



Public health needs power to **suspend students** who aren't vaccinated: Hirji

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara's top doctor says parents need to get their children vaccinated, or they should have to make a legal declaration about vaccinations that could result in their child being suspended from school.

Just 43.6 per cent of kids in Niagara are vaccinated, Dr. Mustafa Hirji told a news conference Monday. And the region's data shows only 3.6 per cent of kids have two doses.

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Mayor wants to **sell land** to fund St. Davids pool reconstruction

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Lord Mayor Betty Disero wants the town to sell off surplus land to pay for a new swimming pool in St. Davids.

Council voted to have staff prepare a report on the possible sale of two pieces of surplus land and for the money to be funnelled toward the St. Davids pool.

Couns. Sandra O'Connor and Alan Bisback voted against the plan during last

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Buried under a **mountain** of white

NOTLers spent hours on Monday and Tuesday clearing snow from paths and driveways



The Gasbarrino family shovels their driveway on Shakespeare Avenue on Monday morning after a blizzard dumped tons of snow. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Across Niagara-on-the-Lake and beyond on Monday, Canadians emerged with shovels in hand to dig out from metre-high drifts of snow that pounded the

area overnight.

Some people simply couldn't get out of their driveways even still, until the plow came by.

On Delater Street, a resident reached out via a group email to ask for help from clearing the piles.

And while neighbours chipped in and picked up their shovels to help others, Good Samaritans like Mark Dawson helped relieve some worries by clearing driveways.

Debi Pratt, who lives on Delater, said for some of

her neighbours get really anxious knowing they can't leave their homes, let alone their driveways.

She said neighbours were grateful when Dawson showed up and agreed to help people clear their driveways.

In the Chautauqua neighbourhood, a young man took his snowblower around and helped out neighbours while earning a well-deserved few bucks.

See our snow photos and read about the young man on Page 4.

Two deaths as Niagara Long Term Care outbreak continues

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Two residents who were in palliative care and contracted COVID-19 at Niagara Long Term Care have died, as an outbreak continues at the Wellington Street care home.

The outbreak has led to 58 cases, with 13 resident cases and 13 staff cases still active. Sixteen resident cases and 16 staff cases have been resolved, execu-

tive director Chris Poos said in a statement Tuesday.

"Sadly, over the last week two residents have passed away," Poos said.

"The cause was not directly related to COVID-19, but they did contract the virus while palliative."

He said the home is in regular contact with public health officials and continues to hold vaccination clinics.

All residents and staff were PCR tested on Tues-

day and the home is working to expedite the results, Poos said.

The home is continuing to follow all outbreak protocols, which include all residents being isolated to their rooms, receiving in-room meal service, and being cared for on contact droplet precautions.

Group activities and communal dining are on hold and one-to-one pro-



Continued on Page 2 The Niagara Long Term Care residence. RICHARD HARLEY

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Roundabout could be **costly, hurt businesses**, owners say

This is one in a series of stories on a regional proposal to build a roundabout at the main intersection in St. Davids.

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Thomas Elltoft outside his property at 247 Four Mile Creek Rd. Elltoft owns some 10 feet extending out from the building and is worried the Region of Niagara will expropriate it, pushing the regional sidewalk right up to the front of the business. EVAN SAUNDERS

Thomas Elltoft, part-owner of Niagara-on-the-Lake Realty, wouldn't have bought his office property in St. Davids if he had known a roundabout was going to be built steps away from the front door.

"It starts to handcuff its use and I wouldn't have bought it otherwise," Elltoft said in an interview.

Elltoft and a business partner own 247 Four Mile Creek Rd., just south of the intersection of York and Four Mile Creek roads, known colloquially as the "Four Corners." He leases part of the building to Bloom & Co., a flower and gift shop.

Elltoft says the roundabout will affect his building in two ways: the ability to grow and its current use.

It is expected the region will need to expropriate land from some of the surrounding properties in order to build the roundabout.

As of Wednesday, regional staff had not responded to several requests from The Lake Report to speak about the roundabout proposal.

"As far as I am concerned, if they want to take that they can buy my whole building," Elltoft said.

"I would only sell my building, I don't want to sell a portion of it."

He said the region would

need to buy a large chunk of the sidewalk directly out front of the building.

There had been plans to install a cafe there and have seating out front, something Elltoft says is now unrealistic with the limited space.

The sidewalk would also be moved closer to the building, which raises safety concerns for Elltoft.

Due to decreased sightlines, drivers leaving the parking lot could have trouble seeing approaching pedestrians and vehicles, he said.

Since the rear of the building borders on conservation land, Elltoft said he has no options for expanding in that direction.

And overall, the building will lose value when its frontage is impacted, he said.

"When you buy a building, the front of it is the most valuable part, especially in commercial," Elltoft said.

"If you are taking away frontage from me, let alone access to our building, you are drastically impacting the rest of the value of the building."

This potential expropriation of land would also affect Ravine Estate Winery, just northwest of the intersection.

Proprietor Paul Harber says having to acquire land around the roundabout will escalate the region's costs for the project.

"I'm not gonna talk figures now but it would not be cheap," Harber said in an interview.

Overall, business owners are concerned the roundabout will impede St. Davids' possible growth as a vibrant commercial destination in NOTL because the centre of the village will be designed around vehicle traffic instead of pedestrian use.

In 2005, planning firm Brook McIlroy undertook a study of St. Davids to lay out a strategy for the village's future. The document recommended turning the Four Corners into a pedestrian landmark for residents and visiting tourists.

"For this vision to be carried out, it is important to focus on the creation of a truly pedestrian-friendly environment and to strike a balance between the needs of local residents" and visitors, the document reads.

The study says the intersection should be designed to "slow down traffic and improve pedestrian safety and comfort without compromising the function of the two regional roads."

Harber said it is frustrating this study was done nearly two decades ago and went unheeded by the region and Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Putting in a round-

about now as a way to mitigate traffic build-up is the result of regional and municipal failure to improve St. Davids infrastructure as the area expanded over the last 15 years, he said.

While a roundabout would slow traffic, Harber does not think it would be safer for pedestrians.

"I don't understand how anybody thinks that a roundabout is safer for pedestrian traffic to walk through," he said.

Harber is worried cars wouldn't be required to stop or a traffic light, resulting in kids and locals having a difficult time finding their way across the road.

On its website, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation says "roundabouts are generally safer for pedestrians than traditional intersections," because there are fewer points of contact between vehicles and people on foot.

Harber said the Region of Niagara should be focused on routing traffic around the heart of St. Davids instead of making the village centre as traffic-friendly as possible.

"Let's open up the arteries around an area instead of shoving everything through it," he said.

Harber referred to the intersection of York Road and Concession 6 Road as a possible contender for rerouting traffic flow and installing a roundabout.

He also is concerned about how cars will enter adjacent businesses once the St. Davids roundabout is built.

Most roundabouts feature

medians dividing oncoming traffic as they approach the roundabout. Medians in this situation would stop vehicles from turning into parking lots for businesses such as the Old Firehall Restaurant and St. Davids Dental, Harber said.

"Parking I don't think will change but the in-and-out access is a concern," said Dr. Angela Murray of St. Davids Dental.

Customers leaving Murray's practice will only be able to turn right onto Four Mile Creek Road, heading away from the village centre, if the roundabout's median extends far enough.

"When I built my practice I actually wanted in-and-out access on Four Mile Creek and York roads, which would make flow for patients getting out, if they needed to get out onto York Road, more of an option," she said.

"We've got a lot of cars in that parking lot, plus staff, right? I just don't think they're taking that into account."

The three business owners all said they have had little to no communication regarding the roundabout proposal from the region.

"No one from the region contacted me at all until Paul (Harber) brought it to my attention," Elltoft said.

So, he reached out to the region for answers about how much of his land would need to be expropriated.

It's been two months and he said he still has not received a clear answer.

NEXT: Many residents don't want a roundabout built – and one St. Davids couple is split on the idea.

Home has had **58 cases** in latest outbreak, with **32 resolved** so far



Chris Poos.

Continued from Front Page

gramming is being offered and encouraged.

Fully vaccinated designated essential caregivers are allowed to visit one at a time, but must pass active screening, receive a negative rapid test and wear full PPE including a respirator mask (N95, CAN95/99).

General visitation and

resident social absences have been cancelled.

Poos also said increased cleaning is happening in all high-touch areas and on surfaces, and that PPE is available and well-stocked in the home.

"All staff will continue to receive rapid tests each shift and a PCR test twice per week until further notice," he said.

"Residents are receiving rapid and PCR tests and staff are rapid tested daily as they enter the home. This practice will continue throughout this outbreak."

