

Drive-by shooting in St. Davids has neighbourhood on edge



Only the exterior of the house at 31 Kenmir Avenue, which was targeted in drive-by shooting last Sunday, was struck.
DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

St. Davids residents who live near a house that was shot at in a targeted drive-by shooting say they are nervous and worried.

Niagara Regional Police are seeking at least two men after four shots were fired at a home at 31 Kenmir Ave. early Sunday.

Erika Johnson, who lives across from the targeted house, said she now feels nervous letting her dog out at night.

"If we weren't in the process of moving, I would've gotten more cameras," she said in an interview, adding she will feel more comfortable once whoever is responsible for the shooting is caught.

Another Kenmir Avenue resident, Nadia Black, shared the same sentiment,

saying it was "shocking" that a shooting happened in such a "quiet" neighbourhood.

At the time of the shooting, neighbour Lee Harag said he and his wife Stef heard some noise but didn't know what it was. About 20 minutes later, 10 police cars with a canine unit showed up, Harag said.

"It is very strange," Harag commented, noting he would expect something like this to happen in Toronto, not in NOTL. "I might install security cameras."

However, one area resident who insisted on remaining anonymous, said she is not worried and said she thinks St. Davids is "still a safe neighbourhood."

Just after midnight an unidentified man fired at least four shots into a resi-

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Cannabis growers in Niagara double in one year

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

By any measure, the business of growing cannabis in the Niagara Region has doubled in the last year.

The number of commercial growers has gone to six from three; the number of square feet to two million from one million, and the number of employees in the industry is growing rapidly.

Since cannabis was legalized, Statistics Canada

reports that cannabis-related jobs grew substantially, by 266 per cent, and Ontario has the lions' share of those jobs.

"The highest level of cannabis-related employment was in Ontario, an estimated 5,700, representing more than half of the national total. Ontario is the province with the largest concentration of licensed producers," according to a Statistics Canada report.

And Niagara has "two of

the three largest producers in Canada. The third is in Leamington," says Blake Landry, manager, economic research and analysis for the Region of Niagara.

Tweed Farms in Niagara-on-the-Lake was here first. It started growing medical marijuana in NOTL in 2014, and is still the largest.

Jordan Sinclair, vice-president of communications for Canopy Growth Corporation, which owns Tweed, says the operation in

NOTL has expanded from the "35,000 square feet it began with, to one million square feet, and is a major part of our overall production capacity."

Canopy Growth purchased NOTL winery Coyote's Run for \$10 million in May, and Sinclair says "it was a good business decision" to buy the winery, which is adjacent to Tweed Farms. "Canopy is look-

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Cannabis plants. SUPPLIED PHOTO



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Niagara cannabis growers double in one year

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ing for partners to use the property to produce wine," he added.

For now, Sinclair says, Canopy has a "contract with a third party to take care of the vines."

But Tweed Farms is no longer an oddity in the area, having been joined by five other producers so far, with more seeking to grow cannabis in the region. An outdoor cannabis operation has been proposed on Airport Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake, though formal approval has not yet been requested.

Landry says the Niagara Region is attractive to licensed producers. "We have experience and expertise, as well as significant existing greenhouse facilities. We also have a tradition of producing food and beverages. There is a very high concentration of horticultural support here, we have capacity, and talent."

Niagara's microclimate is also attractive to producers, since it allows them to save on energy costs, he says.

One of the new operators in the region is Aleafia Health, in Grimsby. "The Niagara Region is blessed with a workforce with tremendous experience in greenhouse horticulture, along with a unique climate that has made the decision for Aleafia Health to call the region home an easy

one," Aleafia CEO Geoffrey Benic said in a statement.

Aleafia has a 160,000-square-foot greenhouse ready to go, just waiting on final approval of its licence from Health Canada.

"We have a core team in place already and they are working at some of our other facilities and will move over to Grimsby when it's licensed. When we get the licence, we would ramp up hiring immediately and build up to the full team in five to seven weeks," says Nicholas Bergamini, vice-president of investor relations for Aleafia. "We'll employ 80 to 100 people there."

For Landry, the growth in Niagara is unprecedented. "I've never seen this kind of growth in a sector, this just boomed."

But this is just the beginning, he says. "Given the rapid pace that this industry is evolving, I suspect that these statistics will change significantly over the next one to two years."

The economic impact is expected to come from more than just growing cannabis. "The real economic opportunity will come from processing and services," he says. "That could include greenhouse technical companies, electrical controls and various types of expertise. The wine industry has the highest value add of any agriculture industry, and

cannabis may rival that."

There are already several cannabis industry players in Niagara, including Avid Growing Systems Inc., which provides turn-key cannabis cultivation systems.

Another, Hamill Agricultural Processing Solutions, is developing products to use to process cannabis, such as small scale trimmers and extractors.

And Niagara Falls is home to the Grow Up Cannabis Conference and Expo, which is the first cannabis industry conference and exhibition in Canada. This year it will be held from Sept. 12 to 14, and organizers expect 5,000 people to attend.

Landry predicts the next wave of growth will be in cannabis edible products, saying "cannabis edibles and beverages are not legal yet, and present a big opportunity for Niagara. It's so new at this time, that we are only starting to see the various products and applications that are being developed with cannabis ... this is a nascent area of the industry. Once edibles become legal, we'll see."

Edibles will be legally available by mid-December. Landry says that there are companies actively "investigating production of edibles, and looking to set up facilities here."

Sinclair says Canopy Growth has no plans to



Blake Landry, manager, economic research and analysis for the Region of Niagara. SUPPLIED

produce edibles at Tweed Farms in NOTL. Production of cannabis products will continue to be centred at its headquarters in Smiths Falls, Ont.

Mishka Balsom, president and CEO of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, also notes there's "a huge interest in edible cannabis and refined liquids" and that may have a significant impact on tourism in the region. "But it's so new, we have to wait and see how it will develop. There are high risks and great opportunities."

Balsom notes "it's a new industry, and when it grows so fast, there are growing pains."

Those growing pains include complaints from residents who live near the new or expanded facilities about the smells coming from greenhouses growing

cannabis. In Pelham the expansion was so dramatic council imposed a one-year moratorium on any additional facilities in March 2019.

In June, NOTL town council extended an interim cannabis bylaw prohibiting new cannabis operations and expansions within the municipality for one more year.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita says the town's cannabis committee, after extensive consultation and information gathering, has drafted a new cannabis bylaw that "would prohibit any outdoor cannabis growth in NOTL, and limit any new greenhouses to industrial areas."

The committee wants to be sure the bylaw "protects our existing fruit and grape industry, as well as our beautiful landscape," Cheropita says.

The bylaw has been sent to staff for comment and Cheropita says there will be a "public open house in September, where we'll make a presentation and invite public comment."

A staff report is expected to be presented to council's committee of the whole on Sept. 9. A notice of motion by Coun. Stuart McCormack outlines details of the proposed new bylaw, including extension of the prohibition on new operations until July 2020.

One licensed producer in Pelham, CannTrust, recently ran afoul of Health Canada, violating its licence conditions by growing more plants than it was licensed for.

Since then, its CEO and board chair have been fired, stock prices have plummeted, and its inventory has been put on hold.

In a statement, Health Canada said that consequences could range from "compliance promotion and awareness, which are intended to educate and prevent non-compliance, up to measures intended to correct non-compliance or address a public health or safety risk, such as the issuance of a warning letter, suspension or cancellation of a federal licence, the issuance of a ministerial order, or the issuance of administrative monetary penalties (up to \$1 million)."

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dence near Kenmir Avenue and Tanbark Road before fleeing, Niagara Regional Police said. Police would not release the address, but neighbours confirmed it was 31 Kenmir Ave.

No one was home at the time and only the exterior of the house was damaged, investigators said.

Members of the force's forensic service unit examined the scene for evidence. No damage was visible from the street.

The shooter was a rear passenger in an older, possibly early 2000s, four-door silver Volkswagen Golf, police said.

The car had a light blue patch on the front passenger door and the front silver rims are different than the rear silver rims.

The vehicle was spotted in the neighbourhood several hours prior to the shooting, investigators said.

Members of the public and witnesses provided officers with detailed descriptions of the vehicle. Police

also obtained surveillance camera photos of the suspects' car.

"While there were no injuries, detectives believe this was a targeted event," police said in a statement.

Marilyn Milanis, who lives on Bunny Glen Drive, which runs parallel to Tanbark Road, said the fact there was a shooting in a "quiet little" St. Davids neighbourhood was "shocking."

"That sense of security we had is kind of tarnished now," she told The Lake Report.

Milanis said she hopes it was a "one-off" incident that won't happen again.

Police are asking St. Davids-area residents to "review the photos of the vehicle and give some consideration to the timeline of the incident. If they have any exterior security video cameras we would ask them to review the footage and contact us if they have captured anything suspicious."

Anyone with information is asked to contact detectives at 905-688-4111, dial option 3, badge #9361.



Police are searching for a silver Volkswagen Golf believed to be involved in a drive-by shooting. SUPPLIED



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Joan King is keeping Terry Fox's dream alive



This year's Terry Fox run is on Sept. 15 at Simcoe Park. Run organizer Joan King says she receives tremendous support throughout town. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Terry Fox wanted to take a stand and run for cancer research and Joan King aims to keep that vision alive through fundraising events and organizing the Terry Fox Run in NOTL on Sept. 15.

The run takes participants through a five-kilometre stretch starting at Simcoe Park, travelling up King Street to John Street, then following Ricardo Street to King, and back to Simcoe Park. A video outlining the route can be found on the town's website at notl.org.

Participants can walk, run, bike or rollerblade, and are asked to donate whatever they can. Donations of \$20 or more will be issued a tax-receipt. King said all she asks for is \$1 a person.

"That was Terry's vision, wasn't it? Just one dollar from each person in Canada. Terry only wanted one dollar, we have a population of about 15,000 and I think we got to \$10,000 (in 2007). Now we're at \$113,000," she said.

Registration is at 9 a.m., and the run kicks off at 10 a.m., with a barbecue to follow.

Last year, King said \$113,538.43 was raised through the community run with 250 participants, and another \$3,865.05

was raised through school events.

King took the reigns of the charitable run in 2007 and has been striving to bring more awareness and raise more money for the Terry Fox Foundation ever since. She said she answered a call for volunteers to help organize the event and has had a hand in revitalizing the charity to the community-wide engagement it has become today.

"I'm a retired teacher, I used to just do it at school with the kids. Then when I came down to do the community run, there was nobody here. They had put a note in the paper saying we need someone to organize a run down in Niagara-on-the-Lake or we're going to lose it," she said.

"I thought, 'Well I'll step up to the plate.' It's something that we can't lose," King added.

It's the support of the community that King said has made the event so successful the last several years.

Since the Terry Fox Run first came to NOTL in 1991, the community has raised \$789,708 for cancer research and the foundation.

"It's just so nice the way the whole community comes together for a good cause, and they're willing to donate or support in some way," she said.

Terry Fox's vision was simple, she said, though it wasn't easy. She said she's inspired by his drive to do more and the message that one person can make a big difference.

"He was in a hospital and he saw suffering and he wanted to do something about it. Look how he was suffering. Running a marathon a day for 143 days. Oh, my gosh, how can it be possible. 'Miracles happen,' he said. And even if he didn't finish, it had to continue," she said.

"That's what we're doing. He passed the torch to us to continue this dream, this vision."

Before the walk on the 15th, those wanting to help raise money for the cause can do so at a Trivia Night on Sept. 6.

Tunes for Terry music trivia night will take place at the community centre at 7 p.m.

King recommends purchasing tickets for a team at a table of eight. Individual tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the door or by contacting King at 905-262-5898, or Yvonne Grecco at 905-468-3055. Seating is limited so registering in advance is recommended.

"It's going to be a really great time," King said.

Planning for the run on Sept. 15 started in May, she said, with a conference in

Toronto kickstarting the year's fundraising goals, though she said she starts to "blitz it closer to the date."

"Not only is it about raising funds for cancer research, it's also about bringing together community, friends, people. It's remembering those who we've lost, supporting those who are still fighting, and just honouring those who have won the fight. It's just so refreshing to see everyone there and enjoying the moment," King said.

King lists many community supporters of the run this year: The Kinsmen who are holding a bike and wine tour on Sept. 14, are donating proceeds to the foundation; Grape Escape Wine Tours purchased almost 60 shirts for their team to wear during the weekend of the run and have been collecting donations in-store leading up to the event; Stage Coach on Queen Street is donating proceeds from its pancake breakfast on Sept. 15 to the foundation; The Sandtrap donates pizzas for the run day and after the run, the Rotary Club does a barbecue; Walker's Country Market donates fruit for participants; and Tim Hortons has coffee and treats for all the participants, she said.

