

# The Lake Report



## Fire service unveils **major** organizational changes

New deputy chief position created in response to workload concerns and staff turnover due to low salaries

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake fire department is revamping its organizational structure to deal with a high rate of staff turnover and excessive workload.

The organizational changes, which are effective immediately, include the creation of a second deputy chief position, chief Nick Ruller told councillors in a report this week.

"The need to retain skilled and experienced staff is important as we strive to improve the workplace culture and ensure that succession planning is

prioritized," he said.

Over the past two to three years, the position of town fire chief has turned over two times, Ruller said.

The job of training officer has seen turnover four times — deputy fire chief twice, fire prevention officer three times and administrative assistant four times in that period, he said.

Workload and the salaries the NOTL department offers are among some of the reasons for the high turnover, Ruller said.

In some cases, people have left Niagara-on-the-Lake for a similar job at

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Snow day  
Page 8

BRITTANY CARTER

## Cannabis business faces **bumpy road** one year in

Producers deal with upheaval, shakeups and only 24 retail locations in entire province

Jill Troyer  
The Lake Report

The cannabis business in Canada is facing falling stock prices, revenue shortfalls, staff layoffs and senior management shakeups as the industry shakes down, painting a portrait of a sector in upheaval, one year into legalization.

Niagara Region is not im-

mune to those speedbumps, hard on the heels of a year of rapid expansion, but the biggest player, Tweed Farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake, says it is holding steady, with 270 employees, and a million square feet of greenhouse space.

The company has no plans to reduce staff or operations at its huge facility on Concession 5 in NOTL, ac-

cording to Jordan Sinclair, vice-president of communications for Canopy Growth Corporation, which owns Tweed Farms.

The "key challenge is the lack of retail stores," explained Sinclair.

"This is most true in Ontario, where we have one store per 600,000 resi-

*Continued on Page 3*



Prof. Sudarsana Poojari and Prof. Debbie Inglis work with some of the new equipment being used as part of Brock University's new cannabis research and development licence from Health Canada. **See story on Page 3.** SUPPLIED

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# Changes to structure aimed at retaining firefighters

Continued from Front Page

another Niagara municipality and received a starting wage more than double what NOTL pays, he said.

“Disorganization and improper staffing have affected the fire department’s ability to effectively deliver exceptional customer service,” the chief reported.

“With recent resources being limited due to staffing shortages, staff members could focus only on their immediate responsibilities, leaving little time, energy, or desire to work outside their current job scope.”

Under Ruller’s reorganization of the Fire and Emergency Services, a new deputy chief position has been created to oversee fire prevention and community risk reduction.

Current fire prevention officer and acting deputy chief Jay Plato is being promoted to that job.

Plato will also be responsible for fire prevention and public education, emergency management, community outreach, data analytics and decision support.

The existing deputy chief position, now vacant, will be responsible for operations and training.

The person in that job will oversee operations, professional development and training, fleet and equipment maintenance, and occupational health and safety.

That job will be filled in the coming weeks, said Lauren Kruitbosch, the town’s community engagement co-ordinator.

The reclassification will not result in adding more full-time employees.

“Although this realignment will result in a second deputy fire chief position, it will be as a result of adding additional responsibilities to one of the fire prevention officer positions through a reclassification,” Ruller explained in his report.

The change will result in a \$14,000 budget increase, which has already been included in the proposed 2020 budget.

The service’s training officer position is also vacant as the former employee has been hired by another mu-

nicipality at double the salary he earned in NOTL, according to the report.

A previous fire prevention officer also left for another municipality where the starting rate was more than twice the current rate paid to NOTL fire prevention officers, Ruller said.

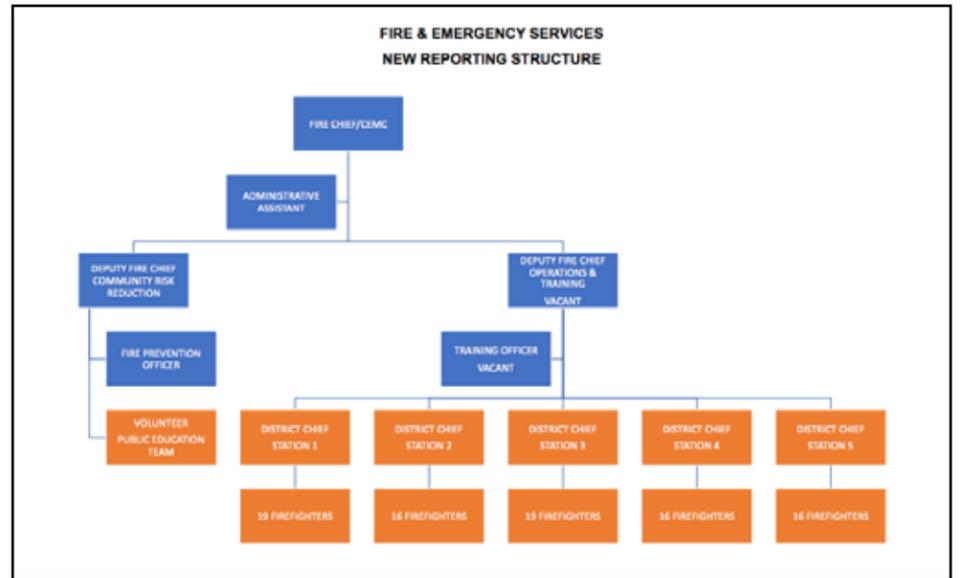
With their new employers, both of the former employees will work 40 hours a week, with alternating four-day weekends, according to the report.

In NOTL, the fire training officer is required to work 35 hours a week and coordinate training for more than 100 volunteer firefighters on top of providing training to the service’s 17 new firefighter recruits.

Under the old structure, the lone deputy fire chief had nine direct reports and oversaw the town’s volunteer firefighters.

The annual salaries for a training officer and a fire prevention officer are lower in NOTL, compared to other Niagara municipalities.

In NOTL, a training officer’s salary is \$54,000,



The fire department’s new organizational structure

while a fire prevention officer receives \$58,000, according to the report.

Across the regional municipalities, fire prevention staff salaries can range between \$52,000 to \$144,531.

Both volunteer firefighter training and recruit training curriculums have been impacted negatively by the additional workload during the recruit training program, Ruller said in his report.

“Due to the volunteer

service delivery model, the majority of the training officer’s work is completed on evenings and weekends, leaving little time for administrative work during regular office hours,” Ruller said.

The administrative assistant position at the fire department is also vacant at the moment.

The administrative changes have been outlined in the department’s Stabilization

and Growth Plan, which has four objectives it will be focusing on over the next 12 to 18 months.

The department’s goals are to make organizational improvements, enhance training and professional development, improve service delivery and commit to continuous improvement.

The fire chief will also be providing quarterly reports to council on the plan’s progress.

# No danger of lead in NOTL drinking water, town says

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake’s drinking water results showed low lead levels in the past, which is why for several years the town has been granted regulatory relief from lead testing, town staff explained in an information report presented to council’s committee of the whole Monday.

Following nationwide investigative research by the Toronto Star, which revealed thousands of Canadians could be drinking water with a high level of lead coming from aging pipes and infrastructure, town staff updated councillors about Niagara-on-the-Lake’s drinking water quality.

In March 2019, Health Canada set a new maximum acceptable concentration guideline from 0.01 milligrams per litre to 0.005 milligrams per litre.



The town of Niagara-on-the-Lake says there is no danger of lead in municipal drinking water. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

In Ontario, the current drinking water quality standard for lead is 10 micrograms per litre or 10 parts per billion, according to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

When the Ontario standards for lead sampling and testing came into effect, all provincial municipalities were required to take and submit samples based on population size, the town’s engineering technologist

Darrin Wills said in the report.

In 2009, NOTL took about 200 samples across town at two set time intervals and submitted the results to the Ministry of Environment. As NOTL had low lead levels, the town was not required to continue extensive sampling. NOTL only was required to take 10 samples every third year.

Since then the town’s

requirement was reduced to five samples for lead every three years. During the other two years, the town must take five samples during each of the periods to test for pH and alkalinity.

However, town staff tested more often, taking 15 samples in 2012, 16 samples in 2015, and 12 samples in 2018.

The town also tests water on E.coli, total coliforms, Heterotrophic plate count,

free chlorine residual, trihalomethanes, pH and lead and Haloacetic acids.

NOTL owns and operates two separate drinking water distribution systems: the Niagara-on-the-Lake system and the Bevan Heights system in Queenston.

Each system receives treated water from two separate regionally-owned and operated water treatment plants.

The Bevan Heights system receives water from the Niagara Falls water treatment plant and serves about 157 residents.

According to the 2018 annual report for the Bevan Heights Drinking Water System, all water mains, appurtenances and service lines within the Bevan Heights subdivision were renewed in 2002.

The only exception is on Mallette Crescent where the water main dates to 1971 but “is still adequate.”

Service lines on Mallette Crescent were also renewed in 2002.

The Bevan Heights Drinking Water System includes two kilometres of water mains, 16 fire hydrants and 19 valves.

The NOTL system receives treated water from the DeCew Falls Water Treatment Plant in St. Catharines.

The system serves about 15,000 residents and includes 200 kilometres of water mains, 1,386 of fire hydrants, 1,358 valves and two water filling stations.

In 2018, 1,900 metres of water main was replaced in all of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s water distribution system, including Bevan Heights, at a cost of \$1,650,000, according to the report.

The town’s annual drinking water reports are submitted to the ministry every year and can be viewed online.



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## \$20,000 damage after car crashes through front doors of bank



Police say the female driver wasn't injured after crashing into the front of the RBC. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

An 86-year-old woman was behind the wheel when she mistakenly accelerated and crashed into the Royal Bank of Canada branch on Mary Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake last week.

The mishap caused more than \$20,000 in damage to the building, Niagara Regional Police spokesper-

son Philip Gavin said in an email.

There was about \$3,000 damage to the woman's vehicle.

The unidentified driver, who is a NOTL resident, was "likely shaken up" but didn't have any injuries that required treatment, Gavin told The Lake Report.

As the collision happened on private property, no charges were laid, he said.

## Brock gets cannabis research licence from Health Canada

Brittany Carter  
The Lake Report

Brock University will begin two research projects focusing on cannabis after becoming one of Canada's first universities to obtain a cannabis-related research and development licence from Health Canada.

One of the research projects, which will be led by Debbie Inglis, a biochemistry professor, and Sudarsana Poojari, an adjunct professor of biological sciences, will aim to improve the quality and health of cannabis plants being grown primarily for medicinal use.

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Donald Ziraldo, chair of Heritage Cannabis Corp., has partnered with Brock on the project.

"We identified a problem with our plants showing some signs of stress and we instantly knew the researchers at Brock could figure it out," Ziraldo said in a media statement.

The second project will

focus on researching cannabis extractables for stability in different products.

The university will work with industry partner Mavcan, a cannabis-infused drink company launched by Maverick Distillery. Mavcan is in the final stage of becoming a Health Canada-licensed producer of cannabis-induced products.

Craig Peters, the founder and CEO of Maverick Distillery and Mavcan, said working with Brock is "vital" to keeping the company at the forefront of the industry for cannabis-infused beverages.

"Through our partnership with Brock University, Mavcan is leveraging cutting-edge separation and downstream processing technologies to isolate and refine high-value cannabinoid molecules," Peters said in a media statement.

After receiving the cannabis-related research and development licence, the university plans to propose more research projects to Health Canada.

# Canopy Growth in NOTL says it will continue ongoing work

Continued from Front Page

dents. Ontario has 24 stores, while Alberta, for example, has 324 stores."

However, Sinclair said, "it's a good problem to have, because it's a simple solution. We've been spending a lot of time in recent weeks in any arena available, advocating for more retail stores."

The other factor that is expected to give the industry a lift is the legalization of edible marijuana products, referred to as cannabis 2.0 within the business.

Products will be legally available to consumers beginning mid-December.

"We will have a full suite of products for consumers, ranging across various categories, including vape, beverage and edibles such as infused chocolate," said Sinclair.

