



Health team clinic pops up | Page 6

# TOP CHEFS' ASPARAGUS TIPS



Story on Page 8, 9

Across Niagara-on-the-Lake, chefs are firing up their creative juices and making culinary delights from the first asparagus crops of the season. RICHARD HARLEY PHOTO

## Vaccines contributing to sharp decline in COVID cases, says Niagara's top doctor

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Cases of COVID-19 are dropping more sharply than expected across Ontario, says Niagara's chief medical officer of health.

Dr. Mustafa Hirji said it's a "good news" story, with a steady drop in the reproduction number (the average number of people one person will infect) — despite large numbers of people ignoring lockdown rules.

On Tuesday, Hirji said hospitalizations and ICU numbers are also coming down — a positive indicator that things are on the right track to reopen, though there is still "a ways" to go.

He attributes the decline in cases to rising vaccination rates, particularly in COVID hot spots. As of Wednesday, the region had 882 active cases (down from 1,247 a week ago) and Niagara-on-the-Lake had 19 (down from 39).

"With a lot more vaccines over the last few weeks having been directed towards the hotspots where most of the infection is spreading, I think it's actually made a noticeable difference in the spread of infection."

In Niagara, about 60 per cent of adults have been vaccinated, with about 70 per cent scheduled to receive a vaccine.

Niagara's cases are not coming down as quickly as the provincial average,

however the numbers are falling. Hirji said he is optimistic cases will be down by mid-June, the date he has suggested would be the right time to end the stay-at-home order — if things continue on the current path.

Niagara hospitals continue to take patients from regions that are over capacity.

He said he thinks the province and region should have no trouble meeting Ontario's

Continued on Page 2



## Splash pad and parks open up to much relief

Stories on Page 12, 13



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# Gardens, golfers and Queen Street promenades

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

It was a hot and humid Saturday in Niagara-on-the-Lake and people were embracing the return of outdoor amenities as the first part of the provincial government's reopening plan came into effect.

Queen Street was bustling with activity, though there was still plenty of room for families and couples to walk the street without getting too boxed in.

It didn't seem as busy as one might have thought, but the long weekend was just getting started. By the end of Monday, mobile data showed around 175,000 people had come into town, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said.

Of those, 73,000 came on Monday alone, which was also "the first time this year that attendance from the GTA was higher than from the Niagara region," Disero said in an interview.

Those numbers seem to reflect the growing desire people have to return to pre-pandemic life as the summer approaches.

"We think (the reopening plan) is great. We're really looking forward to it," Grimsby resident Linda Ridgeway said as she and husband Bryan walked down Queen Street in Old Town.

They have a cottage in NOTL but have not been coming down due to the stay-at-home order.

"It's the first time I've



Mary Kilmer's husband died in 2020. She says that her garden has been essential, not only in coping with the pandemic, but with her husband's death. EVAN SAUNDERS

walked into a store in months," Bryan said.

For many, the relaxing of outdoor restrictions provided opportunities they have not had for a long time.

"This is our first time walking down Main Street since, what? January?" Bryan asked his wife.

It wasn't just the opportunity to do a little storefront shopping that had people capitalizing on the sunny long weekend. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club also was packed with enthusiasts.

"Thank God," golfer Dave Anthony told The Lake Report.

"I got all my chores done and I was bored," he joked.

But Doug Ford's relaxation of golf restrictions was too little, too late, Anthony said. He was not impressed it took so long for people to get back to walking the fairways.

"I spent my life as an engineer making decisions based on science and data.

They should have opened in February and anyone with half a brain knew that," Anthony said.

"There's no science supporting that people shouldn't be out here in the open air getting exercise. Nobody got any disease golfing last year."

Anthony took issue with Ford's reasoning for closing golf courses. Earlier in May, Ford justified his closure of golf courses by saying golfers carpool and socialize together afterward, thus creating a situation for COVID to spread.

That just doesn't happen, Anthony said, noting "99.9 per cent of golfers don't get in one car and go and have pop in someone's basement. It's just demeaning."

"I can't believe how disrespectful it was for him to say that."

University of Toronto epidemiologist Colin Furness told the Toronto Star the current wave is workplace-

driven. He said closing golf courses and outdoor activities as a solution was "perverse."

Ford's "actions and his directives are a result of fear. It was a total disregard of science. His failure to correct his own mistakes is petulant," Anthony said.

Along with the reopening of golf courses, the province also allowed outdoor facilities such as tennis courts, basketball courts and baseball diamonds to resume.

Scott Neufeld is a NOTL resident who runs the Niagara-on-the-Lake Masters Slow Pitch League.

Under the provincial reopening plan organized sports are not allowed to commence until the second phase, which is estimated to begin early July.

That didn't stop Neufeld from heading out to Centennial Sports Park in Virgil and knocking some baseballs around by himself.

"It's been a long time"

since he was on a baseball diamond, Neufeld beamed.

"We're already looking to getting our season started. Hopefully by mid-July. It's gonna be awesome."

The league that Neufeld runs has been active in NOTL for over four decades.

"There's some players that have been playing in the league for 40 years," Neufeld said.

Normally, the league plays every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the summer. Neufeld says everyone's welcome to join in, provided the games stay under the 25-player limit under phase two of the reopening plan.

As life was beginning to return to normal outdoors, many people took solace and spent their recreational time in a more private manner.

All over NOTL people have been turning to their gardens for exercise, fresh air and comfort during the past 15 months of the pandemic.

Chautauqua resident Kathy Morris is well known for her garden on Shakespeare Avenue.

Brandon Carter, her neighbour across the street, was also tending his garden.

He said that it has always been something he enjoys doing and the pandemic has had little effect on that. But he calls Morris "the real gardener" in the neighbourhood.

Morris has been working on her garden for 41 years, she said.

"If I ever moved, I'd be taking this whole garden

with me," Morris said. "I think about it all the time, the logistics of how I would do that."

Morris, who retired last August, said her garden has always been her perfect escape, especially in the pandemic.

"It's been so nice to be able to do this during the week, not just on the weekends," she said.

Morris says she's been at it so long that people will drive by and ask her for gardening advice. "I like to spread my knowledge and I give away plants in the spring."

Fellow Chautauqua resident Mary Kilmer moved into a small house on Addison Avenue after her husband passed away in 2020.

She said her garden has been "essential" to her well-being throughout COVID.

Her garden and trees have been an oasis of comfort as the social restrictions of the pandemic continue.

Gesturing at a beautiful old oak tree on her property that has been grown over with vines, Kilmer commented, "I think fairies still live in places like that."

Her specialty is irises. She has dozens of them growing in her garden and lamented that they would not bloom for another eight or 10 days. She wished people could see them over the long weekend.

We're not out of the pandemic yet though and Kilmer is grateful that she'll have her garden to weather the rest of the storm.

"It's made a world of a difference in my life."

## Hirji warns cautionary measures still need to be taken when out

Continued from Front Page

vaccination targets to start a phased reopening — 60 per cent of adults by mid-June. He noted it is a "low bar" as Niagara already has over 60 per cent of adults vaccinated.

He said he is surprised the province once again decided not to listen to the federal health advice, which says reopening shouldn't happen until at least 75 per cent of adults are vaccinated.

Modelling from the Public Health Agency of Canada shows that with 55 per cent

of adults vaccinated, there will still be a small surge in cases before numbers start to decline again.

"Instead, if you open up with 75 per cent of adults vaccinated, you're not going to see that surge and so they were really advocating that 75 per cent of adults should be vaccinated and 20 per cent have received their second dose. And so it's unusual that a province has gone with a lower threshold."

However, despite the province's decision, he suspects by mid-June 75 per cent of

Ontario adults will have their first shot.

Second doses by then could also be "in the ballpark" of the recommended 20 per cent, he said.

"It's unusual that we didn't just go with what the Public Health Agency of Canada put out, so we could be aligned across the country, given that we're probably going to meet these targets anyway."

He said it's important for people to continue to get vaccinated, especially younger age groups, which

through the pandemic have been the highest source of infection spread.

In the 18 to 29 age group, he said about 25 per cent of people are vaccinated. The number climbs to above 50 per cent when factoring in bookings.

More than 60 per cent of people aged 30 to 39 are vaccinated or booked to be vaccinated.

He said about 25 per cent of children 12 to 17 were booked for vaccinations as of Tuesday.

Hirji reminds people

participating in newly opened outdoor activities that following health advice is "key."

"We're not yet allowing people to stop wearing masks and keeping distance," he said.

"What occurred this past long weekend wasn't relaxing the rules and returning to normal with outdoor activities," he said.

"It was relaxing the rules to permit some of these outdoor activities, but we still need to be mindful of either keeping distance or wearing

a mask when participating in these activities, because there still is some risk, and we're not at the stage where we can start to reopen."

He said people playing sports should not be travelling between regions to do so.

"You don't want to be staying over with others or carpooling where you're going to be in close contact and could spread infections. We don't want to combine playing golf with having drinks or eating with your friends at a picnic and possibly spreading infection like that."



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## Village market returns on Saturday

Jessica Maxwell  
The Lake Report

May 29 marks the return of the Farmers' Market at the Village for 2021.

Saturday's market will host more than a dozen vendors offering produce, other food items and fresh cut flowers for customers to shop between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.

For the time being, customers can expect the market to operate similar to the end of the last season, said market co-ordinator Sharon Brinsmead-Taylor.

"Everything will be set up on the pavement. All of our vendors will be set up in their own individual 10-by-10 pop-up tents with a minimum six feet in between and the same traffic flow again with an entrance and an exit," she said.

Due to the phased opening of the province fol-



The Market at the Village opens for the season on Saturday. FILE/JESSICA MAXWELL

lowing the stay-at-home order, non-food vendors will not be at the market until later in the season. There is no food consumption on site yet.

"We have quite a few vendors that are selling pre-packaged, prepared foods that people will be able to take home and eat, or elsewhere and eat," Brinsmead-Taylor said.

