



Warboys hits hole-in-one | Page 14

Cost of COVID to NOTL businesses could be **\$78 million**, survey finds

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake businesses could be seeing losses of \$78 million over the next 12 months, according to Niagara Economic Development.

Linda Sicoli, economic development officer with the economic development agency, presented NOTL-specific results of an economic impact of COVID-19 survey to town council July 20.

She said 181 businesses

responded to the survey and "almost half were from sectors related to tourism, including retail, accommodation, food service, arts and entertainment."

Sicoli said layoffs were "inherent across Niagara-on-the-Lake."

"Sixty-nine businesses responded that they had had layoffs that impacted 1,343 jobs, 47 per cent which were part-time and about 64 per cent, which were in the accommodation and food

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Downtown NOTL. FILE/RENE BERTSCHI

NOTL has **highest** per capita number of active COVID cases

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake now has more active COVID-19 cases per capita than any other municipality in Niagara Region.

As of July 29, Niagara Region public health sta-

tistics indicate there are at least nine active cases of COVID-19 in NOTL — or 4.8 cases per 10,000 people.

For a few weeks, NOTL had very few active cases. In total, there have been 31 COVID-19 cases to date.

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Playgrounds reopen, but **no sanitization**

Playgrounds were stripped of the protective fencing and reopened with signs for safe use on July 24, as Niagara-on-the-Lake entered Stage 3 of COVID recovery. The Janzens, Alicia and Eve, from St. Catharines, made a stop at the Virgil playground and splash pad on July 26. The Town of NOTL reminds those wishing to use the equipment "to adhere to the recommendations of public health officials, including maintaining physical distancing, practising proper hand hygiene and refraining from touching your face." It also says playground equipment and amenities will not be sanitized. JESSICA MAXWELL

Royal Oak school plans safe September **opening**

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Royal Oak School is planning to welcome kids again in September.

Robin Ridesic, a parent and member of the school's board, said that unless there's a "drastic change" to COVID-19 numbers, the school is "fully prepared to open."

"But we are doing it very carefully and cautiously to make sure in the COVID environment that the kids can remain safe," Ridesic said.

She said the school will be implementing a "very robust COVID policy" to help ensure the school is as safe as possible.

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Tension **rises** during discussion of emergency authority

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake Coun. Norm Arsenault wants emergency powers to be rescinded and daily decision-making to be back in the hands of council by Aug. 24.

Arsenault presented a motion to suspend the town's emergency control group's

powers at a council meeting July 22. The group, headed by the mayor and chief administrator, is comprised of senior officials who have been making daily decisions for the town during the pandemic.

Underlined in red in the motion was that no decisions should be made by the emergency group without consent of council. The mo-

tion was ultimately defeated but not before tensions rose a bit during the virtual council meeting.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she felt the motion was "belittling, or demanding, or a hand slapping, or a scolding of some kind," noting she is "really proud of the work that has been done through delegated authority by myself and our CAO."

She wanted to address the motion to explain some of the decisions made and why she doesn't support removing delegated authority with an arbitrary date, noting NOTL saw its first new COVID-19 case in some time that day.

Coun. Clare Cameron, who was chairing the meeting, fired back with an interruption to ask if the debate

was relevant to the motion, to which Disero said yes and requested her time to speak.

"You can speak for 10 minutes and that will be the only time that you speak to this motion," Cameron said. "Again, a double standard," Disero replied.

Disero highlighted some of the decisions the emergency group has made "to

protect the health and safety of the people in Niagara-on-the-Lake," including the Queen Street parking prohibition, opening washrooms early against provincial orders, starting a COVID complaint email line, closing town facilities, keeping the grass cut, organizing an appreciation night

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More than **40 per cent** of businesses say they're at risk of permanent closure

Continued from Front Page

services sector," she said. "The businesses think that \$26.5 million in losses have been incurred to date and they predicted it could reach more than \$78 million in the next 12 months."

She said about 40 per cent of businesses said they were currently not able to meet their expenses.

About 59 per cent of businesses said they were sustainable or doing well, while 41 per cent said they were at risk of closing permanently or vulnerable to closure.

Of government help for businesses, she said "very few" had taken advantage of recent subsidies, and 33 businesses did not access any programs.

She said 36 per cent of business operators said they felt the government programs that exist are insufficient to help them.

Moving forward, businesses are saying they will need municipal and regional support, "not only with



Some buildings are already for lease. JESSICA MAXWELL

the deferral of taxes and fees, but also in regard to information, advocacy and promotion," Sicoli said.

She noted that companies are saying they will need to implement innovative measures to increase revenue.

"They'll have to gain additional capitals, possibly find new suppliers, do market research. Many of them are not interested in looking at new market opportunities, but a number of them are and they're trying to shift and be agile," she said.

"All industry sectors and

businesses have had some form of negative effects, but the hardest hit one was the tourism and that is primarily focused on the accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment, recreation, retail, and any of the other sectors that are primarily public-facing or person-to-person interaction," Sicoli told councillors.

"So, capital investments that might be required would amount to approximately \$3.2 million in order for them to adapt operations. And almost \$2.6 million of that is coming

from tourism-related sectors such as a combination of foods, arts, entertainment and retail."

As far as operating capacity, she said about half of businesses said they can only operate at 26 to 50 per cent capacity, while a small number said they are even less capable.

She added a large number of businesses said they can still operate close to full capacity.

She said businesses surveyed will need support going forward, in the form of additional loans, help with PPE sourcing and online advocacy.

She noted Niagara Region would not be facilitating the economic response plan itself, but rather through "economic development offices across the region, as well as through stakeholders."

"So the region might be project manager in that regard, but a lot of the tactics will be implemented throughout the region," she said.

Talk about ending delegating authority causes **tension**

And Whereas Section 2 of by-law 5218-20 restricts the delegated authority by ensuring "THAT the body consisting of the Lord Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer shall exercise such delegated powers and duties **ONLY** in the event that Council is unable to hold a meeting in the time frame required to consider matters that may require the exercise of municipal authority".

Continued from Front Page

for frontline workers, and making cuts to staff to keep financial losses down.

"What we also did is from the time the provincial order came in March 17 and we were given delegated authority, we spoke to members of council every day for a week — actually for almost two weeks."

She said she believes council has been informed on decisions made by the control group.

"We weren't getting any real push back on our decisions," she added.

She also noted that any "large" decisions that she and the CAO thought weren't COVID-related were brought to council.

"Like the question as to whether or not council thought they wanted to charge the restaurants for parking spaces. This is something that — I know I didn't support it — but we felt it was important that council make that decision."

"We wanted to, and we kept council involved and gave a report every time we

were all in the same room. So I'm not really sure why this sort of bright red, only, underlined, bold, is coming out the way it's coming out. Because if you took the time Madam Chair, to read the bylaw that was passed by council March 17 giving delegated authorities, you'll see that these exact wordings are in the existing bylaw."

She said she questions the motivation and that no problems were communicated to her until the emergency group changed the time frame for the Queen Street closure.

"Rather than saying 'give me my control back,' Madam Chair, what you should be saying, what the decent thing to say, would be thank you. Thank you to the CAO, thank you to the staff — all the staff, particularly the emergency team."

Arsenault apologized for making the motion bold and red.

Coun. Erwin Wiens came to Disero's defence, noting council is already meeting a lot, and that he thinks some form of delegated authority

needs to remain in place.

RECAP:

NOTL businesses have lost \$26.5 million so far. That number could be as high as \$78 million in 12 months.

NOTL has lost more than 1,343 jobs due to pandemic-related layoffs.

The tourism industry has been the hardest hit by COVID-19.

As many as 41 per cent of businesses say they're at risk of permanent closure.

Damaged canal ship being **repaired** in Port Weller

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

When the MV Alanis, a 12,744 DWT general cargo vessel bound for Duluth, Minn., sustained damage during a very rare mid-afternoon collision on the Welland Canal, just over two weeks ago, the ship's owners called on Heddle Shipyards in Port Weller to make it seaworthy again.

Dship Carriers, owners of the 10-year-old vessel, needed their ship back on the water fast. Its cargo of wind turbine parts had to get to their customers.

Heddle jumped into action.

"We needed to cut out the damaged areas, replace them and turn it around quickly," says Ted Kirkpatrick, sales manager for Heddle. "We did a lot of legwork on how to proceed, made a pitch to the owners and secured the contract."

