Lake levels easing, flood risk diminishing

Water levels in Lake Ontario have eased a bit and there is no immediate risk of flooding, says a Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake official.

Brett Ruck, the town’s manager of environmental services, said the lake’s water level in Lake Ontario hasn’t risen in the last week or so.

“We’re holding steady at this point,” he said Tuesday. “Environment Canada hasn’t said we’ve crested yet so ... I’m feeling confident we’re not going to hit to the maximum that they were thinking. So that’s good news for us.”

As of Tuesday, June 18, the water was at 75.82 metres, said Ruck.

Earlier this spring, the water level passed the 2017 record of 75.75 metres. The town then held an information session on May 31 at which residents were warned to be ready in case the lake flooded their homes.

The town placed sandbags at Collingwood Street, the Nelson Street parking lot and at the parking lot at the River Beach Drive in efforts to protect the dock area. Since the meeting, the town staff has also implemented extra measures, such as installing fencing, to protect the flood prevention equipment.

Neighbours have questions about new nursery school

Some Simcoe Street residents say although they are happy with the planned expansion of a new nursery school in Niagara-on-the-Lake, they also are worried.

A number of concerns about the new facility were raised by the residents including safety, preserving trees and the town’s lack of transparency while negotiating the deal.

Town council last week approved construction of a new 4,308-square-foot child care facility to the east side of NOTL Community Centre. The $1.5-million nursery school will accommodate a total of 69 children, from infants to school-age kids.

As the school’s main entrance will be on Anderson Lane, Rosamund Hennessey, who lives nearby on Simcoe Street, said it is a busy and congested road where people drive quickly and do a rolling stop at the sign before moving on.

“All the traffic and the safety of the children was our main concern,” she said.

David Gray, who lives on the corner of Simcoe Street and Anderson Lane, agreed, saying the stop sign has never been followed.

“People drive very fast,” he said. “It's a real concern for me.”

As of Tuesday, the sign is still in place on the corner.

Federal money helps growers cultivate virus-free vines

The federal government is spending more than $2.3 million to help grape growers cultivate clean, virus-free grapevines.

The money will go to the Canadian Grapevine Certification Network, a nationwide not-for-profit organization comprised of four provincial growing associations: the Grape Growers of Ontario, the British Columbia Wine Grape Council, L’Association des vignerons du Québec and the Grape Growers Association of Nova Scotia.

Accessing virus-free vines has been identified as one of the top five challenges the Ontario wine industry has been facing, according to a 2018 Ontario wine and grape industry performance study.

One of the most common grapevine diseases is called red blotch disease. Once the vines are infected, there is no cure, according to the grapevine network’s website.

For Jamie Slingerland, the director of viticulture at Pillitteri Estates Winery, the federal funding comes in handy as he has three-acre block of 3,000 vines that is infected with red blotch disease. It may be a small piece of land in comparison to the rest of

Continued on Page 2
Continued from Front Page

the vineyard but it affects the winery’s production, he said. “The federal government says, 'Now, we have a chance, with a small investment — really a few million dollars — to save the billion-dollar industry,’” he said. “This is one of the most significant investments that will have the greatest benefit that we have seen in a very long time.”

Infected vines don’t produce enough grapes and nutrients, and the final quality isn’t as high as expected, said Slingerland.

Because of the poor quality, the infected grapes will be used for “entry-level” wines instead of reserve wines. Losing 14 tonnes of grapes on a three-acre property would result in about 1,100 fewer cases of wine per year, Slingerland said The Lake Report.

“I think it’s absolutely unfair for the public not to know what comments they make.”

Bonnie Wegerich, another Simcoe resident.

Jennifer Gardiner expressed some residents said.

Residents also wondered how the nursery school will impact the library with its quiet hours of operation. They also said they worry what will happen to the trees at the back of the library. Jennifer Gaudinier expressed hope the garden behind the library would remain as it is right now because it’s “so peaceful back there,” she said.

Another Simcoe resident David Hennigessy questioned why the town wasn’t informed about the expansion and they residents have a right to know how their tax money is being spent.

The secrecy “in which all of this was done” doesn’t sit right with him, he said, especially since the town has been “excellent” in communicating with residents. This instance is “uncharacteristic” of the council, said Hennigessy. Negotiations for a lease have to be done in-camera, said Lord Mayor Betty Disero, adding the province requested that the deal not be made public until the province signed on to it.

“Until we actually came to an agreement on the terms of the lease, we weren’t even sure that that’s where (the school) would be,” Disero told The Lake Report. “So now we can make it public and talk to residents about it and see what comments they make.”

When asked why the school is built to the east side of the centre, Disero said there were a number of issues, including parking and location, that would have had to be dealt with. Disero also said she wasn’t sure if the school would have been eligible for provincial funding if it just renovated the space instead. “I’m trying to figure out what the challenges were for the school,” she said in a phone interview. “At this point, I’m not sure. I’m told (the deal) is not changeable but I want to find out more about why (the school) wasn’t suitable for the west side.

The current wait list for the school also has more than 80 names on it. Jennifer Jones-Butski, who will be moving with her family back to NOTL from St. Catharines in July, noted the expansion won’t cover the number of children on the nursery school’s wait list. Her five-year-old daughter is on the list but her two-year-old son will be staying at day care in St. Catharines as the NOTL nursery only accepts children from 27 months and older. “Personally, I think they could do a lot more than what they’re doing,” Jones-Butski said in a phone interview. “I think it’s absolutely wonderful that they got this expansion and they’re going to be able to add infants and toddlers. But I think to put it all on one facility is too much. I think there needs to be more than one (school).”

Simcoe Street residents agreed that with the expansion, there will still be children on the wait list and suggested building the new school either on the west side of the community centre or on the old hospital site. Old Town residents are also mostly seniors so having the nursery school near the community centre or on the old hospital site. Old Town residents are also mostly seniors so having the nursery school near the area may not be convenient for young families who have to drive their children from Virgil, St. Davids or Glenlade, some residents said.

The construction cost for the new nursery school will be split among the town, Niagara Region and the Ministry of Education. The building is expected to be ready by December 2020.
Brock partners with Niagara municipalities to tackle climate change

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Brock University is launching Niagara Adapts, a new partnership with Niagara-on-the-Lake and other area municipalities, in an attempt to reduce the risks associated with climate change in the region.

With persistent rains and rising lake levels this year sparking fears of flooding, NOTL and other Niagara municipalities have experienced the impact of climate change first-hand.

While local governments see the effects of climate change in their communities, universities can play a critical role by contributing scientific expertise, research and innovation, Brock said in a news release.

“The challenges brought by climate change require that we all must work together,” Brock University President Gervan Fearon said.