The market will follow all provincial guidelines for reopening and will "go with the flow," she said.

"Last year, it was a comfortable environment for people to shop in," she said. "I don't know if food consumption will be allowed at any point this year. We're hopeful, but it's unknown at this time."

The Market at the Vil-

lage will operate until Thanksgiving weekend, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday.

There are no plans to operate the Supper Market this year but instead a weekly highlight of area restaurants will be posted to the market's Facebook and Instagram pages each Wednesday through "Supper Market Dines Out."

## 'Respect the Neighbourhood' signs stay up despite town's request to remove them

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Some residents of Chautauqua have ignored a town request that they remove lawn signs that violate a municipal bylaw.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake asked the Friends of Ryerson Park group to have its members take down their "Respect the Neighbourhood" and "Slow down!" lawn signs.

The signs conflict with a town bylaw which bans any lawn signs on private property with exceptions for real estate and political signage during election times.

"We have to regulate signage because they can't be bigger than a certain size and all that kind of stuff," Lord Mayor Betty Disero said.

Friends of Ryerson Park spokesperson Brian Crow said he asked members to remove the signs, but that it's up to individuals to comply or defy.

"We've had a request



Signs ask visitors to respect the neighbourhood and drive slowly. EVAN SAUNDERS

from the town to suggest to our people that they take the signs down. All of the signs are apparently illegal, even on private property, which we didn't know," Crow told The Lake Report.

About 20 signs were up in the neighbourhood over the weekend and several were still up as recently as Wednesday.

Crow said he feels the signs were successful in slowing down traffic leaving locals bewildered as to why they should have to take them down.

"They don't feel good

about it. We were getting a lot of support (for the signs) and they were slowing people down," Crow said.

"Not everybody took the signs down and you might see them going back up – I don't know."

Crow felt that some co-operation between the town and Chautauqua residents was necessary to find a proper solution for the signs. He also emphasized that the town wasn't forcing them to take down the signs.

"We'd like to work with them. The town made a request, not an order," he said.

Crow said the signs that remained up were mainly on Shakespeare Avenue and Niagara Boulevard.

"That's generally where the speeding is. Even beyond Chautauqua, there's still signs up towards the golf course on Niagara Boulevard. They're not even in Chautauqua and they wanted the signs," he said.

Town council last week approved a Friends of Ryerson Park request for increased bylaw enforcement in the area to deal with on-street parking issues and illegal parking near the park.

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## COVID Tracker

**NOTL active cases: 19**  
**Region active cases: 882**  
**Region deaths: 405**  
**Region total cases: 15,603**  
**Region resolved cases: 14,316**

\*May 26 data per Niagara Region Public Health

## POSITIVE POWER

**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

"The center of human nature is rooted in the thousands of ordinary acts of kindness that define our days." - Stephen Jay Gould.

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## Editorial: Be sure to thank a firefighter

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

Flames break out. Vehicles collide. A person collapses. A pooch gets trapped down a steep embankment.

When life and trouble happens, who ya gonna call?

Inevitably, it is the fire department that responds first and foremost to calls such as these, and many others.

You learn pretty early on in journalism that in most emergencies the responders first on scene are not police or ambulance personnel, but the fire department.

With good reason: fire services' responses are measured in minutes and seconds – because every second really does count in an emergency.

Here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with a population of



about 18,000, we are blessed with a largely volunteer fire department but the men and women who comprise the service are pros in every sense of the word.

Led by chief Nick Ruller, a young, university-educated administrator and experienced firefighter who has brought new ideas and innovations to the role, he oversees a team of more than 100 volunteer firefighters in whom we all literally entrust our lives.

NOTL is fortunate to have such a dedicated and well-trained group of volunteers

who continually prove their mettle on the job.

Whether it was last week's major house fire in Old Town, the massive all-hands-on-deck February blaze that caused millions in damage, destroying several businesses and vehicles in huge converted chicken barns on Townline Road, or any of the many run-of-the-mill calls they attend every month, our town's fire personnel do us all proud.

These men and women often risk their lives to save people and property, work in freezing cold or unbearably hot weather, clad in heavy protective gear, lugging heavy hoses. And as they did again last week in Old Town, they often stay on the scene all night to ensure everything is under control.

It is not all tragedy, to be

sure, but among their triumphs, our firefighters also see more than their share of terrible scenes. Let's not forget that.

Most of us likely only think about our emergency responders when we are in need – that's only human. Because we know our fire department is there, at the ready, whenever called upon.

But let's not take these men and women for granted. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for their service and hard work.

With COVID, we won't suggest you hug a firefighter (yet), but we do ask that everyone spare a thought for the work they do and the risks they take.

And when the opportunity does arise, thank a firefighter. They deserve it.

editor@niagaranow.com



## A different vaccine for second dose, explained

Dear editor:

On May 8, the Ontario chief medical officer of health Dr. David Williams stated that the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine would no longer be used as a first dose in Ontario.

Since the first use of the AZ vaccine in Ontario the case rate for vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia (VITT), a rare blood clot had increased from 1.0 to 1.7 per 100,000 persons. In the U.K. the case rate was 1 in 93,000, whereas in Canada the case rate was 1 in 60,000.

On May 20, Williams announced that the 1 million persons in Ontario who received the AZ vaccine as their first jab, could select AZ as their second jab if they so desired.

So how are you supposed to decide what to do?

First the good news: Your body uses two main mechanisms to fight against COVID-19 – antibodies and killer T cells.

According to Dr. Marc Hellerstein from University

of California Berkeley, a strong antibody response correlates with more severe disease in COVID-19 cases, whereas a strong T cell response is correlated with less severe disease.

So T cells being elevated is a good thing. They are the cells that will kill COVID-19 if you get infected. The antibodies are there to act as helpers.

A study by the University of Birmingham in the U.K. published in April looked at patients over 80 years age who had received the AZ vaccine. After five weeks of study, 87 per cent of them had raised levels of antibodies against COVID-19 and Pfizer vaccinated patients had 93 per cent raised antibodies.

When it came to T cells, 31 per cent who got the AZ vaccine had an increase, whereas only 12 per cent of those who got Pfizer showed an increase. The researchers speculated that at 12 weeks the levels would be closer. So, if you got the AZ as a first jab, it appears you

have better short-term protection against COVID-19.

Now the somewhat good news: On May 12, the U.K. Com-COV study results were published in the Lancet medical journal. The participants were randomized to receive an AZ vaccine, followed by an mRNA vaccine such as Pfizer. Or vice versa. The study looked at side effects after 28 days and found there were more adverse events if two different vaccines were received.

For example starting with an AZ vaccine and receiving a Pfizer vaccine as a booster caused fever in 34 per cent of cases as opposed to 11 per cent if both doses were AZ. The same results were found for chills, fatigue, headache, joint pain, malaise and muscle aches.

Most of the adverse events occurred within the first 48 hours after the injection and lasted a few days. Patients were able to treat their symptoms with over-the-counter medicines such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil,

Motrin). The study is on-going to evaluate whether the immunogenicity of a mixed-dosing regimen produces the same results in terms of fighting COVID-19.

So what's the bottom line?

Whether you got the AZ or Pfizer vaccine, you are protected against COVID-19. Once you receive your second jab you have better protection. Those who got AZ as a first shot and take AZ as their second shot will have fewer side effects and better protection against the variants. Those who got AZ as their first shot and take Pfizer as a second shot will have a few more side effects for 48 hours.

The best news, however, is that the case rate of blood clots with the AZ vaccine went from 1 in 60,000 for the first jab to 1 in 600,000 after the second jab. And now they know how to treat it.

I hope this helps you make your decision.

Robin Jinchereau  
 NOTL

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# OPINION

## In defence of Liberals' record on supporting seniors



Andrea Kaiser  
Special to The Lake Report

I am writing in response to a letter to the editor that appeared in The Lake Report on Feb. 25 that characterized our federal Liberal government's record on supporting seniors as "fake news" (Letter, "Seniors only matter when politicians want their vote").

Because the letter specifically referred to me by name, I feel it is appropriate for me to reply with some facts.

The letter stated: "Ottawa announced a paltry \$300, one-time COVID-19 payment to seniors, with a

strong inference of a further payout. None materialized."

I would like to point out two important facts in relation to this comment.

First, seniors received between \$300 and \$500 through this COVID-19 relief payment depending on income level.

Second, the federal government's 2021 budget included a second COVID-19 relief payment of \$500 that is coming this August to Old Age Security recipients aged 75-plus.

The letter also stated the government's promise to boost Old Age Security payments by 10 per cent for seniors 75-plus during the last election was "more fake news."

The reality is Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland delivered on that promise in the government's first budget since the last election.

Thanks to Freeland's lead-

ership, seniors aged 75 and older will receive an additional \$766 per year (rising with inflation) under the Old Age Security Program. This is definitely not "more fake news" but rather "promise made, promise kept."

The Liberals' record on supporting seniors and enhancing retirement security is clear. One of the first things they did after forming government in 2016 was enhance the Canada Pension Plan to provide more money for pensioners over the long term. Once fully implemented, this change will provide retirees with up to \$4,390 more in CPP support a year.

Secondly, the government turned back the clock on former PM Stephen Harper's plan to raise the age of eligibility for Old Age Security to 67 from 65. This will mean thousands of dollars back in the pockets of seniors.

Using the maximum monthly payment amount for OAS from April to June 2016 (\$570.52), that would mean an extra \$13,692.48 for seniors over two years.

Lastly, the Liberals have raised the Guaranteed Income Supplement by up to \$947 per year, benefitting about 900,000 seniors, most of whom are single women.

I understand that life is expensive for seniors living on fixed incomes and believe all seniors deserve to retire with dignity.

As MP for Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie, I will always advocate for enhanced income support for seniors, because our seniors deserve nothing less. They built this country we are so lucky to call home.