The collision with McKeil Marine's MV Florence Spirit, carrying coal for Quebec, occurred starboard side to starboard side, in the bows of both vessels. Cause of the crash is still under investigation. There were no injuries to

the total of 30 crew members on both vessels.

After undertaking a comprehensive survey of the damage, including 3D mapping images inside and outside the damaged areas of the hull, Heddle successfully made a pitch for the business.

"We were able to begin fabrication of the required section of the vessel right away," says Kirkpatrick. "The mapping is a fairly complex effort. There are a lot of curves in that part of the ship. But we are just about complete with the pre-fabrication.

"Then we need to cut

out and lift the damaged area and install the replacement section."

The Heddle team will be working 24 hours a day, according to Kirkpatrick.

"We expect the repair to be completed in less than two weeks, hopefully as little as eight or ten days."

The Adonis has remained moored in Port Colborne, arriving at Port Weller this past Tuesday.

Kirkpatrick won't put a dollar value on the work, saying simply that it is important for the Port Weller facility to demonstrate it can complete this kind of work quickly and well.




The MV Alanis arrived this past Tuesday at the Heddle Shipyards in Port Weller, just south of the Lakeshore Bridge, on the Welland Canal in St. Catharines. Heddle has been hired by the owners to undertake a major two-week repair. The Alanis was holed in the starboard bows during a collision with the MV Florence Spirit on July 11. TIM TAYLOR

The Adonis, sailing under the flag of Antigua Barbuda, is 138 metres long, with a beam of 21 metres and a draft of 7.3

metres. Repair work on the Florence Spirit is being completed at a shipyard in the United States.

STEELE GALLERY

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FOR UPDATES ON OPENING**

Let's listen to our frontline heroes when they say 'Staying HOME means Saving Lives!'.
I also want to say a big thank you to everyone who is working during this time to keep our community safe - we will not forget what you've done for us.

Wayne Gates MPP Niagara Falls representing Niagara-on-the-Lake & Fort Erie
905-357-0681 | wgates-co@ndp.on.ca | WayneGates.com

Work to begin on Dock Area protection

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

After persistent lobbying by Dock Area residents, particularly engineer Ron Simkus, Niagara-on-the-Lake council last week agreed to spend \$300,000 to forge ahead with a project to protect the shoreline near Ball's Beach Parkette.

High Lake Ontario and Niagara River water levels in the past few years have led to increased erosion in the area.

Because of environmental concerns over fish spawning in the area, there is only a brief period in which the town is allowed to work in the water near Ball's Beach.

Large anchor stones will be installed to form a groyne – a low, sturdy barrier built with boulders – to keep the water at bay.

In a letter to councillors published in The Lake Report last week, Simkus warned the period for work on the groyne was closing quickly and the town needed to act.

“The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry permit window for work in the water opened last Wednesday, July 15, and closes Tuesday, Sept. 1,” he wrote.

Work on the project is expected to begin soon, with major disruptions for Dock Area residents and the parkette through September, Simkus said.

Medical officer says people getting complacent

Continued from Front Page

The numbers are likely rising due to the region's move to Stage 3 of the pandemic recovery and because people are getting “complacent,” said Niagara's acting medical officer of health, Dr. Mustafa Hirji.

“Our impression is that people are definitely becoming more complacent,” Hirji said in an interview.

“I think we had a good run where we had very few cases, we were averaging about two cases per day, often seeing days with zero cases. And I think it has given people a sense that we had gotten past COVID ... And I think we're starting to see numbers go up, because that complacency has set in.”

He said moving into Stage 3 of recovery means more public interaction, which is allowing the virus to spread.

“(Stage 3) creates more opportunity for people to interact, and therefore for infection to spread more.”

While the numbers are still fairly good, Hirji said it's not time for people to let down their guard.

“Given that we are opening up more, it's even more important that we're practising those measures that keep the numbers down — that we're keeping two metres distance at all times, we're washing our hands, we're wearing face covering, we're making sure we're watching our health. If we get symptoms, we get tested, because that's more important now to keep ourselves from getting COVID-19 and spreading it.”



Pedestrians on Queen Street without masks last weekend.
JESSICA MAXWELL

“We're relying on that now, rather than basically preventing interaction through having businesses and services closed. We're leaning much more on our own personal behaviours now.”

Face masks are mandatory indoors in Niagara Region as of this Friday.

Hirji said there's not enough information to say whether tourism played a part in the case count in NOTL.

“We can't say for sure that there's no tourism relationship here. Those initial cases, we don't know where they got infection from. They're what we classify as community transmission. It's theoretically possible it could have been infected tourists coming down and possibly spreading (the virus).”

“We don't have any information saying that one way or the other.”

He did say that if the U.S. border were to open to tourists, it would present a “significantly greater risk.”

“Because you'd now be allowing people coming from areas where there is much more COVID-19 going around, potentially coming in tourists and bringing that infection (with) them.”

He said his main concern with tourism is if people are congregating in large groups.

“Our first line of defence to stop the spread of COVID-19 right now is keeping physical distance from others. And, of course, if you have a large number of people that becomes very difficult, if they're all crowding into one place,” Hirji said.

“And if tourists are contributing to that, that would certainly be a concern. I'm not on the ground in Niagara-on-the-Lake to observe in this case. But if you're seeing some of that, I think those would be the kinds of things that I would be most concerned about.”

Most of NOTL's cases are the result of close contact community spread, he said, adding the region is working hard to trace those contacts.

“We're figuring out who their close contacts are to figure out, is there a source of infection in that group, but secondary, who are the people that they may now pass the infection on to, and we'll actually typically isolate all of those people as well as the person who actually has COVID-19 in the anticipation that some of those close contacts will get

infection.”

He said when it comes to deciding whether to close things down again, the province is looking at data trends, which haven't looked as good in the last week or two in Niagara.

“So that's something I think we should be concerned about,” he said.

“We're not at any kind of critical stage yet. But if we keep on the trend that we've been over for the last couple of weeks that potentially could change.”

He said, more positively, that the province is also looking at how well public health agencies are able to track cases and follow up with contacts in a timely manner.

Right now about 90 per cent of cases in Niagara are being addressed within 24 hours, he said.

He recommends people stay vigilant in preventing the spread.

“We definitely saw what happened in the U.S. when they ignored the early trends and where they've ended up as a result, and we absolutely don't want that to happen here,” he said.

The increase in Niagara cases should be seen “as a big wake up call that now is the time for us to redouble our efforts to shed any complacency we have.”

Lord Mayor Betty Disero echoed Hirji's comments, that people need to be vigilant about limiting the spread and protecting themselves.

“I just want (people) to stay diligent and know that we have to keep up what we're doing until it's over, because we don't want the numbers to escalate.”

Face Covering Required in Enclosed Spaces

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has mandated the wearing of masks, face shields or face coverings in all indoor public spaces (By-law 5248-20)



Let's help each other stay safe!

The following exemptions are provided in the By-law:

- Children under the age of 10
- Persons with medical conditions which inhibit their ability to wear a mask (i.e. breathing or cognitive difficulties)
- Persons who are unable to apply or remove a mask without assistance (i.e. those accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Persons who have protections, including reasonable accommodations, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code which would prevent them from wearing a mask
- Persons while assisting or accommodating another person with a hearing disability

*Face coverings may be temporarily removed under certain circumstances



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Contributed by Patty Garriock

"Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches will only pull you down."
 - Patty Garriock



Contributed by Norm Arsenaault:

Whenever possible, avoid driving in a car. Local journeys can be made by walking or cycling, and always look for public transport routes when travelling further. If you have to travel by car, investigate the possibilities for carpooling with friends and neighbours, sharing journeys for work and leisure, thus reducing the number of cars on the roads. Many busy offices actively promote such schemes so ask around to see if you can take advantage of this.

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Editorials: To swim or not to swim

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

We are thankful the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has started to post an online advisory about water quality at Queen's Royal Beach, site of the popular gazebo.

And will, eventually

(soon we hope), post signs at Ryerson Park advising swimmers that the water is not tested and what conditions might lead to high E. coli levels.

Perhaps all this would have happened without The Lake Report asking questions of town officials regarding water test results

not being publicized.

But given that the Region of Niagara says it suggested back in the winter such "educational signs" should be installed, we're disappointed that as August now approaches, the signage is not yet up.

