



## A short cut to mushrooms

NOTL foragers find big flushes, cook up specialty meals and sell to chefs



Andrew Ball harvests oyster mushrooms from a log at one of his Niagara mushroom foraging spots. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

You want to cook them well, and know what you're cooking.

That's some expert advice from two avid mushroom foragers who spend their days hunting all across Niagara-on-the-Lake and

beyond for tasty, edible fungi.

It's a sport Andrew Ball and Levi Brant have been honing for about seven years.

Ball, a lifelong NOTL resident, started foraging early in life with his father Terry. But it was nothing like what he and Brant do today.

Back then, Ball and his dad would search primarily for field mushrooms like shaggy manes and agaricus campestris — mushrooms that are sort of similar to your supermarket mushrooms in look and flavour, explains Ball.

Now, Ball and Brant know how to identify dozens of

edibles, like morels, chanterelles, hen of the woods, chicken of the woods, shrimp of the woods. The list goes on.

For the two longtime friends, spotting mushrooms has become a sort of second nature. Follow-

*Continued on Page 10*



Scan here to see our short documentary on foraging

## Council slaps illegal rentals with one-year licence ban

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Councillors have overruled a decision by the town's licensing committee and imposed a year-long ban on three short-term rentals that were operating illegally.

"People (need to) understand that if they break the law, there's a cost to that," Coun. Norm Arsenault said in an interview Monday.

Arsenault spearheaded the harsher penalties on the illegal rentals after the licensing committee allowed two of the rentals to reapply for a denied licence

*Continued on Page 2*

## NOTL man facing child porn charges is free on bail

Kevin MacLean  
The Lake Report

A 39-year-old Niagara-on-the-Lake man is free on bail and facing three child pornography charges after an investigation by the Niagara police internet child exploitation unit.

Weston Thomas Nesbitt was arrested Saturday by Niagara Regional Police.

At a hearing Sunday, he was released on a \$5,000 bail and ordered to appear again on Dec. 1.

Nesbitt, a Grade 7 teacher at Forestview Public School in Niagara Falls, faces one count each of possession of child pornography, making child pornography and

*Continued on Page 5*

## Rake leaves but mulch them for free 'black gold' compost



Joanne Young  
Garden Columnist

Well, you knew that this time was coming, you hoped that it wouldn't, but, regardless, it is upon us. That's right, it is leaf-raking time.

I must say that as long it is a warm, sunny, dry day when I tackle raking, I really don't mind this task.

Before you start raking up leaves, though, let's just stop and think about what we are doing.

We spend hours raking up the leaves, putting them into bags (that at least are now made from biodegradable paper), and then we put them out at the curb to be



Mulch your leaves instead of bagging them.

picked up for recycling.

Then, the following spring, we head off to the

garden centre to buy compost to add to our gardens.

It always seems strange to me that we just discard these leaves and don't make use of this resource by turning the leaves into "black gold." It is so much cheaper to use what nature gives us for free and take advantage of all the benefits all those leaves offer.

So, before you start stuffing all those leaves into

bags, consider making use of them as a mulch in your gardens.

It is best to shred them up first. Some leaves, such as Norway maples and oaks, have a thicker cuticle layer and may not break down on their own over winter unless you shred them.

The easiest way to do that is by using either a lawn

*Continued on Page 19*

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# Rental owner admits knowingly operating illegally

Continued from Front Page

on Nov. 1, 2021, and let the other one reapply in January 2022.

A staff report recommended that the applications be denied for a year and councillors agreed during a committee of the whole meeting last week.

The penalties were formally ratified by council on Monday night, despite a plea from one of the property owners asking for her licence to be permitted. Coun. Gary Burroughs was the only one to vote against the plan at the council and committee meetings.

The three properties in question were Brian Kerr's rental on Princess Street in Queenston, Jennifer Tilley's property on Davy Street in Old Town, and Cindy Wang and David Yao's rental on the Promenade also in Old Town.

Wang and Yao's property was brought to the attention of the town by a complaint registered through Granicus Host Compliance in

July. The other two rentals failed their safety inspections.

All three operators admitted to having run their short-term rental without a licence during a licensing committee meeting on Oct. 7. After that was discovered the town opted to deny their applications.

"All three of them, when they made their application, signed a document that specifically says they will not advertise or rent before they get a licence," Arsenault said in an interview.

Coun. John Wiens said the town needs to ensure its bylaws are taken seriously.

"I believe that this is really important as well, that we stand up for what we've been working on," Wiens told committee of the whole last week.

"I think it's important that we support the bylaw officer and go with the year suspension."

During a licensing committee meeting in October, Tilley said she was not receiving responses from the town about her rental. Katie



This room was illegally advertised for rent on Davy Street. SOURCED

Aeby of Sotheby's Real Estate represented Tilley during Monday's council meeting and said Tilley assumed the application was going to be imminently approved and so began renting.

Wang also claimed she was confused about the application since it had been granted to the previous owners and assumed the rental could be operated.

The third operator, Kerr, who has been hosting people at his home in Queenston since 2019, said COVID-19 left him no other choice.

Kerr said he bought the house in 2018 with the intention of using it as a short-term rental. In 2020, he lost his job due to COVID-19.

"It's just been really hard," the single father of two young boys tearfully told the licensing committee.

"The only way we have been able to survive is with this short-term rental income. My employment insurance ran out last week and I've gone ahead and cancelled all future bookings, which is a loss of about \$15,000."

Kerr admitted he was aware he was illegally operating his rental but said it was a necessity for him and his children. He said he worked 25 years in the hospitality industry and hasn't been able to find a job due to the pandemic.

Arsenault pointed out that, back in March of

this year, Kerr applied for an expensive zoning change on his property. The process of hiring a consultant and applying for the zoning change can cost in the range of \$20,000 to \$30,000, Arsenault said in an interview.

That application involves having the property split in two and is still being reviewed by town staff, he said.

Arsenault presented a motion to make two of the rentals unable to reapply for a short-term rental licence until Oct. 7, 2022. He suggested a permanent ban on Kerr's application.

He also wanted the motion to include a stipulation that if any of the properties violated the short-term

rental bylaw during their one-year ban then their licence would be permanently revoked.

Director of operations Craig Lamour suggested a permanent ban would be difficult to implement, causing Arsenault to remove the stipulation and make it so Kerr couldn't reapply until Oct. 7, 2022, as well.

After Arsenault suggested these measures, Burroughs said, "Maybe we should shoot them as well."

The comment prompted some uncomfortable laughs from councillors. Coun. Allan Bisback shook his head and Lord Mayor Betty Disero requested that Burroughs keep his microphone muted unless he had the floor.



# Arena public skating returns on Oct. 30

Staff  
The Lake Report

Public skating is back on the ice, finally.

Skating returns to Vigil's Meridian Credit Union Arena this Saturday, Oct. 30, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's chief administrator told council Monday night.

"As you know from last week we had some recruitment challenges, like many

businesses have had in Niagara in general," Marnie Cluckie said. "But, fortunately, we've recruited."

Public skating will be available every Saturday and Sunday between 1:30 and 3:00 p.m., she said.

The announcement comes on the heels of a resident outcry that there would be no Santa Claus Parade or public skating at the arena this winter.

# Growing police budget = higher cost for NOTL

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Niagara police budget is tentatively slated to increase by 4.9 per cent in 2022 and Niagara-on-the-Lake residents could pay another \$674,000 for policing next year thanks to increasing property values, the town's treasurer says.

Niagara-on-the-Lake pays one of the highest rates out of the region's 12 municipalities for police services due to the region's assessment-based-funding model.

The assessment-based model means a municipality's policing costs are based on its property values – and NOTL has some of the highest property values in the region.

NOTL is the third-highest



contributor to the budget despite only having the ninth-largest population, according to the 2016 census and a regional budget document.

In 2021, NOTL contributed \$13,944,714 to the police budget, behind only St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, according to the document.

The police budget will see an increase to \$168.9 million from \$161 million

if it is approved by regional council.

Town treasurer Kyle Freeborn said the 4.9 per cent increase in the police budget does not directly translate to a 4.9 per cent increase in what NOTL taxpayers contribute.

Coincidentally, based on current property value trends, it will almost be the same, however. The town's contribution is expected to rise by 4.8 per cent due to increased property value assessments, Freeborn said.

"For 2022, it's estimated that Niagara-on-the-Lake's police levy would increase by \$675,480 to \$14,620,194," he said.

Since 2022 property value assessments are not available yet, that number could fluctuate, he said.

Freeborn said there are

alternative models for how municipalities pay for police services.

"For example, the Ontario Provincial Police bill certain communities a portion of their budget on a household basis as opposed to on an assessment basis," he said.

After a base contribution, the OPP then determines further costs based on an area's call volume and direct contracts such as court security and prisoner transportation, Freeborn said. This is what's known as a performance model.

The draft police budget increase will come before the budget review committee in November and could be ratified by regional council in December, NOTL Regional Coun. Gary Zalepa said in an email.



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Left: An emotional Candice Penny thanks those who contributed to making the new expansion a reality. Right: Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Penny pose in one of the new nursery school rooms. RICHARD HARLEY

## Tears shed as expanded nursery school opens

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

There were tears of joy and thanks Saturday as the expanded Niagara Nursery School officially opened and showed off its new facilities.

Candice Penny, executive director of the nursery school, said it was an honour to be celebrating the “momentous occasion” for the school, which will mark 50 years of operating in Niagara next March.

The expansion of the school, beside the NOTL Community Centre, took three years of planning and construction to complete

and cost about \$2 million.

Community donations and funding from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and other levels of government helped make it a reality.

“This is a big moment for not only Niagara Nursery School, but for our community as a whole. And we are so happy to be able to be licensed for 69 children, doubling our previous capacity,” Penny told a crowd that included staff and area political leaders.

Growing emotional, Penny also took time to thank the project’s donors and supporters, and “countless individuals without

which today would not be possible.”

“I’ve said it many times before and I will keep saying, we are so lucky to live in a region that recognizes the importance of early childhood education, the importance of supporting children and families and those who work in early childhood education fields,” she said.

“The joy on the faces of our little one says it all.”