*Andrea Kaiser is the federal Liberal candidate for the federal riding of Niagara Falls, which includes Niagara-on-the-Lake.*



Turtles at Niagara Shores Park. FILE PHOTO

## A 'Giving Back Tax' could help save our ecosystems

A Modest Proposal

Dear editor:

It is widely agreed that our climate change is driven by carbon emissions.

It is also widely agreed that the carbon footprint of the poor is a tiny fraction of the total.

The top 1 per cent of polluters contribute twice as much as the bottom 50 per cent, for example.

The custom of "giving back" is well-established. Let's build on that with a Giving Back Tax.

This tax could apply quite widely but on a progressive scale. I would pay less than Mark Zuckerberg, for

example.

Let's put this money to work on a job desperately needing to be done: repairing and preserving our ecosystems.

Some may object to a tax being called a gift.

The use of oxymorons in our political lexicon is already widely accepted: for example, we have a health care system without dental care or pharmacare, and which is primarily sick care.

A spoonful bit of sugar helps the medicine go down?

**David Lailey**  
NOTL

## We need to let tolerance and harmony reign

Dear editor:

Kudos to Erwin and Dorothy Wiens and The Lake Report's May 13 article, "An uncomfortable message about race and tolerance."

I fully support the essence of Erwin Wiens' message on the value of diversity and Sue Batson Patterson's comments in her letter in your May 20 issue, "Subtle and outrageous discrimina-

tion getting worse."

I would like to see the term "racism" and all its derivatives ("racial," "racist") disappear from all global languages.

There is no genetic basis for "racial" distinctions: the genetic differences between all humans are minuscule and physical manifestations of those (e.g., skin colour, facial features, hair type) are of no significance.

There is only the human

race, which includes all of us. The core of "racism" relates to culture, history and social or physical environmental factors: our human nature is the same; our human nurture is not.

I consider harmonious diversity one of Canada's greatest qualities and assets, despite our definite, persisting national failures, flaws and imperfections.

The "r-word" and its derivatives should be replaced

by more accurate terms, like "bigotry," "ignorance," and these attitudes and behaviours should end. But, regrettably, I won't hold my breath in anticipation of this soon.

I would, as well, apply the essence of all my comments above to religious divisions and tensions anywhere and everywhere.

Let tolerance and harmonious diversity reign.

**Rick Kirby**  
NOTL

## Closing Queen to traffic hurts businesses and dictates opening hours

Dear editor:

I am writing in response to Samuel Young's letter on making Queen Street pedestrian only, "Make Queen Street a pedestrian mall, with proper signs and infrastructure," May 20.

All great suggestions.

As the owner of Queen Street businesses, concerns about visitors not being able to socially distance on the sidewalks during the summer is, of course, an issue during the pandemic.

However, our sidewalks have been an issue with pedestrian traffic for many years.



The immediate thought is to close the street to pedestrians only. However this has been proven over the last 30 years we personally have been on Queen Street to affect business sales negatively

and upset residents in Old Town because overflow parking moves to area streets. In recent years it also allows the horse carriage protesters to park themselves on the street in front of our businesses.

Unless the street is re-opened at 5 p.m. (when most shops close but restaurants stay open), so that vehicles can drive the street to see we are still open, closing the street basically dictates our hours of operation for us.

Also, the logistics of putting people onto a shuttle during a pandemic is challenging as it may deter people from staying to park.

Allowing merchants to pour on to the street as vendors takes away from the beauty of the streetscape and cheapens our brand, in my opinion.

As Mr. Young mentioned,

Lord Mayor Betty Disero has said a long-term solution is needed and I agree with her.

The sidewalks along Queen Street should be widened by another few feet. The width of Queen Street allows for this. It was brilliant when the mayor and administrator Sheldon Randall alternately used the parking spaces on Queen Street to widen the sidewalks. However, residents were concerned with the double parking on side roads.

In the short-term, placing markers on the ground may help remind people to distance. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control reported

a new study that found your chances of transmitting COVID outdoors is less than one per cent (previously believed to be less than 10 per cent).

It is a tough call, as we welcome the business once we can open. We need it to survive the winter months ahead.

We also want to ensure that everyone remains healthy and the numbers continue to decrease in order to avoid another lockdown, which will be detrimental for Queen Street businesses.

**Maria Mavridis**  
**Corks Restaurant**  
**Firehall Flame Restaurant**



## Have an opinion you want heard?

Send a letter to the editor to  
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Deadline is Tuesday at noon.  
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# Health team vaccinates 150 at special clinic Wednesday

Kevin MacLean  
Managing Editor

With military-like precision, a team of doctors, nurses and staff from the Niagara North Family Health Team vaccinated about 150 people Wednesday at a special clinic at the old Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital.

"We're very excited. We've been patiently waiting," 29-year-old NOTL resident Samantha Miller said as she waited.

From screening patients at the entrance, through registration, getting the jab and the "check out," the whole operation is organized to run smoothly, said Dr. Karen Berti.

"This is our fifth time, so it's worked out quite nicely," she said, referring to earlier clinics held for patients of the health team.

After asking public health officials for up to 600 vaccine doses, the Virgil-based medical practice received 150 shots of Moderna to distribute as first doses.

Many of the patients who signed up were in the 18- to 39-year-old demographic, Berti said in an interview.



Jasmine Garland, 19, gets her COVID-19 vaccine at the old NOTL hospital on Wednesday, during a pop-up Niagara North Health Family Health Team vaccine clinic. In this photo the doctor is drawing a happy face on her bandage. EVAN SAUNDERS

That's encouraging, she noted, as across the province younger people have embraced the chance to get their first shots.

Nineteen-year-old NOTL resident Jasmine Garland was among them.

"My mom's a doctor, so I know how important this is," she told The Lake Report just before receiving her first shot of the Moderna vaccine.

Olivia Frank, 19, was raised in NOTL but attends school at the University of Waterloo. She was excited that the special clinic enabled her to get her first dose so quickly.

"It's so much faster than it would have been in Waterloo. The wait list up there is about a month and a half to two months," Frank said.

For health care workers,

after more than a year of dealing with COVID, being able to inoculate patients is a welcome change.

"This is the happy part," said Berti. "It's the feel-good moment after 15 months of lots of non feel-good moments."

It's unclear when the health team might get another batch of vaccines and there is no timeline for



Anna Redekop, 31, of St. Davids waits to get her vaccine. RICHARD HARLEY

replenishment, Berti said.

It's the same story for Stone Road Pharmacy in Virgil, where owner Julie Dyck said she is waiting for more vaccine. In the meantime, "we're still managing our waitlist and will be ready to vaccinate anyone over 12-plus when stock arrives."

As of May 23, the province allowed those under 18 to register to receive the Pfizer vaccine.

Simpson's Pharmacy still has some vaccines available, with Pfizer at its Virgil location and Moderna at the Apothecary on King Street,

pharmacist Sean Simpson said.

Berti said overall the first-dose vaccine rollout is going well, but there's room for improvement.

"I think we're doing better as a country and as a province getting first vaccinations in arms. What we're not doing that well with right now is getting second vaccinations in," she said, noting the extended lag time between first and last shots.

"That timeline is fairly long and I do wonder if that will get shortened," she said, acknowledging the situation is changing day to day.

"It gives people a lot of relief to know they have had the second shot" and are fully vaccinated.

Berti said she has seen some vaccine hesitancy, particularly around Astra-Zeneca and worries about blood clots, but many others were happy to get whatever shot was available.

"Now, I think people generally want to just move on," she said. "They want to salvage a summer. It's been a long 15 months for most people."

- With files from Evan Saunders

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# Community fund aims to **grow** in NOTL

## Group gave \$420,000 to charities in 2020 to help with pandemic losses

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund is celebrating five years since its inception and distributing hundreds of thousands of dollars to NOTL charities.

Michael Berlis, chair of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund, and Bryan Rose, executive director of the Niagara Community Fund, met with councillors last month to draw attention to the work the fund does and encourage continued support from residents in the region.

“Our aim here today is to remind all of you that this fund exists and to encourage participation, particularly at this difficult time,” Berlis told council.

The organization is structured around a central regional fund which then disperses money raised to the 12 municipalities in Niagara and the Golden Horseshoe, Rose said.

And the fund is looking to continue the success it has had over the last few years.

The regional fund was founded in 2000 “from two \$100,000 donations,” Rose said. It now has assets of over \$65 million.

“In that first year we deployed just over \$9,000 in grants. In 2020, last year alone, we granted over \$3 million,” Rose said.

Since its inception, the regional fund has delivered over \$18 million to charitable groups in Niagara.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund was established in 2016 by then-Lord Mayor Pat Darte to raise awareness of the regional fund.

“Investing in a local community fund allows donors to make a direct impact on the many charities that exist in this community,” Berlis told councillors.

The NOTL fund set a record last year after it donated more than \$420,000 to town charities as the coronavirus pandemic brought life to a standstill.

Over the last five years, the NOTL fund has given almost \$700,000 to lo-



The Niagara Community Fund has over \$65 million in assets and donates to charities across the region. SUPPLIED

cal charities, meaning that more than half of all the money it has given away was during the height of the COVID pandemic.

“The first few years were kind of slow. Because we were just getting started, people were learning about it, so it took a few years to kind of ramp up,” Berlis told The Lake Report.

The huge increase in 2020 is, of course, an encouraging sign for Berlis, the fund and the residents of NOTL.

“It shows that the need is there and that people are realizing it, which is a huge part of what we’re trying to do,” he said.

Projects supported by the fund were the Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care Service, the Shaw Festival, the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre and Niagara College, among others.

The organization’s importance has only been amplified by the community struggles being faced due to COVID-19.

“Last year during the pandemic (the regional fund) quickly rallied to support the charitable sector with nearly \$300,000 in support to local charities,” Rose said.

The money was divided between the United Way’s COVID-19 emergency response fund and a direct donation of \$270,000 to Niagara Health, the region’s hospital system.

The donation was intended to help “purchase vital new equipment such as ventilators and stretchers and new beds,” Rose said.

The foundation also donated more than \$1.3 million to Niagara charities through the federal government’s Emergency Community Support Fund.

