Students strike back

NOTL youth take to the streets to advocate for better treatment of the planet

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake students braved strong winds and chilly weather to stage a strike for climate change action outside the town hall Friday afternoon.

March 15 marked Fridays For Future, a global climate change movement when children and students hold strikes to draw attention to the issue of climate change.

The movement started in August 2018 by 16-year-old Greta Thunberg who was skipping classes to protest in front of the Swedish parliament in hopes the government would cut carbon emissions to adhere to the Paris Agreement.

Thunberg’s action inspired hundreds of thousands of youth around the world to call for more aggressive action against climate change.

She has now been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Around 120 countries and more than 2,000 cities and towns participated globally in Fridays For Future.

Locally, two Grade 8 Crossroads Public School students, Kaitlyn Lambert and Elena Berardocco, took the initiative to organize the March break event.

It started when Lambert was looking for a topic for her weekly school report about current events found in newspapers or in the news. She and Berardocco found out about Thunberg and Fridays For Future and got inspired by the Swedish teen’s actions.

The girls’ siblings and friends also decided to join the strike.

“Help Us Fight Back Against Climate Change NOW!”

Nathan Lambert spent Friday afternoon advocating for people to fight climate change. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

“Climate change is going to affect their (children’s) life a lot,” she said. “When they grow up, they’re the ones...”

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Niagara politicians ride along for Meals on Wheels deliveries

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Hot meals went out for delivery on Wednesday with MPP Wayne Gates along for the ride. As part of March for Meals, organized by Meals on Wheels, local politicians were invited to tag along with volunteers as they made their deliveries of warm prepared food for local clients.

Gates accompanied long-time volunteers Roger Schmid and Dennis Milani as they drove through Niagara Falls, dropping off lunch, offering to help open containers and checking in on clients. MOW opened their office and vehicles to Gates to show him first-hand how the program helps seniors maintain their independence and a sense of dignity.

On March 28, Lord Mayor Betty Disero is scheduled to ride along with local volunteers in Niagara-on-the-Lake while they make their deliveries.

MOW is a non-profit, volunteer-driven service providing 2,567 nutritious meals weekly to seniors, mentally and/or physically challenged individuals or adults at nutritional risk. The goal is to give clients their dignity, allowing them to remain at home while ensuring they are eating healthy, nutritious meals.

Volunteers are on the front line when it comes to ensuring seniors are maintaining healthy lifestyles on their own. Gates said it was wonderful to see the volunteers in action, adding that he could see why they decided to give their time to the program. Watching the clients light up when their deliveries arrived, Gates said he could see that the experience was equally as rewarding for the volunteers. He also said the importance of programs like MOW needs to be brought to attention.

“I think it’s important to highlight the need to continue to fund organizations like this. If you’re going to talk about wanting to keep people in their homes, this is a program that certainly enhances that opportunity. If you’re trying to save dollars in the health care system, this is another way to do that.”

Clients are checked on regularly by volunteers, who make deliveries from one to five days a week depending on the client’s need. Building a relationship with clients, volunteers are able to call emergency contacts or services if any red flags arise while they are making their deliveries.

Marianne McRae, executive director of MOW, said funding is the biggest issue the organization faces. Funding comes from the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care from Local Health Integration Networks. MOW also receives funding through the United Way, which she said has had to scale back the amount provided in recent years.

MOW started with $18,000 of funding from United Way, but it’s been cut back to $13,000. The MOW program costs about $360,000 annually to remain in operation, $140,000 comes from the ministry and $190,000 from the cost of meals charged to clients.

“All they pay for is the food. They are charged $7.20 per three-course hot meal because that’s what we pay for it.”

Clients can choose from hot meals delivered around lunch time, or frozen meals for later consumption. McRae said volunteers deliver 350 to 400 frozen meals a week, which are provided by Ina Grafton Gage Village in St. Catharines.

“They are home-cooked and flash-frozen,” McRae said, adding that the frozen meals provide more variety for the clients. “The beauty of the frozen is they can order what they want, and they can heat it up when they want it, which is normally at dinner time. For the hot meals, they have to have them at lunch.”

The hot meals are created in the kitchen of the St. Catharines General Hospital and brought to the MOW office at the Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls. From there, the meals are sorted and packed up for each route. The volunteers and staff adhere to diet restrictions and aim to provide the best meal per individual client, which is a feat considering they deliver to about 60 clients a day.

Crediting the success of the program to the volunteers, McRae said she doesn’t think they could operate without their dedication.

“They are the reason we exist. We would not be here if it weren’t for the volunteers. Even though we offer gas assistance compensation, there are many volunteers that turn it down, giving it back as a donation.” She said volunteers have been very generous with their time and financial contribution, adding that they might be bankrupt if the organization had to pay out costs to every volunteer.

There are about 200 volunteers on rotation at the Niagara Falls MOW, alternating their time monthly, which McRae said is likely why they don’t experience burnout.

MOW organizes other initiatives aiming to keep those at nutritional risk healthy and social. The organization hosts a congregate dining lunch on Wednesdays each week. Serving lunch in a common room at an apartment building, 16 to 25 people get together to have lunch.

“It’s the social aspect of it. We go good from Commisson’s and serve it to the group, they have lunch together for socialization. We do that in four different apartment buildings,” McRae said.

“That’s good for them, gets them out of their apartment. While the group has many volunteers, McRae said there’s a need for a younger crowd. She said the organization has 90-year-olds who are still volunteering.

“They’re not ready to give it up yet.” Still active and up to the task, McRae said many volunteers are retired and looking for something to do in their spare time, and it’s rewarding for them.

Gates said, “Not only do they need volunteers, they need younger volunteers.”
Students strike against climate change

Continued from Front Page

that will have to deal with the consequences of our actions or inaction. So I think it gives them a chance to stand up and say: ‘A change is coming and what kind of change are we going to make?’”

Kaitlyn’s younger sister, Morgan, also goes to Crossroads school. A Grade 7 student said she wants to help fight the climate change. “I want my kids to see the snow,” she said. “The scientists say in 2030 climate change will be unstoppable. So maybe even soon Canada will be a new Florida.”

Bethany Polti, who is a chair of Lord Mayor’s youth advisory council, said she was proud to be at the strike. “We need to be educated on climate change and we need to be making steps towards improving how we do things, what we’re leaving on our Earth,” said Polti, a Grade 11 student at Laura Secord Secondary School in St. Catharines. “We live on this planet and we have to be here for a while longer if we want to survive,” added Elena Berardocce. “So, it’s really important that we keep it healthy.”

“I think if we’re going to live on this planet for the rest of our planet, we need to start and actually take care of it,” said Keira Walker, another Grade 8 student at Crossroads. Some of the solutions to stop climate change offered by the students, include proper recycling, making more affordable environmentally friendly items, littering less and spreading the word about the issue.

