

The Lake Report

A cake fit for Canada
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Hyper-local news for Niagara-on-the-Lake



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Niagara-on-the-Lake's first independent newspaper

June 20, 2019



Jamie Slingerland, director of viticulture at Pillitteri Estates Winery, examines infected vines. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Federal money helps growers cultivate virus-free vines

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

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 one 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

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Lake levels easing, flood risk diminishing

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

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



High water at the sailing club. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

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 imple-

mented extra measures, such as installing fencing, to protect the flood prevention equipment.

Luckily, last weekend's high winds

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Neighbours have questions about new nursery school

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

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



Allen Gardiner.

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

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Funding will support grape farmers

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 sugar 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 told The Lake Report.

"And the most tragic part of it is we grow our grapes to reserve quality. And so I'm losing reserve wines," he said.

The announcement was made on Saturday, June 15, at Konzelmann Estate Winery in NOTL. A number of officials were on hand, including Justice Minister David Lametti, Liberal MPs Chris Bittle (St. Catharines) and Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre), the



Jim Reschke, vice-president of Konzelmann Estate Winery, Vance Badawey, MP for Niagara Centre, Bill Schenck, the grapevine network's vice-chair, David Lametti, federal justice minister, and Chris Bittle, Liberal MP. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

grapevine network's vice-chair Bill Schenck and Jim Reschke, vice-president of Konzelmann.

By receiving the money through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership's AgriAssurance program, the national organization will work on creating a network of certified clean grapevines that Canadian grape growers can plant in their vineyards.

The organization will categorize and assess existing samples from nurseries and grape growers across the country. Through a database, it will track every vine, produced through this program and planted in a vineyard, back to the mother plants, according to the government's media release.

Some of the larger growers hold off from planting

new grape vines until they are able to get clean plant material, Schenck said after the announcement.

Planting a vineyard can be very expensive, ranging from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per acre, added Reschke.

It may take from three to five years for vines to come into full production and be virus-free, Reschke told reporters.

By planting clean vines right from the start, growers could save money in the long run.

Wendy McFadden-Smith, a horticulture with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, said it's up to the growers whether to remove a vineyard. If the yield and sugar remain high enough to cover the maintenance cost, the growers will "keep

plugging away," she said.

"The challenge is finding sources of certified virus-free nursery material for replanting. Growers have historically relied on local nurseries for their new vines," McFadden-Smith said in an email to The Lake Report.

"Typically nurseries would source their scion wood ... from local commercial vineyards. They would select the healthiest vines that had no apparent symptoms of the virus. This was before we realized how prevalent these viruses are."

Supporting the industry in dealing with the infected vines is important, especially in Niagara Region, because the wine industry is the largest tourism draw to the area, said Slingerland.



Water levels remain high but are not increasing rapidly. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

Lake level easing

Continued from Front Page

haven't had much of an impact either, said Ruck.

"I think we survived quite nicely," he said in a phone interview. "Some of the winds might have brought waves over a little bit ... but everything we got in place right now is put in place to accommodate any water spillage that might come through."

Since the town has improved shoreline protection by putting in rocks, there haven't been any erosion damage due to winds and waves, Ruck said. The trees and vegetation are also holding firm.

There also have been cases of people using the flood protection bladders, which can hold up to two

to three inches of water, as "a toy" with children jumping on them or people laying on them, Ruck told The Lake Report.

"It's not a waterpark," he said, adding the dock area residents were looking for the town's assistance in dealing with the issue and that's why the town decided to fence off all the bladders along Melville Street. The River Beach Park was also fenced off as people need to stay out of what he considers a construction site, Ruck said.

The town staff will now wait for water levels to drop so they can place river rocks on the beaches as well as add another groynes -- a rock island -- which will stop onshore winds and waves.

Neighbours have questions about new nursery school

Continued from Front Page

been adhered to.

"It's mayhem at the moment," he told The Lake Report. "What's going to happen with elderly people who walk on the sidewalk? Whereas if (the nursery school) was on the west side, it would be much easier to drop your kids off in a much safer environment."

