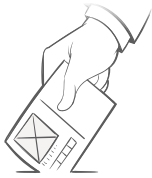




Downed trees make noise | Page 7

## ELECTION 2022



Watch results in-person at community centre or view live online

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre will open its doors for both residents and candidates on the night of the election.

The auditorium at the community centre will be open after polls close at 8

Continued on Page 2



## Environmental spill substance is finally identified

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Sulfate reducing bacteria. That's the name of the substance the town vacuumed out of the Cole municipal drain that runs from Line 5 to 6 in rural Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Back on Aug. 17, the town received a call about sewage odour and discoloration in the drain.

After the town assessed the issue, the Ministry of the Environment was con-

Continued on Page 18

## Secret recording claims Disero knew about husband's complaint

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Lord Mayor Betty Disero is vehemently denying statements in a secret recording that allege she was aware of a bylaw complaint lodged

by her husband months before she originally admitted to knowing.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has alerted its integrity commissioner about the recording, made by the mayor's neighbour

Colin Telfer of an Aug. 22 conversation with former senior town administrator Sheldon Randall.

Telfer and his wife Jennifer Elliott are suing the town over losing their B&B licence after a bylaw dispute

launched by the mayor's husband, Dan Williams.

In the conversation, Randall says Disero discussed the matter with him "way, way before" the town's new chief administrator, Marnie Cluckie, was hired in De-

ember 2020.

He also claims the lord mayor spoke to staff about the complaint.

Disero, who told the integrity commissioner

Continued on Page 4

## Bloody battle relived in NOTL

Queenston Heights steps back in time for historic re-enactment



Photography by Somer Slobodian

Somer Slobodian  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Blowing winds didn't deter the soldiers who marched from Fort George to Queenston over the weekend to re-enact the Battle of Queenston Heights.

The re-enactment marked the 210th anniversary of the bloody battle, which was fought on Oct. 13, 1812.

It was an important moment in Canadian history, repelling an American invasion, and helped shape the country as we know it today.

More than 200 men and women participated in the re-enactment.

"If you don't do it, people forget," said David Moore, who had just finished the 10-kilometre march in his British red coat uniform. He's been participating in re-enactments for many years.

Heritage will be lost if people don't bring it back to life, he added.

The re-enactors brought to life the deadly battle, staged on part of the original battlefield.

The audience watched as

Continued on Page 16

## Niagara Nursery School: From NOTL to a much wider world

In part 1 of our series last week, The Lake Report provided a glimpse into the early days of what was to become the educational foundation for many of Niagara-on-the-Lake's young people — the Niagara Nursery School and Early Learning Centre.

Started in 1972, largely by volunteer mothers looking for a sense of community both for themselves and their children, the school has blossomed into one of the finest such institutions in the region.

Today's instalment adds the very personal story of one well-known NOTL family and how it helped shape the fledgling school in the early 1970s. And how that family's kids have made their way in the world.

Tim Taylor  
The Lake Report

Barbara and Ranjit Ahluwalia lived on the Niagara Parkway, he a doctor; she a former nurse, homemaker and hardworking community volunteer.

They had moved to town

in 1967 from the United Kingdom, with three small children.

By the early 1970s, Barbara had two more youngsters in her skirts, more-than-ready to attend preschool, if they could find one.



Continued on Page 26



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Left: Flying Officer Alfred Alexander Picard, who is commemorated on the Niagara-on-the-Lake memorial clock tower cenotaph, died when his Lancaster bomber was shot down over Germany on Oct. 14, 1944. CANADIAN VIRTUAL WAR MEMORIAL Right: A Lancaster bomber, similar to one Picard flew in. CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Navy Hall will open for free tours on Saturday as part of Doors Open Niagara. EVAN LOREE

# THE MONUMENTS MEN

## Until war do us part: Marriages could be war victims, too

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Niagara-on-the-Lake's iconic clock tower cenotaph. In recognition of the cenotaph's century of service through two world wars and beyond, NOTL historian Ron Dale has been researching the stories of the people – all men – whose names are engraved on it. This is one in a series of stories to document and remember the sacrifices these combatants made. Future instalments will commemorate those named on the Queen Street cenotaph and on the municipal memorial in Queenston.

Ron Dale  
Special to The Lake Report

During the Second World War more than a million Canadian men served in the army, air force or navy, and at least 46,000 women served in the auxiliary services.

As many as 200,000 of these volunteers were married when they served. In addition, 48,000 servicemen married overseas "war brides."

Courtships were often shorter than was normal in peacetime. This did not always work out well, particularly when a couple met and married and then the newlywed man left Canada, perhaps never to return.

More than 8,000 married Canadians servicemen died during the war. Widows

received a small War Gratuity payment based on their husband's service.

Many other marriages ended, but not due to death. A young man living away from his spouse, separated for years from his wife, might fall in love with a woman from wherever he was posted.

The same sometimes happened across the ocean where a woman felt abandoned when her husband went overseas.

For those at home, every moment would be tense, fearing to hear word of her husband's death in combat. Many found companionship and then love among the men who served in Canada or who were not in service.

A married couple might realize that for any of a variety of reasons, the marriage was simply not going to work.

This was the situation Flying Officer Alfred Alexander Picard found himself in when he climbed aboard a Lancaster bomber of 153 Squadron, Royal Air Force, for a bombing raid over Germany on Oct. 14, 1944.

It may have been the last thing on his mind.

Picard was born on May 30, 1917. His father Alfred brought the family to Hamilton, where he worked as a cinema projectionist.

Picard attended school in Hamilton and in 1935 took a correspondence course

from the Radio and Television Institute.

He found work assisting his father as a film projectionist in theatres in Hamilton, St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake from time to time.

On Dec. 9, 1939, Picard married Dorothy Page a few months after her 17th birthday. On Aug. 9, 1941, Dorothy gave birth to their only child, Thomas.

The family was living in Hamilton where Picard was working as a fitter for Otis Elevators, now retooled for the war industry and ironically manufacturing anti-aircraft guns.

For whatever reason, Picard decided to join the RCAF and enlisted in Hamilton on Aug. 28, 1942, leaving behind Dorothy and the one-year-old Thomas.

He passed his War Emergency Training Program in Hamilton in 1942 and was accepted into a course for the training of aircrew.

Picard expressed his desire to be trained as a pilot but was not granted this wish. With his background in radio, he was trained over the next year as a navigator.

He was shipped to England, arriving on Nov. 24, 1943, and attached to Royal Air Force training squadrons for the next several months.

During this period, his wife Dorothy sued for divorce. It was granted on

Feb. 12, 1944, while Picard was still training for active service.

Their child Thomas was being raised by Dorothy's mother, who would continue as the boy's foster parent.

On Oct. 7, 1944, Picard was finally chosen for active service in RAF 153 Squadron.

He was assigned to the crew of a Lancaster bomber with two men from the Royal Air Force and four from the RCAF. During that month they flew several successful bomber missions over Germany.

Just after dawn on Oct. 14, 1944, Picard's plane joined 1,012 other aircraft of the RAF and RCAF to bomb Duisburg, Germany, as part of Operation Hurricane, targeting mines in the area.

Fourteen aircraft were brought down by German anti-aircraft fire. Picard's plane was one of them.

The plane's crewmen were reported missing, presumed killed, until the Germans confirmed the deaths, through the International Red Cross. The men are buried in the Reichwald War Cemetery.

Dorothy remarried and continued to live in Hamilton until her death in 2011.

Flying Officer Alfred Alexander Picard is commemorated on the Niagara-on-the-Lake memorial clock tower cenotaph and in Hamilton's Second World War honour roll.

## Historic Navy Hall added to Doors Open on Saturday

Staff  
The Lake Report

Navy Hall has been added to the list of buildings participating in Doors Open Niagara this Saturday.

The iconic Parks Canada wood and stone structure on Ricardo Street that was home to Canada's first provincial parliament from 1792 to 1796, joins the Niagara District Courthouse, Willowbank, Clare's Harley-Davidson, Ravine Estate Winery, the

Niagara Pumphouse, Shaw Festival, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. Mark's Anglican Church, the Exchange Brewery, the Niagara Apothecary and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, to welcome curious residents and tourists alike.

The full-day event is being co-ordinated by the NOTL Museum.

Site hours vary for all participating locations, so check tour times and opening hours prior to visiting.

## Watch election results in-person or live online

Continued from Front Page

p.m. on Monday, Oct. 24, to allow people to view live results of the municipal election.

"They have two big screens where they post the results and everyone from the community is invited to come and watch," Lord Mayor Betty Disero said in an interview.

Residents can also view the results on the town's website, Notl.com once the polls close and the results are available.

"Since the community centre auditorium is a polling location, the town is unable to provide access to the auditorium earlier than 8 p.m., and kindly requests that the public does not ar-

rive earlier than this," town spokesperson Marah Minor said in an email to The Lake Report.

To learn more about each candidate, check out The Lake Report's Election 2022 Special Edition at [Tinyurl.com/25hzufr9](http://Tinyurl.com/25hzufr9). Or go to [Notl.com/council-government/elections](http://Notl.com/council-government/elections).

Polling hours run from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the following locations:

St. Davids Public School, 1344 York Rd.

Crossroads Public School, 1250 Niagara Stone Rd.

Holiday Inn Express, 524 York Rd.

Laura Secord Homestead, 29 Queenston St.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre, 14 Anderson Lane.



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Gary Zalepa talked to Betty Alexander and her husband Kent during his campaigning in Glendale. EVAN LOREE

## Campaign Walkabout: Parking, traffic, representation are issues in Glendale

Journalists from The Lake Report accompanied Niagara-on-the-Lake's mayoral candidates as they spent time campaigning and knocking on doors. The stories were published in the order in which candidates appear on the ballot: Oct. 6 Betty Disero, last week Vaughn Goettler and today, Gary Zalepa.

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Traffic, parking and a seat at the table.

Those were the common concerns for residents of Glendale when mayoral candidate Gary Zalepa was out canvassing last Thursday.

"You drive down the concession roads and people are just driving past you at 90 or 100. It's absolutely ridiculous," said Carol Milne, a resident of Durham Way.

Zalepa encountered quite a few empty houses and several undecided voters while hopping from court to crescent.

Betty Alexander and her husband greeted Zalepa warmly on their covered porch.

Zalepa had a short chat with them about his history with the town, both as a resident and politician.

"I want to help the (council) work together collaboratively. It's always kind of been my specialty to be able to do that," Zalepa told the couple.

Alexander told The Lake Report she was undecided on

### ELECTION '22

who she would vote for, but that she had worked on mayoral incumbent Betty Disero's campaign in 2018.

"I think she's a very hard worker. But I'm concerned about the discontent (on council)," she said.

Alexander was concerned about the town's lack of upscale accommodations for retirees and seniors as well.

"They want a really nice facility where they feel comfortable retiring, whether it's condos that they can buy into and have sort of an extended care as they need it," she said.

**"We're not looked upon as Niagara even though we pay our taxes."**

GEOFFREY ANDERSON  
NOTL RESIDENT

One resident, John Underwood, greeted the mayoral hopeful with a laugh and permitted his team to put a Zalepa sign on his lawn.

"Get some speeding signs put on here to keep them down a bit," Underwood told The Lake Report.

There are a lot of children in Glendale and Underwood is concerned for their safety.

A door or two down, Zalepa had the chance to meet Ludwig Reiher, who recently moved to Canada from Chile with his family.

Reiher is an international student at Niagara College and was happy with his home, having a school nearby for his kids and a good neighbourhood for them to grow up in.

Stephanie Zerjav had some concerns over the new diverging diamond interchange at Glendale but was more worried about the clear-cutting of trees behind her property on Keith Crescent.

"They did this Feb. 1 and they've done nothing except let the trees rot from the ground," she told The Lake Report.

"We used to have a ton of wildlife and birds and they're all gone."

She and her husband felt concerns like these were being ignored by the current administration.

Geoffrey Anderson had his own list of complaints but the transparency of the town was not among them.

Anderson said he's a Disero supporter because she has been responsive to his calls.

He shared concerns with Zalepa over the lack of parking in Glendale and the aggressiveness of bylaw enforcement.

"We're not looked upon as Niagara even though we pay our taxes."

"We shouldn't feel that we are harassed," he added.

Norm Behring shared some of Anderson's parking con-

cerns but he will be voting for Zalepa because he feels the regional councillor is a "stand-up guy."

He was concerned the current administration is forgetting about Virgil, Glendale and the other communities in NOTL.

"Betty has basically dropped the ball as far as the development here and it's all about the Old Town," Behring said.

Crime was clearly a concern for the residents as well.

Rocio Aleman talked about people breaking into cars in the neighbourhood and said a stronger police presence might be helpful.

The sun was going down when Zalepa met Andrew Vasilyev and his wife on their front porch.

"I'd really like to help with getting clarity around our growth policies," Zalepa told Vasilyev.

He's also interested in attracting additional employers to the NOTL to help build on the town's economic growth, Zalepa said.

He and Vasilyev agreed the town should work to attract people who will develop the town and its economy.

The couple remain undecided on who they will vote for, though.

Vasilyev said one "big concern for the regular people is marijuana usage."

He is concerned that the legalized drug is not regulated well enough and worries about the effect it may have on his children.

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# Mayor calls allegations a political ‘smear’ campaign

Continued from Front Page

in writing that she first learned of the complaint on June 23, 2021, disputed the allegations by Randall, who was interim chief administrator through much of the COVID pandemic.

“He’s wrong,” Disero said in an interview, adding she sticks by what she wrote in her letter to the integrity commissioner.

In a subsequent emailed statement, the lord mayor called the allegations a “smear” campaign in the middle of an election and denied she ever tried to influence the complaint process.

“It is completely false to say that I was talking to any staff to go after the Telfers. Indeed, it is completely false that I ever told any staff member to go after the Telfers or to involve themselves with the Telfers.”

Randall has declined numerous requests for an on-the-record interview with The Lake Report, after repeated attempts to reach him by phone and text.

Randall was not aware the conversation was being recorded. It is not illegal to record a conversation in Canada as long as one party knows it is being recorded.

In an email on Tuesday, Cluckie said she was “unaware of the allegation by any staff members that the lord mayor had spoken to staff specifically about the complaint from Dan Williams” until she heard the audio recording.

The town’s legal counsel is reviewing the recording, which Telfer said was sent to the town’s lawyer on Sept. 28.

“As a courtesy,” Cluckie said she subsequently “alerted the integrity commissioner that new information had come forward via the litigation.”

In an emailed response to questions from The Lake Report, Cluckie said, “The town received an excerpt of the audio recording (approximately three minutes) through the town’s legal counsel.”

“The town’s lawyer then requested the complete



Lord Mayor Betty Disero denies allegations made by former senior town administrator Sheldon Randall, right. FILE PHOTOS

recording and has since received the longer, unedited audio recording (approximately 16 minutes).”

Cluckie said once the review is complete and after the new council is sworn in, the issue will be brought to a closed-session meeting as it concerns a legal matter.

**“It is completely false to say that I was talking to any staff to go after the Telfers.”**

BETTY DISERO  
LORD MAYOR

She said it is up to Elliott and Telfer to bring the new information to the integrity commissioner and request that the matter be reopened.

Telfer on Friday sent an informal request by email to integrity commissioner Edward McDermott asking him to reopen the investigation.

In an email response to Telfer, McDermott said the previous complaint is now closed, but “it now appears that you are raising a new complaint, which is an allegation that the lord mayor was not truthful with my office when asserting her lack of knowledge about the Williams bylaw complaint and may have committed the criminal act of perjury.”

“This question is not presently before me as no complaint about such issue has been made to my office in accordance with the town’s complaint protocol.”

“I would also draw your attention to the provi-

sions of the Municipal Act, 2001, which mandate that effective nomination day, all outstanding complaints under the code of conduct are to be terminated and no new complaints can be made during the municipal election period.”

Telfer said he would be submitting a new, formal complaint on Oct. 25, the day after the election.

Any decision to reopen the case after the election period would “be up to the integrity commissioner,” Cluckie said, adding she has advised Telfer that this was an option available to him.

She said outgoing council members were made aware of the new information on Oct. 10.

The story began with a dispute between neighbours and is centred around a \$100,000 lawsuit against the town. Disero’s property abuts the Telfer’s property.

**“No new complaints can be made during the municipal election period.”**

EDWARD McDERMOTT  
NOTL INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The situation led to an investigation of Disero by McDermott, over the complaint against Elliott and Telfer — one it turned out was made by Williams, the mayor’s husband.