“A total of 66 projects were funded focusing on supporting children, youth, seniors, vulnerable workers and those requiring special care,” Rose said.

He noted that although charitable donations are increasing, where those donations are coming from has changed.

“The world of philanthropy is changing here in Canada. There are fewer donors, but those who are giving are giving more,” Rose told councillors.

“What we’ve learned over the years is that people love to give and have an impact in the area where they live. After all, home is where the heart is.”

Coun. Wendy Cheropita is on the committee for the NOTL Community Fund and formerly served as its chair. She encouraged fellow councillors to keep the organization in mind when they consider donating to charities.

“It’s a great organization. It’s not a high-pressure sale, people just come forward when they hear about the organization,” Cheropita said.

“It’s one of those charities

where you have the ability as a donor to pick who you donate to or you can donate to the fund and it can be directed to specific sectors.”

With donations of up to \$5,000, the fund will use the money wherever it is needed. When a donor gives \$10,000 or more, they can choose which sector they would like the money to go to, according to Berlis.

He noted that one of the most important aspects of a community fund is promoting it. The NOTL fund can’t help the community if it doesn’t have the money to do so.

“We’re at the stage where we’re trying to build up the fund and add more names to the list,” Berlis said.

“We’re not pounding on doors. We’re just trying to make sure that people are aware that we exist. It’s amazing how many people are interested once they know about it.”

The fund currently has 35 donors in NOTL. Berlis believes that with such a strong sense of community in town that number will continue to grow.

“There are a lot of people that were born and raised here, but a lot of us came from elsewhere because we wanted to live here and be a part of this community,” Berlis said.

“And if that’s the case then there’s even more of a reason for people to go out and give back.”

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The Gate House's steamed Thwaites Farms asparagus salad with local Pingue prosciutto, poached egg, shaved parmesan cheese, Kozlik's crunchy mustard, aged balsamic vinegar.

# COOKING WITH ASPARAGUS

Photos by Richard Harley | Words by Jill Troyer



Asparagus is in season and it's not just Niagara-on-the-Lake residents heralding its arrival with joy. With locations like Thwaites Farms on Lakeshore Road offering freshly harvested, farm-to-table asparagus direct to consumers, some of your favourite restaurants are cooking up special takeout dishes in honour of the green stalks.

The Lake Report spoke with a few local chefs about asparagus and they were resoundingly enthusiastic. Even with dining options limited to takeout for now, you'll find lots of asparagus items on local menus this month. Here is what some of NOTL's top chefs are doing with this popular spring vegetable, both at home and in their restaurants:



David Watt  
The Garrison House

*"It's a sign of things to come, you get tired of braising things all winter! There was a lineup at Thwaites today, I was getting two cases. You don't have to do much to it. I like to just blanche it, in water as salty as seawater, then put it in an ice bath if you're not serving it right away. Add butter, salt and pepper, and eat it. It's great combined with other ingredients foraged in early spring, like morel mushrooms, fiddleheads and ramps. We'll be all things asparagus at the restaurant, you'll see it in our new daily takeout menus, for sure. I love it grilled, with a crisp Niagara Chardonnay, or even a dry Rosé."*



Poached Thwaites Farms asparagus with vodka smoked salmon, sauce gribiche, everything bagel crunch, cured egg yolk.



Jason Williams  
The Gate House

*"Asparagus is the first real thing available in the spring, so I like to incorporate it into as many dishes as possible. It's so good in a salad with prosciutto, grilled with butter sauce or hollandaise, or just blanched and buttered. Another favourite is chilled local asparagus with fior di latte mozzarella, brown butter crumbs and sherried vinaigrette. The way my mom used to do it at home was in an aluminum pan with butter on the edge of the barbecue, so it cooked right in the butter. We always get our asparagus from Thwaites Farm. It's unbelievable how much great asparagus they grow. Asparagus and wine can be a tricky match, but I'd say something greener, like a Sauvignon Blanc or Riesling."*



Pan roasted sea scallops with Thwaites Farms asparagus, breakfast radish, chive blossom and spring leek veloute.

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**John Vetere**  
Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery

*“Asparagus is a celebration of spring, a signal the season has changed, and it’s only around a short time, so it’s special. We have an asparagus patch here at Ravine, it pops up every year. You can use it in so many dishes. I love to keep it simple, grilled with a soft-boiled egg, or an egg-based custard, with a little truffle oil, and let the asparagus flavour shine through. We will definitely be incorporating it into dishes on our takeout menu.”*



Charred Ontario asparagus, golden heart potato dressed with a fresh dill and mustard vinaigrette, soft cooked egg, sliced radish and sheep milk feta.



**Ryan Crawford**  
Ruffino’s Pasta Bar & Grill

*“Asparagus represents spring, it’s the first real spring vegetable. It’s so sweet, it just tastes so good! We grow asparagus on our farm, we have purple asparagus as well as green asparagus. At the restaurant, we grill it on our wood fire, with a little olive oil. I like to keep it as simple and natural as possible, and let the ingredient speak for itself. We’re adding it to our menu as a vegetable side, and an asparagus carbonara. Also white asparagus risotto when that’s in season. It’s going to be on our dinner table at home tonight, just grilled. People say Sauvignon Blanc is the best wine to pair with asparagus, and it’s good, but really most Niagara whites are beautiful with asparagus, with their crisp acidity.”*



Asparagus risotto with foraged morel mushrooms.



**Chris Moses**  
OLiV

*“I love asparagus. Of course, at this time of year we purchase it locally, in fact I’m on my way out now to pick some up. We use it in our Lobster & Asparagus Fettuccine, which is our top seller pasta dish. I also like to cook it just in the oven, with a little olive oil, salt and pepper. The trick is not to overcook it. Never boil asparagus.”*



Grilled lobster asparagus with fig balsamic and Italian herb olive oil.



**Joe Marchese**  
Twisted Vine

*“The first thing is asparagus soup, but there are so many ways to enjoy asparagus. We make asparagus frittata, roasted asparagus pizza. It’s great in vegetable lasagna and we’ll serve it as the side vegetable to our mains. My mother was a chef and she liked it in an omelette with leeks, some red peppers for colour. At home, I just grill it with a little olive oil, salt and pepper. You want to get the full taste of the asparagus. As for wine, I suggest something white, light and citrusy. A Niagara off dry Riesling would be a good choice.”*



Spring asparagus prima vera with garlic olive oil sauce.



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SALES REPRESENTATIVE



# Debi Goodwin: A lifetime of nurturing her gardens

*It was Audrey Hepburn who once said: "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." It is also fair to say, gardeners live in hope. And hope is certainly what we all need right now. This is the first in a sometime-series about local gardeners and their handiwork, what motivates them and how they succeed. The Lake Report welcomes your comments and suggestions.*

Tim Taylor  
The Lake Report



In a rare moment of relaxation, Debi Goodwin pauses in her colourful backyard garden. Goodwin is both an accomplished gardener and author. Her recent work, "A Victory Garden For Trying Times," is published by Dundurn Press. TIM TAYLOR

Debi Goodwin gazes thoughtfully over her large Old Town backyard garden, like a military commander reviewing her troops. Too much shade here. That new floral recruit needs attention. Time to prune there.

Everything to its place and time. To an unpracticed eye, on this bright May day, there is not a blade out of place. A soft Monet palette of colours and shapes.

Still, she searches for opportunities to make it better.

A former journalist and forever gardener, Goodwin's greatest joy is getting her green thumbs dirty.

"I always wanted to have my hands in the dirt," she says. "I think that comes from my childhood. I was a bit of a loner. My mother was always sorting fruit. So, I roamed alone. I would build forts with the boxes in the dirt and play in the dirt."

Goodwin grew up in Grimsby, in a ninth generation of fruit farmers, in Nixon Hall, a heritage home on the town's main street, built in 1854.

She declines to reveal her age. "Just say I'm a retired

journalist. That should be enough."

Her father was a local high school principal and a dedicated weekend and summer farmer. Their 30-acre farm was planted in peaches, pears and cherries. A small vegetable garden grew all the vegetables the family of six needed to get through the winters.

"What we didn't eat in the summer, my mother made mason jars of tomatoes and such."

Even as a noticeably young child, she loved working with her father.

"One of my favourite activities was to help my father in the vegetable garden. He taught me how to create the hole and plant."

Goodwin attended both elementary and high schools in Grimsby. She admits that having to attend the high school where her father was principal was not ideal. She left town as soon as she could.

"I was dying to get out. Went to University of Toronto. I never really went

back to Grimsby."

She started her professional career as a teacher but quickly decided she wanted to move into broadcasting, attending a one-year program at Ryerson University.

During her subsequent 23-year career at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, on the documentary production teams of The Journal, CBC News Network and later The National, Goodwin travelled the world for her stories.

One of her stories turned into a book, "Citizens of Nowhere," about the difficulties immigrants have when they first arrive in Canada.

And along the way, she also met her long-time partner, Peter Kavanaugh, a senior CBC producer. Their daughter, Mary, lives with her husband in Toronto and, happily for Goodwin, is talking about having children.

Goodwin tried to garden wherever she could — in planters, on hillsides, on balconies.

"I always tried to have

a little garden wherever I went. But I could never grow the vegetables I wanted to."

She resists choosing between a preference for flower or vegetable gardening.

"It's a hard question. I like them both. I suppose I lean more toward the vegetables. But flowers are good for the soul. My grandmother grew roses and I loved that too."

Hard choices for someone so dedicated to growing things.

But she does not hesitate when it comes to her favourite plant — tomato.

"It's about childhood," she seems to be tasting the ripe tomato as she speaks. "I used to pick them and eat them. When you pick it when it's ripe, in the sun, it is so delicious. My mom would make mason jars of stewed tomatoes. I can eat anything with tomatoes in it. I make my own tomato sauce."

Goodwin admits she has had some gardening failures, but it's not a long list.