“As part of Brock’s new strategic plan, we are committed to collaborating with our local municipalities to enhance the life and vitality of Niagara Region. Together we can better tackle the challenges of climate change and build a more sustainable future for our local communities and beyond.”

The Niagara Adapts partnership brings together seven Niagara municipalities—NOTL, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Welland, Grimsby, Lincoln and Pelham—with Brock’s Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC) to address climate change.

Residents clean up their Green neighbourhood

Resident Submission
The Lake Report

Homeowners, students, the Niagara College Student Administrative Council and members of NOTL town council pitched in Saturday to clean up the Niagara on the Green neighbourhood.

They collected about 20 bags of garbage and debris, said resident Steve Hardaker, who helped organize the blitz with Lianne Gagnon, the college’s director of student services, and the student council.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero offered some words of encouragement before volunteers set off across the neighbourhood.

Every street in the area as well as Glendale Avenue and Taylor Road were cleaned.

The town donated the garbage bags, gloves and picked up the trash afterward.

Niagara Adapts is a partnership that brings together seven Niagara municipalities—Grimsby, Lincoln, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, St. Catharines and Welland—with Brock’s Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC) to address climate change.

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Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

In the spirit of positivity espoused by Niagara-on-the-Lake author Steve Bushnik, featured this week in a story on Page 12, let’s raise a cheer to more of the good things we see, hear and report on in our community, many of which you will only find in The Lake Report.

YEA to Bushnik for standing up to bullying and improper behaviour, and for calling it out when he encounters it in our community. Yes, bullies and ethically challenged behaviour are the exception, not the rule. But don’t let them go unchallenged.

YEA to the town, province and the Niagara Nursery School for finding a way to build a new $1.5 million facility that families in NOTL desperately need. But NAY, or at least, WHY? is it slated to be built on east side of the community centre? There seems to be plenty of room on the west side, where it might be less-obtrusive and likely safer, tucked away from neighbourhood streets.

YEA to the NOTL Public Library for coming up with innovative ways to encourage kids to read books this summer. Beads are brilliant.

YEA to Willow Cakes and Pastries owner Catherine O’Donnell and her staff for once treating NOTL to a giant birthday cake to celebrate Canada Day. And Willow’s 15th anniversary.

YEA to the Friends of St. David’s, a new group, that with its fun and social events is already establishing itself as an important cog in community life for residents. Pochetsa? Mmmmm.

YEA to Music Niagara and its supporters for raising $40,000 for the organization at its Big Night gala on Saturday.

YEA to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for its salute to seniors with the annual Strawberry Social. And kudos to all the volunteers, staff and area businesses that support this yummy event.

YEA to pets and pet lovers: To Ticker the hero dog who saved his family and to that late Thomas the cat, a fixture at Pet Valu in Virgil for many years.

YEA to the residents of Niagara on the Green and staff and students of Niagara College for taking it upon themselves to clean up their neighbour- hood after our long, long winter. YEA to Brock University for partnering with municipalities in Niagara to come up with ways to adapt to the problems created by climate change. Yes, it’s real, and as Hermine Steinberg says on page 6, it’s time for real action.

YEA to Pillitteri Estates Winery for doing NOTL and Canada proud through its new partnership as the official wine supplier to the Canadian Olympic Committee. Cheers to that!

YEA to the federal government for invest- ing in our area’s wine infrastructure to help NOTL grape growers cultivate vines that are free of dangerous viruses.

YEA to the Toronto Raptors for giving Toronto and the rest of Canada something so positive to cheer about and feel good about. AND to Kawhi Leonard for taking time on Tuesday to visit Niagara Falls and then fol- low it up with a quiet, private dinner at Two Sisters Winery here in NOTL. Come back again soon.

editor@niagaranow.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Have a lead on a story?

Call 905.359.2270 or send an email to editor@niagaranow.com

Want to grow your business through advertising?

Call 905.246.4671 or send an email to advertising@niagaranow.com

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Wright is wrong about corporate branding for NOTL attractions

Dear editor:

Your recent article regarding high water levels at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club starts off with an accurate headline which stated that the high water levels were causing us "a hassle.

This is certainly the case. The accuracy of your re- porting diminishes thereafter, however, as you identi- fied your sole sources as sailing club members, which they are not. Your non-member sources characterized our dust control measure as being "nil.

We use an environmental- ly friendly dust suppressant that is in wide use through- out Canada, including many environmentally sensitive areas. They then went on to say that the cause of the high water was because of a change in how they “let the water out.

In that, your sources may have been referring to Plan2014, an environmental initiative agreed to by Can- ada and the United States in 2014, and implemented on Jan. 1, 2017, which sought to let the water level of Lake Ontario fluctuate more natu- rally in order to promote the health of the Lake Ontario wetlands.

Identifying Plan2014 as causative for the flooding of 2017 and this year is the subject of debate. Perhaps there is a story for you there.

Moreover, while the high water does constitute a “hassle,” it is little more than that.

We learned a great deal from the high waters of 2017 and were far better prepared this time around. We constructed a second layer of docks in 2017 which were subsequently stored for just such a need. They have been redeployed in order to protect the members’ boats and are perform- ing well in that capacity.

Yacht operations, i.e. boat launchings, are continuing, albeit at a slower pace than normal.

Our Learn to Sail programs are projected to begin on schedule, though at a different location on the property than usual. Our racing program has not missed a single date as a re- sult of high water. Only one club social event has been rescheduled (not cancelled) due to the water level. All the others have been or will be held on schedule.

It is true that two orga- nized club cruises have been cancelled. But this has as much to do with conditions at the destination yacht clubs as it does with our own. Is it more challenging to operate a boat in such conditions? The answer is obvious. Of course it is.

But on the whole, Niaga- ra-on-the-Lake Sailing Club members are experienced sailors who understand the precautions that must be taken to safely negotiate the high water in a safe and responsible manner.

Yacht clubs and indeed all riparians on Lake Ontario have been impacted to some degree by these water levels. Our sailing club is certainly no exception.

But let’s keep it in per- spective. A “hassle” is not a catastrophe.

John Thompson
Vice president operations NOTL Sailing Club
Op-ed: Climate change is real and it’s time for real action

Hermine Steinberg
Special to The Lake Report

Despite what we may be reading on some social media platforms or fringe websites, and hearing from a few politicians, all mainstream corporations, business associations, government agencies, think tanks and scientific groups have accepted climate change as a fact.

No matter where one may sit on the political spectrum, it is time to reject the misleading narratives that try to drive a wedge between us and get on with the most critical task of our century. It also may be our greatest opportunity to unify and grow in a way that best supports our democratic goals.

Whether we look at the issue of climate change from an economic, environmental, health or social perspective, the lifestyles and values that have created this problem must change.

We can prepare, plan, mitigate and survive – or become frogs in the boiling water; slowly being cooked to death.

Let’s look at the facts.