Williams, based on a Facebook post by Elliott, filed a complaint about the couple’s large new garage and claimed they were us-



ing the building as a living space.

Originally the town refused to name the complainant, citing its privacy policies.

Later the town changed its story and said there had been no complaint at all. Only after Telfer got the Niagara Regional Police involved was it learned that the complaint was made by Williams.

The back and forth has led Elliott and Telfer to feel they’ve been mistreated. They allege the town changing its story could be a result of Disero using her power as mayor to pressure staff to make it look like there was no complaint, to protect her husband.

Disero, in her letter to the integrity commission on Nov. 2, 2021, said she had not talked to any staff about the complaint and that she was unaware of the complaint entirely until June 23, 2021, when she received a call from the town’s lawyer Terry Hill and Cluckie.

In the recording, Randall says, “I know she was talking to staff about it. And she had talked to me about it.”

“I would love the opportunity for the paper or somebody to interview me and say, ‘Did you ever have any discussions with Betty Disero about this?’ And I’m going to say, ‘Of course, I did,’” Randall says later.

He also questioned the integrity commissioner’s investigation of the issue, asking, “Why didn’t they check with the CAO at the time?”

Randall was interim CAO prior to Cluckie’s hiring.

In an interview, Disero said the conversation Randall mentions didn’t happen.

In her statement to The Lake Report, she pointed out the initial investigation by the integrity commissioner found no wrongdoing on her part — and that it’s election time.

**“I know she was talking to staff about it. And she had talked to me about it.”**

SHELDON RANDALL  
FORMER ADMINISTRATOR

“Sadly, people get smeared during election campaigns — this is not the first time I have been smeared, although I hope it ends here,” Disero wrote.

“You should examine the motivation of this person making such a claim against me,” she added.

**“Hopefully I can cost her the election or get her charged or something.”**

COLIN TELFER  
NOTL RESIDENT

Telfer and Elliott both said politics is not behind their release of the recording to the town’s lawyer on Sept. 28, weeks before a municipal election in which Disero is running.

But outside his business, eSkoot Niagara, Telfer also has had a sign posted that

says “ABB” — which Telfer confirmed means “Anyone But Betty.”

And in the full audio recording, Telfer tells Randall, “Hopefully I can cost her the election or get her charged or something.”

Disero’s letter to the integrity commissioner also states the town’s lawyer was “advised by staff that I had not contacted them about the garage.”

The integrity report, which exonerated Disero, noted that retired chief planner Craig Larmour said the mayor “never communicated to him” about the complaint and “there is no evidence of the lord mayor interjecting herself into this matter.”

Disero told The Lake Report she did invite Randall one day to look at her property to inspect a peculiar hole in Elliott and Telfer’s garage — one she suspected was being used to house a video camera pointed at her yard.

Elliott and Telfer said there was never a camera and that the hole was made by a persistent woodpecker.

The hole is still there today. They said they haven’t repaired it because it’s superficial and too high to access, but Disero said she isn’t sure about that and feels like she can’t use part of her yard any more.

Asked why she would have been concerned about a hole at a time when she had no knowledge of the conflict between Telfer and the town, she said, “You never know what people are doing.”

She said the conversation with Randall about the hole predated any knowledge of her husband’s complaint or the lawsuit.

Her story about the hole in the garage lines up with Telfer’s version of events, who also claims to have heard the same story from Randall, as well as with the longer version of the recording in which Randall says, “She still thinks you have a camera pointed at her.”

Disero said she thinks Randall might be recalling that conversation, which she said didn’t involve the complaint.



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# Council's four years ends with a long goodbye

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report



Town council meets for the last time, on Sept. 26. EVAN LOREE

With three retirements and a long, hard-fought campaign wrapped up, Niagara-on-the-Lake council will have a new look after Monday's election.

The outgoing council's final meeting was a time for a bit of reflection as Counc. Norm Arsenault, Clare Cameron and John Wiens all prepared for life after their stints on council.

"I'm really proud of this council and every member on it," said Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

She said she regrets nothing of the "adventure," but she hopes to be part of the next one as well when the new council holds its inaugural meeting in November.

Couns. Allan Bisback, Gary Burroughs, Wendy Cheropita, Sandra O'Connor and Erwin Wiens all hope to join Disero on the new council.

Several committees came to council with their final reports and chief administrator Marnie Cluckie presented a report of the town's accomplishments over the last four years.

Some of the town's modernization efforts will be ready next year, she said, including e-permitting, which she expects to launch early in the year, and online zoning, which won't be ready until the fall of 2023.

Cluckie said the e-permits especially will "help our business community, our residents who want to expand and help our staff to be more effective and efficient."

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn said there has been an uptick in the town's overall financial health.

The town's reserves are trending up since 2019, reaching a "historic high," he said.

Erwin Wiens said that while the town "may be in a healthy situation," things may be less "rosy" than they appear.

Wiens worries there is still much to pay for after council decided to delay some projects, including the reconstruction of the town's estimated 18,000 culverts.

A culvert project on Simcoe Street was among those put off by council.

"There was still a couple more years lifespan on the existing culvert," said Disero, adding that the town decided to repair a culvert on Mississagua Street instead.

After a long meeting, the councillors said goodbye to those not running for re-election.

Cameron gave thanks to her fellow council members in turn, affectionately describing Erwin Wiens as "the happy contrarian."

Bisback thanked his fellow council members as well.

"I am more enriched now at the end of four years," he said, adding he learned a lot in his first term.

The council had its disagreements, Bisback said, but "when we walk out, we still walk out as a unified team."

The meeting came to a close in the waning hours of the evening on Sept. 26 with a recorded vote to adjourn and a chorus of quiet cheers from the "class of 2022," as the lord mayor referred to it.

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# Teamwork makes the dream work, candidates agree

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

“Collaborate” was the word in the seats if not on the street at a candidate Meet & Greet session last Tuesday.

The four candidates at the forum organized by FocusNOTL agreed the town must collaborate with higher tiers of government and town residents to move forward, especially on issues of political transparency, infrastructure and development.

Incumbent Sandra O’Connor voiced her support for contextual zoning and added that she wanted to “focus on the climate change and environment aspect of the question.”

“We need to look at things like low-impact development when we have new developments,” she added.

O’Connor sat on the town’s environmental advisory committee which was instrumental in getting the town’s climate change adaptation plan done.

The new council will have to rewrite much of the environmental section of the official plan after being ordered to do so by the region in August.

Incumbent Erwin Wiens said council needs to work closely with “upper levels of government,” but also with the town’s urban planners when managing its development.

Retired accountant turned council candidate John McCallum said once the town’s official plan is finalized the town can flesh out some further details, like “whether the heritage area should be expanded.”



Coun. Wendy Cheropita and council candidate Adriana Cater Vizzari, right, during the final FocusNOTL question period for council candidates on Oct. 12. They were joined by candidates Allan Bisback and Tim Balasiuk. [Read about that meeting and the regional candidate session Oct. 18 online at niagaranow.com](#) EVAN LOREE



Whatever choices councillors make, they need to work in all the settlement areas, he said.

Katherine Reid pointed out that plans are all well and good, but as a member of the Queenston Residents Association, she was amazed at how often the town’s plans aren’t followed.

“We have to have a play-book, but also maybe follow some of the rules that are in the plan,” she said.

The town’s roads and infrastructure came up when the candidates were asked about bike lanes.

O’Connor has been pushing to standardize bike lanes with all road construction projects, but learned recently that the current council has failed to standardize them.

She wants council to get it done in the next term, adding, “We have to get the region on side with bike lanes.”

Reid said when she sat on the town’s safety commit-

tee they invited migrant workers to a training session where they used Spanish videos to teach them about bike safety.

“We do need to inform everyone about bicycle safety,” she added.

Wiens agreed that public outreach and education will help but said the town needs to spend more on road repairs.

“We need to fund the road system to get those shoulders in tip-top shape,” he said, adding that the town was well behind with its road maintenance.

McCallum agreed with O’Connor that road maintenance will require co-operation with the region because many of the rural roads are owned and maintained by the region.

“I think council should go through and try to think about those roads that are critical to have bike lanes

on and then press the region,” he said.

The candidates also fielded a question about when a councillor should recuse themselves from debates.

“I’m a second-generation farmer and I sit on the irrigation (and) agricultural committees. I have a vested interest in those,” said Wiens, who argued that this did not constitute a conflict of interest.

Wiens’ electoral base is largely made up of the town’s farming community, he noted.

“(Farmers) elected me to represent them at the table. That’s what I’m there for.”

O’Connor said that unless a councillor has a direct financial connection to a company being discussed at council, they shouldn’t need to recuse themselves.

But it is “a fine line” and each councillor has to de-

cide for themselves where that line is, she said.

McCallum agreed with O’Connor and Wiens and added that the power of recusal could be abused.

“I would not want to use (recusals) as a screen for councillors to be able to perhaps avoid having to opine on or vote on an issue that might be very, very contentious,” he said.

How to maintain and improve transparency with the public was also discussed.

O’Connor told the crowd that council needs to address some issues privately, but was not specific about what those issues were.

She said she was not sure what should and should not be discussed in private.

The town’s communications department directs questions from the media to the town staff best equipped to answer them, but responses can sometimes take several days.

“We may have gone too far. I certainly am open to

revisiting it to have a new look at how things worked,” O’Connor said in an interview afterward.

Reid said she has had trouble communicating with the outgoing council as well.

She said she applied to be on some of the town’s committees but never heard back.

Wiens appealed to his record of being outspoken and described transparency as an action.

“I’ve been outvoted, but I’ve been honest. That’s democracy. And I’ll continue to do that,” he added.

Short-term rentals were also a topic and McCallum noted he is “not a fan” of them.

“If they’re going to be in business, I certainly would want them being fully exposed to all the tax regulations that go with business,” he said.

The candidates all agreed the town needs stronger enforcement of rental rules.

“We need more people on the ground to enforce the rules that we have,” said O’Connor.

Reid added, “The bylaw officers are not working when you usually have a problem.”

Wiens said “the vast majority of our short-term rental people” are there to “assist” the tourism industry.

He said the short-term rental committee has come up with “rules that everybody can be happy with.”

Recent data on short-term rental enforcement showed the town has been making progress on the issue.

Voters can watch all the Meet & Greet sessions on the FocusNOTL Election 2022 YouTube page.

## ELECTION '22

# Pat Darte quits race for regional council, but name will still appear on ballot

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

And then there were three. Regional council candidate Pat Darte has dropped out of the Niagara-on-the-Lake election just 10 days before voters head to the polls.

In an interview Friday morning, Darte, who served

as lord mayor from 2014 to 2018, refused to say why he is quitting the race so close to voting day.

As of early last week he was still campaigning and placed an ad in last Thursday’s edition of The Lake Report.

His name will still appear on the ballot but in a media statement he asked that

people not vote for him. The deadline for removing names from the ballot was Aug. 19.

Initially there were five regional candidates. Darte is the second person to drop out of the regional race this year.

Barbara Worthy, the community engagement co-ordinator for the NOTL Museum, quit the race in

early September. Her name also will still appear on the ballot.

Andrea Kaiser, Paolo Miele and William Roberts are the remaining candidates running for NOTL’s regional seat.

Gary Zalepa is the town’s current regional councillor, but he is running for lord mayor.



Pat Darte has dropped out of the race. SUPPLIED

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# Frustrated developer cut down **dead trees** without receiving permit from the town

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

If two trees are cut down on Queen street, does anyone take notice?

You betcha.

Social media was abuzz over the weekend after a work crew employed by developer Rainer Hummel cut down two dead ash trees at 228 Queen St.

Social media posters on the NOTL 4 All and NOTL 4U forums immediately began speculating on whether the developer had obtained a permit to cut down what they saw as healthy foliage.

Turns out they were right – and wrong.

The short answer is the trees were dead but Hummel did not have a town permit – not for lack of trying, he said.

“Look at the damn things. They haven’t had leaves on them for three years,” Hummel told The Lake Report in an interview.

The trees were definitely dead, according to two separate arborists and members of town staff.

“Due to the fact these trees were 100 per cent dead and the property owner had two (large) limb failures recently, these trees posed an immediate hazard,” an arborist hired by Hummel wrote in a report after first seeing the trees in August.

The report recommended Hummel remove the trees as soon as possible. “We do not need a permit from the town or from anyone for that matter if a licensed arborist



The tree in question hadn’t grown leaves for three years, said developer Rainer Hummel. SUPPLIED

deems the trees unsafe,” he said in an email.

A 2019 tree inventory provided by Hummel to The Lake Report marks the trees as dead because of an infestation of emerald ash borer beetles.

Hummel said the town investigated the same trees almost six weeks ago after a windstorm ripped down a few boughs, creating a potential hazard for pedestrians on Queen Street.

He said the town concluded they were dead, so he arranged to remove them.

“None of this is a surprise – should be a surprise – for the town,” Hummel said.

The town received Hummel’s tree removal application on Oct. 3 but staff issued no removal permit.

In some cases for removal of dead or damaged trees, the town issues permission via an unusual document that reads, “This Is Not A Permit.” There is no fee for

that “permit.”

Removal applications often require an arborist’s report but chief administrator Marnie Cluckie said the town is investigating this case to see if in fact one was needed.

The town has not said what the investigation has found so far.

Tree removal crew member Adam Carr, who filled out the application, said he did not include the arborist’s report because town staff had investigated the trees and reached the same conclusions as the arborist.

Hummel said his team reached out to the town by email two weeks ago to confirm that they had permission to cut down the tree and to inform the town they had a tree removal crew scheduled for last Saturday.

There was no response to their email, Hummel said.

Enforcement supervisor Chris Sabourin disagrees.

He said the town did respond to the message from Hummel’s team and informed them the matter was still under review.

Carr said he received verbal consent from the town’s urban forest bylaw officer to cut down the trees.

“We’ll see if we can get somebody out there to block traffic,” Carr recalled being told by the bylaw officer when he called him Oct. 11.

Cluckie said the town does not give verbal consent for tree removals.

“Recognizing that the application was still being evaluated, no permit or exemption was issued to authorize the removal of the trees,” Sabourin said.

On the day of the cutting, there was nobody from the town to help block traffic.

It wasn’t until Monday that Hummel’s team learned that their application had to be approved by the town’s heritage committee.

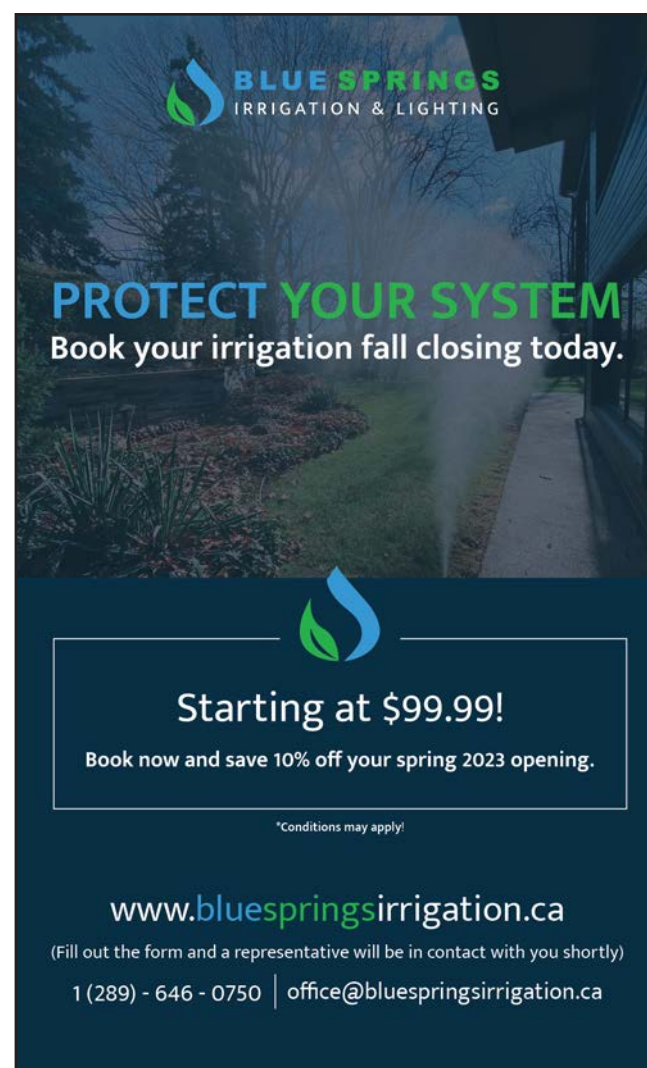
“I don’t suffer fools very well and I suffer foolishness even less,” Hummel told The Lake Report.