Meanwhile, Hexo Corp. has announced the closing



A Tweed farms employee working in November 2018. JILL TROYER/FILE PHOTO

of its plant in Beamsville.

As part of "rightsizing our operations, we are winding down operations at the Beamsville facility. We retain the ability to bring it back online to adjust to any increase in demand in the future," Isabelle Robillard, vice-president of communications for Hexo Corp., said in an email response.

"We have yet to share

numbers for individual locations ... the total number of positions cut is just under 200" across all of its operations, she said.

CannTrust, which also has operations in Niagara, has also announced reductions.

The company is "temporarily streamlining its workforce by up to 140 people through phased layoffs at both Pelham and Langstaff facilities by the end of 2019. This is the result of significantly reduced operations following Health Canada's partial suspension of the company's licences," senior vice-president Jane Shapiro said in a statement to The Lake Report.

CannTrust ran afoul of Health Canada last summer, violating its licence conditions by growing more plants than it was licensed for.

"Ongoing work at the Pelham facility continues to focus on remediation-related

activities. Once the licences are reinstated, the company looks forward to rehiring its workforce, resuming production and once again delivering high-quality products to customers and patients," added Shapiro.

The cannabis business is a "brand new industry and it's having teething pains," surmised Hugo Chesshire, director of policy and government relations for the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce.

"It would be naive to expect smooth sailing. It's to be expected in a new industry there may be some bumps," he said.

In the meantime, Sinclair is unequivocal about Canopy.

"We're solid, we have cash on hand to weather the short-term challenges, and we have no intention of making any changes to our operations at Tweed Farms in NOTL."

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# TLR

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**Managing Editor:** Kevin MacLean  
**Publisher:** Niagara Now  
**Design & Layout:** Richard Harley  
**Advertising:** Rob Lamond, Luke Archibald, Cameron Taylor  
**Staff:** Brittany Carter, Dariya Baiguzhiyeva, Jill Troyer, Tim Taylor, Eunice Tang  
**Contributors:** Denise Ascenzo, Linda Fritz, Ross Robinson, Brian Marshall, Tim Carroll, Susan Des Islets, NOTL Writers' Circle, Jim Smith, Jaclyn Wilms, Collin Gooddine, Plunger Patrol, and many more members of the local community



## Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

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



## Contributed by Patty Garriock

"It's such a lucky accident, having been born, that we're almost obligated to pay attention."  
 – Poet Mark Strand.

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## Editorial

### A new approach at NOTL fire department

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

When emergencies occur, whether it's a fire, car crash, medical emergency or major tragedy, almost always the first to arrive on the scene is the fire department.

Whether we realize it or not, even with a largely volunteer fire department here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, residents owe a lot – often their very lives – to the work of the largely unsung men and women of the fire service.

It can be dangerous work, though most calls are thankfully pretty routine. It can be life-changing work that affects firefighters' health, as they can be exposed to everything from deadly chemicals to human tragedy that can't help but take a toll on a person's psyche.

For these, and a great many other reasons, we all need to appreciate the work our fire department does.

The work that NOTL firefighters

do – and how they do it – is changing, as our community grows and develops.

In fact, even the name of what they do is evolving. We actually no longer have a NOTL fire department – it is officially NOTL Fire and Emergency Services, a reflection of the modern reality of what firefighters do in the community and on the job.

Our front-page story this week about Fire Chief Nick Ruller's major reorganization of his department's administration and how it serves and protects Niagara-on-the-Lake, is a timely reflection of how much the town is changing – and perhaps on how far it still has to go.

Ruller, a young, dynamic, well-educated administrator, is bringing to the fire service an outlook that dares to approach things differently than "the way it's always been done."

This is refreshing and welcome – though it could mean some pain for taxpayers down the road. If so, it will be a price worth paying.

As the newly appointed fire chief, Ruller has recognized that his department has a problem. There are serious concerns about staff retention in some key positions.

Staff workload also is an issue and the department has lost some key personnel to other municipalities where the same job pays double or more. That is worrisome.

And it is a big problem that likely will need to be addressed more fully in coming years. Meanwhile, the new chief has shown he is prepared to shake things up and face the challenges.

Ruller's reorganization is a welcome initiative and appears to be a step in the right direction.

While we're not sure what the future holds, it is encouraging to see the chief taking the reins and ensuring that our Fire and Emergency Service is ready to respond when the residents of NOTL call.

editor@niagaranow.com



## NOTL is **not** a walking winter wonderland

Dear editor:

I must commend the NOTL Christmas committee on the beautification of Old Town.

It truly does give a feeling of a winter wonderland to our lovely little town.

It's so nice seeing the lovely Christmas trees, decorations and light displays throughout town.

That being said I must admit I'm more than a little confused as to how town officials and the Chamber of Commerce can ramp up their promotion of NOTL as a winter getaway while the municipality does not even maintain snow and ice removal of the town-owned sidewalks along Simcoe Park and the old NOTL Hospital – both of which are direct paths from the bus parking lot at Fort George to Old Town.

Further to this is the Christmas committee's nice display of lights and the enticing Christmas entrance to Simcoe Park.

When you enter, you will immediately encounter a town-installed sign stating "Caution No Winter Maintenance Use at Your Own Risk."

This is quite an appropriate warning for anybody who might want to enjoy a walk through Simcoe Park during the winter as no maintenance or snow removal is done on the path through the park.

Maybe it's just time for the town officials to step up to their moral responsibilities of providing a safe winter walking environment for the residents and tourists that have been lured to town expecting a winter wonderland they can walk safely through.

If this won't be done then maybe it's time for new Welcome to Niagara-on-the-Lake signs stating "Caution No Winter Maintenance Use at Your Own Risk" before the Town is cited for false advertising.

Regards,

Laurie Stratton  
 NOTL



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OPINION

# Politicians need to **act now** to save our environment

Liz Benneian  
Special to The Lake Report

In Niagara, we have exactly one cold water creek left that can support a fish population and it's in trouble.

As conservation authority reports have noted for decades, Niagara's surface water quality rates a "D." The condition of our forest rates a "D."

According to Carolinian Canada, in Niagara we have less than half the natural areas we need to maintain basic ecological functions and only 50 per cent of the green infrastructure that's required to mitigate the impacts of global warming. The global extinction crisis is playing out here in Niagara where wildlife and native plant populations are in a precipitous decline. Across Canada, wildlife populations have declined by 50 per cent in the past few decades — 50 per cent!

I have been to three different meetings in the last couple of weeks by three different groups that are trying to address these issues in different ways. All are looking at citizens and asking what we can do. And I'm fed up.

If we want to turn things around, it is not citizens that we need to look to. It is our political leaders who need to step up to the plate because it is bad policy that is allowing humans to destroy the environment that we all depend on. And it is policy change that will fix things.

Want to change things fast? Then elected officials, don't ask citizens to organize tree plantings. Change policy to protect existing forests, wetlands, their buffers and linkages through the implementation of a natural heritage system.

The Region of Halton, an area that has an urban/rural mix like Niagara, has protected 33 per cent of its land through natural heritage system zoning.

This change doesn't prevent agricultural activity, in



Four Mile Creek in Virgil. EUNICE TANG/FILE PHOTO

fact, it protects farming, and the businesses that support it, from being paved over.

The first step in creating such a system is to do a natural heritage inventory that identifies the most ecologically significant areas, maps sufficient protective buffer lands around them and then delineates potential linkages between them to create a system that is sound enough to remain healthy even as development goes on around it.

A decade ago, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority spent two years completing such studies only to have the work shelved by a regional council that felt the information was a "burden" to its development plans.

The conservation authority is now starting to update that mapping. The region is consulting to update its official plan, including natural heritage and climate change components. Now is the time for citizens to make their voices heard on these issues.

Enact private tree bylaws and don't be timid. Follow the best practices of leading municipalities, like Oakville. Strong, enforced private tree bylaws are the only way to stop developers from clear-cutting land before they submit a site plan.

Require the planting of only native trees, shrubs and flowers in all new developments and on all town property. When we plant non-native plants that don't

feed our native species, we are creating giant black holes in our local ecology.

Consider this one example: a native white oak feeds almost 500 native creatures, including the insect larvae that our songbirds need to feed their young; by contrast, Norway Maple, including the popular King Crimson, feed two species. Only two.

Be leaders in explaining to citizens the value of restoring our ecosystem through planting natives in resident's own backyards. Budget to replant our rural roads and change bylaws to promote naturalized landscapes, including maintained meadows and native flower gardens instead of lawns.

Budget for green infrastructure as you do for grey infrastructure. Trees and wetlands can provide the same services as pipes and drains in terms of preventing flooding but they have the added benefits of providing oxygen, cleaning the air and water, providing habitat for animals, recreational areas for humans and shade that cools the heat island effect in cities — an ever more important factor as climate change accelerates.

Put better planning policies in place that protect our remaining natural areas and require sufficient setbacks (7.5-metre buffers don't cut it). Require that developers put topsoil back on sites after they develop them, so urban trees have a chance to

grow, and require soil quality and quantity standards for street trees. Require permeable paving and promote rain gardens to both prevent flooding and ensure cleaner water enters our creeks, streams and lakes.

I have spent 15 years of my life doing everything I can. I have organized community groups to plant more than 17,000 native trees. I have provided environmental science education to more than 70,000 students in 13 regions, I have met with local politicians and MPPs. I have led marches at Queen's Park and I have delegated to innumerable regional and municipal councils.

I have started various advocacy and action groups, led urban first tours, organized native plant sales and restored nature in my own backyard. I have advocated against bad development plans and policies and worked hard to get better leaders elected — and now I'm exhausted, I'm frustrated and I'm heartbroken to see the ever-increasing decline in our natural world and the ever-increasing threat caused by the climate crisis.

Politicians, step up! There is no time to waste, no time for excuses and no one else to rely on. Now, it's on you.

*Liz Benneian is the manager of environmental education for the charitable group Ontariogreen. As well, she is a board member of A Better Niagara.*

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This year, Maintenance By The Yard will be collecting gently used or new coats, boots, hats, gloves and scarves for the homeless and most vulnerable. My family & friends volunteer with Out Of The Cold Niagara and this year we are ramping it up! We have actually entered a float into the Niagara-on-the-Lake Santa Claus Parade in hopes of collecting donations for both adults and children. My family and friends will be walking the parade route alongside the float to collect donations. This is our family's first attempt at this charity drive and we would welcome anything that you may have at home in the way of winter clothing that you would care to donate.

**ALL donations will go directly to Start Me Up Niagara who works directly with Community Care and Out Of The Cold.**  
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Thank you so much.  
Mike, Sheena & Maintenance By The Yard Team

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*The Lake Report*

### Bird cannons an outdated, ineffective practice

Dear editor:

The use of bird cannons along the protected Niagara Escarpment area is nothing short of torture, not only for the world biosphere habitat, long-term residents, new residents, or endangered animals, but also for people like me who love nature and enjoy walking, hiking and bicycling. For all those who choose to call this place home, and for those who actively participate in nature in this beautiful area, it doesn't matter who was here first.

What matters is how we treat the environment.

Let's consider this:

1. Bird cannons are an outdated practice and were originally intended for large-scale farms. They were never intended to be used around close-proximity to neighbours.
2. Experts state bird cannons have lost their effectiveness – some experts even feel they tell the birds where the food is.
3. We all support farmers, but farmers should not be allowed to put profits over the health and safety of their neighbours and those who are enjoying the beautiful Escarpment.
4. In my opinion, there is nothing "normal" (the use of cannons is considered a "normal farm practice") about using bird cannons in the world biosphere.

Past farming practices that were once acceptable and considered normal have now been banned or extensively restricted, ie. cancer-causing pesticides and antibiotic use in animals.

Netting and other options are available.

Let's get with the times.

*Michael Jodoin  
Niagara Falls*

### In honour of three special men

Dear editor:

Lord Mayor Betty Disero proclaimed International Men's Day on Nov. 19 as a day to celebrate men who have made a positive impact on their families, their communities and the world. I would like to talk about three men in Niagara-on-the-Lake whom I count myself privileged to have known.

