchase a gift card during the holiday season — for example, \$100 each and we will give

you \$125 as a little sort of thank you for supporting us during the season — we're giving that little extra to all the food-insecure families of Niagara-on-the-Lake," Crawford said.

The restaurant has partnered with the Newark Neighbours food bank to offer the food certificates to people who can use them.

"We're going to give each family and each individual a gift card for one of our

holiday feasts" or it can be redeemed for food at a later date, said Crawford.

He said his main message is that "no one should go hungry this holiday."

Gift cards are available in any denomination.

Crawford also wanted to express his gratitude to the NOTL community.

"I just wanted to thank everybody in Niagara-on-the-Lake for their continued support."

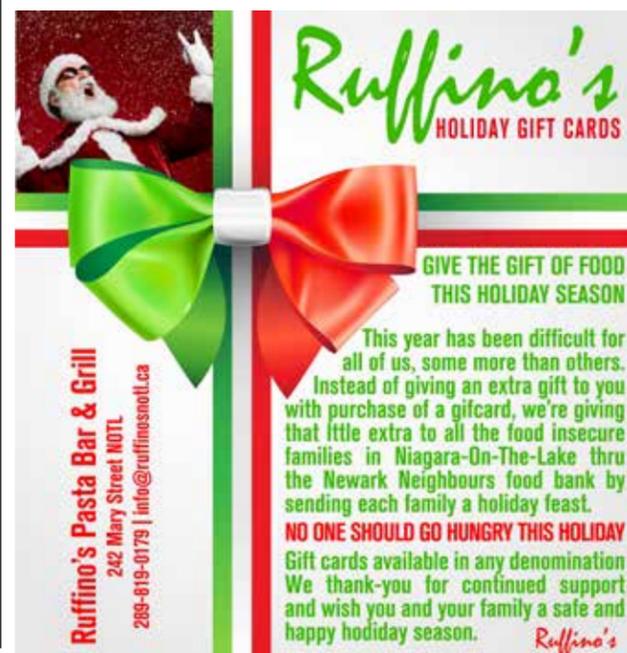


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Ruffino's
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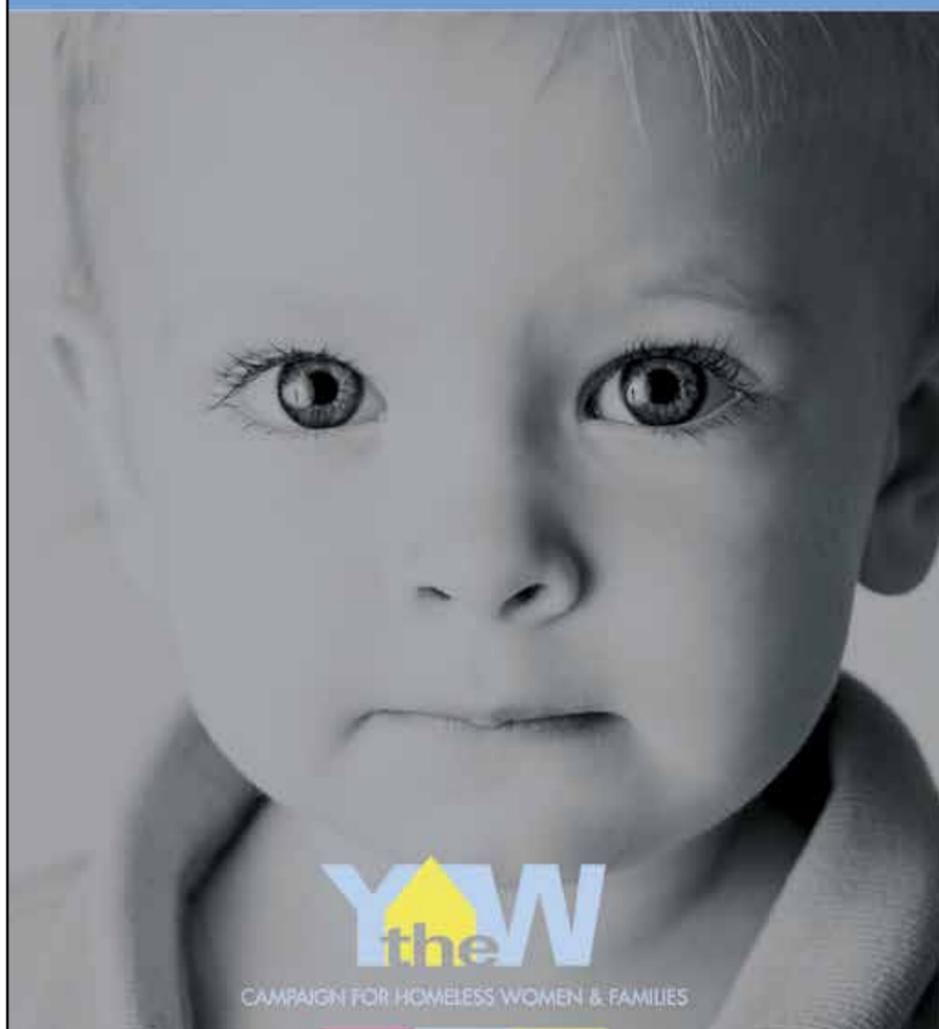
This year has been difficult for all of us, some more than others. Instead of giving an extra gift to you with purchase of a gifcard, we're giving that little extra to all the food insecure families in Niagara-On-The-Lake thru the Newark Neighbours food bank by sending each family a holiday feast.