In total, around two dozen people showed up at the strike, including kids and their parents, town officials and some local supporters. NOTL resident Kim Ort said she learned about the event online and came out to show her support. “I’ve just been really inspired by the kids in the last year all over the world and I think we need to listen to what they are saying,” she said.

Some people, like Devon Fornelli and Amanda Selig, travelled to the event from St. Catharines and Niagara Falls respectively. Fornelli came with his son Paolo because he said the government needs to see there are people for whom the issue is important. Selig said she was planning to go to Queen’s Park with her son Benjamin but thought she could “do more here (in NOTL) than I can there.”

A number of town officials also showed up to support the students, including Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Coun. Norm Arsenault and Coun. Stuart McCormack. “I think it’s very important that all these kids step up. It’s their future, after all,” Arsenault told The Lake Report. “I think it’s the right thing.”

Disero said the event was “fabulous.” “I’m hoping they will feel like they’re doing something and their voice is a positive point for change,” she said. “I’m really proud of all of them.”

When asked how NOTL councillors are helping fight climate change, Disero said they were doing “small things.” “We stopped using plastic bottles. We’re a paperless organization,” she told The Lake Report. “It’s hard in the small community to act alone but if we can get the region involved in some pretty dramatic steps, then we’re better off. And we’re doing what we can.”

Area MPP Wayne Gates (NDP-Niagara Falls), also stopped by the town hall to tell the students he supports them “100 per cent” and suggested students make the strike an annual event during March break.

Local students took to the streets Friday to spread the message that climate change should be on the top of people’s minds. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

Amanda Serig with her son Benjamin. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

Rachel Berardocce, Lianne Lambert, Heidi Polti, Heather Walker and Amanda Serig. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

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Dear Editor,

I am writing to you regarding your “Resident’s speak out on official plan” article in your paper of Feb. 28, 2019.

I am a small farmer in NOTL with 79 acres. What you reported in the article is very upsetting to me and I am sure others in similar situations. Allow me to explain.

What the big wineries and Ms. Zimmerman are doing is lobbying the Town to prevent further competition from entering into the industry. They cry that many of them are not profitable and as profitable as they would like to be. But does that not apply to all industries? Some businesses make money and some do not and end up closing. The government does not get involved and limit/prevent more businesses like them from opening new ventures!

I am in agreement that in order to use the word “estate” in describing your winery you should possess a certain amount of land. However, I do not see the rationale for a small farmer requiring 10 acres in order to be a farm winery. What is the rationale for this other than preventing small farmers from adding more competition for the large wineries.

Why 10 acres? Where did this number come from? Someone just pulled it out of a hat! Why not five acres? This would make more sense as in order to be classified a farm on the tax roll you must farm more than five acres. Also, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario will grant you a winery licence if you have more than five acres with grapes. Why not bring all of this into alignment?

Ms. Zimmerman should stick to looking after us growers and not lobby on behalf of the wineries. After all the name of the organization she represents is the Grape Growers of Ontario. If a small grower like myself wishes to diversify to make their operation more economically viable for their family, why is she standing in their way and asking for restriction?

The Consultants report clearly states that the Town needs to be more flexible towards small farmers in order to provide them with the ability to diversify and offer alternative farm products to make them economically viable. Imposing restrictions like those Ms. Zimmerman and the existing wineries are calling for will not achieve this; it will only once again show how the political and big business machine really works!

The Town and its elected officials are put there to look after the taxpayers and make decisions for the good of the taxpayers and the Town. Until someone explains to me in detail how imposing a 10 acre restriction on farm wineries is a good thing for the Town and its small farmers, I will have no option but to believe this is nothing but people looking after their own best interests and not what they are paid and/or elected to do!

I have written to both the Lord Mayor and Ms. Zimmerman asking them for the rationale and benefits these restrictions would provide. To date, I have received no response.

I hope you will provide the small farmer a fair representation on this issue in your paper. Yours truly,

Sal Florio
Ushering in the spring, the NOTL Horticultural Society spent Friday afternoon arranging flowers for donation to local retirement homes. On the closest weekend to spring, this year on March 15, about 30 volunteers from the group met to put together assortments of flowers for the residents of Chartwell, Upper Canada Lodge and Pleasant Manor retirement communities. By the time the volunteers finished, they had assembled about 250 arrangements.
The group met at the Mary Snyder room in the arena at 10 a.m., armed with good spirits and green thumbs.

Marla Percy, past-president of the society, said the afternoon went without a hitch.

“I think it went pretty well. We had people who hadn’t done it before, but we got everything sent off by 12 o’clock and we were all finished.”

She said the group has been creating and donating the flower arrangements for seniors for at least 30 years, though she said she couldn’t recall exactly when the initiative started.

“We’ve asked some of the older members, no one can remember exactly when it started. It’s been at least 30 years, it may have gone on a little longer.”

She said in the early days of the horticultural society, the group had more of a focus on flower decoration. “We’ve gotten away from that. There’s a garden club in Niagara for people who want to do just flower arrangements, ours is much more general now.”

Percy said Flowers for Seniors is a nice initiative for the beginning of spring. Looking forward to it now, she said some of the residents eagerly anticipate the arrival of the flowers.

The NOTL Horticultural Society pays for the arrangements and supplies. Percy said the flowers come from Van Noort Florists, who give them a discount on the order.

Sharon Van Noort, owner of Van Noort Florists, said the NOTL Horticultural Society does a lot for the community, and this is her way of giving back.

“Our long-time residents in Niagara recommended that (the society) come and see us. They reached out to us and asked if we would be able to source their flowers.”

She said networking together, it’s a great program for the community.

“We offer it to them because they are such a great group and it is such a nice thing that they do for the seniors.”

Flowers for Seniors is just one of the community programs the society organizes. Percy said the group has donated money to the local schools for different horticulture initiatives “Crossroads – one year we gave them money for planting trees. This year we’ve been going around and giving them starter kits for different kinds of plants.”

She said Flowers for Seniors is something the group looks forward to being a part of and will continue, adding that it’s a great way to brighten up the resident’s spaces coming into spring.

Cyndi Gardner, programs and support services manager for Chartwell Niagara said there was nothing but gratitude from the residents.

“One said it feels like spring, another one said they really appreciate that someone is thinking about them.”

She said, asking around, the residents were all very happy with the gift of flowers. “Another one said that it is so nice to have something to brighten their room. A family comment was that it was so thoughtful for (the horticulture society) to think of the residents. They couldn’t believe that there was one for everyone.”

“Each individual one (flower pot) isn’t spectacular but they’re each very much appreciated by the people who receive them.”

 have an opinion you want heard? Send a letter to the editor to editor@niagarannow.com
Local farmer questions acreage rules for farm wineries

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva  
The Lake Report

With NOTL’s official plan in its final stages of completion, one local farmer is questioning the minimum acreage requirement for a farm winery.

The final draft of the official plan from December 2018 states an estate winery should be at least eight hectares or 20 acres. This acreage is needed to provide a “rural setting for the winery, land for the ponding water waste and associated vineyards,” according to the plan.

