



Socks for Change returns | Page 6

COVID variants a **big concern**, as public health investigates 40 cases

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Dangerous COVID-19 variants are making their way to Niagara.

On Monday, the region's chief medical officer of

health Dr. Mustafa Hirji said there were 33 cases of suspected variants being investigated, up from six the week before.

"We've had a substantial number of additional cases screened positive for the

variant," he said during a media conference.

As of Wednesday, Niagara had 40 detected variant cases.

The province began screening every sample for variants Feb. 3. The

screening takes about two days from the first test and is "almost 100 per cent accurate" in determining if a case is a variant, but further analysis needs to be done on the samples to confirm what type of variant it is.

Hirji said overall variant cases in Ontario are "rapidly rising" with about 20 per cent of cases now being the B.1.1.7 variant first found in the U.K. The province is predicting that number will be about 40 per cent by the

second week of March.

In Niagara, about 16 per cent of cases are variants, and Hirji said those cases are "swiftly going to become dominant in terms of the

Continued on Page 3

COYOTE DYNASTY

Hunter says hobby is legal, **needed**



Randy Norris with his hunting hounds Dozer, Pyper and Smooth at his Welland home. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Randy Norris says he's been hunting coyotes in Niagara-on-the-Lake legally for 30 years.

It's a hobby he started

while living up north more than 35 years ago and has become a big part of his life. He says he has about \$10,000 invested in tracking systems for his eight hunting hounds and several thousand more in various

equipment.

His wife, daughter and grandkids even come out to hunt with him and his hounds.

Norris and a group of fellow hunters use his dogs to track coyotes and get

them out in the open to be shot. They do it for sport mainly and some sell the pelts. But due to a declining market for fur, the hides are mostly kept by the hunters.

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Irish Harp owner Jovie Joki. FILE/JESSICA MAXWELL

Roadtripping Ontarians could **boost** tourism

Danielle Orr
Special to The Lake Report

The increased popularity of road trips and people visiting destinations closer to home during less restrictive summer months may be a sign of what's to come for Niagara-on-the-Lake businesses when COVID travel rules are eased.

As restrictions ease, NOTL businesses likely will still miss the support of American visitors, who comprise a large part of their customer base.

But in past reopenings, when safe regional travel was permitted, NOTL retailers received much of their support from locals and road-tripping Ontarians. This makes many NOTL operators hopeful for

future reopenings.

Going straight into a province-wide stay-at-home order and a second lockdown this winter, Pieza Pizzeria's influx of customers dropped significantly, as did the staff's morale. In some ways it was still a shock because the less-restrictive summer and fall months had made things feel slightly normal again.

"It's such a weird, holding standstill pattern of like, 'Are we open? Are we not? Should we clean? What are we doing?' It's a lot of mixed emotions," says Laryssa Cesta, who co-owns Pieza with her partner Maurizio Cesta.

Cesta says the pandemic and international travel restrictions also caused another

Continued on Page 14

Window visits at care home **bring joy** in dark times

Shelby Hautala
Special to The Lake Report

With COVID-19 restricting our lives for the past year, one Niagara family has turned a negative situation into a joyful one.

When the Niagara Long Term Care Residence had a major outbreak of COVID and all residents were

isolated in their rooms, Judy Bennett and her family decided to take things outside.

Bennett and her sister Elaine decided it was time for a family gathering outside the room of their mother, a COVID-19 survivor.

"In all these months of COVID restrictions keeping us from visiting our loved ones in long-term care,

it was such a joy to see my mom, Deleen Priddle, connecting and laughing with her family through her window," says Bennett.

In photos taken from inside their mother's room, "You can see her enjoying watching her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren playing in the snow."

After recovering from COVID, Priddle was struck with pneumonia. After that, the nursing home staff noticed she was getting socially depressed and video calling was not enough. Priddle also has dementia.

"Coping with dementia

Continued on Page 10



Deleen Priddle enjoys a "window visit" with her grandchildren and daughter. SUPPLIED



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Peller purchases Riverbend for a cool \$10 million

Richard Harley
The Lake Report



Riverbend Inn and Vineyard. JESSICA MAXWELL

Andrew Peller Limited's purchase of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Riverbend Inn and Vineyard was a "natural" step for the NOTL-based wine producer, chief executive John Peller says.

The company announced its \$10-million purchase of the historic 17-acre vineyard property and 21-room hotel and restaurant Friday.

The property adjoins Peller Estates Winery on John Street East and the short-term plan is to keep operating the Georgian-style hotel and restaurant as Riverbend, but there are ideas in the works.

"We want to make sure that we explore ideas with people in the town and with some of our winery visitors and talk to people in the hospitality community to get their feedback," Peller said in an interview.

"We have some ideas, but we're anxious to share them with people and get their input so that maybe after the

first year we can look at making some more investment."

The two properties will complement each other, Peller said.

The Riverbend's vineyards will provide a new source of grapes to Peller, he said, and there are already some plans in the works for how to use them.

"The vineyard itself is a very, very beautiful vineyard. It grows exceptionally high-quality fruit," Peller said. "This is a good appellation where we really benefit from the airflow of the Niagara River. And we have ambitions to do something special in terms of wine-making with the vineyard."

"It will be a very special wine that will have its own identity."

He said the long-term goal is to help Niagara-on-the-Lake continue to grow as a world-class destination.

"I've definitely had the great opportunity to travel around the world and stay

in the best places and I am confident that the Niagara-on-the-Lake region has an opportunity to deliver a cultural hospitality experience that competes with the very best in the world," he said.

"And certainly part of our ambition is to try to do something that represents what we think is the future of our region, which is very unique and compelling wine, food, theatre, recreation, great history. And an incredible lake and the Niagara River and the escarpment," Peller said.

There's much in NOTL "that is so compelling that we have to do everything we can do to keep trying to raise the bar. So, hopefully these investments kind of raise the tide for all ships."

"We're super excited about doing something that will inspire the local community and destination travellers."

Riverbend was opened in 2004 and has a "successful and profitable track record as a destination of

choice for visitors to the Niagara Region," said a media release from Peller about the purchase.

"The inn will complement the Peller Estates Winery, with the new vineyards forming a now contiguous 57 acres of high-quality grape growing managed by the company's winemakers. The inn, closed since late 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will reopen in the spring under new management with investments made to enhance the Riverbend's unique and high-quality hospitality offering."

The current owners of the property will be retiring on the completion of the transaction.

"We are very pleased that our neighbours and friends are acquiring the inn and the vineyards, and excited that our heritage of providing one of the region's highest quality hospitality experiences will be only enhanced under their new ownership," said Jane Yu, Riverbend's owner and manager.

Integrated regional transit? **Yes.** Assessment-based funding? **NO**

Evan Saunders
The Lake Report



GO Transit official Matt Robinson speaks to town council about integrated regional transit. SUPPLIED

NOTL councillors are keen on the prospect of an integrated transit system across the entire Niagara region, but have no interest in using an assessment-based formula to pay for it.

Because home prices in Niagara-on-the-Lake are among the highest in the region, assessment-based funding could mean the town would be helping to foot the bill for larger municipalities like St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.

Policing costs are assessment-based and NOTL pays a lot more for that service than it would based on population or how much it is used.

Councillors met last week with Matt Robinson, director at GO Transit's implementation office, to discuss the prospect of improved region-wide transit.

Under the plan, municipal transit systems would be united under a transit com-

mission with a regional mandate. All current municipal transit assets would be handed over to the regional commission at no further cost to taxpayers, according to the presentation.

The idea of regional transit integration was unanimously lauded by councillors, with particular emphasis on the economic benefits from increased tourism, employment opportunities and ease of access for residents to travel between municipalities and regions directly from their homes.

In an interview Tuesday, Lord Mayor Betty Disero also noted the positive aspect of having to pay "one fee to go anywhere in the Niagara region."

But an assessment-based model, rather than one based on how much it is used, is "unfair," Coun. Allan Bisback told GO Transit.

Councillors fear that, although NOTL has one of the lowest populations of the region's 12 municipalities, the town could end up being the third-largest contributor to the program, according to a staff report.

"What will happen, for our one bus that runs up and down Highway 55, we go from about half a million dollars a year to \$2.5 million a year in transit payments," Disero told The Lake Report.