We have already been told that Canada will continue to experience more frequent and intense wildfires, increased damages from river and coastal floods, and extreme weather that could threaten our food sources, infrastructure and health.

And we have all seen the evidence around us. Insurance companies are already significantly increasing rates or refusing to cover properties in flood prone areas. The financial markets are also clearly telling us that it’s time to move on.

Divestment from coal, oil and gas companies is building momentum. According to Canada 2030, a report by the Conference Board of Canada, “over 800 institutions worldwide have committed to divesting $5.58 trillion in investments from fossil fuel companies and some insurers have even stopped underwriting fossil fuel operations.”

Growth in renewable energy use and production will continue to increase worldwide over the next decade.

This is a great opportunity for Canada as it is one of the world’s largest producers of some of the minerals needed for renewable energy systems, “including 14 of the 19 minerals needed for the production of solar photovoltaic panels, as well as copper used for wind turbines and electric cars, and iron and carbon for steel used for wind turbines and light-rail transport systems,” the conference board report says.

Mining, manufacturing, energy, transportation, and technology sectors could all benefit.

Continuing to invest in fossil fuels for short-term gains and promoting unbridled consumerism rather than transitioning to a green economy is simply a bad investment for the Canadian taxpayer and is inviting more dire consequences.

It is also an abdication of responsibility to future generations, a lost opportunity to build a more ethical, healthier and inclusive society, but most of all, it is relinquishment of our power to truly act in our self-interest.

Hermine Steinberg is the director of the NOTL Writers’ Circle. Her articles have appeared in many local papers and online magazines. She taught and developed curriculum for high school history and civics courses for more than 25 years.

Newark Neighbours needs soup, canned goods and more

Newark Neighbours appreciates and values the generosity of our community for your donations which allows us to continue our mission: “Serving our Community with compassion, care and concern.”

Making this mission a reality would not be possible without all of our volunteers whose time and effort we greatly appreciate.

Thanks go out to the following for their wonderful donations: Niagara-on-the-Lake Lions Club, Budapest Bakery, Syme Jago, Mary Keoch, Tony at Valu-Mart NOTL, Christ Church on McNab Road, Jim Walker, St. Michael’s Catholic School, Niagara Mennonite Church, Niagara Region Employee Appreciation Day and a special thanks to Iniskilin Winery.

Our food bank continually needs to be restocked and the following items are required at this time: Chunky chicken soup, soda crackers, baking needs. Jell-o, jam, cans of Spam, Klik, corned beef, chili and tater-tissue.

We do not accept: furniture, children’s toys, books, old tools, sports equipment. A list is posted on the outside of our building.

Disposing of these items is one the charity’s biggest challenges. The expense to dispose of “do not accept items” is often more than several days of our sales, which means less money is available to purchase food for the food bank.

At this time, the Thrift Store needs jeans, hoodies, work boots, backpacks and sheets.

July is a special month at Newark Neighbours as all of our proceeds from the Thrift Shop will be donated to Red Roof Retreat. Please help us out by donating items we accept and stop in to shop!

Please bring all donations to 310 John St. E. (just off Riverbend Inn drive-way). Hours: Monday to Friday 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (closed Saturday and Sunday), Open Sundays from April to October. Call 905-468-3519 or visit www.newarkneighbours.ca.

Suzanne Vaillant
Vice Chair
Newark Neighbours

Did you know?
The Lake Report’s printer sources 100 per cent of its paper fibre from industry leading paper mills, which use quick-growth, sustainable, renewable plots of land, rather than clear-cutting forests. The ink is also vegetable-based.

Have an opinion you want heard?
Send a letter to the editor to editor@niagararanow.com
**MORE LETTERS**

**In honour of D-Day: No More**

While watching news coverage of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion, Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Harry Hearth penned this short poem in honour of D-Day and in honour of the men and women who gave their lives for the freedoms we enjoy today.

No more gazing on black diamond patches on their coats,
No more conversation about Mr. Smith, who lived in #21, being gassed at the Somme,
No more stories about our math teacher telling the class how it was being a prisoner of war,
No more of my pal having no Dad.
No More War.

**Mike Henry**
NOTL

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**Why do we need a new pool and hot tub bylaw?**

Dear editor,

It seems like our new town council is fixated on passing new bylaws and is struggling to agree on how to enforce them. A few thoughts:

1. Councillors should explain the rationale for any new bylaw. For example, I don’t know why there is a new bylaw for swimming pools and hot tubs. Has there been an outbreak of injuries and deaths I failed to know about? What are the statistics that support why they have done this? Why is it retroactive? The building code changes all the time but rarely, if ever, is it retroactive.

2. When agreeing to institute a new bylaw they should also agree on how it will be implemented and what resources will be required not only by the town but by all affected parties. What will be the cost to a typical owner of a swimming pool or hot tub? How could they include hot tubs when they have no idea how many there are in town?

3. They should agree on what will define success or failure in terms of compliance, costs and desired end result that justified the new bylaw in the first place. Then they need to assign accountability with regular reports on performance vs. plan.

4. They should improve their communication on these bylaws, not only telling what they are about but with all the details noted above.

Mike Henry
NOTL

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**We welcome your letters**

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated.

Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 724 Mississauga St., NOTL.

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**Solstice ceremony needs a drummer**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Say hello to summer, finally, and kick off the season with yoga and drumming this Friday.

The sixth annual summer solstice celebration returns to Byerson Park on June 21.

The Drumming Down the Sun celebration will start at 7 p.m. with a yoga session, led by John Pizzolato of Fox Den Yoga.

The drumming ceremony will follow — but organizers need a drummer. The drummer who has led the celebrations for the past three or four years is unable to attend the event as his band has a Friday gig, said Loretta Pizzolato, one of the organizers of the solstice event.

“So, we’re looking for someone who might step up and take his place for the evening,” said Pietrobon.

“Wouldn’t have to be somebody professional, just somebody who’s got that passion to do it.”

Last year, close to 100 people attended the ceremony, which is open to people of all ages. Since there is no shelter at the park, the event will be cancelled if it rains, she said.

The summer solstice occurs when the sun reaches its highest position in the sky and brings with it the longest day of the year. People come for the same reason. “It’s nice in our modern, rush-rush, fast-paced world to just take a moment and appreciate it,” said Pietrobon.

By the time the sun is sinking below the horizon, “you can feel everyone’s on the same beat, on the same page,” Pietrobon told The Lake Report.

“They’ve all come for the same reason. They just appreciate that they’re able to take part in the group recognizing and being part of the celebration.”

Donations will be accepted for the Niagara Land Trust Foundation, which strives to conserve the natural heritage of Niagara Peninsula.

Prospective drummers should contact Pietrobon at lpibrin1@hotmail.com.