There is no minimum requirement for a farm winery in the final draft but the acreage will be specified in a zoning bylaw that will govern the implementation of the plan. The town and its planning consultants are leaning toward a minimum of 10 acres for a farm winery.

At a public meeting on Feb. 25, some speakers, like Debbie Zimmermann from Grape Growers of Ontario and Jamie Slingerland from Pillitteri Estates Winery, were in favour of minimum acreage requirements for both estate and farm wineries.

When Sal Florio, a local farmer, learned about these suggestions, he questioned the rationale behind a 10-acre requirement.

Florio’s total property is 79 acres with his vineyard taking up 6.5 acres. To keep his business alive, Florio wants to be able to diversify his farm and produce wine. But if the official plan sets a minimum acreage for a farm winery, he said he wouldn’t be able to do that.

Sal Florio said he agrees an estate winery should have a minimum of 20 acres. A farm winery, however, is another matter.

The difference between two wineries is that a farm winery is limited to growing, producing and selling wines made only from fruit that is grown onsite, according to the town’s official plan. Meanwhile, an estate winery can produce and sell wines made from locally grown fruit.

“Leave (the official plan) like that,” Florio said in an interview with The Lake Report. “And then farm wineries will go in and ask for a permit to be a farm winery and they will be assessed based on the setbacks and everything else that’s required. That’s the way it should be.”

According to a 2015 Planscape Inc. report, farm operating expenses both per farm and per acre in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2011 were among the highest in the Niagara Region. The operating cost per acre in NOTL was $7,308.

“I’m losing money every year,” said Florio, but if he’s allowed to have a farm winery, even with just 6.5 acres, he said he would be able to produce enough wine that would make his business profitable.

The consultants’ report recommended the town ensure its land use policies and standards are flexible to “support ongoing management of smaller farm parcels.”

“If we don’t listen to that, we’re going to lose farmland and we’re going to lose the primary reason Niagara-on-the-Lake is so popular,” said Florio. He said he also tried doing a virtual winery but “no existing winery was willing to help.”

For a virtual winery, it’s not required to have an actual land so winemakers can rent equipment and spaces at other wineries to produce and sell their own wine.

“If I all I wanted to do is be a virtual farm winery which sells its wine online or at farmers markets, without having retail and visitors etc. but grow grapes and turn it into wine, then I would still need the AGCO license which would not be a problem,” said Florio. “But I would still not be allowed to operate as a virtual winery because of the Town’s 10-acre restriction.”

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario requires a vineyard to have a minimum of five acres. The 2010 Nova Scotian Agriculture and Marketing Act, for example, states farm wineries should have a minimum of 10 acres. And, according to a 2011 B.C. wine law report, a minimum of two acres of grapevines must be farmed and used for a land-based winery in that province.

“You’d lose my mind especially when I can apply for a permit issued to the Ontario government and all they ask for is five acres. And they’ll give me a licence,” said Florio. Then I’m stopped because the town wouldn’t allow me to be a farm winery unless I have 10 acres. It’s ridiculous.”

If the town or the region provides a proper logical response as to why it requires exactly 10 acres, Florio said he wouldn’t have any issues with it.

Kai Wiens, chair of NOTL’s agricultural committee, said the committee hasn’t received any concerns or complaints on the topic.

“The 10-acre and 20-acre concern hasn’t come forward from anybody,” said Wiens. “I think everybody’s comfortable with that unless somebody suggests they’re not. No one has presented the concern to us.”

Wiens said he thinks there should be a minimum acreage for farm wineries.

“There has to be a minimum because we have to have rules and regulations,” he said. “The rules of a farm winery have different opportunities and privileges than an estate winery, which then has different rules and privileges. So we have to keep that segregation in that fashion. That’s the reason there has to be an acreage.”

Craig Larmour, the town’s director of community and development services, said having minimum requirements would depend on land uses.

“(It depends) most importantly on the amount of land that can be cropped or planted in agricultural production. So if you have a parcel that’s too small, you might not be able to have a winery.”

Margaret Walton from Planscape Inc., the Bracebridge consulting firm hired to finalize the town’s official plan, said their team is recommending 10 acres.

“We look at the normal farm practices, parcels and the characteristics of this area,” she said.

“You want to have a certain amount of area to support some production because it all has to be a local product. It has to be a product off that farm. It’s a fairly standard number.”

Lord Mayor Betty Disero also supported having a minimum acreage.

“If there’s no requirement ... we’d become more of a retail strip rather than a farming area. I want to try to keep the farms (as) the farms and focus on growing and farming rather than focusing on retail,” she told The Lake Report.

“There’s always been a requirement. It’s worked in the past and I continue to support it.”

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said in order to be financially viable, a winery can’t have less than 10 acres.

“It’s really a tough business to make money. That’s why we allow value-added activities like events and other activities because it is the only way the wineries can make a profit,” she said.

“The 10 acres is really to allow them to be financially viable and have a sustainable business model. It’s to promote them. It’s to protect the wineries.”

Coun. Erwin Wiens, who is also on the agricultural committee, agreed that 10 acres should be the minimum.

“The wineries need to have grapes to make it a wine,” he told The Lake Report.

“So if you decrease the size, if you decrease the amount of grapes, it doesn’t make a winery sustainable.”

When asked if the acreage requirement is a way to support big wineries from local farmers entering the business, Wiens said that wasn’t “accurate.”

The town is trying to protect 600 per cent Ontario-grown grapes, so “there has to be a minimum amount of grapes that we can make into wine. Just to make it affordable, sustainable,” he said.

The consultants will review all public comments regarding the official plan and will submit a report to council for a decision at a later date.
Progressive dinner rotates visitors through town during Taste of NOTL

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The Taste of Niagara-on-the-Lake is celebrating 14 years. Highlighting local restaurants and wineries, Doug Johnson, owner and organizer, aims to offer a full experience of wine, food and community through a progressive dinner. It’s a unique two-day event, taking guests on a bus tour to five restaurants in the heart of town providing a five-course meal with wine pairings. The tour has space for about 130 customers, three times a year. Slated for one weekend each in February, March and April, Johnson said he tries to plan around other local events.

“Try to pick dates that don’t conflict with anything,” he said.

The upcoming seating is on the weekend of March 22 and the following weekend begins April 5, both with only a limited number of seats left available.

He said his goal is to bring people to town and show them what NOTL has to offer. By planning the weekend around other notable events he’s adding to the flow of traffic instead of borrowing from it.

He created the event to bring more business to town, and in turn to WeatherPine Inn, a bed and breakfast he bought with wife Phyllis in 2003. Johnson said he wanted to offer a dining experience encompassing the spirit of NOTL.

On the Friday night, guests are invited to attend the wine and cheese party at WeatherPine Inn, a bed and breakfast he bought with wife Phyllis in 2003. Johnson said he wanted to offer a dining experience encompassing the spirit of NOTL.