She said she fears transit costs for NOTL will increase while costs for "other municipalities with much larger populations are going to go down."

Councillors made it clear that they will not support the project if the funding model is not changed.

"If this becomes yet another way that Niagara-on-the-Lake gets dinged in an unfair way, economically speaking," Coun. Clare Cameron said.

"And if we have to wrangle our own local budget to accommodate a regional initiative, yet again, (then) this is going to be very problematic for anyone on this council or in this community to support. And that would be such a shame because transit is such a

good initiative," she told the meeting.

The town also had problems about municipal representation on the commission.

The proposed commission would have nine voting members: five from regional councils and four skill-based or public members. The five regional council members would consist of one each from Welland, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, and two chosen to represent the rest of the municipalities as a group, including NOTL, according to the presentation.

"If we are going to pay the third-highest bill we should have (better) representation on the commission," Disero said.

"We want to make sure that all municipalities, not just Niagara-on-the-Lake, but particularly Niagara-on-the-Lake, does have representation on this commission."

Councillors were also concerned that a hoped-

for GO train stop in Glendale would not be a part of the project, meaning that NOTL would get even less out of a regional transit initiative for the town's cost.

"When are we scheduled to get GO Transit at Glendale?" Disero asked Robinson during the meeting.

He said that would happen "once (Glendale) starts to build out. I think that's where the opportunity to locate the train station in that vicinity will certainly come about."

Disero said, "Great. So, so far there's nothing on the books, that's what you're saying?" Robinson agreed.

The presentation was made so GO Transit officials could collect feedback from Niagara municipalities before the final plan is presented.

"We've instructed our staff to go and talk (with GO transit). And, while we support the principle of a regional transit system, there are some things that need to be worked out," said Disero.



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Shaw Festival gets \$1 million from province

Staff
The Lake Report

The Shaw Festival is getting \$1 million from the province to help it recover from the pandemic.

The money is part of more than \$25 million being spent to help artists and arts organizations that have been affected by COVID-19.

The Niagara Symphony Orchestra will also receive \$52,061.

“Ontario’s arts sector, like so many of the province’s heritage, sport, tourism and culture industries, was



Shaw Festival executive director Tim Jennings. SUPPLIED

among the first and hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a ‘high-touch’ sector that depends on gatherings of people and will take the longest to recover,” Heritage Minister Lisa MacLeod said in a

media release.

“Arts and cultural festivals, live musicians, writers, filmmakers, art galleries, and dance and theatre companies are vital to the cultural fabric of this province,” she said.

“They also play an important role in the mental health and well-being of Ontarians and an equally important role in the province’s economic and social recovery.”

Tim Jennings, Shaw’s executive director, said, “We cannot overstate the value of this investment by the prov-

ince into Ontario’s arts and culture institutions or thank the ministry enough.”

“As one of the Niagara Region’s 20 largest employers, and an economic generator that anchors thousands of related tourism jobs for our local wineries, hotels, restaurants and retail shops, the Shaw Festival knows that we, and our colleagues across the province, are deeply and intrinsically linked to the economic success and stability of our communities, as well as their cultural health,” Jennings said.

Hirji continues to warn against openings

Continued from Front Page

proportion of cases that we have of COVID-19.”

For perspective, the time it takes for cases of common COVID to double is about 400 days. The doubling time for the variant is 4.4 days.

“Which is consistent with exponential growth every four and a half days, we seem to be doubling the number of variants that we have,” Hirji said.

The caution, he said, is the Niagara data is based on a very small number of cases so far.

“So these numbers could be a little bit exaggerated just because of that. But I think it’s overall clear that the variants are now what are driving our cases flattening out, as opposed to continuing the decline that we were seeing earlier.”

Last week, he showed data from the province that predicted variant cases would start to climb.

“And I showed several other international comparisons where you saw a big spike leading to a third wave after regions reopened



Dr. Mustafa Hirji. SUPPLIED

in a relatively high rate, and gave opportunity for those variants to start to spread,” he said.

With Niagara now in the COVID red zone, Hirji says people need to continue to be diligent about staying home, sanitizing and social distancing.

“This is exactly what the provincial modelling said. We would see our non-variant cases come down, we would see our variant cases start to climb, and as they grow large enough, they would start to dominate and we start to see that upwards trend.”

Based on those numbers and the doubling rate of COVID variants, it’s possible the number of cases could be as high as 100 next week.

He said a major concern is

that Niagara hasn’t gotten its hospital case numbers down.

The “vast majority” of cases in Niagara are related to travel, to the GTA and even outside Ontario, Hirji said.

“Or indirectly linked where, for example, one person is linked to travel and then, say, family members of theirs become sick because they’ve had contact. There are a couple of cases, though, where we haven’t found that link. So, there is a possibility there is some community transmission occurring.”

“The province has made the policy decision that they are going to proceed with reopening despite these risks being presented by their own expert bodies,” Hirji said.

In order to prevent a third wave, people need to continue to stay home and not travel for non-essential purposes “and really almost live as if we’re still in the mindset that we were in the lockdown living under a stay-at-home order.”

He said while some businesses are open, people should still be avoiding them except briefly for essential

reasons.

“It is not a positive story with the variants. It’s thus far looking like we are tracking where the modelling has said we would go if we did an aggressive reopening. And, unfortunately, I think it’s down to our personal behaviour as citizens now whether or not we avoid that third wave.”

“I have been cautioning all along that we shouldn’t be reopening very quickly. Obviously, there’s a provincial policy decision to go a different way. And I think we’re seeing the fallout of those policy decisions right now,” he said.

“In terms of when I might advocate that the emergency brake be used, I’m actually reaching out to my colleagues in Thunder Bay as well as Simcoe, Muskoka to get a better understanding of what drove the use of the emergency brake there, so I have a better sense of when the situation might meet the threshold and when the province might take action,” he said.

Public health has started to publish the numbers of variant cases on its website.

Man arrested after quick joy ride in Shelby Cobra

Staff
The Lake Report

Niagara Regional Police have arrested a 49-year-old Thorold man after someone entered a Niagara-on-the-Lake garage and took a Shelby Cobra replica for a



short joy ride.

Police say a man took the car at about 3:45 p.m. on Feb. 25 and returned it


about 12 minutes later.

The Shelby Cobra, created by race car driver and designer Carroll Shelby, is considered one of the most iconic North American sports cars ever made.

An original 1962 model Shelby could be worth more


than \$1 million, according to automotive websites. Replica versions are valued at \$100,000 or more.

Police charged Kevin Turner with one count of theft of a vehicle and one count of failure to comply with a probation order.



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COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases: 7
Region active cases: 167
Region deaths: 369
Region total cases: 8,647
Region resolved cases: 8,111
Region variant cases: 40

*Mar. 3 data per Niagara Region Public Health



Contributed by Patty Garriock

“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.” - Joshua J. Marina

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Editorial: The ‘stay home’ stretch

Richard Harley
 Editor-In-Chief

There are a lot of people out there who are questioning the advice of Niagara's top doctor, Mustafa Hirji.

And they couldn't be more wrong.

Hirji consistently has been warning of the dangers of new variants arriving in Niagara, cautioning that provincial models and examples around the world show variants could mean a drastic, third wave spike in COVID-19 cases.

Yet, despite his concerns and the similar worries of other medical officers, the province has decided to push forward with opening up and to ignore the potential dangers.

It's not the right move. It's being done for political reasons and potentially putting the health and safety of

Canadians at risk.

So, as Hirji said this week, unfortunately now the fate of Niagara is in our hands, and even the hands of people who may decide to travel here.

That's a clear warning. And despite some people, including a few NOTL business owners, believing Hirji has some vendetta against restaurants and other businesses, the advice is not coming from just Hirji.

We're a small business and acutely feel the pain of NOTL's small businesses as well. But decisions about public health priorities should be scientific, not political, decisions.

It is tough medicine but as a community, we need to remain diligent in social distancing and not leaving the house unless it's essential.

Until we see the full effect of variants, it's hard to know

what is going to happen.

Another full lockdown could be ruinous.

While deaths have stalled in the region, with no new COVID fatalities being reported for a week now, Hirji remains concerned about the vulnerable population of age 80-plus folks who don't live in long-term care homes.