The news about the expansion came as a surprise to the residents as they didn't know about the deal until after they'd read the article in The Lake Report, added Bonnie Wegerich, another Simcoe resident.

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 Gardiner 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 Hennessey questioned why the public wasn't informed about the negotiations as the 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 Hennessey.

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 west side," 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 area may not be convenient for young families who have to drive their children from Virgil, St. Davids or Glendale, 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.



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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



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. SUPPLIED PHOTO/BROCK UNIVERSITY

seven Niagara municipalities — NOTL, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Welland, Grimsby, Lincoln and Pelham — with the university's Environmental Sustainability Research Centre to address problems caused by climate change.

The partnership aims to build climate resilience in Niagara through a collaboration that can be more efficient through shared resources and expertise than if municipalities go it alone, Brock said in announcing the program.

"You only have to look as far as the flooding threats in the dock area and the declining bee population to know climate change is affecting Niagara-on-the-Lake," said town spokesperson Victoria Steele.

The program will result in a climate change adaptation plan that is unique to NOTL, she said in a statement.

By the end of the partnership, all municipalities

expect to have produced a climate change adaptation plan that builds climate resilience, from flood-proofing homes to increasing climate awareness around Niagara.

"We couldn't be more excited to be engaging in research grounded here in Niagara that will directly benefit local communities," said Brock research centre Associate Prof. Jessica Blythe. "It's the kind of partnership we dream about."

She said the program is a collaborative process that will identify changes and goals through community engagement over the next two years.

Among the changes she foresees are "integrating climate change awareness into existing programs and communications, and developing education initiatives where gaps exist" for residents, businesses and municipal staff.

As well, Blythe said in a

statement that priorities will include showing people, businesses and government how they can "adapt to climate change impacts (e.g. promoting sustainable drainage techniques, improving home flood protection, planting appropriate tree species, emergency preparedness, designing flood resilient communities."

Ryan Plummer, director of the research centre, said everyone benefits from these types of partnerships.

"They embody the spirit of sustainability science and are integrated into the research and service of the (centre), profoundly impacting our students, staff and faculty," he said.

"At the same time, immense benefits are gained by our partners in terms of capacity building, evidence-based decision-making and leveraging expertise to address sustainability challenges and opportunities."

** Opinion: Act now on climate change, page 5.*

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 College students, staff and residents of Niagara on the Green were out in force Saturday to clean up their neighbourhood. From left, Tee Benjamin, Coun. Stuart McCormack, Jordan Bingleman, Tom Price, Chris Allan, Steve Kosh and Tristen Ritcey. SUBMITTED/STEVE HARDAKER



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Editorial: Embrace the positive – yea

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. Davids, a new group, that with its fun and social events is already establishing itself as an important cog in community life for residents. Porchetta? 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 Tucker the hero dog who saved his family and to the 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 neighbourhood 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 cre-

ated 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 investing 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 follow it up with a quiet, private dinner at Two Sisters Winery here in NOTL. Come back again soon.

editor@niagaranow.com



The Lake Report

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wright is wrong about corporate branding for NOTL attractions

Dear editor:
I am writing in defence of capitalism and common sense regarding the letter from J. Richard Wright ("Corporate branding a bad idea for NOTL attractions"), which was responding to Glenn Young's letter about working with corporate brands.

"The Air Canada St. Mark's Worship Centre" or "St. Andrew's by Gillette" — seriously?

If a reputable civic-minded corporation, individual or family wants to donate megabucks for naming rights to the Festival Theatre or Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre — what's wrong with that?

Would you prefer higher fees or taxes?

Any revenue-generating opportunity should be afforded responsible, intelligent consideration.

Wright is wrong.

Larry Mantle
NOTL

Sailing club has some concerns

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 reporting diminishes thereafter, however, as you identified your sole sources as being sailing club members, which they are not.

Your non-member sources characterized our dust control measure as being "oil."

We use an environmentally friendly dust suppressant that is in wide use throughout 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 Canada and the United States in 2014, and implemented on Jan. 1, 2017, which sought to

let the water level of Lake Ontario fluctuate more naturally 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 performing well in that capacity. Yard 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 result 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 organized 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, Niagara-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 perspective. A "hassle" is not a catastrophe.