"There's so much more to it than just raising money. It's such a rewarding thing to do," King said.



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A colourful NOTL sky. DAVID ISRAELSON

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Green Tip of the Week

Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

If everyone in Canada reduce their weekly garbage by 1 lb per week, that is the equivalent of removing 18,000 tons of garbage from landfills!! In Niagara-on-the-Lake that equates to 9 tons per week removed from landfills. In Niagara, 50% of our garbage is compostable. Think about it!

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Editorial

Soaring examples of community spirit

Richard Harley
 Editor

Every day in this town there is some reminder of just why we're so proud to write about it.

Yea to the Chautauqua Residents Association for a successful corn roast on Labour Day. After last year's was rained out, it was great to see neighbours and community members out enjoying the last day before school.

Yea to students young and old going back to school, and to parents, teachers, principals, bus drivers, yard

monitors, and everyone who helps make sure our neighbourhood kids can learn in a safe environment.

Yea to Niagara College for opening its new innovation centre, and to the Marotta family for its generous donation of \$1 million toward education in NOTL. It's great to see businesses supporting our local college.

Yea to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Historical Society & Museum for bringing the Canadian Forces Snowbirds down yet again for a close-up and intimate experience with residents. No doubt some young pilot will be in-

spired by the experience of meeting some of Canada's finest pilots.

Yea to Joan King for continuously breathing life and spirit into NOTL's annual Terry Fox Run. People like King keep our community one of the nicest places to live.

Yea to Sentineal Carriages for opening up its farm for people to come and see how the horses are cared for.

Yea to migrant workers like Rocky McKenzie, who truly are crucial to the area's tender fruit harvest. These are some of the hard-

est working people one will meet, having flown across the world to work and provide for their families back home.

Yea to Grape Escape Wine Tours for its campaign to outfit farm workers with lights for their bikes, and to the volunteers who showed up to help install them. Community spirit isn't lacking in NOTL.

editor@niagaranow.com



A memorable camp experience for NOTL girl guides

Dear editor:

From Aug. 4 to 10, five Girl Guides from NOTL, Virgil, and St. Davids – Sophie, Hannah, Amara, Brooke and Josie – attended LEAP at Doe Lake Girl Guide Camp in Sprucedale, Ont.

Along with 1,200 other girls, we canoed, kayaked, swam, participated in rock climbing and high ropes courses, did archery and outdoor sports, hiked, and sang our way through seven wonderful days.

We learned about STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and the environment, participated in leadership and service projects, enjoyed arts activities, and explored the communities surrounding Doe Lake on our out-trips.

We met and became friends with girls and leaders from across Canada and the world, and were inspired by the words of Sarah Wells, a Canadian Olympian (and our keynote speaker).

We had the opportunity to talk with the adult leaders of Canadian Guiding and share our ideas and vision for the organization and future Girl Guides.

And most importantly, we had fun!

On behalf of the 136th Niagara-on-the-Lake LEAP Unit, we would like to thank all of the service organizations, businesses and residents of NOTL that supported our unit's goal to attend LEAP 2019.

We are especially thankful for the financial and in-kind support of the NOTL Kinsmen, St. Davids Lions, members of Niagara Lodge No. 2, as well as Phil's Valu-mart and Niagara Trailers.

As well, we are thankful for all those who provided support for our cookie sales and fundraisers, and to all of the residents of NOTL who bought cookies or provided donations, both big and small.

We couldn't have attended without all of you – thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Megan Gilchrist, Guider
 NOTL

Not a fan of Justin Trudeau

Dear editor:

When Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came to visit Niagara-on-the-Lake a few weeks ago, I was reminded of the election this October and thought of his many "popular" headlines.

I decided to make a list of some of them:

The budget will balance itself.

He broke ethics laws four times, with the Aga Khan – and now with SNC Lavalin.

He paid \$10.5 million to a convicted criminal.

Plays Mr. Dressup in India.

Invited a Sikh man convicted of attempted murder to dine with him in India.

Changed illegal immigration to irregular immigration to suit his agenda.

Gave the Clinton Foundation \$20 million for Planned Parenthood (abortion clinics).

Groped a news reporter in Creston, B.C.

Fake feminist: Fired Jody Wilson-Raybould over SNC Lavalin scandal.

Met with Paster Steve Long, a Canadian Baptist minister, who said Trudeau told him, "Evangelical Christians are the worst part of Canadian society."

When asked which nation, besides Canada, he admires, said: "You know, there's a level of admiration I actually have for China because their basic dictatorship is allowing them to actually turn their economy around on a dime."

Trudeau told the world he was rather fond of Fidel Castro, a dictator.

What happened to Trudeau's promise of transparency to the Canadian people? I have four words to describe Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: deceive, deny, dismiss, deflect.

George Warkentin
 Virgil

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OPINION

The power – and danger – of political populism

Michael Eagen
Special to The Lake Report

As we prepare for an election here in Canada, it might be worthwhile to consider alarming trends in democratically elected legislatures around the world.

We are quite familiar with the cult of leadership in autocratically governed countries with Kim and Putin being good examples.

However, there appears to be an increasing number of individuals who are being elected in democratically governed countries based entirely on their perceived attractive traits – so much so that they become the lone face of the political party they represent.

Of course, Donald Trump is one of the best examples, but Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine and Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines are given celebrity status and therefore get free passes on personal objectionable behaviour because “they are getting things done.”

One naturally asks why this trend is occurring and the answer may in the works of José Ortega y Gasset who wrote about the rise of fascism and communism in Europe in the 1920s and '30s.

He held the view that local cultural traditions were lost as small states were unified with others, as happened in Germany, Italy and Russia. This left citizens confused by new economic forces as well as technological changes.

The First World War loss plunged those economies into free fall and allowed Hitler and Mussolini to provide simple solutions to complex problems and emphasize strength through unity.

They both used newspapers and radio to deliver the message and hence the formula was established.

Today, TV, radio and the internet have together allowed the cult of personality to emerge in the same way in democracies.

These leaders observe



the world in crisis; mass movement of people escaping war and poverty; loss of jobs in industrialized countries; growth in the gap between rich and poor. The rise of violent crime usually accompanies these issues and citizens at home become fearful and suspicious of “others” – notably newcomers or people who look “different.”

The response from would-be leaders? “I have all the answers and if we all pull together, I can solve all the problems.” Trump brought this view to the forefront when he recently said that he is the Chosen One with regard to solving the Middle East issue.

These individuals have been assisted by mass media, which tend to see politics as a blood sport with sound bites and gotcha reporting. Witness the relentless polling by media companies so they can tell the public who is winning and losing support in an election which might be a few years away. And when an election occurs, the emphasis is on the “winner” of the debate or the personal style of the leader instead of platforms or policies.

This tendency undermines serious discussion of issues and allows a person like Trump and others to find scapegoats; the Chinese cheat; Mexicans are rapists and killers; all intellectuals are elitist and naive and also

to simplify problems with slogans such as “Drain the swamp” or “Make America Great Again.”

In Canada, we are also falling into the pattern of seeing Trudeau or Scheer or Singh as the “party” as opposed to the leader of a collection of members of Parliament who have their own viewpoints and make important contributions to policy which benefit citizens.

One can reach a few conclusions as we observe how leader-dominated democracies operate today.

We will likely see more shoot from the lip policy initiatives since these populist leaders come to believe they are brilliant and special.

Let us buy Greenland, let us reduce ward boundaries mid-election, let's give police in Philippines the power to kill crooks.

Koch family in the United States has funded hundreds of campaigns for politicians who are on the side of climate change denial and advocate for the removal of environmental protection laws.

In Canada we are seeing an increase in third-party advertising by various interest groups in an attempt to sway federal or provincial policy. Anti-immigration billboards or pro pipeline TV ads can lead to public policy decisions which do not represent the majority of

Canadians.

But if historical precedent is a guide, the outcomes for populist-based democracies are quite clear. The struggling democracy of Russia has been hijacked by Putin as he has seized control by dint of his celebrity personality and his influence with the KGB.

The U.S. election of 2020 will be a rejection or acceptance of the cult of leadership. A win for Trump will further fracture the social fabric of a country already badly divided. Gun control, Obamacare, environmental protection and other programs likely will disappear as Trump becomes the Republican Party.

In Canada, we know that when the U.S. sneezes, we catch a cold. So, a populist leader is problematic when it comes to honouring trade deals or funding NORAD. It's awkward if we are seen not as an ally but as a bothersome neighbour.

We, too, have to be vigilant if we wish to avoid the election of federal and provincial leaders who are not simply sloganeers, but are measured in style and informed about the issues which are of importance to Canadians.

Let us hope that the upcoming election is about policy and not personality and that we are not seriously divided in the process.

Michael Eagen lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



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- Cat

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Niagara Flower Growers appreciate community support

Dear editor:

We would like to say thank you to the volunteers of NOTL, Queenston, Glendale, St. Davids fire departments for their quick response to the devastating fire we had in our greenhouse.

We would also like to thank our family, friends, and the greenhouse community for all the messages and offers of support in this difficult time.

Sincerely,

*Niagara Flower Growers
NOTL*

Poorly lit roads are dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists

Dear editor:

I am an ex-NOTLer and writing in response to the tragic, unnecessary death last week of Zenaida, the Mexican migrant worker and mother of two.

Besides the senseless hit-and-run in this instance, it is important to consider that the rural roads of Niagara-on-the-Lake are poorly lit and extremely dark – and especially dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists at night.

Knowing this I would suggest taking some preventive measures that could indeed improve safety for all of us when travelling these treacherous roads in poor visibility conditions.

Farm workers, who often have limited funds, should be supplied with reflective vests and encouraged to wear them.

As an ex-member of Newark Neighbours, I know that organization could well take on this initiative and co-ordinate with farm and winery owners. I believe funds could be available as farms and wineries have generously supported our foreign workers in the past.

Also, from an illuminating point of view, electric, battery-powered or dynamo lights should be mandatory on all bicycles. Dog walkers, also please take heed.

*Simon Clery
Pictou County, N.S.*

Town, region need to implement more safety measures for cyclists

Dear editor:

First and foremost, I am thrilled Niagara-on-the-Lake is attracting throngs of tourists and that bike rental companies are thriving because of this.

I am more than happy to see many folks enjoying a healthy activity while enjoying our town and I welcome their tourist dollars here. We can coexist happily and without incident.

But, I live in St. Andrews Glen, across the road from the NOTL Community Centre, library, the newly planned and expanded day care facility and the firehall, which are located on Anderson Lane at Niagara Stone Road.

For St. Andrews Glen residents, the only exit is from Balmoral Drive. Now we face many cyclists out

for a pleasure ride and often travelling in groups.

These folks (many without helmets) seem blissfully unaware of the dangers while exiting town, and travelling on the same side of the road as the Old Winery restaurant. They often ride in large groups.

According to the Region of Niagara, there is a legally mandated bike path on this side of the road. But it is woefully narrow and becomes non-existent as the road approaches the Old Winery.

The gravel on the right side at this point is an accident waiting to happen. Cars are now travelling upward or over 70 km/h and passing these cyclists. At the restaurant, in the dip of the road, there is an obvious barricade on the opposite side for those

attempting to cross over to safety and access the path on that side of the road.

I have addressed my concerns regarding many of the safety issues in this part of Niagara Stone Road to the Region of Niagara, several times over four years, to no avail.

A stop light suggestion, which would eliminate many problems at the very busy intersection of Anderson / Balmoral / Niagara Stone Road, has been ignored and flatly denied as a challenge to traffic flow. Hmmm.

No clearly painted “cycle” symbols on the road or shared path are evident and do not appear to be in the plans. A directional arrow sign or symbol on the pavement ahead of the Balmoral intersection sending the

cyclists across the road is the very least we can do, if this intersection is not in the plans for a serious traffic-calming solution.

We, as a community, need to welcome these tourists and make them feel more comfortable in their activity, as other communities (like Toronto does along on the lakeshore) with highly visible signs and painted cycle symbols on the pavement of highly travelled roads. Paint is inexpensive and can be refreshed annually.

What will it take to get the town and region to address this particular concern that many share with me? Another injury or even worse, another Niagara-on-the-Lake fatality?

*Mary Gallagher Birkholz
NOTL*

Shoreline erosion is a natural and fascinating phenomenon

Dear editor:

I am dismayed by some of the articles in your last issue, (“Falling into the Lake,” Aug. 29), and the values I interpret them to present. Namely, that erosion is a bad thing.