Matthew Maxwell, an early childhood educator in the school’s toddler room, was thankful to have the new, dedicated facility for the children, and another space

for different age groups.

“Before we had a mixed group room, and now we have a dedicated preschool toddler and infant room, as well as the school-age program,” he said.

“We keep having new children come in each day and we’re really excited to have our family growing and having more happening every week.”

He said educators have been able to help decorate the rooms and add “their own personal touches.”

“You can see all the rooms kind of made from our personalities put together,” Maxwell said.

## COVID spikes elsewhere show preventive measures still needed, Niagara’s top doc says

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Spiking COVID cases in some western provinces and in Nordic countries show Ontario needs to be careful about easing COVID-19 measures, Niagara’s top doctor says.

Noting the problems Alberta and Saskatchewan are facing, Niagara Region’s acting medical officer of health Dr. Mustafa Hirji said countries like Denmark offer lessons for Ontario.

The Danes halted COVID restrictions in early September and are now seeing a huge surge in cases.

“They stopped masking, they stopped social distancing and what they see here is that there’s basically been a new wave of infections,” Hirji said during a COVID-19 update on Monday.



Dr. Mustafa Hirji. SUPPLIED

In comparison, Ontario is experiencing a gradual decrease in infections by maintaining basic preventive measures, he said.

The importance of these basic measures is made clear by the fact Denmark has a 75 per cent vaccination rate but is still seeing a case spike since relaxing social distancing and mask wearing rules, Hirji said.

“The imperial advantage here has been both having high vaccinations but also maintaining those other preventative measures going forward because we don’t

want to go back on those too fast.”

When comparing the Ontario situation to the current infection spike in the western provinces, Hirji used deaths as his main metric.

“I actually did the math here from the point that Alberta and Saskatchewan opened up in July versus now,” he said.

If Ontario had followed the same pattern, there would be between 65 and 80 extra deaths from COVID-19 in the Niagara region, he said.

He said “65 to 80 people in Niagara are still alive today thanks to our measures to make sure we kept COVID-19 under control.”

“I think that’s a really important thing for us to remember, what the true human cost of it is and why we, as annoying as they are, really want to maintain

these COVID precautions.”

Hirji used data from schools to demonstrate how effective vaccines have been at curbing the spread of the virus.

Elementary schools where kids are unable to get vaccinated account for 77 per cent of school-spread cases. Secondary schools where nearly all students are vaccinated account for only 17 per cent of such cases, Hirji said.

Hirji also noted that statistically a person who is unvaccinated is 23 times more likely to end up in an ICU if they contract COVID-19 than a person who is fully vaccinated.

Cases in Ontario are decreasing but have been rising slightly in Niagara mainly due to Thanksgiving gatherings and increased mobility in the last few weeks, he said.

## WELCOMING OUR NEW CHIROPRACTOR

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CHIROPRACTOR

Dr. Lauryn Friesen was born and raised in Virgil, Ontario. She completed her Bachelor of Science in Life Sciences at Queen’s University. Lauryn then obtained her Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. Dr. Lauryn has also obtained certification in Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Therapy, Post Natal Assessment and Rehabilitation, and is currently enrolled in the Contemporary Medical Acupuncture program through McMaster University. Lauryn has experience with neck and back pain, extremity injuries, athletic injuries and rehabilitation. With a very active upbringing playing several sports and experience in university varsity-level basketball, Dr. Lauryn has developed a special interest in women’s health and athlete care. Dr. Lauryn will always strive to provide an environment where her patients feel heard, understand the root of their pain, and tailor treatment to patients’ individual health and wellness goals.



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## Construction on new medical centre should start **next week**, Village developer says

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report



The groundbreaking on Wednesday. EVAN SAUNDERS

Stability for doctors and patients will be the one of the best things about the new Village Medical Centre, Dr. Tim Bastedo says.

After nearly a decade of trying to find a permanent home for some of Niagara-on-the-Lake's essential medical services, Bastedo is thankful construction on the new centre will start soon, he said.

"The biggest thing is gonna be stability. We know we're going to be here for a long stretch of time," Bastedo said in an interview at the new site.

The finalization of the site plan enables physicians to focus all of their energy on patient care instead of worrying about where they will be practising in the future, he said.

Bastedo moved to town nine years ago and said he has been envisioning a large medical hub ever since.

"Just trying to find a location large enough for everyone was a struggle," he said.

The new 8,000-square-foot, one-storey building behind the CIBC on Garrison Village Drive will enable that medical hub to happen. Bastedo will be mov-

ing into the new centre with four other doctors, the entire Niagara North Family Health Team and the LifeLabs located in the former NOTL hospital.

Physicians Iram Ahmed, Karen Berti, Samreen Malik and Pratik Kalani will be relocating to the new facility.

Several doctors will continue practising at the Virgil medical centre behind Simpson's pharmacy, but Bastedo didn't want to specify who since contracts are still being negotiated.

This grouping of medical services will be a bonus for doctors and patients, he said.

"It's nice to know that we're not going to be split apart into multiple different parties," he said.

Bastedo will be moving in to the old hospital with the family health team until the new building is completed.

It was originally hoped the centre would be built by April, but the new timeline is to have the construction

completed by June 2022, said John Hawley, president of Traditional Neighbourhood Developments Inc.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said the town is committed to working with the teams located in the old hospital to ensure they can continue their medical practices in the building until construction on the new centre is completed.

One particularly excited individual was the lord mayor's mother, Lena Disero.

She lives in Old Town and said the new location is a great convenience.

"I like Dr. Bastedo and it's closer to my home," Lena Disero said in an interview.

She was also happy there will be three female doctors working out of the new centre.

Lena had hoped the construction would be done in April so she could start walking to her medical appointments in the spring, but "it's a very big project," she said.

Hawley said the new location is great since it brings a multi-functional medical centre to one of the highest density areas in the municipality.

Construction manager Fraser Muir of Alliance Construction Management said the project would cost roughly \$250 per square foot. At an estimated 8,000 square feet, that equates to roughly \$2,000,000 for the project.

"It is far more than we thought, because of the pandemic," Hawley noted.

The cost of building materials has risen during the pandemic, with Muir noting steel in particular was burning a hole in the budget.

He also said that construction labour is more scarce, meaning developers have a less competitive market to try and find lower costs for building projects.

Hawley thanked the town for help getting the project moving. The town issued a conditional building permit for the development so the team could get started earlier. The developer bears any risk associated with the construction, Hawley said.

The town also deferred the development charges until the building is fit for occupancy, allowing the developer to focus its resources on the construction, he said.

## Halloween activities at native centre and Red Brick Church

Staff  
The Lake Report



The Niagara Regional Native Centre on Airport Road will hold its annual Halloween "Spooktacular" on Saturday, Oct. 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The day will include "trunk or treat" goodies, a costume contest and photo booth, haunted hallway and other fun activities. Everyone is welcome.

And the Red Brick Church (Niagara United Mennonite Church at 1775 Niagara Stone Rd.), will also host a "trunk or treat" giveaway, with candy and treats for kids in costumes. It is on Sunday, Oct. 31, from 11:30 a.m.

## Fort George gives out Halloween **treats**

Staff  
The Lake Report

Parks Canada and the Friends of Fort George will be shelling out Halloween treats at the fort on Sunday, Oct. 31.

Families are encouraged to bring little goblins and ghouls in their costumes to the parking lot at Fort George, where volunteers will be handing out treat bags from noon to 2 p.m.

Sunday is also the last day Fort George and the Friends of Fort George Gift Shop are operating for the season. They

will be open from noon to 5 p.m.

Visitors can explore the grounds, tour the buildings and witness a musket demonstration. There will be special talks and demonstrations happening every half an hour throughout the day.

The organizers noted the Halloween treats were provided by Hendrik's Valu-mart, Phil's Valu-mart, Corks Wine Bar & Eatery, Parks Canada, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Friends of Fort George Gift Shop and the NOTL Museum.

## Future Vision: Part 6

### A retirement village on old hospital site

*We asked readers for their suggestions regarding what should happen to the old Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital site. With its prime location and history in town, the municipality is going to consider formal plans for its possible redevelopment. Here is another idea from a reader.*

Lois Stevens  
Special to The Lake Report

What is needed in Old Town?

Do we not have enough commercial and retail establishments to attract tourism?

Parking will always be in demand but only for about six months of the year during the tourist season.

There are no doubt numerous and wonderful ideas for the future of this historic site, all of which would be wonderful contributions to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Living here for 14 years has shown me what is lacking in this beautiful and privileged village.

Yes, we are seeing tremendous growth for new families and that is what is required to keep this community thriving.

However, what I have

seen and experienced is that there is little to offer the long-term taxpayers and aging population of our town.

From my perspective and personal experience, as we age and are finding it increasingly challenging to maintain our beloved home in the town we cherish, there is nothing to offer seniors who would like to sell, downsize and continue to enjoy the amenities of "their" village as they age.

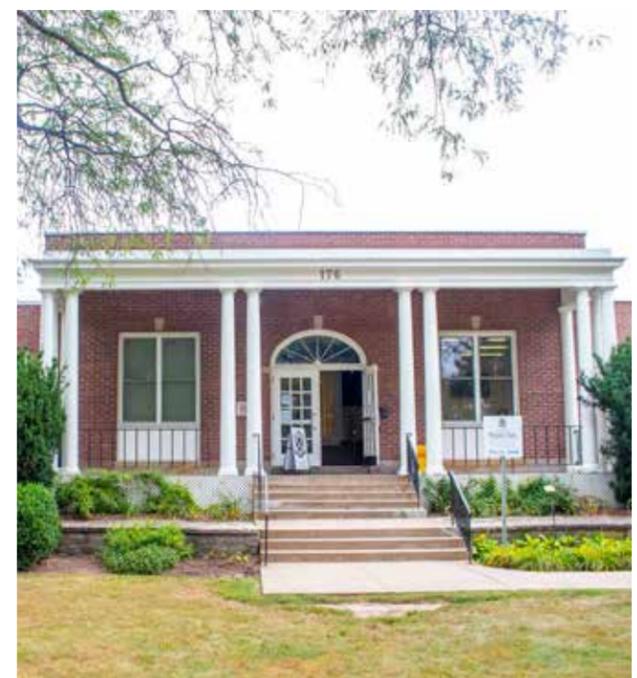
I can envision a seniors retirement "village" for our community to enable residents to continue their lives as they've

known them and supported the town for many years whether through annual taxes, local business etc.