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Local chef headed to Top Chef Canada

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

When the first episode of the new season of Top Chef Canada airs on April 1, Niagara-on-the-Lake chef Tania Ganassini will be among those intrepid expert cooks competing under extreme pressure.

Chefs on the reality show have to prepare all manner of diverse dishes, under tight deadlines for tough, high-profile judges. Ganassini says “it was all a bit of a whirlwind,” starting with the selection process. “It was a last-minute decision to apply,” she says. “I didn’t expect a call back.”

But the call back did come, Ganassini says, “on a Tuesday afternoon, telling me to be ready to audition in Toronto at eight o’clock the next morning. I had to finish work, gather my ingredients, and haul my equipment. The next morning I was walking down King Street in Toronto with my Vitamix on my shoulder.”

Ganassini says she had a lot of fun at the audition, then put it out of her mind, so she was “shocked” when she was later invited to compete on the program. And when the Kinsmen Easter egg hunt was put on hold last year, the family event was put on hold for a year, too.

She notes how unsettling it can be “not having anchors, you are surprisingly out of your element.” Normal routines are suspended during the competition. One of the things Ganassini says she missed most when she lost access to her phone was her meditation app. She says she can meditate on her own, but “having it removed really threw me.”

Ganassini can’t reveal how the series unfolded for her as that would ruin the suspense when the series begins airing in April. But she is candid about her take-away from the experience. “I think it’s really important to put yourself in situations that are highly uncomfortable. There is tremendous growth there to learn about yourself. It really amplifies things, maybe shadow spots you need to bring more light to.”

Since returning from the bubble of reality TV to real life in NOTL, Ganassini has re-evaluated her business, to focus less on delivery, and more on workshops, catering, team-building and cooking classes, all rooted in healthy and delicious vegan meals, with an overall emphasis on workplace wellness. She says there’s a lack of available, convenient, healthy food, especially for those who work in the demanding service industry in NOTL restaurants and wineries.

And where will she be to watch the premiere on April 1? “I’ve been invited to watch the premiere at a launch party in Toronto, but I’m leaning strongly to staying home, to watch it with family, people who support me unconditionally, and don’t care what I look like on TV.”

For all the pressure and emotion of competing in the series, Ganassini says she has “no regrets, not at all. I’m so glad I did it.”

The series premiers on April 1 on the Food Network Canada. You can find Ganassini’s business in NOTL on Facebook and Instagram at Staff Meal Niagara.

Annual Bunny Trail brings focus back to the kids

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The Bunny Trail is hopping back the kids – this year’s Easter event is scaling back to focus back to its roots. The Niagara Nursery School and Child Care Centre along with the Kinsmen will host the annual Bunny Trail on April 20 from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The Kinsmen Easter egg hunt will begin at 10 a.m. sharp. The morning event will take place at the community centre on Anderson Lane in NOTL.

In previous years, the event was larger, including a BBQ, silent auction and market. This year, Candid Penny, executive director of the nursery school, said the event is to be scaled back a bit to bring the focus back to the kids.

“We are refocusing back to the roots of the bunny trail and making it all about the children, and a fun community family event,” Penny said.

With a new board this year, the decision was made to kick the BBQ and the market portions of the event. The touch-a-truck, egg hunt, face painting portions of the afternoon will remain.

“We wanted to refocus, we have a new board that just came into place. We wanted to put our efforts into some fun, child-orientated activities.”

Penny said the plan is what worked best for the families this year. After it’s over she said they’ll look at how the event went and revisit if they need to.

“It was getting to a point where a lot of our families, it was a big ask for a lot of our families, and we’re just trying to be (understanding) of their feedback. Being that it’s Easter weekend, just wanting to take it back to its roots of a fun, family event. This is what we are going with this year because we feel it will work best for our families.”

Crystal Bunny will also be in attendance again this year.

Penny said the touch-a-truck is something the kids look forward to.

“It’s something we had last year, and the kids loved. We’ll have a harvester, a fire truck and couple of other vehicles for the kids to check out. We’re working with local businesses to provide these vehicles as well.”

Penny said there isn’t an official count from previous years, but that there were “probably a couple thousand.”
Moo Let’s Talk Day at Cows raises $500 for mental health awareness
Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

It was about mental health on Friday at Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Cows ice cream shop — 100 per cent.

In an effort to raise awareness about mental health issues and encourage those struggling to reach out for help, Cows Creamery in Old Town teamed up with the Canadian Mental Health Association to hold its second annual Moo Let’s Talk Day fundraising event.

NOTL’s location on Queen Street participated for the first time this year, and CMHA will receive 100 per cent of Friday’s ice cream sales — including tips and donations — said Sherry McIntyre, manager of the branch. “When I tell people (about the fundraiser), I definitely see a difference. People are tipping more than they normally would, which is nice knowing that 100 per cent of tips is going to (supporting mental health),” said McIntyre.

Customer Rob Zuk said Evolve’s floating tank is 60 minutes in a dark and quiet space.

Marlana said athletes often use float tanks for muscle recovery. “I’m just super excited for everyone to get to learn and go through floatation therapy and infrared sauna,” she added. “It’s a better medicine, just really excited about that part.”

Billy Saxton, Jill’s son and Marlana’s brother, will join the team to provide massage therapy after he graduates from the Ontario College for Health and Technology next month.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Jill Saxton and Marlana Saxton at Evolve Wellness Studio Ltd.’s grand opening on March 16.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Jill Saxton and Marlana Saxton at Evolve Wellness Studio Ltd.’s grand opening on March 16.

Evolve Wellness Studio opens in Virgil
Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

When Jill Saxton learned her clients were looking for alternative solutions for weight loss, she knew she had to introduce something different at her new Niagara-on-the-Lake wellness centre.

So, Evolve Wellness Studio Ltd., at 1561 Niagara Stone Rd., near the Virgil LCBO, offers Verju laser treatment, floatation therapy and an infrared sauna.

“I understand that people have to take medications for certain illnesses but there are alternatives to a lot of that,” said Saxton, one of Evolve’s owners.

The business held its grand opening Saturday afternoon. Around 60 to 70 people stopped by the new studio on an opening day to check out its therapy services.

“We wanted to open up a wellness centre for the community,” said Saxton, who has been preparing for the opening for the last four to five months.

Verju laser provides body contouring, targets cellulite and helps with weight loss, said Marlana Saxton, Jill’s daughter and one of the studio’s co-founders.

Jill, who has been in the wellness business for over 15 years, said one laser treatment might not be enough for weight loss.

“I don’t want to misguide anybody to think that they’re going to come and lay down...one treatment — magically they disappear. That’s not the case,” said Jill.

“A minimum of six treatments is required.”

Being into alternative services, the mother-daughter duo also decided to go with an infrared sauna opposed to a traditional steamy one. “(The sauna) basically detoxes you from the inside out,” said Marlana.