The facility is in contact with staff, residents and families through email updates, phone calls and virtual town halls.

"We continue to encour-

age virtual visits with residents and many residents have designated essential caregivers that are allowed to come into the home and participate in the care of their loved one. Staff are working hard to provide great care to our residents," Poos said.

"The home is stable, staffing is good and we are well-stocked with supplies.

(Monday's) snowstorm was certainly a challenge and we are incredibly grateful to our staff for once again putting the home and our residents first, and making it into work."

A year ago, in January 2021, before vaccines were available, a COVID outbreak at the facility led to 11 deaths and more than 120 infections.



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Public health needs power to **suspend students** who aren't vaccinated, says Niagara's top doctor

Continued from Front Page

Hirji said it would make him feel a lot more comfortable sending kids back to school if parents get their children vaccinated.

"One area where I continue to feel a little disappointed is the uptake we've had amongst age five to 11 children," Niagara Region's acting chief medical officer said.

He wants to see that number closer to 80 per cent and said public health will be doing a lot more promotion of kids' vaccines.

Hirji has been advocating for COVID-19 to be added to the provincial Immunization of School Pupils Act, which would allow unvaccinated students to be removed from classrooms if there is an outbreak.

But Hirji said the province hasn't been listening. "I'm disappointed that the province continues not to add COVID-19 as a 10th disease where we would use the Immunization of School Pupils (Act) to protect students," he said.

"This act exists to protect students and teachers from outbreaks of infection in school," he said.

It "just makes logical sense" that COVID be added to the statute.



Parents should be responsible and get their kids vaccinated, says Niagara's top doctor. FILE

Youngsters need vaccines, "so they're going to have that additional margin of safety when they get to school," he said.

Schools "are essential in our society," he said. "Too often we've had a conversation of whether school should be open, and I think the conversation should have always been that schools should be open, (but) what can we do to protect kids even more in terms of their attendance at school, so they have great protection."

With cases so high, a lack of testing, low vaccine rates for kids, and close quarters in schools, Hirji said there is still lots we can do to protect our children.

Tightening mask exemptions, prioritizing students for PCR and rapid testing,

improving ventilation in schools, and maximizing distance between students by lowering class sizes are among his suggestions.

He said public health will work with the school boards to test ventilation in classrooms and improve air quality.

The region is looking at other ways to pull unvaccinated kids from class should there be an infection.

"If we do see unvaccinated people in a class where we are seeing infections, we would be looking perhaps to have them isolated out of the class to make sure we limit the spread of infection and keep everybody protected in that classroom."

Without the addition of COVID-19 to the Immunization of School Pupils Act, health officials can only

suggest to parents "that if your child is unvaccinated, they should be staying home at this point."

He also clarified that the act doesn't make vaccines mandatory for kids, but requires parents to make a legal declaration, which public health can then act on.

"So they either get the child vaccinated, they submit a legal notarized document saying that they have a conscientious objection to getting their child vaccinated, or they submit a medical exemption that their child cannot be vaccinated. Any one of those three is acceptable," he said.

Once the documents are in place, it "becomes a tool we can use to perhaps manage the outbreak by suspending students who are unvaccinated."

A reminder of **importance** of the food supply chain

Ross Robinson
Special to The Lake Report

While enduring nearly two years of COVID-19, we have been bombarded with new words, new phrases and new knowledge. We have learned so much about things we had always taken for granted.

Who ever thought of the food supply chain? A jammed port of Vancouver, a shortage of shipping containers, Trans-Canada Highway bridges washed out, truck driver shortages. And now they need to be COVID vaxxed?

What else could go wrong?

Allow my Collins dictionary to tell us a supply chain is a network between a



The Independent Grocer on Queen Street was closed for renovations earlier this week. ROSS ROBINSON

company and its suppliers to produce and distribute a specific product or service. Producers, vendors, warehouses, transportation companies, distribution centres and retailers.

Here in wee NOTL's Old Town this week, we got a double whammy when it

came to the last link in the food supply chain. On Sunday and Monday, Mother Nature gifted us with a massive snow dump.

Monday, almost all residents were confined to quarters, and even our amazing NOTL roads department could only put a dent in the

deluge. So, most food retailers were closed, with only Mary at our precious Avondale able to open the doors for customers.

The next day, panic set in as the Queen Street Valu-mart (now known as the Independent Grocer) had to close for the day to complete its very expensive and impressive renovation.

Two days of hardship, with locals running short of frozen pizza, ketchup and deli meats and cheeses. Sheesh!

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. We take our fantastic NOTL retailers for granted, until events conspire to remind us that we are so fortunate to live here.

Viva supply chains.

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Have snowblower, will travel: 12-hour day for young landscaper

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

With snowbanks well over a metre high and drifted snow packed hard by the wind, Niagara-on-the-Lake residents spent hours Monday digging out from the overnight snow storm and blizzard.

It made for a lonnng day for people like Joseph Neufeld, who was out around NOTL with his snowblower, clearing the drives and walkways of some regular customers.

Neufeld, 28, owns Imperial Horticulture and toiled from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. digging people out.

What started as simply helping his regulars turned into an all-day affair as other people saw him and

his sister Sarah-Joy clearing neighbouring properties – and wanted theirs done, too.

For a small fee, Neufeld was happy to oblige and folks were elated they didn't have to spend hours heaving the heavy snow.

Armed with a shovel, Sarah-Joy, a full-time nurse at the St. Catharines hospital, regularly helps out her big brother.

She said doing some physical labour is “a great release and way to de-stress” after working shifts at the hospital and dealing with the ongoing COVID pandemic.

It's also a great way to connect with people in the community, she said.

Her brother agreed, noting, many of his regular

customers are seniors so he's “glad we were able to help people clear all that snow. We love meeting and working with people.”

The Niagara College horticulture grad said he was inspired to launch his company by his dad John, also a horticulturist, who used to work at Mori Gardens in NOTL.

In the summer, Neufeld does a lot of work with gardening coach Joanne Young (The Lake Report's gardening columnist) and employs a number of seasonal staff in the warm months.

For now, though, it's just him (with some occasional sisterly help). And on Tuesday he was out again, clearing driveways and helping finish the big dig.



Joseph Neufeld uses his snowblower and his sister Sarah-Joy has a shovel to dig out a happy resident in the Chautauqua neighbourhood. KEVIN MACLEAN

A snow day for the history books



Scan here to see a full gallery of winter photos



Left: Mike Palmer shovels a mountain of snow at his Chautauqua home. Top right: David Lavigne clears his driveway. Bottom right: Tara Rosling's dog Millie was enjoying the snow, running around and jumping. Bottom row: Neighbourhood scenes in Chautauqua show just deep snow and unplowed roads. RICHARD HARLEY PHOTOS



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Federal grant supports ambassador program and rainbow bench in NOTL's downtown

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake has received a \$47,000 federal grant to support the summertime ambassadors program, new safety barriers for downtown patios and to install a rainbow bench along Queen Street.

"With the funds, the ambassadors are so well-equipped to go into a 2022 program. We're so grateful for our partnership with the town," Laurie Harley, past-president of the Shaw Guild and one of the lead organizers of the ambassadors project, said in an interview.

The grant comes from the federal government's new "My Main Street" program.

How the money will be divided among the projects is yet to be determined, town spokesperson Marah Minor said in an email to The Lake Report.

The ambassadors project began in 2020 when the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake asked the guild to help tell visitors and residents about pandemic restrictions, Harley said.

But it became more rewarding than simply acting as a conduit for pandemic restrictions, Harley said.



NOTL ambassadors.

"What was interesting was just meeting visitors. Greeting them, answering their questions, sharing information that probably only people who live here know so people kind of have the inside story," she said.

"That's what we built it on."

All volunteers are trained to know what places in town they can recommend to curious travellers to make sure their specific interests are met and part of the funding will go toward extra training and education for volunteers, Harley said.

"There's a lot to learn about this town," she said.

The project has deepened her love and understanding

of NOTL, Harley said.

"We live here but sometimes you don't really appreciate how beautiful a place is until you see it through the eyes of a visitor," she said.

Funding also will help pay for the recruitment process and cover costs for working clothes, which have the ambassador logo clearly visible.

Harley said the guild is revamping the ambassador program and will share more details on the changes in February. It hopes to have the program underway for the May long weekend.

People interested in volunteering this year can reach out to the ambassadors at info@notl-ambassadors.ca.

The government grant also will go toward two Queen Street projects to enhance the public space.

One of the first projects, which NOTL has committed to, is the installation of a rainbow bench on Queen Street, a move recommended by the diversity and inclusivity committee.