He's also worried about people in the 50 to 80 age bracket, because those people are most likely to be admitted to the hospital and put in intensive care.

So, while the decline in deaths may seem like we're beating COVID, we're not out of the woods just yet.

Maybe, just maybe, when people aged 50 to 80 have been vaccinated, we'll be able to really get back to wider reopening.

But that might not happen until Canadians have all been given a chance to get

the vaccine.

During a media conference Monday, Hirji said our levels of people in hospital with COVID-19 have not come down to anywhere near the numbers we saw when the province opened last summer.

And, if we open too quickly and hospitals are flooded, it means fewer health care workers will be available to administer vaccines. It means public health will be overwhelmed with contact tracing, taking even more people away from vaccine-related measures.

So, really, the more we go out and act carelessly, the longer it's likely going to take for us to recover.

Don't be one of those people who learns their lesson the hard way.

Just stay home.

editor@niagaranow.com



Newark Neighbours collecting items for Easter hampers

Dear editor:

Hello from all our volunteers to our caring community.

Newark Neighbours is most fortunate to have folks starting to ask us what items we need for our Easter food hampers.

Our food manager, Cindy Grant, has identified the following items: canned green beans, canned peas, canned pineapple, bottled juice (cranberry or apple), crackers, cookies (any kind or flavour) and chocolates for Easter baskets.

You can also check our website at www.newark-

neighbours.ca any time to find out what general items our food bank requires and the items that are currently well-stocked.

Food donations can be dropped off at our 310 John St. location on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:30 a.m. and noon.

Food client registration for an Easter food hamper begins on Tuesday, March 9, and will close on Thursday, March 25.

Distribution of the hampers will take place on Thursday, April 1, from Cornerstone Community Church. Please call our

store at 905-468-3519 to register.

Earlier this year we contacted Jane Andres to see how we could help with the arrival of the farmworkers. A need to help fill the Welcome Bags was identified and we were able to donate over 300 pairs of thermal socks, masks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving kits and soap bars.

We would like to sincerely thank the following organizations for their generous monetary or “in kind” donations: Canopy Growth Corporation, Ann-Louise Branscombe Fund

at Niagara Community Foundation, customer donations collected at Phil's Valu-Mart, Crossroads Public School, Grace United Church and Dawland Farms & Landscaping.

Our Thrift Shop remains closed due to COVID-19 restrictions and we are not able to accept any clothing or household items at this time.

Happy Easter to everyone and we look forward to the day we can welcome our customers back to shop.

Laura Gibson
 President
 Newark Neighbours

Town needs homes to better respect NOTL heritage

Dear editor,

Riding around town I noticed two homes on the same street that in my opinion seem to be out of place and not reflect the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I strongly agree with your columnist Brian Marshall when he wrote that: “Our need for a truly encompass-

ing heritage conservation plan remains critical.”

We have to preserve the look of the community that makes NOTL what it was all about in the first place.

I hope the town commits to preserving its heritage looks.

Dr. William Rodriguez
 NOTL



An out-of-character house for NOTL. SUPPLIED



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OPINION

Yes, Texas-style power outage could happen here

Tim Curtis
Special to The Lake Report

With the recent large power outages in Texas, many people are wondering: Can the same thing happen here?

The short answer has to be ... yes. It is impossible to plan for every contingency and, as occurred with the blackout in 2003, the source of an outage can be far away and in a manner not properly considered.

The cold weather that hit Texas will not bother us; we are used to it and built for it. But there are plenty of other events that could cause outage challenges: ice storms, hurricane-level winds, terrorism, cyber-attacks or massive heat waves, to name a few.

The good news is there is a lot of work being done at your municipal, provincial and continental levels to protect the electrical system in case of problems.

At the municipal level, this is the responsibility of Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro. On average around seven per cent of the electricity we use comes from the solar and hydro plants within the NOTL Hydro system. The remaining 93 per cent comes from the transmission grid.

Over the past 15 years, NOTL Hydro has continuously improved our connec-



North American regional reliability councils and interconnections. SUPPLIED

tion to the grid so that we now have two transformation stations, both owned by NOTL Hydro, that can each independently supply enough electricity for the whole town.

All of NOTL's electricity from the grid comes from a pair of transmission lines that are both on the transmission tower line that runs from the Beck generating station into St. Catharines. It is hard to imagine having a closer and more reliable source of generated electricity than the Beck hydro station on the Niagara River in Queenston. Should these lines go down in any one spot, electricity can always be fed in the other direction.

Within NOTL, most of our customers are on a loop system of distribution circuits. This means that in case of an outage, we can restore electricity to most customers by redirect-

ing the electricity flow so that only those customers directly affected by the outage are without electricity while we make the necessary repairs. NOTL Hydro is continuously investing to improve the electricity system within NOTL.

Provincially, two bodies are responsible for managing the distribution of electricity around Ontario and for the contingency planning needed to ensure electricity will continue to flow in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Hydro One owns and maintains 98 per cent of the transmission lines in Ontario. With regards to high-voltage transmission, Hydro One's staff and service are industry leading and the system is well-maintained.

The Independent Electricity System Operator of Ontario (IESO) is responsible for managing the flow of electricity across the trans-

mission lines and ensuring there is enough generated electricity at all times to meet demand. Maps of the electrical grid can be found at <https://www.ieso.ca/localContent/ontarioenergymap/index.html>. The IESO's role in this regard is fundamental and managed by very qualified personnel.

Finally, the North American Electricity Reliability Corp. (known as NERC) is responsible for setting standards and assisting the provincial and state regulatory bodies to ensure that electricity can flow to regions affected by a disaster from regions that are not.

NERC is divided into regional councils and Ontario is part of the Northeast Power Co-ordinating Council and there is Ontario representation in its governance. Should a disaster strike Ontario, there are interconnections and agreements with Quebec, New York state and Minnesota so that electricity can be brought in as needed.

The widespread loss of power can have a devastating impact. Lessons learned from the massive outages of 1968 and 2003 and the ice storm of 1998 have helped create the systems in place now to try to prevent their reoccurrence.

Tim Curtis is president of NOTL Hydro.

Immune-suppressed patients not given vaccine priority

Dear editor:

I have tried since mid-December to get answer to a very simple question.

"Will persons with immune suppression (organ transplant recipients), autoimmune disorders, serious respiratory diseases, heart issues and other serious underlying conditions be considered as high-risk individuals and have a specific priority position within the vaccine rollout prioritization?"

This question has been posed to Health Canada, Patti Hajdu, Justin Trudeau, Doug Ford, Christine El-

liott and Ontario's health ministry.

When I do get a response, it is always a "form letter" referencing a web link that shows the prioritization that we have been hearing about (long-term care residents and staff, health care workers, remote indigenous communities, etc., followed by over 80, then 75 and so on).

Failure to recognize the immune-suppressed population as being high-risk seems like a grave oversight to me. I am certain that in a community like ours, full

of seniors, that there are a significant number of people who have serious underlying conditions and are at much higher risk than a healthy 75- or 80-year-old.

I fall into this category, as I have a kidney transplant and have suppressed immunity as well as a serious respiratory condition. I, and others like me, are at very high risk and would not survive COVID.

It appears at present, at least, that I will likely have to wait until mid-May as I am in the 70 to 75 age grouping. My wife and I

will have to continue living in fear and isolation until our "turn" comes around.

Mr. Trudeau and his government have much to answer for in their response to the pandemic a year ago and their botched handling of border closures and vaccine procurement. The fact that we are 47th or worse in the world in terms of population percentage vaccinated speaks volumes concerning the incompetence of Trudeau and his government.

Ron Ashenurst
NOTL

We welcome your letters

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated. Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 496 Mississauga St., NOTL.

We will win against COVID – keep wearing your mask and checking in on loved ones

Wayne Gates
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Socks for Change back at Virgil Avondale

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Despite COVID restrictions and a provincial lockdown, collections for Socks for Change at the Virgil Avondale store are more than halfway to last year's fundraising total.

Enough money has been raised in the first month of fundraising to supply 400 pairs of wool socks.

For a \$2 donation, people can purchase a pair of socks that will be given to a community member in need. Donations are being accepted until March 31.

"I figure doing 400 in lockdown was pretty good," store manager Kathy Brown said. "I'm hoping to sell more this year."