The first is my father-in-law Georges Masson (1911-2011). Georges grew up in Nancy, France, became a veterinarian and moved to Quebec in 1935 to teach biology to the monks at Oka.

In 1967, while driving through St. Catharines, he heard an advertisement on a local radio station about property for sale in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Remembering a steamship trip from Toronto to Niagara Falls in the mid-1930s, he decided to pull off the road and have a look at the town. Planning to retire to the south of France, Georges and his wife Helen instead bought an abandoned house, had it renovated and lived in town for the next 48 years.

Georges established a large garden, which was on the first Niagara Horticultural Society garden tour in the 1990s. He also wrote two books about wine, one called "Wine from Ontario Grapes" and the other, "Vigne et Vin au Canada." He taught wine appreciation classes in the evenings at Niagara District Secondary School and I am told was known among grape growers here as "the little Frenchman."

I would also like to mention two "gentlemen of the old school" – men who are always courteous, polite and hold the door open for a woman to enter before them. Not like the current practice of letting the door slam in a woman's face as she enters the post office.

Jonathan Kormos and his wife bought the oldest house in the village of Queenston in 1960. Jonathan soon became the head of the Queenston Citizens Association, which fought,

with success, the building of a 500-home development on a 100-acre farm off the Parkway.

The association, with Jonathan as its head, also fought numerous other proposals for development in Queenston. For that reason, it remains the quiet village it was 200 years ago, except between May and October when the noisy jet boat buses rumble through.

Another person who, like Jonathan, always indulged my interest in the history of the area was Calvin Rand.

Calvin was the son of George Rand II, who made the Marine Midland Bank (founded by Calvin's grandfather) into the largest banking system in the state of New York.

Born in Buffalo, Calvin always spent summers at Randwood in Niagara-on-the-Lake. With Brian Doherty, he founded the Shaw Festival and was the first chair of its board of directors.

Calvin also established the Niagara Institute at Randwood in the early 1970s. It was an organization that held leadership conferences attended by people such as Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau.

His home was sold first to the Devonian Foundation of Calgary, then became The School of Philosophy, after which it was purchased by Trisha Romance and Gary Peterson who planned to turn it into The Romance Inn. Calvin continued to visit his cottage behind the house until shortly before his death in 2017.

Unfortunately, the estate that he loved so much is now in ruins.

I hope that in future years, the residents of Queenston will not have to endure jet boat buses travelling from the Parkway to the dock on the Niagara River. And that the next generation of Rands will be happy to visit the John Street estate of their forebearers.

*Betsy Masson  
NOTL*

### Town staff to monitor traffic across NOTL

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's town staff are launching a pilot program to collect traffic data along various roads across the municipality in efforts to address residents' concerns about speeding drivers.

The pilot program will run during December, weather permitting.

The town's operations department has purchased two traffic data collectors to analyze the extent of speeding problems, staff said in an information report presented at the committee of the whole meeting Monday, Dec. 2.

Each collector cost \$3,900, said town

spokesperson Lauren Kruitbosch.

The collector can count vehicles travelling in both directions, measure speed and classify vehicles based on their size.

Once the staff collects and analyzes the information, they can decide if a particular section of the road requires traffic calming measures or enforcement.

"While speed enforcement is an effective method to manage speeds, it requires significant resources that may be difficult to procure on a consistent basis," Mike Komljenovic, the town's acting manager of public works, said in the report.

"As a result, other en-

forcement methods may be necessary to deter drivers that travel in excess of the posted speed limit."

That could include the use of speed minders that measure the speed of approaching vehicles and show it on a digital display, which can help motorists to "self-enforce their speed," staff said in the report.

According to the 2019 capital budget, town staff has purchased two portable radar speed boards for \$18,000 because previous boards no longer met the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines and could only monitor one lane of traffic at a time.

At the request of the council, staff also spent \$50,000 on traffic control

devices, such as intersection flashers, speed limit changes and speed bumps, and on traffic investigations, such as analyzing whether specific intersections merit all-way stop signs.

There are also four speed minders in NOTL, purchased for \$3,450 each, said Kruitbosch.

Before implementing a permanent program in 2020, the staff will submit a report to councillors in the spring of the next year.

The operations department staff will also choose which roads to include in the data collection process and will take into consideration concerns received from councillors and residents.



A speed minder on Anne Street. There are four speed minders in NOTL, purchased for \$3,450 each. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

The information will help determine if traffic calming measures are required, whether Niagara Regional Police need to be asked to crack down on speeders and will provide statistics for the 2020 transportation master plan, Komljenovic said in the report.



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## Glendale Notes: Twistin' the night away with Niagara Dinner Dance Club

Steve Hardaker  
Community Correspondent

Do you have a passion for dancing the evening away to a live band in a social atmosphere?

For the past two years, the Royal Niagara Golf Club in Glendale has been the host site for the Niagara Dinner Dance Club. Established in 1947 in the Niagara-on-the-Lake community, the dinner dance club meets monthly from October to May.

Each event offers members and guests formal dinner and dances featuring live music. The club is a venue to make new friends and provide a fun atmosphere. Many of the events have themes, such as Roaring '20s, Oscar Night, Venetian Masquerade, etc.

The club caters to members and their guests, but welcomes anyone to come out as a guest and see what the club is about.

"Our guests may like what we have to offer



The Niagara Dinner Dance Club was established in 1947. STEVEN GRANGER/SUPPLIED

and may wish to become members, thereby sustaining the club and promoting goodwill within the community," according to club president Bill Murphy.

The next Niagara Dinner Dance Club event is the annual Christmas Gala, on Saturday, Dec. 14 at Royal Niagara. Dress is formal evening wear (black-tie optional). Cocktails will be from 6 to 7 p.m. with dinner from 7 to 8 p.m., followed by dancing with a live band until midnight.

While the club is for members and guests only, anyone interested in learning more can contact the club by email at niagaradin-

nerdanceclub@gmail.com or phone 905-658-0397 and come to a club event as a confirmed guest. There are no ticket sales at the door.

Event prices are \$70 per person for members and \$80 for guests. Annual membership dues are \$70 per person. There will be a cash bar.

Even if you are not an accomplished dancer, this is an opportunity to come out, socialize, meet new friends, have fun, dance and celebrate the approaching Christmas festivities.

*Steve Hardaker has lived in Glendale for nine years and is active in many community organizations.*

### Obituary

## Sandy Crux



Crux, Sandy - Died peacefully at her home in Virgil, Ontario on Thursday, Nov. 28, 2019. She is survived by her husband of 49 years, Jim, her brother David Reynolds (Colleen) of Calgary, her sister Marsha Reynolds also of Calgary and her children Andy Girard (Donna) of St. Catharines and Carole Wiens (Chuck) of Virgil. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Julia Dick (Jeff), Matthew Wiens (Alex) and Stephanie Willms (Jesse) and her beloved great grandchildren Corson, Landen, Georgia, Hunter and Charlie.

There will be a private memorial service for immediate family and friends at the Tallman Funeral Home in Vineland on Monday, Dec. 2, 2019.

Online condolences at [www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca](http://www.tallmanfuneralhomes.ca)



Members of the NOTL midget Green hockey team travelled to the Hamilton Ronald McDonald House to donate the proceeds of \$5,000 from the Mikey Memorial Game. They were also given a tour of the house to see what impact the funds can have. The team would like to thank the community for coming out to celebrate Mikey Labonte and for the generous donations to this incredible place.

# Council treads carefully in search for new CAO

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

As Niagara-on-the-Lake council searches for a new chief administrative officer, some town councillors say the Ontario ombudsman report on the controversial hiring of Niagara Region's CAO was released just in time.

The town's committee of the whole approved hiring Legacy Partners Executive Search firm at a cost of \$25,000 to handle the CAO recruitment process. The decision requires full council approval at its next meeting, on Monday, Dec. 9.

Former CAO Holly Dowd, who worked for the town for 37 years, retired in August.

Town staff reached out to other municipalities to learn how they have handled executive searches. Some municipalities do in-house recruitments while others hire search firms, staff said



Director of operations Sheldon Randall was appointed interim chief administrative officer in August. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

in the report.

Council has also appointed Lord Mayor Betty Disero, councillors Erwin Wiens, Clare Cameron and Gary Burroughs to a selection committee to help in the recruitment process.

Cameron issued a notice of motion for the next council meeting to include 15 recommendations from the provincial ombudsman's report among the selection

committee's terms of reference.

"We've been blessed with the Ontario ombudsman report coming out just within the last week," she said.

"It's been said multiple times in the coverage of that report what went on up there is exactly the kind of thing that every municipality in Ontario should be safeguarding themselves to ensure it doesn't occur elsewhere."

Burroughs said he was on the regional council during the last term when the "fiasco" with the hiring of the CAO took place.

"I'm thrilled it came out just in time because we need to be very proud of the process and ... I'm 100 per cent supportive because having been there, you're not always aware of what everybody else is doing," Burroughs said.

"As long as the rules are clear, I think it'll be an excellent process that we go

through."

The ombudsman determined that the hiring of regional CAO Carmen D'Angelo in 2016 was an "inside job" that was tainted when D'Angelo was improperly given information in advance, including interview questions.

Town staff contacted four firms during a request for proposal process. Three firms responded: the Burke Group, Legacy Partners Executive Search and Feldman Daxon Partners Inc.

Selection committee members met with the town's human resources generalist, Sarah Stevens, to review the proposals.

To ensure confidentiality, the documents were not sent electronically and could only be viewed at the town hall. Submissions were also reviewed separately from financial propositions, according to the staff report.

Once councillors completed score sheets, Stevens

used an average score to determine which recruitment firm to recommend.

Town staff then recommended hiring Legacy Partners Executive Search as it had the lowest price, a flat fee of \$25,000, as well as the highest score.

Feldman Daxon Partners Inc. proposed a flat fee of \$30,000, while the Burke Group's proposal suggested 20 per cent of the successful candidate's first year's salary.

Disero, who chairs the selection committee, said any "backtalk" about the hiring process may bring councillors "trouble" and advised them to refrain from engaging with the public on the matter.

"I'm very cautious now because of the intensity of the investigation that has just taken place at the region," Disero told councillors.

"It makes me think not just twice but three or four

times before I answer any emails or whatever because there are going to be, whether we like it or not, people looking to call for an investigation on what we've done for whatever reason."

Disero made several amendments to the staff report. Town council then voted in favour of having the selection committee come back with an outline on the process, its associated costs and timeline.

It referred the terms of reference to the selection committee and wants the CAO job description reviewed by the committee.

"I think it's fantastic that people are watching us. I think that it is a wonderful thing if people are expecting us to be open and transparent. I think that's excellent," Cameron said.

"I have great faith in the council that we'll be operating above board. We would be complete idiots to be doing anything but that."



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NOTL resident Sonja Schindeler captured this bird hanging out in the ice of a tree. The other photos to the right were taken across Old Town by Lake Report reporter Brittany Carter. Below is a map of the NOTL Christmas parade route.



# NOTL snow day

The town of Niagara-on-the-Lake was covered with ice and snow during the weekend, creating an opportunity for great pictures.

Here are some photos from the community, and some from our photographers.

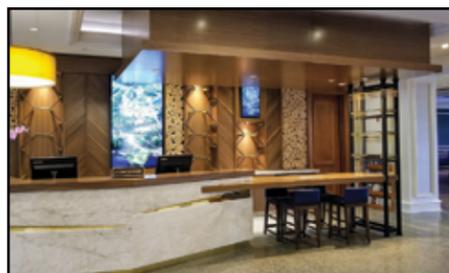


**The Lake Report** **NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE CHRISTMAS PARADE**

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# RiverBrink open house discusses future

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

Increasing attendance is a key to the survival of Queenston's RiverBrink Art Museum, say several people who attended the museum's open house last Friday.

The museum held a feasibility study open house to determine if it needs to expand its space. About 25 people showed up for the meeting.

RiverBrink received \$24,000 from the Canada Cultural Spaces Grant and matched that amount to conduct the feasibility study on its proposed expansion, said the museum's curator/director, Debra Antonic.