Please note that the idea that erosion of the shoreline is damage, or that it is destructive, is an opinion, not a fact, and I do not share that opinion. I am in full support of Parks Canada’s policy of laissez faire with respect to the shore erosion west of Old Town.

Erosion is a natural process and a fascinating and dynamic one. The shore and the beach are alive and the changes can be a

delight to see.

I treasure the new experience every time I walk at Niagara Shores Park. I enjoy the swallows and eagles, the challenge of scrambling over the snags of the fallen trees, and the delicate tracery of roots dangling above the beach.

There may have been some justification for the work done on the shoreline which runs along the golf course and Fort Mississauga, but I mourn the loss of that wild beach and its intricate fractal beauty, a beach I had known and loved for nearly 60 years, in winter and summer.

It is now a sterile, industrial environment. The

life of the beach has been flatlined.

I feel that we ought to try not to interfere with, or battle against, natural processes but adapt as necessary with as light a touch as possible.

Unintended consequences are a given and it may be that the rapid rate of erosion of the shoreline is an unintended consequence of human interference in the ecosystem such as dredging or control of the flow into the St. Lawrence.

However, I don’t see the erosion of the shoreline as “devastation” or “loss” but as ongoing transformation of the landscape which both preserves — nesting habitat

for bank swallows, the sand beach — and evolves.

The changes have become more rapid in recent years as we have had some extreme weather but I would be so very sorry to see them halted and the shore frozen in time and confined in space.

That would destroy its dynamism and its life.

*Christine Earl
NOTL*

Editor’s note: The Lake Report did not intend to present the message that erosion is all bad. Our documentary says erosion is a natural process. The fact is, if left to erode, there eventually won’t be a park left to enjoy.



We welcome your letters

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation.

Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated.

Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published.

Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 724 Mississauga St., NOTL.

The Lake Report



Pauline Reimer Gibson
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Newark Neighbours needs warm items for fall, winter

Suzanne Vailant
Special to The Lake Report

Our summer is winding down and our inventory is now low.

With fall around the corner, Newark Neighbours is in need of warmer clothing including hoodies, jackets, winter boots, bedding, towels and blankets.

A few of our volunteers had the pleasure of attending high school graduations in June for the District School Board of Niagara and the Niagara Catholic School Board and presented \$2,000 bursaries to seven students who reside in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We wish the following students all the best as they continue on with their post-secondary education: Jessie Anne Jones, Rachel Kugler, Taylor Dueck, Shuta Ando, Jadon Tombs and Rosie Tait. The objective of this

bursary program is to assist qualified students who are within the reach of Newark Neighbours' charity work in Niagara-on-the-Lake, are graduating from high schools and are in need of financial assistance to pursue post-secondary education opportunities.

Thanks go out to the following for their kind donations: LCBO in Virgil and Niagara-on-the-Lake, the NOTL Horticultural Society and our local library for placing a food donation bin at the entrance of the library for the community to donate to our food bank.

The income from the retail shop provides the necessary funds to operate the most essential part of the Newark Neighbours operation, the food bank.

Our retail shop is located at 310 John St. (behind Riverbend Inn) is open year-round Monday to Friday



Newark Neighbours bursary cheque is presented to Laura Byers, executive director of the Education Foundation of Niagara, by food bank manager Marion Ollerhead, president Laura Gibson and Hilary Bellis, voluntary liaison. SUBMITTED

from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. From April to October we are also open Sunday 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (except on statutory holidays) to accommodate the seasonal agricultural workers.

We appreciate and value the generosity of our community. Your dona-

tions allow us to continue our mission of "Serving our Community with Compassion, Care and Concern." Making this mission a reality would not be possible without all of our volunteers whose time and effort we greatly appreciate.

Sentineal Carriages offers farm tour

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Sentineal Carriages, a Niagara-on-the-Lake company providing carriage rides, are hosting farm tours this Sunday, Sept. 8, to provide more information about their farm operation and debunk myths surrounding carriage horses.

Fred and Laura Sentineal, who've been running the business for more than 30 years, will host the tours at their farm on 1055 Line 1 Road.

The interactive tours will run every hour, from noon to about 5:30 p.m. With a small group of ten to 12 people, the owners hope the tour will give people a chance to ask as many questions as possible.

People are advised to wear comfortable shoes and clothing.

"I think it's going to be a fun afternoon," Laura said. "I really hope people enjoy it."

From history and pasture management to horse health and safety, the tours will cover six stations at the farm, starting at the office, where six different people, including the Sentineals and some carriage drivers, will talk about the farm life and carriage company operation.

"We really want to be transparent, there's nothing going on here that we're not a 100 per cent proud of. And we're very proud of how we do things," Laura said.

"Horses are part of our family," Fred added. "It's been difficult for us to hear accusations from the (animal rights) activists."

Fred said one of the popular misconceptions, spread by the protesters, is that most people think the carriage horse is exhausted when they see it resting in downtown.

"It's untrue. The horse is so well-settled, it will go to sleep in the corner. We've



Fred Sentineal pets Tom the horse at his farm on Line 1 Road. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

done our job, the horse's realized it has no fear of even a big bus coming by and it'll not be worried," he said. "It's frustrating that they (protesters) take it and turn it into something else to promote their agenda and mislead the public."

If people see a horse at the corner with its head down and asleep, it means the horse is happy, comfortable and relaxed, Laura added.

Another claim, which protesters make, is that retired horses are sent off for slaughter, Laura said noting their company has never done it nor will they ever do it.

"We have too much respect

for our horses," Laura told The Lake Report. "Once retired, they live the rest of their lives here or we have a group of trusted friends with horses where one of our retired horses might see them as a companion animal for another horse."

But the Sentineals said they're lucky and appreciative for the constant community support.

There will be videos and photos posted online for people who can't make it to the tours.

Some openings are still left for 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. slots. Anyone interested in a tour can contact Sentineal Carriages at (905) 468-4943.



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Niagara College opens new innovation centre, named after Marotta family

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Tuesday was a day of fresh starts and new investments as community, innovation and future endeavours came together at the grand opening of the Marotta Family Innovation Complex at Niagara College's Niagara-on-the-Lake campus.

The family of developer Benny Marotta donated \$1 million to the college for the new building at the Canadian Food and Wine Institute Innovation Centre, which will see three research areas in the four-storey complex and boasts more than 50,000 square feet. The donation was originally announced in April 2018,

The complex was named for the family of Benny and Louise Marotta, who own Solmar Development Corp.,

and their daughters Melissa Marotta Paolicelli and Angela Marotta, who own Two Sisters Vineyards.

The college's Student Administrative Council also donated \$5.45 million for a new fitness centre inside the complex, said Tom Price, president of the student administration.

"It'll benefit the students on campus. So certainly, the opportunities for them for that applied research and hands-on learning that the college prides itself on," Price said.

As for the donation from the Marotta family, Price said it's incredible to see so much support from the community and local families and businesses.

"Just a huge congratulations. It really is just those people in the community that go above and beyond for students on campus, so a

thank you for their generous support," he said.

Angela Marotta said she is proud to be able to contribute to the growth in the community through her family's donation, while also benefiting from the college's contribution to the workforce.

"We've invested in the future. There's so many graduates from Niagara College that have worked with Two Sisters and Kitchen 76 from its inception. It is because of so many of these graduating students that we have reached our success," she said.

"Our winemaker (Adam Pearce) was a graduate of Niagara College. Through him we won best small performing winery in Canada in 2015."

Financial contributions for the new complex also included \$8.7 million from



Angela Marotta, Melissa Marotta Paolicelli, Louise Marotta and Guiseppe Paolicelli in front of the new Marotta Family Innovation Complex on Tuesday for the grand opening.
BRITTANY CARTER

the federal government's Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund.

The provincial government also kicked in \$1.55 million, plus \$816,000 from the Ontario Research Fund and \$816,000 from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation's College-Industry fund. The Region of Niagara also contributed \$1.4 million.

Outgoing president of Niagara College Dan Patterson was quick to thank all of the organizations and levels of government that helped make the new complex a reality.

"To bring industry and innovation together, that's when magic happens," he said.

Niagara Centre MP Vance Badawey and St. Catharines MP Christ Bittle also were on hand and announced a nearly \$13 million investment across Niagara Region from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Through the new federal funding, Niagara College will get up to \$5 million to establish a Greenhouse Technology Network in collaboration with Vineland

Research Innovation Centre.

Another \$5 million will go to Brock University to establish the Brock-Niagara Validation, Prototyping and Manufacturing Institute, and Niagara Falls will get nearly \$3 million, in partnership with Ryerson University and Spark Niagara, to establish the Niagara Falls-Ryerson Innovation Hub.

With the opening of the new complex and the federal funding announcement on the first day of classes Tuesday, Patterson said, "Back to school takes on a whole new meaning."

Ombudsman investigating noise problem, St. Davids resident says

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The provincial ombudsman is investigating a complaint about a noisy industrial air conditioning unit at the St. David's Cold Storage facility, says a Cannery Park resident.

The installation of a sound barrier around a large industrial air conditioning unit outside the facility, has not fixed the problem, said Chiara Recine who said she contacted the Ontario Ombudsman a couple of weeks ago.

"(The investigation) just started. I've submitted the information (emails, site plans, a previous story from The Lake Report) that they've requested," Recine said.

Recine, who lives less than 50 metres away from the warehouse on Four Mile Creek Road, said

nothing has changed since the sound panel was put up at the end of July.

"The panel went up but the sound is still the same, the vibration is still same," she said. "The only thing that's different (is) you can't actually, physically, see the unit."

In addition, the noise is also echoing as if "it is contained but echoing upward," she said. The sound barrier surrounds the air conditioner on two sides.

The ombudsman office couldn't confirm if the investigation is ongoing for "reasons of confidentiality," said Linda Williamson, director of communications.

The facility serves businesses across Niagara Region by providing freezing services and storing food and wine products.

Some Cannery Park residents have complained of a constant noise coming

from the outdoor cooling unit, which is used for refrigeration purposes as well as for cooling the facility, and which was installed last year.

St. David's Cold Storage owner Alfred Dyck declined to comment on the ombudsman's investigation but in an earlier interview with The Lake Report on July 24, Dyck said the residents were aware of the employment lands near them when they were purchasing their homes.

"We're allowed to change our site plan and we're allowed to grow and move as long as we follow the noise guidelines with the town and this what we've done."

Rainer Hummel, who owned the property before selling it to Dyck, echoed Dyck's comments saying any addition or a change is "simply an amendment to the site plan."

"And as long as we

meet the requirements of all relevant government authorities, we can continue to do so," Hummel said. "That includes adding condenser units as long as (it is) at our property line, the noise level is below the government limit, we can continue to do that."

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks did not issue any orders against the property, said Gary Wheeler, the ministry's spokesperson, and the ministry staff visited the site last year to assess the noise in response to the complaints.

"The company advised ministry staff that the company had purchased noise barriers and they were coming," Wheeler said in response to questions from The Lake Report.

"The environmental officer asked if there were any interim actions the company could take, such as

placing shipping containers in front of the unit, which the owner did. Installing this type of equipment is exempt from ministry approvals under the Environmental Protection Act," Wheeler said.

According to the town's comprehensive zoning bylaw, "within an urban boundary, all operating apparatus shall be permitted in the front yard, exterior side yard and rear yards only and be appropriately screened and buffered."

The bylaw states an operating apparatus means "outdoor mechanical equipment machinery used in conjunction with buildings or structures including but not limited to air conditioners, pool pumps and pool heaters, generators, heat exchangers and compressors."

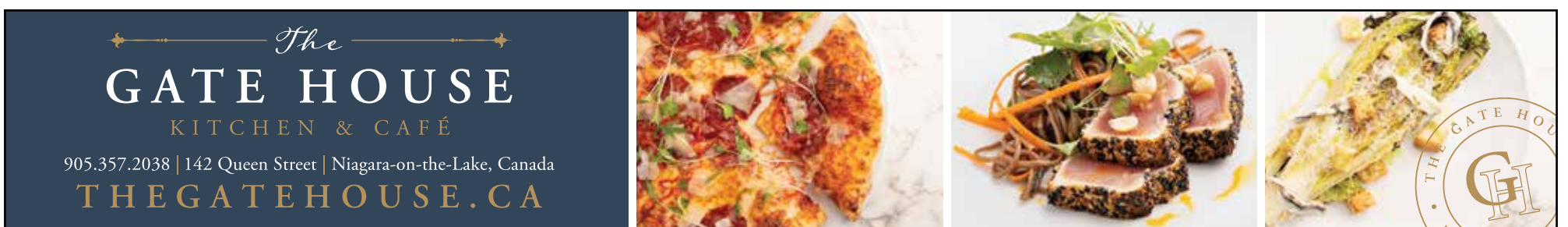
The zoning bylaw has been in effect since 2010, said Craig Larmour, town's

director of community and development.