"Installing the bench is an excellent step to improve economic and social inclusion and demonstrate the town's dedication to

inclusivity and accessibility for all," a statement from the town says.

Minor said the bench will be installed after a location is chosen by council and the weather improves.

The other project is the installation of "creative" safety barriers around the roadside patios dotting Queen Street to "better fit the community's aesthetic and revitalize the public space," the release reads.

"The creative safety barriers are wine barrels filled with aggregate and topped with planting materials," Minor said.

"My Main Street" is a \$23.25 million federal program that aims to "help drive business and restore vibrancy to local communities across southern Ontario in the aftermath of COVID-19," according to its website.

The program prioritizes projects which "support economic and social benefits for equity seeking groups, including franco-phones, women, Indigenous, racialized groups, Black communities, newcomers, youth (39 and under), people living with disabilities, the unhoused, low-income people, trans or non-binary people, and or LGBTQ+."

Council debates land sales to fund St. Davids pool

Continued from Front Page

week's committee of the whole planning meeting.

One of the surplus properties is located beside 280 Anne St. The plot connects Anne and Butler streets.

Director of operations Sheldon Randall said the parcel had been earmarked previously to fund a turnaround at the end of Butler Street and improvements to the bordering trail. He said excess money generated from the sale could still go toward the pool.

The other plot is located beside 978 East and West Line, next to Vineridge Academy.

The motion was spurred on by Disero's work with Niagara's top politicians to

find money for the pool.

"I was thinking about the work we are doing with Wayne Gates and Tony Baldinelli and them looking for money and I thought, 'You know, if we're doing all of this we should be getting ready to put some money of our own aside,'" Disero said.

O'Connor said she was not aware of these parcels of land and wanted a comprehensive review of them before she would support their sale.

"I'm not averse to what the lord mayor is trying to do. She's trying to be forward looking and I think that's great but this is just new to me and I don't think I can support it until a little due diligence is done,"

O'Connor said.

Disero stressed that the motion was to have staff report on the status of the land and their salability and not to move ahead with the sales.

Coun. Clare Cameron wanted a comprehensive inventory of all the town's surplus land before she supported the sale of the two selected parcels.

Chief administrator Mar-nie Cluckie told Cameron a comprehensive list of surplus land has been created and would be shared with council shortly, prompting Cameron to support Disero's motion.

Bisback said selling off town assets "project by project" is a slippery slope.

He questioned the practice

of selling land to support the pool when there have not been any relevant updates on the design since it was presented nearly two years ago.

"I actually haven't seen a plan on the St. Davids pool other than the original plan. Nothing has changed," he said.

The \$5-million plan has not been updated since the federal government denied funding for the project in 2020.

Disero said the St. Davids pool committee will be tweaking the design to "get the price down."

"I understand that we have land to sell. I just don't know why we're linking the two at this point in time," Bisback said.

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Editor-In-Chief: Richard Harley

Managing Editor: Kevin MacLean

Publisher: Niagara Now

Design & Layout: Richard Harley

Advertising: Rob Lamond, Lisa Jeffrey, Megan Vanderlee

Contributors: Evan Saunders, Jessica Maxwell, Jill Troyer, Tim Taylor, Denise Ascenzo, Linda Fritz, Elizabeth Masson, Dr. William Brown, Brian Marshall, NOTL Museum, Kyra Simone, Gail Kendall, Patty Garriock, Bill Auchterlonie, Steve Hardaker, Ross Robinson, Penny-Lynn Cookson, Janice White and many more members of the NOTL community



The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases: 186

Region active cases: 5,047

Region deaths: 458

Region total cases: 29,194

Region resolved cases: 23,689

**Jan. 19 data per Niagara Region Public Health.*

Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown below are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution."



Contributed by Patty Garriock

"Happiness is not out there for us to find. The reason that it is not out there is that it's inside us." - Sonja Lyubomirsky.

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Advertising Department: 905-932-5646

Office Address

496 Mississauga St., NOTL, Ontario, Canada.

Mailing Address

PO Box 724, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S1J0

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A ghost town

Niagara-on-the-Lake was a calm ghost town Saturday morning, as people continued to stay inside due to cold weather and pandemic lockdowns. Pictured here is one lone van parked at Navy Hall. Several other areas were empty, including Queen Street sidewalks, Simcoe Park, Fort George's "killer hill," and the parking lots along the parkway trail. **See a full gallery of photos at niagaranow.com.** RICHARD HARLEY

Editorials

Community lends a hand

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

In the aftermath of the latest "snowstorm of the century" – or at least the biggest one in a few years – we saw heartwarming evidence all around Niagara-on-the-Lake (and beyond) of people helping people.

When there's nowhere to go, because there's no

way to get there, let alone no way to get out of your driveway, what happens? The community springs into action.

We heard about and saw friends, neighbours and complete strangers reaching out to help others, people responding to pleas via phone, email and social media asking for help digging out or getting out.

It also, refreshingly,

brought people out of hibernation, encouraging them to interact with neighbours, check on seniors, lend a hand wherever needed, and to literally talk about the weather as many folks shovelled and shovelled for what seemed like hours.

The Town of NOTL's cleanup crews did an admirable job of clearing the roads so we could get back

to what passes for normal these days. Plus thanks to the town for the brilliant idea to set up a hotline and solicit people to shovel out those who couldn't do it themselves.

So kudos to all those who did their part to make the big dig bearable and remind us all how important community and human connection is.

editor@niagaranow.com

Around and around

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

We love roundabouts. They are safe, efficient and keep traffic moving.

Anyone who has driven in Europe or the United Kingdom knows that roundabouts (aka traffic circles) are everywhere.

Because they work.

North American drivers for whom the concept is new sometimes need a period of adjustment when encountering a new roundabout or if they've never driven on one before.

It's pretty simple: the vehicles circling the roundabout have the right-of-way. Oncoming vehicles need to yield to traffic on the roundabout and enter when there is a break in the action.

Sometimes patience is required.

The Region of Niagara seems to love roundabouts as well.

Niagara's planners and engineers have installed several roundabouts across the region in recent years – and the plan is for more of them.

Because, in the right circumstances and in the right situation, they are a sound and sensible choice.

That said, a roundabout is not a sound and sensible choice for the "Four Corners" intersection at Four Mile Creek and York roads in St. Davids. (Yes, the region is eyeing one for the crash-prone intersection of York and Concession. Now that one seems to make logical sense.)

Besides legitimate concerns for those pedestrians who might need to cross the street in St. Davids, there seems to be a litany of reasons why this intersection is not suited to a roundabout.

It's a case of trying to force a "round" peg into a square hole.

The geography, with several businesses directly abutting where the roundabout would go, would seem to be the biggest reason why this regional idea is a bad one.

It's all just too crammed, will require some expensive property expropriation and then some of those same businesses that border the roundabout will suffer because it may be awkward, even dangerous for

people wanting to get in and out of their parking lots. Not to mention what might happen to the value of their properties.

Some of the historical and other concerns voiced by residents are also not to be taken lightly.

The region's seeming fixation with a roundabout at the Four Corners is misguided and needs to be revisited.

The existing four-way stop remains workable and in the future maybe a conventional stop light will be required.

But squeezing a roundabout into this space strikes us as a foolishly expensive and unnecessary choice.

The region needs to head back to the drawing board. editor@niagaranow.com

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Let's deal with COVID-19 peacefully



Dr. Kathryn Belicki
Special to The Lake Report

Here we go again: another year, another variant. But this feels like we're right back at the beginning of 2020.

Like many, I'm cranky and exhausted. It seems I'm always searching for a righteous reason to be angry.

It's hard to be furious at something I can't see; much easier to be incensed at concrete, in-front-of-my-face you.

Take the escalating battle over vaccination. I'm triple-vaccinated, as are most around me.

It didn't bring us the freedom we'd envisioned, but as Omicron sweeps through, its benefits have come clear. In the last few weeks, 10 people I know have fallen sick.

Nine had a few miserable days but didn't need a physician. The one who was unvaccinated landed in the ICU.

You can bet I dearly wish everyone was vaccinated

— for their sake, for my sake should I need an ICU bed, and for the sake of an acquaintance whose cancer surgery has been cancelled yet again.

But in the face of relentless frustration and fear, it's easy to vilify those with whom we disagree. Last summer, my spouse and I camped our way across Canada, ducking the cities, avoiding restaurants and shopping in rural villages and towns.

I overheard — OK, I shamelessly eavesdropped on — several conversations about the reluctance to get vaccinated.

Unlike the emphasis on conspiracy theories in the media, these were mostly sensible discussions, albeit misinformed.