He said he is frustrated with the red tape he and his team had to go through before taking down the trees.

“Have we become so bureaucratic that the simplest items have to be dealt with through committees?” Hummel said.

Hummel estimated the tree removal will cost him \$27,000 when all is said and done.

Town staff said the application has not yet made it to the heritage committee for review.



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**The Provincial Service Officer will be visiting the Thorold Legion, Branch 17, on Nov. 2, 3 & 4, 2022.**

**Any Veteran wishing an appointment with the provincial service officer should contact the Niagara-on-the-Lake Legion Branch 124 office at 905-468-2353.**

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# Fort George **recruiting** new Fife and Drum Corps members

Staff  
The Lake Report

Fort George is looking for some new recruits to join the historic site’s 41st Fife and Drum Corps program.

The program is a way for youth to get together, have fun, develop some real skills like working as a team, setting goals and following through, all while learning a little history.

This Sunday, Oct. 23,

parents and youth aged 10 to 12 are invited to visit the fort between 1:30 and 4 p.m. and talk with music program co-ordinator Peter Alexander and watch a fife and drum practice.

“I was one of the first people involved in the creation of the Fife and Drum Corps back in 1987,” said Alexander.

“This is the 35th anniversary of this program and, over the years, it has become a core part of a

visitor’s experience at Fort George.”

Members perform for the public, deliver programs and participate in events around town. “The students learn pretty quickly that marching and playing music isn’t easy but that hard work pays off,” he said.

Students are given drum sticks and fifes at the beginning to see if they’re stronger in one or the other, Alexander added.

“If they decide to con-

tinue with the program, they sign on as Parks Canada volunteers and this time counts towards school volunteer hours. There is also the possibility of summer employment once they reach 15.”

Parks Canada provides the instruments, musical instruction and all necessary equipment including uniforms.

More information is available on the fort’s website.



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**Canada** The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

## COVID Tracker

**NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 43**  
**Region active cases: 773**  
**Region deaths: 619**  
**Region total cases: 46,703**

*\*Oct. 12 data per Niagara Region Public Health. Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.*



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

"The key to self-generated happiness (the only reliable kind) is to refuse to take oneself too seriously." - Tom Robbins

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## Escarpment shows its colours



Lake Report correspondent Steve Hardaker captured this photo of fall colours on the Niagara Escarpment, overlooking the Niagara College ponds in Glendale.

## Editorial

# Rand hotel would benefit the town

Richard Harley  
 Editor-In-Chief

In 2018, a new Niagara-on-the-Lake council was elected, largely on the basis of defending the town from inappropriate development.

Now, in 2022, those same battles are still being fought.

It's a necessary and commendable goal as our built heritage, a lot of it at least, is worth protecting.

Which brings us to the ongoing saga of the Rand Estate.

We know that in some quarters developer Benny Marotta is vilified because of how he has handled the Rand development.

And we recognize the danger of saying anything positive about development in NOTL – it can be unpopular and seen as a betrayal. But we'll ask anyway.

SORE and many others in town agree the once-maligned Trisha Romance hotel approved on the site a decade ago would be acceptable now. So, is Marotta's hotel plan really worth going to war over?

A bit of history: The Rand property is already zoned to allow a hotel. That happened when Romance still owned it.

Now Marotta wants to build about one storey

higher than the Romance proposal – 150 rooms versus about 120. Demand in NOTL has grown and continues to do so. The difference is about 30 or so rooms.

Given that there already is tacit agreement that a hotel is appropriate on the site, is there a middle ground on which both Marotta and the townsfolk could meet?

Lord Mayor Betty Disero has proudly said that if she hadn't been fighting development, there already likely would be a hotel on the Rand Estate.

The question is: Done well, would that be a bad thing?

Naysayers have said problems include the planned parking garage, damage to the historic Dunnington-Grubb landscape features on-site and the height of the hotel disturbing views from the Commons. Concerns also have been raised about setting a precedent for large buildings in NOTL. And traffic, but experts can figure out how to improve road access, if necessary.

As we view the property, we see: A parking garage that's not visible above ground, landscape features that, unfortunately, are mostly dead (but could be resurrected) and a hotel that

largely would be hidden behind the estate's stone wall and some of NOTL's tallest trees.

The property is aesthetically perfect for a hotel. It's hidden, it's big, it's beautiful. The Rand Estate is certainly more suited to a hotel than the Parliament Oak property – the fate of which has yet to be determined.

Or are we going to allow more short-term rentals – which shouldn't be legal in the first place because property zoning has been ignored – to infiltrate our residential streets (while not being subject to the town's new accommodation tax)?

A Rand hotel would pay hundreds of thousands in town and regional property taxes, and collect similar amounts from patrons paying the town's accommodation tax. Both those potentially add up to a more than \$1 million annual windfall for the municipality.

And, in theory, every additional room occupied means more people visiting our shops, wineries, restaurants and other NOTL-owned businesses. In the wake of the pandemic, many would welcome that.

That isn't to say we agree with everything Marotta wants to do on this historic property.

Our biggest concern is the proposed subdivision is far too dense, jampacked with homes and is unsuitable for Old Town or such a landmark property. We've said this before: the plan should go back to the drawing board.

And yes, council should be battling to make sure that happens. Part of that starts with fighting the province's push for densification, moving densification to appropriate areas like Glendale, and letting Queen's Park know NOTL is unique and needs to be treated as such.

All the more reason why NOTL's draft official plan needs regional and provincial approval, so the town can move forward with firm development and contextual zoning guidelines with teeth.

Yes, NOTL's heritage is about more than dollars and cents – but it is inevitable that redevelopment of some Old Town properties, like Rand, will happen.

Conceived properly, a grand Rand hotel – not unlike Marotta's award-winning Two Sisters winery operation – could be a boon to NOTL, a strong legacy for the historic estate and a big contributor to the town's treasury.

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# Take time to consider the candidates and the issues – and vote



Coun. Clare Cameron  
Special to The Lake Report

Election day is Monday, Oct. 24, and though I am not running for re-election this year, I have been watching this campaign closely.

I want to encourage everyone from across our entire community to get out and vote.

Voting is easy and so important: In 2018, Niagara-on-the-Lake had the highest voter turnout of any municipality in Niagara at 58 per cent. You can be part of increasing that even more this year.

Municipal councillors make critical decisions about development, traffic, recreation, infrastructure, budgets, taxes and many more community services. Council decisions are often swayed by those who take the time to show up and speak the loudest. If you care about the future of NOTL, express yourself – and vote.

The choice is yours: You can vote for up to eight candidates for council. You don't have to vote for eight. If you only feel strongly about a few candidates, just vote for those few. It will help your favourite candidate(s) if you are selective with voting and don't throw away votes on people that you don't feel sure about.

Think for yourself: Just like four years ago, people are creating lists of councillor candidates that they

want to be elected together. You don't have to think the same way. What motivates someone to create a list? What are their criteria? Is it skills and qualifications? Is it personality or values? Are they aiming to have a council that never disagrees or challenges each other? How can you trust these recommendations?

Endorsements do matter and are worth considering. Yet you have the power to make up your own mind. One of the unique and amazing things about municipal politics is that there are no parties and people (should) run as independent individuals. Do some research and decide for yourself.

Leadership matters, relationships matter: Under the Municipal Act, the lord mayor is head of council and the town's chief executive officer. And while

being the CEO of a municipality is different from being the CEO of a private corporation, these are still huge responsibilities.

As head of council, you set the tone. Eight other councillors are expecting you to lead by example. As CEO, you receive an incredible amount of information, contacts and knowledge. You can choose to keep that to yourself or share it with your team.

And though the lord mayor is only one vote on council, they are also one of our two regional councillors. Whether your passion is infrastructure, heritage, development, health or housing, this role provides incredibly important leadership and represents our entire community at other levels of government. It is a role where the depth and quality of relationships truly matter.

Leaders come in many forms: Leaders can sweep in from the top or grow from within. They can dictate or collaborate. They can shut down in the face of opposition or lean in to resistance. They can have all the answers or be open to learning something new.

Leaders can treat people as instruments to serve a goal or approach others with openness to what might be possible by working together. Politicians plan for the next election; leaders plan for the next generation. Leaders can assign blame or own their role in an outcome. They can look great when dragging others down or shine on the merits of their own accomplishments.

Regardless of who is elected this year, I hope that all of our municipal representatives will work to be the latter kind of leader above.

We are so lucky: Niagara-on-the-Lake is a wonderful, historic, productive and unique place. The people who live and operate businesses here are right to feel passionate about the future and what it should look like.

As a parent raising two children here, I look forward to seeing this community continue to grow in a positive way. The kids constantly remind me, too, that while change and growth can be challenging, it can also be beautiful – and is a necessary part of life.

Good luck to every candidate and thank you for running.

And to the entire community, please get yourself to the ballot box.

*Coun. Clare Cameron is a Niagara-on-the-Lake resident, business owner and the deputy lord mayor.*

## Not supportive of 'team' approach to candidates

Dear editor:  
I am filled with disappointment when people with political power publicly endorse only those that they wish to have on their "team."  
In a time where twice-impeached Donald Trump

is endorsing a range of "interesting candidates," it makes me reflect on whether we are or should be looking for independent thought from our elected politicians, or if we want individuals who will blindly follow the will of

their leader.  
I will vote for someone who vows to work with whomever the voting public sees fit to send to council to address the needs of this community.  
**Sonja Schindeler**  
NOTL



## Council achieved exactly what it was elected to do

Dear editor:  
There has been a lot of finger-pointing and politics of division aimed at Niagara-on-the-Lake's lord mayor and suggestions that a councillor's resignation and some not running for re-election along with some senior staff resignations are a symptom of "poor governance."

To the contrary I believe the current lord mayor and council have accomplished precisely what they were elected to do in 2018, and more.

NOTL for many, many years was run as an "old boys" network in which councillors and staff were chummy with the development and business communities and paid little attention to the wants and needs of residents.

Immediately upon taking the reins in 2018, this most recent iteration of council passed an interim control bylaw and devised a strategic plan to get a hold of effective planning and produced a new draft official plan to supplant the existing 1994 plan.

It is to the benefit of the town that some of the old guard senior staff made way

for new progressive, unaligned staff. It is noteworthy that at least one of those ex-employees is working on the campaign of one of the "old boy" candidates in the current election.

Much has also been said about the council being dysfunctional and uncooperative.

Yes, there have been disagreements and long discussions, but ultimately this council, working through the most significant health crisis in a century, has passed a new draft official plan, established a tree bylaw, begun work on the master transportation plan, instituted a municipal accommodation tax, passed new bylaws to control short-term rentals and begun a complete overhaul of the zoning bylaws.

No, looking back over the past four years of municipal governance I can honestly say they have accomplished more than the previous two administrations combined and moved the bar on governance to the benefit of town residents and our community's future.

**Bob and Irene Bader**  
NOTL

## Marotta consultant gets his facts wrong on Rand

Dear editor:  
I am responding to Sil Ranucci's letter in your Oct. 11 edition, ("Treated unfairly and maligned, is why developer is fighting back,") which comments on my letter about his earlier letter concerning the antics of Benny Marotta re: the Rand Estate.

As a reminder, Mr. Ranucci is a paid consultant to the Marotta companies, something he fairly disclosed in his initial letter.

Mr. Ranucci purports in his most recent letter to give us some facts he accuses me of ignoring. He goes on to try to personalize the legal disputes over the last four years between the Marotta companies and the town as the work of Betty Disero.

Here's the important information that inconveniently contradicts Mr. Ranucci's spin: it was the previous Pat Darte-led council that voted in the summer of 2018 to designate the Rand Estate under the Heritage Act.

That decision was based in large part on the recommendations of the town's municipal heritage committee, which held extensive hearings on the matter.

The Marotta companies then promptly appealed that decision to the Conservation Review Board during the Darte council term.

When the board made an initial ruling against the Marotta companies, he changed lawyers and launched a new application in Superior Court to challenge the legality of

the Darte council's designation decision.

The Disero council inherited this situation and the various litigation initiatives of the Marotta companies.

If Mr. Ranucci wants to complain about our elected council listening to and acting on the recommendations of the municipal heritage committee he should instead be complaining about the Darte council decision in 2018.

But that would run counter to the "Marotta as victim at the hands of Disero" narrative that he, and his employer Mr. Marotta, have been trying to spin for the last four years.

The Darte council did what it should have and discharged its obligations under the Heritage Act by

designating the Rand Estate.

Mr. Marotta knew full well what he was buying. Instead of acquiescing to the Darte council decision, his companies have spent the last four years challenging that decision in every conceivable way.

I hope Mr. Ranucci spends some time looking at the Benny Marotta media archive section of the SORE website. The facts recounted therein speak for themselves.

The Darte council, and the Disero council after it, are to be congratulated for not being yet another small municipality that allowed itself to be bullied by and bent to the will of Mr. Marotta in his pursuit of profits.

**Judy McLeod**  
NOTL

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FOR LORD MAYOR

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# The reason for its being

## Chautauqua was built as a cottage vacation community



**ARCHITEXT**

Brian Marshall  
Columnist

Tourism and Niagara-on-the-Lake, the two are almost synonymous.

Since the middle of the 19th century, this town has been a tourist destination. Some of the finest houses in Niagara-on-the-Lake were built as summer homes by both Canadian and American families.

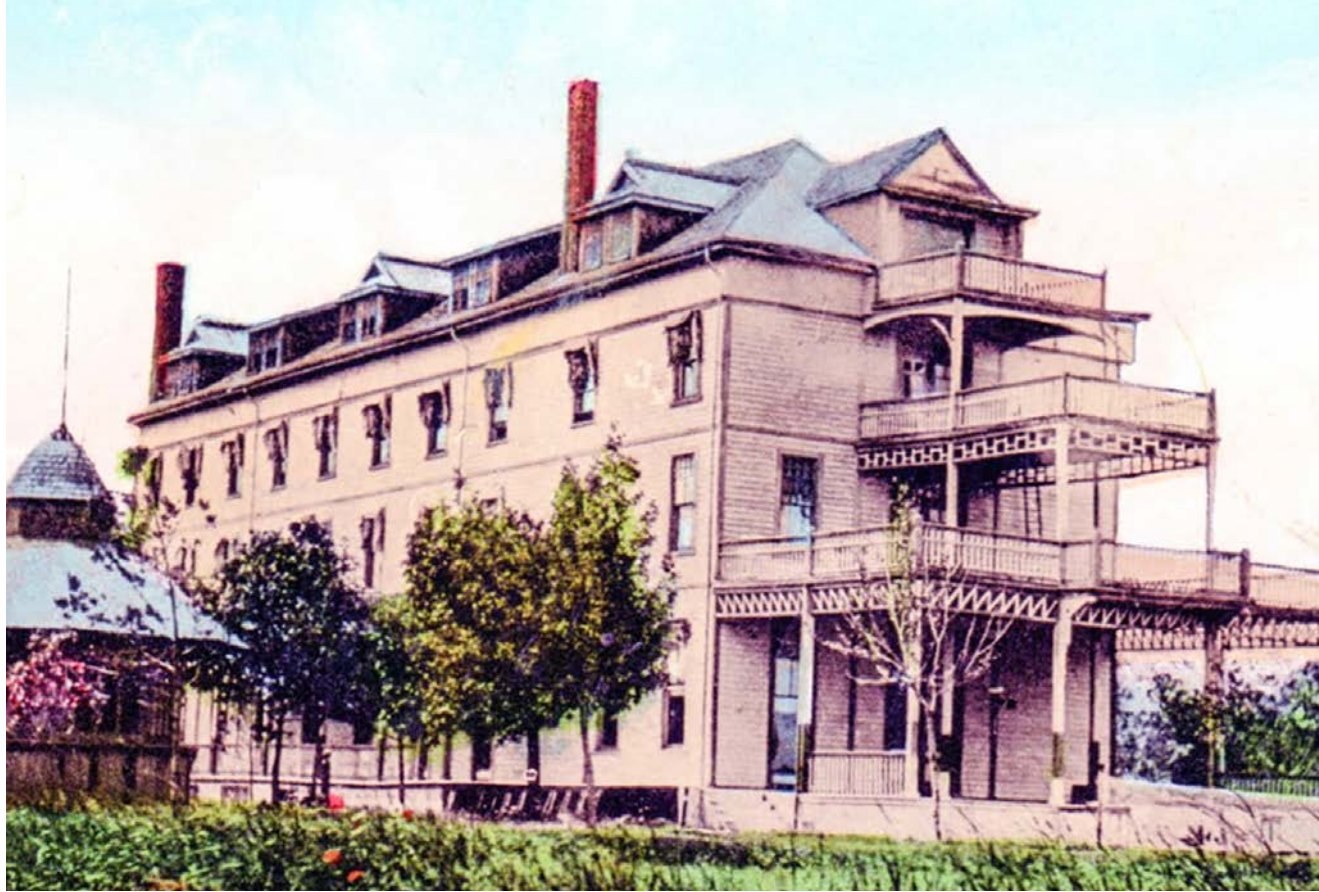
NOTL's Chautauqua community owes its very existence to that tourism.

