



Don't worry, be happy

Story on Page 10



Neighbours in The Village have been outside every night since March 19, rain or shine, to show appreciation for health care workers and various other causes of national significance. From left, Alan Ash, Melissa O'Connor, Diana Ash, Paul O'Connor, Jerry Placken (drums), Wendy Connelly, Patricia Yocom, Nancy Widdicombe, Tore Stautland, Doug Widdicombe, Trinity Stautland, Julie Stautland, Mercedes Stautland. And dogs Cooper (centre) and Tiffany (right). RICHARD HARLEY

Shaw finds positives amid pandemic

Festival focuses on education and outreach as live shows cancelled until at least Aug. 1

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Shaw Festival CEO Tim Jennings and the rest of the theatre company are “making lemonade” out of an otherwise unprecedented situation.

When things go badly, Jennings says, the job becomes, “So what positives can we find in this?”

Of course, everyone – both fans and Shaw “family” – is anxiously waiting for the day the company is able to get back on the stage to present live theatre to the masses.

But thanks to government aid programs, generous ongoing charitable donations from supporters and some creative ingenuity, the festival is keeping most of its employees working and earning a living.

With live performances now cancelled until at least



Tim Jennings, the Shaw Festival's executive director and CEO, chats on a Zoom call in his home office during a meeting with company members involved in the new education and community outreach specialists (ECOS) program. TRULY CARMICHAEL PHOTO

Aug. 1, almost half the season has fallen by the wayside (336 of 737 shows), forcing a rethink of plans beyond this year. Some shows planned for this year could be moved to 2021, which in turn could affect what's staged in 2022, Jennings noted in an interview.

But keeping everyone safe remains a priority.

Jennings said he under-

stands the older demographics of Niagara-on-the-Lake mean the town could be at a higher risk during the pandemic, “and we want to protect it. It's important to us to be both ready to help when it's time to do that and when it's safe, and in the meantime to help by not endangering anybody.”

“As one of the largest theatrical charities on the

continent, we're really here to serve a public good and to demonstrate a basic human need that's served by the arts. That responsibility in this crisis isn't diminished, it's heightened.”

“If supporting the town right now means that the best thing we can do is hold firm, then that's what we are going to do,” he said.

“We're a huge part of the Niagara economy so I feel that is a major responsibility.”

Artistic director Tim Carroll added: “We can't have a human, connected theatre without healthy humans, so we will do whatever it takes to keep everyone safe, whether they work here or are itching to come and watch us play.”

“In the meantime, our artists, artisans and staff will continue to find ways to engage with our patrons

Continued on Page 3



A tree is cut down Friday morning. RICHARD HARLEY

Trees cleared to prepare for nursery school expansion

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has removed several trees near the community centre to make room for the expanded Niagara Nursery School project.

In total, seven trees were cut down, and another 10 were spaded out and five of those were replanted on the property.

Most were “relocated on-site and a couple went to other town properties,” said Kevin Turcotte, the

town's interim director of operations. “New trees were planted on-site at the community centre property,” he said.

Town staff “made every effort to save as many trees as possible” and are “keeping an eye on the trees that have been spaded out and planted to ensure their success,” Turcotte said.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said the expanded nursery school will be “a valuable school for the community.”

Continued on Page 10



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NOTL group to hold 'peaceful anti-racism rally'

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

A group of Niagara-on-the-Lake friends are organizing a peaceful anti-racism rally to stand in solidarity with black members of the community, both locally and across the globe.

The rally, set to take place Friday at noon, follows anti-racism protests happening across the United States, Canada and elsewhere, largely sparked by the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin.

One of the rally organizers said the catalyst for doing something in NOTL was the ongoing protests across North America and an opinion piece by Queenston resident Yvonne Bredow published in The Lake Report in April, which



An anti-racism rally will be held Friday at Voices of Freedom Park on Regent Street. FILE/RICHARD HARLEY

detailed some of her own experiences with racist attitudes.

"There was an article that you guys shared a while back. Yvonne (Bredow) wrote it, and the op-ed, and just talking about racism in Niagara-on-the-Lake. So we know it's here. It's not

a very diverse community, really. So, you know, there's been a lot of comments about migrant workers as well," she said.

"We just thought in this kind of really challenging and difficult, tragic time in the world where a lot of people of colour are feeling

discriminated against, we wanted to stand in solidarity with our immediate neighbours first, and also with everyone who is protesting worldwide."

She asked to not be named in the story, but to instead direct people to the Facebook event which she is the host of.

"We're really being conscious of not being performative and doing this for any kind of recognition," she said, noting the protest is a group effort.

"There's probably like three or four of us that kind of talked about it. I said that I would be the one dealing with all the people on Facebook," she said.

"I just really want to be conscious. One thing I've been reading a lot about in my research here about racial injustice and wage

policy is really taking ourselves out of the equation being there and supporting, but really letting it be the voices of the people who need to have their voices heard."

She said people have been messaging with concerns about public safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic, wondering if social distancing is possible.

"But peaceful protest is still 100 per cent legal right now. So, I think there's a lot of concern about social distancing in NOTL, but there's another whole virus that is racism that we need to call attention to, as well. So we think it's important."

She said she will be asking people to wear masks and stay two metres apart, noting that there was a protest in Toronto Saturday and there will be one in Niagara

Falls this weekend.

The NOTL protest will start at Voices of Freedom Park on Regent Street and include a march "down to Queen Street back up Mississauga and back around on Johnson to the park," she said.

"We'll probably have a moment of silence for everyone who's lost their lives due to racial injustice and police brutality. And then we're going to walk together."

She said she is trying to arrange some speakers from the Niagara Anti-Racism Association, and "any other black members of our community who want to have their voice heard."

Anyone who wants to share a story can message the admin of the Facebook event by searching "peaceful anti-racism rally."

Slow down: NOTLer says bylaw officer was 'aggressive' after being asked not to speed

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake resident Laurie Stratton isn't happy with a town bylaw officer he said was speeding through his neighbourhood, or how the officer treated him after he approached him to voice concerns about it.

Stratton emailed The Lake Report, local politicians and town staff saying he witnessed a bylaw officer speeding down Delater Street where he was walking his dog on Friday, May 29.

He complained the driver of a dark-coloured Ford Explorer was "aggressively speeding" in wet conditions and rounded the "blind curve at Queen's Royal Park (the Gazebo) to King Street in a careless and dangerous manner."

"When he went around the corner I could see a couple of treads on the tire on the driver's side where he took the corner that quick, in the rain. That's when I just went, 'Whoa,'" he said in an interview.

It was immediately evident there was an "emer-



Laurie Stratton and his dog Oscar at their Ricardo Street home. RICHARD HARLEY

gency parking infraction being attended to by the young bylaw officer at the public parking lot across from the Gazebo on King Street," Stratton said in his letter.

When he approached the officer to calmly ask him to slow down, the male officer was belligerent to him, Stratton told The Lake Report.

He was "instantly admonished by the young man, with crossed arms and an aggressive stance," Stratton wrote in his letter.