Many fretted about this new-to-them technology and the apparent speed of its development. Others talked about how they got the flu despite flu shots and wondered why this would be different.

Some, having never experienced how science works in real time, distrusted authorities who had given contradictory advice throughout the pandemic.

These days I am disturbed at the increasing talk of forcing people to get vaccinated. And am even more

concerned at how many of my acquaintances think that's a good idea.

I am not talking about mandates that restrict — for a limited duration — unvaccinated people's access to non-essential public settings including certain work environments. That is simply a tragic but effective strategy for managing an infectious disease.

It's not so unlike requiring smokers to take their habit outdoors. Even those with a medical reason for being unvaccinated should be isolated from such places, I think. (If someone needed to smoke for health reasons, they'd still have to leave the restaurant.)

But to truly require people to get vaccinated? That's a step too far.

In scary times, it is tempting to relinquish freedom in the name of safety — especially other people's freedom.

But it is precisely in such vulnerable times we must resist emotion and instead Krazy-Glue ourselves to sound principles and values.

Our world is increasingly filled with angry, brittle voices on all political sides. Some are prepared to be violent to address what they assume is their righteous reason to be enraged.

Forced vaccination is one

alarming move in that direction. I'm not sure which I dread more: getting a severe case of COVID or living in a country where truly fundamental freedoms like sovereignty over our own bodies are undermined.

Anger is a complicated, sacred emotion: It is the trumpet call of injustice that summons us to action. It sweeps away fear and provides energy to act.

Because of those qualities, it can be intoxicating, addictive even, especially in circumstances that foster depression and anxiety. And though anger can arise for dodgy reasons, it always feels justified — maybe because it's an emotion motivated by justice.

In these oh-so-trying times we need less rage, more reflection, forbearance and grace. Let's not forget that the primary source of our anger is an invisible, havoc-wreaking organism.

As for our fellow, fallible humans, let's try to bite our tongues and unless it's an emergency, keep our hands off the car horn. At least that's what I'm telling myself!

Dr. Kathryn Belicki was a professor of psychology at Brock University for 34 years. She lives in NOTL.

NOTL growth is exploitation, not progress

Dear editor:

When Niagara-on-the-Lake residents speak out about development plans that they find inappropriate, it's not because they are scared of progress.

We once were a town of multigenerational families. For instance, my aunt is the partner of the great uncle of the owner of The Lake Report, and I knew his grandfather and am friends with his cousins.

We were all connected through families for generations. When we grew as a community, the schools grew, too.

We all went to school together for generations.

More houses popped up, yes, but with mostly the same names on the mailboxes.

All of our schools are now gone but three, and there is no high school left.

I don't care if they build on the old Parliament Oak school site. It's over for NOTL. They've wrecked it. It's mostly a retirement village and a wine-soaked amusement park for middle-aged yuppies from other places.

Our main street actually was for people in town 20 years ago.

We actually had a police station below the Court House. Our library was

right beside it. Our hospital was there in the middle of the night. There were two banks on the main street. A pharmacy, a gas station, and so much more.

The tourists were here and they mostly went to Fort George, the Shaw Festival and dined at a few hotels. I'm not talking about 1970; I'm talking about 1998.

The biggest changes really started happening around the early 2000s and just gained momentum around 2010 onward.

If people really knew what we had here, and if you grew up here, you would understand what we've lost and you wouldn't call this progress.

It's not worth fighting over though, as it is truly a lost cause.

Most of us moved away because we are fed up. My family on my mom's side has had a tie to this town since 1858. They left Old Town and moved to the Virgil area just before Christmas.

It's over and it's never going to go back to what it was.

But that's not progress — it's just exploitation and it has proved profitable for some developers and proprietors.

Alan Plut
St. Catharines

Accommodation tax should be reconsidered

Dear editor:

I have read the article regarding the proposed municipal accommodation tax in the Jan. 6 edition of The Lake Report, "Owner-occupied rentals cited as one solution," and would like to provide my comments.

First off, there's unfairness of the tax.

As stated in the article, the majority of accommodation providers, namely those with four bedrooms or fewer, are not included. It makes no sense that only some operators must collect the tax. If some have to, then all should.

A well-placed source has said the NOTL Bed & Breakfast Association made a deal with Lord Mayor Betty Disero to exempt operators with four and fewer bedrooms in return for the

association not opposing the tax.

Not all of us belong to the BBA and were not consulted. In fact, there seems to have been little discussion with those of us affected.

Secondly, this proposal is being implemented before the town's tourism strategy has been completed. Is this not putting the cart before the horse? Doing this would be akin to counting your golf score before taking your first drive.

Thirdly, why is it that just the accommodation industry is expected to finance the projects that are proposed to be funded by this tax? Do the restaurants, golf courses, theatres and wineries not benefit from tourism?

Fourthly, I have not seen how much money is being

designated for the four projects proposed for funding by the levy.

These projects are apparently in the budget but there is no guarantee the expected money raised from this tax will materialize or even cover these projects.

Speaking of the budget, again as pointed out in the article, the town has spent thousands on consultants for various things such as \$90,000 for a study about a new firehall and the hiring of a firm to track down illegal short-term accommodation providers (just ask the people who live beside them to identify these offenders) and now \$15,000 for a rainbow crosswalk that many residents are not in favour of.

How is this accommodation tax to be administered?

Is someone going to be hired to collect and enforce this tax, and at what cost? Perhaps the town should be looking at ways to reduce costs rather than finding ways to spend money.

As a threat to get support, the lord mayor has indicated that if this tax is not implemented, then taxes in general will have to be raised. She has failed to include those of us affected by this tax and instead included those not affected (the BBA). With the recent shutdown again because of the pandemic her timing is poor.

I hope the councilors who opposed this tax will continue to oppose it and that the rest rethink this strategy.

Doug Johnson
NOTL

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Crops aren't big fans of cold fronts, so farmers use big fans to protect them when it gets too chilly. RICHARD HARLEY

Vineyards crank up fans for first time this winter

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

Unexpectedly frigid temperatures last weekend meant the wind machines were running in many vineyards around Niagara-on-the-Lake early Sunday morning.

The giant fans are used when it gets cold enough to damage the tender buds on the dormant vines.

"It got down to -18, and

it was a surprise. That was colder than forecast," said Matthias Oppenlaender, chair of Grape Growers of Ontario. "We know from experience we get bud damage at -18 or -19."

When enough buds are damaged by extreme cold, the vine won't produce for as long as five years afterward, so avoiding that damage is crucial.

As the temperature dips as low as -18C, the coldest

air pools at ground level. The huge fans stir it up, pushing relatively warmer air down to the level of the vines.

"They have temperature sensors and they're automated, but the batteries can run down, so we have to monitor them closely," Oppenlaender explained.

"This is the first time this winter we've needed them. I'm not concerned about the crop, it hasn't been dam-

aged. But it's a wake up call. We have to be on alert."

No one can say how often the giant fans will have to be used this winter, but growers will be keeping an eye on the weather.

"It's impossible to predict how the rest of the winter will go, but when we have clear skies it gets cold," so the big machines will be at the ready to prevent the kind of damage that could ruin next summer's crop.

Resident groups want Chautauqua parking changes to be permanent

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Friends of Ryerson Park and the Chautauqua Residents Association have asked the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to make parking restrictions in the neighbourhood of Chautauqua permanent.

A pilot project to create traffic controls in the Chautauqua neighbourhood has been met with strong support by members of both groups nearly a year after it began, area resident John Scott said.

"There is little question that the suite of measures had the desired effect, as through the summer Chautauqua returned to a balanced park usage between visitors and residents," Scott told council during a committee of the whole meeting on Monday.

The residents group also supports having the no-parking restrictions in effect only during the summer season, Scott said.

Early in 2021, the Friends of Ryerson Park approached council requesting strict parking measures in Chautauqua in order to rein in vehicle traffic and increase safety in the area.

Council approved several changes, including restricting parking on one side of many of the neighbourhood's narrow streets and increasing fines to \$150.

Scott said the Friends of Ryerson Park represents 210 households primarily in Chautauqua, roughly 75 per cent of the neighbourhood.

"The residents of Chau-



Fine signs are fine to stay, say resident groups. FILE

tauqua are pleased and most appreciative of the response of the town to alleviate the significant issues we experienced over the past few years," he said.

Scott had three requests for council.

He asked council to set aside money to hire a seasonal bylaw officer to patrol Chautauqua during the busy months, for the parking restrictions to be permanent and that the speed limit in the area be cut to 30 or 35 km/h.

"Reducing speed limits to 30 or 35 km/h is not unprecedented, even in urban areas like Toronto," Scott said.