She said she'd like to attract more visitors and have accessible facilities on all three levels of the museum while preserving signature architectural designs and exploiting the site's location.

"We have this beautiful property and this wonderful collection I'm hoping the community will support both intellectually and then also financially," she said in an interview.

Consultants from Lord Cultural Resources led the discussion. Open house visitors split into three groups, spending about 20 minutes with each consultant, pitching ideas and suggestions on the museum's expansion.

Consultant Ted Silberberg noted the museum has not been able to adopt an "aggressive" marketing campaign due to cost concerns. The museum earned about



Pumphouse Arts Centre office manager Gail Kerr and NOTL Museum's curator Sarah Kaufman pitch their ideas on RiverBrink expansion at the open house Friday.  
DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

\$5,400 in admission revenue last year.

"Attendance is paramount in getting private and government supporters because they want to see that return in attendance," Silberberg said.

He said one possible solution to increase attendance could be making admission free and using a variety of techniques, like the so-called "guilt messages" on donations boxes or Tap To Donate payments, to encourage people to contribute.

Some of the suggestions proposed by open house visitors included more parking, adding an elevator and expanding the space to allow more storage. The museum's second and third floors can be accessible only by stairs or through a virtual tour.

The consulting firm's president, Gail Lord, said people expressed the need for more space so the museum can showcase both contemporary art and the RiverBrink collection.

Another theme that emerged touched on

a "lifelong learning" as NOTL residents, who are generally older and more financially secure, are eager to learn more about art and want to attend lecture series and hands-on activities, Lord said.

"Because they're at the stage of their life, here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, when they can do this," Lord said in an interview. "People think this is a very special place because it has a unique view of the river and ... there are lots of historical reasons why that is."

RiverBrink member and Niagara Falls resident Patti Malkiewich said the challenge is putting in an elevator without ruining a view of the river, disturbing neighbours and reducing the number of parking lots at the same time.

"I think there should be more room made somehow for the storage of collections. There are vaults downstairs but they're getting very full," she told The Lake Report. "And if you're going to expand, you have to expand that, too."

Some other ideas voiced at the open house included widening doorways, having more permanent collections and letting people lend or bequeath their artwork.

One resident also suggested using the former hospital site in Old Town for storing and showcasing collections. Another suggestion was to hold weddings and catered events at the site to attract more visitors and boost revenue.

Richard Baker, a past director of the museum, suggested having an outside tea-shop in the summer where people could come in and enjoy the view of the river.

"People need to stop in Queenston. They don't," Baker said. "Bringing more people is the key to survival."

Another person suggested making a package comprised of a wine tour and admissions to the museum.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum curator Sarah Kaufman and Pumphouse Arts Centre office manager Gail Kerr said they were on hand to support RiverBrink and bring ideas to the table from their own experience operating a cultural space in town.

One of Kaufman's proposals was having a separate multipurpose room that could be used for lectures and would prevent any damage being done to exhibits.

After the consultants review the suggestions, they will come back with a report for RiverBrink by the end of February or early March.



## Residents rally to rescue injured Glendale Canada goose

Steve Hardaker  
Community Correspondent

Noticing a Canada goose in distress, Niagara on the Green resident Robin Fisher quickly hatched a plan Monday to rescue the bird that was hanging around the storm pond at Glendale Avenue and Taylor Road.

Priority one was to find a sanctuary for the bird. Priority two was to gather a group

of rescuers and priority three was to execute the plan.

The goose, which had been around the pond for about a week, is suffering from angel wing syndrome (also known as slipped wing), which prevents the bird from flying. Left alone as winter approaches likely would mean certain death.

While a number of fac-

*Continued on Page 13*

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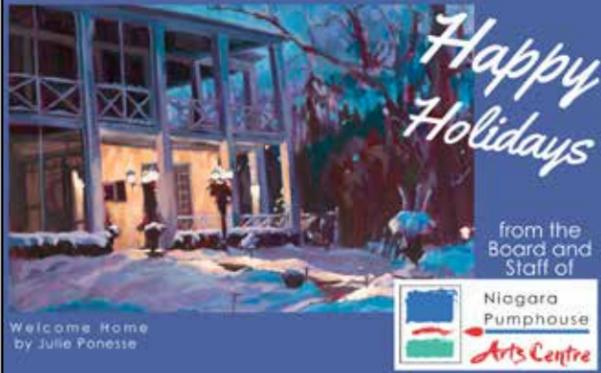
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<h2>The Lake Report</h2> <p><b>COMMUNITY FAVOURITES:</b>            Legion Fish Fry every Thursday            4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.            Duplicate Bridge at the Community Centre            Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m.</p>			
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<p><b>Revolutionary War Winter Garrison</b>-12 p.m. to 4 p.m.-Fort George</p> <p><b>Open Studio Art Show and Sale</b>-11 a.m. to 4 p.m.-Gate Street Studio 358 Gate St,</p> <p><b>NOTL Ukesters Annual Christmas Party</b>-1 p.m. to 5 p.m.-NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Swingin Christmas with the Toronto All Star Big Band</b>-7 p.m. to 10 p.m.-St. Mark's Anglican Church</p> <p><b>Swing and Sparkle: Social Swing Dance Event</b>-7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.-Club 55</p>	<p><b>Council</b>-6 p.m.-Council Chambers</p> <p><b>Fun Duplicate Bridge</b>-9 a.m. to noon-NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Free Youth Walk in Mental Health Clinic</b>-11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.-Red Roof Retreat</p> <p><b>Italian Conversation Group</b>-12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.-NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>French Conversation Group</b>-2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.-NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p><b>Municipal Heritage</b>-6:30 p.m.-Council Chambers</p> <p><b>Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned)</b>-1 p.m. to 4 p.m.-NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>NOTL Rotary Club</b>-Noon-NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre</b>-1 p.m.-NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p><b>German Conversation</b>-9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.-Community Centre</p> <p><b>Communities in Bloom</b>-Council Chambers</p> <p><b>Lord Mayors Youth Council</b>-7:30 p.m.-Council Chambers</p> <p><b>Chess Club</b>-5 p.m.-NOTL Library</p> <p><b>Wine and Words: John Robson</b>-7 p.m.-Konz Winery</p> <p><b>Christmas High Tea for Education Foundation</b>-2 p.m.-Royal Retirement Community</p>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<p><b>S. Davids Lioness Breakfast with Santa</b> - 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. -</p> <p><b>Newark Singers and Orchestra</b> - 4 p.m. - St. Saviours Anglican Church, Queenston</p> <p><b>Youth Advisory Council Holiday Event</b> - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Garrison Christmas</b> - Fort George</p>	<p><b>Free Youth Walk in Mental Health Clinic</b> - 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Red Roof Retreat</p> <p><b>Fun Duplicate Bridge</b> - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Italian Conversation Group</b> - 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>French Conversation Group</b> - 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Special Council Meeting</b> - 6 p.m. - Council Chambers</p>	<p><b>Heritage Trail Committee</b> - 2 p.m. - Council Chambers</p> <p><b>Niagara-on-the-Lake Safety Committee</b> - 4:30 p.m. -</p> <p><b>Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned)</b> - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>NOTL Rotary Club</b> - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p><b>Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre</b> - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p><b>STEAM Story Time</b> - 11:45 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p><b>German Conversation</b> - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - Community Centre</p>

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# Report CALENDAR

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>5</b> Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Parents and Tots Play Group - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - GateWay Community Church The Gift Makery: Eco Friendly Wrapping - 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	<b>6</b> Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Open Studio Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. - Gate Street Studio 358 Gate St, Candlelight Stroll - 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Queen Street Rotary Holiday House Tour - 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Christmas Social and Turkey Raffle - 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. - Virgil Fire Hall 1391 Concession 6 Rd. -	<b>7</b> Rotary Holiday House Tours - 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - Open Studio Art Show and Sale - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Gate Street Studio 358 Gate St, Annual Christmas Bake and Decor Sale - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Queenston Library St. Davids Veterinary Clinic Photos with Santa - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - St. Davids Veterinary Clinic Niagara Plein Air Painters Art Show Reception - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Revolutionary War Winter Garrison - 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Fort George
<b>11</b> Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Willowbank Holiday Open House - 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - Willowbank Community Christmas Dinner - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Pumphouse Annual General Meeting - 5 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	<b>12</b> Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Willowbank Holiday Open House - 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - Willowbank Community Christmas Dinner - 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Pumphouse Annual General Meeting - 5 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	<b>13</b> Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Stuffy Sleepover - 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	<b>14</b> Christmas Parade - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - King Street, Castlereagh Street, Wellington Street, Byron Street, Prideaux Street, Simcoe Street, Queen Street Garrison Christmas - Fort George Newark Singers and Orchestra - 7 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church
<b>18</b> Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara PF Support Group - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Committee of Adjustment - 6:30 p.m. - Council Chambers Parents and Tots Play Group - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - GateWay Community Church	<b>19</b> Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara PF Support Group - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Committee of Adjustment - 6:30 p.m. - Council Chambers Parents and Tots Play Group - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - GateWay Community Church	<b>20</b> Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Heart of Christmas Past - 7:30 p.m. - Grace United Church	<b>21</b> Ryan Langdon live at Club 55 - 10 p.m. - Club 55

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# WINE COUNTRY

WITH VICTORIA GILBERT

## Big pride for Big Head

Victoria Gilbert  
Special to The Lake Report

The sun rises early above the rolling green hillsides of western Poland where a young Andrzej Lipinski would quietly leave his humble home in Zielona Góra (green mountain) at 3 a.m. to fish.

Vineyards had once dotted the lush countryside and, 40 years ago, when Lipinski was a boy, the socialist government had burned many of them – but the history of winemaking in that part of Poland had already been established.

“There was a wine and grape event every year in September,” Lipinski recalls as we taste wine at his Niagara winery, Big Head.

“During the time of the socialists they were (the government) buying bulk wine and bottling in the city. But in that area the wine industry was there for centuries,” says Lipinski. “You only think of perogies when you think of my country but they do many things in Poland.”

Times were tough during the socialist years (1945-1989) and Lipinski, the youngest of six siblings, learned to work hard at an early age. “My friends were playing soccer, but I had to always help my father,” he recounts.

His father was a mechanic and Lipinski followed in his footsteps. But after immigrating to Canada in 1989, he worked at anything he could including construction, which led to a job renovating a burned down building at Vineland Estates in 1993. “You immigrate and you do whatever job is available,” says Lipinski.

He continued working at the winery and had the opportunity to learn the trade hands-on and taste many local wines. Lipinski believed maybe he could do better and began experimenting.

His hard work paid off and, by 1996, Lipinski was



assistant winemaker at Vineland Estates. The first wine he made was a 1998 Reserve Chardonnay with Vineland Estates, which won a Double Gold at Vinitaly.

Lipinski got his licence for Big Head Winery on Hunter Road in 2015 and has increased his production tenfold from the time of his first vintage, winning many wine awards.

Next spring Lipinski is opening another winery with 38 acres of vineyard. Called Eukarya (tree of life in Latin), its wines will be all natural and organic, which is important to Lipinski.

“I’m drinking my own wines, why would I want to put all that garbage in there, all those chemicals?” he says.

Lipinski currently produces 37 styles of wines at Big Head with a focus on low intervention wines, meaning he doesn’t add yeast, which can alter the taste of the fruit and cause fermentation to happen much quicker.

“For me, I don’t want to influence too much. Our wines ferment months, sometimes two years to ferment. If I were to use commercial yeast, three, four weeks fermentation, finished.”

With his RAW series of wines, Lipinski ferments whole clusters of grapes in concrete tanks and terracotta pots and uses a method called carbonic fermentation in which the fermentation occurs inside each berry. “With these wines, we

just want to show the fruit. We’re going back to the roots of winemaking.”

While one might guess the name Big Head is due to Lipinski’s deep pride in his country or in himself, it in fact comes from having a cranium so large as a child, “my mom would buy clothing and my head couldn’t fit through the hole in the sweater.”