In 1874, on the shores of Chautauqua Lake in New York, John Vincent and Lewis Miller opened an outdoor summer education program for adults.

With program offerings addressing science, politics, art, theatre and music, complemented by sporting competitions, the concept generated a tremendous level of success.

The outdoor format naturally lent itself to family vacations "with a purpose" that appealed to the cultural mores of the day and what began as a camping experience quickly evolved into a resort.

The success of the original New York Chautauqua was duplicated in



The Chautauqua Hotel stood at the end of Shakespeare Avenue, near Ryerson Park. NOTL MUSEUM PHOTO

what came to be known as "daughter" Chautauquas that sprang up wherever Americans were prone to holiday.

Here in Niagara-on-the-Lake, postmaster Robert Warren together with several Toronto investors formed the Niagara Assembly, purchased the 90-acre Crooks property in 1886, then immediately started to design and build their daughter Chautauqua.

The street plan was that of a wagon-wheel with the hub devoted to an amphitheatre that sat 4,000 people. Ryerson Park was set aside and a wharf constructed.

By the spring of 1888, the Chautauqua Hotel, which featured all the latest modern conveniences (bathrooms, electricity, telephone, telegraph, etc.), was open for business on the triangular lot bordered by Vincent and Shakespeare Streets beside the park. A second hotel, Lakeside House, was added thereafter.

Now, the Niagara Assembly's business plan was predicated on a booming tourist market and lot sales, but unfortunately their full opening coincided with a run on Wall Street that set off a deep international recession lasting through the rest of the 19th century.

As a result, in 1894,

the Niagara Assembly was forced to sell off its Chautauqua to the Niagara Syndicate, which changed the name of the hotel to Strathcona and operated it until 1909, when it was destroyed by a fire.

Through this period, the Niagara Syndicate continued to sell property lots principally to those who wished to build summer cottages.

These were typically owner-occupied for two weeks to a month and rented to vacation goers during the rest of the spring, summer and autumn seasons.

By 1922, the Mississauga Land Beach Association acquired the remaining

land, laid out a new plan of subdivision and proceeded to sell off the lots. However, they too suffered financial reverses and lost all the lots still in their possession to the town for unpaid taxes. These were subsequently sold off at "fire sale" prices.

Importantly, the profile of the majority who purchased lots in Chautauqua remained the same: people looking to build a summer cottage and offset their costs with vacation rental income.

As a result, the streetscapes of the neighbourhood were lined with small, modest one- and one-and-a-half-storey dwellings that usually were not

winterized. More substantial homes were few and far between.

This was the character of Chautauqua through the remainder of the 20th century and well into the current century. In fact, until fairly recently, many of the actors from the Shaw were seasonal cottage renters in the neighbourhood.

Then, during the last decade, the gentrification of Chautauqua commenced and the face of this part of town began undergoing change.

Much larger, often two-storey homes built to maximum (or over) lot coverage started to sprout up between the old cottages, disrupting the rhythm of the traditional streetscapes.

Now, the quaint character and inclusiveness of the traditional vacation home neighbourhood is well on its way to disappearing as the homogenizing nature of gentrification expands its influence.

And, just to be clear, I completely understand that communities do and should evolve over time to reflect the prevailing socio-political-economic mores.

That said, I can still mourn the loss of those modest dwellings, the laid-back vibe of a cottage community occupied by families on holidays just enjoying their time here.

For over 100 years Chautauqua has been, in one of the best ways, part of Niagara-on-the-Lake's tourism industry. It's something I feel needs to be honoured in the town's future planning.

## First there were NIMBYs ...

Dear editor:

I read this in the September edition of the Economist and changed it to suit our situation in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Pity the poor developer who is opposed by all these NIMBYs (Not In My Backyard).

Well, I am a GOMMBY (paid Good Money for My Backyard).

What do I do when I encounter a GROSPY (Getting Rich On Spoiling People's Yards) with a GRAB (the Goal of Raising Awful Buildings)?

There is no hint of CRILBY (Compensation for Real and Intangible Loss of Backyards).

Of course we are angry.

**Todd Watson**  
NOTL

## Gambling on sports and our future is just wrong

Dear editor:

Ross's Ramblings regarding Wayne Gretzky promoting betting on sports made interesting reading, ("Using hockey stars to promote gambling is offensive," Oct. 6).

I have been thinking the very same thing for quite some time.

I loved Aaron Paul, one of the stars of the series "Breaking Bad," but it disturbed me

to see him doing these ads as well – although he would fit right in with our Ontario cannabis if it advertised.

Apparently betting is more fun and easier with Bet365.

It is all over the world and was started by the wealthy Coates family in the U.K. People all over the world, it seems, know all about Bet365 and its success. (For whom?)

I'm so simple, as I enjoyed going to the casino once or twice a year and win a little on the slots. And horse racing was fun – \$20, 10 races and come home with \$14 maybe.

If I can just bet on my phone, it doesn't seem to be quite so exciting, but maybe that's because I'm not that hooked. I want some excitement for my \$20.

I'm disappointed that our province is well-known mostly for wine, beer, cannabis and betting. Not much else.

Certainly not our health system, which is a totally different matter. Or maybe we are all betting on whether we get taken care of properly in that department.

**Sandie Schulz**  
NOTL

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COUNCILLOR



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## Congratulations on the great **special issue**

Dear editor:  
Congrats again. The Lake Report crew puts out a great paper and it succeeds at a time when people are leaving print media.

The issued published Oct. 13, including your Election 2022 Special Edition, is a perfect example of everything you guys get right.

My late wife and I loved living in this community and I still do, for over 16 years now, and my memories go back to the two summers (aged 15 and 16) I spent on a farm on Firelane

5 as a farmhand making 60 cents an hour.

Clearly this whole region is a paradise in so many ways and it will always attract more people.

That's a given.

I don't think that can be stopped. Perhaps it shouldn't. But it does need to be "managed."

So that means the coverage you give to the need for thinking deeply about what direction NOTL should go is crucial.

My belief is that keeping the past alive is also crucial

to maintaining the very, very special qualities of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

How to do this in practice is of course the question and many seek to address this in their own way, from their own perspective.

That is normal and human.

What I fear greatly, is that economic interests will overcome quality of life and reflection, and the aura of the past that pervades our community.

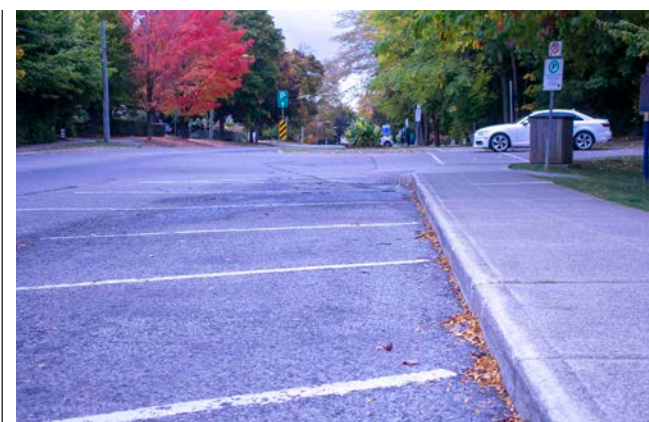
That aura makes it one of the most historic places in

Canada, ranking with the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City and with l'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland.

Life must not be a constant search for "more money" – not by people, not by municipalities.

It should be a search for enhancing the quality of all our lives and a celebration of those who came before, whose traces we should observe and honour and live among in harmony.

**Kaspar Pold**  
**NOTL**



## How about dedicated **parking spots** for seniors?

Dear editor:

This is an open letter to our next mayor and council members.

This is not the first time I have requested that elected officials dedicate a limited number of parking spaces in Old Town, behind the old courthouse, for our resident senior citizens over age 70.

These spaces would be free and available for up to two hours with a town-issued, free window pass.

Our merchants and Chamber of Commerce, supported by our local media, call on the community to shop locally to support our economy.

Clearly parking is a major concern and is front and centre in presentations by all the candidates seeking election.

All residents experience parking difficulties, including those with passes. Accordingly, approving this

request is a no-brainer, low-hanging fruit (easy) decision and should be passed early by the new council.

Tougher decisions take longer and typically we kick the can down the road.

This request was in concert with extending the parking time to two hours for residents who purchase the current one-hour annual passes.

Again the reasoning is that one hour is insufficient to support our local merchants, have a coffee and sandwich etc. without having to rush out and feed the parking meter to avoid a parking ticket.

That is a turnoff for many wishing to shop and socialize in town. Instituting passes for those over 70 is an opportunity to do something positive for resident taxpayers, as opposed to all things tourism.

**Samuel Young**  
**NOTL**

## Maybe an 'ArriveNOTL' app could help bring 'right kind of tourist'

Dear editor:

The three candidates for lord mayor participated in a meet and greet at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 on Sept. 27.

Candidate Vaughn Goettler spoke of working for solutions to bring a Michelin star restaurant or a Relais & Châteaux hotel to town to attract the "right kind of tourism" (ie. not so subtly implying the top 1 per cent, with deep, deep pockets).

Part of the new tourism marketing strategy needs to address how to manage controlling entry to town and ensure only the "right kind of tourists" actually get into Niagara-on-the-Lake. Well, here is one solution.

Let's repurpose the

ArriveCAN App. Set up control kiosks at all entry points into town where potential entrants must scan the new ArriveNOTL app. Those with sufficient net worth and income will be granted entry.

Those undesirables not meeting the net worth/income thresholds will instead be redirected toward other destinations that are accepting of others regardless of economic status.

This simple measure will help ensure the appropriate spend per entrant ratio is met while also lightening the traffic and parking problems that have been unsolvable for so long.

Not to mention the savings from a reduced need

for bylaw enforcement officers and regional police support. After all, those wonderful "right kind of tourists" don't break laws.

Lower-cost services/businesses will eventually be replaced by higher end "right kind" of business operators.

Maybe a Hell's Kitchen/Master Chef pop-up will replace the Dairy Queen. Or an offsite boutique store for Stoney Ridge/Two Sisters?

As far as a workforce, perhaps Elon Musk will have created synthetic humans or robots. When they are off duty they could be stacked in an underground bunker, so they won't require affordable housing.

And since they won't have

children, the town won't require schools or family-affordable services.

As the seniors and lower-income locals leave town, the ArriveNOTL app can also be used to screen prospective new homeowners to ensure the "right kind of buyers" purchase homes here.

The possibilities are endless. The "right kind of entrepreneurs and businesses" should direct their questions and proposals to the Centre for A Utopian NOTL, or to candidate Goettler's office.

My consulting bill will be forwarded to the town once the new council is sworn in. You are welcome.

**Dow Wright**  
**St. Davids**

## A completely **different perspective** on candidate performances in mayoral debate

Dear editor:

After attending the candidates debate on Sept. 28 at the Royal George Theatre, I read with some interest letter writer Peter Rusin's take on the performance of those running for lord mayor.

Unfortunately, his observations left me wondering whether we had attended the same event. To provide balance, I'd like to offer my perspectives on some of Mr. Rusin's remarks.

Let's start with those concerning Gary Zalepa. Mr. Rusin states, "Zalepa is not real since his priority rests with his real estate business, and he was quite clear about that."

I did not come away with that impression. Zalepa seemed to be clear about his

dedication to the responsibility of lord mayor. References to his family's realty business and other local endeavours were evidently meant to underscore his tenure as an active member of the community and his appreciation of the challenge of running a local business.

This, in addition to the dues he has paid in the elected political arena, in both local and regional councils, have made him "feel ready" to aspire to the position of lord mayor.

When discussing Betty Disero, Mr. Rusin uses unsubstantiated hyperbole quite liberally. His dire warnings of a "vote for Disero being a vote for amalgamation" and assertions that the "province

frowns on the Disero style of governance" are merely opinion.

He claims the lord mayor's rebuttal concerning the town's legal posture vis-a-vis developers demonstrated hyper-aggressiveness honed through her years on Toronto council.

Here too, my observations differ markedly from those of Mr. Rusin. I was left with the impression Disero did a good job of defending the town's stance on these legal matters and that she put forward sound arguments to counter the uninformed positions of the other candidates.

I didn't consider her stance to be excessively aggressive, just appropriately assertive.

It is disappointing that

Mr. Rusin's references to Disero's Toronto background are employed derisively.

Shouldn't her Toronto political experience be considered a benefit to the town, given intensified pressure from large GTA developers such as Benny Marotta's Solmar?

Although Mr. Rusin might consider developers like Mr. Marotta to be "good guys" let's not confuse personability with business.

Solmar has a well-documented history of being extremely aggressive on all fronts to achieve its business goals. Frankly, I'd like someone with the energy, assertiveness, and experience demonstrated by the current lord mayor to have our backs when dealing with such groups.

Mr. Rusin supports Vaughn Goettler's seemingly more conciliatory approach to developers and, presumably, other parties wishing to take the town in directions that are at odds with the draft official plan, existing bylaws and heritage designations.

But, Goettler has absolutely no political experience and, in debate, has demonstrated shallow knowledge of the full array of local issues coming to the fore during this campaign.

His pleasant personality and business acumen cannot fully compensate for his political naivety. It is not in the town's best interest to elect a lord mayor who will be learning on the job and highly susceptible to manipulation

by entrenched and aggressive interest groups during this period of formative and rapid change for NOTL.

It is simply too risky. Perhaps it would have been better for Goettler to seek a councillor's seat to gain some experience with local politics before running for lord mayor.

I do not know any of the municipal candidates on a personal level and have no campaign involvement. I am just a resident doing my best to make an informed voting decision.

I do not yet know which candidate I will support for lord mayor, but Goettler is not at the top of my list at this time.

**Michael Ennamorato**  
**NOTL**



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# NOTL election signs could use a jolt of imagination



## Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson  
Columnist

There has got to be a better way.

Let's think about options to lawn signs, which most of our municipal candidates obviously love. Are they really the most cost-effective and efficient way to draw votes?

Egads. One well-tended front lawn in Old Town has been dominated by seven lawn signs obscuring the flowers and other plantings for over seven weeks.

And along a stretch of Niagara Stone Road in Virgil, 14 signs have taken up residence.

For the past 50 days or more, our pretty wee town has definitely not deserved the title of "Canada's Prettiest Town."

We have been conditioned to accept visual clutter and as election campaigns play out it is often hard to see the forest for the signs. Especially at this precious time of year, with nature providing countless effulgently coloured trees to remind us that God truly loves us, and wants us to be happy and inspired.

No need to drive up north to be overwhelmed by autumn splendour. Take a drive along the Niagara Parkway from Fort Erie to Niagara-on-the-Lake, which some locals say Sir Winston Churchill described as "a beautiful Sunday afternoon drive."

Yes, some local folk even believe he waxed effusive and said it was the most beautiful Sunday afternoon drive in the world. Let's just say the great wartime leader



This stretch of road in Virgil is home to 14 election signs. ROSS ROBINSON

almost certainly enjoyed his drive along the mighty Niagara River.

Go for a walk on the Bruce Trail or make an afternoon drive out to Ball's Falls, the Short Hills or many other local autumn delights.

Allow me to ramble back now to my two cents' worth regarding election signs.

Since moving here, I have

often displayed lawn signs that declared my support for candidates whom I believed would work to make our lives better. Never more than one sign at a time and they could not be installed until the actual election was less than 14 days away.

A few friends have been upset with me for this policy, but that's life in a democracy, eh?

Why do none of our current candidates have their favourite selfie on their lawn signs? Up in Niagara Falls, municipal candidates proudly display their new beards, moustaches and hairstyles. So many good-looking candidates...

C'mon NOTLers, don't be so shy. Put your best face forward, with a clever slogan.

Why not fly a banner behind a small airplane out of our Niagara District Airport? How about some advertising on the west-facing wall of Willow Cakes and Pastries. Or on the wall of Silk's Country Kitchen that faces Creek Road? Lots of passersby.