A suggestion for the town: Find a way to pro-

mote the beach advisories prominently on the town's website and via social media so people can easily find the information. And longer term, let's hope the town is able to persuade the region to continue analyzing Lake Ontario beach water quality beyond this summer.

COVID and complacency

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Niagara Region public health's daily COVID-19 statistical report took a disappointing turn this week for Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We're number 1 with a bullet, and not in a good way. The fact we have

seen a spike in cases as the region moves into Stage 3 of the pandemic recovery is not a surprise, but it is disconcerting.

Thankfully, the numbers are not large: nine new, active cases of late.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji, the region's acting medical officer of health, is correct to

suggest complacency might be a factor in the upsurge. Who isn't tired of almost five months of lockdowns, shutdowns and being unable to carry on and socialize?

Repetitive, even tiresome, as the mantra is, we cannot afford to let down our proverbial guard, especially in NOTL, where so much of the

populace is potentially at risk.

We all know the routine: wash your hands, wear a mask (mandatory indoors in Niagara as of Friday), keep a distance, etc. ... Respect the rules, respect the virus, respect each other.

We've come this far, let's continue to fight the war against COVID-19.



The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation.

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Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 724 Mississauga St., NOTL.

The Lake Report

Why didn't **Zalepa** support mandatory masks?

Dear editor:

This is an open letter to Regional Coun. Gary Zalepa.

As a senior and a long-time resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake, can you please explain to me why you would fail to support a mandatory mask bylaw for the Niagara region?

Nearly half of all residents in NOTL can be classed as at-risk for severe illness or death (due simply to age) if they contact CO-

VID-19. Add in people with compromising health issues and the number goes well beyond half of our population.

Voting yes for a mask bylaw is a "no-brainer" unless one disputes the science of masks stopping or greatly reducing the transmission of the virus. (Which effectively transports us into the foggy and high-strangeness of Trump-land.) Seriously, is that the case with you?

And, as we face the usual

influx of tourists from Toronto and surrounding areas, recently classed as hot spots for the virus, risk to our population increases exponentially.

So, again, why would you not support a mandatory mask bylaw? Simply saying you will go with the local health authority, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, is just passing the buck.

You were elected by us to represent our interests before everything else.

According to world health experts, masks are in the best interests of everyone, including NOTL/Niagara citizens. Not supporting such a bylaw sends the message your interests lie somewhere else.

Please understand this is an important health issue and politicizing it would be a dereliction of your duty.

So, I look forward to your explanation. Thank you.

*J. Richard Wright
 NOTL*

Wearing mask is a **small sacrifice** to make

Dear editor:

Something I don't hear much discussed in the Great Mask Debate is the most important reason, I think, for wearing masks in stores: to protect the people who have to work there to make a meagre living.

The research is now

clear. The most dangerous environment is indoors with strangers, and store workers are forced to spend their days in just such a place.

Therefore, while I am the first to say I hate masks: they fog my glasses, irritate my skin and often send my hearing aids flying off when

I remove the mask — and let me tell you those little critters are mighty expensive.

I also have asthma, so breathing in the mask is particularly uncomfortable.

And it so saddens me to not see other's smiles and to have to hide mine.

But early in the pandemic

I stitched myself some face coverings and have worn them faithfully when in stores. It seems a small sacrifice to protect the folks who have to work there.

And hey, it protects me too! Bonus.

*Kathy Belicki
 NOTL*



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No more smiles in aisles, but **let's not lose the love**

Ross Robinson
Special to The Lake Report

So much more than well-stocked and always clean grocery stores and wonderful staff, Hendriks Valu-mart and Phil's Valu-mart are the unofficial social hubs of our special hometown. NOTL is truly special.

Good-feel stores and full of smiles. It was so easy to slip in to buy corn flakes, cinnamon raisin bread, or a box of Chapman's Super Ice Cream Drumsticks. Four vanilla, four chocolate, all with a caramel centre. My daughter Carrie, son Scott and I devour three each week watching the perfect host, Alex Trebek, on Jeopardy.

The Valu-marts were a place to find smiles and friendly faces.

Shelves are always so well and neatly stocked, labels facing out, prices easy to see, the aisles usually bustling with fun and smiling neighbours, most ready for a catch-up chat.

Too many types of milk confused me and a foo-foo variety of cheeses. The deli counter always has so many meats, including my fave, PC Natural Choice Black Forest Ham, at \$3.20 per 100 grams. And such efficient, patient and smiling young people behind the counter. ("Ring bell for service.") The welcoming smiles were always free. Go Abby.

Since March, though, the mood in town has gradually changed. The ambience has

slipped away from small town newsy to physically distanced "don't get it my space." In the Valu-marts and on the sidewalks, our COVID-fighting town seems a bit chilly, a little less friendly.

For all the right reasons, most of us are now donning face masks when we enter a store. We hide our teeth and partial plates. Very little chatter at our busy and friendly post office. (And, yes Ward, most of us are keeping the place cleaner. Thanks for the not-so-subtle slap a while ago.)

An increasing number of us are obeying Dr. Theresa Tam, Canada's chief medical officer, and my main man, Dr. Sanjay Gupta on CNN. We physically distance and we wash our hands.

May I nominate B.C.'s Dr. Bonnie Henry for prime minister?

Now, how can we revive the smiles? At an early age, we were taught to be positive and greet people with a smile. "You never get a second

chance to make a first impression" was on a sign above our sink in the kitchen.

"Every man is entitled to his own troubles." Sometimes, we had to fake it, but we smiled so often.

Late yesterday afternoon at Valu-mart, I was fortunate to bump into three of the "smiley-est" of my NOTL pals. None of them could smile at me, due to the fashionista face masks they were wearing. Maureen Dickson's enthusiastic smile,

and she always has a positive comment about my shirt or an optimistic loss of a few pounds. Such an enthusiastic neighbour and now her ready smile is concealed. But she still makes me feel happier.

For over 20 years, since our parenting days at the Niagara Nursery School and Parliament Oak, Derek Schaaf has been a Smiler-in-Chief. Yesterday in the produce section, though, I could only see his eyes and very cool haircut. This man and his family truly love Niagara-on-the-Lake, always smiling and with a positive vibe. "Live where you like to be," he says, but now we can only exchange muffled words. No hugs. And smiles are concealed.

Tennis pal Robert McCaughey, another world class smiler, was in my face by the meat section before I recognized his toujours well-coiffed hair and good posture. His grin was lurking behind a very sharp black mask.

Here in our wee village, our issues are unique. Up by the cash registers, I checked out the newspaper front pages. The Toronto Star headline blared, "Premier Ford scolds young partygoers." The New York Times (All the news that's fit to print) headline read, "Trump Reverses Position on Covid-19 Masking." Jolting me back to our local reality, was The Lake Report headline, "Masks mandatory as town enters Phase 3."

Yes, my friends, our worries are often small worries. Smile. None of us own all the problems in the world. Please permit me to suggest a good book that will bring many smiles to your faces. "The Day the World Came to Town," by Jim DeFede provides a heartwarming, smile-inducing collection of stories from Sept. 9 to 14, 2001, when 6,132 travellers from 38 jetliners were forced to land in Gander, Nfld.

The 5,000 residents did what they do best. They opened their hearts and homes, spreading the love and the smiles. Oh, the spoken and silent smiles saying, "It's going to be alright. We are here with you. Feel welcome on our rock."

Down East, as they call everyone Darlin' or Hon or My Dear, they are always smiling.

And, listen to Stuart McLean limn his precious experiences in many small Canadian towns. From Nelson to Tofino to Medicine Hat to Drummondville (hometown of Marcel Dionne) to Niagara Falls to Keswick to Halifax, he scratched under the surface, and makes everyone smile and feel good. You will smile often.

Can we replace our hidden smiles here in our magnificent hometown? Perhaps a friendly wave, a few louder than normal nice words, or a shaky shaky of our tail feathers?

Read, listen, smile and love.

Developers' **lawsuits** and residents' interests

Dear editor:

This letter is in response to the article "Developers Marotta, Hummel have no plans to settle law suits," (The Lake Report, July 23), and reflects as a local resident my interest and concern with the issues mentioned.

In my opinion, while the majority of residents are probably not interested in all the legal complexities of the issues that led to the article, this is a fine example of corporate intransigence and arrogance brought about solely by self-interest on the part of Messrs. Hummel and Marotta.