This is the second year the Niagara-on-the-Lake store has hosted Socks for Change and last year the location raised enough for 650 pairs of socks.

Socks for Change is a non-profit organization that uses donations to source and



Virgil Avondale manager Kathy Brown with Socks for Change cards. JESSICA MAXWELL

produce Canadian-made socks, hats, neck warmers and gloves.

"Everyone who gives a toonie for a card and puts their family's name on it, that instantly turns into a wool sock," said Sam Baio, founder of Socks for Change.

"There is such a need here (in Niagara) and people don't realize," he said.

This year, Brown said money raised in town will stay local and be distributed to schools, charities and migrant workers.

Fundraising at Avondale during COVID just makes sense to Brown because of the high traffic the store receives.

After working at the Virgil location for five years, she said residents

are always happy to help others.

"This community is really awesome," she said. "I'm amazed, really, at the amount of support. Anything I asked for, they come through for."

Brown also runs an annual food drive at the store and is currently selling NOTL 4 All T-shirts in support of Red Roof Retreat.

Town's donated pumper arrives in Dominican Republic

Staff
The Lake Report

A reserve pumper that was donated by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has arrived at its destination in Sosua, Dominican Republic.

The pumper arrived Feb. 23, marking the second time the town has successfully donated a pumper to Sosua in collaboration with non-profit group Fuente de Esperanza.

The beach town had been left without an active fire truck, after mechanical failures put the 1985 Ford fire truck the town donated in 2011 out of service, the town said in a media release Tuesday.

"We are thrilled to be able to once again go beyond our borders to help provide another community with essential equipment to respond to emergencies," said fire chief Nick Ruller.

"I'd like to thank members of town council for supporting this endeavour and David Kersteman from Fuente de Esperanza for organizing the donation."



A donated reserve pumper has made it to the Dominican Republic. SUPPLIED

The 30-year-old reserve pumper, worth about \$3,000 to \$4,000, was "no longer effective" for NOTL as it needed about \$4,800 in repairs and maintenance, which exceeded its market value, the town said.

"For the city of Sosua, however, the apparatus could be repaired to meet safety requirements and

actively used to protect the community."

The NOTL fire department also donated used equipment that was "deemed non-compliant according to Canadian standards but still provides value to the Fuente de Esperanza group."

"This equipment included old fire hose, nozzles

and analog radios with batteries."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said on behalf of council she's "pleased to support this progressive initiative that breaks borders and supports emergency response efforts in the community of the Sosua."

"Well done to everyone involved."



Governments should get out of the way

Dear editor:

Have you heard of the new "Fast Track" medical system? This is the newest government system to make people think that surgery is less than a light year away from getting relief for the debilitating pain in your knee, shoulder or back.

If you believe that it means just what it's called, Fast Track, I have some land in Florida that is in the area of, well, you know the rest of that sales pitch.

I was in the Fast Track system for back surgery with two ruptured discs in my back. I may be 84, but before the accident happened I was playing a fair amount of golf each week and doing carpentry work in our home.

I'm a young 84 and have a zest for life. This system required me to see two chiropractors to assess my situation before they would pass me on to be seen by a surgeon.

Now, would you believe that once you see the surgeon in the Fast Track system that you will then get into surgery within days or just a few weeks? Wrong! At the very best, 12 to 18 months is the wait time for the surgeon I saw.

In 1971, it was two days to get the same surgery I needed. The surgeon said the only thing the Fast Track system does is it gets you to be seen by him sooner than the old system, which would have been 12 months or longer.

The reason for the delay is not the doctors, it's the hospitals not giving them enough operating room time. In order to keep their budgets in line, they only allot the surgeons so many hours per year in the operating room. He said if he could get all the operat-

ing room time he needed he could clear up his wait list in a matter of weeks.

Would you say the system is broken? Our hospitals are understaffed with nurses required to run a complete hospital. We have a modern and beautiful hospital in St. Catharines General. One ER doctor on at night means patients brought in by ambulance at 5:30 p.m. might not get seen until 4 a.m.

If you're bleeding and near death you will certainly be seen much faster. A patient brought in following an exploratory examination the same day, was not seen by the ER doctors for 11 hours. Finally, she was given pain killers to help her deal with the excruciating pain she had been experiencing for 15 hours. The pain was due to a problem with her pancreas caused by the exploratory exam of her bile duct.

The problems continued; after three days lying on a gurney in the ER she was finally put into a three-bed location. After a week of less than two hours of sleep per night her family doctor requested a private room. The cost to her family was over \$3,000, even though it was her doctor who requested this change in rooms.

There were other more serious mistakes that almost took her life, all due to medical errors that should never have happened.

Our medical system requires much-needed changes, but only by people who understand how a business should be run.

Government, stay out of the way – you got us into this mess, so let qualified people take over and do what you haven't been able to.

Tom Thornton
NOTL



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Audiologist

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NOTL's Dr. Robin Williams honoured for International Women's Day

Staff
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Dr. Robin Williams will be honoured at a special International Women's Day ceremony on Friday.

The ceremony, hosted by the Women in Niagara council of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, is meant to honour exceptional women in Niagara's business community.

Williams, who will receive this year's award, is the former chief medical officer of health for Niagara Region. The St. Davids resident also now serves as special adviser to both the

provincial health ministry and the Niagara regional chair's COVID-19 vaccine distribution task force.

In 2014, Williams was named to the Order of Canada "for her contributions as a public health leader promoting effective policies in early childhood development."

The online event will also feature keynote speaker Vicki Saunders, founder of #radical generosity and SheEO, a global community of radically generous women "supporting women-led ventures working on the world's to-do list."

The event will be online Friday at 10 a.m. Tickets can be purchased here.



Dr. Robin Williams. SUPPLIED

Museum celebrates women with a month of films

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Lake Report

In honour of International Women's Day on March 8, the NOTL Museum and RiverBrink Art Museum are co-hosting a series of four documentaries, as part of the NOTL Museum's 'Doc Club' offerings.

The "Doc Club" meets virtually to discuss and debate various Canadian documentaries, many of them courtesy of the rich National Film Board library. Participants watch the shows in their own time and then bring their observations to a virtual discussion.

During March, the Doc Club's four films highlight the fearless, the feisty and the tenacity of some of Canada's often unheralded heroines. They share a typical resilient Canadian identity and come from the world of art, medicine, and the political sphere.

The first film in March is part of the NFB series "The Canadians" and tells the story of Agnes MacPhail, who became Canada's first woman member of Parliament exactly 100 years ago. The debate will be held on Friday, March 5, 10 a.m.

"The Doc Club has proven to be a welcome break

in our pandemic lives," said Judy Thornton. "We all miss the Shaw's films this winter and it's been good fun to have a good-hearted debate over tea and short-bread."

The series continues with "By Woman's Hand," with a discussion on March 12, 10 a.m., then "Wanted! Doctor on Horseback," with a discussion on March 19, 10 a.m. and wraps up with "Bone Wind Fire," an evocative journey into the hearts, minds and eyes of Georgia O'Keeffe, Emily Carr and Frida Kahlo – three of the 20th century's most remarkable artists.

Discussion is on March 26, 10 a.m.

March is also designated Women's History Month in the U.S., Australia and the U.K. Canada's celebration is always in October, to correspond with Persons Day, honouring the groundbreaking legislation known as the Persons Case of October 1929, which gave women the right to sit in Canada's Senate.

Registration is required to join the Doc Club discussions and to receive links for each documentary. For more information contact: sdelazzer@riverbrink.org or bworthy@nhsm.ca.

Lecture explores history of prostitution in NOTL

Barbara Worthy
Special to The Lake Report

The fact that the oldest trade in the world is still highly controversial, subject to various laws and penalties, and has survived for hundreds of years perhaps tells us more about our society, than it does about the actual "trade."

On March 10, at 11 a.m., Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's assistant curator Shawna Butts will present "Not All Women Are Saints" – a virtual lecture exploring this phenomenon, as well as the treatment of women by the criminal justice system

over the past 200 years.

Using court records, transcripts and witness statements, Butts will highlight different women and their stories. "I think a lot of people will be surprised at the history of prostitution here, because 'prostitute' and 'NOTL' doesn't seem to go together these days," said Butts.