John Thompson
Vice commodore operations
NOTL Sailing Club



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OPINION

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 experience erratic and



Sourced photo. PIXABAY

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 of "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 Inniskillin 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 toilet tissue.

We do not accept: furni-

ture, 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 driveway). 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.


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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 grieving mothers and wives wearing 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.

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 now 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



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.

The Lake Report

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 Ryerson 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 Pietrobon, 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 around the world have different traditions and festivi-



Summer solstice celebration at Ryerson Park will start with a yoga session followed by drumming. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

ties – with picnics, bonfires, feasts and dancing – when it comes to celebrating the start of summer.

“It’s a tradition that dates back thousands of years ago,” said Pietrobon. “So, it’s nice in our modern, rush-rush, fast-paced world to just take a moment and appreciate (it).”

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 lptribn1@hotmail.com.

TIDBITS

St. Davids Porchetta in the Park

The Friends of St. Davids community group is inviting everyone to Porchetta in the Park on Sunday, June 23.

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 DJRyen 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 fundraising event at Polonia Park, 765 York Rd. Festivities 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.

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: “Illwalkforwine” was best individual name and won a \$10 Dollarama. The four team members of “CirquedeSoreLegs” 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 Boyz.” All received chimney cakes from the Budapest Bakeshop.



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Pauline Reimer Gibson
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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



Kasia Dupuis, children's library services associate, shows off the passport for the summer reading program launching on June 22. BRITTANY CARTER

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 play-



Ezra Allard plays with a chihuahua named Piper at the market. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

ing. 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 Super-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.

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Pillitteri winery partners with **Team Canada**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

NOTL's Pillitteri Estates Winery has been named official wine supplier for the Canadian Olympic Committee.

The six-year partnership will last for the next three Olympic Games, through the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake winery will have pouring rights at Canada Olympic House and at any other events hosted by the Olympic committee.

As part of the collaboration, Pillitteri has launched a Team Canada wine collection consisting of red, white and icewine. The red wine is a cabernet franc-merlot blend and the white is a riesling-gewürztraminer blend.

One dollar from the sale of each \$15 bottle in the Team Canada wine collection will go toward the Canadian Olympic Foundation supporting Canadian athletes.

Both red and white wines



Pillitteri Estates Winery CEO Charlie Pillitteri, left, Brittany MacLean, Rio 2016 Olympic bronze medallist in swimming, and David Shoemaker, CEO and secretary general of the Canadian Olympic Committee. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA



are now available for sale at the winery's retail store and online. The Team Canada icewine will be introduced later this year.

The idea of extending the collaboration came to the winery's team after Pillitteri Estates was invited to pour wines at the Canada Olympic House in Pyeongchang at the 2018 Winter Olympics, said Jeff Letvenuk, the winery's marketing manager.

"To have a family business from Niagara-on-the-

Lake on a national stage like this, it brings a lot of attention to Niagara-on-the-Lake and to Niagara-on-the-Lake grape growing," Letvenuk said in an interview.

"We're really proud to fly that Canadian flag and proud to be part of Team Canada and proud of our home here in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

A number of guests were on hand for the June 14 partnership announcement at the winery, including

Brittany MacLean, Rio 2016 bronze medallist in swimming, winery CEO Charlie Pillitteri and David Shoemaker, CEO of the Canadian Olympic Committee.

"What sets (Pillitteri) apart is the idea that we're on local soil and sometimes we take it for granted. But it's really a cool concept that local companies are supporting local athletes," MacLean told The Lake Report. "This is something that is

homegrown, we're proud of, it goes worldwide just like our athletes do."

Being Team Canada's partner is "a dream" for a family-owned business, Pillitteri told The Lake Report. It's usually big wineries that are selected for the partnership, he said.

In selecting a partner, the Olympic committee carefully considered which winery shares a "common vision" with the organization, Shoemaker said.

"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.

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 Jan. 11 due to health complications.

"It's our way to say goodbye," said Carol Thibault, the store's owner. "It's our last 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 to do it.