As for floatation therapy, it helps with insomnia and anxiety as well as providing magnesium to people who might be lacking it, said Marlana.

Evolve’s floating tank is filled with 850 pounds of epsom salt, which allows customers to stay afloat for 60 minutes in a dark and soundproof room.

Marlana said athletes often use float tanks for muscle recovery. “I’m just super excited for everyone to get to learn and go through floatation therapy and infrared sauna,” she added. “It’s a better medicine, just really excited about that part.”

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One hundred per cent of ice cream sales on Moo Let’s Talk Day went to Canadian Mental Health Association.
DARIYA BAI GUZHI YEV A

Niagara Historical Society dressing up for Arts and Fashion Lecture Series
Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

The Niagara Historical Society and Museum is dressing up for the return of its annual lectures — the Arts and Fashion Lecture Series will be held on the third Thursday of each month, offering an expert point-of-view on fashion through history and culture.

The first lecture on March 21 at 7:30 p.m., Gary Parker, principle consultant for an Aboriginal-owned consultant company, will talk about Indigenous songs and dances, the evolution of colonization and the impact those changes had on Aboriginal's technology and clothing.

Michele-Elise Burnett, a Metis Algonquin, president of Kakekalanick Indigenous Consulting Company, said when she was asked to help put the talk together, the vision was about the importance of Indigenous dress.

“We would wear different regalia, or dresses, depending on what we were doing. For Indigenous people, it wasn’t so much dressing for fashion to impress anybody, it was more for the community and circumstance. It’s more working with the natural world and what the environment has presented. We would wear different regalia for special occasions.”

She commented on how some Indigenous clothes have made their way into pop culture. Jimi Hendrix, half-Cherokee and half-African American, she said his clothes were representative of his heritage and culture, wearing a lot of feathers and fringes. Inspired by his grandmother, who was Cherokee, Burnett said Hendrix influenced the wearing of Indigenous style clothing in the 60s.

She said she didn’t know specifically which Parker would speak about for the lecture series, but that it would likely include the role Indigenous clothes have played over the years.

The series is sponsored by Geoffrey and Lorraine Joyner and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Bed and Breakfast Association.

Other talks include a fall lecture series, but that it specifically what Parker would speak about for the lecture series, but that it would likely include the role Indigenous clothes have played over the years. The series is sponsored by Geoffrey and Lorraine Joyner and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Bed and Breakfast Association.
**Weekly Read the Lake Report**

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<th>Sunday</th>
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| **Progressive Dinner: A Taste of Niagara**
  - 1 p.m.: Niagara Culinary Tours | Famous & Infamous with David Syder: Lloyd Dennis - 2 p.m.: Niagara Historical Society & Museum | Public Information Meeting: Heritage Conservation at the Community Centre, Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 p.m. | **German Conversation**
  - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: Community Centre
  - Simply STEAM Story Time
  - 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.: NOTL Public Library |
| **Winter Wonderland Food Tour**
  - 1 p.m.: Niagara Culinary Tours | **Automated**
  - 11 a.m. to noon: Niagara Culinary Tours
  - Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. | **Painting Drop In**
  - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre
  - 
  - **Legion Fish Fry** every Thursday - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  - St. Davids Lions Club Fish Fry, April 5, April 19 - 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. | **Painting Drop In**
  - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre
  - 
  - **Duplicate Bridge** - 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. |
| **Niagara Historical Society & Museum French Conversation Group**
  - 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre | **Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Drumming Night** - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Niagara Regional Native Centre | **Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors** - 1 p.m. | **Live, Learn, Jazz: Diana Panton**
  - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.: The Exchange Brewery
  - **Freedom Film Screening** - 7:30 p.m.: NOTL Public Library
  - **Film Screening** - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.: The Exchange Brewery |
| **Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong** - 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre | **Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Drumming Night** - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Niagara Regional Native Centre | **Niagara Historical Society**
  - **Monthly Meeting** - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre | **Niagara Culinary Tours**
  - **Winter Wonderland Food Tour** - 1 p.m.: Niagara Culinary Tours
  - **Niagara Culinary Tours**
  - **Niagara Culinary Tours** |
| **Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors** - 1 p.m. | **Niagara Historical Society**
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  - **Niagara Culinary Tours**
  - **Niagara Culinary Tours** | **Brewery**
  - **7 p.m. to 9 p.m.: The Exchange Brewery**
  - **Niagara Historical Society**
  - **Monthly Meeting** - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.: NOTL Community Centre
  - **Babies and Books** - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: NOTL Public Library
  - **Wayne Gates Office** - 1 p.m. | **Niagara Culinary Tours**
  - **Winter Wonderland Food Tour** - 1 p.m.: Niagara Culinary Tours
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  - **Niagara Culinary Tours** |
Wednesday

Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library
Practical Genealogy - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library
DNA Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library
Art & Fashion Lecture Series: Indigenous Stories/History with Gary Parker - 7:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum

Thursday

Babies and Books - 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Public Library
Trivia Time - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - NOTL Public Library
Niagara Golden Age Club: Cribbage for Seniors - 1 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre
Minocraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library
Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library

Friday

Winter Wonderland Food Tour - 1 p.m. - Niagara Culinary Tours
Comedy Night at The Exchange Brewery - 7 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery
Progressive Dinner: A Taste of Niagara - A Taste of Niagara Live, Learn, Jazz: Diana Panton - 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library

Saturday

Niagara College Spring Open House - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Niagara College, NOTL Campus
Artist Workshop: Elementary Watercolour with Peter Malaguti - 10:30 a.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum
Progressive Dinner: A Taste of Niagara - A Taste of Niagara Winter Wonderland Food Tour - Niagara Culinary Tours
Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Landscaping Adds Value $ - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens

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Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Landscaping Adds Value $ - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens

Sunday Service
@ 10:30 a.m.
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Northern toy maker/distributor takes a break

Big man spotted soaking up the sun on remote beach

A surprised beachcomber
Special to The Lake Report

On the day before spring, on a beach not too far away, Santa Claus was resting and rejuvenating, readying himself to return to the year-long effort to bring joy to people across the land.

For years uncounted, Santa Claus (St. Nick, Father Christmas, Pere Noel and so on) has found a quiet place to rebuild his spirit following the grueling worldwide journey each Christmas. He’s visited almost all the beaches in the world—at least the one’s that are warm during the winter.

“I really need a break,” the jovial red-suited merry-maker, chuckles. “And the elves and reindeer need a break from me, too.”

Santa says it is important that no one knows where he takes his annual post-December respite. “Could you imagine if word got out where I went after Christmas? I would never have any peace,” he adds looking up from his e-reader and sipping from a colourful drink with a parasol.

Santa doesn’t stay away from his northern home for long. Even so, his hundreds of elves get worried they’ll not have enough time to get ready for next year.

“Oh, the elves and the reindeer wouldn’t let me stay longer.” Although Christmas is just 24 hours, it takes all year to get ready.