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**TIDBITS**

St. Davids Porchetta in the Park

The Friends of St. Davids community group is inviting everyone to Porchetta in the Park on June 22.

The event will run from 2 to 5 p.m. at the St. Davids Lions Club. There will be porchetta sandwiches served with sides, coffee or tea. The cost for Friends of St. Davids members is $25, for non-members $30 and $10 for children 12 and under.

Music will be provided by DRYen and organizers recommend bringing your own lawn chair.

Music Gives fundraiser Saturday

The Niagara Conservatory of Music is raising money for the Music Gives program on Saturday during its fifth annual music fundraising event at Polonia Park, 765 York Rd. Festivities will kick off at noon. There is a barbecue and refreshments will be served.

The money raised provides youth across Niagara with music lessons.

The Music Gives program began in 2015 and since then the conservatory has donated more than $30,000 to music lessons, more than $40,000 to instruments for schools and students, and more than $20,000 to bring the arts to local families.

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**First Step Challenge winners announced**

As of Wednesday morning, NOTL steppers collectively had reached 14,856,000 steps — 169 per cent of the initial target for the town-wide June Step Challenge.

Winners for best/most creative names from week one: “IlwilkaKing” was best individual name and won a $10 Dollarama. The four team members of “Cirque de Pied” each won $10 Harvest Barn NOTL gift cards.

Week two prizes were awarded to two individuals or teams who averaged 5,000 steps a day and chosen by a draw. Individual winners were “ruthless_1944” and “steplager.” Team winners: “The Nottage” and “Back House Boys.” All received chimney cakes from the Budapest Bakeshop.

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Pauline Reimer Gibson is an Audiologist with over 20 years of experience who loves helping people of all ages in the community. Julia Dick is the Front Office Coordinator and a longtime resident of Virgil. Call Julia today to book a complimentary hearing test.
Library infuses sneaky learning into children’s summer programming

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Children can read for beads this summer at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library as the Sky’s the Limit 2019 summer reading club kicks off June 22.

Kasia Dupuis, the children’s library services associate, said the program is the perfect way to infuse sneaky learning opportunities into summer activities.

With registration, each child will receive a necklace and a passport. For every book read, they will earn a bead for their necklace.

“On the inside of the passport there’s also a whole bunch of summer tasks. So, learn the phases of the moon, find a book that your parents loved when they were a kid and read it, and all of these other kinds of physical tasks, moving around tasks – they can earn different kinds of beads for those as well,” she said.

Learning from similar successful programs at other libraries, Dupuis said the necklaces are perfect for promoting summer reading.

“Kids love to collect things and they like to show off things that they’ve done. So, I thought the necklace was a natural element of that. Also, within the reading and the collecting of the beads and everything attached to the summer reading program, there’s inherent learning.”

The reading club is free and will run all summer. The library will also host a variety of children’s activities throughout the summer, including Crafternoons, Fam Jam Story Time, Club Code and Minecraft Club. Some costs may apply, and registration may be required. Visit NOTLPublicLibrary.org to register for the program.

Brand new this year, the library will feature Power Off and Play: On the Road – where library services will travel to different neighbourhoods around NOTL to bring interactive activities, storytime and adventure from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on Thursdays, weather permitting. See the website for details and specific dates.

Wet weather doesn’t deter Farmers’ Market fans

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Lousy weather can’t stop some Niagara-on-the-Lake residents when it comes to supporting local farmers and vendors.

Four weeks into the Saturday Farmers’ Market’s season, it seems like it’s always rainy or wet all the time, said the market co-ordinator Sharon Brinsmead-Taylor.

But she said it was “amazing (to see) the number of dedicated customers” who turned out again last weekend.

“They come out no matter what,” Brinsmead-Taylor said. “We’ve got our serious shoppers that come first thing in the morning and then we’ve got – I call them the breakfast crowd – they come and hang out.”

“If it’s a nice day, the picnic tables are full of families and kids are playing. It’s just a really nice feel to it.”

Last Saturday, the market had a variety of local produce for shoppers, including cheese, honey, granola, compound butter, jams, greens and microgreens, as well as coffee, chaga mushroom tea, smoothies and floral bouquets.

Music was provided by Tim Atherton who has been performing at the market since it was established 12 years ago.

“Running into people I haven’t seen in forever, from growing up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, that’s the fun about the market,” he said. His band, The Athertones, also performs at the Supper Market on Wednesdays.

This Saturday’s entertainment will be provided by Gemma Wells.

The market runs every Saturday at Garrison Village from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Pillitteri winery partners with Team Canada

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

NOTL’s Pillitteri Estates Winery has teamed up with Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Pet Valu store to say final farewell to Thomas, a 10-year-old cat that died on January 11 due to health complications.

“Thomas was a stray, Thomas was a good boy. A really, really good boy,” Carol Thibault, the owner of Pet Valu store, told The Lake Report.

“Thomas the cat’s legacy will live on through a fundraiser organized in his memory,” Pillitteri Estates Winery CEO Charlie Pillitteri told The Lake Report.

“Niagara wines are well-known over the world,” he said in an interview. “So when we travel the world, as Team Canada, it will be great to have Pillitteri Estates as our partner side by side.”

The quality of Pillitteri Estates’ wines sets it apart from other wineries, agreed Alex del Luca, who is a Pillitteri wine club member.

“I think (the partnership) is amazing. When they told me about it, I was ecstatic,” he said.

The Purina Animal Hall of Fame is an award program recognizing heroic pets that have helped save a human life.

Heroic dog named to animal hall of fame

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

A heroic Niagara-on-the-Lake dog has made it to the Purina’s Animal Hall of Fame.

Tucker, a six-year-old shepherd and rottweiler mix, saved his owners’ lives in September 2018 when a fire broke out in their house.

Thanks to Tucker, who woke the owners up by barking and pawing at their bed, Rachel Spiewak, her boyfriend Jason and their two sons were able to leave the house unharmed.

Along with Tucker, two other dogs – Shelby from Sault Ste. Marie and Rosco from Calgary – were also honoured at an awards ceremony in Toronto on June 11.

Each inductee received a medal of honour and

Pet Valu store says final farewell to much-loved Thomas the cat

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Thomas the cat’s legacy will live on through a fundraiser organized in his memory.

Virgil’s Pet Valu store has teamed up with the Niagara SPCA and Humane Society to hold a fundraiser at the store on Sunday, June 23. It will include a celebration of life for Thomas.

Thomas was a charming store cat, beloved by staff and many customers. He was euthanized on June 11 due to health complications.

“It’s our way to say goodbye,” said Carol Thibault, the store’s owner. “It’s our lase chance to do something for Thomas.”

All money raised will go to the humane society’s mobile unit which helps spay and neuter up to 50 cats per day in communities across the region. Donating money to the society will help pet owners who may not be able to afford it.

