

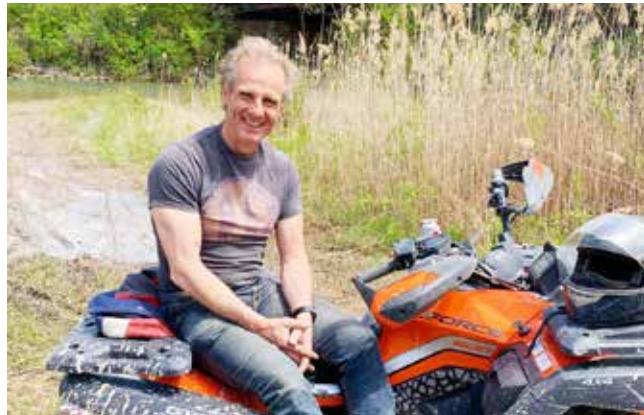


Soggy September harvest | Page 10

Vol. 4, Issue 39

Serving all five communities of Niagara-on-the-Lake

September 30, 2021



Darren Werner has been missing since Sept. 16. FACEBOOK

Disappearance of Darren Werner shrouded in mystery, says investigator

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Det.-Sgt. Richard Gauthier says he has no idea what happened to Darren Werner.

"It's so bizarre, people don't just disappear without a trace like this," Gauthier said in an interview Wednesday.

Werner was last seen on Sept. 16.

Gauthier has been put in charge of Werner's case and he says it has consumed his life.

"I'm losing sleep over this now because it doesn't make any sense," he said.

"It does not make sense, it does not make sense," the detective repeated.

As of now, Niagara Regional Police do not suspect foul play was involved in Werner's disappearance.

"I'd love to be able to say, 'We suspect foul play. Stay tuned,' but I can't," he said.

The void of information police have on the situation is unusual.

"In my 25 years of experience I can honestly say this is a first."

Gauthier said police agencies are on alert across the province for signs of Werner. The detective stressed that Werner is in no legal trouble.

"If someone knows where he is or if he, for that matter, reads this or sees this

Continued on Page 4

Santa cycles for palliative care

NOTL's Tim Taylor virtually rides 1,000 kilometres to Quebec City



Tim Taylor cycles down Niven Road on Monday, shortly after completing his 1,000-kilometre virtual ride. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

How long does it take to cycle to Quebec City? That depends who you ask.

For Tim Taylor, who just virtually pedalled the 1,000-kilometre journey, it was about 20 days.

Taylor biked every day, about 50 kilometres daily, as part of the Healing Cycle ride to raise funds for palliative care services in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He finished his figurative trip to Quebec City on Monday.

For those who aren't good with calculating distances, that's like travelling to Fort Erie from Niagara-on-the-Lake every day.

Taylor, who has been participating in the fundraiser for nine years, said it was actually nice to be able to do something a little

different. While normally the ride is a one-day event, it was opened up for people to ride all through the month of September at their own pace.

"Frankly, I was getting a little bored with just simply going out and riding around in the same circles that I do all the time so I decided to set myself a goal, and I looked around and I decided that I would virtually ride

to Quebec City," Taylor says from his home, still dressed in his red biking outfit and shirt that says "Santa for Palliative Care."

He mapped out the distance using bike trails on Google.

"It's mostly off-road, not that I've ever seen any of it," he jokes. "But it's a little farther than it would be if

Continued on Page 5

Former hydro executive won't serve jail time for \$425,000 fraud

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

A former vice-president of Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro, who stole more than \$425,000 from the utility and then repaid it all, will not spend any time in jail.

Kazi Marouf, who was vice-president of operations, was given a conditional sentence of two years less a day when he appeared via Zoom in a St. Catharines courtroom on Monday.

Under an agreement

reached between the Crown and defence, Judge Deborah Calderwood ordered Marouf to spend one month under strict house arrest and then for the following 11 months must abide by a daily curfew.

Over the next two years, if he violates any of the other sentencing conditions imposed, Calderwood warned that he can be brought back to court and sent to jail.

"I feel very, very bad for this action. It was a momentary lapse of good judgment," Marouf told the court.

"It is not in my character. I'm sorry to all the people I hurt, especially my wife and family, and obviously the community at large."

The 66-year-old father of three said he is "getting help" and just wants to "live in peace with my wife."

The Fort Erie resident pleaded guilty in September to fraud over \$5,000 and assistant Crown attorney Henry Limheng told the judge Marouf's remorse, his

repayment and plea were factors in recommending he not spend time in jail.

Defence lawyer Richard Corbett noted his client had no prior criminal record, had previously been active with local non-profit organizations, including the United Way, and was otherwise an "upstanding" member of the community.

The judge noted that between March 2019 and July 2020 Marouf committed

Continued on Page 5



NOTL Hydro CEO Tim Curtis, left, and former vice-president Kazi Marouf. FILE PHOTO



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An illustration of a tentatively approved gateway design for Queen and Mississauga streets. The project has been the subject of much criticism from residents. SEFARIAN DESIGN GROUP

NOTL councillors pick new gateway design

Evan Saunders
 Local Journalism Initiative
 The Lake Report

A new gateway design has been chosen for the entranceway to Old Town that does not feature a controversial obelisk and aims to be of a design more reminiscent with Niagara-on-the-Lake's heritage buildings.

The obelisk design, its size and the modern look of the wall received overwhelmingly negative reactions on social media, letters to The Lake Report and an online survey done by the town.

With the removal of the obelisk, the project is now moving forward and donor Gerry Kowalchuk couldn't be happier.

"I couldn't feel better, it's as simple as that. I'm elated," Kowalchuk said in an interview Tuesday.

Kowalchuk initiated the project with a \$250,000 donation through the Gerald Kowalchuk Family Fund.

The new design was presented by Sefarian Design Group during a council meeting on Monday. There

were three options: Option one had the obelisk, option two did not and option three was to scrap the project entirely.

Council unanimously voted for option two, getting rid of the much maligned structure once and for all. About 75 per cent of survey respondents did not like the design of the obelisk. The option was passed in principle.

"Proposal number two, it's a concept and I'm expecting the consultants with staff to flesh out that concept," Coun. Allan Bisback said.

"If something comes out that's astronomical, i.e. a huge increase in operating costs or a huge increase in costs associated with the plaza that the wonderful donor is saying he can't do, then they would come back to council."

Representatives from Sefarian produced a new design based on the comments collected on the town's Join The Conversation page.

"We took the survey results to heart and we really tried to create a redesign

that reflected the heritage of the area better than the first design," Brad Smith, a senior landscape architect with Sefarian told council.

Kowalchuk said it was important the team took the public's comments seriously.

"I don't want to be labelled with this as just greedily getting what I want," Kowalchuk said. "I respect the fact that people did participate."

The new design focuses on a stone wall built using historic-looking building products such as dry stone or brick to evoke the history of buildings such as Fort Mississauga, said Haig Sefarian, principal architect for Sefarian.

Smith said the rock would be Queenston limestone or whirlpool sandstone, which are both indigenous to NOTL.

The designers said they tried to bring the design within the dimensions of the existing gateway.

The current signage reaches a height of 2.1 metres and the landscaped area stretches 25.3 metres along Queen Street.

The chosen design will be 24 metres along Queen and reach a maximum height of roughly 3.2 metres where the town's emblem will be installed. Most of the wall is 2.1 metres high, according to the conceptual drawings presented by Sefarian.

An arched doorway along the left side of the wall could be slightly taller, Smith said. He repeatedly stressed the design is conceptual and can be adjusted now that the project is guaranteed to continue.

The design also features extensive planting along the wall and proposes redesigned corners on the south side of Queen Street at Mississauga Street.

"We've proposed an enlarged plaza/gathering space on the southeast corner. That would allow some congregation to view the sign across the road and take pictures," Smith said.

Fears about the added price of the extensive planting required were slightly allayed by Kowalchuk, who said he was pleased to see

the slowed-down project making gains.

"It was a wise choice, number two. And the reason I say that is any savings by not putting the obelisk up will automatically go to the plaza on the other side of the street," Kowalchuk told councillors.

Gracia Janes of the Niagara Conservancy spoke against the project even after reviewing the new designs.

"Although (Sefarian) has the nerve to show images of Fort Mississauga there's no mention of the view being blocked," Janes told councillors.

Kowalchuk noted trees near the present gateway already block the view of the fort.

Janes also felt the building materials did not accurately represent Old Town.

"Dry stone walls have nothing to do with the buildings in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Our heritage homes are wood and brick. Dry stone walls have to do with Queenston," she said.

Sefarian said the concept is to use dry stone but the

company would be willing to use whatever building materials it is directed to as discussions on the design continue.

Janes pushed for council to accept option three, which would have stopped the project entirely. She said the wall is not beautiful and has a "depressive and oppressive" feel.

She also had issues with how the project came about.

"This project was not started by council, and it was not started by the people in council or strong opinion from a heritage group or the heritage advisory committee," she said.

"It was started by one person and this, in our view, is not the way to do it."

Kowalchuk said he had no problems with the criticisms regarding the project over the past few months.

"I'm not offended at all," he said. "I'm not doing this to turn people off. I want to be happy about this."

The approval of the design puts to bed a months-long debate over the gateway project.

Niagara Region seeks feedback on massive consolidated transit plan

Evan Saunders
 Local Journalism Initiative
 The Lake Report

GO Transit and the Region of Niagara want resident feedback on the proposed consolidation of transit across the region.

Residents can access a survey on movingtransit-

forward.ca. It is open until Oct. 3.

The new transit system would see hours of operation standardized across the entire region and make travel between municipalities more seamless, director of GO implementation services Matt Robinson told Niagara-on-the-Lake council in July.

The plan was originally resisted by NOTL councillors because an assessment-based model of payment was proposed. This would result in NOTL paying more than its fair share as it does for police services.

But in July, Robinson presented an updated plan to council which said the

town would pay based on hours of service and usage within the municipality. He estimated the town would be paying \$2.7 million per year by 2025.

The town currently pays about \$1.8 million for its transit, according to GO's presentation to council in July.

A triple-majority vote to move forward with the plan will be coming at some point during the fall.

In order for the plan to pass, the region will have to vote in favour and a majority of the municipalities that also contain a majority of the region's population must support it as well, according to a

news release from the region.

If the vote passes, a 15-person commission will be formed with representatives from all the municipalities. A 20-member advisory board made up of Niagara residents, post-secondary institutions, business groups and others will also be created to guide the project through.



Truth and Reconciliation Day must be about education, says Métis actress

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

National Truth and Reconciliation Day should be focused on education about residential schools, says Shaw Festival actor Julie Lumsden, a Métis who hails from Manitoba.