When his son Jakub was called “big head” at primary school in Canada, the name stuck. “He’s 6 foot 4 now. Most Polish (people) do grow into their heads,” says Lipinski of his son, who works as the head of operations at Big Head.

“My family is very proud. My friends, too. People visit from Poland, they come to visit and they know about me. They have heard about me in Poland.”

Big Head wines are currently available in Europe, in England and France, but Lipinski may one day sell his wines to his own country.

“We have Copernicus, Madame Curie, yes? I always say, who was the best pope? Of course, the Polish pope! So why can’t Polish (people) make wine if the pope can be Polish?”

Lipinski’s wines are as affable and distinctive as he is; taste them once and there’s a good chance you’ll be able to taste them blind.

*NOTL resident Victoria Gilbert has been telling the stories of wine people in Canada and abroad through print and video for many years.*



Each week, the staff of Ravine Winery share their expertise and offer a brief explanation about an aspect of wine. So, whether you’re an expert oenophile or a newbie just finding your way around wine country, we trust you’ll enjoy. Cheers!

## The legend of Dom Pérignon



Dom Pérignon. PIXABAY

Dom Pérignon is a champagne produced by the Champagne house Moët & Chandon in northern France. The line was gifted to the Moët family as a wedding present in 1927 by Champagne Mercier, a prominent Champagne producer.

It is named after Dom Pérignon, a monk and cellar master at the Benedictine Abbey in Hautvillers in the late 1600s. He was a pioneer for Champagne but who, contrary to popular myths, did not discover the champagne method for making sparkling wines.

It was an English scientist, Christopher Merret, who first recorded the method used in Champagne today – adding sugar to an already fermented wine to cause a second fermentation, which creates not only alcohol but ... bubbles (CO<sub>2</sub>).

He was able to achieve this thanks to the superior strength of English glass bottles, compared to their French equivalents. Upon Dom Pérignon’s first taste of “bubbly” his famous quote was, “Come quickly, I’m tasting stars.”

By the 19th century, sparkling wines started to catch on as the main style of production in the Champagne region.

In 1935, the company that handled the Moët & Chandon family of Champagnes distributed 300 bottles of what would become Dom Pérignon. It was a celebratory gift for the 100-year anniversary of the business and was an immediate hit.

Dom Pérignon was first sold in 1936. It is made using a blend of about 50 per cent Pinot Noir and 50 per cent Chardonnay. However, the proportion of each varietal changes with every vintage.

For many years Dom Pérignon grapes were sourced exclusively from the historic vineyards at Hautvillers where the legendary monk lived and sourced his grapes. Although numbers are never officially published, it is thought that upward of a million bottles are produced per vintage.

Despite this scale, it remains one of the highest-rated and most desirable Champagnes on the market.

## Home baking and decor at annual Queenston sale

Brittany Carter  
The Lake Report

Tourtieres and home baked goods will once again draw crowds to the Queenston Library for the annual bake sale hosted by the Queenston Residents Association this Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. More than 150 tourtieres (nine-inch meat pies) are preordered before the sale and have been sold out for weeks, said Marilyn Armstrong, chair of the resident’s association fundraiser committee.

And while the top-selling pies are sold out, the baked

goods also attract droves of community members who come out and stock up for the holidays.

Armstrong said the sale is also a great time to buy holiday decorations. Gently used Christmas décor will be available and she said all items are examined before being accepted for the sale. “They’re all in excellent condition,” she said.

For more than 12 years, the Queenston Residents Association has been hosting the Christmas sale and Armstrong said it’s the group’s biggest fundraiser.

Money raised goes back into improving the commu-



Queenston Bake Sale 2017. SUPPLIED

nity with parks and upkeep and donated back into various charities.



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# Museum gets tiny for parade

Brittany Carter  
 The Lake Report

Local history and culture will soon hit the road with the launch of Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's Tiny Museum – a 7-by-16-foot miniature replica of the centre's link-building of the museum, on wheels.

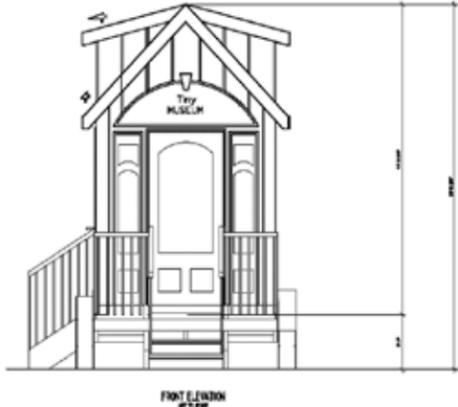
The travelling structure will provide dynamic exhibits and offer modified programming to match the Ontario school curriculum. It will also give the museum more community exposure by giving the organization a clear, interactive presence during festivals and town events.

Faith Bell, past president of the museum's board, said she came up with the idea for a mini museum built on a trailer after seeing "tiny homes" on TV.

"I love watching shows about tiny houses. I think it's a great idea," Bell said. "Libraries have bookmobiles. Why can't a museum have a tiny museum that travels around?"

Bell said the concept solved a "convergence of needs" for the museum. The board's strategic plan called for more community exposure, she said, and it also wanted to reach out to area schools more effectively.

The museum's managing director and curator, Sarah Kaufman, said the idea is to take the museum experience into the community, especially to schools. She said



A design plan for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's Tiny Museum. SUPPLIED PHOTO

many schools have trouble funding activities and field trips.

"We'll bring whatever they're interested in, whatever they pick from our program, and put original artifacts inside. They can come inside and look at the objects on display and talk about the programming," Kaufman said.

As far as she knows, no other museum has developed an idea like this. Many offer programming on the go but she said she hasn't come across anything like the Tiny Museum before.

"Other museums do go out to schools and they have their education program kits and stuff, but this will be an entire miniature museum. The museum is coming to them," she said.

But right now, the tiny building is still in the construction phase.

Kaufman said she hopes it will be ready to take to schools by September 2020.

After confirmation of a \$124,900 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in early 2019, she said they were able to move forward with construction.

The \$156,000 project was partially paid for by private donors, and the Trillium grant covered the rest.

"That (grant) helps with the build and also helps to purchase the vehicle to tow it. We had a few private donors as well – an anonymous donor and David and Faith Bell," she said.

Kaufman said the project was Bell's "baby."

"It was her idea and we jumped on it. We're working with her to develop it," she added.

Bell said another reason for creating the Tiny Museum on wheels was to solve the museum's annual

dilemma of deciding on a parade float concept.

"Every year we were scrambling to get ideas for a Christmas float," she said.

This year, the structure will join the Santa Claus Parade to represent the museum, but it will just be the "skeleton" of the building for now, Kaufman said. The interior isn't complete yet, but she said museum staff was eager to showcase the project.

"It's a very basic exterior, it's in progress at the moment ... It's just an idea to show people what we're doing. We're bringing it to the Santa Claus Parade this year – we just wanted to show it off."

Kaufman said after the build is complete, the next step will be to find more money to develop the programming for the travelling museum.

"So, basically to hire a staff person to make curriculum connections from our history in Niagara-on-the-Lake to the curriculum here in Ontario. In particular, Indigenous history, black history, War of 1812, agricultural history, and more, of course," she said.

The museum is also seeking donations to complete the next stage of the Tiny Museum.

"The faster we get funding for the development of the programming the faster we can get it out and into the community," Kaufman said.



A goose was rescued Monday. SUPPLIED

# Goose rescue

Continued from Page 9

tors can contribute to angel wing, it can be caused by excessive intake of carbohydrates and sugars, notably from eating bread and other foods, according to various animal experts. That is why feeding geese bread is not recommended.

Fisher contacted the Open Sky Raptor Foundation in Grimsby, which agreed to adopt the bird. She then used the Niagara on the Green Facebook page to find volunteers to help corral the goose.

A group of residents met and plotted their strategy for its capture.

Initially, the bird was quietly hanging out at the busy corner of Glendale and Taylor. But as its rescuers approached, it became wary and embarked on a game of chicken, dodging Fisher and

her gang.

The bird fled across Glendale and then across Taylor, which presented a real problem, but the rescuers persisted. Then the Canada goose headed for the White Oaks Resort and Spa.

Fisher and her bird brigade crew pursued their prey behind White Oaks, where "I threw the blanket on him three times and he still ran. It was Alison (Flus) and Tammy (McCarthy) that finally got him down. He was so tired he just gave up. Alison was the one who picked him up and put him in the cage. It went so well."

The rescuers report that "Chicken," so named because he played chicken fleeing from his rescuers by crossing two major roadways, is doing fine in his new home at the Open Sky Raptor Foundation.

# 'Womanpower' serves up St. Vincent de Paul food fest

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
 The Lake Report

Members of the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Catholic Women's League put a lot of "womanpower" into organizing their Fall Food Fest on Saturday.

"Our ladies are so generous. They work and they've been here all week, getting ready, setting up, bringing things in and baking," said the event's chair, Irene Pentesco. "It's been terrific.

They're the backbone of the church."

In addition to a bake table, there was also a raffle table, as well as vintage items and preserves on sale. Most items were donated by members of the parish and all baked goods were made by women of the church who did a "wonderful job," Pentesco said.

Money raised will go toward good works, such as sponsoring a foster child in Africa, as well as visiting

and giving gifts to people in nursing homes who don't have families or whose relatives don't visit them, Pentesco told The Lake Report.

"In town, there could be 30 to 50 people who don't have anybody coming, so we do that," she said. "And we have other things we sponsor along the way, different charitable things."

The parish holds a variety of events and fairs, but this was the first time the

focus was on food, Pentesco said.

For lunch, parish members served shepherd's pie with green beans, frittata with a kale salad and a buffalo chicken chili with cornbread. Fest visitors could choose one of the lunch options as well as a dessert and refreshments.

People could also buy frozen deli goods like chicken pot pies, meatballs with sauce or shepherd's pies.



Kathleen Maloney serves buffalo chicken chili at the Fall Food Fest. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

"People really like that because they get to take some things home. They can take it and have it a couple of days or a week later," Pentesco said.

Parishioner Judy Obee said the fest was amazing and she saw many people coming in for lunch, which took a lot of "manpower and womanpower."

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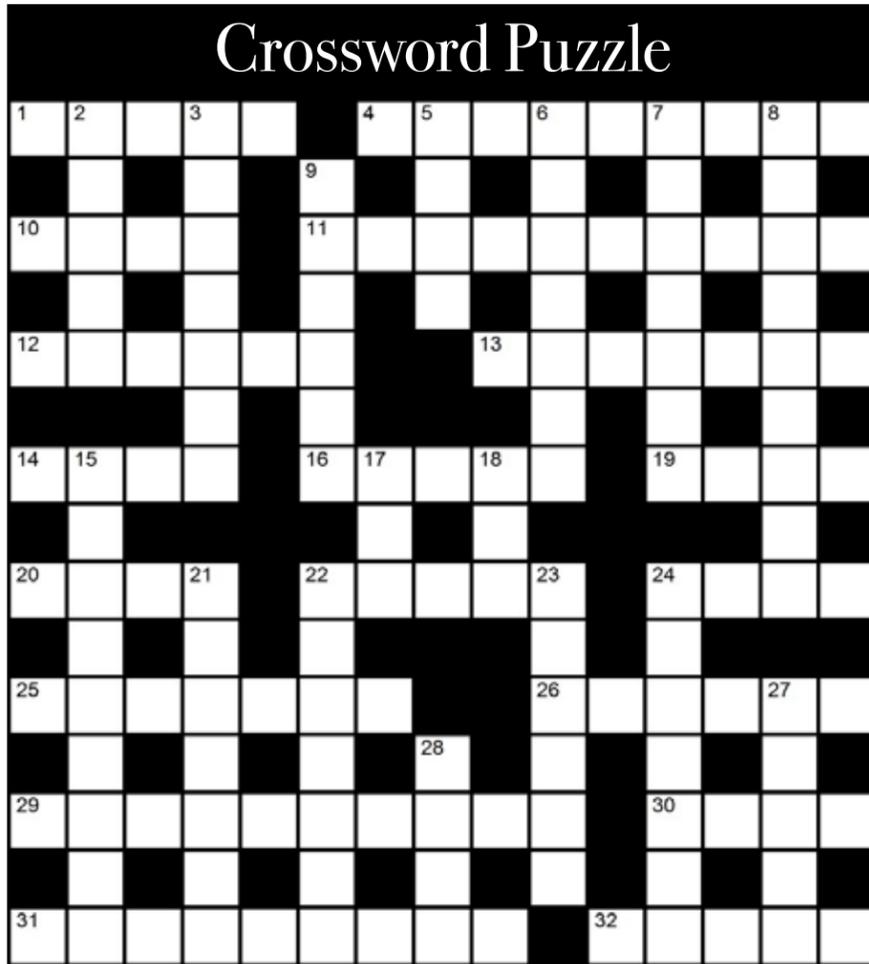
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