Rainer Hummel's argument is based upon the development freeze initiated by the

new town council soon after it was elected.

Faced with the appearance of uncontrolled development that was not in the interests of town residents (although likely in the interests of the developer) council was forced to act quickly.

This was to give time to enable the new council to assess the existing situation and make a proper and informed decision with respect to future development, both in the interest of the residents and the developer.

However, Mr. Hummel believes that a technical and legal argument provides him with a legitimate excuse and the opportunity to help

himself out of the pockets of every resident taxpayer.

Benny Marotta, on the other hand, is well-known for his behaviour and for his level of credibility. (His past record is well-documented and affords the best illustration of this based on his previous actions.)

The bottom line of his initial plan was to level the iconic Randwood Estate regardless of any heritage or cultural assets that may be present at the site so as to facilitate the construction of a six-level hotel (resembling a typical Holiday Inn) combined with high-density housing.

This controversial plan apparently also includes the

provision of a roundabout to be located at John Street and the Niagara Parkway for no other reason than to provide ease of access to his project.

To my limited knowledge and contrary to the unsubstantiated claim as reported in the article, there are many unresolved issues surrounding his initial plan for the Randwood Estate and these are simply not related to the development freeze.

In this case, his use of the term common sense is misplaced and certainly does not apply to him. Hence his victim complaint of dictatorship against council.

Derek Collins
NOTL

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Face masks now **mandatory** indoors in Niagara Region

Only two councillors didn't support measure, including NOTL's Gary Zalepa

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

Face masks will be mandatory across the region starting Friday, July 31 after Niagara Regional Council nearly unanimously voted to impose the restriction.

Niagara-on-the-Lake regional councillor Gary Zalepa told council last Thursday he wanted to "abstain" from voting, counting him as one of two "no" votes alongside West Lincoln Mayor David Bylma.

Previously Zalepa said he would follow the advice of the acting medical officer of health, Dr. Mustafa Hirji, who didn't support mandatory masks, saying it was a decision elected officials should make.

The regional bylaw will supersede similar regulations already passed by NOTL and St. Catharines.

Children age five and up will have to wear masks, a change from NOTL's bylaw, which set the threshold at age 10. The regional rules

will be in effect until Oct. 31.

Unlike two weeks earlier, when councillors debated for 4.5 hours and made no decision, there was not much discussion on the approval of the bylaw thanks to a motion from Thorold regional councillor Tim Whalen calling for an immediate vote.

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati, who had a chance to speak, supported the measure.

"Last time we weren't voting for or against the bylaw, we were voting for or against the deferral."

"I didn't think it was a good idea to vote on something and then amend it later. That's the tail wagging the dog. I wanted to make sure that we got it right."

"I believe now we've come to the point where this is a bylaw I think we all can support."

Welland Mayor Frank Campion said it's important to collaborate as a community to stop the spread of COVID-19.

"The time has come,

we're going to Stage 3 (of the pandemic recovery). Though I will remind everyone that this is not the silver bullet, it's a part of a large group of things that we need to do," said Campion.

The bylaw applies to the following enclosed indoor places:

- * Retail stores where goods and services are sold to customers
- * Businesses that primarily sell food including restaurants
- * Supermarkets, grocery stores, bakeries and convenience stores
- * Churches, mosques, temples, synagogues and other places of worship, except during a religious rite or ceremony that is incompatible with the face being covered
- * Shopping malls or similar structures which contain multiple places of business
- * Lobby areas of commercial buildings
- * Common areas of hotels and motels and other short-term accommodations, such as lobbies, elevators, meet-



Regional Coun. Gary Zalepa. FILE

ing rooms or other common use facilities but does not include the common areas of residential apartment buildings or condominiums

- * Laundromats
- * Concert venues, theatres and cinemas
- * Fitness centres, gyms, other recreational and sports facilities and clubhouses
- * Arcades and other amusement facilities
- * Premises utilized as an open house, presentation centres or other facility for real estate purposes
- * Museums, galleries, historic sites and similar attractions
- * Businesses providing personal care services
- * Banquet halls, convention centres, arenas, stadiums and other event spaces
- * Public transit operated by Niagara Region and local area municipalities
- * Municipal buildings



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The Lake Report



Victor Paukstelis. SUPPLIED

Two **free** Music Niagara concerts on weekend

The Lake Report

Music Niagara's new At Home Series presents two more free concerts this weekend.

On Sunday, Aug. 2 at 4 p.m. there will be a recital by Lithuanian pianist Victor Paukstelis, who has performed in leading concert halls in Vienna, Berlin, Paris and New York. He is also a gifted painter and visual artist, whose work is included in private collections and in the Modern Art Centre in Vilnius.

On Monday, Aug. 3 at 4 p.m., there is a performance by celebrated Canadian pianist Robert Silverman, who is well-known to Music Niagara audiences. Over more than 50 years, he has performed in concert halls all around the world and was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2013. Silverman has put together a series of some of his favourite performances.

To view the performances, go to Music Niagara's "Watch Live" page, <https://www.musicniagara.org/live/>.



Hanging with 'The Entertainer'

Toronto Maple Leaf legend Eddie "The Entertainer" Shack, who died this week, yucks it up with some of his NOTL Golf Club buddies. Pictured from left, Norm Arsenault, Larry Mantle, Dow Wright and Ken Porter. Shack visited friends in NOTL regularly.

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Town now posting **web advisories** on Queen's Royal Beach conditions

Online information follows questions from Lake Report about why test results not published

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has launched online advisories about beach water conditions at Queen's Royal Park.

The move comes after inquiries from The Lake Report and a story published last Thursday questioning why results of tests conducted by the Region of Niagara on behalf of the town have not been publicized.

"The town will be posting the beach status (open or closed) based on the test results" for Queen's Royal Beach, Brett Ruck, NOTL's environmental services supervisor, said in response to a list of questions.

"This is the same process that Niagara Region public health follows. The town's beach posting webpage went live last Friday. Beach status results are available only when we receive results from public health," Ruck said.

The webpage for Queen's Royal, <https://www.notl.org/queensroyalbeach>, indicates whether it is safe to swim there, Lake Ontario's water temperature and when the information was updated.

Queen's Royal has failed E. coli tests at least twice so far this summer, on June 24 and July 17.



Unsafe water posting.
KEVIN MACLEAN

As well, Ruck said, "educational signs" will be installed at Ryerson Park beach, an unsupervised area about two kilometres west of downtown, in the Chautauqua neighbourhood. The small beach there is popular with locals and visitors alike. The water at that beach is not tested by any public agency.

The signs, warning people about the lack of testing or what conditions could lead to high levels of E. coli., were recommended by the region earlier this year, a regional official told The Lake Report last week.

"The signs will be installed shortly as there is a delay from the supplier due to COVID," Ruck said Tuesday.

In response to a question about whether the town

should be concerned about legal liabilities if it doesn't publicize test results and someone becomes ill from E. coli, Ruck said: "The town is always concerned when someone becomes ill in and around water, especially if caused from the water. As with any location when people swim in unposted water, they should always take precautions as they would anywhere else, posted or otherwise."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, while "not a swimmer," noted that "any time you swim in open water, it's important to proceed with caution whether or not signs are posted."

"I've kayaked from Queen's Royal Beach before and if given the opportunity to do it again, I would," she said when asked if she would go in the water there.

Queen's Royal Park, home to the iconic gazebo and a popular destination for families and visitors, is not part of Niagara's region-wide testing program because it is not busy enough to meet the region's criteria for an official beach.

The water is being tested three times a week for E. coli contamination as part of the town's Remedial Action Plan project.

That project is the final

stage of repairs to the municipal sewer system, which last year was found to have been leaking raw sewage directly into Lake Ontario. The E. coli seepage problem was documented in an extensive story by The Lake Report published last May.

As of now, this is the final summer that Queen's Royal Beach water is being analyzed by the region, Ruck said. "The town has requested that regional public health continue sampling this beach in the future," he said.

It is not yet known if the region will agree to continue to analyze the water there.

Ryerson Park is located not far from the region's new sewage treatment plant on Lakeshore Road and a few people have wondered if there are any worries about the unmonitored beach's proximity to the plant.

"There is no concern to the public as there are many rules in place for anything being put into the lake," Ruck said.