The day – today, Thursday, Sept. 30 – is reserved for remembering the victims of the residential school system in Canada. It falls on the same day as Orange Shirt Day, which also honours the victims of residential schools.

Lumsden said the importance of National Truth and Reconciliation Day lies in educating younger generations since the future is in their hands.

"Children in schools and young people are the future to healing. They are already so informed and knowledgeable about the truth of this country and where we've been," she said.

"To think about tomorrow we have to know what we can do today and (National Truth and Reconciliation Day) is something we can do today that will make a better tomorrow."

While the day is a statutory holiday for federal employees, the province of Ontario is not making it a formal holiday.

Lumsden says the country has been on a learning journey through COVID-19 and the discovery of children's graves on residential school properties.

"It's at a point now where people can't ignore or excuse away or remain ignorant about the truths



Julie Lumsden is a Winnipeg-born actress who recently received the outstanding achievement in performing arts award at the Celebration of Nations. SUPPLIED

of this country," Lumsden said.

"To heal we have to acknowledge and this is a small step within that."

Lumsden has starred in numerous productions across the province and is one of the Shaw's most recognizable female leads.

And now she can add award winner to the list.

Lumsden was presented with the outstanding achievement in performing arts award at the Niagara region's Celebration of Nations event in St. Catharines earlier in the month.

"It's a huge honour," Lumsden said in an interview.

"To be able to come into a new community, to be able to come into a place like Niagara, like the Shaw Festival and be welcomed is one thing, and then to also be acknowledged is hugely humbling."

Lumsden was born and raised in Winnipeg. She graduated from the University of Winnipeg's Desautel Faculty of Music. She studied classical music and got a degree in classical voice, meaning Lumsden has the vocal chops to back up her acting abilities.

She worked several shows in Winnipeg and Thunder Bay before getting a chance to audition at the Shaw Festival. Six months later, Lumsden received a call asking her to be a part of the festival's 2019 lineup and she has called the festival home ever since.

And Lumsden stays close to her work, living in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Old Town, and she said she couldn't ask for a better community to call home.

"I'm being welcomed into this community with such open arms, which is how I have felt since the minute I got off the plane at Pearson and took my car to Niagara-on-the-Lake," she said.

"I feel an immense amount of gratitude to the nominating committee and to Tim Johnson and everyone at Celebration of Nations. I just feel so grateful and really humbled and honoured."

The Celebration of Nations is an annual gathering of Indigenous arts, culture and tradition that seeks to highlight members of the Indigenous community in Niagara's achievements in their professional and

cultural spheres.

Lumsden is a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation and has German and Scottish ancestry.

The federation recently succeeded in a years long initiative of becoming the legally recognized democratically elected government of Métis in Manitoba.

As a Métis, Lumsden can authentically representing Métis and Indigenous stories through her acting, she said.

"I've had the immense honour of portraying Indigenous characters and specifically Métis characters. It's a huge responsibility to be able to not only tell stories but to tell stories that are community-minded and based in your culture," she said.

This becomes an opportunity for Lumsden to share Métis and Indigenous stories and to learn more about her identity.

"For me, that's part of my learning journey of who I am and what it means to be a Métis woman, what it means to carry different nationalities within myself and different cultures within myself."

The crossing of cultures is at the heart of Métis identity.

"That's kind of the crux of being a Red River Métis. The amalgamation of First Nations and Scottish or First Nations and French or First Nations and English," Lumsden said.

"The real centre of our culture is the amalgamation of two great cultures and respect within that for the strengths of either side."

More stories on reconciliation on Pages 8 and 12.



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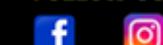
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Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara's chief medical officer of health says people, including family members, who aren't vaccinated against COVID-19 shouldn't be invited to Thanksgiving gatherings this year, to help reduce the risk of spreading the potentially deadly virus.

"My advice would be not to have unvaccinated people invited to those family events," Dr. Mustafa Hirji said on Monday, during a public health news conference.

In response to a reporter's question, he said he's worried that Thanksgiving could lead to a lot of spread of infection "and we may see a spike of infections coming out of that."

"That could mean vaccinated people who are around an infected, unvaccinated person will be at risk of becoming one of those breakthrough infections that could lead to children having their school disrupted, people not being able to work or causing workplace outbreaks," he said.

Aside from children under 12 who aren't yet

eligible for a vaccine, the message was clear: Unvaccinated family members simply shouldn't be invited.

"People who are choosing not to be vaccinated probably shouldn't be invited to those Thanksgiving gatherings, to make sure you don't cause a risk for everybody else who's attending," Hirji said.

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COVID cases appear to be flattening, vaccines coming for kids five to 11

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara's chief medical officer has some good news regarding COVID-19. So far, in Ontario and Niagara, cases seem to have flattened out and even be dropping.

During a public health news conference Monday, Dr. Mustafa Hirji said that means the worries of a bad fourth wave have been "paused temporarily."

However, he does think "there's lots of risk as we go through the rest of the fall."

"As weather gets cooler, people spend more time indoors, they're going to socially interact more, that's going to start to push those cases back up. We're going to have some big celebration-type gatherings around Thanksgiving, Halloween — all of those are going to put risks that we're going to see cases go up," he said.

"But nonetheless I think it's very good news for us right now that we are buying ourselves more time to get people vaccinated."

He suspects the reason cases are lower is that



Public health is preparing for vaccines for children.
FILE PHOTO

people have cut back on social activities, knowing there was a risk of a large fourth wave, in combination with getting back into work mode and having less time to socialize.

Public health is also preparing to roll out doses of a reformulated pediatric Pfizer vaccine to kids aged five to 11 as soon as it's approved. Hirji said there are about 32,500 children in that age range in Niagara.

He said the agency is working on a campaign to encourage parents to have

their children vaccinated, noting elementary schools "are being very much affected" by COVID.

One challenge with the rollout is actually getting the vaccine, since it won't be the same one as is currently stored in freezers.

"Once it's approved, we're going to we need to get ahold of that vaccine. I'm hoping it's going to be readily available, but it's quite possible that we won't be able to get ahold of very much initially," he said.

While the risk of severe illness in children is much less than an adult, he said it's absolutely not a risk parents should be taking.

"Definitely we see that amongst children the chance to severe illness are much less. That being said we do definitely have a handful of children who have been hospitalized with COVID-19," he said.

"The other part is that if (children) are infected, it's a very high risk of spread within the household, so anybody else in a home who is unvaccinated is going to be particularly at risk."

Lead detective in Darren Werner case says there's no evidence of foul play

Continued from Front Page

on TV, I have to make it very clear that he is not in trouble," Gauthier said.

"He's not going to get arrested. We just want to put his family at ease and put the community at ease."

Gauthier said the police have no tangible leads.

"Why would someone disappear like that? I mean, there's a plethora of reasons — who knows? We don't know."

Gauthier said it could be that Werner went somewhere and suffered a medical emergency, leaving him incapable of contacting anyone.

More mystery abounds when considering the unknown vehicle Werner was reportedly seen getting into.

"We don't know who was driving, we don't know what kind of car it was, we don't know what colour it was and we don't even know if this car exists," he said.

"We're in the process of combing through CCTV cameras in the area to see if we can find this car, which is a needle in a haystack."



Det-Sgt. Richard Gauthier.
SUPPLIED

Gauthier said if something happened to Werner, it could be very hard to identify him if a lot of time elapses.

"It happens all the time here in Niagara Falls. Having been a detective here for five years, I could blow your mind if I showed you how many unidentified human remains we have of people that have either fallen into the gorge or end up in the water and wash up on shore."

"It takes years to identify these people."

Having said that, Gauthier stressed that there's no reason to suspect Werner is in any way injured or dead.

"This is just a man who's vanished and two kids who are missing their dad and I don't have answers for them."

Gauthier has released a video calling on people who may know Werner's whereabouts to reach out to the police. Anonymous tips can be made to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

People with information can also call Niagara Police at 905-688-4111, ext. 1009315.

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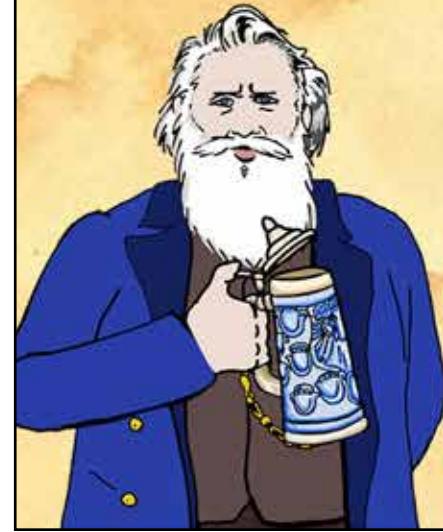
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Woman seriously injured in ATV crash



A 28-year-old woman is recovering in hospital after crashing her all-terrain vehicle on Sunday evening near Carlton Street and Seaway Haulage Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake, police say. The woman, from the Hamilton area, was first thought to have life-threatening injuries, Niagara Regional Police said. However, doctors later said her injuries were serious but her life was not in danger, police said. NOTL firefighters secured a landing site for an ORNGE air ambulance to land and transport the woman to hospital. No charges have been laid, police said. NOTL FIRE DEPARTMENT PHOTO

Conditional sentence for ex-hydro executive

Continued from Front Page

a "serious breach of trust" when he stole the money from his employer.

Marouf was hired by the utility in 2017 and made "a number of important contributions to NOTL Hydro during his time here," CEO Tim Curtis said in a victim impact statement submitted to the court.

Investigators said the

scam involved a phony invoice scheme. It was discovered by another NOTL Hydro employee, who brought it to the attention of senior management.

The utility conducted an internal investigation and subsequently hired a Toronto forensic accounting firm to look into the case.

Hydro officials have emphasized that the fraud had no effect on the utility's

financial status or customers' bills.

In his court statement, Curtis called for a conditional sentence for Marouf, with house arrest as "he is not a threat to society."

Curtis described the "shock and betrayal" that he, the staff and board of directors felt when the fraud was discovered.

"The betrayal of trust of one's work associates was,

for most, the bigger sin," he wrote.

"The fact that Kazi was able to repay the fraudulently obtained amounts, while a great relief and positive first step in making amends, creates questions as to why this crime was committed in the first place," Curtis said.

The utility is applying to have Marouf's professional engineering designation revoked, he added.

Virtual ride to Quebec supports end of life services

Continued from Front Page

you were driving a car."

"For all intents and purposes, I arrived at the Plains of Abraham this afternoon, or this morning I guess about 10 o'clock."

Taylor, 72, said it wasn't the 50 kilometres that was the hard part, doing it every day. "Particularly for an old codger like me. The recovery doesn't happen quite so quickly."