NO ONE SHOULD GO HUNGRY THIS HOLIDAY
Gift cards available in any denomination
We thank-you for continued support and wish you and your family a safe and happy holidday season.

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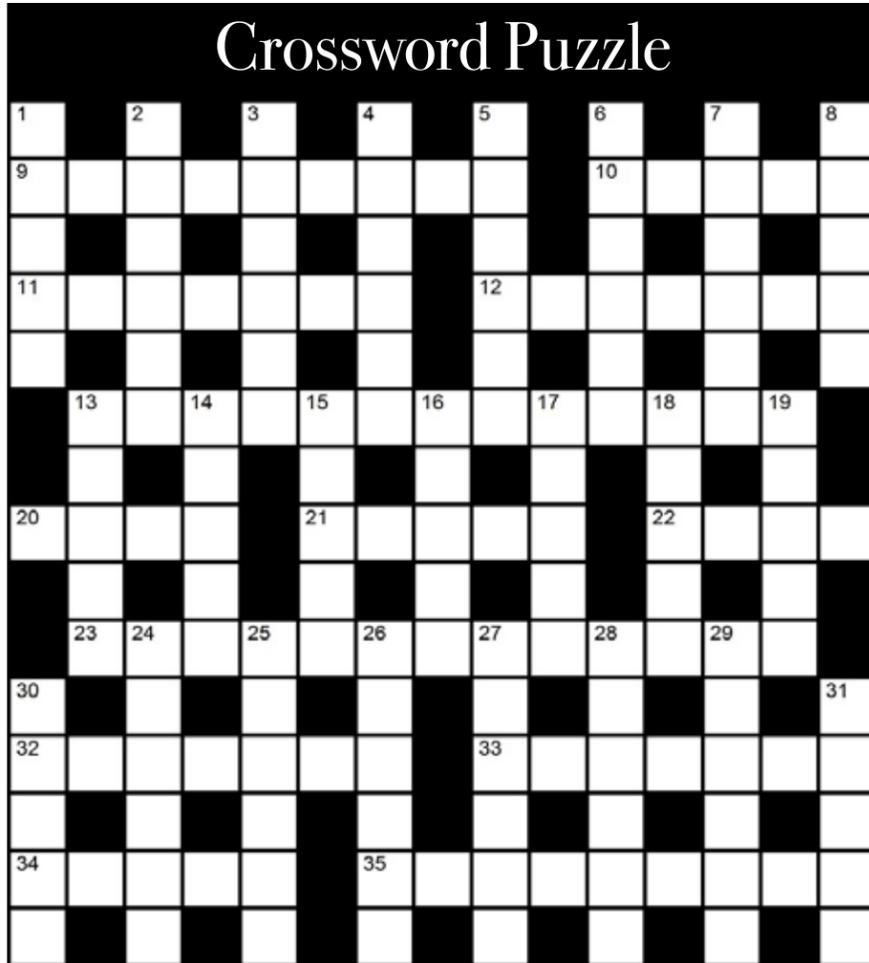
Have some fun