The mobile unit will also be at the event to provide rabies shots and microchipping 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



Carol Thibault, the owner of Pet Valu store. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

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.

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 unhurt.

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

Each inductee received a medal of honour and



Tucker with the family a few days after the fire. RICHARD HARLEY

one-year supply of Purina dog food, according to the program's website.

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



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Chartwell staff member Nicole Lewis with Mona Tighe at this year's senior citizen Strawberry Social. BRITTANY CARTER

Seniors pack community centre for Strawberry Social

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The senior citizen Strawberry Social is a sweet tradition more than 40 years strong.

Hosted by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake since at least 1978 – that's as far back as town staff could trace it – the social provides an opportunity for staff to

mingle with senior residents from all over NOTL.

On Monday at the NOTL Community Centre, eager residents filtered in from 11 a.m., some for the first time and others regulars at the annual event.

Pianist Frank Krahn performed while 25 town staff and volunteers served up strawberries and ice cream, and the St. Michael Catholic

School choir serenaded the group with a few songs.

There were about 300 seniors in attendance, estimated Victoria Steele, the community engagement co-ordinator for the Town.

PigOut Catering supplied lunch and the strawberries were donated by Seaway Farms. The supplies were provided by Cornerstone Community Church.

NOTL resident Yvonne McMorrough has been volunteering at the social for more than a dozen years and doesn't plan to stop anytime soon.

"First I said I'll stop when I'm 65, then I'll stop when I'm 70, then 75," she said. She's now in her 70s and says she's happy to continue volunteering until she is no longer able.

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 for 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



Barbara Ahluwalia, 86, outduelled NOTL Golf Club pro Billy Simkin in a Beat The Pro closest to the pin contest Tuesday. Her shot ended up about four feet from the cup. SUPPLIED PHOTO

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, Margot 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 Eagen & Michele Darling and Glenn & Debbie Young (32). Runners-up: Gerry & Marlene Sibbald and Kevin MacLean & May Chang; Dow & Judy Wright and Keith & Wilca Lay. Most honest: Ross Smith & Bonnie Kinal and Larry & Judy Mantle. Closest to pin: Cal Cochrane, Kathy Taylor. Longest putt: Wilca Lay and Eagen.

In the Tuesday WOOFs league June 11: John Reynolds had low gross (41) and won \$45 in the 50/50 draw. Closest to pin: Glen Murray (#4). Hidden hole: Earl Shore (#2).



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23	24	25	26
Fort George in the Great War: A WWI Commemoration - Niagara College: Culinary Regions of Italy Sicily and Southern Italy - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Canadian Food and Wine Institute at Niagara College Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park Eroica: A Tribute to Laura Secord at Queenston Heights Park - 2 p.m. - Queenston Heights Friends of St. Davids: Porchetta in the Park - 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. - St. Davids Lions Club	Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre Famous & Infamous: Col Sam McLaughlin - 2 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum Monday Night Teen Hang Out - 6 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre	Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Spiritual Principles for the Artist - 7:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	German Conversation - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL SupperMarket - 9 p.m. - The Village NOTL Toastmasters - 9 p.m. - Niagara College Campus
30	1	2	3
Family Friendly Art Studio - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Artistry by the Lake - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen's Royal Park Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park Teen Literary Alliance - 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	Artistry by the Lake - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen's Royal Park Canada Day: Rotary Pancake Breakfast - 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - Simcoe Park Canada Day: Rotary BBQ Lunch - 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Simcoe Park Canada Day: Cake Walk Parade on Queen Street - 3 p.m. - The Charles Inn (Start) to Simcoe Park (End) Canada Day: Evening BBQ & Fireworks at Fort George - 4 p.m. (10 p.m. fireworks) - Fort George	Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Power Off & Play - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George	German Conversation - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Maker Club: Wildfire Bombs using the S - 11 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre NOTL SupperMarket - 9 p.m. - The Village