For Taylor, palliative care is a service that is close to his heart, both personally and semi-professionally. His mother Mary Taylor died in 2011 and relied on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service.

"The doctor helped not

only my mother through that period, but helped the rest of us through that period, which is important."

His sister Terry Mactaggart was also the head of the service 10 years ago when he started participating in the ride.

"She said, 'Hey, try to get a little bit of a peloton of people around,' and I got involved and every year sort of got a little more involved, a little more involved. But then, when my mother passed away at Upper Canada Lodge, we had a lot of palliative care, and I saw how important it is for people in end-of-life circumstances to get a good quality of life, not just not just sort of go away."

This year the NOTL team

— the Pedal Pushers — will raise about \$20,000 for the NOTL organization, he said. Taylor raised about \$6,500 of that total.

"It feels good. Aside from anything else, we can actually make a difference," he says.

Taylor, who is already a fan of cycling, says, "Who could ask for more?"

"It was fun. September was largely a good weather month — a few terrible headwinds and a little bit of rain — but it was a good month to ride. It wasn't as hot as August was."

Taylor dresses in full red when he rides for the Pedal Pushers, an occasion he said happens twice a year — once for the ride, and again in the winter, when he

dons his Santa outfit to once again raise funds for NOTL palliative care.

"Many years ago I started, because of my natural attributes," says the white-bearded gent. "I started being asked to act as Santa Claus, and I used to do it for office parties and things like that in Toronto."

When he moved to NOTL, he realized he wanted to keep the jolly red character alive and began doing it to support palliative care services. This will be his seventh year as Santa.

"I can't think of a better organization to do it for," he says.

You can read Taylor's blog about his journey at <https://santaforpalliative.care/home/>

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

COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases: 10
Region active cases: 241
Region deaths: 431
Region total cases: 17,560
Region resolved cases: 16,888

*Sept. 29 data per Niagara Region Public Health



Contributed by Patty Garriock

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Editorial

Short-term rentals: Part 3

Realistic solutions to an **undeniable fiasco**

This is the third in a series of editorials about the issue of short-term rentals in our community, how they hollow out neighbourhoods, and how town council has continued to give in to pressure from the industry. Today, we offer potential solutions to the problem.

Richard Harley
Editor-In-Chief

While there is a long list of problems created by short-term rentals in our community, there are also some benefits. These businesses do create a small opportunity for jobs for the people who manage them. Presumably, these are registered, tax-paying businesses.

Another positive is that large families or large groups of visitors may find a rental more convenient than a hotel. Some of these people will spend money at tourist-centric businesses like restaurants, tours and shops in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

And as with anything, we must weigh the benefits against the negatives. But a small number of jobs and a slight boon to specifically the tourism economy doesn't outweigh the need for our homes to be filled with residents.

On the other side of the coin, as evidenced around the world, short-term rentals can drive out businesses meant to service residents, because there are fewer residents to patronize those businesses. That same lack of residents leads to forced school closures and hollowed-out communities in the long term.

We've already argued that these rental properties should be illegal, since they



NOTL is becoming overwhelmed by short-term rentals.
FILE PHOTO/CARY FRANK ILLUSTRATION

do not obey long-established zoning bylaws, they evade commercial taxes, create unfair competition in the housing market and they now will be largely exempt from Niagara-on-the-Lake's new municipal accommodation tax – which other accommodation businesses, such as hotels, will be collecting from patrons.

So what does council do about these rentals, to ensure our homes are available for people to live in and aren't all consumed by rentals seeking to make a profit? And what does council do to guarantee these businesses are paying their fair share?

Well, there are a couple of realistic options.

Unfortunately, it doesn't seem likely that council – because it already set a dangerous precedent – will be able to wave a magic wand and make these rental problems disappear.

Massive companies like Airbnb have been known to sue municipalities for challenging them. And in the end, while it's a battle worth fighting and it should be fought, we can't predict a majority of our town councillors having the courage to fight that war – not when they've already spent

millions of dollars battling developers.

But there are solutions that can be implemented immediately and will stand up in court.

One, which town council retreated on because of the influence from a vocal minority of industry stakeholders, is to only allow home rental accommodations to be offered from a primary residence – in other words, just a regular bed and breakfast – the way the town operated for decades before home-sharing apps became popular and later evolved into companies like Airbnb.

In this situation, the owner would live in the house the majority of the year and be a contributing member of our town and community. They would also be on site to manage guests.

We think that's an obvious solution. It's not clever or new. It's just the obvious right thing to do and would allow residences to still fall within the category of a residentially zoned home. The B&Bs wouldn't have to pay commercial property tax. However, they should still have to collect and remit the municipal accommodation tax.

Another option is to

limit short-term rentals to a specific, small number of homes, and have a bid for licences. But what number do we select? How many of our residential homes do we allow to operate as commercial businesses? Is it five per cent? Ten? Twenty-five?

We suggest that even one per cent of homes being bought and used for purely commercial gain is too many, so this option isn't really ideal. But if it was to be council's choice, it should be absolutely no higher than five per cent, or one in 20 homes.

Another option is to temporarily rezone short-term rentals to commercial status for the time of operation to ensure the owners are paying their share in commercial taxes, the same way our hotels and other businesses must. As we've been saying all along — any short-term rental that doesn't function as a primary home to a NOTL resident should be treated as it is — a business.

This might need to be a new zoning entirely – and it should be expensive. Remember, the goal here is also to protect and preserve our homes for real people to live in.

Whatever options our councillors choose, they must act soon. We've spent enough time on designs for projects like the new NOTL gateway, altering perfectly functional stop signs or figuring out routes for the Pedal Pub. These issues are all secondary to the fact that NOTL is losing its homes to an industry that doesn't care about the future of our town.

We can no longer afford to let our residential homes be plundered in the name of profit.

editor@niagaranow.com

Agree? Disagree? Send your thoughts to editor@niagaranow.com.



HEY NOTL! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR DINNER?

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NAPLES-ON-THE-LAKE OR CATALUNIA-ON-THE-LAKE





OPINION

Bed and breakfast president's perspective on Niagara-on-the-Lake short-term rentals

John Foreman
Special to The Lake Report

Over the last few weeks, The Lake Report has published a number of articles and editorials that present a very negative view of short-term rentals, including calling them a "blight on our town."

As president of the Niagara on the Lake Bed & Breakfast Association I would like to dispel some of the misinformation and provide a more objective view on short-term rentals and their place in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In this piece, the first of three installments, I would like to provide some background information. NOTL's bylaw defines short-term rentals as including B&Bs, cottage rentals, villas and country inns. Under the bylaw, B&Bs and cottages have three bedrooms or fewer, villas and country inns have four bedrooms or more.

Short-term rentals have been in Niagara for many decades. I am told that not too many years ago, NOTL was considered the B&B capital of North

America, with over 300 B&Bs. Now it is estimated that there are perhaps 150.

As B&B numbers have fallen, cottage rentals have risen (especially as the popularity of Airbnb has grown), but cottage rentals have been part of NOTL for over a century. Whereas most B&Bs are licensed by the town, the percentage of cottage rentals that are licensed is lower, making this segment more vulnerable to being a source of problems.

B&B owners are often people like myself, who have purchased theirs as a semi-retirement activity, with the intent to retire in NOTL. Most cottage rentals are owned by individuals who want to vacation here for part of the year and rent their property out at other times to help defray the cost of owning the property.

Most of these folks plan to retire to NOTL in time. I have combed through the town's list of licensed short-term rental properties and there are very few cases where properties are owned by a company and only a handful where an individual or company owns more than one property.

My conclusion is the perception that cottage rentals are dominated by faceless, corporate investors is inaccurate. For the most part, cottage rental owners are people who love NOTL and want to be part of it, just like you and I.

The people who stay at short-term rentals, whether B&Bs or cottages, are not necessarily the same people who stay at hotels. On average, a stay at a hotel involves a higher cost per person per day than rentals, largely because of the need to eat out for every meal.

In addition to cost, B&Bs are popular with people who like the quaint, small-scale setting and personalized service. Cottage rentals are popular with families or groups of friends travelling together for whom hotels would be too expensive or not suitable.

In either case, a stay at a short-term rental leaves visitors with more money to spend on other parts of their visit. Lower accommodation costs allow visitors to stay in NOTL longer and patronize more area businesses, often visiting places that short-stay visitors don't.

I believe that in the absence of short-term rentals, most of these visitors would not stay at hotels, or at least not for as long, and NOTL would lose a valuable segment of the tourist market.

My wife and I had stayed at B&Bs in NOTL many times before finally making the leap to move here. For us, the presence of short-term rentals, both B&Bs and cottages, is part of the charm and character of the town and a main contributor to why we moved here. I suspect a great many other visitors and residents agree.

However, I am not denying that there are concerns associated with short-term rentals. In my time as president of the B&B Association, I have become familiar with issues I never dreamed existed a few years ago.

However, there has been a lot of misinformation floating around about rentals.

Next: I will explore the most common issues with short-term rentals and look at remedies that would serve the interests of all stakeholders.

John Foreman is president of the NOTL B&B Association.



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Homeowner surrounded by rental properties

Dear editor:
I concur 100 per cent plus, with your analysis of the "absent landlord short-term rentals" (editorial, Sept. 23, "Too much industry influence.")

Clearly, as I have previously suggested, our town council is solidly in the hip pocket of this industry and is unlikely to listen

to your or the resident taxpayers' opinions of the problems and suggested solutions.

Since moving to NOTL 16 years ago, I am now surrounded by rentals. Talk about hollowing out a community: I live it every day and it's getting worse.

Why for example can a home go up for sale – in

most instances, bought by out-of-town buyers, and without any lawn sign posting alerting neighbouring residents that it will be a rental property.

Surprise, you have another rental and no means to challenge the conversion. This happens with regularity.

A rental party next door

is planning to operate a nail salon in the basement. What next?

Perhaps there will be a major blowback at the next council election. There are too many self-interested parties on council.

Keep up the excellent reporting.

Samuel Young
NOTL

NOTL keeps Terry's Marathon of Hope alive

Dear editor:
The Niagara-on-the-Lake community has honoured Terry Fox since 1991, raising \$1,026,679 for cancer research.

This year's run was once again "One Day Your Way" and as of Sept. 22 online donations had reached \$33,229.70. Still to be in-

cluded in the final total will be the school runs, pledge forms and other related events.

Terry Fox was the first fundraiser. He was one man dealing with difficult circumstances.

The most amazing thing wasn't that he ran a marathon a day for 143 days or

that he inspired over \$80 million to be raised for cancer research. The most amazing thing was that he tried.

"It has to keep going without me," Terry said, inspiring us to come together for a greater good.