"The cold storage facility has operated in this location for decades," Larmour said in an email response to The Lake Report. "The air conditioning unit and sound wall weren't illustrated on the approved site plan."

"It is possible that the units were installed prior to the August 2010 OMB approval, which may provide their location with legal non-conforming status," Larmour noted.

Coun. Allan Bisback, who has been addressing residents' complaints, said there are two sides to every story and he hopes a staff report will provide more clarifications about the site plan and its units. The town couldn't say when the report, which was supposed to be brought forward in September, will be ready.



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NOTL wineries say end of tax rebate program is **worrisome**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

As the provincial VQA Wine Support Program is coming to an end, some Niagara-on-the-Lake wineries are bracing up for what it may bring.

Family-run Caroline Cellars is one of the affected wineries and with the program's termination, the NOTL winery will stop supplying its wine to the LCBO, said owner Justine Lakeit.

Although the winery is "a small player" as it doesn't sell a lot of wine through the LCBO, the VQA support program was "a huge factor" in the winery's ability to do so.

The VQA Wine Support Program, overseen by Agricorp on behalf of the provincial government, was a part of the renewed Wine and Grape Strategy, started in 2015. The five-year program, which will end in April 2020, provided grants to wineries by helping offset up to 35 per cent of the tax.

"Without that program, we won't be considering any releases in the LCBO in the foreseeable future," Lakeit said. "We'll have to sell everything from here and that's more disappointing to our customers who have always enjoyed purchasing our wines from the LCBO primarily when they can't get down to Niagara."

Caroline Cellars also participated in the LCBO's Wines to Watch program, which allowed it to sell between 200 to 400 cases of wine over a four-month period, but the winery won't be considering it now either, Lakeit said.

"(The program) made Ontario wines more competitive in the marketplace," she told The Lake Report. "Ontario wines do get extra shelf space beyond our market share in the LCBO, but that's one of the only perks for domestic products".

In 2009, the provincial government launched a five-year Wine and Grape Strategy to provide support



Caroline Cellars owner Justine Lakeit said their winery will stop supplying wine to the LCBO when the VQA Wine Support Program comes to an end next April.
DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

"The previous governments have treated our wines the same as imports. We can't imagine them doing that in France or California or even B.C., and handcuffing local producers in this way."

RICHARD LINLEY
PRESIDENT
ONTARIO CRAFT WINERIES

to the industry and help it grow by creating more jobs and increasing the number of VQA wineries, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs website.

Gross margin – the difference between revenue and cost of sold goods – is already a problem in the industry so the tax issue needs to be addressed first, said Ontario Craft Wineries president Richard Linley.

After the VQA support program ends, wineries and family farms will have to consider whether they will be able to afford to hire staff and do promotional sales or advertising, he said.

"We're estimating about 75 per cent of the Ontario wineries and 30 per cent of the Ontario wine, in terms of volume, will exit the LCBO sales channel, likely over the next three to six months, if we don't have some certainty from the government as to how our tax issues will be addressed going forward," Linley said in a phone interview.

The non-profit organization, representing over 100 Ontario wineries and about 27 NOTL vintners, is asking the government to lift the 35 per cent import tax imposed on Ontario wineries, even if wine is 100 per cent grown and made within the province.

The full tax markup for a bottle of wine is between 95 and 100 per cent, Linley explained, up to 35 per cent of which was rebated back to the wineries under the support program.

He argued the Ontario wine industry is at a disadvantage compared to other industries in the world and across the country.

"The previous governments have treated our wines the same as imports. We can't imagine them doing that in France or California or even B.C., and handcuffing local producers in this way," Linley said.

Connie Slingerland, chief financial officer at Pillitteri Estates Winery, declined to comment but said the winery supports Linley's com-

ments made on behalf of the industry.

Strewn Winery co-owner Newman Smith said the program's end will affect not only his operation but all wineries as well.

"But what steps we'll have to take (after the program ends) are unknown at this point," he said.

Bianca Jamieson, the ministry's media relations strategist, insisted the program wasn't cancelled – it's just ending – and the ministry is working with the industry to ensure wineries have time to adjust "their business plans to account for the program's sunset."

"The government remains committed to the success of local wineries and helping growers and the wine sector grow and succeed locally and abroad," Jamieson said in an email to The Lake Report.

"At this time, the government is undertaking a comprehensive review of the alcohol sector to inform its plan to expand the sale of beverage alcohol into corner, grocery and big-box stores, and to grow market opportunities for wineries including VQA wines in Ontario. The Ministry of Finance is currently leading this review."

Meanwhile, Linley said the winery organization will continue to lobby the government to ask for fairness for local producers.



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Yum - recipes

Local recipe book planned for 2019

The Lake Report is calling on all cooks, chefs, bakers and food enthusiasts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We want your favourite family recipes, and the stories that go with them, to share with the community. Whether it's a special stew, soup, or salad; the best bread or muffins; or a decadent dessert, we'd like to hear from you!

We'd love it if you could include pictures of the food where possible, and of the family member who might have passed the recipe down. If there is any family folklore associated with the recipe, we'd love to hear that too. Maybe there's a certain occasion when it's always made, perhaps there's a funny or sad story to tell that relates to that particular recipe, or certain traditions that accompany it.

We will publish selected recipes regularly, and at the end of the year we'll compile all the recipes together as a book of NOTL family favourites. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to a local charity.

Please send your recipes, pictures and stories to: recipes@niagaranow.com

The top recipes will be published in an annual paperback book which will be available (in limited supply) to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake at The Lake Report office. This year's book (title uncertain!) will be released in the coming months!



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Rocky McKenzie: From **small-town** Jamaica to **small-town** Canada

Migrant farm workers play crucial role in grape and tenderfruit farming



The Stratus Vineyards farm crew, in front of their home-away-from-home, "Jamaica House", and the small market garden that supplies some of their produce. Back row, from left: Andrel Lawson, Devon (Rocky) McKenzie, Sabado Townsend, Kevin McDonald, Linton Beale and Ralph Brown. Front row: Oral Walters and Devon Reid. TIM TAYLOR

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

Rocky McKenzie knows long days. In the field by 7:30 a.m., sitting on a large upturned plastic pail, sharp pruning shears in hand, slowly moving along the rows, he's removing Cabernet Sauvignon grapes that are not likely to mature.

Thinning up to 40 per cent of the grapes helps the remaining crop to flourish.

The vineyards are damp underfoot, the air is muggy and lifeless. This is crucial, often lonely work. The small Stratus Vineyards team must thin 60,000 vines on the 55-acre property over just a few weeks.

Devon (Rocky) McKenzie comes from Clarendon Parish, a little town called Pennants, deep in the heart of Jamaica's famous coffee

country, 80 kilometres almost due west of Kingston.

He first came to Niagara 17 years ago as a temporary farm worker, to work in the Stratus' vineyards.

Rocky was 24 when he left home, a jack-of-all-trades, able to fix almost anything. He still does that and just about everything else, if it has to do with growing and harvesting grapes. Now, he's considered a team leader of the eight-man Stratus field crew.

Rocky was part of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program that matches willing, skilled workers from Mexico and 11 Caribbean countries with farmers looking for hardworking employees for their farms during critical periods in their season.

The seasonal workers program annually brings

“Without the seasonal workers we would be dead. We wouldn't have an industry. Period.”

KEN FORTH
PRESIDENT, FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

20,000 workers to Ontario for up to eight months. More than 1,400 Ontario farmers participate in the program from 16 agricultural sectors, including dairy, fruit, poultry and swine.

Each year Rocky leaves his partner, Nalician, a stay-at-home mom for their three youngest children—10, 9 and 3 years—and comes to Niagara in the spring. They have two older children, one in university, another teaching school.

Like parents everywhere, Rocky wanted a better life

for his kids. “I need to do well enough so my kids will have a better future,” he says.

“I could have worked in coffee and stayed at home. Everyone else did. But the economy was very poor. I thought: ‘I need to get out of Jamaica.’ ”

For the first time this year, Rocky has become a full-time employee of Stratus. It's a new two-year visa designed to give the industry more flexibility with staffing. Rocky volunteered to try the longer period and

says: “It's going OK, except for the cold!”

In fact, he's hoping another new program will soon allow him to get his landed immigrant status so he can bring his family to Canada.

Rocky is proud of the work he does, fighting all kinds of weather, biological and pest perils, to ensure the harvest that goes into the winery is the best it can possibly be.

“Stratus does it right,” he boasts. “By hand. We hand-pick the grapes and then hand sort them. We pick one day and then go into the winery the next day, to sort and start the winemaking.”

He says the first crush (harvest) for sparkling wine grapes likely will happen in early September. “We probably won't finish Cabernet Sauvignon until December.”

Rocky thinks the rainy, cool spring weather may reduce this year's harvest by as much as 30 per cent. “But you never know”, he says. “Mother Nature may be kind.”

As he moves down the rows, he invokes Mother Nature's work often. He believes She explains why some vines die and some vines grow in strange ways. “That's just Mother Nature. You just never know.”

Connecting with home used to be a challenge. “I remember when we only had a land line to call home. We had to buy a pre-paid calling card. It was \$2 a minute, I think.”

Now with the help of his Bluetooth headphones and his cellphone, Rocky listens to radio from back

Continued on Page 11



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Left: Devon (Rocky) McKenzie thins Cabernet Sauvignon grapes at Stratus Vineyards. Removing 30 to 40 per cent of the grapes improves the remaining harvest. Stratus farms 60,000 vines, including 16 different grapes varieties, on 55 acres. Right: Vineyard manager Diana Sangster. TIM TAYLOR

Continued from Page 10

home in Kingston. And he receives an almost continuous barrage of phone calls from family and friends, all-the-while patiently and diligently searching for and cutting away grape clusters that could inhibit the quality of the harvest.

As the conversation continues, it becomes easier to understand his Jamaican patois. Or maybe he is just being kind. When the whole crew is together, they create a language barrier around their world.

Every fortnight, Stratus arranges a small bus to take the crew food shopping, usually in St. Catharines. Each worker prepares his own meals, in Rocky's case that means a lot of chicken and rice and peas. But he talks about many of his favourite

Jamaican foods — goat's head soup, patties, ackee and saltfish, and so on.

Rocky and the crew live in what is dubbed "Jamaica House," at the back of the Stratus property near the winery's drive shed. They are just now picking vegetables from the little market garden they planted in front of the house.

When his long day finishes, he spends time on a computer he bought locally and continues his conversations home.

"I don't go out much. You hear the bad news from everywhere — people being killed. It's not safe. I don't want to take a chance. So, I just stay home."

Once in a while he and some of his mates attend services at the Niagara Mennonite Church just up the way on Niagara Stone

Road. "I go to church regularly at home."

Rocky talks with reverence about what he does and it's clear his 17-year commitment has earned the respect of Stratus management.

Diana Sangster, Stratus Vineyard manager, speaks highly both of Rocky's contribution and the migrant workers' program.

The winery tries hard to get the same work team back year after year. "We're able to specify the workers they want," she says. "Most of these guys have been here five or more years, with many over 10 years."

"We take the time to train them, so they really understand our equipment and everything we are trying to achieve."

Stratus gets help, navigating the government program, from a third-party

service, Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS).

FARMS is a private sector run, not-for-profit organization, governed by a board of directors, appointed from the agricultural sector groups participating in the program.

Ken Forth is the president and board chair of FARMS. He's also a major broccoli farmer from the Hamilton area.

Forth says he believes in the value of the program. "I've been in the program for 50 years and I have one guy who has been with me for 35 of those years."

He says, without FARMS' involvement, the program would be in chaos. "We charge \$45 per worker to process the application. When it's approved, we put the order in to the foreign

government. We also arrange all the travel for the workers.

"It's simple. Farmers want to do something special. They actually want to farm, not do paperwork. FARMS allows them to do that — we remove some of the hassle."

The seasonal workers are paid \$14 to \$16 an hour, depending on their experience, role and sector. Their accommodation and cooking facilities are provided, but they do their own shopping and cooking. They pay income tax on their earnings.

Forth is proud of the role seasonal workers have played in Canada's agricultural sector. "We've had migrant workers from other countries in Canada for over 100 years.

"Without the seasonal workers we would be dead.

We wouldn't have an industry. Period."

It's not clear if Rocky really understands just how much he and his team mean to the success of Ontario's wine industry.

Perhaps we don't say it often enough.