The big banner sign that welcomes visitors to Old Town at the corner of Queen and Mississauga? Get with modern technology and think about a scrolling digital sign like we see in front of the community centre and the arenas. Maybe even tastefully illuminated?

**Oops:** Permit me to conclude by thanking eScoot's Colin Telfer for correcting my error last week when I stated that the QEW was named after our recently departed, much loved Queen Elizabeth II. In fact, this busy highway was named in honour of her Mum while she and her hubby King George VI enjoyed a Royal Tour of Canada in 1939.



## TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE ROAD CLOSURE – Line 3 Road from Four Mile Creek Road to Concession 4 Road

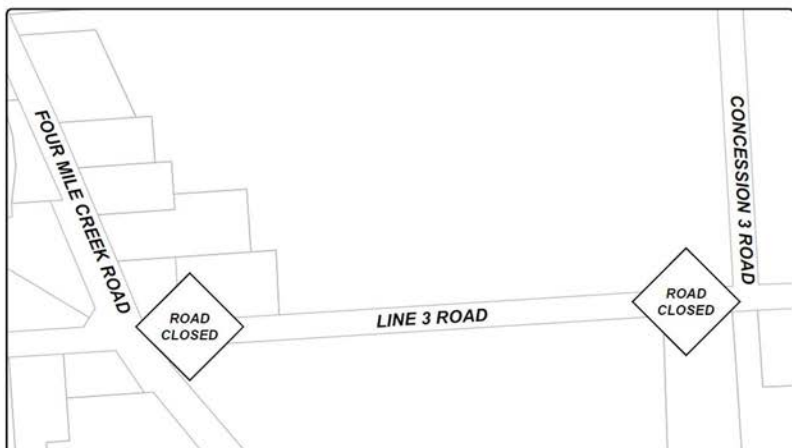
**WHERE:** The Town, through contractor Alfred Beam Excavating Inc., will be completing road reconstruction and a Watermain installation on Line 3 Road, between Four Mile Creek Road and Concession 4 Road.

**WHEN:** The work is scheduled to begin on Monday, October 24, and be completed by Friday, November 25, 2022.

**COMMUNICATION:** A detour route will be provided around the site as the section of road will be closed to all through traffic for the duration of construction. This closure is necessary to facilitate a shorter construction schedule for the reinstatement of the roadway.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this project, please contact Mike Komljenovic, Engineering Supervisor, at [mike.komljenovic@notl.com](mailto:mike.komljenovic@notl.com) or 905-468-3266.

Emergency Services have been advised of this closure and the potential impact to service.



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# Learned a lot from expert's viewpoint on ward system

Dear editor:

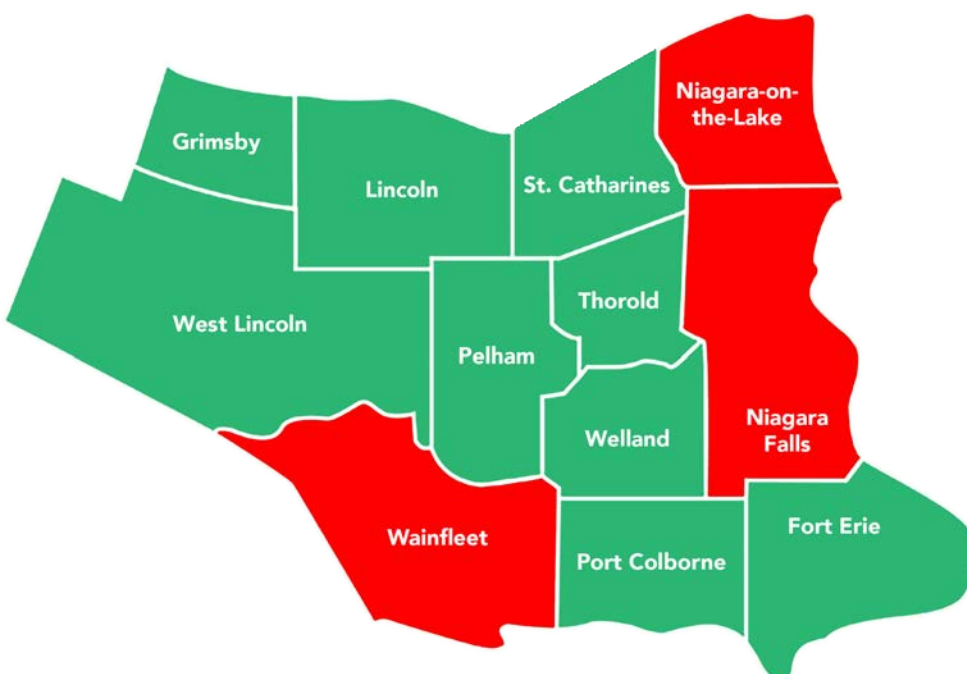
Many thanks to The Lake Report for finding someone as qualified as Ron Fritz, ("Instituting ward system can be a costly, complicated process," Election 2022 Special Edition, Oct. 13), to offer a response to my Sept. 3 letter.

My letter suggested a discussion about a ward system in Niagara-on-the-Lake would be useful, particularly for NOTL residents who feel underrepresented in the current municipal governance system here and a little underserved in terms of discretionary quality of life infrastructure in these communities.

I learned a lot from his article.

It didn't take long after we moved from Old Town to St. Davids to learn about the perception of inequities in the "at large" system for electing councillors.

As a council candidate in 2010, I called then-Liberal MPP Kim Craiton and asked



Three of 12 Niagara municipalities don't have ward systems. LAKE REPORT ILLUSTRATION

about the feasibility of introducing a ward system.

He said if the town wards, it could have them. I suspect I didn't ask the right questions, because the complexities described by Mr. Fritz certainly didn't emerge.

I recognize from Mr. Fritz's article that the selec-

tion of the number of councillor seats can be critical in the determination of sensible ward areas.

Our current system, eight councillors for a current population of about 18,000 people, results in one councillor for every 2,250 people. My thinking was not

limited to the number of councillors or the number of wards remaining at eight. Some other number, perhaps lower than eight, might reduce or eliminate the number of split wards described by Mr. Fritz.

The letter I wrote dealt only with a ward system

because I was responding to a letter that had ward system as the only topic. It would be useful, in my opinion, to see if any other solution exists that might diversify and improve representation.

One of the current candidates for lord mayor suggested designating councillors to "represent" certain areas of the town.

As a past ratepayers association board member, we looked at asking a councillor to champion our issues at town council, essentially the same suggestion as the candidate's with the choice of councillor being made in a different place.

We abandoned the idea because councillor accountability still rested with all the voters in town. I've also taken an interest in the concept of party politics I'm reading about now in last weekend's election of city council in Vancouver, a concept not currently available to us in Ontario.

We have talked about

strategic voting since the 2006 election. I talked about it while doing door-to-door campaigning in 2010 and it also was in my campaign literature in 2014.

One of the delights of door-to-door campaigning was discovering some of the charming determining factors people use to select certain candidates to receive their votes.

Personally, I voted for four councillor candidates in 2014 and only three in 2018. It's harder than you think to organize an entire community to avail themselves of the strategic voting alternative.

The only disappointment I had with Mr. Fritz's article is his suggestion to wait 20 or 30 years to revisit the issue. That timing will perpetuate the current dissatisfiers for about a generation and make me between 100 and 110 years old.

I'm not sure how interested I'll be at the point.

**Kenn Moody**  
St. Davids

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- Preserving the pride and heritage of each of our distinct Villages, while ensuring each is a valued part of what makes Niagara-on-the-Lake a desirable place to call home;
- Strategic development with future generations in mind, while avoiding lawsuits;
- Encourage youth to contribute to community, via schooling, housing and career opportunities;
- Preserving the natural resources of every area of Niagara-on-the-Lake;
- Develop plan for seniors' housing, community, medical care, and related amenities;
- Plan for local healthcare and healthcare workers, including urgent care, imaging and clinics.

## YOUR CHOICES WILL DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE! ASK YOURSELF . . .

- Has the Lord Mayor earned your vote?
- Has the Lord Mayor taken responsibility for failures, as well as successes, of the previous term?
- A Councillor who has served for multiple terms should have had a positive impact on critical decisions and plans. If they have not, do they deserve your vote to become Lord Mayor?
- Has the Lord Mayor taken a leadership role in optimizing the collaboration of Council, Committees, Staff and the Chamber of Commerce?
- Are candidates for Lord Mayor capable of establishing business relationships and rapport with the Region and the Province, to the benefit of Niagara-on-the-Lake?
- Is there a solution to our concerns with Tourism? We need to attract tourists who contribute to the vitality of the Town. With strategic and effective planning, infrastructure and zoning, Tourism should not be considered a problem.

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# Town treasurer says municipality is in **good financial health**

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

As the election draws closer, chatter over the town's financial health has grown louder.

But a report to council last month paints a pretty optimistic picture for the town.

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn shared some numbers on the town's financial reserves at council's final meeting Sept. 26, noting they are at a "historical high."

"I believe the town is in good financial health," Freeborn told council.

From 2018, the town's reserves have grown to \$27.5 million from \$25.7 million, he said.

"I think the election stirs up things in the community and one of them was concerned over financial health or dwindling reserves," Freeborn told The Lake Report in an interview.

The growth of the town's reserves is probably just a normal function of there being more put into the reserves than is being taken out, he said.

"Development right now is probably at an all-time low," he added.

Freeborn's numbers are from the Financial Information Return, a finance report the town gets every year from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**“Although council made decisions to reduce funding in certain areas, we received funding and infrastructure funding from other levels of government that would have essentially mitigated that decision”**

KYLE FREEBORN  
NOTL TREASURER

The report he shared is for 2019, but the treasurer said the trends for the 2019 report are similar for 2020.

The 2021 report is not available yet but Freeborn expects the trend will continue.

The report lays out the town's financial risk according to a series of metrics, including the town's reserves and utilized debt capacity.

The debt capacity is a set limit on the amount of debt the town can accrue to pay off assets like the community centre.

"Our annual repayment limit is \$7,292,049. And in 2022, we're only spending \$725,000," Freeborn said.

"That's about 9.9 per cent of our available debt capacity," he added.

The town also transfers a little over \$2 million into a capital program each year. That money is used to pay for things like park improvements and infrastructure repairs.

Council used to pay more into the capital program, but over the course of its four-year term the amount was reduced by about \$1.2 million.

Freeborn said that was to help alleviate tax burdens through the pandemic.

"Although council made decisions to reduce funding in certain areas, we received funding and



The town's treasurer Kyle Freeborn says the town's financial health is doing well. FILE

infrastructure funding from other levels of government that would have essentially mitigated that decision," he said in an interview.

Coun. Erwin Wiens was concerned by the reduced amount the town has for capital projects like parks, roads and town vehicles.

"It's not a problem unique to Niagara-on-the-Lake. It's all over the municipalities

across Ontario. It's often referred to as the infrastructure gap," Freeborn explained.

Wiens was not satisfied, though.

"How are we going to fund Simcoe Street?" Wiens asked, estimating that the repair project was going to cost a quarter million dollars.

He listed other capital projects such as the town's

culverts, bridges and repairs to the community centre.

"We may be in a healthy situation," he said.

"We're Niagara-on-the-Lake, we have way better, we should be doing way better," he said.

Coun. Gary Burroughs shared some of Wiens concerns.

"We need to start looking after ourselves in our community," Burroughs said.

## **VOTER CARD ~ Top 10 Candidates**

During the course of the Election Campaign I have reviewed and assessed the qualifications of the candidates: Through direct discussions, the many "Meet & Greet" sessions, reviews of how incumbents conduct themselves and vote, as well as input from many citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I believe that these Top 10 Candidates will be the best to serve with skill, respect, honesty and integrity, and in a transparent fashion. I encourage everyone to vote their choices for a balanced Council for today and new talent for the future.

### **LORD MAYOR**

**DISERO, BETTY** ~ Accessible FULL-TIME mayor with integrity and proven strong fiscal management ~ Paid down the town's debt ~ Championed the MAT ~ Added to NOTL's reserves ~ Stands up to aggressive developers and always put residents first

### **COUNCILLOR**

**BALASIUK, TIM** ~ Committed to protect the historic legacy of NOTL ~ Strong advocate for recreational needs of the community

**BISBACK, ALLAN** ~ Outstanding Budget Chair ~ Organised and effective common sense Governance ~ Championed the MAT

**BURROUGHS, GARY** ~ Veteran with deep Regional and Municipal experience ~ Supports Contextual Zoning in NOTL

**CATER VIZZARI, ADRIANA** ~ Articulate dynamic voice for young families ~ Provides competent representation for St. Davids

**MAVRIDIS, MARIA** ~ Preserve Culture and Heritage ~ Strong supporter of local community groups and non-profit organizations

**MELL, RICHARD** ~ Will ensure that tourism pays its fair share in NOTL ~ Wants harmony between tourism and residents

**O'CONNOR, SANDRA** ~ Trusted guardian of accessible quality healthcare ~ Fully committed to environmental stewardship.

**RULLER, NICK** ~ Fiscally responsible former Fire Chief ~ Strong understanding of inter-departmental operating procedures

### **REGIONAL COUNCILLOR**

**KAISER, ANDREA** ~ Former NOTL Councillor with deep agricultural experience ~ Brings transparency, honesty and integrity



 **FEATURED**



The fog of war takes over the battlefield as re-enactors relive the Battle of Queenston Heights on Saturday. SOMER SLOBODIAN PHOTOS



Re-enactors march from Fort George to Queenston Heights for the 210th anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights, the first major battle of the War of 1812.

## Battle of Queenston Heights relived

*Continued from Front Page*

the Americans captured the Redan Battery and as Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock heroically died.

Gunshots echoed across Queenston Heights, followed by smoke from the muskets and the smell of rotten eggs.

The Americans were left in control of the Heights after Lt.-Col. John Macdonell, Brock's aide-de-camp, was fatally wounded.

Explosions rang through the speakers, mimicking the sounds of cannons.

The battle was not looking good for the British. They were outnumbered.

Then, Indigenous warriors, led by John Norton, arrived and held off the Americans until more help arrived.

Soon, the British were fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with the Canadian Militiamen, Runchey's Corps (also known as the

Coloured Corps) and First Nations warriors to defeat the Americans.

"The re-enactors actually come to us," said Tony Chisholm, the president of the Friends of Fort George.

Many of them were excited to take part in the re-enactment, especially since it takes place on the same spot where the battle happened, he explained.

Each soldier's full uniform can be very costly.

"Even to be a private like, the musket alone is going to run you \$900," said Moore.

Most of the men there likely spent at least \$2,000 for their regalia.

Many of the re-enactors also hand-sew their uniforms, said Cadima Meadus, who drove down from the Lake Simcoe area to participate in the re-enactment.

*Continued on Page 17*

  
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A wall of British Red Coats and militia men greet American forces as they arrive.



Amanda Gamble from Friends of Fort George leads a tour around Queenston Heights.



Canadian Militiamen re-enactors march from Fort George to Queenston Heights

## A bloody battle and sacrifice honoured

Continued from Page 16

Dressed like a soldier's wife, Amanda Gamble, the executive director of the Friends of Fort George, led tours around the battlefield all morning and throughout the afternoon.

"During the tours, one of the big things that we're talking about is just Queenston Heights, for us, is really significant because it is the first major battle of the War of 1812 and the first one here in the Niagara frontier," she said.

It's also the first war where you see the resolve of the British Redcoats, she said.

"And the fact that they're standing shoulder-to-shoulder, they're fighting with Canadian Militiamen, Indigenous warriors who have come in strength as well as the Coloured Corps, which were freed slaves," she said.

"They were all here on the grounds of Queenston Heights, defending Upper Canada from invasion," she added.

Alex Smith and Danielle Laraby, from Niagara-on-the-Lake, felt better informed after their tour with Gamble.

"We've lived here forever, right? So we actually wanted to know the history

and kind of see where everything took place, which was very informative," said Smith.

They learned a lot, like how in the beginning the British were outnumbered by the Americans six to one, he said.

The Friends of Fort George, Parks Canada and the Niagara Parks Commission worked together to make the re-enactment weekend happen.

However, the Friends of Fort George were the ones that made the weekend come to life.

Through a Reconnect Ontario grant of up to \$15,000 from the province,

they were able to bring the past to life.

"But it's dependent on how much because they only cover about 50 per cent of the cost of the event," said Gamble.

The grant provides for the re-enactors and helps with publicity. It also helps pay the students who came back just for the day to perform musket demonstrations.