"He was aggressive, downright aggressive. And I started with 'I really appreciate the job you guys are

doing' — to try and keep it positive," he said.

After that he said he asked the officer to slow down in the neighbourhood because "there's no need for you to drive that fast when you're not going to a crime scene. And he just immediately stepped up and said, 'I'll drive 50/km an hour everywhere, wherever I want to.' And then he came right out and said, 'And I've had several people in the neighbourhood yell at me to slow down in this neighbourhood.' Well, why don't you get the message?"

From Stratton's home he said he can see onto Delater Street and he sees bylaw

vehicles "zipping around all the time."

"And this vehicle is typically driving fast," he said.

He said his concern is for himself and neighbours.

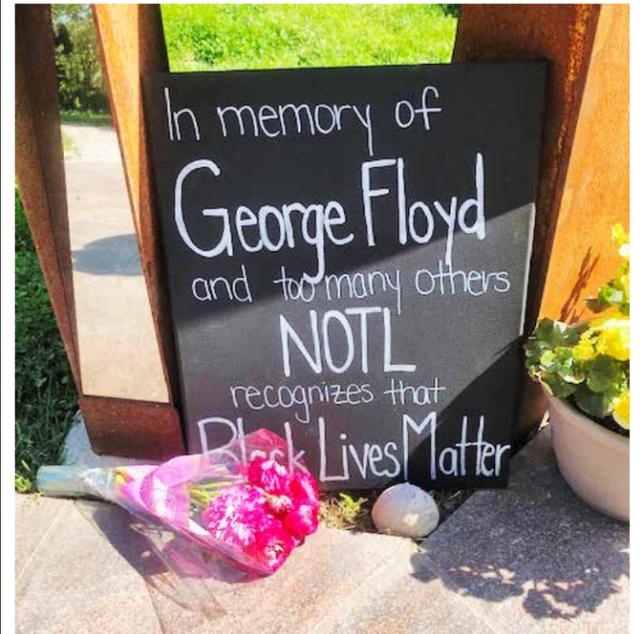
"We walk around the Delater district. For most of Delater there's no sidewalk, so you have to walk on the road," he said.

"I'm walking my dog. Other people walk their dogs around here. There are still kids that ride their bicycles around here. They ride down to Balls Beach and the area. So, I just find it dangerous."

He said he'd like to see the town remind bylaw enforcement officers they "work for the people in the town."

"You know, you have a job to do, but don't go overboard. Don't let power go to your head, which is what's happened. And that was so obvious with his reaction to me."

Town of NOTL spokesperson Lauren Kruitbosch said the municipality is "not prepared to comment at this time," as the matter is pending an internal investigation.



SUPPLIED/LUCY MCEWEN

OPINION: A touching tribute to George Floyd

Dear editor:

While I was at Niagara-on-the-Lake's Voices of Freedom Park on Monday, a young mother came by with her three- or four-year-old son, Graham.

They brought some lovely flowers and a hand-painted sign in memory of George Floyd, the black American who died after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for almost nine minutes.

I was so moved by the actions of this mother and son that I added more flowers.

I hope other NOTL citizens take note and join the floral display in honour of George Floyd and recognize that Black Lives Matter.

Lucy McEwen
NOTL

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July cancelled, but Shaw goes on

Continued from Front Page

and communities online – we hope you’ll join us. Stay well, and we will see you as soon as we can,” he said in a news release.

Despite the latest cancellations, there is plenty happening behind the scenes, Jennings said.

With an infusion from the federal government’s Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program, the Shaw has been able to retain nearly 80 employees to focus on education and community outreach.

In early May it became clear that, “After seven weeks of rehearsing by Zoom, there just wasn’t much more efficacy to it until we could get back in a room, so we ended up suspending the contracts of all of our artists, almost all of whom, actors, musicians, etc., are independent contractors” who normally might not be eligible for some government assistance programs.

So, the theatre company heeded the prime minister’s call and created new jobs in the arts.

The result is ECOS – education and community outreach specialists – who



Alexis Gordon as Fiona MacLaren and George Krissa as Tommy Albright with the 2019 cast of Brigadoon.
 PHOTO BY EMILY COOPER

are on hand not to act but to “help with our education programs, helping us with patron outreach, talking to people on the phone, creating digital content in the small ways that we can, not as plays but just as entertainment and engagement.”

The Shaw was able to rehire just about everyone “and a few more besides. I’m thrilled with the government’s help on that,” Jennings said.

Last weekend’s ShawBiz Junior online cabaret and previous ShawBiz presentations grew out of the ECOS project, he said.

As well, the teacher online resources tab on the festival’s website now has “a ton of content that’s

been developed for use by schools,” which are in need of digital content for students now and in the future.

“With 80 people with that kind of creative background, we’re generating a huge amount of new content and new opportunities.” And more material is coming soon.

While the festival had hoped for a belated launch in July, it has to abide by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s municipal order restricting organized mass gatherings, Jennings said.

If the theatre stays dark beyond Aug. 1, a truncated fall season still remains possible, Jennings said, but acknowledged the festival is “very close” to a tipping point whereby the entire

season could be lost.

With its pre-Christmas slate of “A Christmas Carol” and “Me and My Girl” scheduled to start in early November, there could be an abbreviated fall calendar, with a few plays staged in September and October, he said.

Looking ahead, Jennings is hopeful the charitable sector of the arts, like the Shaw, will flourish thanks to the generosity of donors. Last year, the festival had a \$500,000 surplus, and set records for donations and total revenue.

So far, that donor generosity is continuing, Jennings said, in large and small ways. More than two-thirds of ticket holders this year have kept their money “on account,” paying it forward to when live shows resume.

But no matter how this season eventually plays out, the Shaw’s future is sound, he said.

“We have a remarkable base of supporters and people who love us,” he said, noting friends and fans reach out regularly.

“We get an incredible amount of love every day from everybody. We deeply appreciate all of your support and amazing letters.”

NOTL COVID-free for several days

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

For the past several days, there have been no active cases of COVID-19 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, according to statistics from the Niagara Region public health department.

At this time last week there were three active cases of COVID in NOTL, down from five a few days before that.

However, information from public health shows everyone from NOTL who had the virus has now recovered.

The town has had 21 cases in total during the pandemic.

The region started publishing details of each Niagara municipality’s case numbers two weeks

ago after repeated requests from residents and political representatives.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she is “proud” of NOTL residents “for taking this pandemic so seriously and protecting and caring for each other.”

“We have to stay vigilant in our actions to stay healthy like keeping a distance, wearing a mask, washing hands often and avoid touching your face,” she told The Lake Report.

“More people are coming in to every part of our town, especially on the weekends and while the province is reopening slowly, the risk will be a little higher. So let’s just keep doing the good work we are doing together and we will get through this,” Disero said.



NOTL is clear of COVID — for now. FILE/RENE BERTSCHI/SKYVIEW ARTS INC.

NOTL’s long-term care facilities continue to do well and have not reported a single case, while across the country nursing homes have experienced thousands of infections and numerous deaths.