"I've tried vegetables that do not work. Last year I had a real fight with rabbits. I love Swiss Chard. I grow it from seed. It would get this high and the rabbits would just chop them down."

"For some reason I can't get zucchini to grow any more. I mean, it is the most prolific plant. But mine just kind of wither up and die."

When Goodwin is gardening, she does not think about anything else.

"I just don't. I lose myself. Nothing else matters but that square inch in front of me, getting it clean or getting a plant in. And the reward of it is wonderful."

She describes it as a double reward. "The reward of losing yourself while you are doing the work and the results are pretty fabulous too."

Goodwin and Kavanaugh retired and moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Toronto in 2014. They had been searching for some time, all around southern Ontario. But for Goodwin, Niagara is in her blood.

"We chose our house not because it had a wonderful garden. It was more we bought the garden and it came with a nice house."

Tragically, just over a year after the couple moved in, Kavanaugh was diagnosed with cancer. The two were married, in their wonderful garden in the summer of 2016. Peter died less than a month later.

During their ordeal, Goodwin made meticulous notes of their day-to-day life and feelings. And she painstakingly researched and planned her Victory Garden, a tribute to the wartime gardens that not only provided food, but purpose and meaning in support of

the war effort.

"For me it was about hope. As a journalist, I love research, so it gave me something to research and plan. It gave me meaning, purpose and hope. Distraction for sure. I couldn't get my hands in the dirt that winter, so I did all the research for it."

Goodwin's Victory Garden inspired "A Victory Garden for Trying Times," published in 2019, by Dundurn Press. Her website describes the memoir as "a year in the garden during a time of love, despair and hope."

Sitting comfortably on her sunny backyard deck, she talks about what her Victory Garden means now. The roughly 20-foot by 20-foot plot has pride-of-place along one side of her large garden.

The Victory Garden is carefully tilled, almost smooth, poised to receive this year's crop of vegetables. Most of the plants for the garden are basking in the noon day sun, getting garden-ready in pots surrounding her on the deck.

"While my first Victory Garden was about hope and resilience, my last year COVID garden was about calm and the feeling I could control some aspects of life," she says.

"I think this year my garden is about patience and letting go. I severely injured my ankle this past winter. So, I won't be able to do the daily hours of work I usually do, as my ankle heals."

"When Peter died, I debated leaving town, but this garden has been my solace."

**Find Goodwin's gardening tips in the online story at [www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/5619](http://www.niagaranow.com/news.phtml/5619)**

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**Mike Shatkosky**  
 Owner

# In bloom: What to do after your tulips and daffodils have bloomed for the season

*This is the first of a 10-week gardening column series, organized by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Communities in Bloom committee.*

Bette Ann James  
The Lake Report



Tulips along Queen Street. SUPPLIED

So, what should you do with all those tulips after they bloom? To keep your tulips blooming year after year, they need to be put to “bed” properly.

Allowing the spent bloom to remain on tulips forces them to form seed heads. And although it may sound like a good thing, the process robs precious energy from the bulbs below.

How you put tulips to “bed” can greatly affect the quality, size and colour of their blooms the following year. They need that energy to preserve and use the next year to produce more big, bright and beautiful blooms. (Tip: All these steps also can be used for

daffodils.)

Likewise, it can be tempting to simply cut all of your tulips down to the ground after they bloom. Unfortunately, this too will have a negative impact on the next year’s blooms.

The stems and foliage of tulips provide power back to the bulb as they die off. And cutting them off too early robs the bulbs of the energy they need for the next growing season.

So, what is the best way

to care for your tulip bulbs after they begin to fade? The answer lies in a simple, two-step process.

As the blooms slowly fade, begin by first removing only the flower heads. It is important to remove only the flower head and not the foliage. Simply clip the fading blooms off right below the base of the flower. This keeps the tulip from creating a seed head but allows the foliage and stems to remain.

After a week or two, the remaining foliage will die back and slowly turn a yellowish-brown colour. As it does, it is safe to cut the tulips back completely to the ground.

This gives the bulbs plenty of time to absorb the nutrients back from the decaying foliage and gets the bulbs ready for next year’s blooms.

*Betty Anne James is vice-chair of NOTL’s Communities in Bloom committee.*

# Annual Garden of Week contest goes virtual

Staff  
The Lake Report

NOTL’s Communities in Bloom committee is going virtual with its popular Garden of the Week contest.

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents can now submit their gardens for consideration on the town’s Join the Conversation page in 10 categories: Container gardens, vegetable/kitchen/herb gardens, water feature gardens, hydrangeas, children’s gardens, hanging baskets, bee and butterfly

gardens, specialized plants in Niagara, climbing vines and rose gardens.

Over the next 10 weeks, submissions will be accepted and then the Communities in Bloom Committee will choose the top three finalists in each category. There will be no weekly winning garden as in the past.

The public will be able to vote on the shortlisted selections on the Join the Conversation page to determine the winner in each category.

“We want to encourage

every skill level, young and old, to participate from all five villages in the town,” said Bette Ann James, vice-chair of the Communities in Bloom committee.

“Let’s see what our Niagara-on-the-Lake gardeners have got. Good luck and happy growing.”

In addition, The Lake Report and other media will publish 10 weekly gardening columns with tips and ideas.

*For full contest details, go to [www.jointheconversationnotl.org/garden](http://www.jointheconversationnotl.org/garden).*



A trillium growing in the wild. FILE PHOTO

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Answered first by: **Sheila Meloche**

Also answered correctly (in order) by: **Margie Enns, Debbie Petrucci, Howard Jones, Maria Janeiro, Ellie Harrison, Albert Grimes, Brenda Bartley, Pam Dowling, Wade Durling, Newton Green, Robert Wilms, Katie Reimer, William Brunton, Tee Bucci**

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

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## Pickleball courts **busy** on opening day



Chris McKnight teaches his son Finlay, 2, how to serve a pickleball on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Pickleball courts were full up on Saturday morning, the first day the Virgil courts were open for play since being closed for public safety amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

John Hindle, president of

the NOTL Pickleball Club, was out on the courts and said about 25 club members had been by in the morning, plus families looking to use the courts.

He said club members were anxious to get back in the swing.

“They know there are restrictions, but we all

recognize that those are going to ease, as we slowly reopen,” he said.

He noted the whole Centennial Sports Park was buzzing with activity.

“It’s not unique to pickleball. People just want to get out and do something other than going for a walk.”

Chris McKnight was

playing pickleball and teaching his two-year-old son Finlay the ropes. He said it was good to get out of the house and play a few games.

“(It’s) always nice to get out and do something, especially for him — we like to tire him out before his nap,” McKnight said.



## Golfers **happy** to be back on the course

Play has resumed at the NOTL Golf Club. On Tuesday, the women’s nine and 18-hole leagues kicked off. Members feted Penny Bannister to commemorate her 30 years of involvement with the nine hole ladies. **See a full gallery of photos from opening day at niagarawanow.com.** BILLY SIMKIN PHOTO

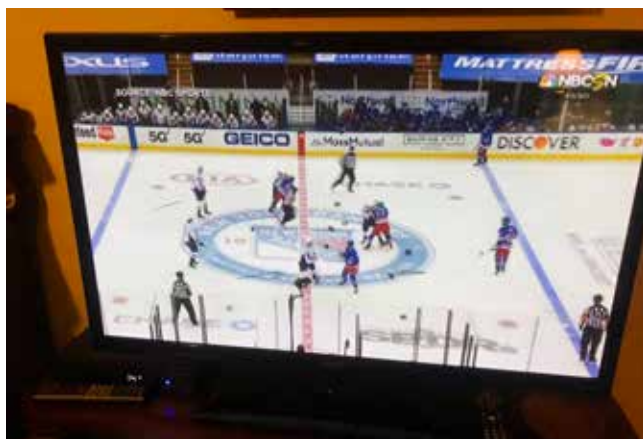
## Ross’ Ramblings: Enough with pro hockey’s **outdated embrace** of ‘The Code’

Ross Robinson  
Special to The Lake Report

A lot of NOTL adult men have been missing their weekly Old Timers hockey fix. Captain Bill Dickson, no referees, slow-motion hockey, team showers and then breakfast and camaraderie at Silks Country Kitchen.

The ongoing deadly global pandemic has paused so many parts of our lives. Somehow though, the NHL wangled permission to play a modified season. Now, the Toronto media vociferously believe Leaf Nation will soon be celebrating a Stanley Cup win. Sheesh ...

The analysis and hype on TV is unending. Talking heads nicknamed Noodles and O Dog. Who are these guys? Who cares about Group 2 unrestricted free agents? Play-



The good ol’ hockey game — not so much. SUPPLIED

ing the cycle around the wall? They’re boards, darn it. You don’t get a penalty for walling. It’s not “puck drop.” It’s a faceoff. Next, they’re going to rename the puck.

Sadly, after some 70 years as a fan and player of one of our national games, I say goodbye to professional hockey. It’s difficult. I have been so loyal and enthusiastic, but earlier

this month, the disgusting incident in Madison Square Garden was the tipping point.

Many Canadians don’t think Americans will watch “our game” unless there are fights. Assault and battery is part of “The Code.” “Let the players play.” Violently chucking knuckles at each other. In the face, never on the stomach or bum. Trying to concuss each other, en-

dangering careers and lives.

What kind of example is this for our children, watching adults violently smashing away at opponents? Yeah, yeah ... “The Code.”

So, another disgusting and condoned incident for the NHL. Admittedly fewer brawls than in the 1970s, but assault and battery it was. “The Code” is again discussed ad nauseum and the experts tell us the players prefer to handle this stuff “in house.” Please, spare me.

During a game two nights earlier, known Washington Capital thug Tom Wilson pummelled a few New York Rangers. He slam dunked the much smaller Rangers’ top scorer head first on to the ice, which ended the skilled star’s season early.

The pundits talked about “The Code.” So sad, eh?

Two nights later the same

teams. The referee dropped the puck. Instantly all the players dropped their gloves. A lengthy brawl. In 2021, yes 2021. A record was set for penalty minutes assessed in the first minute of a game. The announcers opined, “The Code” had been respected.