The oldest trade in the world has always been influenced by socio-economic forces and, in a military town like Niagara-on-the-Lake, "camp followers" were well known. And brothels and bawdy houses were common throughout the town.

Bernard Shaw famously wrote that by "underpaying, undervaluing and overworking women so shamefully ... the poorest of them are forced to resort to prostitution to keep body and soul together."

This lecture will also explore the history of discrimination within the courts. Historically, women were subjected to a male dominated world view and issues of abuse and assault were often dismissed.

"This lecture will touch upon sensitive subjects," said Butts, "Domestic violence, rape and assault will be included, and some partici-

pants may find this upsetting."

Butts received her honours BA in anthropology from the University of Guelph and went on to complete an advanced diploma in applied museum studies at Algonquin College. She is also the assistant curator of the current exhibit at the museum, "Making Her Mark: The Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake," which is open to the public with restricted hours due to COVID.

Registration for the March 10 presentation of "Not All Women Are Saints" is required at www.nhsm.ca/events.

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Far left: Randy Norris gets a kiss from Logan, one of his eight foxhounds. Left: Norris has a large portion of his yard sectioned off for a dog kennel and stomping ground for his dogs, like Logan.

Longtime coyote hunter says hobby is legal, **speaks out** against

Continued from Front Page

The rest of the carcass is simply left in the woods for other animals to eat.

Norris said there's always been backlash to his hobby, but now he's speaking out after vocal criticisms both in-person and online.

Twice now he said police have been called by the same farmer who claimed he was illegally hunting on a private property. However, Norris did in fact have permission from the land owner to hunt the coyotes and claims he was never hunting elsewhere.

On both occasions, things got heated. On Feb. 5, one of Norris' fellow hunters had mistakenly parked in a driveway on Line 6 Road, which caused a dispute between hunters and the land owner, Warren Dyck, who has been strongly against the hunting. During the incident, Norris said Dyck blocked a hunter's car in the driveway for more than two hours.

Police ended up giving them both a warning.

In response to questions from The Lake Report about the incident, Niagara Regional Police Const. Jesse Vujasic said, "Trespassers were warned not to come back and (the) owner was advised not to block people in."

"The one that got the stern warning was (Dyck)," Norris said.

Norris maintains he wasn't trespassing and was hunting on the adjoining property with permission from the owner, Ed Unger.

When contacted by The Lake Report, Unger, who operates an apiary and small-scale farm on the land, said Norris "definitely" has permission to hunt on his property.

"Yes, completely 100 per cent authority to go

on my property, wherever he needs or whenever he needs. Because I trust hunters. They are very trustworthy. They know what they're doing," Unger said.

On the second occasion, Feb. 26, Norris said Dyck was actively seeking out his hunting group and again accused them of hunting on another property illegally. However, upon phoning the owner of the property, he discovered Norris did in fact have permission for his hunt there as well.

On that occasion, police were stern with Dyck. In a video obtained by The Lake Report, an officer can be heard telling him to go home.

"It's none of your business if they're on other people's property," the officer says.

"That's true," Dyck replies.

"So then, go home," the officer says.

Reached by The Lake Report on Tuesday, Dyck said he's not anti-hunting, but is concerned about the safety of farm workers, kids on ATVs and says as a grape grower he actually likes the coyotes on his land, as they help with rodent and rabbit problems.

Rabbits will gnaw at grape vines and cause them to die, Dyck said.

"We don't want the rabbits in the vineyard, but we'd like the coyotes in the vineyard," he said.

While he does recognize there are farmers who actually want coyote hunters on their land, "There's a lot of farmers that don't want them either."

Dyck said though he knows the vehicles and licence plates of the hunters, he isn't actively seeking them out to get into confrontations.

"I'm not seeking them out. I just see them.

Like when I go and look at one of my properties,

they're there. I never seek them out," he said.

Regarding safety concerns, Norris said there has never been an incident of someone getting hurt in his 30 years of hunting in NOTL.

Dyck also said hunters don't always seek permission and questions whether they have permission for all the places they hunt.

"They were hunting on (my) property. I saw them. But by the time I call 911, they're gone," Dyck said.

Norris said he's not hunting in places where he doesn't have permission, but occasionally his dogs do run onto other properties and he tries to get them off or lead them to the road.

"Sometimes the dogs pass onto people's property because they can't read the sign," he said. "If they're chasing a coyote, they'll pass on it. And what we do is we'll go around the block and we'll catch the dog when it comes to the road. Nobody shoots on the property. Nobody goes on the property."

He said he and his hunters go "above and beyond" to make sure they're doing things legally and safely. All of his dogs have satellite tracking systems and the hunters all carry small game licences which permit hunting of coyotes.

"We need a licence, we need permission," he said.

Norris said he understands people's concerns for safety around hunting, but takes offence at people who have called his group "thugs."

"We're not thugs, we're doing a legal activity," he said. "And if you check with the NRP, 30 years I've been down there, and I've never got a trespassing charge, ever. And no house has been shot and nobody's dog's been killed."

While some people might be alarmed to see a gun, "Niagara-on-the-Lake where I hunt is rural.

I don't care what people say. I'm allowed to hunt there."

Norris said he has permission for 200 acres in NOTL, including 200 acres at Farms and another 500 acres at another owner who lives in Toronto.

He said some people who call him "thugs" have their own agenda" and he has his, "I'm hunting legally."

There are several benefits to hunting coyotes, he said. Coyotes eat animals like chicken and sheep which are a nuisance to farmers. Many also eat crops, he said, which can spread to other areas.

Unger said he encourages Norris to hunt on his property, as the coyotes eat other animals. One year he lost 18 chickens and just last weekend, coyotes ate chickens, he said.

"It's terrible with the coyotes," he said. "We have small dogs, too, and they get them out of sight because the coyotes have to go after them."

He said his neighbours have been complaining for a long time and complaining because the coyotes are so aggressive.

Norris said coyotes left unchecked are "out of the food chain" in Niagara and are harmful to the deer population.

He believes his group of hunters is partly responsible for an increase in coyotes in recent years.

His group hunts from late December to the second week of March, and take down 40 coyotes per season. Some are as young as 60.

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gan. Right: Norris holds Dozer. Far right: A coyote pelt in Norris' games room. RICHARD HARLEY PHOTOS

ainst people calling his group 'thugs'

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"We have them for a couple months and then we leave them alone for the rest of the year. We just thin them out a little bit," he said.

"All these people in Niagara-on-the-Lake that are seeing all the deer and all the rabbits and all the pheasants now, it's because we're putting it back into balance because I would go down there and every grape row there would be a coyote track. You wouldn't see a pheasant. Very rare. You wouldn't see deer, never. Now you're seeing all that because it's all back to balance."

During his hunts, he brings along four of his dogs, who help locate the coyotes.

"The dogs will actually get the coyote up and running, and then we chase them onto the property that we have permission for and then we harvest the coyote. That's how it works."

He said sometimes larger male coyotes do challenge his dogs.

"He doesn't run from much in the wild, so he'll only run for so long, and then he'll stand his ground and fight with the dogs. Sometimes the dogs get a few licks, but not very often," he said.

"These hunting dogs have a different mindset. But the craziest part is they chase the coyote, and then they get back to the truck and they're like a lap dog. They'll sit right in your lap, lick your face."

During a visit to his home in Welland, it's clear he loves his dogs. His yard is built into a kennel attached to a fenced-in field for them to roam and play. The hounds are extremely friendly and clearly happy.

He said he's never had a dog seriously injured by a coyote.

"I know there's a lot of people that aren't real cool on what we do. I get that. But you know what, there's a lot of people that want us doing what we do."

Norris said he's been to town hall meetings and faced opposition before, but that in the end, people need to agree to disagree.

He said he gets the most satisfaction not from the killing, but from watching his dogs hunt.

"I like watching my dogs chase them. They're so smart," he said, adding he thinks it's a "sporting" way to hunt. Many coyotes get away in the end.

It's not a cheap hobby either.

"I've got a lot of money invested. That's why I'm so passionate about it and that's why I get a little bit upset when people are trying to make us look bad. Because we're not. We're not trying to bother anybody. We're just out for a Saturday or a Sunday to enjoy our day."

What animals can be hunted and how is determined by wildlife management units. In Niagara, open season for coyotes is all year, with no tags required.