The mobile unit will also be at the event to provide rabies shots and microchip-ing for $25 each.

Thomas used to be someone’s pet before he ended up on the streets, said Thibault. When he was a stray, Thomas was attacked by another cat and got infected with a feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), which can lead to various forms of cancer.

When male cats fight over a female cat, they often bite each other, she said, so the virus can be shared through those bite wounds.

The store adopted Thomas five and a half years ago and he was about 10 years old when he was put down. With the fundraiser, “(Thomas) can help spay and neuter other cats so they don’t suffer what he suffered from,” said Thibault.

The event coincides with the annual birthday party the store used to organize in June for Thomas. This year’s will be the last party held for Thomas, Thibault said.

There will be prizes and giveaways as well as a barbecue and cupcakes. It will also give the community a chance to say goodbye and share their memories of Thomas.

“He was a good boy. A really, really good boy,” Thibault said.
Barbara Ahluwalia, 86, outduels pro in one-shot showdown

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Veteran NOTL golfer Barbara Ahluwalia did what no one else in Tuesday’s Ladies 18 Hole League could do – she Beat The Pro by knocking her tee shot on the fourth hole closer to the cup than club pro Billy Simkin was able to.

That’s quite an accomplishment by the 86-year-old golfer, but Ahluwalia is used to taking on challengers. She has won numerous titles and competitions over the years at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club. Ahluwalia was in the last group of the day’s competition when she hit her drive to about four feet from the hole on the par 3 fourth hole.

Other highlights of the June 18 Ladies League: Yolanda Henry had low gross and low net (83, 66), fewest putts (28) and a chip-in (#4). Second low gross was Lisa Allen (90), third Ginny Green (95). Low net, second Valerie Chubey (70) and third Allen (71). Marg Ketcheson had a birdie on #7. Other chip-ins: Robin Foster (#4) and Allen (#12). Fewest putts: second, Margaret Hickson (32), third Marie Ellison, Allen and Ahluwalia (33).

On June 11: Low gross: Martha Cruikshank and Henry (89), Green (96), Patty Garriock (98). Low net: Cruikshank (69), Henry (72), Susan Gagne (73). Fewest putts: Cruikshank (27), Henry (28), Brenda Bell and Ahluwalia (30). Closest to pin: Cruikshank. Birdies: Bell (#9), Green (#7).

In the Friday Couples league: First: Mike Egan & Michele Darling and Glenn & Debbie Young (32). Runners-up: Gerry & Marlene Sibbald and Kevin MacLean & May Chang; Dow & Judy Wright and Keith & Wilma Lay. Most honest: Ross Smith & Bonnie Kinal and Larry & Judy Mantle. Closest to pin: Mike Cruikshank, Allen and Ahluwalia (33).

Birdies: Bell (#9), Green (#7).

Closest to pin: Cruikshank.

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20

Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Neighbourhood Walks: Queen Street Estates - 6 p.m. - Post Office, Queen Street

Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: My Best Friend’s Wedding - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant

Thursday

21

Laura Secord Walk in support of War Child Canada - 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Laura Secord House

Farmers’ Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village

Strawberry Festival - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

St. Davids Vet Clinic: Community BBQ - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - St. Davids Vet Clinic

Friday

22

Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Neighbourhood Walks: Queen Street Estates - 6 p.m. - Post Office, Queen Street

Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: My Best Friend’s Wedding - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant

Saturday

Sat.

Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre

Neighbourhood Walks: Queen Street Estates - 6 p.m. - Post Office, Queen Street

Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: My Best Friend’s Wedding - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant

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NOTL author uses humour and positivity to tackle bullying and poor behaviour

Brittany Carter  
The Lake Report

There’s power in integrity, says hometown author Steve Bushnik, who wants to tackle bullying through children’s books.

Bushnik’s stories, elegant and delightful in their simplicity, are stepping-stones to opening the discussion about bullying, self-love and kindness, he says.

While written for children, he says adults in Niagara-on-the-Lake could benefit from each book’s powerful message.

After reading the lord mayor’s letter to the editor about bullying in the March 14 issue of The Lake Report, Bushnik says he was inspired and intrigued that Betty Disero approached the topic of bullying.

She wasn’t just tackling the issue, Disero advocated for combating chaos with calm, he says.

“When I see bullying happening in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I know for a fact that this is not the way we want to live in our beautiful community. This is not how we should treat each other. Bullies do not add to the calm, he says.

He says when he witnesses blatant rudeness and unethical behaviour in town he won’t just sit idly by – he says he’ll call people out on it. It’s something he says he’s seen at local establishments more often than he cares to admit.

While fairly new to town, Bushnik moved to his home on Upper Canada Drive with his wife Amy Beth and daughter in 2015, and had been visiting the town for years.

NOTL’s beautiful atmosphere and kind residents swayed his decision to make the move. After spending more time in town as a resident and business owner, though, he says he was stunned by the amount of bullying and judgment he encountered day to day.

“We just realized it’s different as a tourist than when you live here. Now, you’re in that same place, that same business all the time and you see their habits, and you see how depressed everybody is,” he says.

Whether that negativity has to do with some residents being scared of the new growth, stuck in old ways or just not practise enough self-love, Bushnik isn’t sure. Of course, he says, it isn’t everyone in town – but it’s enough that he wants to take a stand; he is hopeful that people can change.

He has set out to combat the negativity he has experienced by using positivity, self-love and simple stories with compelling messages.

Growing up, Bushnik says he was often bullied. Separated from his siblings, scattered across the country, he tried to keep his family together through laughter, letters and storytelling.

“I was always trying to write sweet nothings to try to keep in touch, to try to get everyone back together.”

That’s what pushed him into the humour and entertainment world, he says. He’s done some Acting, building on his desire to make people laugh and instil inspiration.

“Before breaking into the writing world, he took to martial arts as an outlet for dealing with the stress of being bullied as a kid. Through the disciplined practice, Bushnik earned his black belt. He took that discipline and began mentoring kids.

“I started teaching kids going through the same things, being bullied at school. Teaching them to kind of rock your best self and roll with the punches, and don’t take it so seriously,” he says.

He’s all about promoting self-love – evident in his books, To Me and The Colour in You.

“It’s important to teach kids early on that they need to love and appreciate every little thing about themselves, from their clothes to their eyes to their teeth and personalities. Being different is what makes us who we are – if we can embrace that early on, maybe it’ll prevent the angry and judgmental adults many of us have become.”

Bushnik’s books can be found online at MushyBushyBooks.com, and the Colour in You is being sold at Bloom and Co. in St. Davids.

NOTL residents can purchase copies private-ly through Sales@ mushy bushybooks.com, which he says he will sign and deliver locally. He also is donating some of his books to the NOTL Public Library.

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Art Space 106 gallery opens on Queen St.