Reporter's notes: To get a real sense of Rocky McKenzie and his role in the industry, I needed to work a few rows in his boots. One cloudy, muggy morning a few weeks ago, Rocky and I rode our bikes along the rutted tracks to start thinning a block of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes that were planted in 2001, Stratus' first year of operation. As we worked our way along opposite sides of the same vines, Rocky opened up about his life, his aspirations and his pride in his work. — Tim Taylor



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<p>COMMUNITY FAVOURITES:</p> <p>Legion Fish Fry every Thursday - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge at the Community Centre, Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m.</p>			
8	9	10	11
<p>Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park</p> <p>Writers' Circle - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George</p> <p>Pig Roast (Community Event) - 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. - 410 King St.</p>	<p>Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Committee of the Whole - 5 p.m. - Council Chambers</p> <p>Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p> <p>St. Davids Art Group Exhibition (Monday to Friday through Sept. 13) - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - United Mennonite Church (Red Brick Church)</p>	<p>Art Sale: Magdalena Titian - 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. - St. Mark's Church, Addison Hall</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (Sanctioned ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>German Conversation - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - Community Centre</p> <p>Third Annual Music Tournament - Noon - NOTL Golf Club</p> <p>NOTL Snowbirds 2017 - Niagara District Airport</p> <p>NOTL SupperMarket - 9 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>University Women - 7 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Simpson Room</p>
15	16	17	18
<p>Terry Fox Run - 9 a.m. - Simcoe Park</p>	<p>Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Beer and Books: Educated - 7 p.m. - Old Winery Restaurant</p> <p>Council Meeting - 6 p.m. - Council Chambers</p>	<p>Tumble Tots - 9 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>German Conversation - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - Community Centre</p>

Know of a local event? Tell us. Submit it directly to www.niagara.com

Port LOCAL CALENDAR

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	5 Sportball Niagara - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre St. Davids Art Group Exhibition (Monday to Friday through Sept. 13) - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - United Mennonite Church (Red Brick Church)	6 Duplicate Bridge (Sanctioned ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Moonlight Picnic 2019 - 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	7 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Mori Gardens Fall Garden Seminar Series: Fantastic Fall Planters - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park SourPalooza Beer Festival - Noon to 7:30 p.m. - Court House, The Market Hall
1 p.m.			
11 Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library The White Effect Dinner - 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Queenston Heights	12 NOTL Golf Classic Tournament - 10:30 a.m. - Royal Niagara Golf Club Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library The White Effect Dinner - 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Queenston Heights	13 Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Duplicate Bridge (Sanctioned ACBL) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	14 Niagara Grape & Wine Festival - All Day - Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Mori Gardens Fall Garden Seminar Series: The Magic of Bulbs - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens Mori Gardens Fall Garden Seminar Series: Create your own garden design - 1 p.m. - Mori Gardens Icewine Martini Party - 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - 9 Weatherstone Ct.
18 Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	19 Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum	20 Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum Lino Block Printing: Wearable Art Workshop - 1 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	21 Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum Lino Block Printing: Wearable Art Workshop - 1 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre

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Snowbirds fly over NOTL in 2017. FILE PHOTO/RICHARD HARLEY

Snowbirds return

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The Snowbirds will soar over Niagara-on-the-Lake next week — and if weather permits, a dive team will plummet from the sky.

The Saskatchewan-based Snowbirds team, also known as 431 Air Demonstration Squadron, will be back in town Wednesday, Sept. 11., taking off from the Niagara District Airport at about 4 p.m. for a 30-minute aerobatics show.

Nine of the 11 Snowbirds planes will be performing.

In the morning, more than 200 students from six schools across the region, including Crossroads Public School, St. Davids Public School, St.-Mi-

chael's Catholic Elementary School and Vineridge Academy, will arrive to meet the team and learn more about the Snowbirds.

The gates will open up to the public at 2 p.m. Free parking will be available on site.

Preparations for the show started in April 2018, says Niagara Historical Society board member Mona Babin. A team of 23 handpicked committee members — responsible for different tasks from marketing to parking — has been meeting every month since January 2019 to nail down the logistics of the event.

Bringing the Snowbirds to town is no small task, she says, with the committee having spent 2,500

“You really get a chance to have a conversation with the Snowbirds and you can't do that in a lot of large cities.”

NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER MONA BABIN

hours putting the event together so far. She says it will take 100 volunteers to help run the show, and two town councillors, Allan Bisback and John Wiens, have also been providing help.

“It's been lots of fun,” she says. “We have really collaborative meetings, which have been great.”

The show is spiced up a bit this year, she says, with two new features having

been added to this year's show. Depending on the weather, “Geronimo! Skydiving Team” will perform at 3:30 p.m., and there will be a couple of other “surprises,” says Babin.

Air cadets from squadrons across the Niagara region will also be part of the show.

The Snowbirds performance will start at around 4 p.m. After the show, the Snowbirds team will be

signing autographs in the general admission area. There will also be a meet-and-greet for VIP ticket holders.

Babin is excited to talk about it. “You get to meet them and talk to them, take pictures and selfies, and get autographs,” she says. “You really get a chance to have a conversation with the Snowbirds and you can't do that in a lot of large cities.”

The general admission area will have other activities to take part in, such as food trucks, vendors with Snowbirds souvenirs, and a vintage aircraft display.

Babin says anyone wishing to see them should get out this year, as she doesn't anticipate the Snowbirds

will be back in 2020. The last time the Snowbirds were in town was to perform as part of the Canada 150 celebrations.

But it's “certainly a possibility for 2021,” she adds.

VIP tickets are \$45 for youth and \$100 for an adult and are available to be purchased online until Friday, Sept. 6. The tickets include gourmet food, two tickets for wine and/or beer, two non-alcoholic beverages and a chance to meet the Snowbirds team members.

Online general admission tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door — cash only. Admission is free for children aged 12 and under.

The show is organized by the Niagara Historical Society and Museum.

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Police launch **safety blitz** as new school year starts

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

After a summer of fun and leisure, Tuesday was not a usual day for six-year-old Grace Miarecki, who was starting Grade 1 at Crossroads Public School in Virgil.

She said she was a bit nervous moving from senior kindergarten into Grade 1.

But Grace had plenty of support from her older sister, Emily, who started Grade 4 at Crossroads. Eight-year-old Emily said she was most excited about gym classes as “you get exercised a lot.”

The Miareckis were among hundreds of children starting a new school year on Tuesday in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Grade 4 student Carson McConkey said he was looking forward to meeting new teachers and having recess time with the older children. Carson’s sister, Athina, who started Grade 2, said she was excited to spend recess time with her younger friends from kindergarten.

When Athina was in senior kindergarten, her friends were in junior

kindergarten. Now, that her friends are in Grade 1, she is glad they’re going to have the same recess time.

The first day back is always hectic and Crossroads principal Gerda Klassen was busy from early Tuesday morning preparing and greeting new and returning students.

Tuesday also coincided with the 19th annual Traffic Safety and Awareness Day conducted by the Niagara Regional Police. Officers across the region were looking for drivers who were speeding, driving while distracted, not wearing their seatbelts, failing to obey a crossing guard and not stopping for a school bus.

By the end of the day, 73 tickets had been issued and 89 warnings given out across Niagara, police said in a news release.

Niagara Region has also implemented a new community safety zone at St. Davids Public School. The enforcement for the 1.10-kilometre zone, stretching from York and Queenston roads to Concession 3 Road, will start mid-September.

Police were at the school Tuesday handing out infor-



Athina and Carson McConkey pose in front of Crossroads Public School on the first day of school Tuesday, Sept. 3. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

mation cards and explaining the details about Community Safety Zones. Officers will be at St. Davids during school hours over the next couple of weeks to inform the public about these new changes, the department said.

As of Tuesday, 10 Niagara Student Transportation Services school buses have been equipped with interior and exterior video cameras. The video footage can help bus drivers to file complaints if other vehicles fail to stop for a school bus with activated red flashing lights.

By the end of November, 100 buses will be equipped

with video cameras, police said.

With the start of school, police reminded drivers to slow down in school and community safety zones. All drivers and cyclists must stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the road and when a crossing guard displays a stop sign. Before turning or proceeding through a crosswalk, motorists must also wait until a crosswalk is clear from pedestrians and school crossing guards, police said.

Many set fines for speeding and traffic signal related offences in a community safety zone are also doubled.

Rotary adds **inspiring** messages to rocks at gazebo

Reader Submission
The Lake Report

There’s a new addition to the Rotary Club of NOTL’s “Rotary Rocks” near the gazebo at Queen’s Royal Park.

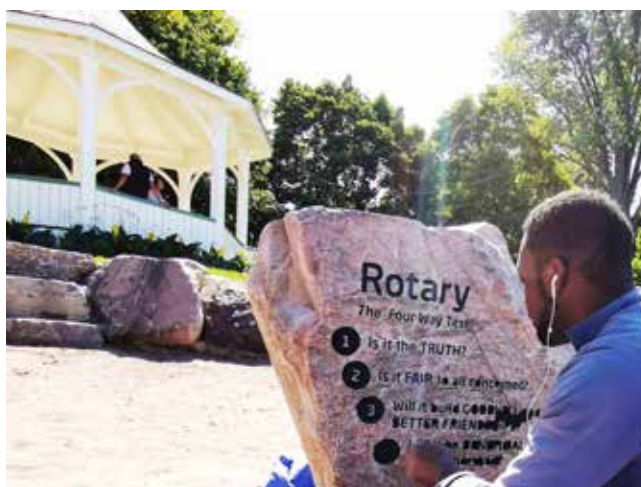
The club built a stone “amphitheatre” to reinforce the area and has now added the final piece, a large upright stone that is engraved with inspiring messages.

“The stone engraving at Rotary Rocks is meant to be a focal point at the park,

giving people a place to reflect,” said club member Paul Lalonde.

The main stone cites Rotarian’s Four-way Test: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

“The front face’s simple universal question is one that is meant to promote kindness, self-reflection, conversation and a call to positive action,” said Lalonde. “It’s also a question



Rotary rocks-Dale Williams engraves the stones. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Rotarians ask themselves, which is why our logo is below the question. It’s a form of answer as well.”

The other side asks if you have made someone’s life better today, which is “how Rotary approaches

all dealings and is a great motto for any dealings in life and business.”

“One kind act can change the world and, like Rotary, we hope people can be moved to change it for the better also,” he said.

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'Tenacious' female authors highlight NOTL literary series

Waverly Neufeld
Special to The Lake Report

Four female Canadian authors are coming to NOTL this fall for Niagara Parks' literary speaker series, Canada's Tenacious Women.

The popular series will be held at the Laura Secord Homestead in Queenston and will take place on the second Thursday of each month from September to December.

The award-winning authors will offer their unique perspectives and published works at the home of one of Canada's most well-known heroines – Laura Secord.

Here is a list of the various authors and when to see them. Each event is at the Queenston Chapel and runs

7 to 9 p.m.:

Sept. 12: Kim Fu – The Lost Girls of Camp Forevermore

Fu is a west-coast author whose debut novel, *For Today I Am a Boy*, won the Edmund White Award and the Canadian Authors Association Emerging Writer Award. Her most recent novel, *The Lost Girls of Camp Forevermore*, has received critical acclaim from the *New York Times*, and her writing has appeared in *Granta*, the *Atlantic*, *enRoute* and the *Times Literary Supplement*.

Oct. 10, Sharon Bala – The Boat People

Bala writes from a "cold rock in the North Atlantic" – St. John's, Nfld. Her bestselling debut novel, *The*

Boat People, was a finalist for Canada Reads 2018 and the 2018 Amazon Canada First Novel Award. In 2017, Bala won the Writers' Trust/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize for her short story *Butter Tea* at Starbucks.

Nov. 14: Lynne Marie Sherry – Where Mary Went

Indigenous author and Fort Erie resident Lynne Marie Sherry is a member of the Six Nations of the Grand River, with blood ties to the Alderville First Nations and Mississauga of the New Credit. Being an explorer, teacher and helper by nature, she finds expression and the opportunity to offer the healing properties of traditional knowledge, through her work as a



Emma Hooper, left, Kim Fu, top right, and Sharon Bala are some of the female authors to take place in the Niagara Parks literary speaker series on Sept. 12. SUPPLIED



writer, poet and speaker. Her most recent book, *Where Mary Went*, follows Mary Fisher through three decades, and events during the Second World War, the Depression, and years spent in the horrific residential Mohawk Institute.