We want to still be a community as well as to enjoy the worldwide audience through natural beauty, culture, commercial endeavours etc.

So it is my "vision" to support our seniors, who are increasing in numbers.

We need to allow them to remain in NOTL and continue to enjoy life here, reap the benefits of their work and support for our wonderful town as they progress into "the golden years."



The old NOTL hospital. FILE



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Members of the NOTL Museum's Poppy Brigade work on the display that will hang outside. SUPPLIED

## Thousands of knitted, crocheted poppies to adorn exterior of museum for Nov. 11

Staff  
 The Lake Report

The Poppy Project is moving outside. The arborists at Davey Tree Expert Co. of Canada Ltd. will be volunteering to help install thousands of knitted and crocheted poppies on the exterior facade of the NOTL Museum next week. The museum joined a nationwide Poppy Project to create a special display at the museum after a donation of more than 1,500 poppies from the Niagara Falls Museum – left over from its own poppy installation in 2020. As previously documented in The Lake Report, nearly 40 volunteers in Niagara-on-the-Lake formed the Poppy Brigade – and for the past six weeks they knitted,

crocheted, glued, cut and attached about 3,000 poppies to netting or bamboo sticks. The poppies will cascade down on the outside of the museum's building at 43 Castlereagh St. to form a path to the Canadian flag, as well as a "garden" of poppies. Hanging them is a job that can only be accomplished from a cherry picker. And Davey's experts have volunteered their services. The netting will be hung on Nov. 1, weather permitting, from the bell tower at the top of the museum's exterior façade. The tower is part of the original Niagara High School, circa 1875, which has been part of the museum complex since the 1940s.

"The poppy 'production line' has been a place of great efficiency," said organizer Barbara Worthy. "We've almost lost count of the number of red and black balls of yarn and the thousands of zip ties we've used. But mostly it's been about the enormous fun and conviviality, the amazing ideas for design and installation, and the satisfaction of completion." The Poppy Brigade itself is reminiscent of the knitting and sewing groups formed during both world wars, when packages of socks and woollens were sent overseas for the troops. "The same enthusiasm and community spirit is here with all these volunteers," said Worthy. "Even the Niagara Girl Guide

Rangers played a part, spending an entire evening attaching poppies." Niagara is not alone in this endeavour. Poppy-makers worldwide have joined the campaign to honour veterans of all wars and to pay special homage to the symbolism of the poppy. This year is also the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the poppy by the Great War Veterans' Association as a symbol of remembrance. The annual poppy campaign allows the Royal Canadian Legion to offer advocacy and financial assistance to veterans and their families. The museum's display can be viewed from Nov. 2 to 12 and visitors are encouraged to drop by, especially on Remembrance Day, Nov. 11.

## DSBN suspends teacher charged with child porn

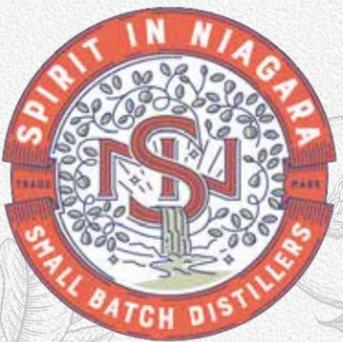


Weston Thomas Nesbitt, 39, faces three child pornography-related charges. SOURCED

*Continued from Front Page* making child pornography available. Police spokesperson Const. Phil Gavin told The Lake Report that "the investigation, arrest and charges are not related to his employment. The investigation remains ongoing by detectives." The District School Board of Niagara has suspended Nesbitt and removed him from the classroom, spokesperson Kim Sweeney said. In a letter to Forestview families on Monday, DSBN

superintendent of education Darren VanHooydonk said that immediately upon hearing of the charges, Nesbitt "was removed from his duties and will not be returning to any DSBN school." "This news is distressing to the principal and staff at Forestview and we understand that it is upsetting for families as well," VanHooydonk told parents. "It is possible that your child may have feelings about this news that they would like support with. We are committed to providing for the needs of our students

and have arranged for social workers to be at our school all week if needed," he said. Sweeney said Nesbitt was hired in 2005 and "worked various temporary contracts until 2013 when he started working at Forestview full-time." "He has been suspended, removed from the classroom, is at home and will not be back in a DSBN school," she said. VanHooydonk also told parents that Niagara police are asking anyone with information about this case or the suspect to contact them.



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## Classifieds

### LOST AND FOUND

On Oct. 18, 2021, around 12 noon, I picked up my mail at the Old Town post office and then walked across to Starbucks on Queen Street to check out the new shop before returning to my car. Somewhere between the post office and Starbucks, I must have dropped my keys which were in a black leather key case with about six keys. If anyone finds them, please call Karen at 905-468-4010 or drop them off at the post office.

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



**NOTL active cases: 2**  
**Region active cases: 154**  
**Region deaths: 437**  
**Region total cases: 18,092**  
**Region resolved cases: 17,501**

\*Oct. 27 data per Niagara Region Public Health



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**  
 "Carry laughter with you wherever you go."  
 - Hugh Sidney

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## Editorials

### A circle of community care

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

Niagara-on-the-Lake is a town brimming with talented and successful individuals.

Many of them retired to NOTL, for a variety of reasons, including its beauty, charm and history.

Of course, not everyone in town is a retiree nor did they move here. A great many are longtime and lifetime residents. Together with the newcomers, and those in between, they all help to make this little town the special place we know and love.

Despite what some might think, not everyone in NOTL is well-off financially (our friends at Newark Neighbours can attest to that). However, a great number of those among us have done well (or well enough) in life to be able to share their abundance with the community. And they do.

We see it regularly in the proliferation of volunteers, service clubs, community organizations and the like doing everything from planting trees and flowers to raising money for worthy causes, big and small.

Last week we told you about a new initiative un-



dertaken by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

This vital, innovative and much-loved community hub launched its Planned Giving Program.

It's an inventive way to entice residents who recognize the importance of the library now to ensure that it continues to flourish long after they're gone.

Planned giving is not a new concept. Foundations and charities have used the

format for decades, but it is a forward-thinking and inspiring option that has been embraced by the NOTL library's board and management. Kudos to them and all those who opt to bequeath a gift to support the library.

Given the innovation we see year-round at our library (note this week's story about its high-tech Makery space), we are not at all surprised to see it throw out the challenge to its patrons

to remember the facility in their wills.

We urge anyone who can do just that – and consider supporting the library now, or in the future.

And looking to the future, just around the corner from the library, is the newly expanded Niagara Nursery School.

This modern facility is another important part of life in NOTL – despite the influx of retirees here, the town also is home to many young families desperately in need of child care.

This \$2 million facility, built with plenty of government help, but also, of course, many thousands of dollars in donations from the community, is a key component of NOTL's future.

Parents need to work and need professional, dependable, trustworthy child care. And in the Niagara Nursery School, they have just that.

As well, the children and families who depend on the nursery school will someday rely upon the library and its many programs. It's all part of a circle of community care and it is so very heart-warming to see it finally come to fruition.

editor@niagaranow.com

## Punishing illegal short-term rental operators

Richard Harley  
 Editor-In-Chief

Councillors have finally taken a hard stance against short-term rentals by slapping bad actors with a one-year licence ban.

As we have been strongly advocating for council to get this industry under control, we must congratulate all the councillors who supported the ban.

Now you need to hold firm and continue to ban all illegal operators. They should also be made to pay a hefty fine for breaking the rules.

Despite Coun. Gary Burroughs' out-of-order comment during council, that "maybe we should

shoot them as well," this is a fair punishment for people who knowingly violated the rules in the name of their own personal profit.

We appreciate the genuine financial concerns expressed by Brian Kerr, who operated illegally and said it was the only way he could survive after losing his job during the pandemic.

But we applaud council for not caving in and giving more than a slap on the wrist to these illegal operators. It's really just a first step in what is sure to be a long fight.

It's a good start, but it's not going to fix the ongoing threat short-term rentals, legal or not, can

have on our community, neighbours and homes.

It's time now to act, as other municipalities have done, to set a limit on short-term rentals.

Other municipalities have even had the courage and foresight to ban these businesses outright in residential areas.

They've done this because it's clear short-term rentals are commercial businesses, and like any other commercial business, they are inappropriate for residential neighbourhoods.

We appreciate that such a bold move would stir a large outcry from the owners of these businesses, but sometimes leaders need to make bold

moves.

So, councillors, let's see you stick to your guns. Let's see you revisit the principal residence requirement, let's see you put the needs of our residents and communities and neighbours before the needs of an invasive, problematic industry that feeds off our homes.

Let's see you continue to take real action to preserve the character of NOTL.

Establish a firm limit on short-term rentals or ban them in residential areas.

And keep Granicus around, to seek out, penalize and shutter those who decide to operate illegally anyway.

editor@niagaranow.com

**HEY NOTL! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR DINNER?**

← **Italian Pizza Pasta** or Spanish Tapas →

**NAPLES-ON-THE-LAKE OR CATALONIA-ON-THE-LAKE**



## In debating development, NOTL's unique character needs to be preserved and **protected**

Dear editor:

I think that some of the comments made by Samuel Young in his letter to the editor about development ("Rather than fight developers, work with them," Oct. 21) merit further debate from a different perspective, and with a direct focus on Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In the first place, the horse bolted from the barn a long time ago and is no longer relevant.

Consequently, to my knowledge very few people are against the principle of change through development. Population growth is seen by most as inevitable.

In this respect NOTL is no different than the other communities referred to – except that it is.

Old Town is a unique historical location that has important heritage assets, including the iconic Rand Estate.



These assets are an essential part of the character of the town and its neighbourhoods and must be preserved at all costs.

As a result, the elected council faces the additional burden of protecting them in the face of growth through rapid and, in some cases, destructive development.