Across

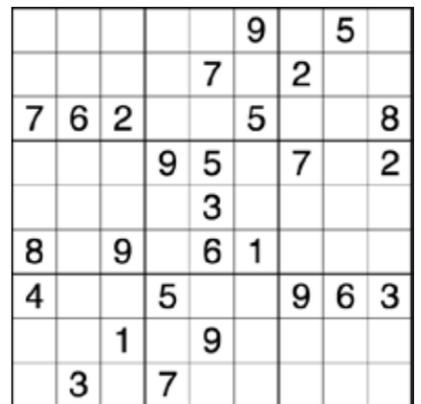
- 9. Wiggler (9)
- 10. Eight singers (5)
- 11. Curtain calls (7)
- 12. Trap (7)
- 13. Debatable (13)
- 20. Equipment for the reproduction of very good sound (2-2)
- 21. Set apart (5)
- 22. Irish county (4)
- 23. Unpredictable (13)
- 32. Tolerate (7)
- 33. Sustain (7)
- 34. Awaken (5)
- 35. Appraising (9)

Down

- 1. Gem (5)
- 2. Dealer in foodstuffs (6)
- 3. Winged child (6)
- 4. Sweet dessert (6)
- 5. Simple life form (6)
- 6. Dwarfed tree (6)
- 7. Capital of Canada (6)
- 8. Speak (5)
- 13. Publish (5)
- 14. Intense hatred (5)
- 15. Hire (5)
- 16. Island awarded the George Cross (5)
- 17. A tenth part (5)
- 18. Celestial body (5)
- 19. Faithful (5)
- 24. General escape (6)
- 25. Maxed (6)
- 26. Make over (6)
- 27. Wretchedness (6)
- 28. Son of one's brother or sister (6)
- 29. Very handsome young man (6)
- 30. E.g. the Romanovs (5)
- 31. Male deer (5)



Last issue's answers



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Keeping it
Green 

I'm dreaming of a green Christmas



Kyra Simone is a NOTL-born nature lover with a master's degree in biology. In her spare time, she advocates for sustainable change, picks up garbage, makes recycled jewelry, and transforms furniture bound for the landfill.

Kyra Simone
Special to The Lake Report

Canadians produce 25 per cent more waste around the holidays than any other time of year. But simple switches can keep things merry and bright while reducing environmental impact.

Oh, Christmas Tree: The choice between real and artificial Christmas trees is a multifaceted debate.

Artificial trees are often manufactured in Asia, where factories have lax environmental regulations and poor working conditions.

Because artificial trees are made with fire-resistant PVC, factory workers can be exposed to heavy metals and toxic airborne chemicals.