**Across**

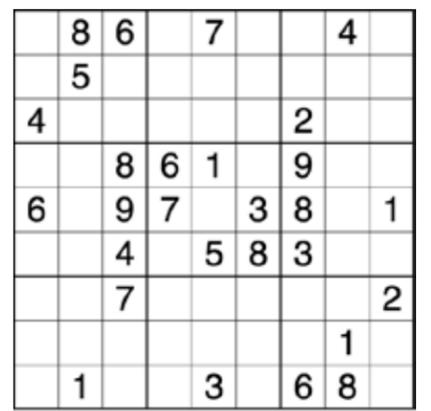
- 1. Farm honkers (5)
- 4. Declares formally (9)
- 10. High-pitched flute (4)
- 11. Happening together (10)
- 12. Safe stores (6)
- 13. Casual tops (1-6)
- 14. W W II turning point (1-3)
- 16. Lowest-value chessmen (5)
- 19. Deciduous timber trees (4)
- 20. Cloth colourist (4)
- 22. Portable music players (5)
- 24. Deep voice (4)
- 25. May contain peas or beans, for example (4,3)
- 26. Shows broadcast again (6)
- 29. Mental analysis (10)
- 30. Woodwind instrument (4)
- 31. Graceless (9)
- 32. Up (5)

**Down**

- 2. My Fair Lady --- Doolittle (5)
- 3. Author of "Ozymandias" (7)
- 5. Told (4)
- 6. Consecutive parts of a meal (7)
- 7. International carrier (7)
- 8. Frequently (4,5)
- 9. Misbehaves (4,2)
- 15. Rainless months (3,6)
- 17. Egyptian cobra (3)
- 18. Indicate agreement (3)
- 21. Profoundly different (7)
- 22. Household chore (7)
- 23. Wanders away (6)
- 24. Obtains temporarily (7)
- 27. Model --- Campbell (5)
- 28. Stupefy (4)



**Last issue's answers**



# Epicurean's Breakfast with Santa grants Palliative Care's wishes

Brittany Carter  
The Lake Report

The Epicurean will once again open its doors to serve breakfast with the jolly man in the red suit.

The Old Town restaurant's second annual Breakfast with Santa is Sunday, Dec. 8, from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Proceeds from the sale of each breakfast, \$15 for adults and \$10 for children, will go to Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care.

Palliative Care program manager Bonnie Bagnulo said she was approached by Epicurean owner and chef Gina Angelakopoulos last year about the breakfast. Her plan was to support the organization with Tim Taylor, NOTL's resident Santa, enlisted for the iconic role.

"This year we have our own Tim Taylor, who is



Tim Taylor is Santa for the Epicurean's Breakfast with Santa in support of Palliative Care. SUPPLIED

the Palliative Care Santa, and he goes out and does appearances around town and gives a portion of the proceeds to Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care, which is amazing," Bagnulo said.

Taylor connected with Angelakopoulos at the Epicurean and so began the relationship between the restaurant and the organization.

Last year, "We put it together on short notice, and we had an OK turnout. But she thought if we did this every year it would grow, so this will be our second annual," Bagnulo said.

Angelakopoulos said she's looking forward to Santa's visit.

"We want nothing more than to help Palliative Care. Santa comes in and walks around from table to table

and talks to everyone. This is a cause for all ages – and who doesn't love Santa?"

Bagnulo said she is "incredibly grateful" to the Epicurean and Taylor for the support.

"Opportunities like this offer not only additional needed funds, but it's relationship building. It's also a chance to chat with people about all that our crucial service offers this community," she said.

"We have a need for extra equipment and we have extra programming costs as a direct result of growth this year, and Santa just may make our wishes come true."

Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling the restaurant at 905-468-3408, or by email at theepicurean@cogeco.net.

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# Shaw reviews: Must-see Holiday Inn a **sumptuous feast**

Mike Keenan  
Special to The Lake Report

The Shaw Festival's "Holiday Inn" emits lots of dazzle, and its popular Irving Berlin song-and-dance numbers leave one with a beaming smile. It's Tim Carroll's impeccable antidote to Scrooge's winter bah-humbugs.

Music director Paul Sportelli, in his informative program notes, tells us about the remarkable Berlin. "Israel Beilin came from Russia to America with his family in 1893 at age five, escaping pogroms against Jews. In America, his first published song ... spelled his name wrong on the sheet music, and he decided to stick with it. Irving Berlin, the quintessential American composer, was an immigrant."

"Berlin's compositional genius is abundantly clear: infectious rhythms combined with strong melodies that seem inevitable. His lyrical genius dazzles with its conversational simplicity."

Thus we have infectious



Kimberley Rampersad as Lila Dixon, Kyle Golemba as Ted Hanover and the ensemble of Holiday Inn. EMILY COOPER

tunes such as "Steppin' Out With My Baby," "The Little Things In Life," "Blue Skies," "Heat Wave," "It's A Lovely Day Today," "Shaking The Blues Away," "White Christmas," and "Happy Holiday" from the first act and "You're Easy To Dance With," "Let's Take An Old-Fashioned Walk," "Cheek To Cheek," "Easter Parade" and "Song Of Freedom" from the second.

In her program notes, director Kate Hennig explains, "Holiday Inn is a respite. At this seasonal time of year where the darkness is at its most dark and the light, which will inevitably begin to grow, is still hiding just around the corner, "Holiday Inn" has no neurotic reaction, no nastiness, no angst. This piece (originally the film) was an antidote to the Second World War. It provided reassurance for

a society trying to return to, or to find anew, a sense of ease and comfort in the big, wild world that had suffered so much loss – and was crippled by the fear of slipping back."

Shaw's bubbly production brought back memories of the 1942 film featuring the mellow crooner Bing Crosby and the smooth dancing Fred Astaire. Shaw replaces them with Kyle Blair cast

as Jim with a soft, velvety voice, his smooth singing underlying an honest, innocent nature and fireball Kyle Golemba as Ted, a macho man dancing with remarkable energy on the huge Festival Theatre set.

The song-and-dance act of Jim Hardy, Ted Hanover and Lila Dixon (Kimberley Rampersad) are floundering in theatrical doldrums, and they split. Jim proposes to Lila and wants her to renounce show business to live on a Connecticut farm.

But Lila hits the road for six weeks with Ted. Jim meets the former farm owner, Linda Mason (Kristi Frank), who failed as an actress and is now the town's school teacher. Aided by a rough-and-ready handy-woman, Jenny L. Wright as Louise, Jim concocts a scheme to run an inn only on holidays with themed shows. Of course, romance complicates matters, and its machinations literally lead to a Hollywood ending.

Rampersad excels as the avaricious Lila. Her sultry rendition of "Heat Wave" adds to the sizzle,

while Frank as Linda is the textbook hometown girl with great potential. Wright is hilarious and wows the audience with her "Shaking The Blues Away." Jay Turvey adds comic relief as Danny, the archetypal Hollywood Jewish promoter.

The show features eye-catching, elaborate choreography by Allison Plamondon that reminds one of grandiose Hollywood musicals with stylish charm and elegance.

Designer Judith Bowden makes it all work with an amazing array of stunning costumes and footwear fashioned in unbelievable detail. Her lavish "Easter Parade" concoctions were a remarkable and glamorous fashion show.

Her sets featuring large painted backdrops and pastel colours complemented the gorgeous costumes, and Sportelli did Berlin proud with his sumptuous orchestra. In all, it was a sensuous feast!

"Holiday Inn" plays at the Festival Theatre to Dec. 22, and it's a show that you really must see.

# Unique but classic, A Christmas Carol is a **wintertime treat**

Mike Keenan  
Special to The Lake Report

The Shaw Festival's impressive resources are on full display in Tim Carroll's third winter version of "A Christmas Carol" at the appropriately Victorian-like setting of the Royal George Theatre.

Kevin Lamotte's lighting is evocatively impeccable; Paul Sportelli's music, spot on; puppetry and movement by Alexis Milligan, incredible; and the overall design by Christine Lohre, imaginatively sparse and innovative such that actors act as human props serving as desk and door.

At the beginning and end, festive actors mix with the appreciative audience, singing merry Christmas carols and throwing paper snowballs, their gentle, parabolic arcs gradually descending into nasty fastballs as with any children at play.

An informative festival



Michael Therriault as Scrooge with the ghost of Jacob Marley in A Christmas Carol in 2017. DAVID COOPER

program includes interesting notes on Dickens by Carroll as well as director Molly Atkinson's production take-along with pictures of the cast in action.

One full-page picture depicts Bernard Shaw with this quote: "I am sorry to

introduce the subject of Christmas ... It is an indecent subject; a cruel, glutinous subject; a drunken disorderly subject; a wasteful disastrous subject; a wicked, cadging, lying, filthy, blasphemous, and demoralizing subject. Christmas is forced

on a reluctant and disgusted nation by the shopkeepers and the press..." (Did you look up "cadging" in the dictionary? I did.)

Bernard Shaw captures the essence of Ebenezer Scrooge, played by a youngish Michael Therriault, as he is visited by three Christmas ghosts who help him understand the importance of charity in the holiday season. Therriault is excellent in his depiction, but I prefer an older curmudgeon with more caustic "hum-bugs" as with Soulepp's Joseph Ziegler who plays Scrooge in their 13th season in Toronto's Distillery District.

Nonetheless, Shaw's production is spectacular, with neat idiosyncrasies such as Lohre's Advent Calendar, equipped with little doors à la TV's "Laugh-In" that pop open for myriad visual treats throughout the show.

The daunting ghost of Scrooge's former business partner, Jacob Marley, drags

heavy chains and sets the scene for three more spirits. Sarena Parmar as Christmas Past, sits Scrooge on a pendulous swing while he reflects on his early life decision to forgo human companionship for money.

Jeff Meadows is hilarious as Christmas Present, bounding about the set on roller skates and painfully punning on the word "present." Puppets are employed cleverly to help illustrate Scrooge's past, and the enormous, imposing, swirling Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is simply dazzling as it projects eerily well into the audience.

Graeme Somerville inadvertently got the play off on a humorous note when, with his thundering voice, he forgot the stage name of his actual wife, Marla McLean (Mrs. Cratchit). Somerville is shunned by Scrooge when seeking donations for the poor. Jonathan Tan plays a contrasting, jovial Fred

(Scrooge's nephew), while Patty Jamieson as Scrooge's maid, Mrs. Dilber, doubles convincingly as his desk.

In the end, thanks to the four ghosts, Scrooge is transformed into a kinder, gentler man, offering the audience the possibility of redemption and hope in a world that currently seems bleakly divided between rich and poor. Carroll provides us with much-needed tonic for the soul. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

In 1849, Dickens began public readings of his story, which led to 127 further performances until 1870, the year of his death. "A Christmas Carol" has never been out of print and has been translated into several languages, the story adapted many times for film, stage, opera and other media.

"A Christmas Carol" plays at the Shaw Festival's Royal George Theatre until Dec. 22.

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## COOKING WITH COLLIN



### Delicious apple butter

Collin Goodine  
Special to The Lake Report

Apples are one fruit that certainly meets the demands of festive food lovers. During the holidays, it's easy to pair with cinnamon, chocolate, nutmeg and the spices that bring out that "Christmas flavour."