"The Ministry of Environment, Parks and Conservation is notified if anything is put into the lake and there are very strict guidelines put in place by the ministry that the sewage treatment plant follows."

Rotary's 'Big Backyard' aims to help Niagara restaurants

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Eleven Rotary Clubs across the Niagara Region are inviting people to make a difference while having fun in their own backyard.

The Rotary Big Backyard event, on Aug. 8 and 9, is focused on supporting local restaurants during their struggles with the pandemic.

Residents across the region are encouraged to order takeout from their favourite restaurants and tune in online between 1 and 8 p.m. for a broadcast of 6 local bands at www.rotarybig-backyardevent.org. As of

July 29, nearly 20 NOTL restaurants were involved in the event.

The event was spearheaded by the St. Catharines Rotary Club as members were brainstorming how to either postpone, close or change their rib fest for this year because of the pandemic, said Jolanta Janny, fundraising chair and marketing co-chair of the NOTL Rotary Club.

Rather than bring in businesses, potentially from outside of the community, to operate a pop-up style event, "This is the time for us to give back and we want to do something for the restaurants," Janny said.

"Most of the restaurants lost 85 to 90 per cent of the income for this spring and half of the summer," she said, "and the restaurant business is really difficult regardless."

Janny said Rotary recognizes the enormous stress these businesses are under and members wish they could do more, but the event hopes to give many restaurants extra promotion "that shows them that we appreciate that when things were good for them, they were good to us."

"We are so rich in Niagara, you know, we come with ideas, we overcome obstacles

and we're always positive," Janny said. "Rotarians are people of action."

Janny encourages people to support their local restaurants through this difficult time.

"I'm looking at our restaurants and we enjoy eating out," she said, "what will happen if next year half of them will close? What are we going to do?"

"If everybody would just do a little bit, we might overcome and help the restaurants overcome this because, you know, we worry about our health, but businesses worry about surviving."

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NOTL design studio reopens as **Madra Rua**

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report



Christie MacGrath stands inside of Madra Rua on the day of the reopening, July 18. JESSICA MAXWELL

A design studio specializing in the production of printed textiles and home-ware has reopened under a new name and invited other local female-owned businesses to celebrate together.

Pop-ups of The Little Green Shop and Hometown Ice Cream joined in the post-pandemic reopening.

On July 18, Christine MacGrath re-launched Bibelot Design Studio as Madra Rua.

She said she chose to rename her shop Madra Rua, which means red fox in Irish, as a tribute to her late father and a meaningful experience she had with some red foxes after he died.

What started as a collaborative showroom and gallery has evolved into a space for MacGrath and her husband Reid to showcase their own work.

The studio and gallery at 853 Lakeshore Rd. features a luxury line of home decor that is handcrafted in house by the couple.

Textiles are block-printed, silk-screened or dyed on 100 per cent linen and then

combined with other mediums such as wood and glass to create a variety of home furnishing items.

“Our primary thing that we do is hand-printed textiles. It’s all printed on linen,” MacGrath said.

“I’m from Ireland originally, both of my grandmothers were weavers in linen mills in Ireland and so I just love that leaf of linen and that nod to the history.”

She said the hand-printed linen is then used to make home furnishings.

“Most recently, I’ve been doing pottery as well and I’ve been doing that on and off 15 years, but I haven’t really had a chance to really delve into it but then COVID happened and I just love exploring that,” she said.

MacGrath said the studio was used for production for most of the past seven years, but now that the space is set up to showcase her own work it feels like a whole new experience.

“I feel like I’m reinventing myself,” she said.

“I’m at a period of my life where we’ve been doing this for 30 years and just been a production studio and I was feeling very burnt out doing

that.”

“Now I feel like I’ve started all over again. I feel like I’m in my twenties and I’m just so excited.”

Although the studio has made a shift toward showcasing work made by MacGrath, she said having the pop-up shops for the reopening was something she would like to continue.

“I’d like to do these little pop-up shops and have local people come in, especially local women who are running businesses. There’s lots of them.”

Tara Rosling said her Little Green Shop is a “community-oriented, eco-friendly company based in Niagara-on-the-Lake that aims to cater to the residents in town in terms of their interest in developing green awareness and becoming more eco-friendly.”

The products are all sourced from Canada, but Rosling tries to get them

all as local and as natural as possible.

“I think one of the really exciting things during the time of the pandemic is that we’re realizing how important it is to go local, go small, go community-oriented,” she said.

“Artists supporting artists, women supporting women, local supporting local, feels like a really imperative time to do that.”

Hometown Ice Cream makes all of its own ice creams and baked goods which makes Linda Vandewetering feel good about her products because she knows what is in everything her customers buy.

“You know when I really value somebody and I see great people, it’s like, sure let’s work together,” said Vandewetering.

“I think it’s so important to connect with businesses that do everything themselves.”

Royal Oak plans to open unless situation changes ‘**drastically**’

Continued from Front Page



Leila Ridesic is one Royal Oak student who will return in September. FILE PHOTO

“We’re kind of doing it all. We’re daily screening the kids before they enter the school, we’re taking temperatures with a touchless thermometer, we’re ensuring they don’t have any symptoms before they even enter the building,” Ridesic said.

“And then there’s kind of a complete gauntlet of protocol around hand washing at least five times a day, sanitizing all the high-touch surfaces at least three times a day, we’re using UV light in the classroom overnight just as an extra disinfectant.”

She said the school is still waiting to get feedback from all students’ families with regards to requiring the children to wear face shields in the classroom as well.

“The faceshields are significantly preferable in a school environment to a mask for a couple reasons. One, kids have a hard time with masks and they fidget with them. And that kind of defeats the purpose to a large degree. And two, the nonverbal communication is so important

in the classroom. So the face shields are great.”

She said the school will source them locally from Rene Bertschi, a NOTL resident who has been printing face shields using his 3D printer.

She said parents are rightfully concerned, but that they’re more comfortable with the smaller school.

“I think every single parent in the country is concerned about their children returning to school,” Ridesic said.

“We are in a great position as a small school with a community of parents who can actually provide input and feedback on these things, that I think our parents are feeling much more comfortable

than most are. And we do have the ability to put all these extra steps into place that are impossible at other schools. So yes, I think there are general hesitations of any parents about returning their kids to school but I think we are going to do it in the safest way possible to give our parents as much reassurance as they can.”

She said she understands that even going back in a smaller group is still a risk, but believes the educational and social benefits outweigh that risk.

“The reality is, in any environment where you’re bringing, whether it’s 10, or 15 kids together, or people for that matter, those situations are by definition higher risk than our children staying at home,” Ridesic said.

“But I think all of us — ‘cause you know, I’m a board member, and I’m a parent — I recognize the trade off between the potentially increased risk of exposure to COVID versus the mental health and educational benefit to my children — and social benefits to my kids being back to school.

And so I think the school is doing a really awesome job to minimize as much as possible that COVID risk, so that the benefits from the social, the mental health and the education completely outweigh that risk, in my opinion.”

She said so far most families have been in agreement about returning to school.

“But it is an ongoing dialogue and we’re continuing to be flexible and kind of adjust our policies based on feedback from our community.”

So far, only two students won’t be returning, one because of health concerns, she said, adding there’s been a “big uptick in enrolment.”

She said 11 new kids have already registered for the fall and others have said they were going to.

She suspects the increase is for two main reasons: parents weren’t happy with the online learning available at other schools and families are more comfortable in the COVID-era with sending their children to a smaller school.

“There are lots of benefits to being a small school

but in a COVID environment that gets magnified by many times. And so I think parents are feeling more comfortable sending their kids to a smaller school where they know that there are going to be those extra health and safety protocols in place.”

The school has also been allowed to swap rooms at the former hospital site on Queen Street — a space it leases from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“The town has given us permission to expand and use the whole second floor of the hospital site so that we can really set the children up to be socially distanced within the classroom, and create a very safe environment, despite COVID, for them to continue learning.”

Ridesic asked council to consider the room swap on July 20.

She told councillors the swap would allow students to return to a safer environment, as they would have more space to spread out.

The school will trade nine rooms and nine bathrooms for five larger rooms and

four bathrooms.

“(It) will allow our classes to spread out and socially distance effectively within the classes,” Ridesic said.

She said the move would permit classes to be split into two groups, both entering from different sides of the building.