This sometimes results in a necessary defence against costly lawsuits and appeals initiated by certain developers.

The constant legal confrontation has resulted in the appeal of lawsuits brought about by developers

but deemed to be without merit by the Ontario Superior Court.

On the one hand we have those developers (not all, but some) who are interested only in maximum profit and nothing else, certainly not heritage assets or the surrounding community.

On the other, we have elected councillors who must consider these assets as well as community opinion when having to make decisions on appropriate development. This is not an effort to stop progress or impede population growth as suggested, nor do I consider this to be an exercise

in futility or a case of NIM-BYism (name calling), as is often claimed.

Although well-intended, I think that the idea of a mediated compromise between the town and developers is naive in this case and particularly so given the issue of heritage preservation in NOTL and at least one developer who has shown no genuine interest in preserving heritage assets that interfere with his development plans.

Few would argue that growth through development is necessary and inevitable.

However, the impact and effect of this development on important heritage assets and the surrounding neighbourhoods cannot be overlooked and must be seen as appropriate even if this leads to legal confrontation.

*Derek Collins*  
NOTL

## The unvaccinated and the **future** of society

Dear editor:

As countries around the world marginalize and attempt to pressure non-vaxxers to get vaccinated by denying them access to international travel, restaurants, bars and numerous other services available to the vaccinated, we are witnessing a "chasing our tail scenario" when it comes to slaying the COVID-19 dragon.

Politicians are, with regularity, ignoring the medical science deemed as the solution to the COVID crisis. Alberta and Saskatchewan are recent examples here in Canada. Politicians re-

jected the medical science recommending restrictions, subsequently both provinces are in a health care crisis — and in Alberta, not for the first time.

In the U.K., for the same reasons (relaxing restrictions), they are also in a new health care crisis. This latest occurrence comes as a new COVID subvariant, dubbed "Delta plus," is spreading with alarming consequences.

Purportedly 10 to 15 per cent more contagious than the already highly transmittable Delta variant, it originated in India and has been reported in five U.S. states.

With Ontario opening up and setting a future goal of Jan. 17 to eliminate vaccine passports etc., what does our health care future foretell given the aforementioned crises, considering that a certain percentage of the population will never get vaccinated no matter the attendant circumstances or penalties?

Are we going to disenfranchise and stigmatize this segment of society forever? I think not.

Without prejudice we will have to integrate them into a normal life and somehow manage the consequences.

They will forever be mixing in our communities, not an assuring feeling in the midst of an ongoing challenging and stubborn pandemic.

It will assuredly have a negative impact on any efforts to exit this dark tunnel by straining our ICU wards with the unvaccinated and delaying critical operating procedures and medical care for others.

It also delays a quicker return to a robust economy. Might further shutdowns be in our future?

*Samuel Young*  
NOTL

## Gateway Community Church **bicycle dropoff** Saturday

Dear editor:

Bikes For Farmworkers, a volunteer organization supplying safe, roadworthy bicycles for temporary farmworkers, is in need of used, repairable adult bicycles to be donated for its 2022 refurbishing program.

All bicycles go through

a 50-point rebuilding program and are then supplied to temporary farmworkers at a modest cost.

After-sales service includes no-cost repairs and a free loaner bike if needed during the repair process.

During the past year Bikes For Farmworkers supplied 297 refurbished

bicycles while repairing 205, but the supply of repairable bikes for next year is currently extremely low.

Gateway Community Church is continuing its support of Bikes For Farmworkers by having a bicycle dropoff between 11 and 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 30 at the church

located at 1615 Niagara Stone Rd. in Virgil.

Anyone who would like to donate a repairable bicycle is encouraged to drop it off at Gateway Community Church where the Bikes For Farmworkers team will gladly receive your donation.

*Ken Eden*  
NOTL

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## NOTL Sparks do the mash

The NOTL Sparks dance to the "Monster Mash" at their meeting on Monday. From left: Brooklyn Thwaites, Rebecca Scott, Olivia Driedger, Mieka Jantz and Lily Sliastas. SUPPLIED



Top: CF car rally. Bottom: NOTL Kinsmen Roy Hobbs and Ken Slingerland handed out candy. SUPPLIED

## Ravine concerts host top Canadian talent

Staff  
The Lake Report

Ravine Vineyard in St. Davids is launching a series of six monthly indoor concerts featuring some top Canadian musicians.

The shows, to be staged in the winery's event centre, begin Dec. 8 with a Christmas show by the Skydiggers.

Other concerts include Hamilton's Terra Lightfoot, Ron Sexsmith, one of the country's most prolific singer-songwriters, and Toronto rockers Whitehorse.

All guests will have to provide proof of full vaccination with matching photo ID to enter the venue. Tickets for individual shows (\$45) or a season's pass (\$270) for the entire concert



Joel Plaskett performs May 11 . SOURCED

series are on sale now on the winery's website, [ravinevineyard.com/Events/Concert-Series](http://ravinevineyard.com/Events/Concert-Series).

The shows, produced in partnership with Noise-maker Artist Management, include:

Dec. 8: For over 25 years, the Skydiggers' friends and fans have reunited over

the holidays at Toronto's iconic Horseshoe Tavern to celebrate the season with the band's distinctive rootsy Christmas tunes and Skydiggers' classics. This year they're taking it on the road to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Jan. 12: Terra Lightfoot's newest album is "Consider The Speed."

The winner of the 2018 Polaris Music Prize is also a former Juno nominee.

Feb. 9: Ron Sexsmith, a native of St. Catharines, has been performing and writing for 40 years.

March 9: The duo of Melissa McClelland and Luke Doucet have received a handful of Juno nominations and been hailed by music critics for their blues-infused sound and harmonies.

April 13: Basia Bulat, a celebrated folksinger-songwriter, returns from a scheduled European tour in time for the second-last show in the Ravine series.

May 11: The series ends with a concert featuring the versatile East Coast rocker Joel Plaskett.

## Kinsmen car rally aids cystic fibrosis

Staff  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Kinsmen rallied for cystic fibrosis and raised more than \$300 for research.

Twenty-two cars and over 40 kids joined in the fun for the Kinsmen Zone Cystic Fibrosis car rally on Oct. 17.

Vehicles came from all over Niagara as parents and kids were dressed up in their Halloween outfits. NOTL Kinsmen Ray Hobbs and Ken Slingerland handed out candy for the kids.

The only Niagara-on-the-Lake stop on the rally was at the "Little White Church" at 15796 Niagara Parkway beside Walker's Fruit Market.

The Living Water Wayside Chapel was built in 1964 by the Niagara Falls Christian Reformed Church and is famous for being the Guinness Book of World Records holder for the smallest chapel in the World.

Owner Jim Walker provided baked cookies from the market for the kids. Kinsmen collected over \$340 for cystic fibrosis, including a very generous donation from Walker.

Since 1964, Kinsmen across Canada have raised more than \$50 million for cystic fibrosis. The NOTL club has raised an average of \$1,000 every year since the club was formed in 1970.



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# Volunteers want to build outdoor **community rinks**

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake could have three new public skating rinks open across the municipality this winter thanks to the lobbying efforts of a former town councillor.

Town council unanimously approved, in principle, a plan put together by NOTL residents to build three outdoor skating rinks this winter.

Former town councillor Paolo Miele on Monday formally asked council for permission to build three rinks on public property and for the rinks to be covered under the town's insurance.

Miele said the project would be completely funded by residents and only needed the town's go-ahead for the work to be done.

The three rinks would cost a total of \$8,250, or \$2,750 per rink, Miele said, noting he has a local contractor ready to provide all the supplies and build the rinks.

"The only thing we have to do as a community is to



An outdoor rink would help create a safe space so local children don't need to skate on potentially dangerous ponds. FILE

fill it and, of course, to flood it every once in a while," Miele told councillors.

He said he has already raised \$2,000 for the project and the municipality would not need to chip in.

However, "If the council wishes to throw some money at it — fantastic," he said.

Miele said the goal is to create fun activities and long-lasting memories for the town's youth this winter.

"We used to have ice rinks and the fire department would fill them for us and the kids went out skating, whether it was playing hockey or just going out skating," he said.

"I think it's a good opportunity to bring back that opportunity for kids and families."

Miele noted that even if the town rejected the idea, kids will find other places to skate, possibly in dangerous spots.

"We've had kids on the Line 3 conservation ponds

— which is fine but maybe not the safest thing — trying to go on our storm ponds. I know the town has had some issues with that," he said.

Coun. Gary Burroughs asked who would be responsible for maintaining the rinks once constructed.

"What we're looking for, ultimately, is to get volunteers to maintain the rinks," Miele said.

He also said he was open to volunteer firefighters helping with flooding the rinks, an idea that some councillors were not in favour of.

"I'm worried about putting more volunteer work onto our firefighters," coun. Erwin Wiens said.

Wiens had no problem supporting the proposal and bringing it under the town's insurance so long as the project is self-sufficient and relied minimally on town staff involvement.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero agreed, saying, "This is a community, volunteer thing, so, it's on them and this does not require or obligate the town to put in staff hours we don't have."

Coun. Clare Cameron said several rinks are already being built in town by private companies. There will be a rink at the Pillar & Post's "Monet Gardens," one at Wayne Gretzky Estates and another at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery.

Miele said the issue with those places is they are on private property and often use of the rinks can be reserved for paying customers at the vineyards. He also didn't like the idea of kids playing hockey at an establishment that serves alcohol.

Disero said areas like Old Town and Virgil already have skating options, whether public or private, and asked Miele if the group would consider building a rink in Glendale.

"Wherever it's needed, that's where we are," Miele said.

Council approved a motion that requested Miele put his proposal in writing which establishes who will be responsible for maintaining the project and cooperate with town staff to choose suitable locations for the rinks.

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**The Lake Report**



From left: Turkey tail mushrooms, Ball and Levi collect shaggy mane mushrooms at the Commons, a proper knife helps to make clean cuts and keep dirt out, a table full of mushrooms from a

# Andrew Ball and Levi Grant have been foraging

*Continued from Front Page*

ing them around while they hunt, they're constantly finding flushes. They scope out potential scores from impressive distances and often they can simply spot them from the road while cruising in Ball's truck.