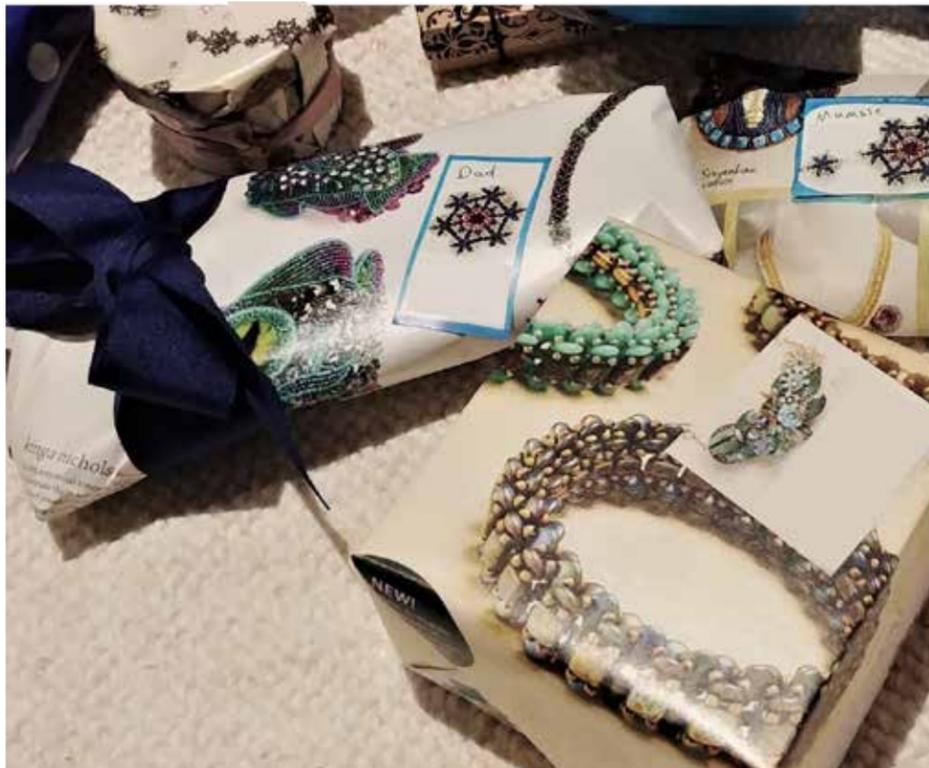
On the other hand, buying a real tree supports local small businesses: there are over 500 family-owned tree farms in Ontario.

There are actually environmental benefits to real Christmas trees! For every tree harvested, up to three new seedlings are planted.

While they reach maturity, which takes several years, trees take up carbon dioxide and provide safe refuge for wildlife. Roots help to reduce erosion and prevent flooding, and each acre of Christmas trees generates enough oxygen for 18 people!

Unlike artificial trees, which cannot be recycled, real trees are given a second life.

For example, the Niagara River Coastal Wetlands Project anchored 350-plus recycled trees to the riverbed to prevent erosion and create wetland habitat. In Niagara, real trees are turned into mulch, which reduces the number of trees



Magazines can be used as wrapping paper to help the environment. KYRA SIMONE

cut down to supply garden centres.

Many Christmas tree farms offer a low flat rate and an opportunity to cut your own tree. Or, you might seek out a potted tree, which can be planted in your garden and enjoyed for years to come.

If you'd still prefer an artificial tree, try to seek out

one made from polyethylene instead of PVC plastic.

Wrapping Up: One key problem with our gift-giving tradition is the wrapping itself. Zero Waste Canada estimates that Canadians throw out 545,000 tonnes of giftwrapping and shopping bags every year.

Most wrapping paper is not recyclable; paper with

a foil or glitter component especially must be thrown in the garbage.

Brown craft paper, even reused from online orders, makes excellent recyclable wrapping paper. You can get creative with designs by using stamps or markers.

Old newspapers and magazines are other recyclable alternatives. In the past, I

have wrapped gifts in pages from *Beadwork* magazine to add a bit of extra glitz.

The wrapping can also be part of the gift itself. Items can be placed into a basket, mug or scarf that can be used again and again.

Paper with plastic tape or curly ribbon cannot be recycled. Instead, gifts can be tied with twine, cloth strips, or reusable fabric ribbon. And last year's cards make unique gift tags.

Most holiday crackers are not recyclable and trinkets inside are usually discarded right away. Seek out recyclable or reusable alternatives, or try a DIY craft to make your own.

Giving Back: We ought not to buy unneeded items just for the sake of gift-giving. Try a Secret Santa exchange, where each person gifts to just one other.