Now, 41 years later, Terry Fox's values still define

the best in us and what the world needs today: hope, perseverance and determination.

Thank you to the NOTL community for keeping the Marathon of Hope alive and believing together we can make a difference.

Joan King
Terry Fox Run organizer

Classified

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OPINION

Why the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is important

Niki Walker
Jamie Knight
Special to The Lake Report

This year, today, Sept. 30, marks the first official National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada, a day that is intended to honour the victims and survivors of the residential school system.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will, understandably, view and experience this day differently, as we approach it from different perspectives and lived experiences.

As non-Indigenous Canadians, we wrote this column to share background information and advice with others on how we plan to honour this important day. We encourage you to seek out Indigenous perspectives as well; there are many Indigenous voices readily available that address the topic, via websites, news columns, interviews, social media and podcasts.

On this day, non-Indigenous Canadians are encouraged to learn about and



A ceremony at the Niagara Regional Native Centre. FILE

reflect on the horrific realities of the residential school system, its human toll and its racist underpinnings — the Truth that was long hushed by government and religious leaders. This is a necessary first step toward meaningful Reconciliation, the commitment to build a relationship of mutual respect, compassion and improved understanding between Canada and Indigenous people.

Although 2021 is the first year that Sept. has been proclaimed an official federal holiday, this date has been recognized as a day for honouring residential school survivors since 2013. Known as Orange Shirt Day, it was inspired by the experience of Phyllis Webstad, and marks the day when she arrived

at St. Joseph's Residential School in 1973.

Phyllis was six years old and proudly wearing the new orange shirt her grandma had bought for the occasion. Adults at the school stripped her and took away her shirt, which she never saw again. The experience left Phyllis traumatized and feeling worthless, and when she shared her story years later, her orange shirt became a symbol of the harm done to children at residential schools.

Thousands of survivors shared stories like Phyllis's as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which travelled across Canada between 2008 and 2014 to hear first-hand accounts and bear witness to survivors' trauma.

Grown men and women recounted the neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse inflicted on them as children, and described the lasting impacts of broken ties with their families, languages and cultures.

The commission concluded in 2015 with a final report that included 94 Calls to Action, of which only a handful have been implemented to date. One of these, Call to Action 80, led to establishing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

This past June, the discovery of a mass grave of 215 children at the former Kamloops Residential School was a shocking introduction for most non-Indigenous people to the dark and brutal reality of residential schools. Each time another mass grave is uncovered — and there have been many to date, with more to come — survivors, their families and communities experience the trauma all over again. It is crucial that we acknowledge this trauma, that we see the

importance of every child lost, that we do not look away.

We cannot change the past, but we can recognize the injustice, acknowledge the harm and help create a path to a better future. We must own this history, and we must understand and address the harm it continues to do, if we have any hope of moving through Truth toward Reconciliation.

The path to Reconciliation will be a long one. Sen. Murray Sinclair, while serving as the chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, observed, "Residential schools were with us for 130 years, until 1996. Seven generations of children went to residential schools. It's going to take generations to fix things."

So where can non-Indigenous people begin? The path starts with Truth. We must commit to educating ourselves. Read survivors' stories, read the commission's Calls to Action and learn about Indigenous peoples, history, resilience and current issues through

Indigenous perspectives and Indigenous voices — there are so many excellent books, websites, podcasts and other media available.

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library has a Truth and Reconciliation collection, if you are looking for somewhere to start. Purchase an orange shirt through an Indigenous organization and wear it on Sept. 30 to show that every child matters. And beyond today, take action — hold our government accountable on the Calls to Action and other issues, including Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, housing and water crises on reservations, and treaty rights.

For links to Indigenous education resources and more information on Truth and Reconciliation, visit the inclusivity committee's Join the Conversation page: www.jointheconversation-notl.org/inclusivity.

Niki Walker and Jamie Knight are co-chairs of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's inclusivity committee.

Concerns about seniors receiving a timely Pfizer booster shot

Dear editor:
It would seem the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has decided that those over 65 should receive a Pfizer booster shot six months after their second vaccine.

The agency also recommends that those who are suffering from such diseases as diabetes should also receive the booster shots.

Those frontline workers should also receive the booster shot at the same time, but as of now that does not appear to be the case in Canada.

This week when I visited my family doctor, I was informed that I was not qualified to receive the booster shot, nor is my wife, both of us well over 65.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said we may see the booster shots after they are ordered and available by late January. That's not in keeping with the direction of the FDA



COVID-19 vaccine. FILE PHOTO

and the developers of the vaccines.

If you are like my wife and I, you received your second shot after the recommended time span between your first and second dosage.

If the second shots people received within the recommended dates are seeing their immunity waning, what does that mean for us here in Canada who did not receive our second shot until long after the recommended time for the second shot?

How protected are we, since we did not receive our second shot in the time-span recommended by the

vaccine provider? Do we have a strong enough immunity to ward off the first strain of COVID let alone the latest variant?

It would seem that our government is playing with our lives. They were late giving us our second vaccine. Now, are they going to be late with our booster shot?

Trudeau stated on the campaign trail that he and his party had done a remarkable job handling the treatment of our citizens during this pandemic. What is your assessment of his record?

Tom Thornton
NOTL

Some questions about goals of NOTL's inclusivity committee

Dear editor:
I would like to make a number of comments concerning the subject of inclusivity which at the present time in NOTL appears to be one of widespread discussion and varied opinion.

In the opinion piece by the NOTL inclusivity committee, published in The Lake Report on Sept. 23 ("NOTL's inclusivity committee reflects on discrimination, diversity and equity"), the subject of inclusivity was discussed.

The discussion referenced a recent survey carried out by the committee. The survey had a response rate of less than 1 per cent of the population of NOTL.

This is not a reflection of public attitude or opinion but is instead a failure and hardly worth mentioning.

The inclusivity committee indicates that it was formed by council as an advisory group made up of volun-

teers. The existence of this group and the statements made give rise to a number of questions that I believe are important and need to be answered in the interest of all residents.

1. What is the precise mandate for the group and has this ever received public input or been seen as a public issue?

2. Do they represent or consider in any way the attitudes or opinions of the NOTL resident and taxpayer?

3. What are the credentials of each individual that enables them to advise council and how are they vetted against possible bias in their recommendations?

4. In my opinion, the veracity and accuracy of the statements should be examined for verification. Is this actually done and, if so, by whom?

While reference to disadvantaged groups is made in passing, the emphasis is

clearly on one group with the recommendation that public property be used (without any public agreement) in an effort to endorse and advance a specific agenda.

This has very much the appearance of bias to me as well as being based on the failed 1 per cent survey and at the same time giving no thought to the majority of NOTL residents whose opinions are important and may differ.

To understand inclusivity the meaning of exclusivity must also be understood. For example, who claims to be excluded and what is their definition of exclusion? What are they excluded from?

To claim credibility the committee must also be seen to have given thought and consideration to the majority in its recommendations. This does not appear to be the case so far.

Derek Collins
NOTL



Hello Friends! We would like to start this week's weekly prose (a.k.a. nonsense) by welcoming Stephanie back to our team full time (which moves me down one on the hierarchy totem pole to just below the cat & dog). The Boss has got some Chicken Noodle Soup this week just in time for the Cold & Flu season.

For each week's offerings & more send your email address to: sweetsandswirlscafe@gmail.com



'Home' and COVID focus of Pumphouse exhibit

Staff
The Lake Report

A new month-long show opens Oct. 1 at the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre featuring the artwork of Sue Archibald.

In her exhibition "Home – Protector or Predator," the artist tells stories of what a safe home means through the imagery of domestic dwellings. The scenes depicted in the works stemmed from the artist's personal experiences and imagination.

Archibald said she was in the midst of creating a body of work focused on "Home" when COVID-19 hit.

When the stay-at-home mandate was enforced last year, the isolation from the outside world heightened the meaning of her paintings.

For Archibald, images of dwellings represented comfort zones and safe spaces. The series morphed into a pandemic theme, as the two became intertwined.



Time to Rest, acrylic charcoal. SUPPLIED

While several paintings in the exhibit are playful, folksy and whimsical, others show long-term care homes as places of death.

"Most of my inspiration comes from something I might have seen, read or heard on the radio. This is what sparks my imagina-

tion," said Archibald.

"My work is narrative, colourful and appeals to people on multiple levels. Regardless of what is painted, my style remains consistent," she added.

Archibald is an award-winning artist from Mississauga, whose work can

be found in private collections across North America, Ireland and the U.K.

Sixteen of her paintings will be on display in the Pumphouse's Joyner Gallery until Oct. 30. The gallery is open Tuesday to Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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Soggy September keeps harvest plans fluid

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

Heavy rainfall in September has created challenging conditions for the annual grape harvest.

"It puts pressure on growers," says Gavin Robertson, winemaker at Niagara College.

"Wet conditions create the potential for sour rot and breakdown, as the grapes are left on the vines to ripen further," he said.

September rainfall in the region amounted to a whopping 166 millimetres, far above the average of 90 mm, with two major downpours on Sept. 8 (44mm) and Sept. 23 (35 mm) in addition to many other overnight and daytime showers.

"We've never had that much rain at this time of year in my 10 years here," said Amelie Boury, vice-president of winemaking and operations at Chateau des Charmes Winery.

That volume of rain doesn't just affect the grapes, it also softens the ground, in some cases making it impossible to drive the harvest vehicles around the vineyards.

"We tried to harvest in some sites, but the ground was too soft. We couldn't drive the machine there," Boury said.

And where the machines can drive, muddy ground can mean the tires sink in, putting the vehicle a little off kilter, and that can cause mechanical breakdowns.

For Boury, it's meant three broken beater bars in three days. Her crew carries extra parts onboard the harvester for quick repairs right in the vineyard.



Left: Ravine winemaker Lydia Tomek tastes a grape for flavour and ripeness in the vineyard. Right: Vice-president of winemaking and operations at Chateau des Charmes Winery, Amelie Boury, surveys healthy Alligote grapes going into the hopper. DON REYNOLDS PHOTOS



"Instead of a harvest where you can take your time and breathe a little, this season is condensed," said Lydia Tomek, winemaker at Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery.

"You really have to be on your toes and keep a good pulse on the vines, and when to pick," she said.

"I'm optimistic, but it's going to be a long harvest with long days."

For Tomek that means walking the vineyards every day, inspecting the grapes to make sure they're still healthy, and tasting them to see how ripe they are.

"You can't drag your feet on decision-making, it could impact the flavour of the wine. If we see breakdown developing, we pick the fruit," said Tomek.

For Boury, "it's all about decisions and weighing the risk of rot developing. We have to put everything in

balance and maybe sacrifice sugar levels a bit to protect the integrity of the fruit, if necessary."