Director of operations Sheldon Randall said a speed reduction in Chautauqua is being considered as a part of the town's transportation master plan and nothing will be done before the plan is finalized.

Scott acknowledged the restrictions will be constantly under review.

"One thing that we all have to realize when we're doing remedial measures like this is that adjustments are going to be required over time," he said.

Chief administrator Marnie Cluckie assured council that all of Scott's requests are already on staff radar and said a report on the success and future of the measures will come before council in March.

Catch up with council news online

Parking restrictions coming to The Village to accommodate garbage and recycling trucks



All-way stops not justified for Prideaux Street



Council approves parking limits on East and West Line



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Upper Canada Food Guide

Vol. 1, Issue 2

Serving up delicious food to all of Niagara-on-the-Lake

Jan. 20, 2022

Budapest Bakeshop is all about **freshness**

Owners Todd and Anett Kane say every chimney cake is made fresh daily, with a variety of flavours

The Food Guru
Upper Canada Food Guide

For the family-owned Budapest Bakeshop in downtown NOTL, it's all about freshness, uniqueness and tradition.

The Queen Street bakery focuses almost exclusively on high-quality chimney cakes — a Hungarian speciality food that the family has put its own spin on.

"That's really what we're about, is being the freshest, most different kind of bakery," says Todd Kane, who runs the bakery with his wife Anett, often with help from their two daughters Helena, 9, and Victoria, 5.

The bakery bakes are prepared fresh daily and the store doesn't keep any day-old product.

"There's nothing out of the fridge, nothing out of the freezer. Nothing's done overnight. We don't use anything the next day like that. That's kind of the essence of what we are," Todd says.

In Hungary, chimney cakes are typically a snack food found at carnivals and festivals, sort of like Beaver Tails are to Canadians. Traditionally, they're sweet pastries coated in cinnamon sugar and nuts.

But the Kanes, who wanted to bring a bit of Anett's heritage into their business, have reinvented the funnel-shaped bread with some savoury flavours like bacon and cheddar and turned them into sandwiches, while keeping the light, traditional texture and cooking method.

All of the cakes are done in a special oven designed specifically for making the bread.

"Because I grew up in Hungary, I grew up on chimney cakes," Anett says.



The Kane family, father Todd, daughters Victoria and Helena, and mother Anett, at Budapest Bakeshop. RICHARD HARLEY

"It was a specialty food. You couldn't buy it in the stores. If we'd go to a market or fair once or twice a year, I'd have it there and it was a very nice memory."

Todd also got to experience the cakes for the first time while visiting Anett's family in Hungary about 18 years ago.

"We always dreamt about doing something in food, like being in the food world, but what we wanted to do was do something Hungarian to represent Anett's background and give our girls, our two young children, a chance to grow up with a strong connection to their Hungarian background too," Todd says.

Anett says chimney cakes go back about 300 years in Hungary.

The recipe is light, with no

eggs or butter.

"It's like bread, pizza, croissants, pretzel and a donut had a baby together," Todd says.

“It was a specialty food. You couldn't buy it in the stores. If we'd go to a market or fair once or twice a year, I'd have it there and it was a very nice memory.”

Both Todd and Anett say since opening they've been extremely thankful to have developed a large local following. Some people come in two or three times a week.

"From Niagara-on-the-Lake to St. Davids to Niagara Falls, the whole Niagara area has really responded well to the product. And we just, we're lucky," he adds,

noting that they have great staff who have been with them from the beginning who also believe in their product.

**ANETT KANE
BUDAPEST BAKESHOP**

"We're fortunate there because there's been a lot of ups and downs the last two years with openings, closings, openings, closings, all these new rules. And we're adapting and kind of riding that roller coaster. But the staff has been consistent and they're just a great team."

The shop also tries to give back to those in need in the

community. Before the pandemic hit, the store would donate all of their end of day product to Newark Neighbours to give to people in need. Unfortunately Newark Neighbours couldn't store the food at the time, so while they work out the logistics they're also looking to partner with the YWCA to do something similar.

"If there's any products that we haven't sold that day, they can come pick that up and then they could go right away to families that could benefit from it."

Todd says another thing they're grateful for is the sense of community among NOTL businesses.

"We've reached out to other people and made great friends through this pandemic, with the restaurant owners and the busi-

ness owners," he says.

"These are all people that we've come to know now in our time here and become friends with and can talk to about things because they have more experience. It's been really nice to be able to bounce ideas and talk to the people" from other businesses.

Though the pandemic has been tough, "our attitude is always 'the glass is half full.' We're always focusing on the positive and I think that this community does a good job of that."

Check out some of Budapest Bakeshop's menu items in this week's food guide.

Or stop by their store at 118 Queen St. and try out a chimney cake and watch the fresh cakes be baked throughout the day.



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CALAMARI FRITTI | lemon | jimmy nardello chili aioli 19
THE GREAT BAMBINO | cured meats | cheeses | foccacia | olives 36

Pizza

THE OG | basil | sauce pomodoro | fior de latte 22
PEPPERONI | mozzarella | sauce pomodoro 22
THE RUFFINO | sausage | piacentino | cacciatore | ricotta | pomodoro 24
THE DANIELLA | roasted garlic | kale | lemon | potato | rosemary 22
THE BEATRICE | mushroom | crema di pecorino | black pepper | nduja 23

Pasta

SPAGHETTI CARBONARA | pancetta | farm fresh egg | black pepper 28
TORTELLINI | roast chicken brodo(broth) 28
PORK RAGU A LA BOLOGNESE | rigatoni | parmigiano reggiano 28
SPAGHETTI & MEAT BALLS | tomato | basil | parmigiano 26
2lb BAKED SEAFOOD "MAC N' CHEESE" | shrimp | scallop | lobster 38

Secondas includes 2 contorni*

BONE-IN PORK SCALLOPINI | lemon | caper | butter 29*
GRILLED VEAL CHOP | marsala & mushroom cream sauce 39*
"EGGPLANT PARMESAN" | marinara sauce | mozzarella | sourdough 29
WOOD-OVEN 1/2 CHICKEN "SALTIMBOCCA" | sage | lemon | prosciutto 29*

Contorni

WOOD-FIRED ROOT VEGETABLES | balsamic reduction 11
BROCCOLI SPRIGARELLO | lemon | garlic | anchovie 11
POLENTA | grass-fed butter | parmigiano 10
WOOD-OVEN ROASTED POTATOES | rosemary | preserved lemon 10

Dolci

CHOCOLATE PANNA COTTA | pawpaw dulce de leche 9
TIRAMISU | coffee | cocoa | mascarpone 9

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All Canadian Burger \$13
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Bacon Chicken Melt \$12
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+ add house-made garlic dipping sauce | 2

RAVINE BURGER | 20

7oz Cumbrae's beef, Dre's bun, American cheese, house-made kosher dill pickle, comeback sauce, house cut fries
+ change to gluten-free bun | 2 / + add extra cheese | 1

FRIED CHICKEN SANDWICH | 20

crispy fried organic chicken thigh, Dre's bun, Alabama white sauce, bread and butter pickles, iceberg lettuce, house cut fries
+ change to gluten-free bun | 2

BEEF SHORT RIB | 36 | GF

8oz master-stock braised short rib, black garlic sauce, creamed swiss chard, fried brussels sprouts, buttery mashed potatoes, pickled chili

ROASTED KOREAN CHICKEN | 28

organic Yorkshire Valley Farms roasted, ginger and soy marinated 1/2 chicken, radish and daikon pickles, kimchi, gochujang, fried rice

dessert

STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING | 10

topped with house-made miso butterscotch and vanilla whipped cream

BUCKWHEAT BROWNIE | 10 | GF / V

fudgy buckwheat and tahini brownie, date caramel sauce, sesame tuile

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Back to the creek

With continued lockdowns and shutdowns of arenas for hockey, some Canadian kids just aren't in the mood to wait to shoot the puck around. These NOTL kids are back to the frozen One Mile Creek to pass the puck around and take some practice shots. On the side of the creek are hats and gloves and shovels, all part of the experience.
RICHARD HARLEY

NOTL youth council has big plans for 2022

Tannin Driedger-Bradshaw
Special to The Lake Report

Members of the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council are especially excited this year to again play a part in helping our community.

This is our youth council's fifth year and it's the fourth year I have been involved. The council has made some important contributions to our town and we are pleased to see a growing number of young people who want to be involved in our council.

During these still difficult times, we have made plans to help Niagara-on-the-Lake be happy and healthy in 2022. To do this, we have split the council into three main groups: advocacy, outreach and wellness.