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>20</p> <p>Practical Genealogy: Beginner Class - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Practical Genealogy: Intermediate and DNA Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Canadian Crowns, An Exhibition of Vintage & Contemporary Millinery by Canadian Designers - 7:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Neighbourhood Walks: Queen Street Estates - 6 p.m. - Post Office, Queen Street</p> <p>Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: My Best Friend's Wedding - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Laura Secord Walk in support of War Child Canada - 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Laura Secord House</p> <p>Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>Strawberry Festival - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church</p> <p>St. Davids Vet Clinic: Community BBQ - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - St. Davids Vet Clinic</p> 
<p>26</p> <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Clare's Bike Night - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Clare's Harley-Davidson</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Neighbourhood Walks: Irish Town / Rye Park - 6 p.m. - Rye Park</p> <p>Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: Mean Girls - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant</p> <p>Fiddlestix Live at The Irish Harp - 8:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. - The Irish Harp Pub</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>Artistry by the Lake - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen's Royal Park</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>Cherry Festival - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church</p> <p>28th Annual NOTL Garden Tour - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Horticultural Society</p> <p>Niagara Etsy: Hydrangeas + Handmade at Mori Gardens - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Mori Gardens</p> <p>Canada Historic Places Day at The Museum - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p> 
<p>3</p> <p>Clare's Bike Night - 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Clare's Harley-Davidson</p> <p>Niagara Jazz Festival presents Live Learn Jazz: Women Of The Hour, Sax in the Vineyard - 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Stratus Vineyards</p> <p>Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Artist Workshop: Impressionistic Architecture with Julie Ponesse - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sancionted ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Trius Red Presents Movie Night in the Vineyard: You've Got Mail - 8 p.m. - Trius Winery & Restaurant</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>Cherry Festival - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church</p> <p>28th Annual NOTL Garden Tour - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Horticultural Society</p> <p>Niagara Etsy: Hydrangeas + Handmade at Mori Gardens - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Mori Gardens</p> <p>Canada Historic Places Day at The Museum - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum</p>	<p>6</p>

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Simple stories with powerful messages

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 outstanding quality of



Steve Bushnik, author of many children's books promoting self-love and owner of Painting the Town, with wife Amy Beth. BRITTANY CARTER

life we live here for," Disero said in her March statement on bullying.

Her words resonated with Bushnik.

"That was huge for me. It made me realize that she's not just some woman in a high-profile position who doesn't care about the people. I think she's a welcome addition to the town," he says.

Bushnik says he has been bullied both as a child and in the business world in NOTL. He's the owner of a house painting company called Painting the Town.

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 practising enough self-love, Bushnik isn't sure. Of course, he says, it isn't everyone in town – but it's enough that he wanted 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 voice work and 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 men-

toring 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 Mushy-BushyBooks.com, and *The Colour in You* is being sold at Bloom and Co. in St. Davids.

NOTL residents can purchase copies privately 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.

Art Space 106 gallery opens on Queen St.

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
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.



Shannon Wiebe, Joerg Wiebe and Ruth Aspinall. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

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.

"Part of the idea was bringing some more

diversity to Niagara-on-the-Lake," said Shannon. "Just bringing some culture and some visual."

The two-storey 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 ceramic and glass items. Some art pieces are commissioned and some artwork is bought during their travels, said Shannon.

It took six 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 and building the business."

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Peter Howe and Judy McLeod, the second week's winners of Garden of the Week for their Gage Street property.
BRITTANY CARTER

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 lush property at 83 Gage Street.

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.