Try something new this year by making some apple butter with this recipe. It is great on toast, an accoutrement for cheese and sweet additions to soups and sauces. Keep some on hand for use anytime.

#### Ingredients:

- 10 lb local apples (or Granny Smith)
- 2 cups white sugar
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2 pinches of salt
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 3 pinches ground cloves
- 1/2 cup apple cider
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar

#### Directions:

Place all the ingredients into a thick-bottomed pot and place on stove on low heat, covered. Cook and stir until apples are soft, about an hour or so.

Place into a food processor and blitz or keep in pot and blitz with an immersion blender.

Continue to cook on medium-low heat, stirring often until dark, creamy and thick (2 to 3 hours).

Pass through a fine strainer.

Place into jar, allow to cool, cover and refrigerate.

Or jar shelf ready.



## A visit to Grandma's at Christmas time

Paul Masson  
Writers' Circle

"We are visiting Grandma tomorrow, Karen, so I want you to do a little preparation to avoid the mishaps that occurred last year. You wore your goth costume, with the black eye shadow and your hair spiked using gel. It was embarrassing when your grandmother didn't recognize you and had to ask me who you were. It's Christmas, so wear a proper skirt and blouse."

"Yes, Mom." Karen yawned.

"And another thing, try to kiss her on her cheek gently this time. At the last visit, you scrunched up your mouth in disgust and closed your eyes so you missed her face entirely, hitting the side of her shoulder instead. Don't forget that her bones are fragile, not to mention the trauma resulting from being assaulted while lying in bed. You remember that she started hyperventilating and that the nurse had to give her a sedative to calm her down."

"It wasn't my fault! She moved!"

"Also, try to make polite conversation. When she asks you what you are doing in school, the proper answer is not 'whatever I can get away with.' Instead, mention a few of the things that were assigned in class. What would be nice to make up for last year would be for you to bring her a small present. Some perfume or note paper would be nice. Or even some fragrant soap, but do not suggest to her that she needs it. Your comments about her body odour were not appreciated."

"All right Mom, I'll find something."

The drive to the nursing home is uneventful, and they pull into the visitors' parking lot after an hour's ride. While her father signs them in, Karen looks at the bulletin board of the daily activities, thinking that she would rather die than be locked up in a place like this.

Grandma is dozing in her bed when they enter her room but wakes up as soon as she hears their voices.

"Grandma, I have a present for you! Shall I open it?" The small package was gift-wrapped at the store and has a pink bow.

"That's very nice, hand soap with lilac scent—my favourite fragrance. Thank you, Karen, that's very thoughtful of you."

Her assignment completed, Karen lapses into a near coma, going over in her mind what she will do on the weekend. She is revived by her mother's sharp tone:

"Karen, your grandmother asked you what you were doing in school."

"Er, I wrote an essay on the ancient Greeks for history class, and I demonstrated the exothermic oxidation of magnesium in chemistry class."

Karen's mother smothers a guffaw. Ignoring her, Grandma looks impressed.

"That's very nice, Karen — I didn't know you even took those subjects" she says with a twinkle in her eye.

The conversation turns to other topics and Karen tunes out. After an hour or so, they get up to go. Her parents don't force Karen to kiss her grandmother goodbye this time so as to avoid any unpleasantness.

After they have gone, Grandma sits back in bed and muses about Karen. "I was wild too, when I was young. It's funny how old age catches up with you, though. Life is like a journey up a great river. You start off successfully swimming upstream, but after a while, you get tired of fighting, and finally you just let the current take you. It's a good thing

the young don't understand this or they might decide not to make the journey. I admire Karen's pluck. She'll settle down eventually."

Later, at home, Karen thinks about the visit to Grandma. "It didn't go too badly after all; those school projects I made up were awesome! Of course Mom wasn't fooled, but Gran got a charge out of it.

Hmm, did she guess that it was all a joke? I wonder what she was up to when she was young. Maybe next time I'll ask her.



## STAY FIT NOTL



Jaclyn Willms and "Mullsy" McMullan demonstrate a quick workout. STAY FIT NOTL

### A winter wonderland workout

Jaclyn Willms  
Special to The Lake Report

We love Canada's four seasons and one reason is for the different activities each season brings.

Finding ways to keep moving on the icy days this winter is important while staying safe, so here are four snow-themed exercises you can do for your core

and cardio at home or in the gym with no equipment.

30 seconds on, 30 seconds rest, of each exercise three times through.

1. Ski jumps
2. Snow angels
3. Slalom jumps
4. Glacier climb (mountain climbers)

Visit @niagarafit on Instagram for the videos of each exercise.



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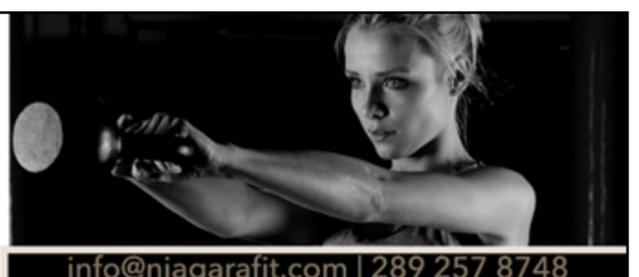
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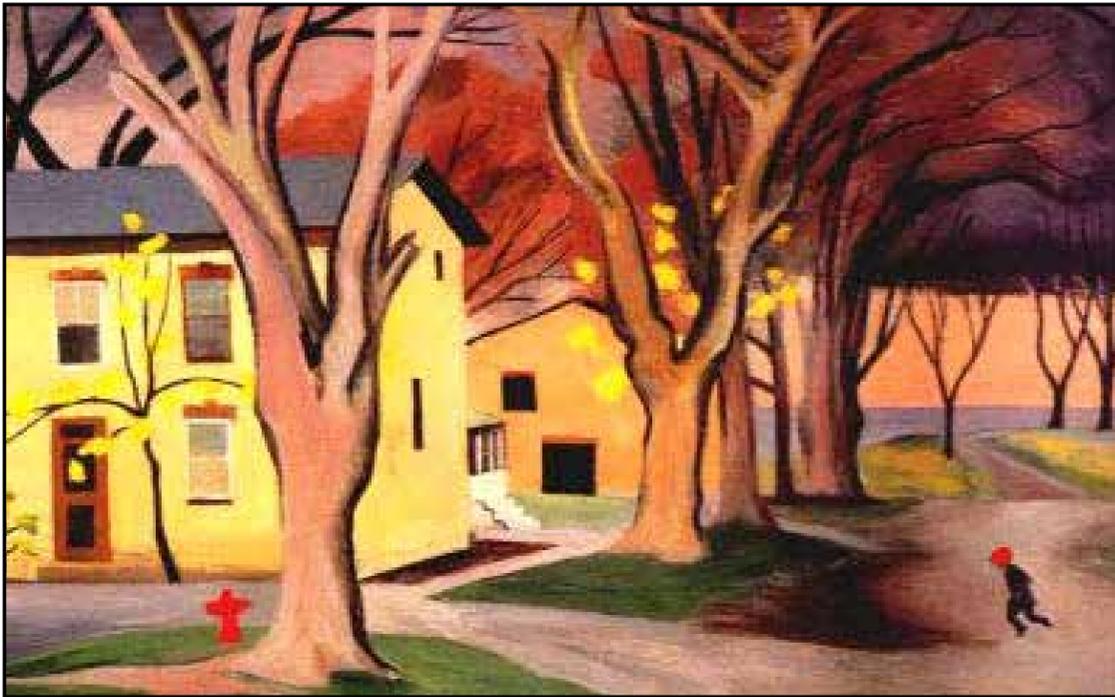
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# EXPLORING PHOTOS

WITH JIM SMITH



## Regent and Prideaux streets

This 1940s painting shows the corner of Regent and Prideaux streets. As seen in the picture, Regent Street continues past Front and up the hill at Queen's Royal Park to view Lake Ontario. The yellow house behind the huge maple trees is made of brick and actually is still there. At the time of the painting a family named Leith lived in this house. The farthest building at one time was the Munroe blacksmith's shop. For many years the building was vacant and dilapidated and was a playground for us kids. Today a fairly new house has been built at this location.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH

### ARCHITEXT

## The classic Ranch Bungalow

Brian Marshall  
Featured



A late 1960s classic Ranch Bungalow. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Patio entertaining around a barbecue was something that came into popularity in the mid-20th century.

For the first time in middle-class North America, it became respectable for the "man-of-the-house" to engage in meal preparation. Very rapidly, it became obvious to these "bread-winners" that the traditional isolation of the kitchen in house design was both inefficient and not conducive to socializing.

Change was called for and, as always, architects responded with a design style that facilitated ease of transition from the interior to

the exterior of a home, particularly with respect to the kitchen, entertaining and patio spaces. The style became known as the ranch bungalow.

Drawing heavily on the design cues of visionary designers, such as the pioneering work of Californian Cliff May in 1932 and Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian concepts, architects set to work in creating a facade and exterior treatment that was generally palatable to mid-American sensibilities.

The design criteria they followed called for a single-storey house that was long

and low, and had a clear separation between public entertaining space and private (bedroom) quarters.

The medium/low pitched roof extended to deep overhanging eaves that, on the facade, would shelter a picture window and a main entry placed off-centre, often in a recessed space that acted as a small verandah.

To the rear, doors and windows giving out onto a patio (or deck) benefited from the shade of these eaves. And, given the average North American's love affair with their car, an attached garage (or carport)

was almost de rigeur.

Marketed as a casual family-oriented lifestyle home, the Ranch was commonly described as "middle-of-the-road modern," a design with a traditional exterior, and a modern interior.

Quite simply, the buying public loved it and the Ranch dominated the housing market between the late 1950s and early 1970s.

As time wore on, the design faced two major challenges. The first was its long footprint, which required a lot with wide frontage on the street and sufficient depth to encompass an entertainment-sized backyard – something that didn't suit the pocketbook of most developers.

The second was its understated (some might say boring) facade, which limited the opportunities for the status-statements many buyers desired.

Next week, we'll explore the design answers to these challenges.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us at

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# Queenston stories **resonate** with readers



Linda Fritz  
Exclusive/The Lake Report

I have been writing this column for several months now and although I spend a lot of time researching my stories, there is no way I can catch everything. So, I'm truly grateful to those of you who have added to the stories I have told and have corrected my mistakes.

Two stories in particular have gathered a lot of attention. Although there are quite a number of books about the Queenston railway, a lot of people told me how surprised they were to read of its existence. My story centred on Queenston but I'm sure there is another whole column about its presence in the rest of Niagara.

People also talked to me about the Queenston peach. I never, in my wildest dreams imagined that I would become a peach biographer. It was a lot of fun to research and I'm so glad that the story brought back so many happy memories.

After the story of Queenston's post office appeared, Betsy Masson sent me an article entitled "Old Queenston" that may have appeared in Saturday Night magazine. It's difficult to tell because the article is simply a fragment.

Queenston was the home of the first post office in Upper Canada. One question I couldn't answer was where exactly it was located.

The collected wisdom was that it was somewhere near the corner of Dee Road and Queen Street (now Queenston Street.) Archeological digs were unable to produce any clear

evidence. The magazine article suggests the reason for this is that when the building was demolished, the stones were used to create a fence for the Willowbank estate along Dee Road. Although somewhat dilapidated, much of the fence is still there.

I chose to concentrate my story about Willowbank on the present day School of Restoration Arts. Elizabeth Oliver Malone thought it would be useful for a more detailed history of the Hamilton family's ownership of the estate. It is as follows:

John Hamilton was the youngest step (half?) brother of Alexander. John Latshaw (the designer of Willowbank) was a master builder who was born in York County, Penn. He crossed the border to Niagara Falls (Upper Canada) in 1828 after his stepbrothers cut him out of his father's will.

John Hamilton married Frances Macpherson and moved to Kingston where he built a shipping dynasty. He was faithful to Queenston and had Latshaw build Glencairn for him in 1832. Alexander contracted Latshaw to build Willowbank in 1834 and Alexander and Hannah moved in with their six children in 1836.