That way the school can “create these little class bubbles where each class has a classroom, a break-out room, a boys and girls bathroom and is physically separated ... And that allows the students and our staff to return to school safely come September,” Ridesic said.

She noted the swap comes at no cost to the town and the space the school will be using is currently unoccupied.

Royal Oak school is privately funded and an alternative to public schooling, Ridesic pointed out.

“The school offers a local option for residents of Old Town as well as an alternative to the public system for all residents of Niagara,” she said, adding the school is open to anyone, independent of their financial situation.



Pauline Reimer Gibson
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Answer: Plants/seeds

Answered first by: Bill Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Kieran Jones, Janice Hall,
Katie Reimer, Sheila Meloche, Margie Enns

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2	3	4	
<p>Pumphouse Reopening, Renovation Tour - 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p> <p>Walking Tours of Historic NOTL - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park</p> <p>Victor Paukstelis: At Home Concert Series - 4 p.m. - Facebook: @MusicNiagaraFestival</p>	<p>Robert Silverman: At Home Concert Series - 4 p.m. - Facebook: @MusicNiagaraFestival</p>	<p>Transportation Advisory Committee - 2 p.m. - Virtual: notl.org</p> <p>Paint Night @ Lakeview Wine Co. - 5:30 p.m. - Lakeview Wine Co.</p> <p>Desiree's Ride Bike Nights - 7 p.m. - Club 55</p>	<p>Come out and Play - 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p> <p>Irrigation Committee - Virtual: notl.org</p> <p>Inclusivity Committee - Virtual: notl.org</p> <p>Communities in Block - Virtual: notl.org</p>
9	10	11	
<p>Rotary Big Backyard Event - 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. - www.rotarybigbackyardevent.org</p> <p>LiveStream LOVE WORLD Series: Amanda Martinez - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Virtual: www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1Dvm09Y5Ao</p> <p>Walking Tours of Historic NOTL - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park</p> <p>Yoga in the Vineyard - 10 a.m. - Lakeview Wine Co.</p> <p>Yoga + Brunch - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Between the Lines Winery</p>	<p>Committee of the Whole: Planning - 6 p.m. - Virtual: livestream.com/notl</p> <p>Afternoon Zoom Art Program: Draw - 1 p.m. - niagarapumphouse.ca/programs/registration</p>	<p>Virtual Coffee with the Lord Mayor - 6 p.m. - www.facebook.com/Town.of.NOTL/</p>	<p>Paint Night @ Lakeview Wine Co. - 5:30 p.m. - Lakeview Wine Co.</p> <p>Afternoon Zoom Art Draw - 1 p.m. - niagarapumphouse.ca/programs/registration</p> <p>Come out and Play - 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p>

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Lake Report

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	30 Emancipation Day STC Weekend Celebrations - 7 p.m. - Virtual: youtu.be/1y3Bcj-UJNw - Ask the Curator: NOTL Museum - 4 p.m. - Via ZOOM: Email aklassen@nhsm.ca for registration. -	31 Lion Burger Returns - 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. - St. Davids Lions Club Jack and Ginger Rooftop Series - 9 p.m. - Club 55 Mel Monaco @ Ravine - 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery Afternoon Zoom Art Program: Sculpt - 1 p.m. - niagarapumphouse.ca/programs/ registration Family Fun Fridays - 12 p.m. - NOTLPublicLibrary.org	1 Market @ The Village - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - 111 Garrison Village Drive Walking Tours of Historic NOTL - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park Cooking with Kids - 11 a.m. - NOTLPublicLibrary.org
5 Painting with Pastels - Niagara Centre - 2 p.m. - Art Class - 6:30 p.m. - Art Class - 2 p.m. -	6 Environmental Advisory Committee - 6 a.m. - Virtual: notl.org Drop in Yoga - 9 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum RiverBrink Reads: The Underpainter by Jane Urquhart - 11 a.m. - Virtual: riverbrink.org Artist Workshop: Abstracting the Landscape with Lenore Walker - 2 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum Micro:bit Mini Camp - 5 p.m. - notlcodeclub@gmail.com	7 Lion Burger Returns - 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. - St. Davids Lions Club Pumphouse: Out in the Open - 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	8 Market @ The Village - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - 111 Garrison Village Drive Rotary Big Backyard Event - 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. - www.rotarybigbackyardevent.org Walking Tours of Historic NOTL - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park
12 View Wine Co. - Niagara Wine Co. Art Program: niagarapumphouse.ca/programs/ Painting with Pastels - Niagara Centre	13 Drop in Yoga - 9 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum	14 Lion Burger Returns - 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. - St. Davids Lions Club Afternoon Zoom Art Program: Draw - 1 p.m. - niagarapumphouse.ca/programs/ registration Drop in Yoga - 9 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum	15 Market @ The Village - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - 111 Garrison Village Drive Walking Tours of Historic NOTL - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park

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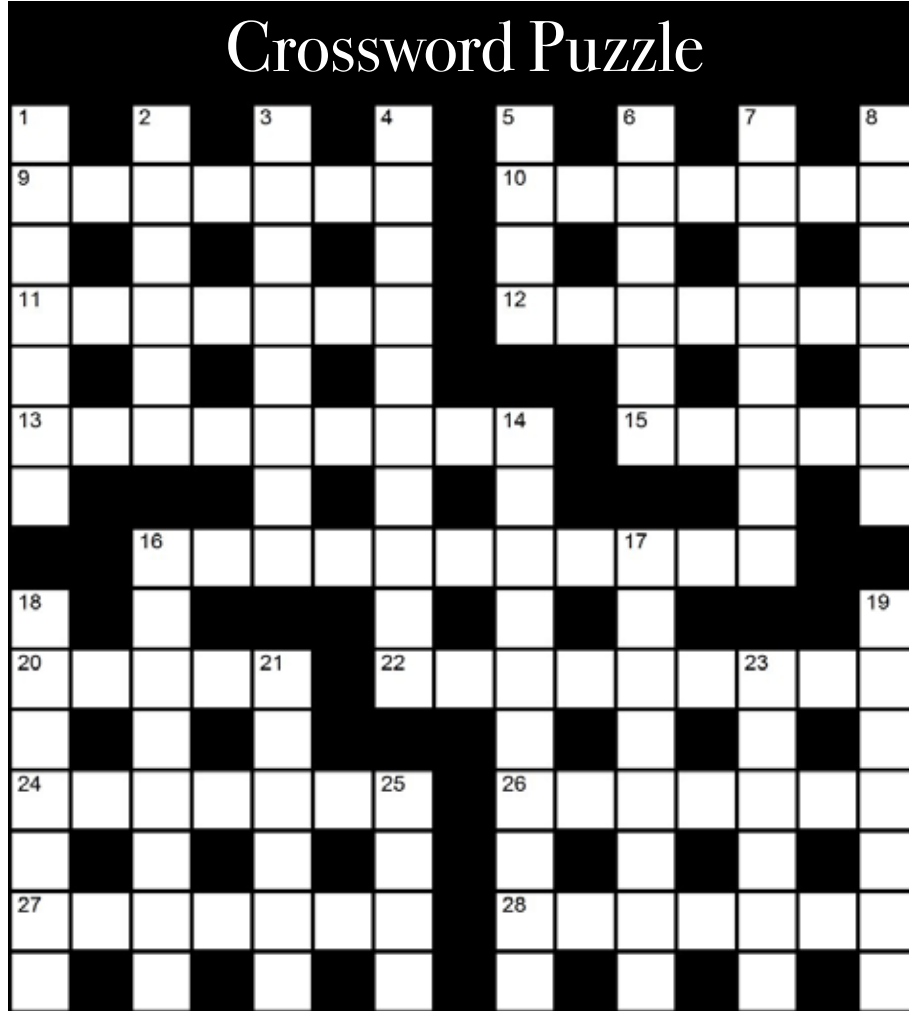
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers.
editor@niagaranow.com

Across

- 9. Hair cleaner (7)
- 10. German measles (7)
- 11. Chatter (7)
- 12. Anxious (7)
- 13. Emphasize (9)
- 15. Astonish (5)
- 16. Decent (11)
- 20. First prime minister of India (5)
- 22. Chinese revolutionary leader (3,3-3)
- 24. Type of chair (7)
- 26. Poorly matched (7)
- 27. Demolish (7)
- 28. Cooking vessel (7)

Down

- 1. Sterile (7)
- 2. Largest desert (6)
- 3. On an upper floor (8)
- 4. Depression from lack of company (10)
- 5. Make beer or ale (4)
- 6. Spain and Portugal (6)
- 7. Last (8)
- 8. Walked like a duck (7)
- 14. Put out (10)
- 16. Practise (8)
- 17. Wrist band (8)
- 18. Indefinite person (7)
- 19. Fishermen (7)
- 21. Yet to arrive (6)
- 23. Squalid (6)
- 25. Supporting ropes (4)



Last issue's answers



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Council **doesn't want** Pedal Pub's licence renewed

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors are unanimously against allowing the controversial Pedal Pub to continue operating in town.