Dariya Baiguzhieyeva  
The Lake Report

A new art gallery in Niagara-on-the-Lake is attempting to bring more diversity to the art scene with work from local and international artists.

Featuring contemporary works, Art Space 106 officially opened its doors on Friday, June 14. Located at 106 Queen St., the gallery is owned by a small group of friends: Joerg Wiebe, his wife Shannon Wiebe and Ruth Aspinall.

“We all had the same ideas and we said, ‘Half of the expenditure is double the fun’. That’s why we do what we do,” said Joerg.

With Aspinall’s artistic background and the Wiebes’ love for travelling – which allows them to shop for artwork all over the world – the idea of opening a gallery soon became a reality.

“The two-storied gallery showcases contemporary artwork created by three international artists: Romero Britto from Brazil, Volker Kuhn from Germany and Hamilton-based Taiwanese artist She-Chen Cheng.

There are also pieces from local artists such as Susan Holly and Alison Sawatzky, as well as sculptures, jewelry and glass items. Some art pieces are commissioned and some artwork is bought during their travels, said Shannon.

“We took a few weeks to open the space and a soft opening was held in May. The response from the community has been good and local residents received the new gallery pretty well, said Shannon.

Opening a new business in town wasn’t “a new ride” for them as Aspinall is the owner of Serendipity shop and The Epicurean restaurant. The Wiebes operate a bed and breakfast and a number of retail shops in town.

“We love our community. Niagara-on-the-Lake is an amazing place to be. With every little store we open, we hope it’s bringing some new and fresh, upbeat and upscale,” said Shannon.

“We had a good time doing the gallery,” added Aspinall. “We’re looking forward to moving forward to building the business.”
Gage Street home wins Garden of the Week

Brittany Carter 
The Lake Report

Peter Howe and Judy McLeod are the second winners of the Garden of the Week contest for their Gage Street property.

A media release from the town announcing the winners quote comments from the judges: “Our winner this week has a property filled with mature shade trees and lush landscaping that spans two streets on the corner of Victoria and Gage. There are beautiful manicured lawns and walkways leading to the home and the right balance of planting beds.” Both Howe and McLeod said they were happy to receive the award, beam- ing at the sign announcing their recent accreditation on the front of their property. Howe has owned the house for more than 40 years, having completely overhauled the garden space when McLeod moved in.
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@niagarawow.com

Crossword Puzzle

Across
1. Shrink (5)
5. Iberian monarchy (5)
8. Second planet (5)
10. Atoll used for nuclear tests (6)
11. Foolish (6)
12. Brittle (5)
13. Open up (6)
14. Mistakes (6)
15. Tender (5)
17. Penniless person (6)
19. Applauds (6)
20. U S state famous for potatoes (5)
21. Greek goddess of wisdom (6)
23. Brawn (6)
25. Crawl (5)
26. Short cannon (6)
27. False (6)
29. Beginning (5)
31. Sponge-like (6)
32. Adequate (6)
33. Throwing weapon (5)
34. Appears (5)
35. Inheritors (5)

Down
2. Systematically arranged body of facts (7)
3. Capital of Egypt (5)
4. Against (4)
6. Incapable (9)
7. Underwriter (7)
8. Highest military decoration (8,5)
9. Powerful number cruncher (13)
16. Scale (5)
18. Sleeping accommodation which is only occasionally used (5,4)
22. Couple (7)
24. Recliner (7)
28. That group (5)
30. WWII sub-machine gun (4)

Sudoku

Last issue’s answers

Across
1. A S E N T E R
2. O X C O T T H E R
3. S T A R T
4. T C R E E S T
6. K I N G M A T S
7. R E S T R I C T E D
8. A T T E R O R
9. W O L D N I S A
11. P R O S T E N T
13. H U G E N N O I N
14. M A N S H O T
15. I N A S E N T E R
17. W E S T E N
18. M A N D I N
19. A T T O N S
20. P A R K E R
22. M A N K I N D
23. O N E N S L O M
24. H O O D I N
26. S S N A R I
27. A N D J O N
28. I N N O R M A T I O N
30. A N N U A L
31. L I N E A N
32. S A T T A H
33. A D D I N G
35. R E S T E R

Down
1. S C O R T E R
2. M E N I L N
3. S O R T E R
4. O R G E N
5. M A R S H
6. S C H R I N R
7. C R O W S
8. I N C R I N T
9. O N S T A R T
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29. N I N T E R
30. S E N T E R
31. N I N T E R
32. S E N T E R
33. N I N T E R
34. S E N T E R
35. N I N T E R
Canada Day cake marks two birthday celebrations

This year, the giant NOTL Canada Day cake is about birthdays. “This year is about fun. Fun and birthdays,” said Catherine O’Donnell, chef at Willow Cakes and Pastries.

For several years now, Willow has been producing the mammoth cake that is paraded through town to Simcoe Park, where it is one of the highlights of the Canada Day celebrations.

“Because Willow turns 15 years old on July 1 … and then (there is) Canada Day, so you’ve got two birthdays this year. So, it’s about birthdays and that’s about as much as I tell you guys,” O’Donnell said.

She won’t reveal exactly how the cake will look like or what it will feature. “The excitement is that, realistically, until the night before no one actually knows except who works here,” she said.

O’Donnell, who is also a chef professor at Niagara College, opened the bakery on Mary Street 15 years ago and has been baking the giant cakes for Canada Day ever since.

What started as a “simple cake” with maple leaf cookies 14 years ago, quickly grew into one of the most anticipated traditions in town.

In her fourth year of making the cake, O’Donnell met a family from Kitchener who said they drive down to NOTL on Canada Day just to see the cake.

That’s what inspired O’Donnell and her team to start making more elaborate cakes. “And that’s just made it why we go that extra mile because if somebody’s going to drive that far just to see the cake and celebrate Canada Day in Niagara-on-the-Lake, it’s amazing,” O’Donnell said.

“I’m OK paying the labour … but getting the ingredients’ cost back helps because we’re a small business. That makes a big difference when a community pitches in.”

O’Donnell said she always strives to outdo her previous cakes.

“It’s also competitiveness in my own head … It’s what gets me excited,” she said.

Seeing the children get excited and recognize characters on the cake is the most “amazing gratitude” and what makes the whole experience satisfying, too, she said.

Last year, a Garrison Village couple generously covered the cost of the cake, O’Donnell told The Lake Report. Donations for this year’s cake will be accepted starting next weekend.

“The ingredients you can’t get suppliers to donate anymore. So we pay for everything,” O’Donnell said.

“It’s also an amazing opportunity to thank you to all the people who live in town for coming in here, supporting, because, without them, we don’t exist.”

Besides, once you’ve made something “really amazing,” you can’t go back, she said.