"Everyone is antsy right now."

Decisions about when to harvest this season are based more on "need to pick, versus want to pick, to avoid problems," she added.

The situation is somewhat different for different growers.

"It varies site by site. It depends on soils, drainage, canopy management. There are so many variables at play," explained Robertson.

One thing all the growers have in common, though, is "a large crop this year. We had good heat and rain, and healthy vines through the growing season," he said.

Tomek beams with pride as she shows off her Chardonnay grapes, which are pristine, though not quite



With all the rain recently, harvesters can sink into muddy ground.

ripe yet.

Boury is three weeks later than usual in picking her Sauvignon Blanc and Gewurztraminer grapes this year, but they are excellent quality, and with improving weather they should be safely in soon.

"A lot of growers have been waiting with white knuckles" to get harvesting under way in earnest, said

Robertson. He said to expect to see a lot of activity in the vineyards this week, as growers take advantage of better weather.

"Daytime wind and sun with lower temperatures at night are a blessing right now," Boury added.

Even as Tomek keeps a close watch on her white varietals, she's thinking ahead to the later harvest of the

bold reds.

"Our Merlot grapes are stunning. Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon are beautiful, but we'll have a better picture in October."

Long days and vigilance will ensure the Niagara wines of 2021 will be delicious, as winemakers and growers make the best of whatever challenges Mother Nature sends their way.

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Mike Shatkosky
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David Lang looks at the new Upper Canada Heritage Trail plaque to commemorate donors for the project. He and his wife Gwen were among the first 100 to donate to the expansion and restoration campaign. EVAN SAUNDERS

Trail donors help preserve NOTL's heritage

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Gwen and David Lang had a deeply personal reaction to seeing their names Wednesday morning on a plaque commemorating the first 100 donors to the Upper Canada Heritage Trail's restoration and expansion.

"We're emotional about it. We really believed in this project," Gwen said.

"We believe in the heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake very much and we want to preserve it."

The trail is a special project because it is a heritage monument that is accessible and improves everyday life for residents, she said.

"It's exactly what they said it would be. It's for the community, for general people to use and, of course, visitors. But visitors don't really know about it."

The trail is built along the route of the old railroad that ran through town.

"If you walk (the heritage trail), then the neighbourhoods make sense, because they were built on either side of the railroad," David said.

He pointed out the railroad's placement is one of the reasons some streets take on new names as they cross the municipality, such as Queen Street turning into Picton after it crosses over the tracks.

Building the trail along the former railroad had construction benefits.

"The good thing is it's not got a lot of hills on it," Gwen said.

David said the trail never inclines more than four per cent thanks to railroad companies flattening the land.

"And it's raised, so it drains well," he said.

The Langs, who live in Chautauqua, are frequent walkers of the trail they invested in and are looking forward to the full trail opening. But they say the

current distance is perfect.

"Right now it's a good length for us because we both have a little bit of knee issues," Gwen said with a laugh.

The couple have been married for 43 years. David is a former vice-president of operations for a clothing company and Gwen is a registered nurse who still works part-time in St. Catharines.

They moved to NOTL five years ago from Mississauga and are happy to have contributed to the heritage trail project.

"It's very exciting to see your name there. Just to know you've made a difference. That's really important to us," Gwen said.

The unveiling of the plaque featured a number of dignitaries Lord Mayor Betty Disero began the speeches before introducing MP Tony Baldinelli, Rick Meloen and Tony Chisholm, who are both on the heritage trail committee.

MPP Wayne Gates called on newly re-elected MP Tony Baldinelli to help NOTL find funding to complete the heritage trail.

"What's important to realize is how important heritage and a trail like this is to the overall health of our community," Gates said.

He said after speaking to several people at the unveiling, the fact that NOTL is short of money was top of mind.

Having said that, Gates pulled up his pant leg and showed he was wearing blue socks.

"I wore my blue socks today because I want to say to Tony, very clearly, that I think me and you as elected officials should be making sure that we do everything we can to get the funds needed to finish this," Gates said to a round of applause.

"If money is the stumbling block we've got to make sure that we get that for you."

RIDDLE ME THIS

I'm an invention that lets you see through walls.
What am I?

Last issue: I'm a building with the most stories. What am I?

Answer: A library

Answered first by: Sheelah Young

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Mary Drost, Ann Ghirardi, Margaret Garaughty, Terry Nord, Sonja Schindeler, Colleen Johnson, Maria Janeiro, Susan Hamilton, Sylvia Wiens, Pia Seeger, Wendy Bosela, Bob Stevens, Wade Durling, Josh Langendoen, Chris Yakymishen, Amélie and Dale Merrill, Sheila Meloche, John Venables, Bruce Robb, Gary Davis, Patricia Fraser, Robert Wilms, Bob Tebbutt, Joan Busbridge, Teresa Kaminski, Margie Enns, Ted Scott, Wesley Turner, Victor Goertz, Steve Siansky, Robert Morley

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

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Indigenous residents want Ontario to make Sept. 30 a statutory holiday

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Fallon Farinacci has gone through severe trauma as a Métis woman but has started using that narrative to raise money and inspire change for the plight of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada.

Which made it all the more disappointing to her when the Ontario government failed to make National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a statutory holiday.

"That actually is something that has to change next year," said Farinacci.

Farinacci is a Métis woman from St. Eustache, Man. She is raising money for Abbey House Transitional Home for Indigenous Women and the Manitoba Métis Federation, St. Eustache Local for Indigenous Youth.

When Faranacci was nine both her parents were murdered in her home while she was in bed. A family friend had become obsessed with her mother and entered the home one night, killing her father, her mother and then



Fallon Farinacci's parents were murdered when she was nine and she and her two brothers were orphaned. She has learned to use her grief-stricken narrative as a way to reach out to other Indigenous People in Canada and help them deal with tragedy. SUPPLIED

himself.

And the police failed to intervene.

The first shot was fired at 2:30 a.m., killing her father. Her older brother who had been threatened with a gun to his stomach escaped the house and called police.

Officers deferred action as long as they could, Farinacci said

"The RCMP officers who received the call called their

next level in seniority. He was the only RCMP officer who was also a hostage negotiator. Instead of showing up to the crime scene, he told these two officers to go to the Paul residence and see if they could speak with Andre."

Andre is the name of the murderer. He had been repeatedly identified as a dangerous individual by Farinacci's parents, who

even had a restraining order filed against him, she said.

Andre had been repeatedly arrested for crimes involving drugs and firearm possession.

The officer who had hostage negotiating experience hung up the phone and went back to sleep, Farinacci said.

Officers didn't arrive until 6:30 a.m., four hours after her father was killed.

When they arrived, Andre promptly shot Farinacci's mother and then himself, she said.

"My younger brother and I had to wait in the house with three dead bodies until 8:30 in the morning" when the RCMP finally came in.

"And they only came in because at that point my grandfather had made his way to the door to get into the house."

Less than a month later, Farinacci and her brothers were moved to St. Catharines to live with her mother's family.

These traumatic events highlight the damaging legacy of colonialism in Canada. The experiences of Farinacci and her brother were minimized and

they received little help for what they went through, she said.

"None of us received proper post-traumatic care. I remember going to maybe two therapy sessions," Farinacci said.

"And in 2004, my older brother committed suicide."

But Farinacci has turned on this overwhelming grief and decided to use her story to raise awareness about the plight of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

"I wanted to bring change any way that I could and bring awareness to my brother's and my parents' story," she said.

When she turns 38, Farinacci will be older than her mother, father and brother when they died. Her father was 37.

Raising awareness about Indigenous issues is at the heart of Farinacci's identity now. All the more reason for her to feel frustrated that her son won't be able to attend National Day for Truth and Reconciliation events because Ontario did not make it a statutory holiday.

"If (my son) misses one day of school that sends a ripple effect. One day, espe-

cially in a pandemic when these kids are being taught only two courses for X amount of days, it's deeply impacting," she said.

"It's going to deeply impact (his education), so he can't be there."

Farinacci was critical of the school boards in Niagara, which could have chosen to close schools on the holiday but have not.

She asked Canadians to lend their voices in calling for schools to close and Ontario's policy to change, "so that it doesn't all fall on the backs of Indigenous people."

Farinacci lives in St. Catharines, as does her little brother who is married with a family of his own.

"He's doing amazing," she said.

Farinacci will be a speaker at St. Catharines city hall at 10 a.m. on Thursday for a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation event organized by the Niagara Regional Native Centre. Other speakers will include native centre president Roxanne Bucks, Orange Shirt day advocate Wanda Griffin and St. Catharines Mayor Walter Sendzik among others.

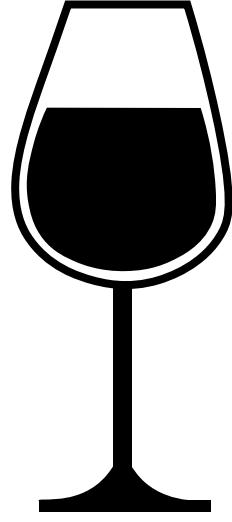
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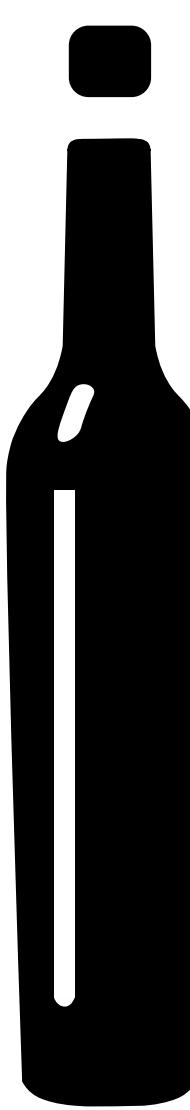
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RiverBrink's 'Power' exhibit explores Niagara's history

Debra Antonic
Special to The Lake Report

As we slowly emerge from the various stages of lockdown and the attendant levels of anxiety, amid a sense of time suspended, many in the arts community are reflecting on the future.

Questions such as how we can re-engage with audiences and reinvigorate the connection to visual art, how we can emerge stronger, are uppermost in our minds.

One of the more pressing challenges is balance: how to balance the need for joy and pleasure that viewing and experiencing works of art can bring against a climate of social reckoning and a desire for critical engagement and deep learning.

In the exhibition "Power," on view now at the RiverBrink Art Museum until Oct. 23, artist Elizabeth Chitty successfully achieves this balance. The work reminds us of the beauty and riches of the natural world while challenging us to reflect on the history that has brought us here.

Visitors to the exhibition



The Niagara River is a past and present source of power for the region. SUPPLIED

will encounter a three-channel video and four-channel audio installation in a gallery space overlooking the Niagara River. Given the location, RiverBrink is an optimal site, providing views across to Lewiston, N.Y., beyond the invisible barrier separating Canada from the United States.