Author’s note: I understand “The Code.” Playing for the Sudbury Wolves against the North Bay Trappers in the old NOHA long ago in 1967, I was one half of three very one-sided fights during the first period. Coach Marcel Clements had told me, “You have to establish yourself and send a message.” I did, and finally the kindly referee threw me out of the game.

“The Code.” I set a league record that day, 37 minutes in penalties, The ref had humorously added, “A further penalty, Sudbury’s number 5, Robinson, two minutes

for delaying the game.” I would have laughed, but my face hurt.

Which brings me rambling back to professional hockey. What an embarrassment to our peaceful and respected nation. We are better than this. Hockey can be such a bewdyful game.

The day after the horrible brawl at MSG, I spoke to several friends in the States and Canada. Not one of them mentioned the awesomeness of Connor McDavid, or the goal-scoring flash of Auston Matthews, this year’s Rocket Richard Trophy winner for most tallies. Each of them said, “Why does hockey still allow that fighting garbage?”

So, sadly, I have said goodbye to hockey. I will now watch rugby and women’s indoor volleyball. So exciting, and respect for the rules of the games. Lotsa love.

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Ariya Murdza enjoys the splash pad at Centennial Sports Park in Virgil. RICHARD HARLEY

## Virgil Splash Pad opens, provides relief from heat

Jessica Maxwell  
The Lake Report

The Virgil Splash Pad attracted crowds of kids who enjoyed some outdoor play time over the warm long weekend.

Lauren Murdza took to the park with her children, Logan, 8, Ariya, 3, and baby Max, to burn off some steam and cool off in the water.

"It's such a breath of fresh air that they're not stuck inside any more and they can finally play because they're so bored stuck at home," Murdza said.

The mother of three said the social interaction is also important for her daughter, who is starting school next year.

"Just playing in our back-

yard with our neighbours is just not cutting it," she said.

Her NOTL mother, Cindy Jenkins, said they try to bring the kids out to different parks in the area when her daughter and grandchildren visit from Niagara Falls.

Murdza believes that the time her children spend outdoors is imperative for their well-being, especially with the amount of time her son spends online for school.

"I changed my son's school routine, just a little bit because five days, online all day is just damaging his well-being. He's not happy," she said.

"So I made a promise to my kids that, every week, we either take a day off or an afternoon off and we'll go to a new park."

## Yellow Door working on film production

Bernard Lansbergen  
The Lake Report

In the past six years the young actors at Virgil's Yellow Door Theatre Project have put on many stage performances, but this summer they are producing their first musical film, called "Misfits."

Fourteen talented teens were chosen out of more than 30 who auditioned virtually from all over Ontario.

"The auditions were fantastic. The kids were so talented," said Lezlie Wade, the film's writer and director.

"If I could have written this show for all of them, I would have, but within a certain period of time you can only write so many (songs)."

"Misfits" tells the story of a group of teenage girls who relive their four years of high school at their graduation.

"It seems sort of fortuitous," said Wade, "because some of these kids haven't been able to have their graduation. So, in a way, we're giving them a theatrical graduation."

Scott Christian is writing the songs but, just like the script, they're still a work in progress, as Wade is creating characters and a story specifically tailored to the chosen cast.

"We're looking for an opportunity for the audience to maybe get a bit more of



A still from "Dead Reckoning" by Scott Christian and Lezlie Wade, a previous work by the creative duo. SUPPLIED

an idea of how difficult it is for kids at this particular time, as well as for it to be cathartic for the kids (involved)," said Wade.

Yellow Door Theatre Project is a charitable organization that provides young people with skill training and live theatre performance opportunities.

Andorlie Hillstrom, its artistic director, hopes the latest project will be a beacon of hope for the teenagers involved.

"Our teens, in particular, have suffered from the effects of COVID-19 and the lack of peer activities and support groups," said Hillstrom.

"I believe that this film will motivate, provide a strong education and

mentoring component and be a positive mental wellness arts activity for teen performers."

The switch from theatre to film was prompted by pandemic restrictions that make it more difficult to stage live performances and have in-person rehearsals.

But Hillstrom said she thinks Yellow Door has gained from the pandemic.

"Initially it was scary (and) frustrating, but the pivots that we made perhaps forced us to move into digital areas we wouldn't have otherwise," noting the organization intends to keep up its digital program even after the pandemic is over.

Although they haven't shot it yet, "Misfits" has

already booked its premiere for April 2022 at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

This June, the cast will rehearse the musical numbers virtually, with shooting commencing in July on several yet-to-be-determined locations across Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Because of COVID-19, safety protocols will have to be followed at all times on set, often spacing out the actors to create the illusion that they're together on camera.

"Even though we're all in separate places, the great thing about film is when you put it all together it looks like we're all together," said Wade. "There's something kind of magical about that."

## Lack of rain one reason for low water level in Four Mile Creek

Kyra Simone  
The Lake Report

Uncharacteristically low water levels this spring in Four Mile Creek are likely a result of several compounding factors, including lack of rain.

This year there has been less precipitation than usual.

In addition, irrigation and drainage staff confirmed that the Virgil Pond, between Line 2 and Line 3, has been draining for about a week, says Brett Ruck, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's environmental services supervisor.

Unfortunately, it appears that boards were removed



Low water levels in Four Mile Creek. RICHARD HARLEY

from the pond and used as firewood. Typically, these boards help to control the timing of water releases from the reservoir.

When such barriers are compromised, large volumes of water rush quickly to the lake and leave little flow behind in the

creek. The town has been in contact with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, which intends to install a more robust barrier so that the pond volume can be replenished.

So, irrigation practices, warming climate and tampering with Four Mile Creek's storage reservoirs have likely further suppressed the creek's low summer flow.

In response to notably low water levels in the creek, several members of the NOTL 4 All Facebook group expressed concerns for local wildlife. Historically, water levels in this creek do tend to be

quite low between May and September when some flow is diverted for irrigation purposes.

An NPCA water availability study found the flow rate to be approximately 0.1 cubic metres per second during the summer, even back in 2009. These months also tend to be the warmest, so evaporation rates are higher at this time of year.

The creek provides habitat for a variety of species, including breeding grounds for American toads and western chorus frogs. Some areas of the creek even support rarer species, including the red-spotted newt or the marsh wren.

Four Mile Creek is also home to many more "generalist" birds, like red-winged blackbirds, that are comfortable in several types of floodplain environments.

Historically, land-use changes have made the creek uninhabitable for brook trout.

As natural riverbank environments were transformed into urban areas, these cold-water fish were not able to survive when destabilized banks eroded and produced higher quantities of debris in the water.

*Environmental columnist Kyra Simone writes the Keeping it Green column for The Lake Report.*



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# Queenston boat launch busy, despite pandemic rules

Gail Kendall  
Special to The Lake Report

The Queenston boat launch can be a whirlwind of activity or a quiet place to sit, walk and enjoy the view of the Niagara River on any given day.

Fishermen frequent the area daily, beginning at dawn and remaining until the early evening. Residents and visitors enjoy a tranquil walk along the waterfront leading up to the village. Gorgeous views of the Niagara River, Lewiston and being surrounded by nature during any season without crowds of people is idyllic.

The jet boats have always been a favourite activity with tourists but not so much with the residents. Large buses filled with tourists invade the quiet village, allowing visitors a thrilling boat ride through the Niagara rapids.

But, 2020 saw a different take on the waterfront area.

While the buses were not permitted to carry tourists, much to the delight of the residents, the jet boats still ran when permitted. This brought more and more in-



The Queenston boat launch is a popular fishing spot. GAIL KENDALL

dividual traffic to the area. With other Niagara region recreational opportunities limited, the boat launch became more popular.

In March 2021, Niagara Parks introduced paid parking at the launch. The revenue from the meters is used for maintenance and

upgrades to the launches. Ten dollars will get you a full-day visit.

The boat launch has undergone a number of restrictions during the provincial lockdowns. From initially restricting auto traffic, to recently installing no trespassing signs, to cars, walkers and fishermen.

Despite the signage, many people continued to defy the order and populate the area.

The situation was further aggravated with the recent spring smelt run which attracted additional visitors and had fishermen at the waterfront throughout the day and the night. This

resulted in an abundance of trash left behind that the residents took upon themselves to clean up.

Jim Armstrong, the Queenston Residents Association president, remarked, "When the road to the boat launch was closed off, this allowed those who wished to walk in the area to do so without having to be concerned about the hazards of vehicular traffic. I believe that many found this to be very enjoyable and more like past times when there was not so much traffic."

"On the other hand, the vehicles that would (for the most part) normally park in the various areas provided by Niagara Parks, took to parking along Front/Princess and Dumfries streets, the north end of Queenston Street and the Willowbank parking area on Walnut Street in large numbers, at times exceeding 60 vehicles," Armstrong said.

"This has carried on throughout the stay-at-home order periods, which were largely ignored from all perspectives."

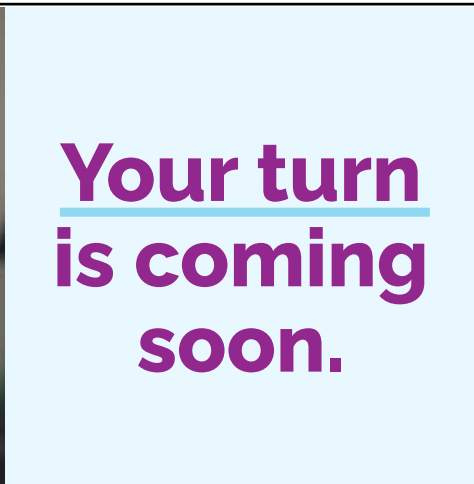
According to Niagara Parks Police chief Paul

Forcier, "The boat launch was closed due to a lack of social distancing. The area has a much more confined footprint for pedestrians and vehicles and we found it was difficult for users to stay socially distanced."