During his annual round-the-world trek, Santa visits thousands of communities, large and small. But he does have his favourites.

“I shouldn’t say which towns I like best—I really love them all. But one of my favourites is called Niagara-on-the-Lake,” he says. “It is such a pretty little town, steeped in history and everyone leaves me the best treats,” he adds, his big hands circling his ample tummy. “Wonderful wines and the best butter tarts!”

No one knows just how old Santa Claus is. Google claims that he’s 1,748. But the beachside Santa refuses to state his age.

“It doesn’t matter how old I am. It’s much more important to consider the millions and millions of people who have happier lives, because I come to visit. There is no better feeling.”

As he looks back down again to his reading, he mutters an almost silent “HO HO HO.”

Santa Claus spends a few weeks each winter soaking up the sun on a beach not too far away. His pale winter skin requires SPF 60. But it isn’t long before he’s ready for next year’s Christmas rush. SUPPLIED

BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW! Offer ends April 5. Quote code NIAGARA to book.

eBonus! Book online and save on the handling fee. $4 online, $10 by phone.
Local chef and owner of Backhouse Restaurant turned a birthday celebration into a fundraising event, bringing local businesses and residents together for a good cause.

Raising money for Community Crew, an organization that focuses on feeding kids in the Niagara Region affected by poverty, Backhouse Restaurant raised about $2,500 over the course of the evening to donate to the charity on March 13.

Ryan Crawford, chef and proprietor of Backhouse, said it was a great opportunity to raise some money for an organization doing good work for the community. Celebrating his 40th birthday, Crawford said he always enjoys throwing parties, but wanted to bring the focus to something more meaningful.

"I always like hosting a party. It’s a way to say thanks to my friends. Usually, everyone brings you a bottle of wine or whatever, I don’t need a bottle of wine. I’d rather do it for something.”

He said his good friend, Erica Lepp, is a lunch angel for the Community Crew, and he remembered the organization is always on the lookout for money to feed more kids.

"It was just a natural fit.” Sarah Pirala, Community Crew director, said this is the first fundraising event Backhouse has partnered with the charity organization for. She said the organization is a local non-profit charity that goes into schools providing lunches for kids in need.

“We go in and say to the teachers that we have this lunch program, we’d love to provide some healthy lunches for the kids. Do you think your school would have a need for this.” She said the program feeds about 550 kids across seven schools right now — each week — and the program continues to grow. Right now, the program is once a week but she said the group is looking to provide meals more often. Funds raised through the Backhouse charity event will go into the lunch program. The theme for the night, Backhouse to the Future, was just a fun way to bring people in for the evening. He said he was listening to golden oldies one day and the idea to host a ‘50s themed party came to him. Adding the ‘Back to the Future’ element to the night, he said he had to include the ‘80s, because that’s the premise of the movie. “It morphed into that kind of party.”

Sporting an outfit reminiscent of Marty McFly from the classic ‘80s film, Crawford dove into the theme of the night. He said it was a good turnout, with more than 100 people showing up throughout the evening.

Crediting the donations and time volunteered by local businesses, he said it was an evening for the community.

“‘All the chefs were behind the line helping cook, all working together, behind the bar where the brewers, distillers, winery stuff were all helping to serve and pour and that kind of stuff.’”

Aside from the Backhouse’s contributions to the night, food was provided by Lavishly Simple, Pieza Pizzeria, Garrison House, oddBird, and Tide and Vine. Wineries, breweries and distillers also took part: Stratus Vineyards, Vineland Estates Winery, Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery, Bench Brewing Company, Great Lakes Brewery and Dillon’s Small Batch Distillers.

The restaurant had two jars for monetary donations near the door and a guess-the-corks game set up. Crawford said there were 420 corks in the jar, the best guess was 419.

After the success of the evening, he said he would plan a similar event in the future, adding that he participates in fundraising events throughout the year as well.

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Food was in abundance during the event. BRITTANY CARTER

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We need your support.

A group of animal rights protesters has been invading the streets of our town, trying to put an end to one of NOIT's most beloved local traditions — horse and carriage rides.

Help us defend our heritage by funding legal action against the group and its members. If they had their way, these people would see the extinction of all domesticated animals, including service animals like seeing-eye dogs.

They have filmed our children. They have taken free parking from our politicians. They are convinced they have the right to impede the success of our local businesses. It must end now.

This is a CALL TO ARMS for anyone who wishes to help defend our town. We will be hosting a pasta trivia night Saturday, May 11 from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124. All proceeds go to helping defend local businesses from these protesters. Call Jen at 289-690-6492 to reserve a ticket.

If you can’t attend, donations can be made to: gofundme.com/save-the-animals-stop-the-harrassment
Have some fun

Crossword Puzzle

Across
1. Rapid nuclear reactor shut-down (5)
4. Helper (9)
10. Dressing (10)
11. Atoop (4)
12. Ministers (9)
13. Bender (5)
15. Sets of equipment (4)
16. Female big cat (10)
17. Herefordshire town (10)
21. Type of heating fuel (4)
22. Reprimand (5)
24. Contented (9)
27. Waist band (4)
28. Volume for preliminary artistic studies (10)
29. Steam locomotive (4,5)
30. One of these means almost cloudless (5)

Down
2. Truce (5-4)
3. Isolated (5)
5. Snow vehicle (7)
6. Notion (4)
7. Fabricated (7-2)
8. Hangman's knot (5)
9. Emphasize (9)
14. Wig (9)
16. Ignorant person (9)
18. Whipping boy (9)
20. Makes journeys (7)
23. Gaiety (5)
25. Legend (5)
26. Capital of Norway (4)

Last issue’s answers

Across

1. Rapid nuclear reactor shut-down (5) 4. Helper (9)
10. Dressing (10) 11. Atoop (4)
12. Ministers (9) 13. Bender (5)
15. Sets of equipment (4) 16. Female big cat (10)
17. Herefordshire town (10) 21. Type of heating fuel (4)
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Down

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7. Fabricated (7-2) 8. Hangman's knot (5)
9. Emphasize (9) 14. Wig (9)
16. Ignorant person (9) 18. Whipping boy (9)
Avoiding reno blues

Brian Marshall
Featured

OK. I admit — I may be a little obsessive when it comes to design. This could be why subject of renovation often makes me cringe. It’s not that I feel houses should not be renovated; goodness knows there are many, many houses that could stand a really good makeover. So why do I get reno shivers? Well, I guess it’s because I have seen so many go wrong.

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By: hermine Steinberg

My father's name I knew immediately.

But that wasn't surprising. As a holocaust survivor, having fought in the resistance during World War Two, and arriving in Canada in 1952 when anti-Semitism was a fait de la vie, remaining politically aware was a matter of survival.