The national border drawn down the river, an imperceptible line on the water, carries profound implications into the present. The separation of Indigenous communities, and the division of water, power and industrial activity, flow

outward from this artificial barrier.

Within the exhibition, the artist has included video footage of three women walking separately along a different section on the Canadian side of the Niagara River. The women each live in Niagara and have ancestors who came here, or close to here (in the case of the Six Nations Grand River Territory), following the creation of the invisible barrier – Kanyen'keha:ka, United Empire Loyalist and Freedom Seeker.

The women share their histories, of family and

memory, of connection to the river, of how they came to be living in Niagara. They remind us of the shared and multilayered history of this region, one with its own history of slavery and conflict over land and resources.

Each extends a hand – a gesture of greeting, but also a reference to the promises and responsibilities, of gifts and mutual aid, pledged by the alliance known as the Covenant Chain.

Images of hydro-electric power generation and river remediation alternate with the footage of the women.

The sounds of the river, the sounds of spoken excerpts from historical documents and the sounds of the women's voices compel the viewer to pause and listen, to heed the words from the past as they resonate in the present.

The video component of the work brings the viewer in direct contact with the water, not only at the edges of the river, but physically out into the shallows. In her practice, the artist has had a long engagement with water, specifically water infrastructure and governance.

"Power" is the most recent iteration of this engagement, the culmination of a body of performance, photography and media installation works about local water.

As suggested by this list, Chitty's practice is interdisciplinary, but her primary medium involves movement. And so visitors to the exhibition are propelled by movement, pulled along by the camera, passing barriers and swift-flowing water and verdant wetlands to emerge downstream at the mouth of the strait.

Within the exhibition, sound pulls the viewer from speaker to speaker, prompting the movement of bodies in order to attend to the details of the historical texts, birdsong and personal reflections. It is by way of this movement that the artist performs a gentle activism on the viewer.

A critical starting point for the exhibition is the Niagara Treaty, negotiated at Fort Niagara and the Indian Council House at the mouth of the Niagara River in 1764.

This treaty, together with the Royal Proclamation of 1763, established a familial and shared relationship among sovereign nations and is increasingly important today as Canada faces the necessity of nation-to-nation negotiation.

RiverBrink's proximity to the fort is a poignant reminder of this history. More than two centuries later, the artist challenges us to examine our individual histories and to seek a way forward.

Debra Antonic is director and curator of RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston.

A special party at Queenston Heights for Brock's 252nd birthday bash

Staff
The Lake Report

Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock is turning 252 and the Friends of Fort George are celebrating in style.

Brock's Birthday Bash, on Oct. 6 at Brock's Monument in Queenston, is a special celebration of the life of the hero of Upper Canada.

"This event provides us with a unique opportunity to focus on the life of Brock, and the contributions that he made as head of the civil government and military, leading up to the War of 1812, as well as his legacy after his death at the Battle of Queenston Heights," said Amanda Gamble, executive director of the Friends of Fort George.

The Friends also are running a special donation drive in honour of Brock



Scott Finlay as Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock. SUPPLIED

and hope to raise \$1,769 to commemorate his birthday (Oct. 6, 1769).

All money raised will support employment and educational programs at Brock's Monument for the 2022 season, Gamble said. You can follow the fundraising at www.canada-helps.org/en/dn/64588

The party will include special presentations highlighting the life of Brock, and birthday treats, which are being gener-

ously donated by one of the Friends' members.

The day includes a featured talk on the life and times of Brock at 10 a.m. (featuring Scott Finlay as Brock), cupcakes at the monument at 10:45 and a featured talk at 11 a.m. called "After the Battle of Queenston Heights: What happened to Brock After the Smoke Cleared."

Admission is \$10 per person and space is limited. Book online at friendsoffortgeorge.square.site.

Museum's fall lecture series digs deep

Staff
The Lake Report

The NOTL Museum is launching its 2021 fall virtual lecture series on Zoom on Oct. 6.

"The enormous success of our previous Zoom lectures was surprising," said museum marketing director Amy Klassen, "but the accessibility of Zoom is perfect for these times."

The series is packed with knowledge and information, from Indigenous treaty negotiations, the nostalgia of the railways, to exploring Niagara-on-the-Lake's archeological history.

The series kicks off Oct. 6 with Dena Doroszenko from the Ontario Heritage Trust exploring "Archaeology of the Niagara Apothecary" and digging deep into the secrets of this historic location on Queen Street.

On Oct. 20, Kathleen Powell, curator of the St.

Catharines Museum, presents "Triumph and Tragedy: Building the Welland Ship Canal," where she delves into the fascinating story of the four Welland Canals, the "fallen workers" and how a city evolved beside such an engineering wonder.

On Nov. 3, in honour of Treaties Recognition Week, three guest speakers from Ontario's Ministry of Indigenous Affairs will present "Treaties and Land Claims."

They will look at the significant impact that treaty responsibilities and promises have made on First Nations in order to create a better understanding of collective treaty rights and obligations.

On Nov. 17, local author Peter Mulcaster presents "A Railway History of Niagara-on-the-Lake, 1854-1959," in which he explores the socio-economic and tourist benefits of what was once a thriving railway town.

On Dec. 1, the NOTL Museum's own curator is back by popular demand with her "Opening the Curator's Treasure Chest: Exploring the War of 1812 Collection, Part 2."

Sarah Kaufman breaks open the NOTL Museum vaults for another fascinating insight into the world of 1812.

The final lecture in the series is on Dec. 15, presented by local historian Rochelle Bush. "The Lesser Known: Uncovering some of the Black People of Old Niagara and Surrounding Area," shines a light on extraordinary stories of African American freedom seekers who settled in Niagara.

All presentations start at 11 a.m. and require registration through Zoom.

To access the Zoom registration link, go to www.notlmuseum.ca

For more information, contact Klassen by email at aklassen@nhsm.ca.

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Little Free Library in St. Davids aims to boost childhood reading

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A new Little Free Library installed in Sparky's Park in St. Davids aims to bring the community together and inspire youth to pick up a book, says project overseer Lili Kvederys.

The design of the book dispensary was inspired by the village's iconic Woodbourne Inn so it also provides people with a bit of St. Davids history.

The project was initiated by the Friends of St. Davids, a community-led organization started in 2018 whose goal is to unite the expanding population of St. Davids.

Friends co-founder Greg Walker said part of the genesis of the group back then was because people realized "this village is growing so fast and none of these people know each other."

Greg's wife, Dorothy, released a book in 2018 about St. Davids entitled "A Village in the Shadows." During the book launch the couple realized the potential for a community organization in the village.

"Dorothy said to me,



Jan King-Watson puts a copy of Khaled Hossenei's novel "The Kite Runner" into the new Little Free Library in St. Davids. King-Watson recently moved to St. Davids and has spared no time in becoming one of the stewards of the new little library. EVAN SAUNDERS

'Greg, we've got to do something about this. Why don't we start something, why don't we get some sort of social movement going?" So they did.

The organization had a good start but was hampered by COVID-19. That's where the idea for the Little Free Library came in, he said.

"This year, we had two people step up and say, 'I would like to do something to bring this community together.'"

One of those people was Kvederys.

She wanted the project to be inclusive of the range of St. Davids community members.

"We're trying to hit all of the age groups and genres. We'd like to have some Indigenous and Black history. We're trying to get lots of things so the children who are reading it understand more," she said.

One of her goals with the project was to induce more young people to start reading. The Little Free Library is complete with books for young kids and teenagers and is strategically located

next to a playground so kids have easy access to literature.

And it's already working, Kvederys said.

"The very first day that I came here there were two little boys sitting here reading a book and I thought, 'Oh my goodness,' " she said.

"It's so good to see them sitting here reading instead of reading their phones and their father's not sitting and looking through his email."

With its Woodbourne Inn theme, the library helps reinforce St. Davids history.

It was designed by Leslie Mann, a scale model architect in the village.

Mann said key features from the actual Woodbourne Inn incorporated into the design were the arched door with a white handle, two significant window designs on either side of the building, corbels that hold up the ledge over the main door, as well as the white siding and green paint adorning the windows, doors and roof.

"It's so nice to have and it educates our community about some of the historic aspects — there's so many beautiful historic buildings in St. Davids," Kvederys added.

Walker said the initiative was originally intended to be the first of several Little Libraries in St. Davids, all designed after a historic property in the village.

But the current Little Free Library, which has been installed on municipal property, is considered a pilot project by the town.

Walker said the Friends of St. Davids will wait until the pilot project period is up before pursuing the creation

of any more Little Free Libraries.

Meanwhile, Kvederys wants NOTLers from other parts of town to come and take a book and add some of their own to the collection.

She and Jan King-Watson are stewards of the project. King-Watson recently moved to St. Davids and jumped at the opportunity to get involved with the community project.

"I'm so grateful. The Friends of St. Davids just embraced me and made me feel so welcome," she said.

King-Watson and Kvederys are tasked with overseeing the Little Free Library and making sure it is filled with appropriate books daily.

At its heart, Walker hopes the Little Free Library can be a spot for people to commune and engage with literature.

"What's most important is that we find that people do come and they use it. Kids come and find books and they sit here and they read. And we say, 'You know what? We really are adding something to this community,'" Walker said.

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Kids back on the ice

The Canskate program is back on the ice with the Niagara-on-the-Lake Skating Club. Pictured, at Centennial Arena, coach Allison Sotola works with a group of beginners while coach Darlene Dorton helps guide a student across the ice. Canskate offers lessons for a variety of ages and skill levels. Go to notskatingclub.com for more information. LARA DAVIDSON PHOTOS



Women celebrate 'retiring' Ricky

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Ricky Watson likes to quietly go about his job as associate pro at Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club – and always shuns the limelight.

He couldn't escape it on Tuesday afternoon, however, as members of the club's 9 and 18 hole women's leagues took the opportunity to share their appreciation for his help and hard work.

The women feted him on the first tee with a gift presentation, a ton of thank yous and some warm words.

Watson, one of the longest-serving employees of the club, is "retiring" to take up a career in real estate sales.

One of the most talented golfers ever to come out of NOTL, he has been a fixture at the club since he was 13. Now, 18 years later, he's decided to pursue other interests and maybe eventually resume competing as an amateur.

He departs the club on Oct. 12 and plans to embark on his real estate career in the new year.

But in the meantime there's a golf trip to



Members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake 9 and 18 hole women's leagues bid farewell to the club's associate pro Ricky Watson Tuesday. KEVIN MACLEAN PHOTO

Scotland in the offing (including a visit to hallowed St. Andrews), with friends and his dad Todd, plus a vacation in Ireland with his partner Shauna Dickson.