Dec. 12: Emma Hooper – Our Homesick Songs

Hooper is a Canadian author who resides in the U.K., where she completed her

PhD in music-literary studies and lectures on commercial music at Bath Spa University. Her first novel, *Etta and Otto and Russell and James*, was published in 18 languages, and her second, *Our Homesick Songs*, was longlisted for the Giller Prize in 2018. As a musician, she plays viola, violin, vocals, and a number of other small instruments for clients, including the BBC, *The Heavy*, and Peter

Gabriel, as well as for her own solo project: *Waitress for the Bees*.

Admission to each night of the series is \$10, with a series pass available for \$30. Seating is limited. For more information or to reserve a seat, go to niagaraparks.com/coast or contact the Laura Secord Homestead at 905-262-4851. There will be a wine and cheese reception with cash bar.

Shaw Review: Wonderful Cyrano will break your heart

Mike Keenan
The Lake Report

Some bad-asses are considered vulgar and beligerent, people who exhibit unpleasant and extreme behavior. Then, there are those we admire such as Gen. George Patton, who sliced through the Nazis with his tanks.

Cyrano de Bergerac (Tom Rooney), the heroic French swordsman afflicted with a prolonged proboscis, heroically takes on 100 opponents one dark night while incurring only a single deep gash to one hand.

And in the first scene, he vanquishes Valvert (Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster) in a sword fight while simultaneously composing and reciting a poem that ends with a final deft strike. Like contemporary super heroes such as Superman and Batman, he can accomplish anything that he desires – except tell Roxanne (Deborah Hay) that



Deborah Hay as Roxane in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. SUPPLIED/EMILY COOPER

he loves her.

His tragic flaw is low self-esteem, which dooms him, turns him into a furious fighting machine whom nobody dares encounter and forces him into an intermediary romantic role, aiding and abetting the handsome yet inarticulate, love-struck cadet Christian (Jeff Irving) in his from-a-distance courtship of Roxanne, taken

first by appearance and then by prefabricated words.

I watched Heath Lamberts star as *Cyrano* at Shaw in 1983, and both Colm Feore and Christopher Plummer took on the demanding role at Stratford. Now, it's Stratford heavyweight Rooney (oh so good in "Victory") in his debut season at Shaw, and he is phenomenal, forcing all of the action

throughout the play while probably humming to himself Frank Sinatra's signature song, "My Way."

Set in 17th-century France, Kate Hennig translated and adapted Edmond Rostand's verse, adeptly changing it to prose, thus allowing a modern sensibility, and Rooney runs with the freedom, cracking up the audience throughout the

play with his witticisms, many alluding to his nose.

He even has the audacity to joke in his death scene when he revels in his "panache" and he gets away with it, the audience totally won over by his craft, standing and stridently cheering his performance, many loudly shouting out their approval.

Humorously melodramatic Hay is liberated also and besides soundly playing the infatuated Roxanne, her comic moments ("Tell me more") encourage the word-sluggish Irving, and she bravely transports a carriage full of food through enemy Spanish lines at the siege of Arras where *Cyrano*, Christian and the French are starving.

Chris Abraham directs with amusing cross-dressing cast selections and his collaborations with designers Julie Fox and Kimberly Purtell produce perfect lighting for war and ro-

mance as well as costumes, wigs, makeup and prosthetics that are extraordinary.

This is the story of unrequited love for both *Cyrano* and Christian, secretly married to Roxanne to foil the evil commander De Guiche, played perfectly by Patrick Galligan, who whisks them away to war before the marriage is consummated.

And thus the pathos of the final convent scene where Roxanne languishes, visited by *Cyrano* faithfully every Saturday for many years. The woman sitting beside me was so taken that I heard her exclaim to her friend, "I'm coming back to see this again!" Ah, the power of the broken heart.

Cyrano by Edmond Rostand, translated and adapted by Kate Hennig, directed by Chris Abraham plays until Oct. 20 at the Royal George Theatre, 85 Queen St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. shawfest.com or 1-800-511-7429.

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Shaw Festival spends \$330,000 for new audio equipment

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The federal government has given the Shaw Festival \$330,000 for upgrades to the Festival Theatre.

The funding is a matching grant paid through Heritage Canada's Cultural Spaces Fund for the purchase and installation of a new audio equipment for the main 856-seat theatre.

The Shaw raised the other half of the matching funds from its own operations, said Tim Jennings, the festival's executive director.

The federal money was received in March but the announcement was made late last month by Melanie Joly, the minister of tourism.

The new equipment will be installed in January.

In 2016-17, the Shaw, a non-profit organization,



Shaw Festival's artistic director Tim Jennings. SUPPLIED

received \$2.77 million, which was spent on a variety of operations from renovations and solving accessibility issues to purchasing equipment and new seats for the Royal George Theatre.

With the Shaw Festival being one of the largest tourist destinations in the area, seven per cent of the theatre's annual operating budget comes from various levels of government, said Jennings.

Tickets on sale for new Bravo Niagara! season

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Tickets and Flex Packs are now on sale for Bravo Niagara's 2019-20 season.

Eight performances are planned for the sixth season, with four of them taking place at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The new season will kick off on Oct. 19 with soprano Measha Brueggergosman's performance at the recital hall at FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines.

Israeli-born Canadian cellist Ofra Harnoy will take the stage at St. Mark's Church on Nov. 30. The five-time Juno Award winner will perform at 7:30 p.m.

The next show in NOTL will be by London-based classical guitarist Miloš Karadaglić. His solo recital, following the release of his fifth album, *Sound of Silence*, is at 3 p.m. on



Cho-Liang Lin and Jon Kimura Parker who will perform at St. Mark's Anglican Church in NOTL on May 3, 2020. SUPPLIED

March 15, 2020.

Three Broadway performers – Jason Forbach, Siri Howard and Joseph Spieldenner – will entertain the crowd at St. Mark's with a wide range of "heartfelt tunes." The show will start at 7:30 p.m. on May 2, 2020.

Cho-Liang Lin and Jon Kimura Parker will conclude the season as they perform classical music by Beethoven, Prokofiev, Brahms and more. Their

performance will start at 3 p.m. on May 3, 2020.

Purchasing a Flex Pack of three or more concerts comes with exclusive benefits, including discounted prices and the first chance to buy future tickets and Flex Packs before they go on sale to the public.

Single tickets can be purchased online or by phone 289-868-9177.

For a full list of performances and venues, visit www.bravoniagara.org.



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Have some fun

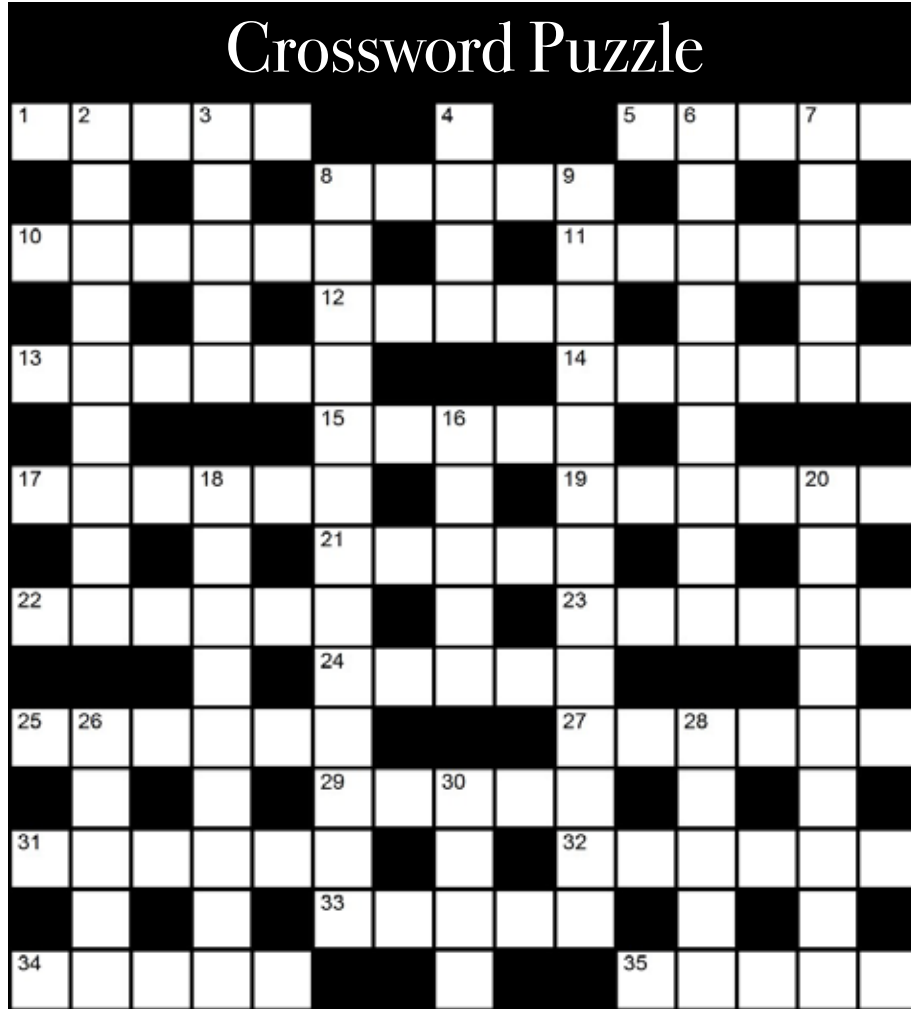
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Across

- 1. Eyots (5)
- 5. Rubbish (5)
- 8. Incantation (5)
- 10. Russian sleigh (6)
- 11. Defence covering (6)
- 12. Having the form of a song (5)
- 13. Sister of Mary and Lazarus (6)
- 14. Resident of e.g. Nairobi (6)
- 15. Stage play (5)
- 17. Scratched (6)
- 19. Plan (6)
- 21. Cuban dance (5)
- 22. Die from lack of food (6)
- 23. Professional killer (6)
- 24. Locations (5)
- 25. Workshop machinery (6)
- 27. Pressed (6)
- 29. Grecian architectural style (5)
- 31. Go back (6)
- 32. Beast (6)
- 33. Porridge (5)
- 34. E.g. Tarka (5)
- 35. Is inclined (5)

Down

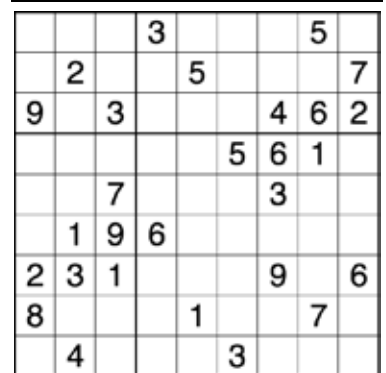
- 2. Rill (9)
- 3. Throw out (5)
- 4. Not in any circumstances (Poetical) (4)
- 6. Recall past experiences (9)
- 7. Sweat room (5)
- 8. Mayonnaise (5,8)
- 9. Lazy (13)
- 16. Allow to enter (5)
- 18. Storage building (9)
- 20. Cemetery (9)
- 26. Representative (5)
- 28. Oil source (5)
- 30. Part of speech (4)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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Greens win Matrimonial, Mantle aces #4

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Ginny and Paul Green have won what is probably one of the toughest titles to win at the NOTL Golf Club – the annual Matrimonial Tournament.

The Greens shot a net score of 69 in the alternate shot format tournament last Wednesday.

The reason it can be so difficult to score well in is that men tend to play all over the course and women tend to hit it up the middle.

With alternate shots, that means women find themselves hitting from areas of the golf course they've only walked past previously.

Second place went to Louise Robitaille and Stephen Warboys (70) and Patty and Bill Garriock (71).

In the new Modern Flight category (in which only one spouse is a full club member), the winners were Don and Cathy Saytar (78), followed by Glenn and Deb Young (79), and Rai Lauge and Jo Holden (80).

Holey Mackinaw: Congrats to Larry Mantle, who went to "work" on Labour Day Monday and

notched the first hole-in-one reported at the NOTL Golf Club this season.

The lanky lefty popped a gap wedge over the front bunker on the par-3 fourth hole, landed his ball about five feet from the pin and rolled it right in. With the bunker blocking his view, Mantle wasn't able to actually see his second career ace on that hole.

But assistant pro Ricky Watson, member Paul Dickson and club champ Joe Doria watched it all unfold from the #5 tee and shouted out the good news.

Mantle, unfazed as ever, wasn't finished there, however.

He continued his torrid play for the next 14 holes, adding a few birdies, sinking putts, hitting pins and had a long run of pars to shoot a stellar round of 2-over 38-36=74. It's one of the best scores posted all year at the club.