Making a mammoth cake is a mammoth production. “Around 100 layers of cake, eight cases of eggs, 100 kilograms of sugar, 80 kilograms of chocolate, from eight to 10 litres of corn syrup, 120 pounds of butter and 200 pounds of icing and sugar are used during the process. The cake itself weighs over 1,000 pounds.”

Six people, including O’Donnell and Niagara College apprentices, spend up to 500 hours in total, working at night and on their days off, to create the cake.

As the bakery’s kitchen isn’t big enough and can’t be conditioned in the building, O’Donnell has to use an 18-foot kitchen island at her house where her team works on creating the cake’s visual components such as flowers and sculptures.

Then, they will bring these elements over to the bakery on Saturday, two nights before Canada Day. The cake is then baked and assembled on Sunday morning in the bakery’s kitchen. It’s also a chance for the apprentices, who volunteer their hours, to learn some skills they wouldn’t otherwise be able to acquire at the college or at the bakery’s kitchen, O’Donnell said.

Friends of Fort George provide a trailer on wheels, which is hooked to the back of a car, for the Canada Day parade to Simcoe Park where the cake will be sliced and served.

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A BIG NIGHT

More than 160 people attended Music Niagara’s annual Big Night fundraiser at the NOTL Community Centre on Saturday night. The crowd was treated to an exciting performance by Sora Sato-Mound, pictured bottom right, a 10-year-old young virtuoso who studies at Music Niagara’s Performance Academy and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. The young violinist received a rousing standing ovation. The organizers transformed the community centre gymnasium into a beautiful venue for the event, which raised more than $40,000, said Music Niagara chair Margot Hickson. Music Niagara, which kicks off its season on July 14, features summer-long classical, jazz, choral and folk performances. It also has three pay-what-you-can concerts featuring some of its student virtuosos, Hickson said. Go to musicniagara.org for more information. Also pictured: far left, Brian Harrison with David and Donna Lailey and Vic Ramanaukas; Top right, Chris Byart, with Music Niagara board member Randy LeGallais and Jackie Morris. PHOTOS BY KEVIN MACLEAN

Brittany Carter
Sponsored

A hometown computer service company is filling Niagara-on-the-Lake’s ink cartridge needs, quite literally.

Niagara Computer Systems is the first and only location in NOTL with a printer ink refill station, which allows residents to bring empty printer ink cartridges in to the store for onsite refilling.

The service is available now and customers can drop depleted cartridges off to the retail store at 1501 Niagara Stone Rd., unit 2 (near Four Mile Creek Road in Virgil), to be refilled by one of the two trained staff on hand.

It costs between $12 to $40, depending on the brand and size of the cartridge, which will save customers upwards of 80 per cent on printing costs if used consistently, says Dennis Den Besten, owner of the computer repair and retail store.

The new service will especially benefit small businesses or individuals who do a lot of printing, shaving down printing expenses immensely, says Den Besten. He is excited to bring the refilling station to town to give residents the opportunity to experience big-box store services with the hometown atmosphere his company provides.

“Ryan is great, he’s so patient. People love him.”

Den Besten grew up on a farm on Line 8 Road where his father instilled in him the importance of working hard, he says. It’s also where his desire to sharpen his business acumen began.

After watching and helping his family sell produce on the farm, he decided he wanted a piece of the action. He began working throughout the day digging out Trumpet vine shoots and selling them alongside the family produce, turning his own profit and saving his money. He learned all about hard work and investing during that time, he says.

That work ethic travelled with him throughout his career into the technological world. After working in IT until 2002, he decided to go into business for himself. He has been servicing computers for more than 20 years, working out of the Virgil storefront for more than 15 years now.

Den Besten wants people to know that they don’t need to travel out of town to receive quality computer assistance. He offers a wide variety of repairs, services and sales – eager to put his years of experience to use helping the residents and businesses of his hometown.

The store is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. Contact the store at 905-468-8026.
Don't fear historic designation

Brian Marshall
Featured

Soon after starting my post-retirement gig as a realtor, I sat down with a couple who wanted a “historical character home as long as it wasn’t designated.” During our discussion it became apparent their position was derived from the vague impression that designation adversely effects the resale value of a house and would limit what renovations they could do. Off the top, let’s deal with value. Academic research has conclusively shown the rate of appreciation on stand-alone, designated homes is at least equivalent to the market and, during a market downturn, depreciates at a slower rate than the average house. Further, when located within a heritage district, the property will tend to appreciate between 4 per cent and 12 per cent more than other homes. Next, let’s consider designation and renovation. The process of having a property designated requires a detailed explanation of any “cultural heritage value” and a list of “key heritage attributes,” which may include association with important historic figures or events, exterior architectural style/elements, original interior appointments, and/or a combination of significant factors that meet the threshold for designation. Careful due diligence of the designation documents will define specific limitations associated with a particular house. For example, a house might be designated based purely on the exterior form and details, while the interior has no heritage value. In that case an interior renovation is perfectly acceptable. So, is it more expensive to renovate a designated house? Yes … you can’t, for instance, simply yank out heritage windows and replace them with cheap vinyl windows. Can the renovation process be longer? Again, yes … plan approval is more rigorous, although in my experience, proper up-front consultation with a town’s heritage planner will ease this hurdle. However, at the end of the day, you’ll have a unique house with a great return on investment, the option to access (availability dependant on jurisdiction) renovation grants and/or property tax rebates, and many decades of proven livability.

Moreover, designation means that a piece of living history is safeguarded for future generations, thereby establishing a Canadian legacy.

“Great responses from the article. We have been approached at least five times with ‘hey, you’re that guy in the paper.’ One thing’s for sure, everyone in town reads your paper front to back! Great use of our marketing funds and great article.”

- James Green
Owner, Ravenshead Homes

Send your testimonials to editor@niagarawine.com

36th annual STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Saturday, June 22, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church 323 Simcoe St., NOTL A great event for the whole family. Come and enjoy all things Strawberry! For info call: 905-468-3163 or 905-468-3193
Laura Secord school was a model for province

Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

The Laura Secord Memorial School was a model for province-wide education. It was one of the first schools to receive state aid and was the first to have a full-time principal. The school’s history is rich with contributions from community members, including a gift of J.D. Larkin of Buf falo at a cost of $19,047 to build the school. The school had a bell on the first Queenston- Lewiston ferry operated by William Humphries to take passengers to meet Toronto boats.