MEN'S RESULTS

Ted Carmichael and Warren Tutton were two of the big winners in the final week of men's league seasonal competition last Thursday.

Carmichael shot an even-par 36 to tie for low gross with multi-time club champ Mark Derbyshire. Tutton was the only golfer to birdie the second hole and won a \$50 net skin as well as the entire \$130 gross skin prize money.

And Carmichael was second in modified Stableford scoring, accruing 21 points, one behind Ken Burr. Three players tied for third, with 20 points: Harry Huizer, Tom Elltoft and Lou Puglisi.

Other net skin winners were Burr (#3), Bill Smith (#5) and John Wiens (#6). Closest to the pin shooters were Jim McMacken (#4) and Rick Janes (#9).

Carmichael also won low gross honours, shooting 40 in WOOFs league play on Sept. 21. Tom Wiley won low net (36).

Ken Willms had the shot of the day with a pure eagle 3 on the par-5 third hole.

Drew Porter was closest to the pin on #4 and Peter Warrack won \$55 in the 50/50 draw.

The WOOFs league members are gearing up for their closing scramble, scheduled for Oct. 5.

WOMEN'S RESULTS

Lisa Allen was low gross winner in the 18 hole women's league on Sept. 21, with an 88. Yolanda Henry was second with 90, and Margot Richardson and Susan Gagne shot 92.

Low net winner was Janice White (69), followed by Gagne (72), and Richardson and Allen (73). Henry chipped in for a birdie on the par-3 13th hole.

Women's Grape and Wine tennis tournament sends balls flying



Left: Karen Wright, Kendra Osa, Mary Towndrow and Ann Davies share a laugh on the court. Middle: Gina Snary swings for the ball. Right: Sylvia Allen and Ann Davies both line up a shot on two different courts. Bottom: Lynne Gough and Paula Lepp. DEB ROBERT PHOTOS

Staff The Lake Report

It was a day for the ladies on Saturday, as ladies from the NOTL Tennis Club hosted a women's Grape and Wine Tournament at Memorial Park.

One of the event's organizers, Trish Spagnol, said 24 ladies "came out to share

laughter and great tennis and enjoy a delightful boxed lunch provided by Sweets and Swirls."

The weather held off for the tournament, she added, as there was a high chance of rain.

The event was organized by Spagnol, Jill Evans and Christy Pennington, "and strongly supported by our

club," Spagnol said.

"It was another successful event."

Spagnol and Dorothy Booth took home first-place prizes, with the second place being earned by Anne Robinson and Jen Allen.

"The objective was to have fun, play outside your groups and make new tennis friends," Spagnol said.



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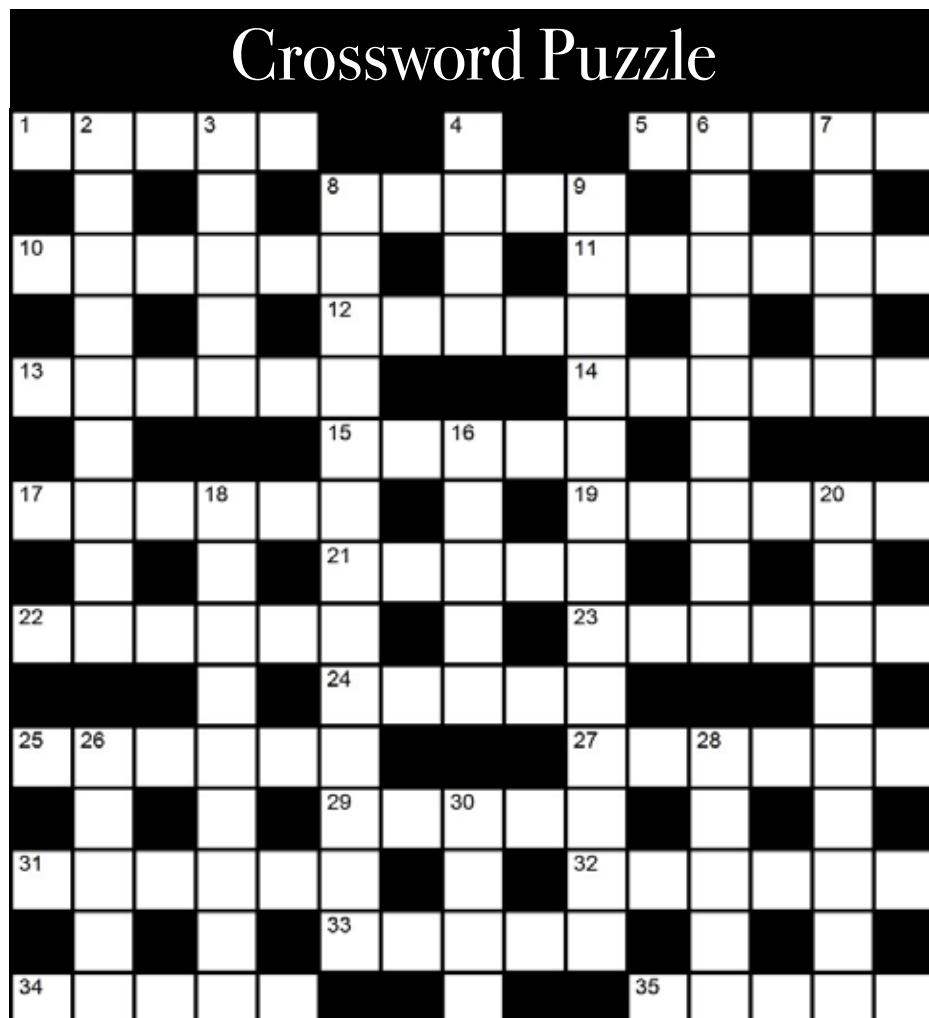
Have some fun

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



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Berlin Street Scene

Penny-Lynn Cookson
Special to The Lake Report

Berlin is back in the news with the German election requiring the formation of a coalition government and a future without the steady hand of Chancellor Angela Merkel.

On reflection, has Berlin been out of the news in the 150 years since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 when a victorious Germany became a nation? The German Empire was on a fast track leading up to the First World War with all the instability of a society in rapid transition to urbanization and the conflict between conservative and progressive ideas.

By 1913, Germany was an industrial, technological and scientific leader with the largest economy in

Europe and third-largest in the world. Berlin, being the centre of government, the economy and culture, would experience momentous historic events including the Weimar Republic, Hitler's Third Reich, Second World War destruction, the Cold War, the Berlin airlift, the Berlin Wall and now, once again, it is the most powerful economic nation in Europe.

Parallels to such uncertain times are to be found in an art movement, Der Brücke, that was a foundation for German Expressionism, which would greatly impact subsequent modern art.

In 1905, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, an architecture student at the Technical University of Dresden, initiated Der Brücke (The Bridge) with Fritz Bleyl, Erich Heckel and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff.



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner,
Berlin Street Scene, 1913,
Neue Galerie, New York.
SUPPLIED

They rejected a stultifying academic style of art with a goal to create a bridge between the Gothic and Renaissance art of Albrecht Dürer, Matthias Grünewald and Lucas Cranach the Elder, and the progressive art of the contemporary avant-garde. They were inspired by the emotional, expressive paintings of van Gogh and Munch, by Oceanic and African ethnographic works, and by the dynamism of the Italian Futurists.

They revived woodcuts through which they developed a style of simple and flattened forms. In their paintings, garish colour, visible rapid brushstrokes and distortion were a means to achieve direct, authentic work that expressed immediacy and spontaneity.

In their unconventional bohemian lifestyles and communal studios, they made life drawings from nude models, spent summers of love at lakes near Dresden and sought to bring life and art into harmony as part of a German youth movement protesting against urbanization and the conservative imperialistic German society.

In 1906, they had their first group exhibition in Dresden. In 1913, the group disbanded and Kirchner was alone in Berlin making paintings of Berlin street scenes, capturing the cosmopolitan vibrancy of the fast-paced city with its overcrowded sidewalks, horse drawn wagons and new trams.

Streetwalkers were his symbol for a place where anything could be bought, where an underlying current suggesting imminent danger existed in the anonymous crowd. In their feathered hats and fashionable garments, the prostitutes presented hardened faces to the voyeurism of the male gaze. His skewed perspectives and tilting angles capture the tension, isolation, alienation and psychological angst of pre-war Berlin.

In 1914, Kirchner volunteered for the German army. Within the year he had suffered a physical and mental breakdown and was discharged. The next years were spent in and out of sanatoriums and, though dependent on barbiturates, morphine and alcohol, he remained prolific, producing art for well-reviewed exhibitions.

He settled in Frauenkirche, Switzerland, a village near Davos, where he painted increasingly abstract alpine mountain scenes. After 1933, when

the Nazis came to power in Germany it was impossible to sell his paintings. The 1937 Degenerate Art Exhibition in Munich included 25 Kirchner works. Degenerate art was the official term for the modern art of the time but defined by the Nazi regime as not in line with its ideas of beauty.

Over 600 of Kirchner's works were removed from museums, dispersed, destroyed or sold to American collectors. Profoundly depressed with the situation in Germany and fearful of a Nazi invasion of Switzerland, Kirchner shot himself in front of his house in Frauenkirche on June 15, 1938.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an art historian who taught at the University of Toronto for 10 years. She was also head of extension services at the Art Gallery of Ontario. She is presently giving virtual lectures on "he Germans – Art, Faith, War" for the RiverBrink Arts Centre, Queenston on Thursdays until Oct. 28.

Dr. Brown: New drugs and the ongoing battle against Alzheimer's

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

Like Oliver Sachs, I eagerly look forward to the weekly arrival of the next issue of the journal Nature.

Last week a piece written by Paul Nurse caught my eye. He quoted his Nobel Prize-winning friend Sidney Brenner, who stated 20 years ago that, "we are drowning in a sea of data and starving for knowledge."

Brenner's observation, recycled by Nurse to apply to some science these days, hit home. Because that's been the case for research into Alzheimer's disease – a lot of data and a several-decade fixation on the "amyloid hypothesis," which claims that Alzheimer's is caused by the accumulation of beta-amyloid (and tau) protein in the brain.

That fixation led to the development of several drugs, including vaccines and monoclonal antibody (mab) drugs designed to rid the brains of patients with Alzheimer's of their accumulations of beta-amyloid.

In every instance, except for the latest controversial



evidence favouring aducanumab (Aduhelm), the vaccines and monoclonal antibody treatments failed to significantly slow progression of the cognitive impairment, even if they reduced the beta-amyloid load in the brain. Unfortunately, some of those same drugs provoked troublesome adverse side effects.