It's a matter of having an experienced eye, they explain.

"Our eyes are trained for looking for different things. Not everyone's looking for the same thing," Brant says. Once you know what you're looking at, "you see things people don't see."

Brant's first time mushroom foraging was with Ball. Until then, he didn't even like the taste of mushrooms.

"The first time I ever went mushroom picking actually was with Andrew, and we picked shaggy manes, which have like little hairs on them, and then we picked some other field mushrooms," he says.

"We picked those and brought them back, and I had always said, 'Man, if you want to go pick mushrooms cool, but I can't stand them.'"

But a foraged mushroom soup made that day changed his mind.

"If you make those into like a soup, it's freaking fantastic," Brant says.

The two began by searching for mushrooms during fishing trips, and ended up spending less and less time fishing. Now mushroom foraging is the primary goal and the two go almost every day if the weather is right — a rainy, wet week is a forager's delight.

"We were fishing nerds at the time, we weren't mushroom nerds," Brant says.

"It's terrible," Ball laughs. "I fish in the spring before the mushrooms come now and I took basically the summer off."

Ball, who is also an avid duck hunter, says going out foraging is sort of nostalgic for him.

"Duck season and mushroom season were always around the same time. If you're out hunting ducks, you're always looking for mushrooms. We would always find puffballs when we're duck hunting and things like that and really it just snowballed from there. Levi started getting into it. And the first thing we ever went for was chanterelles."

The two get excited recalling their first time successfully finding mushrooms.

"Imagine what it's like panning for gold, right? Where you find that first golden nugget, but it was just a golden chanterelle, and it was like

jumping around, screaming like little girls, high fivin' — throw our fishing rods in the trees, scour the ground for five minutes and end up walking away with a baseball cap full of them," Ball says.

They have a mushroom bucket list and are always on the hunt for new kinds they haven't found before.

"It's like catching a fish for the first time, it's like, 'Oh I can't wait to go there and catch one of these,' and then you actually catch it and it's so satisfying," Ball says.

Asked what the process looks like to get started, Ball says, "I look for six beers and Levi."

Camaraderie is also a big part of the hunt for the two longtime friends. They're usually not without a beer in hand while they're out.

They said there isn't really a limit on how often you can eat wild mushrooms. Standing in front of a table of mushrooms like hen of the woods, bears head tooth and shaggy manes, Brant says any one of them could be eaten on a daily basis if cooked properly.

"There's only four species of mushrooms that you can eat raw in Ontario. And that's just all the excuse to cook all of them well. You can get the right mushrooms, any one of these mushrooms, if you didn't

cook them well, they won't set with your stomach, and you're gonna get sick," Brant says.

"You get the GI," Ball adds.

Brant says he's never made himself sick from mushrooms before — though Ball admits he had one experience where he didn't know how to properly prepare a mushroom and gave himself some stomach trouble.

"I didn't do enough research that you had to peel the shiny, slimy top off, because it's nature's laxative and it was like 30 minutes later I was 'whoa.'"

"I had to hit the loo a couple of times," he says.

Both said that despite common tales that wild mushrooms will kill you, most of them will just make you sick. Some though, can be lethal and the two advise anyone who is thinking about mushroom foraging to be 100 per cent sure of the mushroom they're eating before experimenting.

The two have gained their mushroom foraging experience from a variety of sources — some knowledge from mutual friends whose parents were avid foragers, some from books or guided tours, and of course online.

That first time they found chanterelles, they said they didn't really know how to pick them yet. When they brought them to a friend, he

identified them and told them they were full of dirt. However, the prized mushroom. They were they could probably sell them.

Now that they've gained experience as foragers, Ball and Brant sell their finds to local chefs, who are always eager to get wild for mushrooms. They sell for about per pound to chefs.

While it's not legal to serve game in restaurants, mushroom legal.

"First off you start realizing kind of mushrooms — if you actually get into it, you start realizing 'Wow, some of these taste real freakin good,' and you start making them at home and then your neighbours over," Brant says.

Finding chefs who want them trouble, Ball says. You just have "know your people."

"It's a small town, people know people. You know exactly who you're going to want these mushrooms from, chefs, top chefs, people that like to make good food," he says.

"You go to the best restaurant in town, go knock on the back door. If you don't know anyone you say 'Hey, where's the chef? Hey, where are these. You want to buy these?' The chef says, 'No question. If not then on the next guy. But now we all have

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**Mike Shatkosky**  
 Owner



After a few hours of foraging. PHOTOS BY RICHARD HARLEY

# Wild edible fungi for seven years

phones so you just texts all of them. We literally find them in the woods, I text all four of my chefs right now. I'll text all and be like, 'What's up, who wants them?' The first chef to text me back gets them, that's it."

They said the kinds of mushrooms chefs want most are chanterelles and morels — two choice eating mushrooms. As well as lobster mushrooms — which actually taste like lobster. "The super hard to get ones," Ball says.

The reason the mushrooms are so prized is because most of them can't be cultivated. The system for mushrooms requires a forest root system, which can't be mimicked on a farm or in a greenhouse.

"So the ones that they can cultivate obviously drops the price completely," Ball says.

Hunting for field mushrooms in a surprisingly public, well-known location in NOTL, Brant says there are certain identifying factors that help foragers know what is edible and what's not. One is if the mushroom has pink or brown gills — that's a sign it might be an edible species.

Mushrooms with white gills are "a dead giveaway for a no-eater," says Brant.

Advice they give to any new foragers is to do your research, and don't

rely on common names. Terms like field mushroom are unreliable, Brant says, and it's "easier for people to do their research" if they're looking at the proper Latin names for the mushrooms.

Once you know your fungi, there are other signs to help identify species, like spore prints and checking for staining.

"The top of this one here is yellow. If you were to cut it and have a staining that is yellow on the inside of that mushroom, then that would be a problem," Brant says, pointing to a common-looking field mushroom.

The two warn against using apps to identify mushrooms, since there are many species that have poisonous lookalikes. They also advise to not post pictures and ask people to identify them, as photos also aren't always reliable. If people are going to ask for help identifying mushrooms through photos, they should photograph all angles of the mushroom, especially the underside and the tops.

"Do your homework, read a book. Go out 10 times, go out 15 times, don't even pick a mushroom — obviously pick one, you know, maybe to do your research. Don't pick 40 mushrooms and go online to be like 'Can I eat these?' It just doesn't look good."

Mushrooms also have a symbiotic relationship with certain plants and trees. Ball says a big part of learning to forage is knowing your trees.

In front of them are several species of mushrooms. Ball pulls an acorn off of the hen of the woods and says, "That tells you something where they grow."

The two make loads of different mushroom recipes — puffball pizza with giant puffballs as the crust, battered and deep fried chicken of the woods nuggets, mushroom soups, mushroom jerky. Most types can also be dried and frozen, or ground into powder to add to stocks.

Some mushrooms have different characteristics. Chicken of the woods and hen of the woods, as the name suggests, has a texture similar to chicken. While shrimp of the woods feels and tastes sort of like shrimp. Other mushrooms have a steak texture and even taste sort of meaty.

"There's a reason they call it chicken or hen of the woods," Brant says.

For those that put in the work, it can be rewarding.

"I grew up doing this and I knew I was always out in those woods. All (these mushrooms) were growing here the entire time ... so much wasted youth," Ball jokes.

## RIDDLE ME THIS

Mary has four daughters, and each of her daughters has a brother. How many children does Mary have?

Last issue: Which is heavier: A ton of bricks or a ton of feathers?

Answer: They're both the same weight.

Answered first by: Sheelah Young

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Mary Drost, Howard Jones, Robert Wilms, Pam Dowling, Margie Enns, Gary Davis, Terry Nord, Bob Stevens, Frances Sorrenti, Wade Durling, Linda Slee, Tammy Florio, Ron Cane, Sheila Meloche, Maria Janeiro, Doug Bruce, Greeba-Ann Birch

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

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# In the face of man-made climate change, **Niagara Adapts**



Kyra Simone  
Special to The Lake Report

NOTL councillors voted unanimously last week in favour of a draft corporate climate change adaptation plan.

Council's endorsement will allow continued planning for imminent climate change problems in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This plan was developed through Niagara Adapts, a partnership between professors from Brock University's Environmental Sustainability Research Centre and seven Niagara municipalities that began in June 2019.

"We have to be very aware of what's happening in other municipalities and partner with them, because frankly climate change is a global issue. You can't deal with it in a singular way," said chief administrator Marnie Cluckie.

Communities reached out to residents to gauge local perceptions of climate change risk. Almost 80 per cent of NOTL respondents felt climate change is affecting the community and many described personal experiences with flooding,



Dr. Jessica Blythe, top, speaks to NOTL council.

extreme heat and severe weather.

Only 20 per cent, however, believed NOTL is prepared to adapt to climate change.

The town's environmental advisory committee was instrumental in developing the adaptation plan. Through a brainstorming workshop in March 2021,

the committee compiled a comprehensive list of actions to minimize health and safety risks, support public awareness and integrate climate change considerations into town activities.

"We're very lucky to have such a talented committee working on our behalf on such a critically important subject," said Coun. Wendy Cheropita.

Dr. Jessica Blythe from Brock University, town engineering technologist Rob Andrea and myself as a representative of the environmental advisory committee presented a draft adaptation plan at the Oct. 18 committee of the whole council meeting.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she was "thrilled" with the report and told repre-

sentatives, "Your work will take us into the future in a very positive way."

Many councillors also voiced their support for climate action. "This is our number one priority for the town," said Coun. Sandra O'Connor.

Climate change considerations must "encompass everything we do," added Coun. Norm Arsenault.

Budgets for the adaptation plan are still in development. Andrea said Niagara Adapts will now determine which actions are most cost-effective and have the greatest community impact.

Cluckie mentioned a 2019 report by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which shows local governments are responsible for much of Canada's vulnera-

ble, aging public infrastructure. It is much cheaper to implement adaptations than to rebuild after climate change causes problems for which municipalities are unprepared.

With council's endorsement, the committee will continue to work with Niagara Adapts to develop a final adaptation plan.