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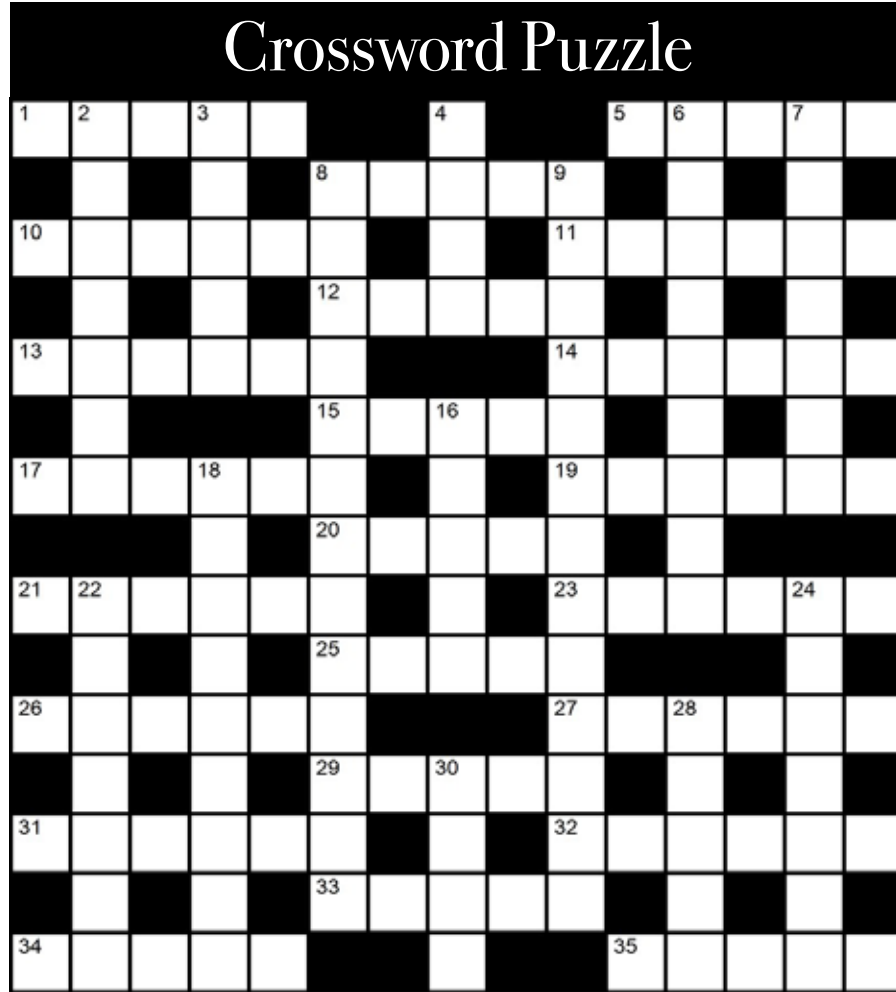
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Across

- 1. 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. Spongelike (6)
- 32. Adequate (6)
- 33. Throwing weapon (5)
- 34. Appears (5)
- 35. Inheritors (5)

Down

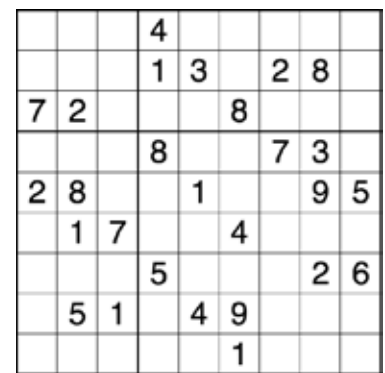
- 2. Systematically arranged body of facts (7)
- 3. Capital of Egypt (5)
- 4. Against (4)
- 6. Incapable (9)
- 7. Underwriter (7)
- 8. Highest military decoration (8,5)
- 9. Powerful number cruncher (13)
- 16. Scale (5)
- 18. Sleeping accommodation which is only occasionally used (5,4)
- 22. Couple (7)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



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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Canada Day cake marks two birthday celebrations

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

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



Catherine O’Donnell with the Canada Day cake in 2018. RICHARD HARLEY FILE PHOTO

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 mak-

ing 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.

“But it’s also an amazing opportunity to us to say 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 “re-ally 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 cannot store the cake’s sculptures due to the lack of air conditioning 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.

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.

“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.

“There’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.



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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 Ramanauskas; Top right, Chris Byart, with Music Niagara board member Randy LeGallais and Jackie Morris. PHOTOS BY KEVIN MACLEAN

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Fill 'er up: Niagara Computer Systems launches ink refill station

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.

"I'm not one of those up-sell guys. I just look for the right answer," he says of his approach to helping each customer who walks into his store.

"We emphasize the right answer as opposed to just

(pushing) what we sell. If you give people good service and good advice, you'll do good business because they'll come back to you. They trust you."