Opening the launch was consistent with the latest changes from the province easing outdoor restrictions for outdoor activities. Niagara Parks Police officers have been monitoring the area and observed this past weekend things were going well. Boaters and shoreline anglers were able to engage in activities while socially distanced."

According to Armstrong, "Now that the boat launch area is wide-open again, there is a lot of traffic, making walking in the area much less enjoyable. At the same time, the parking areas are once again accessible, so on-street parking has diminished."

"This is the reality of returning to a more or less normal situation," he said and the association stays in contact with the parks commission to deal with any issues.



**Your turn is coming soon.**

Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine plan is helping to stop the spread and save lives. Thousands of people across the province are getting vaccinated every day.

As vaccinations continue, we need to stay the course to protect those we love. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Keep your distance.

Find out when, where and how to get vaccinated at [ontario.ca/covidvaccineplan](https://ontario.ca/covidvaccineplan) or call 1-888-999-6488 for assistance in more than 300 languages.

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Firefighters

# NOTL Pandemic Heroes



Teachers



Front-line workers

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](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com). A special thanks to Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery for providing a bottle of sparkling wine to our pandemic heroes. That's the spirit!

## NOTL's farmers and farm workers

During a time when everything in the world was uncertain at best, Niagara-on-the-Lake's farmers and farm workers continued to ensure food crops were being grown and put on the table for families.

There's a long list of farmers doing a long list of things, from raising livestock, to growing asparagus, grapes, tender fruits and vegetables.

While the rest of us worried about toilet paper and stacking the shelves with spaghetti sauce, our farmers were working to make sure food kept coming.

It's only fitting that the men and women of the farming community are recognized as Pandemic Heroes.

Evidenced by the photo to the right, it's a tough job and our the people who toil in the fields aren't afraid to get their hands — and faces — dirty to keep the crops coming.

Farmer Dylan Wiens, pictured, told The Lake Report it's been a tough year for the agriculture industry, but our farmers have been doing it for generations.

"When older generations learn I farm in Niagara I often get a story back from their childhood about picking cherries all day and getting paid by the basket. A lot of those same farming families are still active here in Niagara, pushing through whatever new challenge each season brings," Wiens said.

"The last two seasons those challenges haven't been drought or frost, but COVID-19. Despite this, whether you shop at a grocer or the local farmers' market you'll have access to fruits and vegetables grown in Ontario. In fact, here in Niagara they could've been grown right down the street from you."

So when you're out enjoying a socially distanced walk or drive through Niagara's ripe agricultural sector this spring and summer, give a kind wave or a honk of the horn to show your appreciation for their hard work.

And make sure to stop by local fruit and vegetable stands to get your produce as close to home as possible. Nothing beats Niagara-grown.



Dylan Wiens of Kai Wiens Family Farm. SUPPLIED

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# GAMES



*Have some fun*

**Across**

- 1. U S space group (1,1,1,1)
- 3. Court game (10)
- 10. Consequently (9)
- 11. Female sovereign (5)
- 12. Survive (7)
- 13. Bowling pin (7)
- 14. Skin eruption (4)
- 15. Pachyderms (9)
- 19. Sue (9)
- 21. German Mrs (4)
- 24. Passage (7)
- 27. Surrey commuter village (7)
- 28. Trembling poplar (5)
- 29. Mouth organ (9)
- 30. Science of numbers (10)
- 31. Undiluted (4)

**Down**

- 1. Belonging to a country (8)
- 2. Enticement (9)
- 4. Papal (9)
- 5. Leg joints (5)
- 6. Mexican liquor (7)
- 7. Proficient (5)
- 8. Beam over a door (6)
- 9. Started (5)
- 16. Medley (3-6)
- 17. Frighten, usually by violence (9)
- 18. Take away (8)
- 20. Squeeze together (7)
- 22. Las Vegas setting (6)
- 23. Racecourse (5)
- 25. Island in the Bay of Naples (5)
- 26. Resort lake in both California and 22 down (5)

## Crossword Puzzle


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30											31		

## Last issue's answers

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	K	Y	Y												

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9				5	8	7		
	7			2			1	
	1	2				8	7	3
3				1				2





making our mark

## NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

# ADD YOUR VOICE TO NIAGARA'S OFFICIAL PLAN

### NIAGARA IS GROWING!

The region is forecasted to grow to a minimum of 674,000 people and 272,000 jobs by the year 2051. To guide this growth, Niagara Region is creating a new Official Plan.

The Niagara Official Plan will set out objectives and policies to shape Niagara's physical development, protect what's valuable, and balance the interests of current and future residents. Niagara is facing many growth management challenges, including; housing affordability, protecting the natural environment, minimizing impacts from a changing climate, and increasing economic prosperity. A made in Niagara solution, is being developed to address these challenges.

### YOU'RE INVITED

Attend a series of virtual public information centres to learn more about key draft policy directives and core policy content that is intended to be part of the Niagara Official Plan.

Updates on other key sections of the official plan will also be provided. Background information and draft policies are now available for review through [niagararegion.ca/official-plan](http://niagararegion.ca/official-plan).

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in meetings or events, contact the Niagara Region's Accessibility Coordinator at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca).

Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

### VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRES

Register for each of the following session at [niagararegion.ca/official-plan](http://niagararegion.ca/official-plan). Video recordings will also be available online following the sessions.

**Wed., June 9 | 6 p.m. GROWING REGION**

- Growth Allocation and Land Needs - Draft Policies
- Regional Structure - Draft Policies
- Housing - Draft Policies
- Settlement Area Boundary Reviews - Update

**Thurs., June 10 | 6 p.m. VIBRANT REGION**

- District & Secondary Planning - Draft Policies
- Urban Design - Draft Policies
- Archaeology - Update

**Wed. June 16 | 6 p.m. COMPETITIVE REGION**

- Agriculture - Draft Policies
- Employment areas - Draft Policies
- Aggregates - Draft Policies

**Thurs., June 17 | 6 p.m. CONNECTED REGION**


- Transportation - Draft Policies
- Infrastructure - Draft Policies

**Wed., June 23 | 6 p.m. SUSTAINABLE REGION**

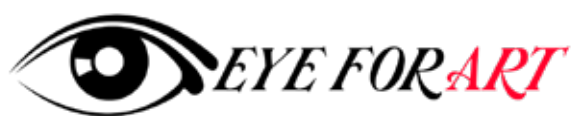
- Natural Environment System - Update
- Watershed Planning - Update
- Climate change - Update

If you are not able to attend, you can provide input or ask questions by emailing [makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca) or contact David Heyworth, Official Plan Policy Consultant at 905-980-6000 ext. 3476.

[niagararegion.ca/official-plan](http://niagararegion.ca/official-plan)  
[makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca)







## 'The Song of Love'

Penny-Lynn Cookson  
Special to The Lake Report

In these days of our town's empty streets, closed shops and still dark theatre scene, the remarkable images of Italy's influential metaphysical artist Giorgio de Chirico comes to mind.

In his haunting deserted piazzas, the late-afternoon sun throws dramatic long shadows but the clarity of that light never penetrates the dark arches of classical arcades. A clock may signal an eternal present but there remains a dislocation in time and space.

Theatrical views of architecture, out of scale objects and illogical perspective increase an uneasy sense of remoteness. Things are not at all what they are supposed to be.

De Chirico's roots lay in the philosophy of metaphysics, which contemplated the world in ways that are hidden beneath physical appearance, and the writings of Nietzsche, who explored the subconscious. What is the reality behind ordinary things? What are we to make of things that are deprived of their usual associations and are juxtaposed in new mysterious relationships?

Every piazza can become a stage, a place where incompatibles meet. In his recurring motifs, everyday reality meets mythology and creates moods of nostalgia, tension and alienation.

De Chirico became a major influence on the Surrealist art of the 20th century but he was not a surrealist. It was the unexpected strange encounters between objects

and the clarity of vision in his work that appealed.

The basis of Surrealism was the analysis of dreams, a liberation from constraints and logic and de Chirico's imagery was exactly that. To André Breton, the writer, poet and theorist of the "Surrealist Manifesto," de Chirico was the link between 19th-century Romanticism and 20th-century Surrealism.

By 1918, de Chirico's art changed to neo-classical images and he was denounced by the Surrealists as betraying the psychic integrity of his earlier works between 1910 and 1917. Nevertheless, he led the way for the work of the most famous Surrealists: René Magritte, Salvatore Dali and Max Ernst.

He also influenced major filmmakers such as Michelangelo Antonioni, musicians Thelonius Monk and David Bowie, the poet Sylvia Plath and 21st-century video games such as SURREALISTA.

In "The Song of Love," the plaster head of a Greek classical sculpture overhangs

an angled wall attached to an arched façade. The mould of a hand represented by a rubber surgeon's glove implies the absence of human presence. A green ball is stationary in the foreground.

In the distance, smoke or perhaps a cloud, rises above what might be a smokestack or a train, a reference to industry or his father, an engineer who built railroads. In 1909, de Chirico wrote of the "host of strange, unknown and solitary things that can be translated into painting ... What is required above all is a pronounced sensitivity."

In a subtext written on his 1920 self-portrait, de Chirico wrote: "Et quid amabo nisi quod aenigma est?" What shall I love if not the enigma?..

*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. Watch for her upcoming lecture series at the Pump-house Arts Centre and at RiverBrink Art Museum.*



Giorgio de Chirico, "Song of Love," 1914, Oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York. SUPPLIED

# Dr. Brown: The evolution of **caring** for kin and neighbours

Dr. William Brown  
The Lake Report

During this pandemic we witnessed selfless behaviour by thousands of health care workers around the globe, who at great risk to themselves, struggled daily to save lives in a battle with a virus, with no end in sight, especially in crowded, poor, under-resourced regions of the world.

Such was the risk that many health care workers died and others continue to struggle with the emotional toll of witnessing so many tragedies, despite their best efforts.

But where does such day-in, day-out, strength, resilience and determination come from, to care for so long, for so many, at such great cost to themselves?