"In areas where a tag is not required and there are no harvest limits, you may hunt cooperatively in a group without restrictions on the number of animals harvested or who can take them," the regulations say.

However, Ontario's hunting regulations say, "It is illegal to abandon or otherwise allow the pelt of a fur-bearing mammal to spoil or to be destroyed."

Norris said the hides of the coyotes are typically tanned and hung in hunting rooms.

And the answer to the looming question: No, they don't eat coyote meat.

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Answered first by: Sheelah Young

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Margie Enns, Bill Hamilton, Frank Bucci, Cathy Watson, Pam Dowling, Elaine Landray, Sheila Meloche, Katie Reimer,

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Left: Deleen Priddle, Niagara Long Term Care resident. Right: Priddle watches her daughter and grandchildren through her bedroom window. SUPPLIED

Window visits at care home bring joy in dark times

Continued from Front Page

is hour by hour and especially hard for those with dementia who cannot fully understand the isolation restrictions or dangers of the virus," says Bennett.

"Although we have had many telephone calls and virtual Skype/Zoom calls with her, it is not the same as being there in person," she says.

"With each call we would hear her repeatedly ask when we were coming to see her, when we were going to take her for a drive, when was she going to be able to eat in the dining room with

the others again, when can we take her out for coffee."

That made the family realize they needed to do a window visit to give her a reason to get out of bed, says Bennett.

Although the Niagara Long Term Care Residence does not have a lot of window visits because of the cold temperatures, says executive director Chris Poos, this family had a great time playing in the snow with their family while putting a smile on their grandmother's face.

The children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren range in age from

two to 67 years old.

"It changed her whole perspective of caring to get out of bed. She was thrilled to see the children playing in the snow and being able to talk to them at the same time with the use of cell-phones," Bennett says.

"She was laughing, telling the staff who the little ones were, and talked one-on-one with each grandchild and great-grandchild," she says. "The window visit gave her a purpose to get out of bed, to take in the sunshine through the window, to care about her appearance, to be able to brag about her family to the staff and to laugh again."

While the kids were playing in the snow, other residents in the building were also able to enjoy it as they looked out their window and waved to the children. Now, the family knows how to make a visit fun and cheerful for all the residents, her daughter says.

When her sister Elaine visits at the window, "she brings something along to make it fun. When all the great-grandchildren were there, she brought funny hats for them all to wear. She also brought a gigantic helium heart balloon that said 'Hugs' on it," says Bennett.

The COVID outbreak at the facility was declared over by public health last Sunday, Poos said.

"Through the outbreak, we were in regular contact with families ... This consistent communication through emails, phone calls, and virtual town halls allows families to feel connected to the home and their loved ones," he told The Lake Report.

"I believe this helped with alleviating any concerns the family members may have been experiencing."

Although families cannot see their loved ones in person, the residence is

helping residents to have virtual contact using phones or iPads.

Bennett notes, "We are encouraged and fortunate to be able to schedule telephone and virtual visits with the residents very frequently through their recreational director. We talk to our mom a few times a week this way and are able to arrange the window visits whenever we have asked to."

She says the family is happy they have found a way to entertain, visit and connect with their mother.

"Even a short visit of this nature has brought joy to her and the other residents."



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Salmon | Potato | Grated Parmesan | Egg | Flour | Butter | Onions | Cloves | Parsley



NOTL's pharmacists

The Lake Report wants to help recognize NOTL's Pandemic Heroes — people who have made a difference, big or small, in a positive way. You can help us recognize someone in the community by sending a bit about the person and why they're a Pandemic Hero. Please send your nominations early to editor@niagaranow.com. A special thanks to Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery for providing a bottle of sparkling wine to each of our pandemic heroes. That's the spirit!

Niagara-on-the-Lake's independent pharmacists have been thinking outside the box since the beginning of this pandemic – which is one of the reasons they have both been nominated as pandemic heroes.

Julie Dyck, owner/pharmacist of Stone Road Pharmacy, says she needed to adapt her service delivery model to meet the needs of her customers while also following frequently changing restrictions and guidelines for maintaining public health and safety.

“Many times when people come into the store now we are their personal shoppers and we'll walk around and grab everything for them. They kind of stay on the welcome mat and we grab the products for them so that way it makes them feel very safe,” she says.

Dyck credits her team for keeping the pharmacy in high spirits throughout these uncertain times.

“Every day we just remind ourselves that we're grateful we're able to work and that we still have workplace to come to ... And even though the customers can't see our smiles we joke that they can see the wrinkles in our eyes when we smile,” Dyck says.

Sean Simpson, owner of Simpson's Pharmacy, says from the beginning of the pandemic he and his staff have done whatever they could to create a safe environment for every person walking into each of his locations – on Niagara Stone Road and King Street in Old Town.

His goal is “to provide people's essential medications and access to our other services in as safe a manner as possible. So that people could continue to get their everyday health care needs looked after, all while feeling safe,” Simpson says.

With the help of volunteers, he says he was able to “ramp up” delivery services right from the start. The website was updated to include all of the products offered in store. He says he wanted to offer a better online shopping experience, so customers had access to all of the products they were used to finding in store.

“We're trying to create a safe environment. We added the COVID testing service, which has gone well ... Our mantra is to do whatever we can to create a safe environment but also to provide the products and services that people need,” Simpson says.



Sean Simpson, owner of Simpson's Pharmacy. FILE/JESSICA MAXWELL



Julie Dyck and team at Stone Road Pharmacy. FILE/BRITTANY CARTER

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Have some fun

Across

- 1. Total (3-2)
- 4. Fat bakers make a hash of the morning meal (9)
- 9. Framework of hexagonal cells (9)
- 10. Petty officer on a merchant ship (5)
- 11. Game with traps and checks (3,6)
- 12. Headed (5)
- 13. "Good Will Hunting" star (4,5)
- 15. Cheap WW2 sub-machine gun (4)
- 17. Of the present month (4)
- 19. Victories (9)
- 23. Overtly aggressive man (5)
- 24. Perceptive (9)
- 26. Where you are now (5)
- 27. Noiseless (9)
- 28. Aping (9)
- 29. Sides in an eternal battle (5)

Down

- 1. Belief that there is no God (7)
- 2. Not strict (7)
- 3. Cargoes (8)
- 4. Tolerate (5)
- 5. At an early stage (9)
- 6. Sticky snacks? (6)
- 7. Kind of rifle (7)
- 8. Switched on (5,2)
- 14. Il Duce (9)
- 16. Humiliates (8)
- 17. Tel Aviv native, for example (7)
- 18. Feudal Japanese warrior (7)
- 20. Support for an orator (7)
- 21. Artists' models (7)
- 22. Battle of Jericho leader (6)
- 25. Colloquialism (5)

Crossword Puzzle


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Last issue's answers

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			8	5			






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Napoleon visits plague victims

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

In the days when nothing went viral except disease, how authorities dealt with crises and communicated their message was a matter of concern as great then as it is today.

A case in point is the Egyptian campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte in the Levant and North Africa in 1799.

In the painting, “Napoleon Visiting the Plague Victims of Jaffa” by Antoine-Jean Gros, we see the brilliant young general from Corsica who had not only led victorious French armies to conquer most of Europe but was challenging the Ottoman Empire in the east.

The French had taken Egypt, Syria and, after a five-day siege, the Mediterranean port city of Jaffa,

but they hadn’t reckoned on another enemy, the bubonic plague.

The scene is set in a French army plague “hospital” in the arched courtyard of the Armenian Monastery of St. Nicholas in Jaffa.

In the foreground are sprawled bodies too weak to look up at the visitors. To the left, a wealthy Arab distributes bread into the thrusting hands of beggars. On the right, a collapsed delirious French officer rests his arm on a dying compatriot. A blind man, seeking help, inches forward.

In the centre, in a blaze of light, Napoleon, resplendent in his uniform, body full frontal, his head turned to face an emaciated soldier, reaches out his hand to touch the man’s open sore. His aide, reacting to the smell and fear of conta-



‘Napoleon Visiting the Plague Victims of Jaffa’ 1804, Antoine-Jean Gros, oil on canvas, Louvre, Paris. SUPPLIED

gion, holds a handkerchief to his nose. His personal physician, lifts a restraining hand, which Napoleon ignores.