One aspect our advocacy group plans to address is the upkeep of our town parks, which should always stay clean and beautiful.

Several parks, including the St. Davids Lions Park



Tannin Driedger-Bradshaw.

and Queen's Royal Park, need attention. We hope that through the next year we will be able to organize NOTL garbage clean-up days that will help tidy these public garden areas.

Furthermore, the advocacy committee wants to create a campaign focusing on Black and Indigenous history in NOTL for Black History Month in February.

As a part of this venture, our youth council intends to design information videos about local historic sites for the benefit of both residents and visitors. We hope this helps people around our town learn about and acknowledge those who helped NOTL become what it is today.

For the upcoming year, our outreach team hopes to keep people in town up to date on the innovative ideas and plans we have for the near future.

This will mean more social media postings as well as publishing more articles like this one. We hope these actions will allow our fellow townfolk to monitor and keep current on our progress.

The outreach group also plans on organizing a sit-down with Lord Mayor Betty Disero to be streamed on Facebook Live. They will discuss, debate and acknowledge what we hope our advisory council aims to achieve for our town this coming year.

The wellness committee looks to focus on helping teens around our area with their mental well-being and physical health, especially throughout the extremely difficult, stressful and sometimes lonely times of this pandemic.

This will include making reels, or short videos, for

the community to view on our advisory council's Instagram page, as well as organizing and holding our version of a mental health and wellness conference.

Finally, the wellness group will be arranging another "You Got This Bag" event to boost the spirits of NOTL teens. We found this was a great success for those who received the bag last year.

While we all live in our small town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, we at the Lord Mayor Youth Advisory Council have big plans and are aiming to help kids and teens around town have a safe, great, healthy and prosperous year in 2022.

Other members of the youth advisory council are: Michaiiah Ivri (chair) and Mateo Gruosso (vice-chair), Samantha Fretz, Ezekiel Ivri, Julia King, Kaitlyn Lambert, Treasha Ray, Ella Roat, Hope Tsuji, Iyla Williams. Mentors for the sub-committees are: Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Amy Casey and Catherine Goerzen.

RIDDLE ME THIS

If there are three apples and you take away two, how many apples do you have?

Last issue: I belong to you, but other people use me more than you do. What am I?

Answer: Your name

Also accepted: Phone number, door bell

Answered first by: Terry Nord

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Mary Drost, Christine Yakymishen, Pam Dowling, Gary Davis, Sylvia Wiens, Lech Bednarek, Sheila Meloche, Margie Enns, Ron Cane, Wade Durling, Doug Bruce, Danielle Gault, Josh Langendoen, Howard Jones, Leanna Usenica, Julia King, Maria Janeiro

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Virgil community rink officially opens to public

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The Virgil community skating rink officially opened on Friday.

As project leader and former town coun. Paolo Miele cleared off the ice and opened the gates, the first skaters showed up right on time to get in the first official skate.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Niagara Falls riding MPP Wayne Gates also stopped by to see how the opening went.

Disero had one word to sum up her thoughts: "Yay!" she proclaimed.

She said having an outdoor rink is important right now, especially during lockdowns, so kids of all ages have a place to get some exercise out of the house.

"I know since I've started walking, like I walk an hour a day when I can and it just clears your mind. It makes you feel better, gets those good endorphins going and it's a healthy thing to do to be outside and just clear your head," Disero said.

Gates echoed her thoughts, saying it's "wonderful" that people have a place to skate.

"I think with everything that's going on right across Ontario but in all our communities, to have an ice skating rink outside where you can get out with the family enjoy it, I think it's great," Gates said.

Both of them thanked the volunteers like Miele who gave up their time to help run the rink.



James Freeman-Guy and Violet LeBrument, 6, are the first skaters at the Virgil community rink Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY



Pauline Reimer Gibson
Audiologist

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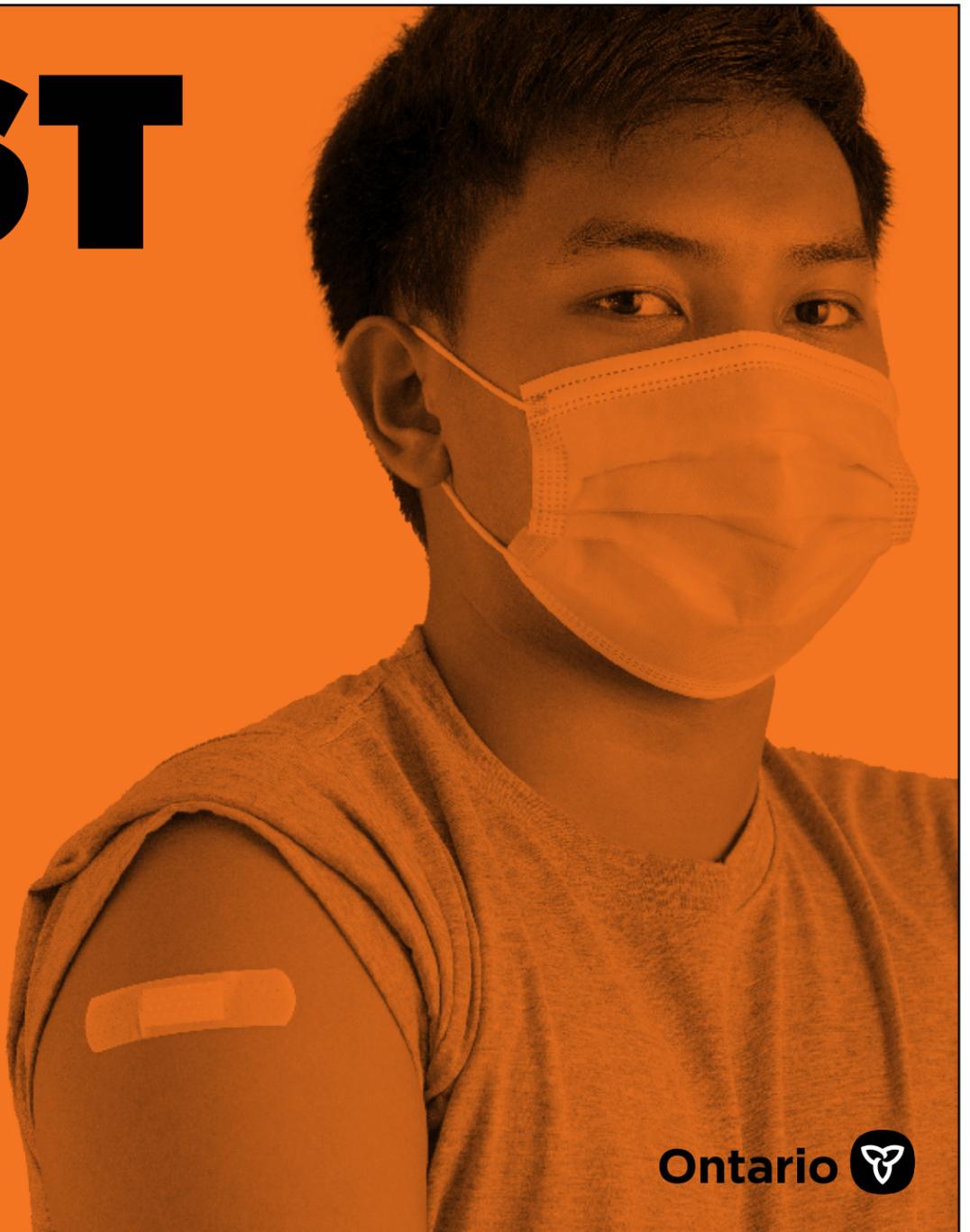
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DR. BROWN Proteins and artificial intelligence a major scientific triumph

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

In biology, structure dictates function. That's certainly the case with protein-encoding genes: the sequence of bases in a specific gene dictates the sequence of bases in an intermediate molecule called messenger RNA, which in turn, dictates the selection and sequence of amino acids in the protein and the form and function of that protein.

Most proteins are complex chains of hundreds of amino acids. By now many of us are familiar with computer-generated 3-D models of the coronavirus's spike protein, accompanied by arrows pointing to this or that mutation or combination of mutations, which make a variant more transmissible, potentially more lethal, or perhaps, in the case of the Omicron variant, less likely to cause moderate to severe symptoms.

Recent studies illustrate the importance of identifying potentially troublesome mutations and understanding how they affect the shape and charge of the



Dr. William Brown says mRNA vaccines are a major scientific accomplishment. FILE PHOTO

spike protein, and so alter the virus's ability to infect host cells and evade the host's immune responses.