Or, give experiences instead of "things": a restaurant gift card, guided tour, or class to learn a new skill together. Consumable gifts, like local wine and cheese, are also guaranteed to be enjoyed.

During this season of giving, let's also think about giving back to the planet.

Dr. Brown: COVID vaccine doesn't mean immediate end to restrictions

Continued from Front Page

many south of the border failing to take any precautions during recent Thanksgiving celebrations and political rallies, including outdoor events.

Those simple public health guidelines proved their value in this pandemic in jurisdictions where the political leadership was sound and citizens recognized the need for some restrictions on their freedom for the common good, such as wearing masks and distancing.

That sense of obligation to put the needs of others before oneself, seems to have been conspicuously absent this time around in some regions north and south of the border.

Indeed, flouting public health recommendations for some appears to be a badge of honour. Continued, that



PIXABAY PHOTO

kind of antisocial behaviour will surely make the coming winter months hell for health-care workers and those most at risk for developing life-threatening COVID-19.

The fact that very effective vaccines are on the way is welcome news. But the hard truth is that to make a real dent in this pandemic, we need to roll out vaccination programs as quickly as possible, beginning with those most at risk.

Most experts in the western world agree the

first priority for vaccination should be health-care workers, who by the nature of their jobs are most at risk for developing COVID-19.

In my view, first place should also be given to all residents and staff in long-term care facilities and nursing homes. After all, that's where most of the deaths have occurred.

Next in line should be all those 65 years of age or more, with or without comorbid conditions. Beyond them, all those at any age with comorbid conditions such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, any chronic lung disease, kidney failure or anyone, who for whatever reason, is immunosuppressed.

Once those most at risk are vaccinated, the next goal should be to vaccinate as many of the remaining healthy members of the community as quickly as

possible in order to shrink the number of potential spreaders and eventually immunize the 60 per cent or more of the population required to achieve herd immunity.

Those are the goals. But between now and reaching those goals there looms a gap of several months – hopefully only three or four months, but perhaps six months or longer – when a significant proportion of the population will remain unprotected. For the welfare of everyone, all of us, including those who have been vaccinated, will need to continue social distancing, wearing masks and avoiding large groups, especially indoors. * See below.

The gap between now and vaccination for all, covers the worst time of the year for spreading this virus – the looming winter in a time when many are fed up

with restrictions on socializing and tired of Netflix.

Still, this is not a time to let our guard down. If anything, with an end several months off, it's time to double down and remind ourselves what worked to protect us for the last nine to 10 months and keep doing what worked.

Who would have imagined 12 long months ago what was to come? So many deaths around the world in such a short time – so many jobs lost, so many families dropping below the poverty line, so much debt, so much disruption to families, communities – all caused by an insentient virus with a genome 100,000th the size of ours. Humbling!

If there are bright lights in all this carnage, they surely rest with three groups.

First, there were the health-care workers who toiled shift after shift, week

after week, month after month to save their patients despite the agony of losing some. That was hard, very hard.

Then there were many millions who quietly went about their lives doing whatever was needed for the common good.

And last, there are those pioneers in vaccine laboratories who may finally rescue us by providing what looks like an abundance of different types of effective vaccines, several before this year ends.

Thanks to all, and to most of us, for sticking with this challenge without losing our senses of humour and responsibility.

We're almost there. *Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the Infohealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.*



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NIAGARA'S HISTORY UNVEILED



Left: A curling stone in wall at Randwood. Middle: The silo near the former stables. Right: The dilapidated train shelter. ELIZABETH MASSON PHOTOS

Randwood: **Triumph and tragedy** for Rand family

This story is one in a series about the history of the Rand Estate, about 35 acres of land lying behind the stone wall on John and Charlotte streets, along the Heritage Trail and whose eastern boundary is a hedge between the properties at 176 and 210 John St.

Elizabeth Masson
Special to The Lake Report

The home on John Street owned by the Dickson and Lansing families, known as Woodlawn, and 19 acres of land were sold in October 1910 for \$10,000.