The region’s statistics show of the 21 NOTL cases, all came from travel, close contact or community spread.

There have been nine travel-related cases, five community-spread cases and seven close contact cases.

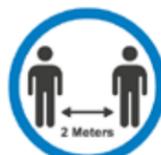
Across Niagara Region, as of Wednesday, there have been 706 COVID-19 cases and all but 86 have been resolved, the region said. There have been 60 COVID-related deaths in the region.

Niagara Lake
-on-the-Lake-

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Contributed by Patty Garriock
 "The most I can do for my friend is simply to be his friend." - Henry David Thoreau.



Contributed by Norm Arsenaault:
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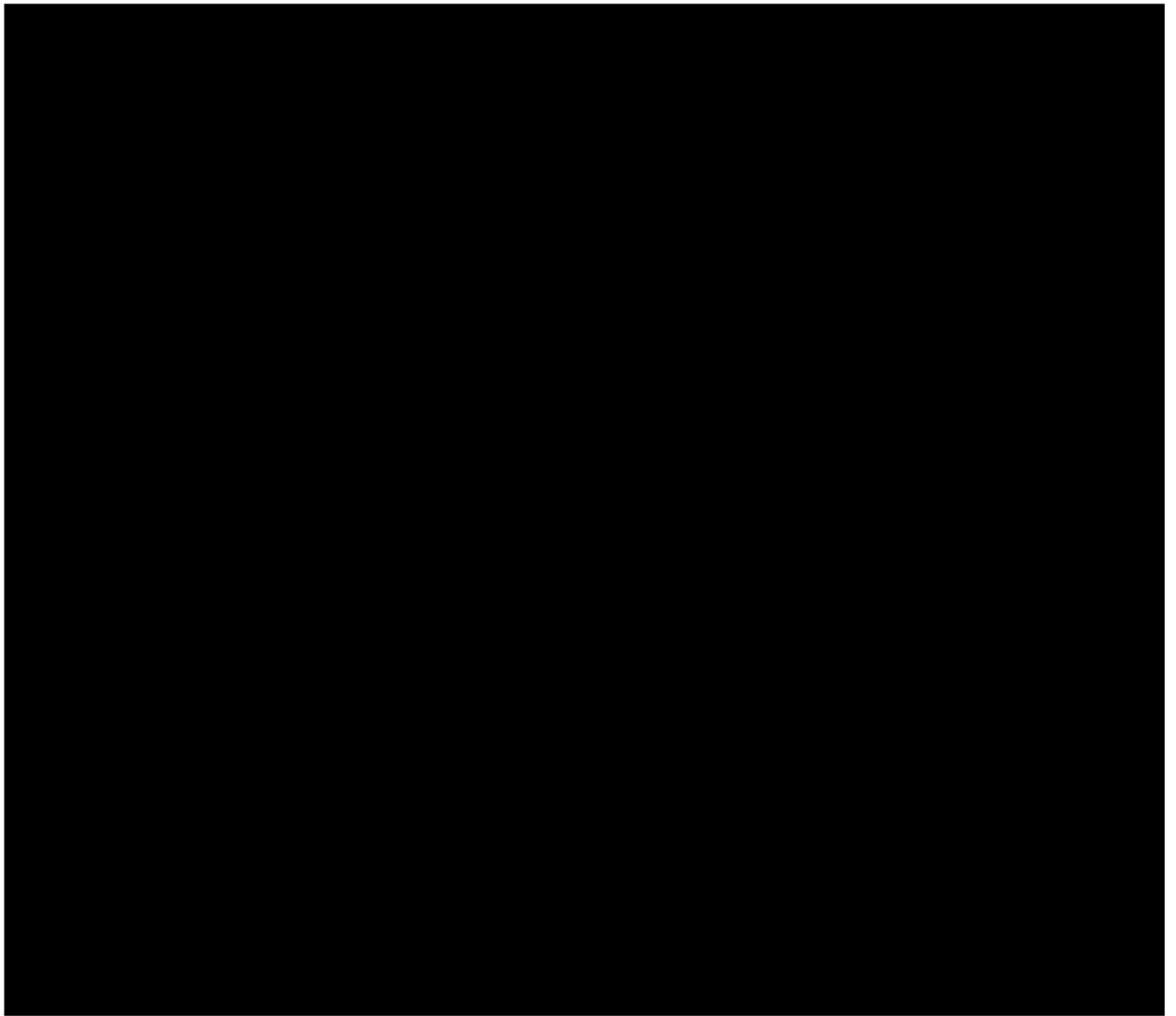
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Editorial: #BlackOutThursday



The Lake Report stands in solidarity with black people in communities across the world.



Not optimistic long-term care homes will improve

Dear editor:
 More than 80 per cent of COVID-19 deaths have occurred in seniors long-term care homes.

The outbreak, as quoted by 86-year-old Marie D’Rozario, a Toronto-area resident, “has cast older people as dispensable.” A further article, reported in the U.K.’s Daily Telegraph, touted the virus as a way to cull the elderly population.

There will be nothing more frightening than the death statistics and images seared into the minds of seniors as they perhaps contemplate spending their twilight years in one of these homes, which clearly are more akin to “warehouses for the dying.” Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau, in his response to this systemic problem, was to call for a special commission, especially for-profit ownership ones. (There are exceptions and excellent long-term homes).

At the same time during his Monday, June 1 news conference, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh was reporting that Trudeau was meeting with a lobbying group from the long-term care home owners.

Additionally, he said, those owners paid out hundreds of millions in executive bonuses and shareholder dividends. Any wonder there is no money for supplies and adequate staffing, etc. These same actors will no doubt be looking for and receiving millions of taxpayers’

dollars in government handouts.

We have seen this rodeo hundreds of times before: Set up a commission, form a committee or several to study the commission report.

All political BS or double speak. It makes them feel important chairing another useless commission or committee. Same old, same old end result – no action, political waffle.

In short order this issue will fade to page 6 in our news reports, much like the unresolved problems with our Indigenous population living in abject poverty, usually with no clean drinking water.

How often over the decades have we seen this movie?

Some things never get resolved. The black discrimination and guns in the United States, which is part of their DNA, the Arab-Israel conflict, the Protestant-Catholic issue in Northern Ireland, all passed down through generations.

It lies dormant for a period of time and invariably raises its ugly head again.

Sadly my wife, who is retired from the medical profession, and I, have witnessed the long-term care home debacle ever since emigrating to Canada more than 50 years ago.

As I said, some things never change and often get worse. I am not optimistic this time will be different.

Samuel Young
 NOTL



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OPINION



Pet owners need to remember to scoop their dog's poop. IMAGE COURTESY U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Dog owners need to pick up after pets

Dear editor:

It is a good routine to walk your faithful and fun-loving Fido.

But please be considerate and pick up after your dog.

Why leave your dog poop on our lawn or somebody else's property?

Do you know dog poop is actually considered an environmental pollutant – viruses, bacteria and parasites found in dog poop can cause disease contami-

nation.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a gram of dog waste can contain up to 23 million fecal bacteria!