This type of biological detective work has become a universe where physics, chemistry and biology fuse together. That fusion was on display for recent Nobel Prizes in physics and chemistry.

For example, Nobel Prizes in chemistry in 2018 and 2021 highlighted methods for developing more effective organic, that is protein, enzymes, bioengineering

potent antibodies (also proteins) for treating cancer and discovering the active sites in enzymatic proteins most responsible for those enzymatic properties.

And the 2021 prize in medicine-physiology was awarded for truly elegant studies that illustrated how the shape of receptor proteins translates mechanical stimuli involving the skin, muscle and deeper tissues into electrical signals in the peripheral nervous system.

But until recently, figuring out how the type and

order of amino acids in proteins affect the shape and therefore function of proteins was a laborious, expensive, and time-consuming task. The search began in the 1950s using X-ray crystallography, to which was later added nuclear MR spectroscopy, and most recently and topping the list for expense, cryo-electron microscopy.

As early as the 1960s scientists also began to harness computer algorithms to help them figure out how the sequence of amino acids dictates the shape of proteins.

To speed up the process, scientists launched a biennial competition to pick the best algorithms. To no one's surprise, the algorithms helped, but not enough – a major advance was needed.

In 2018, Google's sister company DeepMind entered the game with self-learning programs, the first of which was called AlphaFold and, in updated form, AlphaFold2.

The latter and similar software developed by others such as RoseTTA-Fold were trained on a database of hundreds of proteins

whose 3-D structures had been laboriously worked out beforehand using conventional techniques.

Once trained on the database, AI programs soon learned to work out the 3-D structures of hundreds of proteins with a precision matching standard techniques. The difference was that AI took far less time to solve the origami challenge of relating amino acid sequences to 3-D shapes for proteins.

For medicine, the rewards are huge because the sequences of amino acids dictate the function of thousands of proteins from receptors to antibodies, to enzymes and a host of other proteins which play key roles in the brain, muscles, immune system, and other systems.

One of the major payoffs may come with the design of novel drugs tailored to prevent the accumulation and/or clear the brain of the structurally and hence functionally distinctive misfolded protein aggregates found in a wide spectrum of neurodegenerative diseases.

The latter include Alzheimer's disease, Pick's

disease, traumatic encephalopathy, cortical basal degeneration, progressive supranuclear palsy as well as infectious forms of neurodegenerative diseases such as bovine-encephalopathy and Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease, and other as-yet untreatable encephalopathies.

That's one of several reasons why the introduction of AI as a powerful tool for solving the riddles of protein structure by John Jumper and his team was chosen by the journal "Nature" as one of its top 10 advances in science in 2021.

It was yet another triumph for artificial intelligence with many more expected in coming years and potentially a big win for the recognition and early treatment of the dementias and many other neurodegenerative diseases, which so far, have stubbornly stymied physicians and scientists.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

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FEATURED



Bainsbrigge visits Queenston

The NOTL Museum has a wonderful art collection depicting the community of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Here is a watercolour of the Queenston Heights landscape and a view down the Niagara River by Philip John Bainbrigge (1817-1881). Bainbrigge, who was a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, arrived in Canada during the Rebellion of 1837-38. He painted many Canadian sites during his tour of duty from 1837-1840s. It was not uncommon for people to visit this community during the 1800s as we were known for our picturesque landscapes, but the former 1812 military sites were also a tourist draw for many. This view can be admired from the present day Queenston Heights park.



Rebuilding community

Brian Marshall
Columnist

Far too often when the term “affordable housing” is used, our minds draw an equivalent to the subsidized housing projects that proliferated across this province during the third quarter of the 20th century.

But, they are two completely different things. So, let’s take a moment to put some parameters around this term.

In short, what we are talking about is the creation of dwellings that can be purchased (or rented) at a dollar amount that allows folks whose household income is insufficient to obtain a mortgage on a market-

priced property to achieve home ownership. There is no subsidy involved.

The purchaser is required to conform to standard down payment thresholds and qualify for a mortgage under normal financing rules, which they can do because the purchase price is low enough for them to qualify.

And we are not talking here about “tiny homes” or a cubicle in the sky. These are reasonable, albeit modest, well-appointed dwellings that have been thoughtfully designed and are contextually appropriate.

How is this possible without ongoing government subsidies?

To answer that question, let’s take a trip into the heart of free-market capitalism: the eastern seaboard of the United States and visit Martha’s Vineyard, Mass.

With a population of about 17,300 and covering an area of 226 square kilometres, Martha’s Vineyard is a tourist destination in which the majority of landowners represent an older demographic and vacation home owners (stats similar to Niagara-on-the-Lake).

In the last 20 years, property prices have skyrocketed

and rental accommodation, even when available, command premiums (in 2019, monthly rent of a modest one-bedroom basement apartment was north of U.S. \$2,000).

Despite very handsome sector wages, the hospitality industry was chronically short-staffed and even the hospital faced high levels of turnover with ongoing recruiting challenges. Quite simply, the lifeblood of a viable community could not afford to live there.

Since Martha’s Vineyard happens to be an island, this community issue became acute much more quickly than it would have on the mainland. With this motivation forcing creativity, key players representing public and private interests envisioned a concept and came together to translate that vision into reality.

They created the Island Housing Trust, a non-profit Community Land Trust with a mandate to create and sustain permanently affordable housing.

The model they developed lowers the cost of home-ownership by eliminating the land cost through land leases (similar to homes

on Toronto’s Centre Island), economies of scale for construction and no-profit on the builds.

The caveat for new homeowners (registered on title) is, should they decide to sell their home, it must be sold at an “affordable” price to another low- or moderate-income family.

The success of this trust is undeniable, but it took establishing a joint effort of individual citizens, private corporations (including a financial institution), resident groups and two levels of government to make it happen.

While this sounds like a monumental challenge, the fact it happened in very short order reflects a commonly held understanding that a community that does not include all demographics is destined for failure and death.

As Canadians we have the precedent of Wartime Housing Limited and international examples of folks successfully fighting to save the future of their communities. Can Niagara-on-the-Lake be saved? The answer to that question is up to you.

For further reading on the Island Land Trust, go to www.ihmv.org.

Looking to the Stars



Next week brings intense, all-consuming behaviour

This week, we see the sun conjunct Mercury while both Mercury and Mars enter Capricorn.

Thursday, Jan. 20: Just before the moon leaves Leo and enters Virgo it sets up a perfect harmony with Mars, creating some generous energy that makes love blossom. On Jan. 20, 1980, U.S. President Jimmy Carter announced the American boycott of the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. Several countries followed suit, prompted by Russian military actions in Afghanistan.

Friday, Jan. 21: Retrograde Mercury in Aquarius is 45 degrees from Neptune in Pisces, creating a conflict of ideas that is confusing, especially regarding spiritual matters and long-term plans. It was 14 years ago today, on Jan. 21, 2008, that stock markets everywhere crashed at the beginning what was then considered to be the worst recession since 1929.

Saturday, Jan. 22: Late this evening the moon in Libra is in perfect harmony with the sun in Aquarius. Hopefully, that will be kind to help heal the stresses of earlier in the day. It was Jan. 22, 1973, that the U.S. Supreme Court, in a decision known as “Roe vs. Wade,” legalized most abortions in all 50 states.

Sunday, Jan. 23: Today, the sun is conjunct retrograde Mercury in Aquarius and a new Mercury cycle begins. Sun-Mercury cycles are great times to start a new Mercury project, and since the conjunction happens in Aquarius, this may be something connected to communication, technology, social media, friends, networks and groups of people. Today, Chesley (aka ‘Sully’) Sullenberger celebrates his 71st birthday. Sully was the pilot of a U.S. Airways plane that he landed in the Hudson River after being hit by a flock of seagulls. He

was fired for his heroism. He went to court and won. A film, directed by Clint Eastwood, starred Tom Hanks as Sully.

Monday, Jan. 24: Today, Mars leaves Sagittarius and enters Capricorn. Mars is exalted in Capricorn so the next couple of months are an exciting time to get intentional about what it is that we want to achieve. Mars in Capricorn will give us that extra stamina and persistence, so we follow through with our projects, no matter what. Mars is in interesting company in Capricorn, rubbing shoulders with Venus and Pluto. This trio is dynamite. Venus, Mars and Pluto will fuel our desires to levels we have never experienced before.

With Venus, Mars and Pluto in Capricorn no mountain is high enough. On Jan. 24, 1848, gold was discovered in California and the great gold rush was on.