But I spent my formative years in the 1960s and early 70s when social change was the mantra of every respectable young person. They were weird and wonderful times; youth were hyper-critical of traditional institutions and oddy innocent and optimistic at the same time. Civil rights protests, peace demonstrations, and women's rights marches filled the growing media presence in our lives, and in our consciousness. And maybe that's what also made us feel arrogant, worldly, and self-righteous beyond our experience or real understanding of the world.

The name belonged to a man that was in my sociology class at the University of Toronto. He was older than the rest of us; gaunt, swollen, and weary. He was also in my tutorial group with whom our left leaning Italian TA loved to challenge us, and we rose to the occasion, often continuing our debate at the local pub after our sessions ended. It was on these occasions we learned that the man liked to drink, ultimately confessed his hatred for anti-Semitism and the power of his name left me speechless. At first, I thought the name was just a coincidence but he unabashedly confirmed it. And when he unburdened himself to be used as a pawn. He was a bottle. John also was eager to let me know what he had done in those times. All the characters except for Corporal West and his wife Winn, are fictitious.

Dick thought, Darn.

"Yes, Sir."

Dick spun round, came to attention and saluted the Sergeant. "Sir?"

"Pack up the kit and your own gear. We move out in three hours."

"Yes, Sir."

Dick thought, Darn. Sevenoaks is a short train ride back to Lewisham. I've been able to see Winn fairly regularly from here. I hope we aren't being posted too far from London. Hope it's not France.

Mind. I doubt that. If the Germans bombed anything it will be around London.

***

It took about two hours for their convoy of lorries to reach the village of Ashtown in Sussex. A farm to the south of the village where the anti-aircraft guns were to be set up. Dick's troops were sent to the southernmost part of the farm where there were fewer buildings, a barn full of cows and some sheds. "Sandy."

"Yes, Corp."

"That shed over there. See if you can arrange to use it as shelter for the lads and our gear."

"Yes, Corp."

"Now you lot, set up the searchlight here. Stinky, find the telephone cable and see how we can run it around this field back to control."

"Yes, Corp."

Three hours later the searchlight was in place, they had a telephone link to control and the lads were settling into the shed.

It began to rain and Dick found there was no room left in the shed. He stood under a tree and wondered where he could bed down for the night.

"Yes, Corp."

"Yes, Jonesy."

"It looks like you and me are going to have to rough it."

"It does Jonesy. We had better find one of the tents."

"OK Corp. But let's just use it for our kit."

"Why?"

"We've got a better place to kip down in."

"You have?"

"Yes, Corp."

They erected the tent and sorted out their gear.

"It's late Jonesy. I'll make sure the lads get some rest."

Dick walked to the shed and ordered his men to turn in. As he walked back towards the tent he shuffled. It's damn chilly.

"This way Corp."

"Jonesy. Where are we going?"

"Somewhere warm, Corp."

Jonesy took Dick to the barn but did not go in. Instead he squatted the east and turned left. There was a low wall around a pen with a shaky tin roof over it.

Before Dick could say anything Jonesy hopped over the wall and disappeared.

Dick peeked over the wall to see Jonesy lying on his back on some straw leaning against a massive sow, surrounded by piglets.

"Jonesy, you'll be killed."

"Oh no Corp. She likes the company, all passive with the mothering instinct. Nice and warm in "ere. But don't tread on the piglets. She may object."

"Are you mad?"

"No Corp. I grew up on farms like this one. You learned how to keep warm when you've been down the pub too late and your Ma has locked you out."

Dick stared at the piggy, shivered, then climbed over the wall. The tent very tentatively was shuffled up to the sow and touched her belly. She granted with what he took to be pleasures.

After ten minutes Dick and Jonesy were warm and fast asleep.

The next morning Dick joked Jonesy.

"Rise and shine, Private."

"Yes, Corp."

"Jonesy."

"Yes, Corp."

"Don't you breathe a word about this."

"No Corp, who'd believe the story."

"The Niagara on the Lake Writers' Circle presents... How to Build Your Story What? Plotting novels & Writing short stories Where? NOTL Public Library. 10 Anderson Lane When? Saturday, May 25, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for registration & coffee) This workshop will show you how to plot your novel and will give you the best tips on writing short stories. We'll also look at where to get your stories published and how to win contests. Best yet, you'll get to apply these story building techniques you've learned to your own writing. General admission: $49 advance or $53 at the door. NOTL Writer’s Circle members: $44 advance or $53 at the door To reserve a spot now: email: briannah@sympatico.ca
Wallbangers players shocked to see spectators in stands

Ross Robinson

SWING INTO SPRING

Hardatt Rampersaud enjoys an early afternoon of golf on a March afternoon at the St. Davids Golf Course.

EUNICE TANG

Sage Fredericksen swings at Chautauqua Park.

EUNICE TANG

Tom Coleman hits the ball at the St. Davids Golf Course.

EUNICE TANG

NEWS

March 21, 2019

Wallbangers players shocked to see spectators in stands

Even the mice were surprised when two enthusiastic spectators showed up at Meridian Arena in Virgil at 7 a.m. last Sunday to watch the Wallbangers game. Foster Gallant is the grandson of versatile Blue Team player Dave Shantz, and also the nephew of Captain Mark Shantz. He obviously knows what side his bread is buttered on. His grandmother, avid and talented sailor Maureen Shantz, drove him to the arena from out of town.

SUPPLIED

Only seventeen players had shown up. By 6:40 a.m., it was clear there had been a communications breakdown, and one goaltender was M.I.A. This happens about once per year, and the quality of the game is diminished, as one team has to shoot and hit a goalpost or the crossbar to count a goal. This is much more difficult than it sounds, because the skaters are moving at a fast speed while shooting the little round black puck. Remember now, “fast speed” is a relative term. However, a telephone call was made to Freddie Andres, who lives only a five minute drive away. Happily, he had only been between the posts 11 times so far that week, so he did his best imitation of a firefighter, pulled some clothes on, grabbed his bag, drove to the rink and walked in smiling at five to seven. “Hi guys, thanks for calling.” This is an extraordinary man, who simply loves to play hockey.

The game raged on, four aside, and it was quickly apparent the three younger players on Red Team were skating circles around the relative elders on Blue Team. Even when the score got to 7 – 1, Blue Team’s decision makers were too dauntery and filled with false pride to admit that a trade might even up the teams.

At that point, yer humble scribe made a unilateral decision. I skated over to teenager Josh Frena on the Red Team bench. He plays organized hockey during the week with the NOTL Wolves. Not only does he have a fairly complete skill set, but he also has good hockey sense and compete. “If you and I trade sweaters, this game will be much closer and more fun,” I said. He replied, “What’s a sweater?”

“Gerz, I patiently explained, “You kids and some newbie adult fans call it a jersey. But adult fans call it a sweater. The game went on, in a much more balanced fashion. The final score was something like 10 -9, but there was some confusion and a bit of discussion.”