If you forgot to take a poop bag with you, please have the courtesy to ask a homeowner nearby. I am sure they will be happy to supply a garbage bag for you to dispose of Fido's poop.

Janet Tan
NOTL

Sky lights up



NOTL resident Meagan Sentineal captured this picture of lightning striking Tuesday night during a thunderstorm.

Politicians can't be playing politics during pandemic

Dear editor:

I am sure I am not alone in finding the contradiction in letters to the editor last week supporting political leaders and specifically the mayor, while the same paper reports on Lord Mayor Betty Disero expressing her criticism of the provincial leaders.

I think all the political and medical experts are doing their best, and most are well-qualified for their roles.

These are tough times and leaders at all levels need our support as they

break new ground trying to protect us all.

Neither I nor anybody I know will agree with every decision and or the timing on those decisions, but we do need to acknowledge these are not easy calls for anybody involved.

However, I do wonder whether our lord mayor had the same high level medical opinions and full data utilized by our provincial leaders in their province-wide decision-making that she is critical of.

Having said that, she has a variety of tools available to slow the pace of opening in our town.

If she is truly concerned, I would expect to see actions to back the words and opinions expressed. For the sake of our citizens and our local businesses I truly hope she and town council get it right.

So long as the lord mayor does her best both she and council will have my full support. The same applies to regional and provincial

leaders.

The one thing I will not support is politicians playing politics when they need to work together. Hopefully it does not come to that in our town, region and province.

So far I am optimistic that our leaders will not lose focus. I thank them all for their long hours and hard work.

Stay civil, stay focused and stay safe.

Mike Macdonald
NOTL

Pandemic actions smack of dictatorship

The following is a letter to New Democrat MPP Wayne Gates. A copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

Since I have not seen a formal apology on your or any NDP politicians' websites, one has to assume that you are in lockstep with federal leader Jagmeet Singh's shameful enabling of the treasonous Liberal party's actions toward Canadian citizens.

Selling out and denying our children a reasonable future of prosperity for a short-term paid sick-leave

for a few whiners during a so-called pandemic is a serious danger to what remains of our hard-fought rights and freedoms.

Gagging our elected parliamentary representatives for six months in order to pass bills with a non-emergency agenda smacks of dictatorship.

Of course, it was too late to do anything about this backroom deal. As law-abiding citizens, what means of objection do we have outside of Parliament?

Jennifer Dorfman
NOTL

Advertisement featuring town CAO was unusual

Dear editor:

An advertisement in your newspaper on May 28 featuring a message from the interim CAO of Niagara-on-the-Lake, presumably using public funds, presents an interesting insight into the current operations of our municipality.

It is not often that one sees a bureaucrat taking a lead on promoting government policy.

Usually it is the purview of the mayor and council to use town funds for this purpose.

It is not often that a mayor and council accept a subservient position to this approach of promoting government programs.

The interim CAO may have been better served to simply email staff his thanks, and presenting a news release announcing the work of the town.

Otherwise, it may be inadvertently perceived that he is using city funds to promote himself, with a picture yet.

Derek Insley
NOTL

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NOTL copes w

NOTL wineries get ready to welcome visitors for tastings

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

Wineries in Niagara-on-the-Lake are preparing to invite guests back for tastings, and when they do, the experience will be very different.

Social distancing measures mean there will be far fewer people in the wineries at one time, and other tactics will include use of plexiglass, frequent sanitization of surfaces and protective equipment for staff.

Wineries will manage the flow of visitors by strongly encouraging or even requiring people to book their tastings ahead of time. Some also plan to use a concierge desk at the winery entrance.

The two dozen wineries in Niagara-on-the-Lake have worked together to come up with shared guidelines for safely resuming wine tastings, though each winery will determine their own timing, says Andrea Kaiser, chair of Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

"There's a common approach," Kaiser added, emphasizing the priority is



Strewn sommelier Juan Nunez-Sanchez shows special distancing space at one of the winery's tasting bars.
JILL TROYER

"ensuring the safety and well-being of the community, team members and guests, locals and visitors alike."

For some wineries, there's a positive side to the reduced volume of tastings – a more personalized approach.

"This is a huge reduction of our capacity, as much as 75 per cent," said Jane Langdon, who is responsible for direct to consumer and onsite experiences at Strewn Winery on Lakeshore Road.

"We'll be offering personalized tastings, with a focus on each guest's interests," she said. "This could redefine how we do wine tasting and we plan to deliver a great wine country

experience."

In addition to the existing tasting bars at Strewn, there is a brand new patio that will offer outdoor tastings this summer.

Just down the road at Konzelmann Estate Winery, that sentiment is echoed.

"Gone are the buses and crowds," acknowledged Andrew Niven, director of marketing at Konzelmann. "I see it as a positive. We'll connect with our guests on a more personal, intimate level," he said. "I'm excited to see where we go with this."

Riverview Cellars already has some bookings made online for later this month. "We plan to open for tasting on June 12 if all continues going well," (with COVID

infection numbers), according to general manager Mike Pillitteri.

Other wineries are also hoping to start host tastings by mid-June, and some are watching for the province's state of emergency to be lifted, which has been extended until the end of June.

Wine tastings are a grey area in terms of restrictions, as they are not specifically mentioned in the provincial guidelines.

"We've been heavily relying on each other as a wine community to determine the best approach to create as safe an environment as possible," said Kaiser, adding that the group has been meeting regularly to discuss ideas.

"We're very excited to have our guests come back, but a bit apprehensive too, because we want to keep everyone safe, and it's all new," she said.

All three wineries we talked to were of one mind in terms of looking forward to welcoming guests back, but insisting that safety will be first and foremost when they do.

Backhouse lights final fire in closing

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

NOTL's Backhouse restaurant is lighting its last fire, as it transitions fully into Ruffino's Pasta Bar & Grill.

Chef Ryan Crawford, owner of both restaurants, says it's a natural progression, to something he feels is more suited for families and fun.

While Backhouse was a cool-climate French tasting menu restaurant, Crawford said he's excited to bring more of a family environment to town with the switch to Italian food.

Ruffino's was launched over the winter as a pop-up restaurant operating a few days a week.

"We're just gonna do what we do, but in a different sort



Owner and chef Ryan Crawford has closed Backhouse restaurant to open Ruffino's permanently. RICHARD HARLEY

of style. It's gonna be more accessible. I want more families running around," he said.

"I want to cook for my family and I think I stopped cooking for my family and cooking for the tourists," he said of Backhouse.

"But I think now I'm

cooking for everybody, so locals, tourists, everybody," he said, adding that meal portions are bigger and prices are lower so "everybody can afford it."

Backhouse closed officially on June 1 and Ruffino's took over the same day.

During this time of uncertainty, please remember to support the local

RIDDLE ME THIS

One way I'm loose, one way I'm tight. Out with left, in with right. What am I?

Last Week: It's the right thing to keep me, even though you've given me to someone else. What am I?