It's that level of authenticity that he says keeps his clients coming back. Ryan Bridgeman, a member of the Niagara Computer Systems team for the last couple years, has an unmatched level of patience working with customers, Den Besten says.

"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



Ryan Bridgeman and Dennis Den Besten stand with the new printer ink refill machine - the only one of its kind in NOTL. BRITTANY CARTER

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.

www.NIAGARA COMPUTER SYSTEMS.com

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Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report



The sand sucker

An everyday sight on the lake at the mouth of the Niagara River was the sand sucker, pictured here in the 1960s. She started work early in the morning by lowering her boom with a heavy chain that made a loud clanking sound which echoed across the water. There were three sand suckers, the C.W. Cadwell, the Charles Dick and the Niagara. The sand was delivered to many ports where it was used for making cement.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH



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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 affects 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



Buying a home that carries a heritage designation doesn't mean you absolutely cannot renovate the building. It depends on many factors. (Supplied photo/Brian Marshall). BRIAN MARSHALL

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 im-

portant 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 reno 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.



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Laura Secord school was a model for province

Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

The Laura Secord Memorial School no longer functions as a school. It closed in 2010.

At the time, the community sadly acknowledged that the venerable building could no longer continue as a modern elementary school; however, Willowbank, the School of Restoration Arts, has taken over the building and uses it for classrooms and demonstrations.

The two-acre playground has been subdivided. Half has been sold as building lots to support Willowbank's future programs. The remainder became a park in 2017, the only one in the village.

The school is a large one-storey brick and stone building with a raised Queenston limestone basement. Sitting on a slight knoll facing Princess Street, it has the characteristics of Edwardian classicism with arts and crafts details.

If you face the school at the intersection of Princess and Maple streets in the winter when the trees are bare, you will notice that Willowbank up on the hill behind the school resembles the school's front facade. Willowbank's four pairs of pillars seem to match Laura Secord's two pair, albeit on a smaller scale.

The Laura Secord Memorial School replaced a stone building built in 1844.

Construction took place in 1914 and the school was opened on Sept. 18, 1915. It had two classrooms even though enrollment could be as high as 120. In its first 38 years, there were only two principals, Charles R. Kilkenny (from the opening until June 1918) and Hazel A. Corman, who ran the school until her retirement in 1953.

Corman, recording her recollection of the school's history, notes that, "At (the) impressive (school opening) ceremony, Mr.



Laura Secord Memorial School in 1923 and a student photo from 1925. COURTESY THE JEAN HUGGINS COLLECTION

Charles Lowrey, who acted as chairman, gave a resume of its construction by architect A. E. Nicholson at a cost of \$19,047 – \$3,000 of which was a gift of J. D. Larkin of Buffalo and a further gift of \$3,000 (from) the Queenston Women's Institute."

At the time, the school was described as a model for the province. It had flush toilets, a steam heating system and a well under it to provide running water for pressure drinking fountains.

(Until 1924, the Women's Institute used the hall that it built in the school. At that point, the institute received a letter from the school trustees ordering them to take their belongings and leave the building, even though they had a 999-year lease.

The trustees made it clear they would not return the W.I.'s \$3,000 donation. The case went to the Supreme Court of Canada, which found in favour of the institute.)

The opening program that followed, according to Corman, included the playing of O Canada by the Fruit Growers Band and speeches by various dignitaries. She then recounts that "Mayor James Sheppard gave a most interesting account of his recollections of the old school built in 1844, which had seen Queenston pass from a great port with mule teams portag-

ing cargoes to Chippawa, later replaced by horse railroad, and having 13 hotels, four liquor stores, a shoe factory employing 40 employees, to the pleasant village of today."

A ladies' sitting room was added to the auditorium some years later and in 1946 the school was connected to the new municipal water supply.

Corman also comments on not one, but two bells being in the school during her tenure, "Interesting items of equipment are the large bells, the one in the belfry having come from "Paddy Miles" (the Michigan Central Railway) train which was the chief means of transportation to N. Falls, the conductor of which for years was fondly known as Paddy Miles. The smaller bell, mounted in the corridor, was once a ship's 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 grandfather Charles Lowrey 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 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 it had a latch on 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 Huggins, a life-long resident of

Queenston, and its historian. 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 troublesome 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 Restoration Arts lower campus. It continues to serve the villagers, however.