Though the re-enactment eventually came to an end, Fort George kept the activities going on Sunday, including a re-enactment of Brock's funeral procession.

"Those who don't honour it (the past), they lose it," said Moore.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.  
Category: Channel

**"Black Sails" & "American Gods" are originals from this heavenly sounding channel**

Last issue: This stretchy polyurethane fabric was introduced in the late 1950s

Answer: What is a spandex?

Also accepted: Tip

Answered first by: Susan Hamilton

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Maria Janeiro, Jim Dandy, Janice Tate, Brian McAndrew, Pam Dowling, Wade Durling, Claudia Grimwood, Gary Davis, Sheila Meloche, Margaret Garaughty, Margie Enns, Elaine Landray, KC King

\*REMEMBER TO PUT "WHAT IS" FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!

Email answers to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com), with your name, for a chance to win a \$20 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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# Ministry confirms town acted voluntarily to clean spill

Continued from Front Page

tacted, as was the province's Spills Action Centre.

Under the direction of the ministry, the town hired Accuworx to clean it up and GHD to act as an environmental consultant.

Between Accuworx, GHD and the disposal fees, the town has paid close to \$1 million to clean up what it is calling a spill.

As of Sept. 2 the spill was cleaned up, according to the town's website.

The Environmental Protection Act classifies a spill as "discharges into the natural environment that are abnormal in quality or quantity."

Accuworx vacuumed out more than 1 million litres of the substance and it remains unclear if the town's insurance will be covering the costs.

When The Lake Report asked chief administrative officer Marnie Cluckie what will happen if insurance doesn't cover the spill, she declined to answer, citing legal concerns.

One thing we do know now that we didn't before is what the substance is. So, what exactly is a sulfate reducing bacteria?

Those bacteria are "specifically micro-organisms that use sulphur for their metabolic processes," said Vaughn Mangal, an assistant professor in the chemistry department at Brock University.

Sulphur reducing bacteria, as some people have termed it, is the same as sulfate reducing bacteria, Mangal said.

"We use oxygen to breathe, but the sulphur reducing bacteria can actually use elemental sulphur and convert it to hydrogen sulphide as part of the respiration and overall growth," he said.

Hydrogen sulfide is known for smelling like rotten eggs, which explains the smell that came from the drain.

"At the end of the day, there is no kind of explicit health kind of problem that could come from sulphur reducing bacteria," he said.

However, there are a few key points people need to know.



Containment tanks along Concession 5 allowed the vacuum trucks to quickly dispose of 1.8 million litres of the substance. FILE/SOMER SLOBODIAN

"The water gets a little bit bitter tasting as well if you're relying on wells or groundwater inputs," he said.

"Depending on how much sulphur reducing bacteria and how much sulphide is actually in the system, it could potentially corrode plumbing and culvert pipes," he added.

More sulphur reducing bacteria relates to poor water quality overall, according to Mangal. That can be harmful to aquatic life due to the lack of oxygen.

Sulfate reducing bacteria also plays a huge role in the cycling of mercury in the environment, he said. This type of bacteria can convert mercury to methyl mercury, which can be toxic.

"So, the fact that there's more sulphur reducing bacteria, to me, could mean that if this area becomes contaminated, it could be like a hotspot for the contamination for mercury, which is worrisome for myself," he said.

Cluckie said there are two series of things going on here that people may be confused about. The first is related to the containment and cleanup of the substance.

"We had a responsibility and direction from the ministry to do the clean-up," she said.

The town quickly tested the substance and deter-

mined it was an organic pollutant.

"And that was done very quickly so that we knew how to manage it and where to take it for disposal," she said.

During a spill, it's the ministry's job to make sure the owner acts to prevent adverse effects, and to restore the natural environment, environment ministry spokesperson Gary Wheeler said in a statement.

**“Our decision to issue an order depends on all related circumstances. In this case, as mentioned before, the town cleaned up voluntarily and it would be inappropriate to speculate.”**

LINDSAY DAVIDSON  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

"It is the owner's responsibility to identify the substance to ensure appropriate disposal," he added.

The second piece is relating to the environmental forensic investigation, which required multiple testing of different sources, said Cluckie.

"During that analysis, which was concurrent and

different, we determined the sulphur reducing bacteria piece was what led to the foul smell and the black sludge-like material that was in the drain," she said.

Over the last two months, it's been unclear to people who exactly was in charge of the investigations.

GHD is the town's consultant and it has been leading the ongoing investigation.

As of this week, the probe into the source is finished. A report will be sent to town council and has been shared with the ministry.

When asked if somebody was responsible for this spill, Cluckie said, "I have to wait until that has been released because that is with the ministry right now."

Mangal said, "It almost seems like this was from a wastewater treatment plant, or some form of microbial culturing facility that was transporting the micro-organisms."

He said it's rare to find sulphur reducing bacteria by themselves.

"Usually, these micro-organisms like to reside where there's no oxygen so they like hanging out in places like stream sediments and aquatic sediments. Wetlands particularly. So, the fact that it's specifically a sulphur reducing bacteria spill is weird to me," he said.

In August, the ministry

gave the town "direction" to clean up the spill.

While this wasn't a written order to the town, Cluckie said the town was given a verbal and written direction from the ministry.

"Given the town acted and cleaned up the spill in the public interest, the ministry did not need to order the town to clean up the spill," Lindsay Davidson from the ministry said in an email to The Lake Report.

When we followed up asking whether the ministry would have issued an order if the town didn't clean up the spill within the first few days, Davidson said, "Our decision to issue an order depends on all related circumstances. In this case, as mentioned before, the town cleaned up voluntarily and it would be inappropriate to speculate."

The key word is voluntarily.

"Nope, that's not accurate. They gave us direction," said Cluckie.

"I mean, they didn't issue a formal order. I think that could be where there's confusion," she added.

If the town didn't follow the direction and the ministry then gave an order, the town would lose the autonomy it had when they were working collaboratively together, Cluckie said.

Comparing it to the Ministry of Labour, she said, "You would not wait if you saw a health and safety

concern. You wouldn't say I'm doing nothing."

"You would ensure that you work with the ministry straight away," she added.

Because the town did not receive a written or verbal order, just direction, this may be considered a voluntary clean up. It's complicated.

Coun. Erwin Wiens is concerned the town started cleaning up something without actually knowing what it was.

Since the start, he's been trying to get answers.

"Listen, I can tell you it's not for lack of me trying to get answers," he said.

As of Sept. 12, the town had spent \$873,000 on the spill. The updated cost isn't available yet and won't be revealed until the new council is in place.

"Staff are compiling the information and then that will come to the new council," Cluckie said.

"It might come earlier except for the fact that the election is just one week away."

When it comes to cleaning up the spill, Mangal said he thinks what the town did was justifiable. All of the systems are connected, he said.

"Although it might not seem like a big deal in the immediate source, it could have downstream consequences that may not be as clear that you just alleviate by cleaning it up," he added.

Re-Elect

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JOAN KING—CHAIR TERRY FOX RUN, QUEENSTON RESIDENT



## NOTL Ambassadors hope for new recruits

Molly Bowron  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Ambassadors have wrapped up for another year, celebrating the successful end to the summer 2022 season.

And the program is looking to continue growing next year, attracting more volunteers to its ranks.

On Fridays and weekends from May to September, a team of 44 volunteer ambassadors, working two-hour shifts, hit the street in Old Town to offer advice and directions to visitors.

“When you kind of open your eyes and look at it the way a visitor would, it really does impress you as to what a little gem of a town we have here,” said Laurie Harley, the NOTL Ambassadors’ team leader.

The ambassadors program started in 2020 and Harley said it faced some challenges due to COVID.

Originally partnered with the Shaw Guild, the group was tasked with encourag-



NOTL Ambassadors Kerry Ryan, Janet Ennamorato, Wendy Howe and Lynne Hanna. SUPPLIED

ing pandemic protocols.

Now ambassadors works closely with Tourism NOTL and “we moved so that we had a more tourism focus.”

Looking to next year, Harley said there is always room for improvement, but one of the main goals is finding more volunteers.

With only 44 ambassadors, the group is limited to how many days it can operate.

The program is also looking to attract more students and young people.

“We tend to be an older

demographic and it would be nice to be able to have more diversity in terms of the team itself,” Harley said.

With goals set for the coming year, Harley took a moment to look back on the group’s past accomplishments, saying, “It really does make you feel extremely proud to be able to talk about this town.”

This spring there will be a recruitment drive for new ambassadors and Harley said if anyone wants to learn more they can email [info@notl-ambassadors.ca](mailto:info@notl-ambassadors.ca).



### TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE ROAD CLOSURE – Line 1 Road from Homestead Drive to Concession 6 Road

**WHERE:** Contractor Alfred Beam Excavating Inc., will be completing sanitary sewer installation and road restoration on Line 1 Road, between Homestead Drive and Concession 6 Road.

**WHEN:** The work is scheduled to begin on Monday, October 24, and be completed by Friday, November 18, 2022.

**COMMUNICATION:** A detour route will be provided around the site as the section of road will be closed to all through traffic for the duration of construction. This closure is necessary to facilitate a shorter construction schedule for the reinstatement of the roadway.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this project, please contact Mike Komljenovic, Engineering Supervisor, at [mike.komljenovic@notl.com](mailto:mike.komljenovic@notl.com) or 905-468-3266.

Emergency Services have been advised of this closure and the potential impact to service.



## VOTE 2022 CANDIDATES FOR THE 2022 MUNICIPAL & SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

For more information visit [www.notl.com](http://www.notl.com) or call 905-468-3266

**Election Day: Monday, October 24, 2022**

### Lord Mayor

One (1) to be elected at large

Betty DISERO  
Vaughn GOETTLER  
Gary ZALEPA

### Town Councillor

Eight (8) to be elected at large

Tim BALASIUK  
Allan BISBACK  
Gary BURROUGHS  
Adriana CATER (VIZZARI)  
Wendy CHEROPITA  
Alistair (AJ) HARLOND  
Maria MAVRIDIS  
John William MCCALLUM  
Richard MELL  
Sandra O'CONNOR  
Katherine REID  
Nick RULLER  
Erwin WIENS

### Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir Trustee

Melinda CHARTRAND  
(ACCLAIMED)

### DSBN School Board Trustee

Four (4) to be elected at large

Kate BAGGOTT  
Alex BRADNAM  
Mike BROUSSEAU  
Lora CAMPBELL  
Jonathan FAST  
Rhona LINDO-KELLY  
Donald MACDOUGALL  
Kris VRCEK

### Regional Councillor

One (1) to be elected at large

Pat DARTE  
Andrea KAISER  
Paolo MIELE  
William A. ROBERTS  
Barbara WORTHY

### NCDSB School Board Trustee

Two (2) to be elected at large

Natalia BENOIT  
Larry HUIBERS  
Jolanta PAWLAK

## Voting Methods

### Proxy Voting & Voting by Mail

If you are unable to vote during Advance Polls or Election Day, alternative options are available for qualified electors. For more information about how to vote by proxy or by mail, please visit [www.notl.com/council-government/elections](http://www.notl.com/council-government/elections)

### Voter Notification Cards

Voter Notification Cards were mailed out in late September. All voters are required to present valid identification at the Advance Polls and on Election Day.

- Victoria Steele, Town Clerk

## Where & When to Vote

### Election Day

(10 a.m. - 8 p.m.)

Niagara-on-the-Lake  
Community Centre  
(14 Anderson Lane)

Laura Secord  
Homestead  
(29 Queenston Street)

Crossroads Public School  
(1350 Niagara Stone  
Road)

St. Davids Public School  
(1344 York Street)

Holiday Inn Express  
(524 York Road)

### Advance Polls

(10 a.m. - 8 p.m.)

**Saturday, October 8**

St. Davids Public School  
(1344 York Road)

**Wednesday, October 12**

Municipal Offices  
(1593 Four Mile Creek Road)

**Saturday, October 15**

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community  
Centre (14 Anderson Lane)

**Wednesday, October 19**

Municipal Offices  
(1593 Four Mile Creek Road)

Qualified electors are welcome to vote at any  
Niagara-on-the-Lake polling location



# OUR HERITAGE IS AN ELECTION ISSUE

From Old Town to St. Davids and Virgil, from Queenston to Glendale and everywhere in between, the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake is at risk.

The Niagara Foundation posed several questions to the candidates for Lord Mayor, Town Councillor and Regional Councillor to get their views on heritage, planning and development matters. Here's how the mayoral candidates responded to one of the Foundation's questions:

Many residents are angry and frustrated over the type of building that has been going on recently. How do you view the issue of contextual architecture, and do you think the Town should adopt and enforce policies around it?

## BETTY DISERO

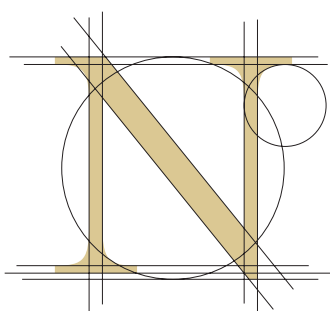
"I know this is an issue that is very important to the town. I support contextual zoning. It was in place until 2009 and then removed. Since then, we have seen homes being built that are out of context with our heritage environment. It is starting to escalate and we must return to contextual zoning."

## VAUGHN GOETTLER

"I absolutely support contextual architecture, respect for sufficient lot size, protection of our urban forest and wildlife corridors, with cautious and wise development programs moving forward. I totally share our residents' anger with inappropriate architectural designs and over building."

## GARY ZALEPA

"In principle contextual architecture and related policies appear to be a good process for managing the concerns mentioned. Having seen the use of such policies not be effective in the past causes me to wish to investigate how the previous issues can be resolved so that a contextual framework can be successful."



THE NIAGARA  
FOUNDATION

In the upcoming election, be informed. Find all the candidates' answers to other questions we asked on our website: [theniagarafoundation.com](http://theniagarafoundation.com)

[info@theniagarafoundation.com](mailto:info@theniagarafoundation.com)



# NOTL library series examines **climate change** in depth



## Keeping it Green

Kyra Simone  
Special to The Lake Report

A three-part series by a Niagara environmental scientist is shining the spotlight on the causes and the future of climate change.

Dr. Adam Martin's first talk in "The Changing World" series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library sparked plenty of conversation among the engaged audience.

Originally from Welland, Martin is an assistant professor at the University of Toronto in the Centre for Critical Development Studies.

A friendly face around Niagara-on-the-Lake, he can often be found

working in the library or volunteering at community events, like last month's Jane's Walk.

His first library lecture drew many local environmental enthusiasts, including Coun. Sandra O'Connor and Jo-Ann Fraser, who leads the NOTL Jane's Walk.

Asked if they could think of a recent news story about climate change, the audience quickly came up with several examples: flooding in Sydney, historic droughts in California, wildfires in Europe.

"It's hard to keep up with the climate change-related news," said Martin.

"Students that I'm teaching have family back in Pakistan. There's tremendous flooding there – the prime minister has said the whole country looks like a sea."

Climate and weather are fundamentally different. Weather describes short-term conditions in the atmosphere on the scale of hours to days.

"It's really short-term events: temperature, precipitation, wind ... All of the



Prof. Adam Martin is leading "The Changing World" series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library. SUPPLIED

stuff you check online before you walk out the door," said Martin. "There's no historical context around it."

On the contrary, climate describes how the atmosphere is expected to behave over long periods of time: years, decades, even centuries.

Climate change makes that behaviour "less and less predictable," said Martin, "because it's starting to deviate from this historical pattern."

As most of us know, the burning of fossil fuels has greatly warmed the atmosphere.

"The science is very settled in this," said Martin. He explained how human activities release green-

house gases like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which trap excess heat in the atmosphere and make the Earth's surface less reflective for solar rays.

Scientists can determine how much CO<sub>2</sub> was in the atmosphere at different times in history. "We can examine ice cores and figure out how much CO<sub>2</sub> is trapped in the bubbles way down there," he said.

We now know that in 2018, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels reached the highest levels in 800,000 years. The biggest sources of emissions are energy extraction and consumption, and industries like agriculture and forestry.

Without human contribu-

tions to greenhouse gases, historical data indicates that the Earth was actually in a cooling phase.

"From about 1,000 years ago, there's this cooling trajectory. And then whammo," said Martin.

Since industrial activity took off, "over about the last 150 years, we've seen global average temperatures go up by about 1.5 degrees."

Changes in temperature and precipitation have been monitored worldwide, using a network of more than 30,000 measurement stations.