The property's new owner, George F. Rand, renamed it Randwood.

George Franklin Rand was born in 1867 in Niagara County, New York. At age 16, he began working as an assistant cashier at a bank in North Tonawanda and by 21, he was its president. He married that year and eventually had four children.

Ten years later, Rand's selection as president of the Columbia State Bank in Buffalo took the family there. Through numer-

ous bank mergers, Rand became president of the Marine Trust Co., one of the strongest financial institutions in the United States at that point in time.

George Rand I expanded the house, adding porches to the front and western side as well as a solarium to the east. The mansard roof over the tower was replaced by an open belvedere, more in keeping with the Edwardian changes made elsewhere. Inside, the dining room was extended and decorated with substantial Doric columns.

In April 1919, Rand acquired the house known as Rowanwood to the west of Randwood and 12 acres of land along Charlotte Street. This area had been divided off from the main Dickson property in the 1860s. He had the house demolished and declared he would turn his estate into one of the showplaces of Canada.

The best-known feature of the Rand Estate, its wall, was probably started in 1919. The foreman of the crew was William Elliott, a trained stonemason from Ireland, and his son and

grandson were among the workers. Many descendants of the Elliott family still live in town today.

The wall along John Street is made of concrete supported by brick pillars with a wrought-iron gate in front of Randwood (the house) and a wooden one in front of the white house next door.

Then as the wall rounds the corner to Charlotte Street, its appearance changes. This portion consists of large stones embedded in a concrete base.

There are two curious features which have been placed in this part of the wall. One is a large curling stone and the other a Board of Ordnance stone – one of the markers placed in 1823 to note the boundaries of Niagara's military reserve.

When the wall reaches the former Michigan Central Railroad tracks (now part of the Upper Canada Heritage Trail), it turns and proceeds to the eastern edge of the estate. Unfortunately, this part of the wall has not been as well maintained as the other sections.

Not far from the end, there is a wrought-iron gate through which one can see a dilapidated structure. This served as a shelter when that spot was an unofficial stop on the railroad line.

Not only did Rand family members board the train there but it was also used to transport dairy products after part of the estate was incorporated as Randwood Farms in 1929.

Several other structures were built in this same time period. The wall on Charlotte Street is interrupted by two small buildings, which served as groundskeepers' homes under the Rands. A large cement arch links them and on it is inscribed the name "Randwood."

Just behind the groundskeepers' cottages and slightly closer to the rail line, stables and a small milkhouse (present address: 9 Weatherstone Court) were built. Their style has been termed "eclectic," combining Romanesque, Queen Anne, Tudor and Colonial Revival styles.

The stables is a long building composed of stucco with a small tower

at one end and a very large one at the other; the latter was once the silo. The diamond-shaped window panes are edged with wood.

Before George Rand I could see his many plans for the Rand Estate completed, tragedy intervened. In December 1919, while on a business trip to France, he was taken to visit the battlefield of Verdun.

There, he was so moved by the bravery of the French soldiers who had been killed in the "Trench of Bayonets" that he called upon Premier Georges Clemenceau and offered \$50,000 to build a monument to them.

The Trench of Bayonets was created in June 1916. The French 137th Infantry Regiment, positioned in a forward area of the Verdun battlefield, was nearly totally annihilated one day after heavy German shelling.

Months later, an army chaplain visiting the battlefield found a long row of bayonets protruding from the ground and underneath each was a dead soldier standing in place; it is

thought they were buried alive by the shelling.

After making his pledge to Clemenceau, Rand embarked on his first plane trip, hoping to get to Southampton in time to catch a boat that would get him home in time to spend Christmas with his children.

Unfortunately, the weather was bad, the plane crashed, and both Rand and the pilot were killed. Now the four Rand children were orphans, their mother having previously died.