"We asked the region not to issue a licence due to safety and noise issues pertaining to the town," Lord Mayor Betty Disero said.

Council recommended that Niagara Region not renew the Pedal Pub's li-

cence when it expires Aug. 28.

Disero said there has been a lot of resident feedback about the operation and some of those complaints included noise.

Part of the problem is that council could not find a route that would satisfy the region's road safety requirements, or that would ensure the Pedal Pub wouldn't impact the quality of life for residents.

Coun. Norm Arsenault

said he has nothing against the business.

"I think there's a place for it in certain areas. Young adults actually enjoy it very much. I've seen many comments to that effect. However, I have some serious concern about the routes that are going through town ... somewhere between 10-15 km/h maximum ... it's a real safety issue. I am not in support of continuing this business in town."

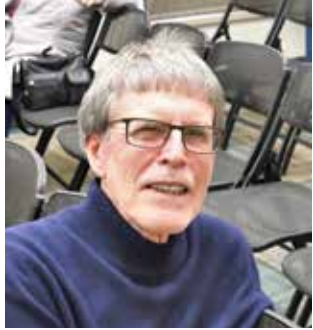
He said there are "better places" for the business to operate.

Coun. John Wiens said he also didn't approve because of safety and noise worries.

"The noise, the singing — I think it's not appropriate. I'm a big no."

Coun. Allan Bisback asked if the decision opens the town up to any potential lawsuits but interim CAO Sheldon Randall said he wasn't sure.

Dr. Brown: **Six months** of COVID



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

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

In late December of 2019, the first reports emerged from China about a new coronavirus genomically related to the SARS virus of 2003, which killed hundreds.

This version of the virus is much worse. Worldwide so far, 16 million cases have been confirmed and 650,000 people have died. Those figures clearly underestimate the true numbers of cases and deaths.

We've learned that this virus poses the greatest threat for the elderly, especially those in long-term care facilities and those with conditions such as obesity, diabetes and hypertension. The length and intensity of exposure to this highly infectious virus are also important: witness the number of front-line health care workers, even the healthiest among them, who were killed by COVID-19.

At the other end of the spectrum are the young, for whom infection may be associated with few, if any symptoms, but some of whom shed the virus for two to three weeks. On a more positive note, we learned that social distancing, wearing facemasks and avoiding crowds are effective in blocking the spread of the virus.

Why such different responses in susceptibility? Recent studies of several thousand patients in Italy and Spain revealed that there may be strong genetic links in severe COVID-19 cases such as one region in the genome that determines ABO blood types.

Other candidates include genes that encode for proteins related to the ACE-2 receptor on cell surfaces, sites the virus uses to gain access to the interior of cells. Yet other susceptibility genes appear to be related to the immune system. These and other genetic suspects are tantalizing smoking guns, but so far nothing definite.

What about the immune system? Most of the attention so far has focused on neutralizing antibodies that attack key components of the spike proteins of the virus, some of which proteins, by the way, are prime targets for several vaccines under development. At this point in the pandemic, key questions about the immune response to COVID-19 include:

How reliable and sensitive are currently available tests for detecting and quantifying neutralizing antibodies?

What is the correlation between antibody titre and severity of the disease?

How effective are neutralizing antibodies in defeating the disease: In the young? In older patients?

How long do neutralizing antibodies last?

What role do T-cells play in the response to COVID-19, both short- and long-term?

(In the young, T-cells mature in the thymus gland and play key roles in our resistance to viruses, bacteria and cancer. Unfortunately, the thymus gland begins to atrophy in midlife and much past the age of 70, from the perspective of the immunological system, the thymus no longer functions, even if a little fatty tissue remains.)

Much of the evidence bearing on the above questions has yet to be peer-reviewed, which might take several months, despite the willingness of many of the best medical journals to hurry up the process. The result is that we depend on interviews with "experts" on the CBC, BBC, PBS and newspaper articles written by reputable sources for much of our information. Less reliable has been information from politicians at all levels. And no surprise, social media has been the least reliable.

What about the possibility of new mutations arising which might make the virus more lethal?

Fortunately, the genome of this virus has been tracked regularly as it marched around the world. And yes, COVID-19 continues to mutate but as yet, there's no evidence of the emergence of a more lethal variants or strains that might be resistant to vaccines under development.

Of course, there's always the possibly this virus might become less lethal, although it may well become a permanent resident of our species. Viruses, like bacteria, exploit in true Darwinian fashion, opportunities to keep going and so long as enough of us provide opportunities by travel and close contact, this virus will persist, as have the common cold and flu.

Then there's the big question about the effectiveness of prospective vaccines. Here we simply have to wait.

Even the best vaccines won't put an end to COVID-19. But if vaccines prevent the worst of the disease from developing in those most at risk, that would be a worthy achievement.

In the meantime, we're learning just how effective changes in our behaviour — distancing and using masks — make to tamping down the transmission of this virus and probably the flu virus to come. I hope we don't forget these hard-won lessons.

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RiverBrink **reopens** August 5 with Adopt an Artwork program

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

The RiverBrink Art Museum is launching an online fundraising project, called Adopt an Artwork, to coincide with its reopening on Aug. 5.

The program will allow visitors the opportunity to support the Queenston museum by making an annual donation and “adopting” an artwork.

Twenty different fan favourite artworks will be featured in the program, as well as five different giving levels starting with a donation of \$50, offering accessibility and a variety of price points.

Debra Antoncic, the director and curator of the museum, said the program will benefit both the museum and the community of art lovers who visit.

“We can’t add to any of the fundraising events that we had underway that involved people getting together so we thought this was a fundraiser we could do without having people physically get together,” she said.



RiverBrink Art Museum. FILE PHOTO

“There is a personal connection between different works of art that people have so we thought it would be a good idea to perhaps give them a chance to adopt an artwork.”

Donations will be used to support ongoing care and conservation of art works and to help ensure the future of the collection.

When a visitor chooses to adopt a work their name will be showcased on a label whenever the adopted work is exhibited, but “adopters” can choose to remain anonymous if preferred.

While the launch of the fundraiser is digital, the

goal of the museum is to eventually have all adopted work on display at once.

“If someone wants to adopt a piece, the label can go up right away. Then, when our exhibition on our main floor closes up in September, we will be able to put up more work and then the idea is that by the winter we will have everything that is available for adoption up on display,” said Antoncic.

When RiverBrink reopens next week it will be accessible by appointment Wednesday to Saturday.

More details about the Adopt an Artwork program can be found at <http://www.riverbrink.org/>.

Golf: Warboys **scores ace** during RBC Scramble competition

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The thrill of hitting a hole-in-one never grows old, says NOTL’s Stephen Warboys.

Warboys, one of the best golfers at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club and a one-time club champ, aced the par-3 fourth hole last Wednesday.

The shot came during the pressure of competition, a qualifying round for the RBC Scramble, a Canada-wide event that lets teams of amateurs compete for the chance to play in a national final in Inverness, N.S., this fall. The NOTL qualifier was won by an out-of-town team.

Thanks to the pin placement on the short but tricky fourth hole, Warboys and his playing partners were able to watch his 9-iron shot sail right to the cup.

“The nice part about it was we could all see it. Sometimes you don’t always see them go in. This one we actually saw roll and so it was a very nice way to finish,” said Warboys, who was playing with Kurt Hamm, Harry Huizer and Jim McMacken.



Stephen Warboys holds the ball that found the hole for an ace last week. With him are playing partners Kurt Hamm, Harry Huizer and Jim McMacken. SUPPLIED

It was Warboys’ first ace at the NOTL club and the fourth of his career. Despite decades of playing the game, his first hole-in-one wasn’t until about 20 years ago, he said.