18-hole women's league: Congratulations to Marg Ketcheson and Sharon Allen for winning the Yule Pairs match play event. Patty Garriock and Yolanda Henry were dominant forces in Sept. 3 play. Garriock



Larry Mantle with his hole-in-one ball. KEVIN MACLEAN

won low gross with an 84, followed by Henry at 86 and Martha Cruikshank (87). Low net: Garriock (63), Marg Ketcheson (69), Henry (71). Fewest putts: Garriock (25), Cathy Murray (30), Marie Ellison and Henry (31). Closest to pin: Andrea Douglas, Cruikshank. Birdies: Janice White (#2), Michele Darling (#4), Garriock (#13), Cruikshank (#17). Chip-ins: May Chang, Darling (#6), Donna Lailey (#11), Garriock (#13), Cruikshank (#17).

Men's league: Joe Doria won low gross Aug. 29 with a 2-over 38. He also took a \$40 gross skin for a birdie on #5 and was closest to the pin on #8. Larry "Ace" Mantle warmed up for his impending hole-in-one by being closest to the pin on #4 and netting a birdie (and gross skin). Bob Cheriton took the big money with a net skin on #5, worth \$236. Other winners: Closest to pin: Ted Wiens (#2), Arthur

Wosinski (#9). Long drive: Mike Scott, Ron Planche. A Flight winner: John Sobil (22 points), B Flight: Tom Elltoft, Jack Hanna, Mike Freel (23 points). 50/50: Alan Dickson (\$175).

WOOFs: Daryl Fry's even-par 36 was best score of the day on Aug. 27. Ray Lauge took low net and Ted Wiens won the hidden hole (#3). Wiens also was closest to the pin on #4. 50/50: Randy McCartney.

Couples league, Aug. 30: First: Grant & Deborah Williams and Bill & Patty Garriock, second: Cal & Marilyn Cochrane and Dean & Lyn Sanders, third: David & Donna Lailey and Mike Eagen & Michele Darling (all with 35). Most honest: Jack & Eileen Hanna and Rai Lauge & Jo Holden. Closest to pin: David Gagne, Deborah Williams. Long putt: David Gagne, Patty Garriock.



Barron Walker plays pickleball. DARIYA BAIGUZHUYEVA

83rd Rand Cup tennis tourney played in NOTL



The 83rd anniversary of the Rand Cup was marked in Niagara-on-the-Lake over the Labour Day weekend. The family and community tennis tournament was founded in 1936 by Calvin Rand's family (then-owner of the Randwood estate). Here, Clinton Brown (centre), of Buffalo, representing the founding families, reminds the dozens of players and spectators in attendance of the continuing significance of the cross-border nature of the event. Winners of the 2019 Rand Cup — the Salt Brown Trophy — Sam Ridesic and Carmen Bowron, look on. SUPPLIED PHOTO

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Henry Schein supports 125 children with back to school supplies

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

More than 120 children started the new school year with confidence thanks to a Niagara-on-the-Lake company's back-to-school program.

Henry Schein Inc., a medical and dental supplies distributor, in collaboration with the non-profit agency Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold, provided 125 children in need with clothing and personalized

boxes of back-to-school supplies.

The company held a barbecue at which the children received the goodies and enjoyed a variety of activities. There also was a free dental screening service available for the children.

"You only have to be there to experience the joy on faces of the children and having the ability to have fun and then receive a very nice gift box at the end," Betty-Lou Souter, CEO of Community Care, told The Lake Report.

"It's very special and it helps 125 families to ensure the kids start school on the right foot," she said.

Henry Schein has been running its back-to-school program in Canada for 14 years. The program, originally established in Melville, N.Y., in 1998, helps children to get ready for school by providing them with clothing and school supplies.

Throughout the year, Henry Schein's employees also raise money to provide each child with \$100 worth

of clothing and supplies.

Henry Schein identifies recipients by partnering with local non-profit organizations. In this case, Community Care provided a list of clients in need.

Catharine Wickabrod of Henry Schein said the company partnered with Old Navy and Nike. On top of two or three outfits of clothing and a pair of new running shoes, each child received a backpack full of school supplies, healthy snacks and a dental hygiene package.



The annual Back to School event, hosted by Henry Schein Inc. and Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold, provided school supplies to 125 children. SUPPLIED

Writers' Circle: *The Gift* – Irma's solution

Hermine Steinberg
NOTL Writers' Circle

In the previous installments of The Gift, I shared the story of five friends who encountered a magical spirit. She gave them an enchanted tea that could transform the women to the idealized version of themselves at half their age. They were given three days to decide whether they would accept the gift. This is Irma's story.

Irma burst through the front door with her two golden retrievers in tow. She was out of breath and perspiration was running down her face despite the cold weather.

"Are you alright?" David, Irma's husband, rushed up and grabbed the dogs' leashes.

She threw her coat on the hall bench and kicked off her boots. "I've got to find my journal, write it all down before I forget."

"Did something happen?"

"It certainly did!" Irma hugged David. "I'll tell you all about it at dinner, after I write it down. I want to remember every detail." She ran upstairs to her study.

"I made reservations at The Irish Harp for 7," he called after her.

"Plenty of time," she yelled down to him.

David poured himself a scotch and plopped down on his favourite leather

chair. He smiled to himself, shaking his head. Irma was always full of surprises.

When they got to the restaurant, it was bustling with Friday night regulars and tourists. There was a young man fiddling up a storm on the corner stage. Irma asked for a table in the back room.

"We'll start with onion rings and lager," Irma told the waitress. "Then fish and chips for both of us."

"This must be some story," said David. "We normally reserve the onion rings for special occasions."

Irma reached into her purse and retrieved a leather-bound journal with 2019 tooled in gold on the cover. She had been recording her experiences, ideas and short stories for nearly 55 years. Her older sister, Sarah, bought Irma her first journal for her 10th birthday. It became a tradition. Until a few years ago, Sarah gave her a new one every birthday, each with a unique cover and the first page containing a personal letter to Irma.

By the time Irma finished reading her account of what happened in the Commons to David, they had finished their pints and there was nothing left on the platter but crumbs.

"You know, if it was anyone but you, I'd think you were out of your mind," said David.

"I wouldn't totally discount that theory if I were you."



The waitress brought their main courses and for a few minutes they ate silently. David then put down his fork and looked across the table to his wife. "Honey, if you want to do this, I'll support you a thousand per cent. After all, this just might be an offer too good to refuse."

"You know, we'll be celebrating our 40th anniversary next year. The other day I was thinking about how lucky we were to find each other and what an incredible life we've had."

"We have had a wonderful life. You're my best friend and I couldn't have dreamt up a better partner than you. That's why I want you to have this chance."

Irma sat back in her chair.

"I won't lie. As I was writing down my experience, the thought occurred to me that if I could be an idealized form of my younger self, perhaps now ... now that we've already experienced so much and I might be physically able to, I could be a mother."

"Are you sorry we decided not to adopt?"

"No, after years of trying to have a child, we made the right decision to just live our lives to the fullest, design a career around our desire to explore the world and all its wonders. I wouldn't have traded those years, that life for anything." Irma took David's hand. "And what I realized after thinking about the possibility of being a

mother now is that I didn't want to do it alone or with anyone else but you."

David's eyes welled up. "Are you sure? What then?"

"I also discovered something else. I got so excited about what happened, realizing that there are magical forces in this world, that a veil had been lifted and I now knew this other reality existed, I started emailing people we knew that had done research in this area, could analyze what is in the satchel, and imagining a series of podcasts where we would track down other people who have experienced similar things. Monday morning I'm meeting Ray Chelmsford at his lab so he can test a sample."

"Are you saying you want

to unretire, go back to work, and let this gift go?"

Irma's eyes twinkled as they always did when she came up with one of her great ideas. "Well, maybe in my case, the gift was realizing I wasn't really ready for a life of leisure, lunches and volunteer work. It sparked my imagination, injected me with a second lease on life, one we could experience together if you thought we were up to it."

David laughed. "You have no idea how relieved I am! I didn't want to say anything because you seemed so happy. But I've been just itching to take on a new project."

"I also have another crazy idea. The memory the tea conjured up for me was when I went to the doctor with Sarah and we learned that she had Alzheimer's. Reliving that day, now knowing how quickly it has progressed since then, was absolutely devastating."

"Do you think it will work on her?" David got up and sat next to Irma on the bench seat. He put his arm around her. "What's the plan?"

On Monday afternoon Irma and David went to visit Sarah. On Tuesday they returned home with their 35-year-old research assistant whom they just hired to begin their new venture – In Search of Magic.

To be continued ...

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Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report



Parliament Oak School, 1957

I failed school every year except Grades 6 and 7, from which I was pushed forward as I was too old to hold back. I often got the strap, sometimes twice a day, and often twice a week for minor things like disturbing another student in class. We would start school at 9 a.m. and we had an hour and a half for lunch. We got out at 4 p.m., but there were no buses for public school in town. This 1957 picture, taken at Parliament Oak School, shows the boys and girls baseball teams. Our principal, Mr. Brunton, is seen on the left and our teacher, Mr. Nightingale, in on the right.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH



Craft made and perfect

Brian Marshall
Featured

The Industrial Revolution was a societal whirlwind. Change was the norm as enterprising innovators continually challenged the way things were done in virtually every field of endeavour.

New processes spawned different and varied demands on the workforce. Managerial roles multiplied and a new middle class developed.

As the years went by, it seemed that the rate of change increased almost exponentially. By the late 1800s the majority of folks were feeling somewhat shell-shocked and longed for the slower, simpler days of their youth.



Period perfect craftsman. BRIAN MARSHALL

It was this desire for an alternative to the mechanistic ethos of the Industrial Revolution that architects (among others) responded to with the Arts & Crafts style. Born in England, what became the central tenets of this movement were originally penned by John Ruskin, who believed that true morality, art and nature were directly associated with acts of craftsmanship. An early convert to the philosophy, William Morris nearly singlehandedly drove the establishment of Arts & Crafts by creating medieval

styled guilds to produce extremely successful furniture, stained glass, wallpaper and textiles.

And it was Morris who commissioned architect Phillip Webb to develop a residential house design based on these same Arts & Crafts principles, a stylistic statement that was broadly and rapidly embraced.

It wasn't long before Arts & Crafts jumped the pond to North America and spread among the architectural community in the U.S., spawning the Shingle, the Prairie and the Craftsman

expressions.

Of these three, the Craftsman truly captured the imagination and the pocket-books of North Americans.

The brainchild of the Californian architectural firm owned by brothers Charles and Henry Greene, the Craftsman design was based on the Anglo-Indian bungalow form.

Following the local tradition of shingle and board buildings, the brothers drew liberally from elements and stylistic cues of both Japanese and Swiss wooden residences.

The result was informal and brilliantly crafted houses with strong horizontal lines, set into the landscape and incorporating natural rustic materials, large low-pitched roofs with gables, sleeping porches and banks of windows.

They were charming, easy to build and inexpensive; a formula the growing new middle class found irresistible.



Yum - recipes

Local recipe book planned for 2019

The Lake Report is calling on all cooks, chefs, bakers and food enthusiasts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We want your favourite family recipes, and the stories that go with them, to share with the community. Whether it's a special stew, soup, or salad; the best bread or muffins; or a decadent dessert, we'd like to hear from you!

We'd love it if you could include pictures of the food where possible, and of the family member who might have passed the recipe down. If there is any family folklore associated with the recipe, we'd love to hear that too. Maybe there's a certain occasion when it's always made, perhaps there's a funny or sad story to tell that relates to that particular recipe, or certain traditions that accompany it.

We will publish selected recipes regularly, and at the end of the year we'll compile all the recipes together as a book of NOTL family favourites. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to a local charity.

Please send your recipes, pictures and stories to: recipes@niagaranow.com

The top recipes will be published in an annual paperback book which will be available (in limited supply) to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake at The Lake Report office. This year's book (title uncertain!) will be released in the coming months!

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90 years of flying in NOTL



Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

On the cool, wind-swept beaches in Kitty Hawk, N.C., history was being made in the dawn of the 20th century.

On Dec. 17, 1903, at 10:35 in the morning two brothers, Wilbur and Orville Wright proved to the world that man was capable of successfully flying under his own power.

Their first flight lasted 12 seconds, gained a height of 10 feet and covered a distance of 120 feet, shorter than the wing span of a Boeing 747 jumbo jet. Three more flights were conducted that morning. The last flight, at noon, lasted 59 seconds, gained a height of 14 feet and flew for 852 feet.

The first flight in Canada took place in Baddeck, N.S., on Feb. 23, 1909, when John McCurdy piloted the Silver Dart.

The plane was designed by Alexander Graham Bell and the team from the Aerial Experimental Association, the majority of whom were Canadian.