Cluckie said the draft plan "allows us to make decisions based on impact, based on cost, based on community. They have helped set us up with this framework for success."

*Kyra Simone is a NOTL-born nature lover with a master's degree in biology. In her spare time, she advocates for sustainable change, picks up garbage, makes recycled jewelry, and transforms furniture bound for the landfill.*



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# NOTL artist's 'Migrations, Frontiers and Territories' on display at **Pumphouse**

Staff  
The Lake Report

For the artist, Anick Fernandez, the theme of her upcoming exhibition at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre resonates with the experience of many who had to leave the place they called home either for a short time – or sometimes, forever.

The collection on display in the Joyner Gallery from Nov. 3 to 27 represents the migration of people from all over the world and the barriers found along the way. The show features a collection of collagraphs and monotypes in three acts: "Migrations, Frontiers and Territories."

The Syrian crisis and the ensuing journey of refugees inspired Fernandez to start the series of prints while she still lived in Europe.

Her body of work developed as she saw parallels in the migratory flow that was occurring around her, notably, the plight of migrants resulting from conflict, persecution or the effects of



Territorios (2018) by Anick Fernandez. SUPPLIED

climate change.

"Throughout history, people around the world are constantly moving from one place to another for different reasons. As they travel, they may be confronted not only by physical borders but also by all sorts of barriers such as prejudices towards cultural, religious or ethnical differences," says Fernandez.

"Every person leaving their country is also leaving behind a trace, like footprints that others can follow in a non-stop migratory flow that has been going on for thousands of years," she says.

"Territories may seem very different from each other, but just like people, they are all interdependent.

We are now more conscious than ever of the interconnection between them."

Her own creative experience spans several continents. Her early works as an artist in Mexico were in drawing, oil, pastel, acrylics and sculpture.

In 1995, she started experimenting with different printing techniques at L'Atelier de l'Île, a print art production centre in Val- David, Que. Her expertise in this medium developed as she started working with dry point, aquatint, linocuts, etching, serigraphy and monotypes.

Her growth as a printmaker continued across the Atlantic when Fernandez moved to Spain in 2005. She started investigating

the extensive possibilities of collagraphy, a non-toxic and eco-friendly technique that allowed her the greatest creative freedom in printmaking.

After years of experimenting and documenting her research, Fernandez began teaching printmaking in 2013 at Hedera Printmaking Studio in Madrid. Since 2019, she has called Niagara-on-the-Lake home and has installed her printing press from Spain in her atelier where she continues her craft.

Her work has been exhibited in group exhibitions throughout Europe and North America. Fernandez has received many accolades including the first prize in International Mini-print Biennial Santander in Spain. Her prints can be found in public and private collections in Mexico, Canada and Spain.

With health and safety protocols in place, the public is invited to meet Fernandez on Sunday, Nov. 7, 10 a.m. to noon at the Pumphouse.

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NOTL fire crews conduct flashover training on Saturday outside the Old Town fire station. RICHARD HARLEY



Lord Mayor Betty Disero gets her flu shot at Simpson's Pharmacy. SUPPLIED

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# Dr. Brown: Earth friendly, effective enzymes – and all that plastic

Dr. William Brown  
Special to The Lake Report

The headline might sound esoteric, but the subject is not.

The planet is awash with plastic, thrown every which way from car windows, piled up in dumpsites or cluttering the bottoms of rivers, seas and oceans where it's out of sight and mind, left to generations to come to solve.

Bundling the stuff up and shipping it off to foreign countries isn't and should never have been an option. The trouble is "us." We consume plastic, not literally of course, but for packaging food, household cleaners, cosmetics and hundreds of other items our homes and cars are stuffed with – plastic is everywhere.

But first a word about catalysts: they accelerate chemical reactions without themselves changing.

For example, when silver is put into a beaker containing hydrogen sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>), the hydrogen peroxide changes into water (H<sub>2</sub>O) and oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>).

The catalytic converter in cars and trucks control toxic



emissions from internal combustion engines by turning them into less-toxic pollutants by catalyzing the combination of oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>) with carbon monoxide (CO) and unburned hydrocarbons (C<sub>n</sub>H<sub>n</sub>) to produce water and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) using metals such as platinum, rhodium or palladium.

Before the year 2000, catalysts belonged to one of two groups: metals or organic enzymes. Metals are excellent catalysts because they borrow and share electrons willingly. However, to work, they need an oxygen- and water-free environment, and many are heavy, toxic metals.

The beauty of life's catalysts (organic and carbon-based) is that they are very efficient, precise and do not incorporate a metal. They also work side by side with other enzymes to form chains, passing off their products to the next metabolic reaction in the chain, much like relay racers pass batons, to build complex molecules or generate energy such as ATP in oxidative phosphorylation, our prime source of energy at the cellular level.

One way to deal with plastics would be to break them down with environmentally friendly organic enzymes. Which brings us

to two recent Nobel Prizes.

In 2018, Frances Arnold was awarded a Nobel for harnessing evolution to make more effective organic enzymes and, this year, Benjamin List and David MacMillan won a Nobel for equally clever ways of developing organic enzymes.

Like other scientists and engineers, Arnold considered building enzymatic proteins from scratch, one amino acid after another, but soon realized that would be a herculean task well beyond her laboratory's or any other's capabilities. Then she had her better idea – why not harness evolution to create better organic enzymes?

She and her colleagues began with a single organic enzyme and set out to improve it by introducing random mutations into the gene that coded for the enzyme. Then they compared the effectiveness of the enzymes produced by the mutant genes and chose the most effective.

After several similar rounds, the best enzymes were much more effective than the original, and all achieved by harnessing the

power of evolution. It was an inspired idea and reason enough for her Nobel win.

This year's winners, List and MacMillan, had other clever ideas. List's was based on the fact that the active site in enzymes was usually only a small part of the much larger molecule (as small as a single amino acid or at the most a few amino acids).

So why not try a single amino acid, such as proline, which is simple, cheap, and environmentally friendly, to see whether such a bared-boned molecule could catalyze organic reactions? It could. That was List's breakthrough and with hindsight, it's hard to see why such a simple, straightforward idea hadn't been tried before. Even List was surprised with his success.

MacMillan's bright idea involved designing simple organic molecules, which like metals could accommodate electrons, but were far more durable than metals and unlike many metals, not toxic.

To catalyze the reaction he was interested in, he needed to form an iminium ion that contains a nitrogen

atom, which has an inherent affinity for electrons. He chose several organic molecules with the right properties and tested their ability to drive a reaction that chemists use to build rings of carbon (the Diels-Alder reaction). It worked.

All three were clever ideas that worked to simplify organic enzymes, make them more effective and cheaper to produce. That's a huge plus for cleaning up plastics and toxins in the environment and a boon for pharmaceutical companies creating tailor made drugs.

\* Our fifth annual Review of the 2021 Nobel Prizes begins with physics on Nov. 8, followed by the chemistry on Nov. 15, economics on Nov. 22, medicine on Nov. 29, the Peace Prize on Dec. 6 and, finally, the literature prize on Dec. 13. All are at 11 a.m., with Zoom as our medium. Reserve your spot through the NOTL Public Library.

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

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**Across**

- 1. Husky (7)
- 5. Highest (7)
- 9. Complete (6)
- 10. Opening (8)
- 11. Shades (10)
- 13. Restraint (4)
- 14. Unsullied (6)
- 18. Foretells (8)
- 19. Fleet commander's vessel (8)
- 21. Chaise longue (6)
- 23. Having no money (4)
- 24. Writing materials (10)
- 28. Large amount of electrical power (8)
- 29. Stoppage (6)
- 30. Profound (7)
- 31. Nervous (7)

**Down**

- 2. Member of the Indian majority (5)
- 3. Unpaid (5)
- 4. 8th letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
- 6. Lay out too much (9)
- 7. Motherhood (9)
- 8. Table napkin (9)
- 10. Fabulous story-teller (5)
- 12. Permit (3)
- 15. Eve of All Saints' Day (9)
- 16. Source of sweetness (5,4)
- 17. Recipients of one of St. Paul's Epistles (9)
- 20. Braid (5)
- 22. Fuss (3)
- 25. Relative by marriage (2-3)
- 26. The dark (5)
- 27. Achieve (5)

## Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

Last issue's answers

C	O	B	W	E	B	N	E	P	A	L	E	S	E
M	A	R	I	O	A	T							
H	A	I	R	B	A	L	L	S	U	N	T	A	N
H	S	T	E	T	O	T							
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9	4	8		
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	7		8	
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7		4		
4	6	7	2	
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2		5	3	



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# Jr. A team **loses coach** six games into season

Kevan Dowd  
Special to The Lake Report

The Niagara Jr. A Predators have learned to adapt to being short of players all season but last weekend they found themselves short a coach – having lost their head coach just six games into the schedule.

Friday night was the Predators' first game without head coach Andrew Whalen behind the bench since his sudden and unexpected departure from the team.

The team's owner, Robert Turnbull oversaw the team in his place, which ended in a 3-2 win for the Predators over the Plattsville Lakers.

General manager Johan Eriksson said Whalen opted to put family first and chose to step down for personal reasons, including the arrival of his fourth child in a matter of weeks.

The coach was also making a long, expensive commute to Niagara-on-the-Lake from his home in Brantford, he said.



Andrew Whalen, pictured on the bench during home game earlier this season, is no longer coaching the Jr. A Niagara Predators. KEVAN DOWD

Eriksson told The Lake Report the team had initially intended to keep the news of Whalen's departure low-key in the lead-up to last weekend's two games.

"We wanted to keep it a little bit quiet at first but (with others on the bench over the weekend) now it's not really a secret, but there's no issue with us to speak about it now," he said.

"It came up very suddenly for us, so we were blindsided a bit, but we are closing in on a new head coach. If it takes longer, we are OK with that, we just need it to be the right person."

Whalen could not be

reached for comment.

Eriksson said he already has interviewed a few coach prospects and some are serious candidates for the position.

He hopes to have a new coach by early November, but in the meantime Turnbull will be on the bench again this Friday.

"We're hoping to have this sorted out by the end of the week."