Notably, the talented former tennis pro, has holed out – sunk his shot from the tee or fairway – with every club in his bag, except his driver.

“It shows how much luck obviously plays a role. I’ve had four in the last 20 years, so I’m starting to catch up.”

He also has some catching up to do at home when it comes to aces.

Warboys’ wife Louise Robitaille, the reigning women’s club champ, has

seven aces to her credit, including one on a par 4.

“Can you imagine making a hole-in-one on a par 4?” said Warboys.

MEN’S LEAGUE: Mark Derbyshire continued his stellar play last Thursday, shooting an even-par 36 to take low gross honours in men’s league play.

Tom Goodbody was tops point-getter in the modified Stableford scoring, netting 21 points. Glenn Young and Steve Levy were second with 20 points.

No net skins were won but \$53 gross skins went to Dan Regan (#3), Wil Neufeld (#4) and John Sobil (#8).



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EXPLORING PHOTOS
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Sandham Carriage Shop

This is a late 19th-century image of the former Sandham Carriage Shop in Virgil. Robert Sandham, likely the man posing with the carriage, built and painted wagons and carriages here from the late 1800s until circa 1917. Note the plank wood sidewalks along the fence and the newly planted trees lining the dirt road. The Sandham Carriage Shop was on the east side of Niagara Stone Road, close to the intersection of Creek Road. The Sandham family lived in the house behind the carriage shop. The carriage shop and home no longer exist. There is an accounts ledger of the carriage shop in the NOTL Museum's collection with a number of local names inside!



Pride of place

Brian Marshall
Columnist

No war has commenced with a neat line that divided people on one side or the other. In fact, history shows that usually there is a hard-core group at either extreme while the majority of folks sit in the middle ground; some having slight leanings one way or the other and many who just want to stay the hell out of it.

Unfortunately, societies in wartime have little tolerance for the middle ground; one is either for us or against us; and many are the people who have been the casualties to patriotic fervour.

Such appears to be the case with the Field family during the American



The Field House. SUPPLIED/BRIAN MARSHALL

Revolution. Accused of having Loyalist sympathies, they were forced to abandon their home and land in Pennsylvania and flee to Fort Niagara.

Whether the initial accusation was true, it is certainly understandable that their forced exile may have inspired George and his sons Daniel, Gilbert and Nathan to enlist with Butler's Rangers. Of these four men, it was Gilbert who petitioned the Crown

for and eventually received land grants (between 1794 and 1798) for more than 300 acres overlooking the Niagara River upon which he built a grand Georgian manor house in 1800.

Constructed of locally made bricks laid in a Flemish bond, Gilbert's house was a grand classic Georgian of the Loyalist tradition. He built a two-storey, end-gable home with interior chimneys on which the front facade presents a strictly symmetri-

cal five-bay design centred on the main entry door.

Two 12 over 12 pane windows are equidistantly placed to either side of the door with second-floor 12 over 8 pane windows ranked directly above each of the main-floor openings. Normally this would complete the Georgian facade but, perhaps to one-up his neighbour John MacFarland, who was building his statement house at the same time, Gilbert decided to splurge on six-pane foyer lights set to either side of the front door.

Commandeered for use as a barracks during the War of 1812, it did suffer damage (purportedly struck by five cannonballs) but survived the war relatively unscathed and continued to house members of the Field family until 1925. Although sympathetic, the delicate white portico that graces the facade is a modern replacement.

Today, the Field House still holds pride-of-place on the Niagara River Parkway, reminding us of one refugee's success.

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All hail the toastmaster

Overcoming a fear of public speaking was only the start

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Pushing beyond his comfort zone, Miguel Mori has been on a five-year, “life-changing” journey with Toastmasters, earning the Distinguished Toastmasters Award this year. He says he plans to keep the momentum going with the hope of inspiring new speakers and leaders.

Toastmasters International is a non-profit organization “run by its members, for its members,” Mori says.

While the desire to overcome anxiety speaking in crowds as a musician initially drew him to the program, Mori says Toastmasters taught him “much more” than just public speaking.

“If you ask any Toastmaster their reason for being there it’s going to be different. But the reason for staying, it’s kind of similar. There’s a sense of community afterwards,” he says.

Gaining experience and building confidence public speaking is just one limb of the organization.

“You learn very quickly when you walk through that door that there’s the public speaking side. And there’s the impromptu speaking side, which, of course, is if you’re doing interviews or things like that, which is helpful.”

“But then there’s the whole leadership side as well. It’s taking on both meetings and board roles and taking on planning projects in the community,” he says.

Mori’s education through the program has helped him as growth manager for the family-owned Mori Gardens. Working in marketing, he says the leadership skills gained have also helped him cultivate relationships and co-ordinate events for the community.

“NOTL Toastmasters and Rotary do have a partner-



Miguel Mori earns the Distinguished Toastmaster Award. SUPPLIED

ship. We’re going to be defining what that is ... I think it’s up to the two organizations to find what they want to do with it.”

Now, he is the vice-president, education for the Niagara-on-the-Lake club, which he helped create in 2018 with fellow Distinguished Toastmasters Katharine Parsons, Charles Kennedy and Mario Hundertajlo.

“(They) assisted me greatly on my path as a Distinguished Toastmaster and continue to be a huge support for the club and its members ... Only one per cent of Toastmasters reach DTM and the four of us reached within six months of each other, all having been members for five to six years during our journeys.”

At a certain point along the Toastmasters jour-

ney, Mori says members are encouraged to either sponsor a mentor or to start their own club. He saw “a want” for NOTL to have its own and with nothing directly in town, he says the four of them came together to form one.

It didn’t come without its roadblocks.

Mori says to officially create a branch of Toastmasters the club must have at least 20 members. Without having the numbers in the beginning, he says the group got off to a rocky start.

“We created it, we brought down world-class speakers, amazing people to help us out, and then no one showed up, and this happened for a little bit actually ... (Niagara College) helped us out a lot by giving us a room. And we went for about

six months with a couple guests here and a couple of students but we weren’t getting the people we needed in order to get the club started.”

Mori says they took a route that many clubs don’t and began offering a six-week intensive course. With the assistance of Pen Financial Credit Union in St. Catharines, which he says offered a space, the group began attracting more people.

“And, you know what, it turned out that was what people really wanted,” he says.

At first he says he expected the workshop to support more of a wine tourism-oriented group, but it actually attracted more people from entrepreneurial groups.

“It was your real estate, your mortgage brokers,

your people that were kind of making their own way and wanted to move themselves forward, which is really interesting,” he says.

While fear and anxiety can often hold people back from joining the program, Mori says it’s important to know it’s a place for all.

“The biggest thing is that it’s for everyone. Everyone has different reasons.”

He says there’s no one walk of life; everyone’s there to learn.

“You have a person that starts and they can’t speak, they need help, but you have another person that’s in their 50s, 60s, that’s an amazing speaker, but they can’t use PowerPoint at all. And so, they need help using technology to communicate better. And so, the two are able to mentor each other in different ways to move forward. And

I think that was always an important part,” he says.

While everyone has a different goal, each person comes to the table with a different skill “that’s valid as well that we can all learn from.”

So, although it can be frightening to push through your comfort zone, Mori says it’s worth the effort.

“I think, the same thing for everyone is you’re in your head at the beginning, when something is scary, when you have anxiety.”

His journey began with a six-week Speechcraft program, which is an extended workshop on communication and leadership run by Toastmasters. Due to his own anxieties, combined with his work schedule, he says it became too overwhelming.

“I actually dropped out.”

He tried again with another club, attending several meetings before dropping it again. On his third try he joined Cariboo Club in B.C., “finally giving myself the kick in the butt,” to stick it out.

“Pretty soon you realize, ‘Hey, if I have a goal outside – I want to come up as a facilitator, I want to lead workshops or something like that. This is actually the place to practice where I’m not judged in the same way.’ Everyone here is just helping me move forward.”

What really drew him to it “is that everyone here has a totally different goal, not everyone wants to public speak or public speak for the same reason ... Each person is really finding the confidence in delivering the message that they have.”

The NOTL Toastmasters is now holding meetings via the Zoom meeting app. If anyone is interested in joining or sitting in on a class, Mori says to reach out to the club at NOTL-toastmasters@gmail.com, or to check out the website at www.niagaratoastmasters.com.

STEELE GALLERY

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