Answer: Your word

Also accepted: Friendship/Love

Answered first by: Lynda Collet

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Janice Hall, Margaret Garaughty, Brenda Bartley, Katie Reimer, Sylvia Wiens, Pam Dowling, Sheila Meloche, Margie Enns, Britney Turasz

Email answers, with your name, to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

with COVID-19

Clear masks made to help lip readers

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

A Niagara-on-the-Lake woman has designed a facemask that can help lip readers to "see" what people are saying.

Amy Post created Big Smiles Lip Reading Masks to make masks more accessible to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, their caregivers and family members.

With a clear window across the front of the face, the masks allow lip reading and wearing a mask to go hand in hand.

As a result of COVID-19, Post saw an old friend of hers, Jill Lunn, posting online about sewing masks, caps and gowns to be provided free to front-line health care workers.

By the end of March, Post was ready to contribute to the project, which then had two or three people sewing to produce all the items. All finished materials were then sent to Lunn's home in Jordan to be distributed.

As more people began to contribute to the initiative, about a dozen members became the Sewing Aunties. That was only the beginning as Post said the Sewing Aunties Facebook group has continued to grow. It now has about 75 members.

Post said members have donated fabrics, cut the patterns to be sewn, sourced elastic for masks and even drivers who "would drive to the different Aunties



NOTL resident Amy Post is the designer of the Big Smiles Lip Reading Masks. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

houses, pick up their sewing and take it out to Jill. It was quite the endeavour."

Lunn put out a challenge for the Sewing Aunties on the Facebook page after a family reached out to another sewing group asking if they could create a mask that would allow their deaf father to communicate with his caregivers.

"This other sewing group contacted us because it wasn't a project they were able to take on," Lunn said. "They're a lot smaller than our group because our group has about 75 women."

Post came up with the design that is now used for the Big Smiles Lip Reading Masks. She creates the lip reading masks and distributes them from her home.

"I knew we needed a mask pattern that was flat across the front," she said.

"Some of them are not flat, they're different shapes or they have a seam down the middle, and I knew that wouldn't work."

She said she saw ideas



for masks online that others had made with a clear square window over the mouth to enable lip reading.

"They were really inspiring but I thought, they're going to be very hard to sew," she said. "To sew fabric around a small window is very tricky."

"I just thought if I took a flat mask pattern, cut out the middle and put plastic where that middle went, maybe that would work. And it did," Post said.

"I think they look really good. They're much more tailored to the face and more fitted."

"It's using very little fabric, it's mostly window, but just enough fabric to make it comfortable and have a seal. It's really well-engineered," Lunn said.

Post said the feedback she has received from her sewing group members and those looking to purchase the masks has been positive.

A Sewing Aunties member told Post the mask pattern is "fantastic because

so much of your expression goes well up onto the cheek. They need to see the whole mouth area, not just a small area."

She has also had teachers reach out looking to purchase the Big Smiles masks for their classrooms in the fall to make learning more accessible for their students.

"That was really inspiring to me that there can be more uses than just lip reading," Post said.

"Another teacher friend who is in an elementary school said she doesn't want her kids to feel nervous around her, that there's a barrier around her," she said.

"She wants kids to see her smile to know exactly what she's communicating from her heart, not just her words."

Post said she is blown away by people's reactions to her design.

"I was so happy to be able to help that first family, but then to put these out there and have so many comments come in about how glad people are that there's something available like this," she said.

"It really makes my heart feel good."

Post created a Facebook page at the end of May called Big Smiles Lip Reading Masks where people can order the masks. They cost \$25 each.

Those interested can also contact Post by email at vizchik@hotmail.com.

Thieves smash glass door in Pet Valu break-in

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

The front door was smashed at the Virgil Pet Valu store during a break and enter early Tuesday morning.

Owner Carole Thibault said she was alerted by the security system in the early hours.

The three cats in the store, familiar to many NOTL residents, are safe and sound, she said.

Thibault offered a special

thank you to the nearby Virgil Animal Hospital for taking in the cats while broken glass was cleaned up.

Pet Valu is still open for business for residents who need pet supplies.

Niagara Regional Police said a male broke through the front door of the pet store at about four in the morning and stole a small amount of cash and about \$200 in property.

There are no suspects at this time but the incident remains under investigation.



Front door of the Virgil Pet Valu is boarded up following a robbery early Tuesday morning. JESSICA MAXWELL

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Wayne Gates MPP Niagara Falls representing Niagara-on-the-Lake & Fort Erie
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Have some fun

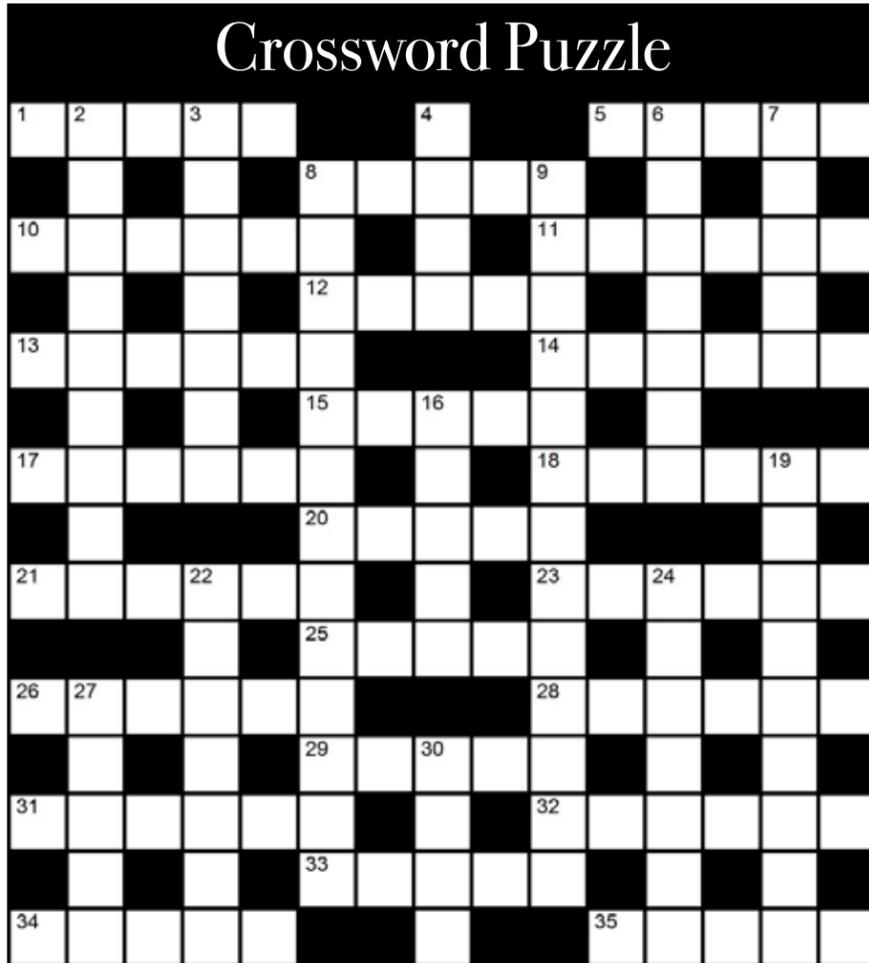
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers.
editor@niagaranow.com