Eriksson said his ideal coach is someone with experience but who has the right personality to fit with the team.

"I want a calm presence on the bench. You won't get

anywhere in this league or with this team if you're up yelling and screaming," he said.

Whalen has left some big shoes to fill as he not only was head coach but also handled video review and dryland training,

"Whalen did both of those things for us, which is very difficult to find in a coach. So I may need to bring in one more assistant coach as well."

Meanwhile, on the ice Friday, Plattsville goaltender Luca Del Rizzon stopped 36 shots on goal but was not quick enough to stop one by Niagara's Dawson Walker 15 minutes into the first period, another from Alexander Insulander in the second period, and the team's final marker by Mario Zitella four minutes into the third.

Plattsville's first marker of the night came 22 minutes into the game courtesy Malcolm Campbell with Kyle Struth netting their only other goal with one second left in the game.

Eriksson filled in as

coach during Sunday's 4-3 road loss to the St. George Ravens. The Ravens have proven to be Niagara's toughest competitors so far, besting the team twice in eight games for the team's only two losses.

Niagara had faced St. George at home on Friday, Oct. 15, winning 3-2 and putting them in first place in their division of the Greater Metro Hockey League. Sunday's loss means they are now tied for first with the Durham Roadrunners and North York Renegades, but both those squads have games in hand.

Eriksson blamed Sunday's loss on a worn-out, short-handed team of just 13 players and two goalies compared to St. George's bench of 17. Due to injuries, the team was down to just 10 skaters for the last 15 minutes, pitting two lines against the Raven's three and a half.

"It's been a long week for us. The game Friday was OK, I didn't think it was our best game, we weren't on

top," said Eriksson.

"And Sunday's game we started off very, very slow. The second period we played like we know we can but in the third period we were very, very tired. The Ravens have stacked up a lot of players. They had a full team."

Niagara got a power play goal by Dawson Walker early in the first period with the Ravens earning a tally nine minutes later. St. George got their next point less than a minute into the second but Insulander and Zitella answered back with a goal each.

It was the third period where St. George ran away the game, scoring two goals to secure the win.

"Two goals, if we're better rested, they wouldn't have happened," said Eriksson. "We were just very tired and when we're tired mistakes happen. That's just how it is."

The Predators face North York this Friday in Virgil. The action starts at 7:30 p.m.

# Ross's Ramblings: Tennis players **persevere**, despite Mother Nature

Ross Robinson  
Special to The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club director Rosemary Goodwin worked hard to organize singles tournaments in October, staring down Mother Nature and persevering for over three weeks to declare champions in both men's and women's divisions.

Twenty men and eight women registered, and by being flexible and patient, and anxious to play, good times were had.

October's weather was October's weather, and after three frustrating weeks, Kendra Osa prevailed in a hard-fought match to top



NOTL tennis star Kendra Osa. FILE/EVAN SAUNDERS

former champion Fran Doran 7-5. Both players were aggressive and tenacious, with sportswoman-ship and elan, down to the last cross-court volley by Kendra.

This was Kendra's

first year as a member of our very active club. Her genuine warmth and desire to improve her game, and her willingness to play in various leagues and clinics, has made it easy for club members to welcome her

with open arms.

Her infectious smile, energy and sportswoman-ship have brought youthful joy to Memorial Park.

She is a Grade 11 student at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in St. Catharines and earlier this month she won the girls singles championship at the Southern Ontario Secondary Schools Association Zone 4 tournament.

Players from Eden, Governor Simcoe, Grimsby and other Niagara-area high schools competed. Kendra joins a fairly long line of Bulldogs to win this title and she will compete for the southern Ontario title early next year.

Originally from Indonesia, her family believe that it is as important to be a good sport as it is to be a good athlete.

Sunni Cao won the women's B division, outlasting the very sporty Danna McDonough in a match that featured some long rallies and "great gets."

As Jay Silverheels, a.k.a. Tonto, the thespian Mohawk from near Brantford, would have said to John Reid, a.k.a. The Lone Ranger, "Who was that masked man?"

The men's champion was somewhat of a phantom entry. A young chap from Toulouse, France, working in Fort Erie for a year or so,

met a NOTL tennis player a few months ago, and ended up entering the club championship tournament. He registered as a club member recently.

Boy, was he ever good. Various hard and tricky serves, deep shots, painting the lines often, and what topspin!

During the tournament, he toasted his opponents in every round, winning 30 games and losing only one.

Local favourite Mark Waler put up a gallant effort in the final, fighting for every point before watching yet another deep topspin crosscourt catch the line for the final point. Yes, 98 per cent out is still in.

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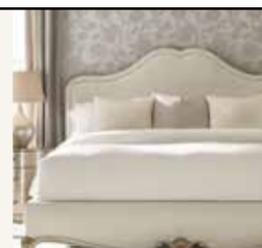


# SIMPLY WHITE INTERIORS

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# EXPLORING PHOTOS

WITH NOTL MUSEUM



## The dock area

This photograph is similar to the one you saw last week. However, this one is farther back and is possibly taken from the 75-foot chimney that once existed at the pumphouse farther up the Niagara River. Originally a swamp area along the Niagara River, in the 1830s the dock area was drained and dredged by the Niagara Harbour and Dock Company. The area has served for ship building, ship repair, a foundry, brewery, basket factory, tannery, canning factory and more. It was also a destination for the local railway to pick up and drop off passengers or fruit to be loaded onto the steamships. It now is owned by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club. The wharf warehouse and wharf can be seen behind the lighthouse and the boathouses are the buildings you see lined up from the centre to the left. For anyone living at the King's Point residences, your buildings exist where the open land is along the bottom of the photo.

# ARCHITEXT

## A stroll around Queenston

Brian Marshall  
Columnist



One of York Road's stone houses. BRIAN MARSHALL

Having strolled the streets in the village last week, let's take a look at some of the residences along the Niagara River Parkway and York Road in the vicinity of Queenston.

We'll begin with the stone houses of York Road. Two of these houses, at #1717 and #1755 respectively, are attributed to Capt. William Davis, who purchased the original acreage from David Secord after the War of 1812.

For himself, Davis built a grand two-storey, five-bay, Georgian home set up on a rise of land overlooking the road.

For his son James, he built a more modest storey-and-a-half home. Both houses were constructed of local whirlpool sandstone and, as was common at the time, were centre hall plan only

one room deep. The dwellings were anchored on each end with chimneys and rear kitchen extensions were added within the following decade.

A little farther down the road toward Queenston, at #1893, is one of only two houses in Niagara-on-the-Lake principally built of Grimsby red sandstone; its pale red field set off with Queenston limestone quoins.

This L-shaped home set beneath a hipped roof displays elements that suggest mid-19th century construction. Although it has fallen into disrepair, imagine approaching this home up the grand stairway and under the broad sweep of its white wrap-around porch. Let's hope that this fine home will

be restored.

Then let's go down York, left on Niagara Parkway and past the Queenston Street entrance into the village. Here, along the river side of the road, begins a series of homes designed in architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

At #14623 is a red brick Tudor Revival interpretation belonging to the Eclectic design school. The stone-work surrounds in all the openings on its frontispiece, the high-pitched roof and segmentally arched doors are clear identifiers.

Next door is #14639, a fairly uncommon (in Niagara) two-storey Craftsman. This house was "modernized" at some point during the last decade but still retains many

typical elements of the expression, most notably the deep overhanging eaves and belled roof.

Down the road is a shingle-clad home that speaks to a trending architectural style in the U.S. at the turn of the 20th century. Keeping in mind that, from the street, we are actually looking at the back of the house (the facade faces the river) at #14713, the building form is an American Foursquare capped by a roof with exposed rafter tails, deep overhanging eaves and a broad dormer that features ribbon windows.

These features and others strongly suggest the Prairie style popularized by the early work of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Finally, and although it is only possible to see the back of the house, 14795 Niagara Parkway is a glorious Greek Revival home designed by the same architect who was responsible for Willowbank. If you ever get a chance to view this home from the river, take it.

The gorgeous white facade and pillared colonnade is a show-stopper.

# Looking to the Stars



## Patience and honesty might keep you sane

This week we see the third quarter moon in Leo and Mars move from balancing Libra into powerful Scorpio.

**Thursday, Oct. 28:** Things get better as today rolls out. Saturn is supposed to rule Saturday, but today it's very much in charge until later this afternoon when Jupiter steps in with a gift from the gods. Patience and honesty keep us sane today. Today is also the day of the third quarter moon in Leo. Time to finish what we have started on our monthly wish list. It is said that Scorpios are sexy. Julia Roberts is 54 today. Joaquin Phoenix is 47.

**Friday, Oct. 29:** Heart and mind grow together as pride drives clever ideas. And good news. Remember Rich Little, the comic impressionist from Ottawa who was a huge draw even on the "Tonight Show"? On Oct. 29, 1994, he married Jeannette Markey, his third wife.

**Saturday, Oct. 30:** Speaking about taking the necessary action, October saved us the best for last. On Oct. 30, Mars enters its domicile sign, Scorpio. Mars is the planet of action and Scorpio gives it the depth and drive to conduct this Martian impulse to achieve whatever we set our sights on. Go big. Today, in 1869, Canada's sixth prime minister died. Charles Tupper was only PM for a record 69 days.

**Sunday, Oct. 31:** Happy Halloween! Tricks with treats are very much on tap today. And not just for young people. All around the world, 103 years ago today, an outbreak that became known as the Spanish

Flu began. It killed millions, even in Canada. With no powerful vaccines, masks and distancing were the chosen defence.

**Monday, Nov. 1:** Clever Mercury in Libra is in perfect harmony with Jupiter in futuristic Aquarius, meaning it is a day to pay attention to ideas. Especially big ideas because they show the best way forward. It was Nov. 1, 1959, that Montreal Canadiens goaltender Jacques Plante first wore a face mask. And on Nov. 1, 1997, the movie "Titanic" opened. The Oscar-winning film included a best director nod for Chippewa, Ont., native James Cameron.

**Tuesday, Nov. 2:** It's serious. Today, I mean. Motivations get in the way of clear thinking and everything looks very serious. Breathe, as this too shall pass. It was Nov. 2, 1950, that the only person ever awarded both a Nobel Prize and an Oscar, died. George Bernard Shaw was 94.