McCurdy flew the plane for a distance of 2,640 feet, at an elevation of 30 feet for 45 seconds. The speed was an astounding 40 mph!

The First World War saw the aviation world expand greatly. No longer considered experimental, planes were now developed into war machines. However, when the war was over, there was a glut of pilots; those thrill-seekers discovered that the return to civilian life was not easy.

In Canada, as well as in the United States, "barn storming" brought aviation to the masses. The death-defying and thrilling aerial demonstrations were performed not just in and around large cities but out in rural communities.

Young people now dreamed of flying, a dream



NOTL airfield full of Tiger Moth fighter planes in 1943 when it was a training facility. IMAGE COURTESY NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

that was attainable. Small airports and flight schools popped up across the country.

In May 1929, the St. Catharines Flying Club received its charter to be officially recognized by the Canadian government to run a flight school. The first Niagara District Airport was just northeast of the Welland Canal but in 1935 it moved to its present location.

The St. Catharines Flying Club moved as well and has been an integral part of the airport, even to this day. Both the flying club and the airport are celebrating their 90th anniversaries this year.

When the Second World War broke out airplanes were once again considered war machines. However, this time, Canadian pilots did their training in Canada with the newest branch of the Department of National Defence, the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Although we did have pilots flying and fighting during the First World War, they were trained and commanded under Britain's Royal Air Force. After the war the Canadian government debated back and forth whether a permanent air force could or should be maintained. The decision was finally made on April 1,

1924: Canada would have a permanent air force.

In 1939, Germany invaded Poland and war was declared throughout Europe including Great Britain, which meant all the Commonwealth countries. Canada was now at war and the three branches of our military, army, navy and air were in full training.

At the time, small airports were deemed to the Department of National Defence. Niagara District Airport was included and became the Elementary Flying Training School (#9) in the fall of 1940. During the years from 1940 to Jan. 15, 1944, a total of 1,848 pilots were trained in the basics of flying. Further training in aerial combat was done in Britain.

One well-known pilot to go through the training at the Niagara District Airport was John Gillespie Magee. When he finished his training in Canada, he was shipped out to England where he continued to train.

He was one of several who experimented with high-altitude (40,000-foot plus) flight into the stratosphere. After his first high-altitude flight he composed the poem "High Flight," which he sent to his mother on the back of one of his letters.

On Dec. 11, 1941, Magee died in a training session.

He is buried in Lincolnshire, England.

After his death, his parents had the poem published. It is now the official poem of the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal Air Force and the U.S. Air Force Academy. This poem can be seen at the Niagara District Airport just outside of the main terminal building.

Another important alumnus is St. Catharines native Leonard Birchall, who is also known as the "Saviour of Ceylon" (now Sri Lanka). Birchall always wanted to fly and saved relentlessly to just purchase one more hour of flight training. Eventually he attended the Royal Military College and just after his graduation, the Second World War was declared. And, like all young men at that time, he volunteered and joined the RCAF.

His first tour of duty was flying anti-submarine combat patrols off the coast of Nova Scotia. Later, he was sent to northern Scotland where he flew the new Consolidated Catalina long-range amphibious aircraft to run patrols throughout the British Isles. This was short-lived as Japan had entered the war and Birchall's squadron was sent to Ceylon.

Birchall was not even there 48 hours when he was sent

out on a patrol. On April 4, 1942, just a few hours into the patrol, a huge Japanese naval fleet was spotted heading toward Ceylon. The air crew were able to send a coded message back to headquarters before they were detected by the Japanese and shot down. Birchall and six of his eight surviving crew members were held as prisoners of war.

The Japanese tortured the men to find out if a message had been sent but all claimed they hadn't had time before they were shot down. The Japanese fleet continued toward Ceylon, which was now prepared for battle. Although heavy damage was inflicted by the Japanese, they were not able to take the port and eventually withdrew.

On Birchall's return to Canada after the war, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He died on Sept. 10, 2004, and is buried in Kingston, Ont..

The Niagara District Airport is celebrating its 90th anniversary of operation. Over the years there have been many ups and downs, it has seen businesses come and go and many stories to reflect upon.

The airport is ideally located in the beautiful wine region of the Niagara

peninsula. Close to Niagara Falls, historic Niagara-on-the-Lake, golf courses, the theatre and excellent restaurants.

It boasts a 5,000-foot runway with a 24-hour customs clearance capability. On-site services include jet refuelling, NAV Canada and Avgas (aviation fuel).

There is a flight training school on site as there has been since the first airport opened its doors in 1929. Daily flights to Toronto are available as are helicopter tours over the region. The new terminal building offers hassle-free services to all commuters and visitors to the region.

Another anniversary celebration must also be noted. The first parachute jump in Canada was made on July 4, 1919, by Frank Ellis. He jumped from a Curtiss JN4 aircraft piloted by Don Russell over Crystal Beach, Ont.

At 10,000 feet, using a 28-foot circular canopy as his parachute, Ellis jumped. Landing in Lake Erie, he used two rubber tubes as flotation devices until a pleasure craft was able to pick him up.

The Niagara Historical Society is bringing the Canadian Forces Snowbirds back to the Niagara District Airport next week for everyone to enjoy their wonderful show. However, we now realize just how fortuitous the date is that we were given by the Snowbirds.

A celebration of 90 years of operation for the Niagara District Airport and 100 years of the first parachute jump in Canada offers a great day for all.

On Sept. 11, not only will you be able to watch the aerial display of the Snowbirds but you will also have an opportunity to watch the Geronimo! Sky Diving team. Free parking, food trucks, merchants and many displays will also be on hand as well.

For more information on the event, go to www.notlsnowbirds.ca.

More Niagara's History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at: www.niagaranow.com

Niagara Historical
SOCIETY MUSEUM



43 Castlereagh St.
Niagara-on-the-Lake
905-468-3912



COMMUNITY



We invite you to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section. Send your submissions to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to be featured.



NOTL community snaps



Leo and Lucas Pillitteri work hard selling lemonade to raise money for Team Pillsy at Riverview Cellars on Saturday afternoon. BRITTANY CARTER



Do NOTL residents Glenn and Debbie Young have the gardener's magic touch or is the town's superior soil the secret? A 12-foot-tall patch of sunflowers has blossomed in front of their Niagara-on-the-Lake home. Glenn says the giant plants grew from seeds that were part of a Cheerios promotion to help the bee population. It's such a standout that people have asked to take selfies with the towering sunflowers, he said.



Willy Janzen and Bob Forbes of NOTL Kinsmen Club stand next to a new club sign which was installed last Thursday. The previous sign was damaged in hit-run accident earlier in June. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA



The Golden Plunger
With Betty and Jane
Hinterbrook



Jordan Cowe accepts the Golden Plunger for Hinterbrook. THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

The Plunger Team was meandering along Lakeshore Road when we came upon Hinterbrook Estate Winery. As we entered the winery it had a distinct feel of "artistic peace," much like an art gallery, with a unique selection of wines displayed in small groupings. The Nomad label speaks of the true expression of the land with artwork depicting the spirit of Canadians. The phrase coined by fellow sports enthusiasts, "We The North," comes to mind when enjoying this winery. While drinking in the atmosphere we learned that unique cab franc grapes are used to make Hinterbrook's popular Franc Blanc wine. As the Plunger Nomads visited the privy we noted the attention given to hygiene and cleanliness. The restroom was brightly lit and was accessible for all seeking comfort on their journey. Guests of the winery are encouraged to design a personal Nomad label, becoming a part of this story.

3/5 Gold Plungers



Top: Sonny and Judy D'Mello are the Garden of the Week 12 winners for their B&B property at 481 Gate Street. Bottom: Brian and Jackie Lonergan are the last winners of Garden of the Week contest. Their award-winning garden is on 155 Loretta Drive. PHOTOS BY BRITTANY CARTER AND DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Gardens of the week



RIDDLE ME THIS:

I'm always in front of you but you can never see me. What am I?

I certainly taste better than I smell. What am I?
Answer: A tongue
Answered first by: Cheryl House
Also answered correctly by: Marion Briston, Chuck Jackson, Katie Reimer, Zaheer Merali, Evan Ganski, Mark Abboud, Carla Abboud, Bob Tebbutt.
Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.

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FEATURED LOCAL STORY

The Great NOTL

Summer Walkabout

Welcome to the latest episode of the Great NOTL Summer Walkabout, a summer-long series of stories that will take you to all corners of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Our reporters will trek around the community to meet residents and visitors, attend events, visit area landmarks and tell stories about what they find. Enjoy the Walkabout.

A tour of Old Town



Steve Steele leads the Old Town Walking Tour hosted by the Niagara Historical Society and Museum. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

This town's history is much more intricate and detailed than many know, like Dave and Doris Kent who were just a few of about 20 locals and tourists who joined the Niagara Historical Society and Museum's guided walking tour of Old Town on Saturday morning.

The one-and-a-half-hour casual stroll through some of the defining landmarks and important moments of NOTL's history taught walkers some obscure and unknown facts about the historic village, while also providing a behind the scenes look into the crowded core of town.

Kent said it was one of the best guided tours he had been on, and he's attended many, both with his wife and on his own, he added. He travels to Europe often and makes it a habit to jump on tours and learn a little bit of the history of each place he stays,

at home and abroad.

Though he says he considers himself fairly well-versed in NOTL's past, there were several things he said he was surprised to learn.

"I think probably how many times they moved Brock's body once he was dead, the poor guy," Kent said.

Sir Isaac Brock was exhumed and reburied four times, the group learned during the walk.

He says he was also pleasantly surprised to see Steve Steele guiding the tour. The two flew together as pilots for nearly 40 years with Air Canada and haven't seen each other in several years.

"He and I flew together years and years ago. It was great seeing him after all that time ... I haven't talked to him for probably 20 years or more," Kent said.

The group met at the gazebo at Queen's Royal Park to begin their journey. Steele corralled the group to introduce himself as one of about eight guides who perform variations of the

tour. Each guide has their own highlights and flair, he said, so you could have a very different experience coming back again. Guides follow a loose guideline and must be able to verify information if they want to add their own historical facts.

Steele said as each guide creates their own experience, he doesn't have a set route exactly, though he said the museum supplied about 17 pages of notes when it started with the War of 1812 Tours, which were the start of the walking tours, and he has about 60 pages of personal research that he uses to develop his own tours. The route may change based on the amount of people in attendance, he said.

Saturday morning's excursion was one of the biggest groups the museum has seen. Usually tours see about six to eight participants.

New residents of NOTL Bill and Wendi Barber said they wanted to experience the tour because they have

lived in town for about three years but haven't seen a lot of what the town has to offer.

"We haven't even done a wine tour yet!" she said.

She thanked the Lake Report's printing of the event calendar each week for learning about the tours at all.

"I usually hear about things after they happen, it's nice to find out about something before it's been and gone," Barber said.

From the gazebo, where Steele talked about the town's war background and the relations and conflicts between the US and Canadian troops, the group learned about the town's beginnings.

"The information regarding Fort Niagara and how it led to the growth of the town with United Empire Loyalists coming across," Steele said that is one of the highlights of the tour for him. The cemetery at St. Mark's United Church also holds a lot of interesting history, he said.

"There's a lot of people in the cemetery that have done a lot of good things for Niagara-on-the-Lake. I think those are the highlights," Steele said.

The group walks up King Street for a brief stop at the plaque marking Ontario's first newspaper, the Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle.

From there, the tour is brought down Ricardo Street to arrive at the St. Mark's United Church cemetery. Stopping at several iconic graves and remnants of war throughout the old graveyard, the group continues to the corner of King and Queen streets before meandering through the streets, stopping at interesting landmarks before finally ending at the Niagara Historical Society and Museum on Castleragh Street.

Steele guides the large group seamlessly throughout town, making quick remarks while passing historic landmarks and stopping to answer any and all questions tour-goers may have.

If an answer isn't readily available in his knowledge base, he takes the time to quickly look it up to provide an answer.

The leisurely stroll is both relaxing and informative, bringing new residents of town, born and raised locals and tourists from around the world to embark on a morning journey through NOTL's historic Old Town.

The group is invited to peruse the museum at their leisure after the tour, the yellow sticker worn throughout serves as entrance to the museum and can be used immediately or at a later date.

Steele encourages the group to check out his favourite exhibition piece, Sir Isaac Brock's hat, with its own intriguing history.

The museum's Walking Tours of Old Town take place on Saturday's and Sunday's at 11 a.m. from June to September. The museum also hosts a variety of other tours and events, which can be found on the website at nhs.ca.

Join us for our Annual
Harvest Party!

Saturday, September 21st
from 12-6pm



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