Across

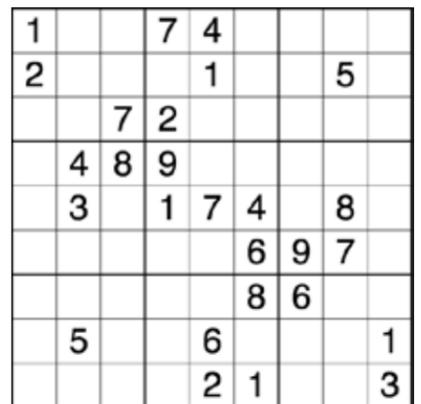
1. Frequently (5)
5. Divest (5)
8. Sag (5)
10. Spanish fleet (6)
11. Israeli currency (6)
12. Bring together (5)
13. Dwelling (6)
14. Kine (Arch.) (6)
15. Moor (5)
17. Contaminate (6)
18. Resist (6)
20. Minor actor in crowd scenes (5)
21. Sliding compartment of furniture (6)
23. Capital of the Bahamas (6)
25. World's largest democracy (5)
26. Regular customer (6)
28. Departs (6)
29. Rotten (5)
31. Capital of the Philippines (6)
32. Scandinavian kingdom (6)
33. In what place (5)
34. Tale (5)
35. Small salamanders (5)

Down

2. Alien (9)
3. Scrutinise (7)
4. Central Chinese desert (4)
6. Crown (7)
7. Standard of perfection (5)
8. Wife of your son (8-2-3)
9. What shrinks do (13)
16. Behaved (5)
19. Declaration (9)
22. Soldier (7)
24. Type of twin (7)
27. Behind (5)
30. Junkie (4)



Last issue's answers



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Dr. Brown: When's this pandemic going to end? **Not anytime soon**

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

Ever since COVID-19 emerged in China in late November this virus has kept the experts guessing. Despite similarities to SARS – with which COVID-19 shares 80 per cent of its genome and the lethal nature of both diseases once they strike the lower respiratory track – COVID-19 is different.

For one, it is far easier to catch than SARS, so far infecting more than six million worldwide so far, unlike SARS where there were several thousand cases. Moreover, COVID-19 attacks many more tissue targets, including the clotting and vascular systems, kidneys, bowel, liver and even the brain, and eyes – unlike SARS.

Throughout this pandemic, governments and experts struggled with conflicting urgencies.

First there was the urgent need to deal with thousands of patients, some of whom were seriously ill whose needs threatened to overwhelm healthcare systems. Linked to that was the need to stem the tide of the disease by reducing social contacts by shutting down schools, venues such as bars and restaurants and businesses.

Now when the price tag of shutting down economies has become intolerable, there's a rush with the first blush of summer coming, to 'reopen' and revive economies on the brink of collapse in the face of the worst recession in decades.

The two main reasons COVID-19 created such worldwide havoc in such a short time are simple. Unlike SARS, Covid-19 turned out to be highly transmissible.



Masks could continue to be a common sight until a vaccine is created for COVID-19. FILE/JESSICA MAXWELL

And second, many of those infected, especially the young, had few, if any symptoms, and unwittingly spread the virus for up to two weeks. The most effective measures to stem the tide of the pandemic have been isolation of the most vulnerable such as the aged and those with significant pre-existing conditions from contact with anyone who might have the disease and social distancing.

That, and widespread cancellation of natural social activities such as sporting events, bars and restaurants, helped "flatten the curve" and reduced the immediate risk to the vulnerable. And so far, where practised, those strategies worked, especially when those measures were coupled with vigorous contact tracing and widely available testing for the virus – measures South Korea continues to carry out.

However, until effective vaccines become available sometime next year, the vulnerable will remain just as vulnerable as before until their chance of becoming infected with the virus becomes significantly reduced through the "herd effect."

For example, when the pandemic first struck communities, there was no natural immunity, but at the outset at least, the chance of becoming infected

was low, because there weren't enough infected spreaders in the community.

However, within a few weeks, as the number of spreaders increased exponentially within the community, the chance of infecting others increased dramatically. And thus, the number of those severely affected spiked, many of whom died – a rapid-fire succession of tragic events – which played out over a few weeks in New York City as the first major city in the Americas to be hit hard.

The pandemic struck long-term-care facilities the hardest, accounting for 50 to 80 per cent of the deaths in communities throughout Europe and the Americas.

However, once 70 to 80 per cent of a community acquires natural immunity to COVID-19 through a previous infection (or an effective vaccine), the risk to the vulnerable is much less because the chance of them contacting someone actively "shedding" the virus – symptomatic or not – is much reduced.

That's the herd effect: those with immunity provide a firewall against the spread of the virus. However, there's much to be learned about this virus.

How effective is acquired immunity to a second infection with this virus and related to that question, how

long does the immunity last? The same questions apply to any prospective vaccination program. How effective is the vaccine in preventing or muting any naturally acquired infection with the virus and how long does the vaccine work?

Good questions, because in the case of the common cold, caused by other coronaviruses, immunity lasts only a few months, and only a year or so in the case of an unrelated virus such as the influenza virus and about two years in the case of the closely related SARS virus.

Right now, in North America and Europe, we're nowhere near the 80 to 90 per cent of the population with an acquired immunity to COVID-19 needed to provide herd immunity for the vulnerable.

In most communities, that number is somewhere between 10 and 20 per cent. Based on that, especially without an effective vaccine, the vulnerable will continue to be vulnerable for many months to come – possibly a year or longer or until an effective vaccine becomes available.

That's not good news for Niagara-on-the-Lake, roughly half of whom are over 60 years of age, and many of whom have one or more comorbid conditions. So, be warned in Niagara-on-the-Lake – this battle is not over by a long shot, for us.

How does COVID-19 affect your lungs? Read more on our Pandemic Blog at www.niagaranow.com/opinion.phtml/3942.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the Info-health series held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.



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Neighbours going on 11 weeks of hurrahs for health care workers, and other causes

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

A group of neighbours in The Village are finding a way to connect through cheering for health care workers.

And they've been doing it every night at 7:30 since March 19.

Patricia Yocom, who lives in the Village, said it started when her retired nurse friend forwarded an email from Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.

"It simply asked for pots to be banged at 7:30 each night in support of health care workers," she said.

"I sent an email to a few neighbours and we started that night, many of us not missing a night since."

At first they were participating from their porches, banging pots and pans, but eventually things progressed to social distancing in the park at the end of Garrison Village Drive, in front of their homes.

Now the group has evolved into a small jam band, cover-



The Stautland family — Tore, Trinity, Julie and Mercedes — help make some noise for health care workers on Monday. RICHARD HARLEY

ing songs like "Don't Worry, Be Happy" and "We Are The Champions."

"We clap, make noise, play musical instruments and sometimes dance, all in support of our health care workers," Yocom said.