Tuesday, Jan. 25: This is the day of the third-quarter moon in Scorpio. It’s a day when the sun in Aquarius is 90 degrees from the moon, encouraging us to catch up on things we meant to do. On Jan. 25, 1759, in Alloway, Scotland, was born poet and lyricist, Robbie Burns. His “Aulde Lang Syne” is celebrated after 11:59 p.m. on every New Year’s Eve all over the world.

Wednesday, Jan. 26: Mercury retrograde re-enters Capricorn to finish what began in December. Mercury is conjunct Pluto for a record of almost three weeks so you can bet that whatever Mercury has to do in Capricorn will be an intense, all-consuming endeavour. Get ready for some intense revelations and remember that the truth will first be totally frustrating, but it will eventually set you free. Happy Birthday #61 to #99 – the Great One, Wayne Gretzky.

Bill Auchterlonie has a podcast and more at www.lutts.ca.

Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.



The Museum is temporarily closed, but visit notlmuseum.ca to explore our online resources, or to shop the gift store.





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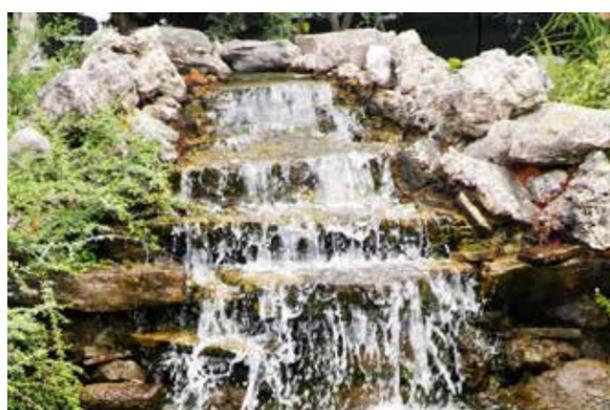
Growing Together!

Adding a **sense of welcome** to your garden



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Garden Columnist



Above: Sitting areas are a good way to use space in your garden and create an inviting place for people to spend time. Below: Water features are a good way to create a sense of welcome in the garden and can be a focal point of your design.
JOANNE YOUNG PHOTOS

In memoriam



In Loving Memory of MacKenzie King
May 16, 1995 - January 22, 2021

You were gone before I knew it,
and only God knows why.
My heart still aches with sadness,
as the days pass slowly by.
Thinking of the times we spent together,
sometimes they make me smile,
sometimes they make me cry,
but the reason you're gone I'll never know why.

*"Death leaves a heartache,
no one can heal,
love leaves a memory,
no one can steal."*

Love always,
The King Family

I wrote last week about the importance of adding a "sense of entry" to your front or back garden.

Let's look at the next sense that is required for good garden design – the "sense of welcome."

We all have something in common: we are all looking for ways to relax and get away from the busyness of life.

Think about a garden that you have been in where you instantly felt relaxed. What made it so welcoming?

I think of a garden that I helped to develop at a seniors home. As soon as you walk out into the garden there is a central water feature surrounded lavender hedging.

The garden is surrounded by large mature trees that are home to many songbirds. Within the gardens are large, curving beds filled with a plethora of flowers. There are pergolas placed to provide shady retreats for those who want to stay and enjoy the beauty a little bit longer.

In our gardens we need to create spaces for unwinding and reflecting. You need to be thinking of what an ideal space for relaxation might mean for you or for your guests. It might mean different things for different people.

Maybe it is the scent of roses, the sound of running water or the site of moss-covered rocks. It could be seeing various textures of foliage or the sound of birds singing. All these things can lend themselves to the sense of welcome.

Let's explore some simple things that you can do to incorporate this element of welcome into your garden.

SEATING

What is more welcoming than wandering around a beautiful garden and coming upon a bench placed under a large tree where you can have a seat and rest while taking in the view.

When planning a sitting area, first think about its purpose. Is it for entertaining a larger group of people or is it just for a solitary visitor? Are you thinking about table and chairs or more comfortable seating?

Knowing this will help you to plan for the space. Secondly, what is it that you would like your focus to be on? The last thing that I would want to be looking at is the clutter that we all have beside our sheds.

By including our regular senses of touch, taste, sound, smell and hearing near a seating area we will automatically increase the sense of welcome into the garden.

NATURAL LIGHTING

Another way of creating a sense of welcome in the garden is considering the natural sunlight available to you. Think about what kind of light different areas of your garden are receiving at the different times of day.

Whatever your sun conditions are, take advantage of them and use the light to help create a sense of welcome.

FOCAL POINTS

Focal points are used in garden design to draw and direct the eye. Think of a garden that was just a swath of plants. Your eye sweeps along, not knowing where to land.

A focal point will cause your eye to stop and rest at that feature. Properly placed focal points give your garden a sense of purpose and order.

Your focal point could be an ornament such as a bird bath or gazing globe. It could be a structure such as an arbour or obelisk.

There is nothing like a quiet water feature, unique plant, a well-placed large rock, or the use of vibrant colours to capture your attention, giving you that sense of welcome.

MOVEMENT

Movement refers to what keeps the eye in motion throughout a landscape. Some plants, such as grasses that naturally sway back and forth in a gentle breeze, can create a sense of calm and relaxation. Even a winding path of pea gravel that

directs a visitor toward a seating area can provide movement in the garden.

Another way that we can generate movement is with repetition of colour and form.

Movement can also be created by the lines of the beds themselves.

SIMPLICITY

If your garden is lacking organization, unity and a sense of balance it will leave you feeling chaotic. Organize your storage area or shed so that you do not see any messes as you stroll around the garden.

Simplicity can also refer to the layout of garden shapes. Simplistic lines, whether curved or geometric, in a garden are much more welcoming than a garden with haphazard lines.

How can you be adding the "sense of welcome" into your garden?

Would you like to learn more about gardening? Why not join the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society? Visit notlhortsociety.com to see how you can become a member.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.

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 - Bacon Portobello Mushroom \$19
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DESSERTS

- Cheesecake of the Day..... \$8.99
- Sticky Toffee Pudding\$8.99

ANGEL INN FAVOURITE GF GLUTEN-FREE OPTION AVAILABLE VEGETARIAN DISH

LOCAL FAVOURITES

ALL SERVED WITH FRESH CUT FRIES OR SUB GARDEN SALAD FOR \$3.50 OR CAESAR OR GREEK SALAD FOR \$4.00

- Fish Butty\$21
- Shrimp In a Basket\$18
- Portobello Mushroom Melt\$19
- Roast Beef Dip Sandwich.....\$20
- Chicken Fingers\$18
- Steak and Guinness Poutine.....\$20
- Reuben Sandwich.....\$20
- Turkey Club Sandwich.....\$19
- Chicken Caesar Wrap.....\$19
- Buffalo Chicken Wrap\$19
- Vegan Buffalo Wrap.....\$22
- Shepherd's Pie Poutine\$19
- Open Face Hot Beef Sandwich....\$20

EXTRAS: Gluten-free bread +\$2

PUB FARE

- Award Winning English Style Fish and Chips\$21
- Baked Chicken Curry\$21
- Bangers and Mash.....\$19
- Shepherd's Pie\$20
- Steak Guinness and Onion Pie....\$21
- Fisherman's Pie\$22

EXTRAS: Mushy Peas +\$3

SALADS

- Caesar Salad\$15
- Greek Salad\$15
- Garden Salad\$14

Choice of dressing: Italian, Balsamic, Ranch, Blue Cheese, or Thousand Island

ADD: Fresh Chicken \$6, Bread Roll \$2.50, Extra Dressing \$0.75, GF Bun \$2.50

All prices plus HST.

WE'RE OPEN

We are still here for all of your take-out needs.

Fish Friday

8 oz. award-winning haddock with chips, coleslaw and tartar sauce.***Add an order of mushy peas***

One piece \$18

Two piece \$25

Sunday Roast Beef Dinner

Slow roasted beef served with Yorkshire pudding, roasted potatoes, peas, carrots & turnips, smothered in a classic Guinness gravy.

Dinner for one: \$20

Dinner for two: 38



NOW OFFERING
FREE DELIVERY
WITHIN NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

VISIT OLDEANGELINN.COM FOR FULL MENUS

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PIE EVEN BETTER? A GREAT PINT AT HAPPY HOUR PRICES.

ALL OF ANGEL'S DRAFT BEERS NOW AVAILABLE FOR TAKE-OUT.
BUY A GROWLER FOR \$5 | DOMESTIC FILLS \$18 | IMPORT FILLS \$22

NOT IN THE MOOD FOR A PINT?

BOTTLES OF HOUSE WINE AVAILABLE FOR TAKE-OUT
BOTTLES OF WINE \$25 | PREMIUM WINES \$50

'PROBABLY' THE BEST TAKE-OUT IN THE WORLD



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