Some suggest that selfless behaviour is rooted in traditional values passed on by families, cultures, religious beliefs and backgrounds. Or is such altruistic behaviour driven by a strong professional sense of duty, obligation and commitment? Or is there something more basic at work?



SOURCED IMAGE

Is the impulse to care for others at some risk to oneself, innate in some fashion, to being human. And going further, is caring for others, a biologically determined behavioural default widely shared with other highly social species?

Or is the "why" behind selfless behaviour far more complex and personal and related to some or all of the above or perhaps other factors? You may want to chime in on this one.

The precise evolutionary roots of moral behaviour are unknown. Perhaps it all began with maternal care – the need to care for the defenseless young – which later broadened to embrace other needs in the community, as the size, complexity and dependence on others

increased in social groups.

The notion that moral behaviour has deep and widely shared evolutionary roots, comes from studies of other social primates such as chimpanzees, bonobos, rhesus monkeys and baboons, and extends to other highly social species such as whales, porpoises, elephants.

Even small-brained but highly intelligent corvid birds, such as ravens, can read the intentions of others and possess a sense of fairness (and unfairness).

Chimpanzees, for example, often help those unable to fend for themselves, by providing food, shelter and protection, and willingly provide long-term care for chronically disabled members of their troop, for months and even several years. Of course, chimpanzees can be malicious and merciless to the point of savagely killing members of neighbouring, competing troops.

But then again, humans can be calculatingly malicious, merciless and savage toward one another, something we are reminded of al-

most every day by news reports of domestic and racial abuse, instances of police brutality and even killings, or, as continues to happen in the Mediterranean, refusals to help boatloads of refugees at sea, with the result that many drown. The list is much longer.

The same two sides of the behavioural coin seen in chimpanzees and other animals, has been observed in our close cousins, the neanderthals in whom fossil evidence reveals both examples of violence and moral behaviour.

Evidence of long-term care is based on the observation that some neanderthals managed to survive for several years after grievous injuries and disabilities, which must have required continuing support from others in the troop for many years.

What was surprising for me was to learn that similar long-term care was provided by many of our paleolithic ancestors, including various australopith species from as early as four million years ago to as recently as a little over a million years ago.

And likewise, for several examples of homo erectus, dating as far back as one point seven million years ago to several hundred thousand years ago, and several examples of long-term care involving pre-neanderthals in Spain about 400,000 years ago.

The cumulative fossil evidence strongly suggests a mixed record – examples of great violence and other examples of long-term care – the evidence for both of which, reaches back several million years, long before there was evidence of symbolic thinking, except in the skill with which tools and weapons were fashioned – but long before any figurative art.

Social intelligence – making sense of the behaviour of others in your group – probably had similar deep evolutionary roots because it emerged in so many distantly related animals.

Perhaps it was this social intelligence that drove the evolution of moral behaviour – the need to work together for the common good – to insure the survival of the group. That makes sense

to me.

Finally, a word about good and evil.

For our primate relatives and our ancient ancestors, good and bad behaviour are biological features of the species as a whole and individuals within the group, not forces beyond their biological nature as animals.

Comparatively speaking, the emergence of monotheistic moralizing gods was a late acquisition – about 5,000 years ago in Egypt and the Indian subcontinent, according to an excellent international study reported in the journal Nature in 2019. Of course, the whole notion of supra-human agency playing a role in good and evil was probably much older.

Then there's the matter of artificial intelligence and whether AI could ever be considered sentient and moral. Let's leave those thorny questions to another day..

*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.*



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# FEATURED

## EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



### Lawn bowling green

This is a photograph of the former lawn bowling green that existed on the corner of Johnson and Regent streets in the heritage district of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Four gentlemen are playing a match while others watch in the background. The date of the image is unknown but the tower in the back is the water tower that once stood on King Street (see last week's photo). Other King Street buildings can be seen in the background. Today, you can walk this same green space when you enjoy a moment of reflection at the Voices of Freedom Park, which was built to commemorate our community's significant Black history.



Jim Filyer, Richard Connelly and Ardeth Staz stand by the new Little Library on Perez Street. Filyer and Connelly constructed the libraries that are now up and running in the Village. EVAN SAUNDERS



### Village gets two Little Libraries

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

"The collection changes over time as residents take or add a book."

The public library now isn't the only place for residents of the Village to pick up new books.

In this case, the Little Libraries will be placed near the Village's mailboxes. The association asked that they be placed on the posts that support the pergolas around the mailboxes, instead of installing new posts.

Niagara-on-the-Lake council unanimously approved a plan to install two Little Libraries in the Village, at the request of the Village Community Association.

"You provide the posts and we'll do the rest," said Staz.

"We have three of them in Niagara-on-the-Lake on private property. They're quite busy and always full," Lord Mayor Betty Disero told council last week.

Staz led the initiative to contribute to the warm sense of community she says she has experienced in NOTL since moving into the Village a year and a half ago.

The two new Little Libraries are now up and full of books.

"I quickly learned how welcoming and friendly and caring the people in NOTL are," she said.

The initiative has been labelled as a pilot project by the town so it can see how it goes before committing to doing the same in other neighbourhoods.

"I was more than willing to take forward a project that would add to that sense of community."

A Little Library is like a bird house for books and are placed in strategic locations in communities. "Little Libraries are little boxes or houses that contain a collection of books for sharing," Village Community Association vice-president Ardeth Staz told council.

The project has been endorsed by the public library, which views it as "promoting literacy," Staz said.

The Little Libraries include flyers to promote the public library's extended services.

Due to worries about COVID, the libraries also have hand-sanitizing stations attached to them.

## ARCHITEXT

### Something else is missing

Brian Marshall  
Columnist



Styld Ranch. SUPPLIED/BRIAN MARSHALL

First as a visitor and then as a resident, I have been driving the roads of Niagara-on-the-Lake for nearly 50 years.

From the beginning I was entranced by a town that had not followed the prevalent trend of the mid-20th century to tear down the old homes and replace them with modern builds. Here was a treasure trove that represented much of central Canada's architectural legacy with an assortment of examples from the American experience thrown in.

It wasn't too long, however, before I found a curious anomaly. It seemed that homes in various architectural styles popular

between 1870 and 1900 were either very rare or completely missing from the town's built heritage.

While it might be understandable that a town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's size might not include a build in the ultra-expensive Romanesque Revival style, there was a total absence of Italianate homes as well (note that St. Mark's rectory is a Regency Tuscan, not an Italianate).

While the mansard roof of the Second Empire shows up on Randwood and a couple of small period vernacular builds, there are no houses actually design/built in this style.

Perhaps most curious is the fact that arguably the most popular architectural style in the latter part of the 19th century was the Queen Anne and Niagara-on-the-Lake has only one period example.

So what caused this gap in the town's architectural history?

Initially, I wondered if it might not have been small-town conservatism. After all, each of these styles could be seen to express the Victorian inclination toward the ornate and elaborate which might turn off a conventionally inclined populace.

However, there were plenty of more staid and

even understated homes design/built by each of these schools of architecture. Moreover, it didn't seem that the townfolk had taken an issue with Gothic Revival design, which could certainly be the decorated equal of our missing architectural styles.

I suspect the real answer is somewhat more prosaic.

National and international economies of the late 19th century could easily be described as "boom and bust." The first broad use of the term "Great Depression" occurred in England between 1893 and 1897. The United States suffered a national depression from 1873 to 1879, experienced significant bank panics occurring in 1884 and 1890, and then followed Britain into depression in 1893.

Then, like now, Niagara-on-the-Lake was heavily dependent on tourism and when the tourist trade dried up, so did the local economy. If you had to build a house during this period, the average folks went modest and vernacular.



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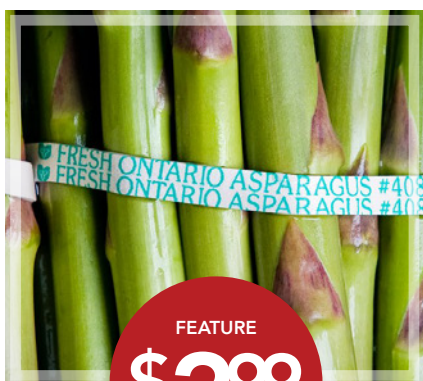
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- Potato Skins ..... \$14
- Chicken Wings ..... \$15
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- BBQ Bacon Wrapped Scallops ..... \$16
- Crab Cakes ..... \$15
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*(fried egg, bacon, cheddar & hot sauce)*
  - Olde Smokey ..... \$16  
*(bacon, KC BBQ Sauce, crispy onion, cheddar & chipotle mayo)*
  - Bacon Cheese Burger ..... \$16  
*(cheese, bacon, lettuce, tomato & pickle)*
  - Beyond Meat Burger 🍷 ..... \$16  
*(lettuce, tomato & pickle)*
  - Bacon Portobello Mushroom ..... \$16  
*(bacon, mushrooms & Swiss cheese)*
- EXTRAS:** Sautéed onions or mushrooms on a burger +\$2

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- Chicken Fingers ..... \$15
- Steak and Guinness Poutine ..... \$17
- Reuben Sandwich ..... \$17
- Meat Loaf Sandwich ..... \$16
- 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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- Award Winning English Style Fish and Chips ..... \$18
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- Bangers and Mash ..... \$16
- Shepherd's Pie ..... \$16
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- Liver and Onions ..... \$17

**EXTRAS:** Mushy Peas +\$3

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**WEDNESDAY: BOGO BURGERS!** ..... Buy 1, Get 1 Half Price  
*Buy any house made burger and get the second half price*

**THURSDAY: Liver & Onions** ..... \$15  
*Served with mashed potatoes, peas and carrots*

**FRIDAY: Fish Fri-Yay** ..... \$16 - 1 piece | \$24 - 2 pieces  
*Haddock served with fries, homemade coleslaw, tartar sauce, & lemon wedge*

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY: Slow Braised Ribs** .... \$23 half rack | \$30 full rack  
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