George Rand II, the oldest of the Rand children, became guardian for the younger who were still minors. And as his father had promised, \$50,000 was given to build the Trench of Bayonets monument, which was dedicated on Dec. 8, 1920.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Masson has been a research volunteer at the Niagara-on-the-lake Museum for more than 15 years.

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



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EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Simcoe Park rink

We will all be missing the winter activities this season. A community ice rink is always lots of fun and this photo shows the ice rink that was built in Simcoe Park, circa 1930s. Check out the original four-legged “Zamboni” clearing the ice. The perspective is from Byron Street looking toward King Street. In the background you can see the corner of Queen Street on the left side with the back of the Apothecary and the former Trisha Romance gallery at 177 King St. toward the centre-right.



The details matter

Brian Marshall
Columnist

To achieve a seamless presentation when renovating any type of house involves equal measures of art and discipline.

Unfortunately, far too often art trumps discipline, or discipline rules, or both are forgotten. In each case, the result is completely unsatisfactory.

Without rehashing the past series of columns I wrote on design, suffice it to say that any competent architect designing in a recognized architectural style has an established set of parameters they must comply with. Generally speaking, these parameters establish an overall



Window glass a part of the composition. BRIAN MARSHALL

aesthetic which, when used correctly, produce a visually pleasing presentation.

The challenge one faces in a renovation, particularly when the work affects the exterior of the building, is maintaining the integrity of the original design. Anything short of a complete transformation (altering the architectural style) requires “sympathetic” treatment in which every detail matters.

In this context, sympathetic means creating a continuity between new and old that maintains the overall presentation of the gestalt without visual interruption or distraction. Simply put, the newly renovated building looks and intuitively feels like

it was always meant to be that way.

So, what happens when you get the marriage between the new and old part of the building right, but the details wrong?

As an example, shortly after my retirement, I was asked to restore a home designed by Ron Thom. A brilliant five-level design set into a ravine, it had been added to in the years since it was first constructed.

The architect responsible for the renovation had done a marvellous job of sympathetically melding the addition with the existing facade. However, unwilling to wait for the new red cedar cladding to naturally

silver and blend with the original cedar, the owner painted the entire house grey.

Sadly, while the paint did unify new and old, this decision eliminated a vital element in its overall organic composition by minimizing its integration into the landscape.

The details in a renovation (or restoration) of a historical residence are just as important.

Consider the fact that these houses were designed using the materials of-the-day to create that visually pleasing presentation.

Something as simple as using wavy glass to create a decorative dreamy effect on the facade was part of the overall composition (visit the 240 Centre St. restoration to actually see this in person). To use modern featureless float glass robs the original design of an important (in some cases vital) decorative element.

Quite simply, success is dependent on the details.



BE IN THE KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO SNOW!

Residents are reminded that restrictions on snow removal and street parking are in effect during the winter months.

Please be a good neighbour and consider the safety of other road users.

Visit www.notl.com to see full restriction details.

Thank you for your cooperation!



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HOLIDAY LIGHTS
(AND WHERE TO FIND THEM)



1621 York Rd. PHOTOS BY RICHARD HARLEY



137 Queenston St.



78 Prideaux St. - Biscott House



285 Victoria St.



805 Charlotte St.



688 Penner St.

Here's a list of some great light displays around NOTL. Find more photos at www.niagaranow.com:

- 792 Warner Rd.
- 200 Four Mile Creek Rd.
- 1621 York Rd.
- 137 Queenston St.
- 15630 Niagara Pkwy.
- 78 Prideaux St. - Biscott House
- 69 Prideaux St. - Demeath House

- 285 Victoria St.
- 210 John St. East
- 805 Charlotte St.
- 827 Charlotte St.
- 375 Butler St.
- 3 Wilberforce Ave.
- 64 Shakespeare Ave.

- 48 Colonel Butler Cr.
- 688 Penner St.
- 650 Penner St.
- 13 Autumn Cr.
- 1585 Concession 6 Rd.
- 58 Wright Cr.
- 39 Niagara-on-the-Green Blvd.