Some regions are warming much more quickly: like the Arctic, where temperatures have risen 1.7C to 2.5C above historical averages. "That's a tremendous amount of warming in a short time," said Martin.

The discussion included some insightful audience comments. Dr. Gordon Young, professor emeritus at Wilfrid Laurier University, raised the important point that world population contributes greatly to climate change.

At the same time, develop-

ing populations are likely to be hit hardest by climate change impacts and often do not have the resources to adapt or rebuild in the wake of disaster.

A side conversation also emerged about the staggering carbon footprint of data storage and the internet itself.

"In 2019, the amount of electrical energy used for mining cryptocurrency was equivalent with the consumption of Ireland or Czechoslovakia," said one person.

"And that's just cryptocurrency mining, not Google," said another. "Or pictures of your dog."

Clearly, there is more to the climate conversation and it will continue at the library on Tuesday, Oct. 25, at 6:30 p.m. Martin's next talk is about the future of our climate.

*Kyra Simone is a PhD student in environmental science, with master's degrees in biology and science communication. When not researching climate change, she advocates for a sustainable future, picks up litter and makes recycled jewelry.*

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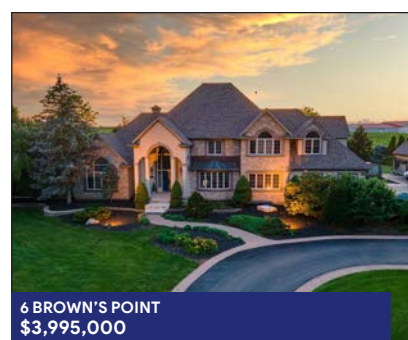
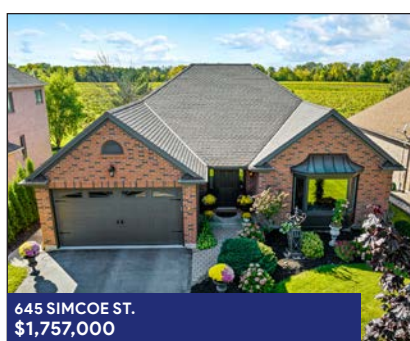


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# Lakeshore Oktoberfest is Ironwood's 'best day ever'

Evan Loree  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Ironwood Cider House brought a little version of a big German festival to Niagara-on-the-Lake last weekend.

Folks came out to the cider house for Lakeshore Oktoberfest for two days of tasting sparkling cider and foamy beer.

A duo of acoustic guitar players strummed and sang under the cloudy blue sky for a crowd of around 100 people on Sunday.

"Basically, we just wanted to have a fun fall party to do," Ironwood marketing and event planner Robyn Brown told The Lake Report.

The celebration was put together with Dragon Brewing Company and Palatine Hills Winery, both of which set up tents for the backyard festival.

Ironwood is the new kid on the block, having only been around for a year and Lakeshore Oktoberfest was its first festive event.

"It's the best day we've ever had," Brown said.



Gary Hodge and Jen Fox dance to a cover of Van Morrison during Ironwood's Oktoberfest celebration. EVAN LOREE

The place was "absolutely packed the entire day" on Saturday, she said.

"Both of our parking lots were at full capacity the whole day," she added.

Jen Fox and Greg Hodge came all the way from

Grimsby to share a moon dance.

The pair of dancers were a pretty picture dipping and twirling to the sounds of Van Morrison.

They've been dancing at Social Ease in St. Catharines for 10 years now and

look for gatherings with live music all over Niagara to dance at.

Meanwhile, assistant brewer Ryan Dawson was taking a break from his day job as a barista to

serve beer at the Dragon Brewing booth.

"I couldn't be happier with how it's turned out. I get to make coffee. I love coffee. Get to brew beer on my days off. It's fantastic," he said.

Dawson got his start as a brewer during the pandemic and taught himself how to brew with a little help from YouTube.

"Through COVID I probably brewed 100 beers at home. So I learned the ins and outs," he said.

Children dressed in autumn coats played lawn games on the property as folks sipped boozy beverages at their picnic tables.

Jack Cembalisky and Terence Fowler were near the Dragon Brewing booth drinking from steins large enough to make a Norse god blush.

Fowler was enjoying a special batch put together specifically for Oktoberfest.

He and Cembalisky were visiting from St. Catharines, having been directed to Ironwood after visiting Dragon Brewery's main location in St. Catharines.

Moondancers, beer swiggers and cider sippers revelled away the afternoon.

Brown said Ironwood wants to do something special each season now and hopes to have something ready for winter this year.



# THANK YOU

In a recent survey, 85% of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents said they believe our town can attract a lot of visitors AND be a great place to live.

Scan the code below to view the complete survey results or visit [www.chambernotl.com/researchandresources](http://www.chambernotl.com/researchandresources)



**NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE**  
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# **\$1 MILLION WASTED**

**“It was never a spill.”**

**“It’s ditch water.”**

---

**NO OVERSIGHT.**

**NO ACCOUNTABILITY.**

---

**“Just hired lawyers and  
consultants to cover it up.”**

It’s time for transparency.  
It’s time for change.



# SPORTS



## Practice makes perfect for NOTL Timbits

Minor hockey season is in full swing again in Niagara-on-the-Lake and coaches are busy teaching their young charges fundamentals, with a strong focus on fun. We caught up with the U7 Timbits during Saturday morning practice and scrimmage at Centennial Arena. Above, Bennett Hope skates with the puck during a scrimmage. At right, from the top: Brayden Kavanagh guards the net, while fellow goaltender Cedric Olsen awaits a shot, Jaxon Thwaites finds himself sprawled on the ice and Hudson Perrie reaches for the puck. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JULIA SACCO

### LET'S TALK LEADERSHIP

- What kind of leader do we want for our Town?
- As Lord Mayor, I will always lead with honesty and integrity. My experience demonstrates my ability to assemble strong teams and work together to achieve results. I am organized and efficient and able to work smart.

### LET'S TALK RESULTS

- The Town is nowhere close to completing its Official Plan. Current Council has a history of investing in expensive studies and then letting them sit on the shelf.
- I have a proven track record of delivering results at Town Council and Region of Niagara. I will work with Council and staff to be fiscally responsible and deliver positive, actionable results.

### LET'S TALK SMART GROWTH

- Current legal expenses have taken up a larger share of the Town's Operating Budget. These are unacceptable and avoidable litigation expenses.
- As Lord Mayor, I will create strong policies to guide growth. We will amend the development policies and by-laws to provide builders with clear guidelines that reduce litigation. Setting clarity in the community's expectations for development.

Vote  
**GARY ZALEPA**  
 for Lord Mayor  
 Niagara-on-the-Lake



**Common Sense Leadership**  
**Election Day October 24, 2022**



## Golf leagues wrap up season with awards

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

Winners were celebrated as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's men's and women's leagues wrapped up their seasons last week.

For the Thursday men's league, the year-end banquet is a seasonal highlight – not for the golf, but for the prize table.

There was some golf played at the finale, however, and the foursome of Oleh Hrycko, Harry Huizer, Jim Meszaros and John Reynolds won the day.

Seasonal winners were crowned in several categories.

Top of the board, winning the low gross title seven times each, were Ricky Watson and James Grigjanis-Meusel, the 2022 and 2021 men's open champs respectively.

Gerry Shelly was the Stableford scoring champ, with five wins. Watson (with 12) and Reynolds (10) were tops in skins.

Ben Berti was named long drive champ and closest to pin winners were Brian MacIntyre (#4) and McMacken (#9). The season-long putting contest winner was Terry Catney.



Ian Adams, left, was crowned Golden Dog and Jack Hanna, right, was named Top Dog in the WOOFs league. In the middle is WOOFs co-ordinator Bill Katrynuk. SUPPLIED

In team play over the season, there was a rare tie, with two groups accumulating 1,783 points.

Members of the Natural Hazards were: Randy Busbridge, Bruce Dixon, Steve Ferley, Jack Hanna, Mike Henry, Daryl McCrossan, Doug McCulloch, Jim McMacken, Drew Porter, Gerry Shelly, Earl Shore and Warren Tutton.

The Far From Par team was comprised of: Peter Danakis, Greg Fedorin, John Foreman, Oleh Hrycko, Johnson Hu, Brian MacIntyre, Bernard Marlow, Jim Meszaros, John Reynolds, John Thomson and Glenn Young.

The Tuesday morning

nine and 18 hole women's leagues teamed up for the Queen's Jubilee Closing Game and Breakfast.

Organizers Maria Townley, Nikki Jenkins and Cathy Taylor went all out and participants each received a golf ball cupcake, bath balm, tea, coffee and scones with jam and butter. The tables were decorated in the Queen's Jubilee theme.

Scrolls were handed out with game instructions and a card was handed to each player for a fun little game.

After the day's Royal Scramble, the winners were crowned: First place: Jo Castledine, Judy Mantle, Carole Matheson and Maria

Townley. Second: Carroll Baker, Bonnie Lamourie, Carolyn Porter and Suzanne Rate. Third: Christine Earl, Susan Gagne, Lynn Heaman and Suzanne Watson.

Individual winners were: Penny Green, closest to the crown (#4); Maria Townley, longest putt (#7); Brenda Bell, longest drive (#5); and Suzanne Rate, closest to the line (#8).

Three women were singled out for their jubilee-themed attire: Brenda Bell, Michele Darling and Carolyn Porter.

The women's trophy winners also were recognized: Cathy Murray (Holmwood Cup); Michele Darling (Robb Cup); Sharon Marlow (Gilbert Cup); Sue Sherk (Hunter Cup) and Yolanda Henry (Rossal Cup, Vera Derbyshire trophy and Barbara Alhuwalia trophy).

Fewest putts winner was Ginny Green and the Queen of Hearts prize went to Helen McCallum.

At the Tuesday WOOFs league wrap-up, co-ordinator Bill Katrynuk announced two major prizes. Top Dog honours went to Jack Hanna and Ian Adams was named Golden Dog.

## Tough opponents mean two more losses for Preds

Kevan Dowd  
The Lake Report

Another tough weekend led to a pair of losses for the Jr. A Niagara Predators.

Facing the undefeated North York Renegades in Virgil Friday night, the inexperienced Predators held their own but lost 5-3.

Head coach Kevin Taylor credited rookie goalie Cameron Huff with keeping the score close but felt a lax second period cost his team the game.

Things were close for more than 20 minutes with just a single goal for North York in the first period. But two more second-period tallies had Niagara down three going into the last period.

Things continued to look grim with a fourth for the Renegades 4:32 into the third but something seemed to click on the Predators' bench.

Not 30 seconds later Anthony Tropea opened the scoring for Niagara, Reese Bisci netted another for his team 30 seconds after that and a deuce for Tropea made for a one-goal differ-

ence with just 46 seconds left.

An empty-netter for North York sealed the deal with seven seconds left.

Taylor said his team was optimistic for their road game three days later against the Durham Roadrunners who beat them 6-1 a week earlier in Virgil.

But Monday night's road game didn't pan out for the Preds, ending in a 4-1 loss.

Durham made it onto the scoreboard five minutes in and netted another less than two minutes into the second period. Niagara's Jaroslav Dohnal notched one for the Predators five minutes later to make it a 2-1 game after 40 minutes.

The Roadrunners widened the gap in the third, slipping two past Niagara's Ryan Santini, who turned away another eight that period – for a total of 44 saves – to hold things at 4-1.

The Predators have no home games this weekend, facing the Northumberland Stars Saturday and Streetsville Flyers on Sunday.

**Read the full story at [www.niagaranow.com](http://www.niagaranow.com)**

# COMMUNITY LEADERS SUPPORT GARY ZALEPA FOR LORD MAYOR



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**George Lepp**  
Lepp Family Farms  
"Gary is the leader we need to get our town back on track, he is a community minded individual with proven experience."



**Rick Sherk**  
Retired Business Owner  
"We need Gary as the Lord Mayor, he brings experience, a genuine understanding of what is important for our town and he is a great listener."

WE HOPE TO HAVE YOUR SUPPORT ON OCTOBER 24

Authorized by Gary Zalepa



# Memories fade, but nursery school is **in the heart** of students

*Continued from Front Page*

Barbara not only found a solution in the Niagara Nursery School, then only in its second year of operation, she became the first official chairperson of the organizing committee.

She remembers somewhat fondly the children's participation in the annual Christmas Parade: "We used David Lailey's farm trailer. The kids were dressed up as little Santa Clauses. And we mothers sat there and froze our butts off."

"At the time, the school was in Chautauqua. I think, Jim Collard's father brought a Quonset hut from the Commons to become the community centre for Chautauqua. We rented it. We had all our stuff there. But we had to put everything away at the end of each session," she said.

"It is quite gratifying to start at something in the beginning. And then the next people come along and take it to bigger and better things."

Kamla Ahluwalia is one year older than her brother, Baldev. He's the youngest of the five Ahluwalia kids, now scattered around the world



Above, Barbara Ahluwalia rides on the Niagara Nursery School float in the annual NOTL Christmas Parade in the early 1970s. SUPPLIED Right: Kamla Ahluwalia lives near San Francisco and is a professor at Samuel Merritt University. TIM TAYLOR



in California, Wisconsin, Spain, Ohio and England.

Kamla lives and works in the San Francisco area, a doctor of physical anthropology, teaching gross anatomy to students going into health care.

"I remember we sort of lived on the edge of town. I went to Laura Secord School in Queenston. We would always ride our bikes into town," she said in a Zoom interview from California.

"My only memory of the school was when someone hit me in the head with a plastic hammer. I hid under the table."

Growing up, Kamla couldn't wait to get out of town.

"What I hated about it most then, I appreciate most now. When I was a kid, we were the brown family. Everyone knew us. When they saw you, you were one of Dr. Ahluwalia's children."

"I don't mean it in a racist kind of way. People knew who you were," she said.

**"It is quite gratifying to start at something in the beginning."**

BARBARA AHLUWALIA

"I didn't like everyone knowing who I was. So, I always wanted to get away

— let me be a number, just a face in the crowd. So, I could just live my life."

"But now, with my parents the age they are, everyone knows them. What I hated then is what is serving us now. Everyone has their eye on them and that is very comforting."

Baldev Ahluwalia now lives in Delafield, Wisc., a half-hour outside of Milwaukee. After degrees in physics from Brock and Western, he works with GE

Healthcare, developing innovations for MRI scanning.

Of the nursery school, he remembers rest time most. "Each of us on our own mat. Piles of mats in many colours. And the annual Christmas Parade float..."

"I grew up very lucky," he said. "I've never known a day without food or love from my parents. We lived on the Parkway. Our neighbours were all farmers. We were outside all the time. I spent my day on the bike from morning till night."

"I remember McClelland's being on the main street.

I can tell you the layout of the store. I remember a big hardware store where the post office is now. The old Red & White grocery store, too. We made our own fun."

Baldev's two children are well beyond preschool age. But he recognizes the value of returning to Niagara with them, as often as possible.

"It's important for me to bring the kids to visit my parents," he said. "My parents have an incredible social network. The people they have in town are wonderful."

**Next: Teachers, students and parents reminisce.**



**October 18 is Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day!**

**Thank you.**

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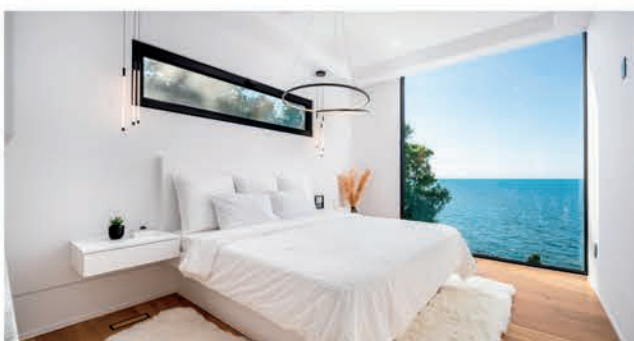


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GAMES 

- Across**
1. Insurers cover them (5)
  4. Avert scam, abusing studio kit (2,7)
  9. Manic-depressive (7)
  10. River mouth (7)
  11. Die (5,4)
  12. Food poisoning bacteria (1,4)
  13. Recast (7)
  15. Fortification sounds like a horn, maybe (7)
  17. Vigorous (7)
  19. Distended (7)
  21. Instruct (5)
  23. Lifted out (7,2)
  25. Hackneyed (7)
  26. Provocations (7)
  27. Ayrshire golf course owned by Donald Trump (9)
  28. Book preceding Philemon (5)
- Down**
1. Only Hitchcock film to get a Best Picture Oscar (7)
  2. Not a leading player (10,5)
  3. Top briefs (5)
  4. Prospered (7)
  5. Less cloudy (7)
  6. Corner joint (5)
  7. Grounds for acquittal (10,5)
  8. Top cutter? (7)
  14. Deck speed measure (1,1,1)
  16. Long March leader (3)
  17. Motown (7)
  18. "Waterworld" star (7)
  19. Drops in (5,2)
  20. They're often changed on little ones (7)
  22. Big banger? (1-4)
  24. "— Your Wagon", Frederick Loewe musical (5)

*Have some fun*



### Crossword Puzzle

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
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11										12				
13				14				15		16				
17						18		19						20
21				22		23				24				
25								26						
27										28				

Last issue's answers

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7										8		9						
										7								



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# Eye on the prizes – NOTL's Nobel series returns to library



**DR. BROWN**

Dr. William Brown  
Special to The Lake Report

The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901 with occasional years off during the two world wars.