During the 2018 municipal election campaign, the former gymnasium was the only space in the village large enough to hold an all-candidates meeting..

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

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



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 to remind them of an upcoming refill.

The ultimate goal of this service is to make the process of taking medications less challenging, said Sean Simpson, the owner of Simpson's Pharmacy.

"The research has shown that by promoting medication synchronization and by doing a follow-up, we can help people to take medications that they've



Sydney Brown, Hedy Wiebe, Sean Simpson and Rebecca van der Zalm. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

been prescribed and which are necessary," said Simpson, explaining that by taking medication regularly, patients will do better in the long run.

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 medi-

cation needs to be taken.

The service is not "a rocket science," said Simpson, as 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 then could miss a regular dose. But when the pharmacist knows in advance that a patient will need a certain refill, it will give the dispensary time to have the medication ordered in, said Simpson.

The MedAlign service also includes a mobile app, called eCare@Pharmasave, which allows people to look over their medication records and set reminders.

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.



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms:
Sandtrap Pub & Grill



Natasha Dietsch accepts the Gold Plunger for the Sandtrap Bar & Grill. PLUNGER PATROL

The Sandtrap Pub & Grill, at 358 Mary St., provides Niagara-on-the-Lake with a place to hang out with local friends, watch your favourite sports team, or share your unbelievable golf score. There is no need to bring your "wedge" to get out of this Sandtrap as you are sure to score a "hole in one" with your dining experience, even if your team is shooting a double "bogey." The menu boasts local produce, local wines, local beer and local laughs! The restrooms are small and clean, but the mirror and lighting will definitely highlight where you dribbled the "hot sauce" down your shirt. While visiting the Sandtrap, do "tee it up" with your favourite beverage and the special of the day! The Sandtrap earned a Gold Plunger Award with 3/5 plungers. Way better than "par"!

3/5 Gold Plungers



Raptors licence plate was 'omen' of team's historic victory

Richard Harley
Editor

It wasn't until the Toronto Raptors championship series that something strange dawned on Chris Wiens.

In the mid-2000s, he had purchased a Toronto Raptors customized licence plate — one that would turn out to be a harbinger of the team's success. The plate number, next to a Raptor logo, reads: 20RA19.



Chris Wiens with his Raptors licence plate. BRITTANY CARTER

It's just a big coincidence, says Wiens, of Stevensville, Ont., 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 stuff, 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."

RIDDLE ME THIS:

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@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.



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Featured local story

BLURRED LINES



A superior mirage can be seen across Lake Ontario. The effect is more common in spring when the air warms more quickly than water. RICHARD HARLEY

Superior mirage distorts Toronto skyline

Richard Harley
Editor

It 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. And, although it's one of

the less common types of mirage, it isn't so strange, according to Canadian academic Keith Heidorn, PhD.

Heidorn has more than 35 years of experience in meteorology, climatology and air quality assessment and education.

A member of the American Meteorological Society and the Canadian Meteorology and Oceanographic Society, he is the author of several educational books about weather, and is the producer and author of The Weather Doctor website.

On his website, Heidorn says superior mirage refers to the image appearing above the actual object, compared with the inferior mirage which appears below.

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.

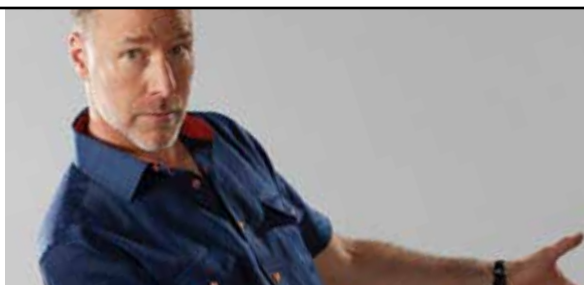


The view of Toronto on a clear day from Niagara Shores Park. RICHARD HARLEY

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