"The experience has been great for morale, meeting new friends and sharing distanced visits for a few minutes before we return to our homes."

While the group started out playing for health care workers, the initiative

evolved to support all front-line workers, plus "many other events and milestones related to COVID-19 that affect us directly and indirectly in our daily lives."

They've been making noise to recognize:

* NOTL natives Chelsea Widdicombe and Scott Robinson trying to get home from Peru, and a welcome home night when they finally returned.

* Individual health care workers, like Sarah, a nurse at Mount Sinai in Toronto.

She is the daughter of one of Yocom's neighbours.

* The victims of the shooting in Nova Scotia;

* The Snowbird crash in B.C.

* Mother's Day.

* When anyone in the neighbourhood celebrates a birthday. "We even had a pet turn 11," Yocom said.

"There was one evening a few weeks ago where the town asked residents to go out in support of health care workers, so we altered our time and joined in."

Trees removed to open lot for nursery school

Continued from Front Page

"There have been a couple of new trees planted and it is our intention to replace all and more of the trees cut, in line with the requirement of the town tree bylaw. We will look to the tree fund to be able to supplement even further the size of the trees so they are significant," Disero said.

"As mentioned in all our discussions, the tree bylaw requires replacement of trees if they are removed. This allows the NOTL canopy to remain strong and vibrant. We will do that."

Construction on the new expansion is supposed to start this summer, Turcotte said.

The \$1.5 million project was approved by the town last June.

The 4,300-square-foot facility will include an infant playroom with a kitchenette and a separate sleeping area, a toddler playroom, a preschool playroom with adjacent washrooms and changing rooms, and a

school-aged room, as well as office and storage space.

Once complete, the new nursery school will accommodate about 69 children, nearly double the current facility's capacity.

NOTL resident Pauline Speers said she doesn't think the nursery school expansion is needed, at the expense of the open land where she enjoys walking.

"Basically, it's raping an environment that is already very healthy and beautiful, when there's an alternate place for people to send their kids around the corner" in the community centre.

She said when she saw trees wrapped a few weeks ago, she phoned the town and asked if they would be cut down. She said she was told the town couldn't answer the question at the time.

"I was told they couldn't answer this right now, you'll have to talk to the appropriate person."

When she asked to talk to that person, she was told they weren't at their desk.

"It's avoidance," she said.



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Obituary

Marjorie Helen Clement



Marjorie Helen Clement
July 23, 1928 - May 17, 2020

Marjorie Helen Clement (nee Howarth) passed away peacefully in her sleep during the early morning hours of May 17th, 2020. Marjorie would have been 92 on her next birthday. Marjorie has been a resident of Wiloughby Manor in Niagara Falls for the last 5 years but Niagara-on-the-Lake was her home for almost all of the first 87 years of her

life, 62 of those years shared with husband, Harold Clement. Harold passed away in 2009. Marjorie is survived by her three sons: Wallace (Elsie), Jack, Thomas (Wendy), and daughter-in-law Lesley Clement. Her nine grandchildren: Christopher Clement (Saye), Jeffrey Clement (Corrina), Aron Clement, Jessica Clement-Lefevre (Randal), Lara Weber (Joshua), Ellice Whitford (Curtis), Kaitlin Clement, Julian Clement, Alexandra Clement McNamara (Adam) and 12 great-grandchildren.

Marjorie worked various part-time jobs while raising her family in Niagara. Many will remember her as their NDSS school bus driver when she became the first female bus driver in Ontario. Marjorie enrolled in Niagara College the same year as her youngest son. She studied library technology, and graduated at the top of her class. She worked for the Niagara Regional Library System until its closure in 1979.

Marjorie will be remembered as a fierce competitor at the bridge table. She loved the challenge of duplicate and played contract bridge regularly well into her 80s. She enjoyed all kinds of card games and many, many evenings were spent around her and Harold's dining room table playing cards with family and friends.

Marjorie loved her home at the corner of Nelles and Davy Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She and Harold moved into it shortly after the war and made it their home for sixty years. Her attractive wrap-around porch was a favourite spot to sit and enjoy a cup of tea while reading the papers. She loved to visit with friends as they passed by on their way to the Commons.

Marjorie belonged to St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara and was very involved with the parish, sharing her love of flowers as a member of the flower guild for many years. A celebration of her very long and full life will be held at St. Mark's when the family is able to travel to be together.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Marjorie's memory can be made to St. Mark's Church or to the charity of your choice.



To share your memories
of loved ones
with the community,
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Pumphouse **hopes** to reopen for summer

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre staff and volunteers are looking forward to reopening following renovations earlier this year, but for the time being the focus is on reinventing how the facility operates.

Renovations at the Pumphouse were completed "just before COVID really knocked us over," said office manager Gail Kerr.

"We're really looking forward to reopening," she said. "Our board and staff have been working so hard to ensure everybody's safety when we do reopen."

The centre is hoping to resume operations sometime in the summer but will wait for the town to decree when the time is appropriate.

The Pumphouse will be looking for new ways to reinvent classes and events to support the arts centre.

"Everything we are doing is new and innovative," Kerr said. "It is a direct result of us having to deal with COVID-19."

"The difference between a not-for-profit organization like the Pumphouse and say a retail type of business is when they open their doors, they get money coming in, people are spending money," Kerr said. "When we open our doors, most of our funding comes through fundraisers."

"We've had to cancel



Volunteer Aimee Medina sanitizes the counter at the Pumphouse Arts Centre. SUPPLIED

the fashion show and Art at the Pumphouse," she said. "Those are big fundraisers for us."

Kerr said board members are working to determine "how we can take those cancelled events, that really did hurt us financially, and move forward."

Now is a time where the Pumphouse is relying on sponsors, supporters and members more than ever for support, she added.

Kerr encouraged people to support the arts centre, "where they can and where they're willing to and that is certainly going to sustain us."

The Pumphouse is offering online classes, which include watercolour and acrylic workshops, family friendly online videos and art activities which can be accessed through their website at www.niagarapumphouse.ca.

Pumphouse programs and art classes are available to everyone but there is a discounted price on classes if you hold a membership.

"Anyone who wants to be a member can be. It doesn't mean you have to take classes, it just means you're supporting the Pumphouse and that's a wonderful thing," Kerr said.

Current offerings for classes and workshops at the Pumphouse are different from what is usually available.

"We're looking for ways to keep our members and the public engaged,"

"It's a lot of new people that are offering their time," Kerr said. "These people are reaching out to us and we're certainly grateful."

Sandra Nass Misiak is a NOTL resident volunteering her time to conduct some of these workshops and video series. With a passion for arts and education, art has always been an important part of her life.

The upcoming series through the Pumphouse website, *Beginners' Tips in Acrylics* by Sandy, presents helpful ideas designed for those looking to start their artistic journey from home.

Nass Misiak said anybody can learn how to create art and it is important to push any fear or doubt aside.

"There's no age limit," she said. "It's not something for the young, it's something that can be explored and developed even as a senior."