The enterprise began with wealthy Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, an engineer by training, perhaps more famous or reviled by some, for his invention of dynamite.

Using his fortune, Nobel set forth the objectives and ground rules for establishing Nobel Prizes in physics, chemistry and medicine/physiology, literature and the peace prize.

A late comer, the economics prize, was created in 1968 by a donation from the Swedish central bank to the Nobel foundation, in honour of Alfred Nobel.

In the first half of the 20th

century most of the winners were Europeans. The Camelot period in physics, as I liken it, between 1900 and 1930, was revolutionary.

In that short span, the existence of the atom was finally firmly established, the quantal nature of light and more broadly, energy was proven. And the whole new field of subatomic physics was created, called quantum physics or mechanics.

The same period ushered in general relativity, an entirely new way to look at gravity, energy and the universe thanks to Albert Einstein.

Most of the early discoveries in physics were made by Europeans. The same was true for chemistry, which was especially strong in Germany in the late 1800s through the Second World War.

The Nobel prizes have their critics. For example, the science awards appear to leave out mathematics and the engineering sciences. In practice, however, both are recognized. Roger Penrose was awarded a half share of the Nobel for physics in 2020 for his



Swedish chemist Alfred Bernhard Nobel. WIKIPEDIA

mathematical analysis of black holes.

The other half of that prize was shared by two large experimental research groups, one led by Andrea Ghez and the other by Reinhard Genzel, for compelling evidence that a gigantic black hole exists at the centre of the Milky Way.

Direct evidence for that black hole was shown last year using the Event Horizon Telescope, itself an amazing engineering triumph.

engineering should be included.

One other criticism of Nobel awards is the exclusion of posthumous awards. That certainly applies to Stephen Hawking, who died before the award to Roger Penrose in 2020. Or what about Henrietta Leavitt, who died before the Nobel committee, working by the rules, could award her a Nobel for her studies showing how distances to faraway variable stars could be measured by their relative luminosities.

Some prizes have been awarded as much as 50 years after the work was done, such as Syukuro Manabe last year whose climate model studies were done in the 1960s. He shared the Nobel in physics with Klaus Hasselmann and Giorgio Parisi (another mathematician) both of similar age and all lucky enough to still be alive.

There are other shortcomings in the Nobel Prizes, instances of chauvinism, culturism and simple dumb mistakes. Overall, however the Nobel committees do an excellent job in the sciences – not so much for

the economics, peace and literature prizes. Those are other stories.

All this is to twig your interest in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Sixth Annual Nobel Series, celebrating this year's awards. This fall, the presentations will be in-person at the NOTL Public Library for the first time in three years. The sessions also will be recorded for YouTube.

The series begins on Wednesday, Nov. 2, at 2 p.m. and run weekly thereafter. Physics leads off, then chemistry, medicine/physiology, economics, the peace and finally the literature prizes. As with the last three years, I cover the science prizes, David Elkins the economics and peace prizes, and Valmai Elkins finishes the series with the literature winner.

We hope to see you. Please register with the library beforehand.

*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.*

## VOTER CARD ~ Top 10 Candidates

During the course of the Election Campaign I have reviewed and assessed the qualifications of the candidates: Through direct discussions, the many "Meet & Greet" sessions, reviews of how incumbents conduct themselves and vote, as well as input from many citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I believe that these Top 10 Candidates will be the best to serve with skill, respect, honesty and integrity, and in a transparent fashion. I encourage everyone to vote their choices for a balanced Council for today and new talent for the future.

### LORD MAYOR

**DISERO, BETTY** ~ Accessible FULL-TIME mayor with integrity and proven strong fiscal management ~ Paid down the town's debt ~ Championed the MAT ~ Added to NOTL's reserves ~ Stands up to aggressive developers and always put residents first

### COUNCILLOR

**BALASIUK, TIM** ~ Committed to protect the historic legacy of NOTL ~ Strong advocate for recreational needs of the community

**BISBACK, ALLAN** ~ Outstanding Budget Chair ~ Organised and effective common sense Governance ~ Championed the MAT

**BURROUGHS, GARY** ~ Veteran with deep Regional and Municipal experience ~ Supports Contextual Zoning in NOTL

**CATER VIZZARI, ADRIANA** ~ Articulate dynamic voice for young families ~ Provides competent representation for St. Davids

**MAVRIDIS, MARIA** ~ Preserve Culture and Heritage ~ Strong supporter of local community groups and non-profit organizations

**MELL, RICHARD** ~ Will ensure that tourism pays its fair share in NOTL ~ Wants harmony between tourism and residents

**O'CONNOR, SANDRA** ~ Trusted guardian of accessible quality healthcare ~ Fully committed to environmental stewardship.

**RULLER, NICK** ~ Fiscally responsible former Fire Chief ~ Strong understanding of inter-departmental operating procedures

### REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

**KAISER, ANDREA** ~ Former NOTL Councillor with deep agricultural experience ~ Brings transparency, honesty and integrity



# FEATURED

## EXPLORING PHOTOS WITH NOTL MUSEUM



### Queenston Heights tourism, circa 1910

Brock's Monument has always been a popular spot to get the best view of the lower Niagara River and to learn about the Battle of Queenston Heights. Here's a photo from circa 1910 that shows the entrance to the path leading to the monument. There are several soldiers with helmets, which is no surprise since War of 1812 battle sites were a major tourist draw during this time and many soldiers wanted to see the sites of formidable battles of the past. Although admission was free, a 1910 newspaper reported the township government had leased the souvenir and refreshment stand on the roadway to Joseph Parnell for three years for \$125 per year. These funds were then used to maintain the road. In this photo, the sign to the right provides the details of the historic site. The stand in the middle is selling postcards and offering to mail them on the sender's behalf. Different cards are displayed for purchase on boards nearby. A few people can be seen sitting to the left writing notes to loved ones.

### In Memoriam

In loving memory of Rino DeBon  
March 24th, 1940- October 19th, 1997

We lost you 25 years ago and not a day goes by that we don't think about you.  
Those who touch our lives stay in our hearts forever.

Lovingly remembered by Paul and Cathy, Perry and Carrie, Dina and Darren, Daniel, Rachel, Jack, Samantha, Matthew and Gavin.

### Rotary's Holiday House Tour returns



**PHOTO GALLERY**  
See more pictures at [niagaranow.com](http://niagaranow.com)

Tickets for two separate Rotary Club Holiday House Tours are now on sale. Choose from a visit to the McArthur Estate, above, or one of six beautifully decorated homes around Niagara-on-the-Lake. Tickets at [niagaraonthelakerotary.ca](http://niagaraonthelakerotary.ca).

## Looking to the Stars

### European solar eclipse could set us on a new path

**Thursday, Oct. 20:** Just before the moon moves from Leo to Virgo, she makes a sweet move with the sun, which brightens the day. This is during the noon hour. Happy birthday number 58 to the 49th vice-president of the U.S., Kamala Harris.



**Friday, Oct. 21:** Even though it's a fairly quiet end to the work week, today is a time for embracing new opportunities. It was Oct. 21, 1964, that the film version of "My Fair Lady" premiered in New York. It went on to win the Oscar for best picture in 1965.

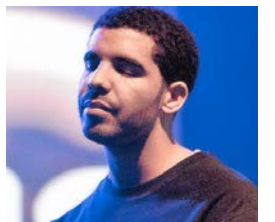
**Saturday, Oct. 22:** Mercury, Saturn Venus and the sun are today's dance partners in the sky, making for fun and joy that lasts and grows sweeter over time. Today would be the birthday of Canadian Metis hero Louis Riel, who fought many battles to secure Metis rights and was eventually hanged for treason.



**Sunday, Oct. 23:** Today the sun enters Scorpio at 6:54 a.m. And Saturn goes direct, having been retrograde since June 4. All Saturn stations (and all planetary stations) are important, but this one will be particularly intense. That's because Saturn is now almost exactly squaring Uranus. This is a pressure cooker type of energy that demands release. When Saturn changes direction, we may suddenly change our mind about a course of action. Saturn and Uranus are collective energies, so we will most likely experience this energy at a collective level. If you have

planets or angles around 18 degrees in fixed signs (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius) this transit will influence you at a personal level. With the state of the world right now, everyone may be affected. On Oct. 25, 1915, an estimated 25,000 women paraded in New York City, pleading for women's right to vote.

**Monday, Oct. 24:** In preparation for tomorrow's new moon in Scorpio, she spends all of today zooming through Libra and bringing peaceful, balanced Libra supports and very demanding Libran challenges all day long. Happy birthday #36 to Drake, the world's best-selling singer from Toronto.



**Tuesday, Oct. 25:** Today we have a solar eclipse. This is a partial eclipse that will be visible from Europe and Asia. This is also a south node eclipse, so it's concerned with karmic, fated new beginnings. South node solar eclipses often come with an ending followed by a new beginning. The solar eclipse is exactly conjunct Venus, suggesting a rebirth of the heart that will set us on a completely new path. Happy birthday to Katy Perry, who turns 38 today.



**Wednesday, Oct. 26:** Mercury in Libra in perfect harmony with Mars in Gemini makes for quick and clever thinking, especially about health matters. On Oct. 26, 1881, the most famous gunfight ever happened at the OK Corral. Wyatt Earp was one of the participants.

**Check out the weekly podcast, researched, written and recorded by Bill Auchterlonie at [www.lutts.ca](http://www.lutts.ca)**

*Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.*

### Celebrate life's events

The Lake Report would like to help you celebrate events that are important to you. Birthdays, anniversaries, achievements, or just a fun message to a friend. It's a great way to support your local paper, and have some fun at the same time! Contact [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com)



October 22, 2022  
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## Divide and conquer: Some perennials need attention now



Joanne Young  
Gardening Columnist



Dividing hostas should be done in the fall. JOANNE YOUNG

When it comes to fall garden chores, there are two main jobs that need to be done concerning your perennials. One is dividing them and the other is cutting them back.

### Dividing perennials

There are three reasons you need to divide your perennials. The first reason is to control the overall size of the plant.

Vigorous growing varieties, such as rudbeckia, can quickly outgrow their space. By dividing the clump up into smaller pieces, it will help your garden from becoming too crowded.

The second reason is to rejuvenate older plants. The sure sign that your plants need rejuvenating is that the centre of the clump has no growth and all the growth is just around the edges of the clump.

The third reason for dividing is to propagate from the original clump to create new plants for new garden areas or to give away.

### When to divide

The general rule of thumb for dividing perennials is to divide spring and summer flowering perennials in late summer or fall and to divide fall blooming perennials in early spring.

By dividing them at the opposite time of their regular bloom period, the plant is able to put its energy into developing a good root system.

### Here's how to divide them

To make digging and dividing easier, water the bed well a few days in advance

Prune plants back to just about three inches tall.

Dig out the entire clump as completely as possible and sit it on top of ground or on a tarp.

Using a sharp spade or

knife, gently cut through the roots, dividing the clump into as many pieces as desired. If the centre of the plant has died, divide the living portions into smaller clumps and replant elsewhere. Throw out dead portion.

Enrich the soil in the new plant areas with compost or triple mix before planting. Treat new plantings with a high-phosphorus fertilizer, such as bone meal.

Water well.

Mulching around newly transplanted perennials in fall will help to stop the root ball from being pushed out of the ground by frost throughout the winter.

### Cutting back perennials

Cutting back some plants in the fall is a good way to keep flowerbeds looking neat and tidy through winter and helps keep plants vibrant and blooming the following year.

Removing spent foliage and blooms helps a plant focus on recharging its roots. It also plays a pivotal role in keeping disease and pests at bay as well.

The ideal time to start cutting back your perennials is after the first couple of frosts, when the plants are beginning to turn to fall colour and die down.

The entire plant does not have to be completely brown or faded to begin the process. A pair of secateurs or pruning shears are the best tools to be using to cut the stems.

Cut stems back to about three to five inches above the ground. The advantages of this are that you will know where the plants are come spring and the remaining stems or leaves

will provide a bit of insulation for the plant throughout winter.

You do not need to cut all your perennials back in fall. Many can wait until spring. The ones you definitely want to cut back are any that showed signs of insect or disease problems. Do not put those stems into your composter.

Consider keeping some perennial foliage and stems in the garden as shelter for native bee species and butterfly pupae.

Some perennials, including evergreen plants such as epimedium, hellebore, heuchera, dianthus, moss phlox, lavender, bergenia,

hens and chicks, and candytuft should not be cut back in the fall.

Tidy them up in spring as needed by removing brown or tattered leaves. I like to leave any perennials that provide an interesting texture there for the winter, such as ornamental grasses, sedums, Russian sage and red hot poker.

Also, leave any perennials that will provide seeds for birds such as purple coneflower, rudbeckia, grasses, and Joe Pye weed.

Happy gardening.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at [joanneyoung.ca](http://joanneyoung.ca)



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## Obituaries

### Lachlan Watson

WATSON, Lachlan (Lockie) 1934-2022

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Lockie on Tuesday October 11, 2022 at the Greater Niagara General Hospital. Lockie is survived by his daughter Kim Alves (Len) and son Greg Watson. Beloved grandfather of Trevor, Taylor and Zachary. Lockie was a lifelong resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake and a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124. The family would like to thank Dr. Rohani and the nursing staff for the wonderful care given to him in his final days. The Watson family would like to thank everyone for their kindness at this difficult time. Lockie will be deeply missed by all those whose lives he touched. Arrangements have been entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. Inurnment has taken place at St. Mark's Cemetery. If desired, memorial contributions to the charity of your choice would be sincerely appreciated by the family. Memories, photos and condolences can be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)

### Joan Gardner



GARDNER, Joan Mary – Joan Mary Gardner, avid reader, loving wife, adoring mother, and proud grandmother, passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on Sunday, Oct. 9, 2022 at the age of 92. Born in Portsmouth, England on May 6, 1930 to Thomas and Winifred

Seddon, she was a bright and playful child, enjoying reading and board games from a young age. Among her treasured memories were game nights spent with her family when her father came home from his service in the army. In 1948, she enlisted in the Women's Royal Naval Service where she was commended not only for her intellect, but also her skill in marksmanship and leadership as a "Leading Wren". She served until 1951 when she took a job in the tax office in Watford. It was here she met the love of her life, John Clifford Gardner. They were married on July 16, 1960 in Bushey Heath, England and were married for 62 wonderful years. In 1962, Joan and John moved to Toronto, Canada where the couple welcomed their son Christopher in 1964 and daughter Karen in 1968. The family of four moved back to England in 1973, settling in Gerrards Cross. This allowed them to spend more time with their families. They moved again in 1976 to Old Greenwich, Connecticut, USA. In 1988 they moved back to England, settling this time in Bournemouth. In 2007, Joan and John moved across the Atlantic once more settling in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada which allowed them to spend more holidays with their grandchildren.

Joan is survived by her husband John of Vineland, Ontario, her son, Christopher (Colleen) of Katonah, New York and daughter Karen of St. Catharines, Ontario, brother Geoff (Theresa) Seddon of Rayleigh, England and sister-in-law Glenda Taylor of Bournemouth, England. She is also survived by her grandchildren Catherine and Christopher Gardner, niece Lindsey Goacher, and nephews Andrew Taylor and Trevor Seddon. Joan will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Family received friends at Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake on Monday, Oct. 17, 2022 from 1-2 p.m. followed by a celebration of Joan's life at 2 p.m. A private family interment at Niagara Lake Shore Cemetery will be held on Thursday, Oct. 20 at 2 p.m. As an expression of sympathy, those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Arthritis Society Canada or at [arthritis.ca](http://arthritis.ca)

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



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