**Wednesday, Nov. 3:** Mars, newly arrived in Scorpio, is in stress with the karma of the moon in Gemini. It could be very attractive, particularly sexually. It was Nov. 3, 1894, that William George Barker was born. He went on to become the most decorated soldier in all the British Empire during the Second World War.

Next week we see the new moon in Scorpio and Mercury moving into Scorpio.

**Please check out the new website [www.lutts.ca](http://www.lutts.ca) as in Looking Up to the Stars. And you can get my free horoscope with interpretation emailed to you.**

*Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.*



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# Green bin usage up 24% since garbage pickup changed, Region of Niagara says

Staff  
The Lake Report

One year into every-other-week garbage collection, the Region of Niagara says residents have embraced the program and increased use of their green bins – which was a major goal of the change.

Green bin tonnage is up 24 per cent and garbage tonnage is down almost 16 per cent, the region



announced last week. Recycling has also increased by almost 8 per cent since the new collection changes came into place.

The region launched the new curbside collection changes on Oct. 19, 2020.

Catherine Habermehl, Niagara's director of waste management services, credited residents for stepping up.

"It is great to see the progress so far and we want to continue to increase Niagara's waste diversion rate," she said in a news release.

Regional chair Jim Bradley said the program's success "shows Niagara residents commitment to being environmentally oriented, which I always knew they were. We are making our communities a better place for today and for future generations by using our green bins, recycling properly and minimizing the amount of garbage we put at the curb."



**SAUCY TOSSIES**

The NOTL Dart League is looking for **players and sponsors** (more licensed venues to play in). Currently an eight team beer league, we've been playing darts every Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. at various NOTL venues since the mid-1980s.

Must live or work in NOTL to join. Cost of membership is \$20 per player and includes an end of year banquet and awards. All extra funds raised go to community needs and support.

Contact Geoff at 289-213-9308 or our Niagara-on-the-Lake Dart League Facebook page.

# American Rotarian visits NOTL to help with tulip planting

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club had some help from an American counterpart for its annual End Polio Now tulip planting on Friday.

Tom Gerbasi, assistant district governor for the Lewiston, N.Y., and NOTL clubs, crossed the border early Friday morning to help out with the planting.

"It's been a real pain-in-the-butt to get over the border," Gerbasi said as he helped his fellow Rotarians plant tulip bulbs at Simcoe Park.

"Eight o'clock in the morning I had to go get a COVID test on Wednesday. They sent me the results at 11 o'clock (Thursday evening)."

Gerbasi, a retired pediatri-



Laurie Gunton lets out a hearty laugh as she plants End Polio Now tulips with the Rotary Club on Friday morning.  
EVAN SAUNDERS

cian, said being a member of the Rotary Club gives him the chance to be somebody else.

"I was locked into this role (as a pediatrician). I

was the grandfatherly teddy bear kind of guy," he said.

"Rotary allowed me to do something different. They sent me to Brazil to check out medical missions —

I've been all over."

He said the international community of Rotary Clubs is one of its biggest draws.

"I get to meet people I would never have known. I know people from Jamestown in New York up to Hamilton," he said.

"And the best thing is I can go anywhere in the world, from Brazil to South Carolina, or where my daughters live in Boston and I'll always meet a bunch of friends if I show up at a Rotary meeting."

Gerbasi said one of his biggest passions is advocating for autism education.

"Just a little bit of understanding would help. It's the whole business of educating about people with developmental disabilities and getting them accepted into the whole diversity and inclusiveness conversation." As a dad of two hard-

working professional women, he said he is always fighting to break the glass ceiling for women.

"With Rotary, there's really no glass ceiling. (District president) Patricia (Murenbeeld) is a great leader and she's a big contributor to the Niagara-on-the-Lake community."

Some 15 Rotarians gathered at Simcoe Park on Friday to plant tulip bulbs to raise money for the fight against polio.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero was among the planters and presented the club with a plaque commemorating Oct. 24 as World Polio Day.

She said she was proud to be a member of the organization.

"(Rotary) means friendship, it means charity, it means service above self — the Rotary motto," Disero said.

"And it means making sure that everything we do is fair for everyone concerned and in the best interest of the community."

NOTL business owner Laurie Gunton said the work Rotary is doing to eradicate polio is even more important in the face of the global pandemic.

"With COVID around right now we can sort of relate how serious polio could be without vaccines," Gunton said.

The tulips being planted were bred specifically in the Netherlands for the End Polio Now campaign, Murenbeeld said.

About 600 tulips were planted in the garden beds in the corner of Simcoe Park at Queen Street.

More tulips will be available for purchase next summer, said Rotary spokesperson Jolanta Janny.

# Don't put your leaves at the curb, mulch them and keep them as fertilizer

Continued from Front Page

mower with a mulching blade or a leaf blower/vacuum/mulcher. If you don't have a mulching blade on your mower, which cuts up the leaves smaller, you can just use your regular mower and go over the leaves several times.

Shredding the leaves first, before putting them on your garden, will help them decompose more quickly. The smaller the pieces of leaves are the quicker they decompose.



Joanne Young.

It is best if the leaves are dry when shredding them. The only leaves that you do not want to use are ones that have had a disease on

them, such as tar spot or powdery mildew.

You also want to avoid walnut leaves as they contain a substance (Juglone) that can inhibit plant growth.

When using dried, shredded leaves as mulch, spread them at a depth of 7.5 to 10 centimetres (three to four inches) around existing trees and shrubs and five to 7.5 centimetres (two to three inches) over perennial beds.

You can also be putting a thicker layer of shredded

leaves on vegetable garden areas in preparation for spring planting.

The benefits of using shredded leaves as a mulch are many because applying leaf mulch:

\*Will keep the soil warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer, thereby protecting more sensitive plants.

\*Will boost nutrients in the soil, reducing the amount of fertilizer needed. As the dried leaves decompose they release traces of calcium, magnesium, phos-

phorous and potassium.

\*Will suppress the growth of weeds, which, in turn, cuts down on your maintenance time and use of herbicides.

\*Is a great way of adding organic matter back into your garden. This will help to break up a heavier clay soil or help to provide better moisture retention with sandy soils.

\*Will shade your soil so it will not dry out as quickly compared to being fully exposed to sunlight. Therefore, you will not need to be

watering as often.

\*Can help reduce soil erosion in certain instances.

And best of all – it's free! All great reasons why you should consider mulching your leaves this fall and watch them turn into black gold.

So, when you see all the leaves falling from the trees, don't think of them as more work, but rather as a gift that keeps giving back.

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.



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# Don't have \$4,500 for a 3D printer? Then head to the library

Evan Saunders  
Local Journalism Initiative  
The Lake Report

There's a world beyond books lurking in a corner of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

The modern, high-tech Makery space allows people to interact with state-of-the-art technologies that aren't easily affordable – and gadgets they might not even know existed.

The library has officially reopened its Makery space after the pandemic forced it to shut down. And it offers NOTLers a chance to create things using state-of-the-art equipment.

"It gives people the opportunity to use things they wouldn't normally be able to use," Makery assistant Christine Reganti said during an open house on Thursday.

The space has been operating for a number of years and with the reopening comes the unveiling of some expensive gadgets, including a \$4,500 3D printer and a \$6,000 Glowforge.

The cost to use these expensive machines? Nothing, it's free.

"Not everyone has room



At the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, Betsy Masson inspects a wooden box that was engraved using the Makery's new Glowforge laser printer. EVAN SAUNDERS

for a Glowforge and not everyone has money for a Glowforge," Reganti said.

"And not everyone wants to commit to buying something like this. What if you just want to do one project? Are you going to go out and spend \$6,000?"

The Glowforge is a laser printer that can carve writing into a number of materials, from wood to certain kinds of metal. But it needs to be the right metal or else the laser could reflect off the material and damage the machine, Reganti said.

Not everything is free.

For a limited time, the library is offering the use of its laminator.

"We normally don't offer the laminator as a service, but because of the vaccine passport we have been," Reganti said.

For a nominal fee of \$2 visitors can have their vaccine passports laminated by library staff.

Indeed, there are some learning curves to using new technology like Glowforges and 3D printers. But laymen need not worry – not only are these items available for anyone gratis,

the library will also give you free classes on how to use them.

If an individual wants to train on any of the new toys available in the Makery, they just need to call or email the library and a time will be set up for a one-on-one training session with Reganti.

Folks who want to make something using the 3D printer need only find the design they want on the website thingiverse.com and go into the library. All the materials needed for the printer and the machine

itself will be free to use.

But, be forewarned – you might have to wait your turn.

When the open house started, the 3D printer was hard at work making a mask for a library employee's kids' halloween costume. The machine had been creating the mask for nearly 24 hours.

"But usually it only takes three hours or so," Reganti assured onlookers. The time varies based on the complexity and size of the design, she said.

The revamped space also features a Cricut – a machine that uses 3D mapping to cut out any design on a piece of paper, fabric or vinyl, a high-speed photo scanner that can transfer hundreds of photos in minutes to a digital format, and a button maker.

In spite of these advanced technologies there was something more enticing, and more archaic, for visitors Betsy Masson and Ann Watson.

That was an old VHS to DVD converter. Reganti said the device is popular since it allows people to transfer home movies to a DVD and then to their com-

puter for safe-keeping.

"I'd like to use that (VHS converter) myself. We've got a lot of home movies and old VHSes that I'd like to make sure are alright," Masson said.

"We had a camera that had a VHS tape in it, so this would be perfect to use," she said.

There are also a number of devices for kids including Bloxels, a mapping device that lets kids create their own video games, and Cubetto, a simple toy that teaches programming skills to youth.

Some of these gadgets are available for parents to take home as well, Reganti said.

All of the expensive equipment begs the question: how does the library afford to purchase and maintain it and not charge its customers a dime?

The generous residents of NOTL help with that, Reganti said.

The library accepts donations in many forms, but the easiest way to support the Makery is to bring a cash donation when you go to check out the facility. Other forms of donating can be found at notpubliclibrary.org.



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