The message is clear. Napoleon as hero, invincible, brave, god-like, with a strong reference to the compassionate Christ when he touched and cleansed the

lepers thereby spreading the message of faith in his healing power.

Was the painting true to facts? Yes, the French had taken Jaffa but had been thrown back in the north by the Ottomans and were retreating to Cairo. Napoleon had ordered over 2,500 prisoners of war to be killed

as guarding them would delay the retreat and freeing them would create more enemies to fight.

What about the sick French soldiers? Debatable. British propaganda was that Napoleon ordered they be given laudanum to hasten their deaths as they would be left behind to their

fate. Denied. Did this scene actually take place? Again debatable.

The importance of the painting, commissioned by the state, was its propaganda value to celebrate Napoleon’s divine power for posterity. It was unveiled in 1804 in the period between Napoleon’s proclamation as emperor of France in May and his coronation in December.

The Egyptian campaign ushered in the late Neo-Classicism “Empire Period” in French decorative and visual art. It was to become a boon for Egyptian travel and archeology and was a precursor of “Orientalist” art in the 19th century.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an art historian who taught at the University of Toronto for 10 years. She also was head of extension services at the Art Gallery of Ontario. See her upcoming lecture series “Art and Revolution, From Cave Art to the Future” Thursdays on Zoom, March 11 to April 29 at RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston.

Dr. Brown: Tools for studying the human brain keep improving

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



Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

In the early 1970s when I was a young staff neurologist in the department of clinical neurological sciences in London, Ont., our tool kit for studying the nervous system was limited to the clinical history and examination, lumbar puncture, plain X-rays, arteriograms, contrast myelography, electroencephalograms (EEGs), electromyograms (EMGs), radioisotope brain scans and an occasional air study.

Of those, the most useful tools were the clinical history and physical examination, which in skilled and experienced hands, were capable of localizing most lesions based on the time, course and nature of the symptoms and the clinical findings.

In those days neurosurgeons had the added practical advantage of

confronting many of the diseases they managed in the operating room, where they could see what was going on, even if, as was so often the case, there wasn’t much to do for many of the problems they faced.

Neurologists and neurosurgeons learned from one another and radiologists and pathologists by presenting clinical cases and critically reviewing the history, clinical findings, course of the disease, any relevant laboratory findings, imaging studies, biopsy material or, if the patient unfortunately died, the findings at autopsy.

These days, imaging studies and other data often provide the answer, but not always. Clinical-pathological conferences still play an important role in educating physicians and keeping them up to date. In the United States, the New England Journal of Medicine weekly publishes “Case

records of the Massachusetts General Hospital,” many of which cases are solved and manageable in life. I’ve found them a marvellous way to keep up to date and plan to incorporate some of that material in our continuing series about the brain at the NOTL library.

Beginning in the 1970s, there were several revolutions in imaging. First on the scene was computed X-ray tomography (CT scanning) which harnessed a computer to analyze focused X-ray beams as they rotated about the head to create virtual slices of the brain in three planes.

The results were amazing. For the first time we could see the grey matter of the neocortex and deeper nuclei and the vast web of connecting white matter. And with the aid of contrast agents, it was possible to see most tumours and even clots plugging arteries and veins.

Since then the resolution with CT scanning has improved and unlike MRIs, CT scans provide excellent resolution of bony structures.

But by far the greatest revolution came with the

introduction of MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) technologies. MRI depends on the fact that in a strong magnetic field, protons in water molecules, tend to line up. If a brief radio frequency (RF) pulse is then applied, those protons are briefly thrown out of alignment and energized, after which the acquired energy decays.

The rate of decay of the energy released by the protons may then be converted by a computer into images that reflect differences in the water content of the underlying brain – more water proportionally in grey matter and less in white matter where there is more lipid and less water.

The result of all that technical magic is marvellous images of the brain in the three cardinal planes. By changing the frequency, strength and duration of the RF signal, and the strength of the magnetic field, different images may be created depending on the water content of the underlying brain.

For example, in the case of ischemic strokes, there are usually three types of tissue (healthy brain, brain at risk

because of a marginal blood supply and dead brain), which can be differentiated from one another by diffusion/perfusion MRI scanning techniques.

The latter provide potentially brain-saving information about which areas of the brain are threatened and hence potentially salvageable if the circulation to them is restored in a timely fashion by dissolving the clot. Or in the case of a large artery, such as the middle cerebral artery, by physically extracting the clot through an intra-arterial catheter threaded up to the site of the clot.

MRI has also been adapted to create images that reflect local changes in oxygen consumption and blood flow that accompany specific tasks. Called functional MRI (fMRI) this tool has become the darling of psychologists and physiologists because it provides a useful tool for studying the localization of function in the brain in real time.

For example, tapping a finger, lights up the associated area in the motor cortex for controlling that

finger, or in other examples, different areas of the brain light up in response to reading, hearing and speaking words or recognition of familiar faces or perhaps remembering a favourite driving or walking route.

Perhaps most dramatic was the finding in severely brain injured patients who were wakeful but unable to respond, that when they were asked to imagine walking through a familiar neighbourhood or through their home, their brains lit up in the same areas as healthy subjects given the same instructions.

Those findings strongly suggested that some patients, thought to be functionally brain dead, understand and process information in the same places as you and I, yet are unable to show us that they understand.

These and other promising technologies such as genetics and computer-assisted brain recording and stimulation technologies are the subject of the second and third sessions in the BRAIN series on March 10 and 17 at 2 p.m. using Zoom through the NOTL library.

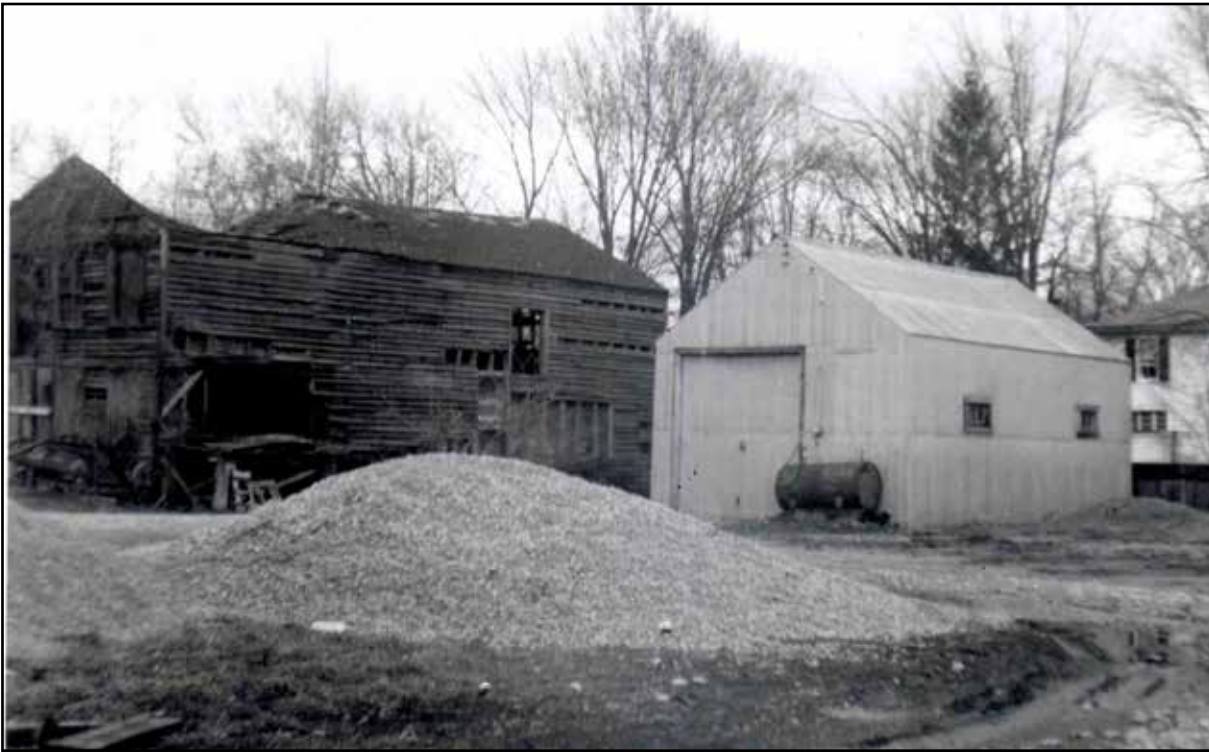


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WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Behind the courthouse

This photograph from 1957 shows the former municipal public works sheds that were located in the Market Square area of Niagara-on-the-Lake. This was directly behind the Queen Street courthouse, which was formerly the town hall. The white building on the far right is a home on Johnson Street that can still be seen. Today this area is used for visitor parking in the Heritage District. Do you have any memories about working here or exploring the area before it was moved? Let us know at the museum. Email us at contact@nhsm.ca.