There also are plans to offer a renovation tour of the new Pumphouse, "which is going to be really fun because that will be a fundraiser for us, probably early August, and it will be a personalized tour," Kerr said.

When it is time to reopen, the Pumphouse will be looking to take advantage of "plein air" – or outdoor – classes.

"We have done plein air classes before so we're going to take advantage of that type of format so that we'll be able to be outside in the fresh air," Kerr said.

The Pumphouse will also host indoor classes but will have a reduced number of students to ensure physical distancing is maintained.

"We are working hard to ensure everyone's safety when they do come through our doors," Kerr said.

"We're doing all the right things with health and safety, installing the acrylic shields at the front desk, disinfecting and changing our traffic flow and all of those things. We're working on it, we are going to be ready and we're very excited about it."

Artist **submissions sought** for Pumphouse chair auction

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre is looking for a Niagara artist to creatively paint a Muskoka-style wooden love seat as a fundraiser for the arts centre.

Submissions will be accepted until June 23 from

artists who live, work or operate in the Niagara Region. The chair provided by the Pumphouse will be the winning artists' canvas.

The painted chair will be sealed with a weather-proof coating and then be auctioned as part of the Summer Niagara Pumphouse Online Auction.

Proceeds from the auction will be split between the winning artist and the Pumphouse, but the artist will donate their time and resources to paint the chair.

There is no application fee for interested artists. Painting proposals must be submitted with an example of the artists' painting

style, medium to be used, sketch or narrative description of the artwork concept as part of the application.

The fundraising auction is set to take place at the end of August.

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FEATURED LOCAL STORY

Yellow Door sings a new tune online

Non-profit Virgil school was in danger of closing, but generous landlord helped out

Richard Harley
 The Lake Report

Even during a pandemic, musical theatre is finding a way in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Yellow Door Theatre Project, a high-end school of musical theatre, is hosting its classes online via Zoom, so students can continue to meet and work on their performing skills.

The classes will be a mix of singing and dance, artistic director Andorlie Hillstrom said during a Zoom interview.

"It's just a smattering of things that we're going to be offering dance-wise, musical theatre-wise, just to test the waters again."

Classes have been on hold since March, when the province issued emergency orders that shut down most activities.

To Hillstrom, it feels like "forever ago."

On top of not being able to hold regular classes, the not-for-profit Virgil school also missed out on one of its major fundraisers this year.

"It is a shame really. Right now I am so missing live theatre and live events. It's killing."

Hillstrom said when the pandemic first hit, because of the losses, the future of Yellow Door was uncertain.

"We came very, very close to (closing). Honestly, I saw the writing on the wall, it was like, 'We're done. We're going to become one of the victims of this pandemic.' And it made me really sad," Hillstrom said.

"There was no income. And I was really worried — really, really worried — because we can't go in a hole, we're a charity. I thought, 'What on earth are we going to do?' I was already to the point where I was planning to move everything out ... into a storage space, and then once things had died down and were over we would make decisions about where we would go."

She said her landlord



Hannah Jamal, far left, and sister Ayla (middle, black dress), with fellow Yellow Door performers. SUPPLIED

Lloyd Redekopp and his wife Angela stepped up to help them out.

"Thankfully, our landlord was very empathetic and he was working with us ... he is continuing to make this available and he is giving us hope for the future. I wanted to mention that because it's people like that (who) are making a difference for (organizations like ours)."

Now that the future is more certain, she said it's all about focusing on how to adapt.

The school is reinventing how to do things, since the pandemic means in-person classes are not possible, Hillstrom said.

"It's a very different process — obviously you can't sing together. I'm finding that the easiest way to do this is that you can go through things a phrase or two at a time, and then have the student or students repeat after you."

She also said recordings have "come in really handy."

"I'll have my students send a recording, I can critique or perform from their end, their side of the Zoom. And I listen. Yes, there's

some lag. There's some glitches, but it's enough. And I can do a critique and then we talk about it and they can redo it. So there are ways to get through it. It's not optimal, because I really like to be in the same space as the people that I'm working with, whether it's in a group, whether it's one-on-one."

Hillstrom said it has been particularly tough for group work.

"Drama work involves an integration of movement and physical contact, and that group experience of being able to respond to individuals beside you, or in front of you that you're working with. So, it isn't perfect. But we're all trying to find ways to do this so that we can still see each other's faces. We can talk, we can connect. And I think that's really important. I think that we have to do everything we possibly can to stay connected right now."

She said she's thankful the technology exists to keep the class connected.

"Otherwise, it would be ever so much harder. And we would feel that much more isolated," Hillstrom said.

else," she said.

For students, it's also been hard not having the school open. Many of them live and breathe musical theatre and fellow students have become like family they don't get to see.

Ayla Jamal, a 14-year-old student of Yellow Door, said she's excited to start classes, but worried it might be a struggle.

"I'm just kind of sad about it because I don't have like the motivation of the people around me to do it."

She said it's been tougher to practise from home and that being around everyone else challenges and inspires her.

Her sister Hannah, 16, said it's also been tough not being exposed to as much art as usual.

"It's kind of been rough to stay on top of like learning new techniques. But I'm really thankful that I have a person in the house that loves the arts as much as I do. We've been able to exercise our skills together, so I feel really fortunate to have that," Hannah said.

Another student, Sebastian Moccio, 15, said he's been fortunate to have had a different experience, in that he's had almost "more opportunity to make music" while being at home.

His father is a music teacher at Eden High School, so he was able to bring home some equipment to record with.

"That's what I've been doing a lot, but I have not been practising dance," he said.

With dance and music together, Hillstrom said it's been a challenge to figure out online lessons.

Ayla said she prefers the pressure of performing live, where "it's only one shot. When you know that you have multiple takes, it's a lot more difficult because you know that if you mess up, you can do it again. So, there's not as much pressure put on you. And I guess that like is always in the back of

my mind."

Hillstrom said it's been nice to see other theatre companies adapting in the same ways, like the Shaw Festival's "That's Shawbiz" live online cabarets.

"From their first Shawbiz to even the second one, the improvement was significant. They're getting their technical people involved now, and again, everybody's learning, they're learning how to do this," she said.

The loss of revenue has been hard, with Yellow Door's full slate of summer courses cancelled.

She said she's hoping the Zoom classes will generate a little bit of revenue to help the school survive.

Hannah said it would be sad if the school doesn't survive.

"That space, I've been working in there since I was 12," she said. "I'm a Yellow Door baby. I was there for the first year."

Ayla echoed her sister's sentiments.

"That was the space that I found out that I love theatre and it's actually like another family to me. I care about the people there and the company and I just I love it so much," she said.

Moccio said Yellow Door "basically is the driving force" behind his plan to pursue professional performing as a career.

"Just like the sense of community and stuff I learned. And the friends I've made, they're just incredible," he said.

Hillstrom said being able to continue adds a sense of normalcy in the kids' lives because they, like the rest of the world, have had to accept major changes.

"Because their lives have been turned upside down as well. They're not in school with their friends, they just found out that their school year has ended."

Yellow Door will be performing with the Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines on June 25.



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