We have letters from Hannah Jarvis Hamilton regarding summer visits to Glencairn, and sympathy and support to Hannah after Alexander's untimely death (in debt) in 1839. Hannah and 10 children, ages six to 21 had only the pension of her mother (Hannah Peters Jarvis) to keep them alive.

Hannah Jarvis Hamilton outlived her siblings and many of her children. She died at age 91 in 1888 and afterward three siblings were not able to look after the orchard, as the farm was called.

A nephew, Cyrus Jarvis Hamilton, returned from the United States to help and by 1904 the family



The exterior stone of the Greystone house is made from limestone from the Queenston Quarry. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

decided to sell Willowbank to Cyrus for \$100. You can see the wonderful indenture (document) where all the typing is faded but all the signatures of the children and grandchildren are in black India ink.

Cyrus married Phyllis Wikkens in 1909 and they had a daughter Caroline (Caro). By 1912, Cyrus needed help and persuaded his cousin, Toronto architect Alfred Boulton (grandson of Maria Lavinia Jarvis and George Hamilton), to buy Willowbank and use it as a summer retreat. Cyrus built 129 Queenston St. for his family.

Greystone was built for Tom Bright, brother of John Bright (who bought Willowbank in 1934 from the Boulton estate.) Both their wives were named Dorothy. Bright oriented Willowbank to front onto the Niagara Parkway as that road was a make-work project during the Depression. Appleton Boys School was for dyslexics but ran out of money. The NOTL Conservancy bought Willowbank. The Conservancy president was Laura Dobson. Mary

Bright (daughter of Tom) and her husband (Tom Urban) put up most of the money through the American Friends of Canada (Bluma Appel arranged with Lady Bird Johnson).

Their daughter Vicky Bright Broer and the foundation still sit on the Willowbank board and help with funding. They chose Julian Smith to head the school because they believed it should be run by a heritage architect. Smith has an international reputation. He is the former architect for Parks Canada and has served on the National Sites and Monuments Board. He was an adviser to UNESCO and other international organizations, something that was essential to the school.

Two people wrote to provide more information about the Queenston Quarry. (A third letter, written by Phyllis Babyk appeared in the Nov. 25 edition of The Lake Report.)

Joseph Solomon wrote: Another local building constructed of Queenston Quarry rock, was the former Baptist Church in the

village of Queenston. It is now a community centre. It was constructed by Adam Vrooman, an early settler to Niagara, who lived between Lines 6 and 7 on the Niagara Parkway.

He had a trade in stonemasonry and he hauled the Queenston Quarry stones on his horse-drawn wagon from the quarry to the church site where he fitted the stones and constructed the church. He was also responsible for bringing the Baptist faith to the Queenston area, first holding meetings at his residence and later at this church. His son became a Baptist minister.

I was surprised at your comments that there could be some 10 kilometres of tunnels and caverns under this quarry. The removal of stone was a surface proposition, however, the quarrying of lime for the cement mining by Usher could have been underground mining and resulted in the tunnels and from the natural caverns.

One of the associated quarry lots that supplied stone was on the Parkway

road, some halfway up the escarpment to the Heights. There is a house on the side the hill across from the observation viewing area of the Niagara River. The circular driveway next to this house leading up to the stairs to Brock's Monument was a depression in the hill from the quarry of stone.

On the same topic, Doug King wrote:

My grandfather purchased blocks from the Queenston Quarry to use for sculptures on Toronto buildings. Also, the Toronto post office, which later became the Air Canada Centre had tons of Queenston limestone in its construction.

When the building was dismantled, Priestly Demolition gave me about 200 tons of it. Two stone patios at my home were cut from some of this. The balance was cut into bird baths and benches. Some are on my property but the rest were donated to charity in recognition of Vic Priestly for his generosity. I still have a few blocks from the building in my backyard that I hope to sculpt into garden furniture.

Finally, I have to thank Kathy Thomas. Her family has been in the Queenston area for generations. It was she who brought the Queenston peach to my attention and she talked to me about the Larkin farm, now under the Ontario Power Generation reservoir. Kathy was out walking with her grandson in October and at the end of the lilac garden near the floral clock, they came across a small plot of ancient apple trees. The trees were probably part of the old farm. Kathy picked some of the apples and turned up at my door with Larkin apple crisp. It was wonderful.

Thanks again to everyone who reads this column..

**More Niagara's History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at: [www.niagaranow.com](http://www.niagaranow.com)**



# COMMUNITY



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



President of the Virgil Women's Institute Sandra Edgeworth and vice-president Margaret Byl donated \$200 to the Town of NOTL during a committee of the whole meeting Monday. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA



Roger Beedles and Rayburn Blake brave the weather to entertain the crowd during Open Mic at Legion Sunday. SUPPLIED



Mocha the dog out for a walk in his winter clothes. BRITTANY CARTER



## THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

With Betty and Jane

### Husky Truck Stop



Hanndore LaFitte and Sydney Hunter accept the Golden Plunger for Husky restaurant. THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

The day was young when nature called and we found ourselves at the Husky on York Road. The truck stop has two types of bathrooms. Some for customers of the restaurant, some for the store, with paid facilities for travelling professional drivers. The paid facilities boast laundry and shower rooms. You can shower for \$7 but you have to pay \$10 if you'd like a clean towel with that shower. The facilities were clean and utilitarian. Betty repeatedly referred to it as her new spa. There also are plenty of public bathrooms and we headed over to the restaurant and enjoyed our first meal of the day. The men's restrooms had a change table, something we don't see enough of. The bathrooms got cleaning attention. Fully accessible, these bathrooms are a great match with the venue.

3.5/5 Golden Plungers



## NOTL DART LEAGUE

Each week, dart teams face off at local restaurants and pubs. Find scores here weekly, exclusive to The Lake Report.

Jini	80
Close Shavians	75
Guzzlers	73
Legion Airs	72
Guyz	69
Legends	68
SandTrap	57
Dartbags	26



## Tarot of the week

Lisa Tache/Special

**DATE:** Dec. 5, 2019

The Seven of Pentacles encourages you to think about the long-term and assess where you can best invest your time and energy. If you've been working really hard at something, trust that your dedication to the

project will pay off.

Putting in time and energy will bring in positive results. You are not looking for quick wins. Focus on the bigger picture. Embrace what you have built and measure your performance to date. If you aren't seeing the results as quickly as you'd like, this is your reminder to be patient and grateful for the progress that you have made so far. Focus on the present and do what you can with what you have.

**ASK YOURSELF THIS.**

What actions can I take to ensure my long-term success?

## RIDDLE ME THIS

When I grow I get closer to the ground. What am I?

**Last Week:** I'm seen in the middle of March and April, but can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month. What am I?

**Answer:** The letter "r"

**Answered first by:** Win Laar

**Also answered correctly by:** David Steele, Lynne Stewart, Dinorah Centeno, Margie Enns, Quinn Tiller, Roger Marcos, Wendy Bosela, Gary Davis, Crispin Bottomley, Julia Klassen, Katie Reimer, Christine Yakymishen, Evan Ganski, Pat Braun, Marilyn Milani

Email answers to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com) for a chance to win a prize.



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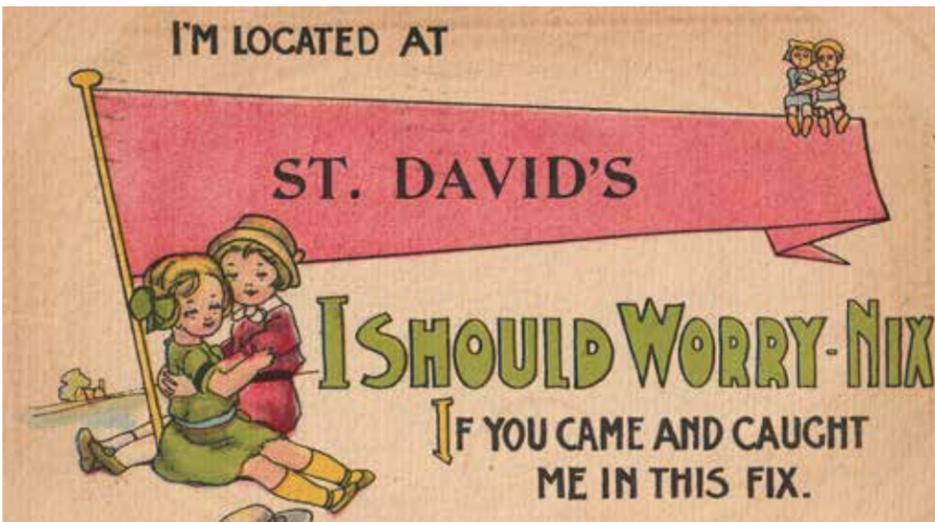
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## FEATURED LOCAL STORY



One of the many fine images of Niagara Camp – the 28th Regiment Bugle Band. COURTESY NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE MUSEUM



## Museum receives valuable postcard collection

John Sayers  
Special to The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum managing director Sarah Kaufman is thrilled that a large collection of Niagara-on-the-Lake postcards has been donated to the Museum by John Burtniak, a widely respected collector of Niagara postcards and ephemera for many years.

As well as Niagara Camp and Old Town, the John Burtniak Postcard Collection of almost 1,000 cards embraces historical images of Queenston and St. Davids, built up over many decades with the painstaking connoisseurship of both an historian and a collector. Some of these images probably do not exist anywhere else on the planet, and one, a St. Davids “fun” postcard aimed at the tourism market, is rare.

This valuable archive is likely the largest single collection of Niagara-on-the-Lake postcards and positions the museum as the world’s indisputable premier holder of images of the area.

From the historical side, the images record early pictures of life in the Old Town, Queenston, St. Davids, and Niagara Camp. And from the collector’s perspective we see several almost-identical pictures of Brock’s Monument – but they aren’t identical because they represent different publishers and a variety of card styles.

This aspect tells us that many, many people visited Brock’s Monument – and other high-lights of the region – over the years, bought postcards from a range of retailers and sent them to relatives and friends back home. We are reminded that tourism here isn’t just a modern-day phenomenon.

A genealogy alert: some of the cards have names or addressees that may ring a bell with genealogists. We have already had an inquiry from a local person who is keenly awaiting the availability of access after the cards have been catalogued.

The key images are those taken by itinerant – and sometimes local – photographers, who spent their days seeking groups and events that they could capture on film and sell as postcards. The total number of cards ever produced would only be the ones that the photographer printed and sold at the time – maybe just one or two.

Postcard collectors refer to them as Real Photo postcards and they are the absolute cream of the proverbial crop. An image of a Niagara-on-the-Lake school class of 1912 might have been a gold mine for the photographer who offered to sell a copy to each of the parents.

The John Burtniak Collection has many Real Photo examples, including Niagara Camp photos. When the photos are captioned, they are even more important, so we know that the 28th Regiment Bugle Band trained here in 1911.

And when the photographer’s name is shown, that helps to pinpoint the event even more because we know that it was professionally done and who did it – a local or an out-of-towner. So the winning cricket team of September 1918 has the date, the event, and even the name of the Hamilton photographer who took and sold copies of the picture – a collector’s and historian’s dream.

Town landmarks received equal attention, as in a 1904 image by a Toronto photographer of guests luxuriating on the porch at the Queen’s Royal Hotel.

Like any pond, wading into what is an ocean of material becomes even more interesting as our museum people become immersed in it.

Kaufman reports that the work is being led by assistant curator Shawna Butts, assisted by local postcard experts John and Judith Sayers. Butts says that if you have any interest in local history – and who hasn’t – you’ve got to see this collection.

Thank you, John Burtniak!



Top: The winning cricket team, September 1918 at Niagara Camp. 2. This “fun” souvenir postcard was likely purchased and sent by a tourist. 3. Guests in 1904 relaxing at the elegant Queen’s Royal Hotel. 4. The Niagara-on-the-Lake school class of 1912. IMAGES COURTESY OF THE NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE MUSEUM

**NOTL: SPECIAL WINTER EDITION**

The Lake Report Press Pass Program gets local residents discounts at a long list of businesses in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Valid for local residents only.

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