After the Second World War, a cannon was placed beside the school, much to the enjoyment of the village children playing war games. The cannon is gone now, first to the Queenston cenotaph and now in the Old Town near Butler’s Barracks. Former villager T. Alan Clifford spoke of his days as a student at Laura Secord Memorial School: “Laura Secord Public School was a two-room school that, according to my mother, my grand father, Charles Lowrey, who had been instrumental in having it built, I was told the stone used to build it came from his quarry at St. Davids. My mother had attended the old school at the turn of the century … Much of the schoolyard was covered in cinders from the coal-burning boiler which heated the school. A fall on these in the yard always meant torn flesh from which the cinders had to be picked out. At recess the boys played baseball or soccer in season, caught frogs in the pond beside the yard, tried to start fires with magnifying lenses, built forts from which to throw snowballs, or rode our bikes. No teacher ever supervised the yard. Occasionally, the principal, Miss Corman would come out to stop a fight but the teachers usually spent recesses in the library having tea. The school, then, as was quite common, had separate boys and girls entrances. Teachers rang a hand bell at times but the school had a bell on the roof which was rung from inside in the hall separating the two classrooms. To ring it you pulled on a rope that emerged from the ceiling. Care had to be taken not to pull too hard and flip the bell over. If that happened, someone had to get a ladder, go up into the attic, into the cupola on the roof and flip the bell back over. There was a door on the cupola that opened onto the roof and a ladder up the inside. Those were great years in which to grow up and the village provided a wonderful environment in which to do so … the fact that everyone knew who you were kept us from committing serious misdemeanours.”

Marian Murray was a teacher at Laura Secord School. In a Jan. 7, 2015, interview, she gave her view of mid-20th century life in Queenston. Murray started teaching in 1944 and, single at the time, she boarded in the village. She said that if you lived in Queenston, you had to participate in village life. Nearly everyone who attended the school walked to and from it, as well as going home for lunch. (During an earlier period, this wasn't true.) Helen Glendenning, who lived near Niagara Glen, took the trolley to school most days. She comments that on the days she had to walk, she spent her five-cent trolley fare on candy at the store!”

Murray taught primary school, although in her first year, after teaching for four months, the school principal fell and hurt her back, so Murray took over the senior classes. Her substitute with the primary children was Jean Hug gins, a life-long resident of Queenston, and its history. Unfortunately, she wasn’t a success. Murray considered her to be a “bit of a tartar.” In the post-war period, boys were allowed to stay at school until they were 16. They could be trouble-some at this stage and some were known to come to school drunk. New classrooms were added to Laura Secord School between 1955 and 1957. They weren’t enough for the long-term, though, and in 1968, the primary children were moved to Brockview School, at Line 2 and Concession 1.

Like Laura Secord School, it is now closed, although the building is still there and used as a community hall by the local Croatian community. Murray stopped teaching in 1953, when her daughter was born. She returned to the classroom in 1959 and continued to teach until she retired in 1980.

Today, the Laura Secord School is the Willowbank School for Restorations Arts lower campus. It continues to serve the village¬ers, however. During the 2018 municipal election campaigns, the former gymnasium was the only space in the village large enough to hold all the candidates meeting. More Niagara’s History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at www.niagarawinow.com

Laura Secord Memorial School in 1923 and a student photo from 1925. COURTESY THE JEAN HUGGINS COLLECTION
New pharmacy service means no more missed drug refills

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

A new high-tech service that allows patients to get their prescription refills more easily has been introduced by Simpson’s Pharmacy and Simpson’s Apothecary.

MedAlign is a free service that lets the pharmacy synchronize patients’ refill medications so they can get their refills all at once instead of making multiple trips to the store.

Refills will be co-ordinated so that they are all lined up and run out at the same time. Pharmacists will also call the patients at the same time. The service is to make the process of taking medications less challenging, said Simpson.

The research has shown that by promoting medication synchronization and by doing a follow-up, people can receive their medication either in vials or in blister packs. Over the summer, the NOTL pharmacy will also be introducing pouch packaging, a portable, small clear package that can hold a number of different pills and will have the patient’s name on it as well as the date and time a medication needs to be taken.

Medication synchronization has been used in a number of pharmacies across Canada and in the United States for several years. The pharmacy is using a database to keep track of patients and to remind them of medication renewals.

It’s a win-win situation for the pharmacy and doctors as well, said Simpson. The doctors are used to have several refill requests for different medications but with a new service, there may be only one renewal. Sometimes a patient calls the pharmacy for refills right after taking their last pill. However, the pharmacy may not always have it available and the patient could miss a regular dose. But when the pharmacist knows in advance that a patient will need a refill, it will give the dispensary time to have the medication ordered in, said Simpson.

The service is to make the process of taking medications less challenging, said Simpson.

Another tool is coming soon: an interactive machine called Spencer, will be providing an even more enhanced level of care. It will be loaded with the patient’s pre-packaged medication which will then be dispensed when needed. It can also remind people to measure their blood pressure or blood sugar level. The in-home machine will be released later this summer.

Chris Wiens with his Raptors licence plate.

It’s just a big coincidence, says Wiens, of Stevensville. Out, who humbly admits he didn’t even pick the numbers.

“I bought a used car up in Georgetown and I went to the local licence bureau and just bought some Raptors plates, and those are the numbers that I got … the random numbers that came next off the pile, I guess. Of course, I didn’t think anything of the number at the time.”

He was watching game four on Friday when it hit him.

“(I said), it’s an omen. They’re going to win, baby?”

The plates have since been taken off the car and while Wiens isn’t sure yet what he’ll do with them, he has some ideas about making a Raptors display. “You know, put the records of how they made out in the playoffs, and all the team members and staff, and maybe just make some kind of display with them hanging up.”

He would put them back on the car, he says, “but then I’d worry about them being swiped I guess.”

3/5 Gold Plungers

I am gentle enough to soothe your skin, light enough to fly in the sky, strong enough to crack rocks. What am I?

Last week’s Riddle: I jump when I walk, I sit when I stand. What am I?

Answer: Kangaroo

Answered first by: Cheryl House

Also answered correctly by: Shelley Kobelsky, Margot Richardson, Margie Enns, Vanessa Stones, Katie Reimer, Marian Konik, Dianne Radunsky

Also accepted: Frog, by Esther Marcos

Email answers to editor@niagaranon.com for a chance to win a prize.

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Oh, hi.
It’s seems like a glimpse into what could be the future — one where the Toronto skyline is completely packed with buildings, but as if the building code stipulated that the CN Tower must still poke through the top.

As spectators gathered to watch the sunset over the past week in Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Ryerson Park, that’s basically what they saw, with a massive skyway running the behind it.

The strange sight, which has appeared periodically in recent weeks, is actually called a superior mirage. The effect is the result of what’s called a temperature inversion. It’s when a large body of warm air — below the line of sight — is sitting above a layer of colder air. The warm air distorts light rays, bending them down and causing an inverted image, like some sort of fun house mirror.

What we see is actually behind the city, or what’s normally out of view behind the curvature of the earth. Basically, Toronto is all smooshed up against the skyline.

The effect called Fata Morgana in Italian, shows distant objects and features at the horizon which appear as spikes or towers rising from the surface.