Rise is roadtrips could lead to good year for tourism

Continued from Front Page

phenomenon that helped their business over the summer and fall.

"It wasn't like a black hole that we were feeling, and it really should have been if we didn't get all of those new local tourists," she says. "I like that development a lot, I don't think we would have seen that if it hadn't been for the pandemic, not at this rate."

Cesta says the majority of out-of-town visitors to Pieza were from the GTA and surrounding areas like Hamilton, Halton and Grimsby.

"It's funny to hear people live so close in the GTA and they've never been to the Niagara region," she says. "I think a lot of people are just desperate to get outside, get out of their house or go for a drive, and they've discovered Niagara-on-the-Lake."

Jovie Joki, owner of the Irish Harp, says she also saw more customers from Toronto and across Ontario when people were allowed to travel.

"We saw that more in September and October when we were open but as soon as the lockdown happened in Toronto or our area it was a huge dip in revenue," Joki says. "We also found that more people were going up north to areas that were open."

Across North America, road-tripping and the outdoors have become more popular distractions from the pandemic.

The 2020 COVID-19 North American Camping Report found that about half of the leisure travellers who camp would replace their cancelled or postponed travel with a road-trip, and 34 per cent of travellers who don't camp said they'll do the same as restrictions lift.

The report anticipates even more interest in road-tripping and camping as North Americans continue to look for safer ways to safely travel "close to home."

Guess Where Trips owner Jessica Off says her travel company saw a 100 per cent increase every month



Laryssa Cesta of Pieza Pizzeria. SUPPLIED

from September to December last year, with the highest demand seen in November. The company provides self-guided road trip itineraries in Ontario.

Based in the GTA, Guess Where Trips has an itinerary that features several hand-picked Niagara-on-the-Lake businesses, including Pieza Pizzeria, The Irish Harp, Old Tyme Candy Shop and Bistro 61.

"Niagara-on-the-Lake is such a great finishing point because there are so many great wineries, flower shops, local shops," Off says. "We actually include a whole Niagara-on-the-Lake guide at the end of our trip for people to choose from."

Off agreed there has been a kind of "road-trip renaissance" since the pandemic began. Those who aren't travelling to Europe or taking their typical summer trips are still looking to experience something new.

The increase in demand hasn't been without its challenges. Guess Where Trips had to constantly adjust, increasing the number of recommended outdoor attractions and other shops so that businesses wouldn't become overwhelmed.

With talk of possible future reopenings in Ontario, Joki and Cesta remain hopeful.

"I'm just hoping the town will be as receptive as they were last year with assisting businesses in the area and getting temporary patios or whatever the case may be," Joki says.

"It definitely was beneficial when we were finally able to open up in August, September, October. I think everyone's really hopeful we'll be in that place again."



Rise of developers

Brian Marshall
Columnist

Prior to 1945, there were no "residential housing developers" as we know them today.

Certainly there had been successful builders who would purchase a piece of land, divide it into lots, sell a lot and then contract with the buyer to build a house.

It wasn't uncommon that a quality builder might strongly recommend an architectural firm that they knew and trusted. And, occasionally, one of these builders might build a house "on spec" to model their craft and style.

The neighbourhoods that resulted from this approach, built over time, generally had a sense of continuity in style and form while maintaining the distinct nature of each



Low-density developer Suburbia. SUPPLIED

house. Old Glen Ridge in St. Catharines is an excellent example of these pre-Second World War practices.

The demobilization of slightly more than one million Canadian service personnel after 1945 resulted in significant issues around employment and housing. To answer the housing issue, enterprising builders lifted a page from the government's war-time Victory House program (and designs): construct modest houses with pre-fabricated components and specialized crews on an assembly line model.

With the co-operation of the government, large

tracts of land were expeditiously subdivided and developed. By 1950, one developer in a single tract was finishing 30 houses per day! These were the houses that made home ownership for those of average income attainable and altered societal expectations thereto.

With the successful model in place and the buying public wanting more, the stage was set for the growth of the juggernaut referred to as the "housing industry."

Construction companies across North America embarked on the development of large tracts of land, building homes for families

busy birthing the baby boom generation. The successful companies followed the Victory House formula: build easily constructed houses of similar size and limited variations with task-specialized teams on lots that maximized the saleable units per acre. It's a formula that is largely followed to this day.

The problem with this formula is that it irrevocably alters the architectural and cultural landscape. When hundreds of vanilla cookie-cutter houses are built, the original unique identity of a village or town is lost in a sea of suburban mundania.

Do I blame developers for this? Heavens no. As a business, they have a primary responsibility to generate profit for their shareholders and support their stakeholders. It is not the role of a corporation to safeguard a town's heritage, identity nor control the way in which it grows.

That responsibility rests with the town's citizens, their elected officials and municipal administration.

Based on the evidence, this is a fact most towns have failed to understand.



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What's NOTL's **sexiest** building?

Bernard Lansbergen
Special to The Lake Report

What is the sexiest building in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

Is it Locust Grove on Hunter Road or perhaps Willowbank with its Greek Revival style? The Woodbourne Inn in St. Davids or maybe McFarland House on the Niagara Parkway?

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum is looking for the input of the community as every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday a new poll is posted online, pitting two beloved NOTL buildings against each other.

The idea for the project was sparked after Shawna Butts, the museum's assistant curator and education programmer, saw a similar poll on social media for inns in the U.K.

She sent it as a joke to her colleagues but they liked the idea and quickly decided to put on a similar competition for the buildings in NOTL.

Thirty-two buildings were hand-picked by the staff of the NOTL museum and will compete through several



The McFarland House on the Niagara Parkway. FILE

rounds before a winner is declared in late April or May. The field has been narrowed to 16 quarter-finalists so far.

"For this particular series we've only selected heritage buildings because they have a more unique quality than the more modern buildings in Niagara-on-the-Lake," says Butts.

So what makes a building sexy?

"That's a very personal question," said Butts.

"When people are voting they are probably looking at the overall landscape of the property ... or they might have some personal connection to the buildings as well."

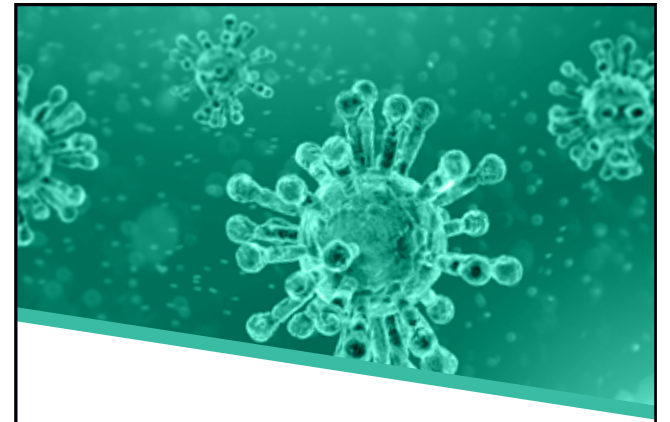
This is not the only way the museum is virtually engaging with the community. Throughout the pandemic the museum has been putting on virtual lectures as well.

As for the sexiest building, there isn't much agree-

ment among the staff of the museum, so they've started a competition of their own, where the staff member who gets the most rounds right will win a prize.

And the winning building? "They'll just get the honour of being named the sexiest building in the community."

If you want to have your voice heard, head to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's Facebook or Twitter account to participate.



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- Chicken Fingers \$15
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- Reuben Sandwich \$17
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- Turkey Club Sandwich 🍷 \$16
- Chicken Caesar Wrap \$16
- Buffalo Chicken Wrap \$16
- Shepherd's Pie Poutine \$16

EXTRAS: Gluten-free bread +\$2

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- Liver and Onions \$17

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