Finally, we remembered that the Meridian Arena Snack Bar doesn’t open until 8:00 a.m. Turns out they were Maureen Shantz, an enthusiastic and talented sailor whose husband Dave had been featured in a recent Wallbanger hockey article in The Lake Report, and her 7-year-old grandson Foster Gallant. Young Foster had come along with her to watch Grumps and his Uncle Mark play their best for Blue Team. Foster is a fine young minor hockey player, and when asked if he had learned anything watching Wallbangers hockey, he pondered a moment, then diplomatically replied, “I have seen better hockey.”

This boy will do O.K. in life, as he navigates the trials and roads that are often winding and full of potholes.

The final Wallbangers game of this 28th season will be on Sunday, March 31 at 7:00a.m. Face Off at 7:06a.m., a bit early, to leave a few minutes for the trophy presentation after the game.

The players will then enjoy happy banter in the Blue and Red Team dressing rooms. After showering together, the players will repair to Silk’s Country Kitchen for the traditional “Second Place Finisher Bays” breakfast.

There are still General Admission tickets available for this Spring highlight, at no cost. Call the Wallbangers Box Office at 905-401-3344, or try to find our non-existent website.

We are so fortunate to live in Canada in 2019.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

The Lake Report encourages readers to support the businesses that advertise in this paper.
The first naval buildings were built in the late 1760s by the British Navy who constructed a collection of buildings and a wharf on the east side of the Niagara River opposite Fort Niagara. These buildings were destroyed by red hot shots from the cannons of Fort Niagara in May of 1813. The building of today was built in 1814 as part of the reconstruction of Niagara (NOTL) after the Americans destroyed the town in December of 1813. The naval yard or as it was later referred to as “Navy Hall” was ideal for overwintering ships and was offices of the Provincial Marine, what in essence was a colonial Navy. Currents in the Niagara River and prevailing winds made it easier to dock ships on the west bank of the Niagara River than on the east side near Fort Niagara.

The buildings consisted mostly of quarters for Navy officers and buildings to warehouse sails, ropes and netting. Each year as winter approached, sailors would securely tie ships at the Navy Hall dock then remove running rigging, sails, ship’s boats and cannons to storage indoors. The crews would then return to their homes in Quebec while the Provincial Marine officers stayed in quarters at Navy Hall.

The buildings were no longer used by the Provincial Marine by the early 1780’s and they were not being maintained properly in the following years. By 1788 they were in desperate need of repair. When Lt. Gov. Simcoe (1792-96) arrived at Niagara (NOTL) in 1792, he ordered extensive repairs be made to all of the buildings in the Navy Hall area.

In the beginning one of the buildings of Navy Hall was to be considered as a residence for the Simcoe family. However Simcoe found them damp and as storehouses. The building of today was constructed Navy Hall, the first time with the arrival of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent in the latter part of 1792. It should be noted that this was the first visit of any British family member in Upper Canada. The Prince was given the dwellings under canvas and the Simcoe family had to move into one of the "hovels" at Navy Hall.

There has been great discussion about the first parliament of Upper Canada and just where official government business was conducted in Newark (NOTL). The Executive Council (appointed Members of the government, not elected) did meet in Navy Hall; however the first parliamentary sessions were conducted in the Masonic Temple at the corner of King and Prideaux Streets. Later after the Rangers Barracks (located on Byron Street) were retrofitted, parliament moved there.

On February 1, 1796 the capital of Upper Canada was moved across Lake Ontario to York (Toronto) and for the second time the Simcoe family had to leave their home under canvas at Navy Hall, permanently. The Simcoe family returned to England that same year.

At the time of the Simcoe's departure, construction of Fort George was underway and the Navy Hall complex was used again as storehouses. The building that Simcoe had used became the Officers' Mess for Fort George.

During the War of 1812, American forces, army and navy, attacked Niagara (NOTL) in May of 1813. On May 25 they opened up a terrific bombardment of red hot cannon balls and exploding mortar shells, burning all of the wooden buildings at Fort George and likely any structures remaining at Navy Hall. Two days later, the Americans landed from Lake Ontario, north of the town and fought their way to Fort George.

By 1814, the British had control over the town (NOTL) once more and constructed Navy Hall, the one which we see today. This building is smaller than the first which was cost built and its first use was that of a commissariat store for the garrison of Fort George. Later in the 1840’s Navy Hall was converted to a barracks to house 72 men. A new wharf was also constructed at the same time as the new Navy Hall and named “Kings Wharf”. King's Wharf was a busy port for the cross-river ferry service between Upper Canada and the United States. A customs house, guard house and a tavern were also constructed in the area of King's Wharf. By 1850's Navy Hall was used only as a warehouse. Later, for a short period during the American Civil War, married couples and their families of the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment were housed in the building.

The railroad industry started to expand which saw the Erie and Niagara Railway build a spur line to the dock in Niagara (NOTL). Space was needed for the trains to meet the steamships coming across Lake Ontario to King’s Wharf. The rail line came down the Niagara Parkway along the river bank to the dock area. Navy Hall was in the way.

Part 2 will be published March 28.
All Niagara-on-the-Lake residents and visitors are welcome to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section. Please send submissions to editor@niagaranow.com.

Artifact of the Week: John Swinton’s Tool Box

Answer: This week’s artifact is a tool or tackle box (c.1800) that belonged to and was made by craftsman, John Swinton in London. Despite the exterior’s simple design, Swinton constructed an array of interlocking compartments. Altogether, the back unit contains fourteen drawers and the front unit contains fifteen drawers which move and slide so the craftsman could reach the desired tool. Encased in the main cavity are several of Swinton’s tools, some of which he made by hand. The design of this box demonstrates the legacy of a historic profession and the expertise of its maker.

The Artifact of the Week column is submitted by the Niagara Historical Society & Museum, exclusive to The Lake Report.

Can you guess next week’s artifact? >

Clue: Order! Order! I will have Order!

The great pothole challenge

Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol
Inspecting NOTL’s bathrooms: Stratus Winery

Stratus Vineyards is located on Niagara Stone Road. The building boasts some fabulous views of their vineyards. The bathrooms blend in well with the striking architecture. All the doors, interior and exterior are close to 15 feet tall. The washrooms were no exception. We left with the impression we were much taller people than we actually are. The Stratus bathrooms were gold plunger winners garnering a solid 3 Plungers.

3/5 Golden Plungers

RIDDLE ME THIS:
I’m often broken before I’m used.
What am I?

Last Week’s answer: A pea
Answered first by Esther Wilms.
Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

The Lake Report encourages readers to support the businesses that advertise in this paper.
ST. PATRICK’S DAY FUN

Crowds lined up to get into The Irish Harp Pub on St. Patrick’s Day.

Lee Rowland serves up some St. Patrick’s Day drinks at Irish Harp Pub.

Tom Bishop said he had a few people ride the carriage on St. Patrick’s Day.

James Grigjanis, Shelley Bray and Shauna Dickson at Irish Design.

Lee Rowland serves up some St. Patrick’s Day drinks at Irish Harp Pub.