That was the situation until aducanumab came along several years ago. Like many of its predecessor anti-amyloid drugs, aducanumab successfully cleared the brain of much of its beta-amyloid load. However, that wasn't the primary issue. The issue was whether aducanumab slowed progression of the cognitive impairment and

other clinical markers.

One phase 3 trial said no, as did the other phase 3 trial – until Biogen, the pharmaceutical company that developed the drug, reassessed the data and claimed that at the highest dose level, aducanumab, did indeed slow the progression of cognitive impairment.

The claim divided the experts, many of whom felt the data favouring a clinically significant benefit was too weak to justify approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, while other experts and Biogen claimed there was some clinical evidence to support their claim.

The FDA then made an unprecedented decision: the agency based its ap-

roval on what was obvious evidence that aducanumab cleared the brain of much of its beta amyloid load while turning a blind eye to the drug's less-than-stellar clinical impact.

Many experts felt betrayed and that the FDA had lowered the bar for approval of this drug. Many felt this opened the door to other similar drugs in development in the face of a questionable clinical benefit and evidence that many patients suffered from adverse side effects such as swellings and tiny hemorrhages in the brain.

Did the FDA make a mistake? Yes, and a qualified No. Yes, for not demanding more convincing evidence that the rate of decline in cognitive impairment was slowed.

But a qualified No for two reasons. Even in the earliest clinical stages of Alzheimer's, it may be too late for drugs like aducanumab to have much, if any, clinical effect, because too many nerve cells and especially connections may be lost or dysfunctional beyond repair.

The real challenge would

be to treat as-yet asymptomatic patients with progressive PET scan evidence of beta-amyloid accumulation. That's a tricky step to take given the potential for adverse side effects of this and other similar drugs and uncertainty about whether the patient will actually develop clinically symptomatic Alzheimer's, and whether other factors such as co-existing vascular dementia might be playing role for which those drugs would not be expected to help.

Given the risk of those adverse side effects, a better bet for testing the amyloid hypothesis would be to prophylactically treat patients with the autosomal dominant variant of Alzheimer's.

These patients will for certain develop the disease and earlier by a decade or so before vascular dementia might fudge the study. As a result, it would be easier to justify taking the drug a decade or more before the anticipated onset of symptoms in the hope of delaying, or hopefully preventing the disease.

When I last wrote about the amyloid hypothesis and

aducanumab in The Lake Report that was the state of affairs. Since then, the chasm between the approvers and non-approvers has widened with several high-profile health care organizations and experts in Alzheimer's distancing themselves from support for the drug, citing weak clinical evidence and high costs for the drug (more than \$50,000 U.S. a year, exclusive of expensive PET scans and other costs).

Given the FDA's approval for aducanumab, other similar drugs such as the more recent donanemab, will probably find their path to approval much easier.

You can access more information on the subject later this week by going the YouTube site below or the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's website and following the leads.

See the video at [youtube.com/watch?v=88B_OHUAQ9Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88B_OHUAQ9Y)

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



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FEATURED


EXPLORING PHOTOS
 WITH NOTL MUSEUM


Residential school in James Bay

This photo shows a building from the residential school in Moose Factory on the shore of James Bay in Northern Ontario. It was donated in the early 1900s by Alexander Niven, a local surveyor. The historical society often collected photographs from across the country so locals who couldn't afford to travel could see what the world outside of NOTL looked like. The NOTL Museum plans to review its collection with Indigenous representatives to determine whether particular pieces should be repatriated.

Today, Sept. 30, is a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. From the earliest Indigenous inhabitation extending back 13,000 years in the Niagara Peninsula, to the arrival of people of European descent, to the partnerships and treaties formed at the Indian Council House on the Commons, to the War of 1812 (where Indigenous allies were integral to the defence and preservation of our communities and nation), Niagara-on-the-Lake's history is intricately connected with Indigenous peoples. The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum stands with Indigenous Peoples to express our deepest sympathy to families who lost relatives because of the residential school system as well as to all those experiencing the generational trauma that this discredited system continues to inflict upon their lives.

ARCHITEXT

Take a little walk in Virgil

Brian Marshall
Columnist



The Rogers House in Virgil. SUPPLIED

of the street at #1458 is the Rogers House.

Built around the turn of the 20th century in the popular Gothic Farmhouse style, this clapboard-clad home with its wrap-around porch anchored the Rogers farm, which ran between Lines 1 and 2 on the west side of Four Mile Creek Road.

Continuing down toward the crossroads, on the corner of Niagara Stone and Four Mile Creek, is #1490. What is now one building, started out as two separate dwellings: the Phillips House and the Wilson House, both circa 1880s.

Aside from the obvious conjoining of the two build-

ings, this structure has seen many alterations over the last century particularly after becoming an inn during the 1960s and then, more recently, an antique store.

Proceeding across Four Mile Creek Road, tucked in behind two restaurants, is the Gibson-Penner House at #1502. The dwelling seems oddly placed on the lot until one realizes it was moved from its original fronting on Niagara Stone in 1956 to make space for the restaurant building.

Its three-bay facade is strictly symmetrical except for the offset window above the door in the centre bay. This placement could be a

later alteration or perhaps "as-built" given the second floor of this building was originally a large open hall used in the 19th century for Anglican church services and regular meetings of the Orange Order Lodge.

Directly across the road is #1503, the W. Stevens House. Built circa 1900 in an L-shaped Gothic Farmhouse style, it was designed as a true live/work structure.

The more impressive brick-clad front portion housed the local grocery store while to the rear was the wood-framed dwelling. Once again, the original facade has suffered sad 20th century "improvements."

Our last stop on this stroll is 1516 Niagara Stone Rd. This venerable old house was rebuilt by George Lawrence in 1818 after the original home was burned during the War of 1812.

It was renovated circa 1885 and likely received its current stucco cladding during the first half of the 20th century when stucco finishes were all the rage.

And, if one circles out farther in Virgil, there are other gems that await discovery.

Looking to the Stars



A lingering stalemate might not soon be resolved

Bill Auchterlonie
Special to The Lake Report

This week is bookended by Jupiter with a financial gift on Thursday and a new moon in Libra on Wednesday.

Thursday, Oct. 30: Drifting, aimless feelings get woken by a connection between good fortune Jupiter in Aquarius with financially secretive Venus in Scorpio. A loan is approved? On Sept. 30, 1960, we saw "The Flintstones" for the first time.

Friday, Oct. 1: Thinking is not easy when deep inside we feel that compromise is not possible. There is a stalemate here that may not be resolved until Mercury turns direct. In fact, likely not until a month from now, around Nov. 1. Happy birthday #97 to the 39th president of the United States, Jimmy Carter.

Saturday, Oct. 2: It's a sunny Saturday, at least so far as an important relationship is concerned. This, thanks to a friendly bump to Venus in Scorpio from Pluto in Capricorn. It was Oct. 2, 1902, that Beatrix Potter's story "Peter Rabbit" was published for the first time.

Sunday, Oct. 3: Here is a day to pay attention to big ideas. These thoughts may also include good news and may be about travel, education, relationships and even spiritual insights – all courtesy of Mercury in Libra in perfect harmony with Jupiter in Aquarius. Happy birthday to Canadian actress Neve Campbell, born Oct. 3, 1973. Her starring roles in the horror film series "Scream" began in 1996 and most recently in 2020.

Monday, Oct. 4: The moon in discriminating Virgo is in harmony with both Uranus in Taurus and with Pluto in

Capricorn. Quiet and surprising together? Today this is so. The race for space began on Oct. 4, 1957, with the successful launch of the Soviet satellite Sputnik.

Tuesday, Oct. 5: The moon moves from discriminating Virgo into balancing Libra on the day before the new moon in Libra. While memories may bring on tensions, today is a good day to be honest and serious and practical and responsible. On Oct. 5, 1813, the British forces at Chatham were defeated by the Americans. Tecumseh was also killed in this battle.

Wednesday, Oct. 6: There are two very significant events in the sky today. First a new moon at 7:06 this morning. Then, Pluto turns from retrograde to direct motion in the afternoon. So, this new moon sees the sun and moon together in Libra, along with Mars and retrograde Mercury. Yet the ruler of Libra is Venus, now in sultry Scorpio. While so much energy is devoted to this new moon in airy, well-balanced Libra, just below all that is a sexy, secretive Venus. Then, at 2:28 this afternoon, Pluto turns from retrograde to direct. Pluto has been retro since the end of April 2021. If something changed for you back then, today it may come back to play a more outward role for you. Today, Elizabeth Shue, actress most famous for her Oscar-nominated role in "Leaving Las Vegas," turns 58.

Next week, speedy Venus enters Sagittarius, and Saturn turns from retrograde to direct.

Please check out the brand-new website www.lutts.ca as in Looking Up to the Stars. And you can get my free horoscope with interpretation emailed to you.

Astrology is a form of entertainment, not a science.



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Museum tea party celebrates stories of NOTL's legendary ladies

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Tea, biscuits and the tales of inspiring women abounded during Friday's sold-out tea party at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

The tea party was held in celebration of the museum's newest book, "Making Her Mark: The Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake."

The book is a celebration of the many women hailing from NOTL who have left great legacies. And on Friday afternoon, an all-female crowd gathered to celebrate their stories.

There were two sittings for the tea party, at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Both were sold out and both had Barbara Worthy, visitor and members services assistant at the museum, lead the discussion about some of the women featured in the book.

"She cursed like a trooper and that was because she



Susan Baxter pours a cup of tea with Ruth Denyer, left, and Jody Evans during the NOTL Museum's Tea Party celebrating the women chronicled in the new book "Making her Mark: The Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake." EVAN SAUNDERS

wanted to make a point," Worthy said of NOTLer Margherita Howe, who died in 2006.

Howe was one of several NOTL women honoured during the tea party.

An environmental activist and active community member in NOTL, she became a member of the Order of Canada in 1983 for her work organizing a community initiative to clean up the Great Lakes

and Niagara River.

She was also deeply involved in municipal affairs with some of her peers like Judy McLaughlin, who still resides in NOTL.

"Everyone remembers seeing them in the chamber, in the council sitting in the front row — pre-Betty," Worthy said to laughs as Lord Mayor Betty Disero looked on.

"They were watchdogs. They were listening, they

were note-taking and they were dedicated to ensuring that what was right was more important than ego."

She said Howe fought against development in NOTL and was always advocating for environmental causes.

Worthy also told the story of Molly Brant, an influential Mohawk leader from the 1700s.

"If there's anyone I'd like to have tea with, it's Molly

Brant. She was an influencer, you might even call her a disruptor," Worthy said.

She emphasized Brant's ability to act as an intermediary with the British, Mohawk/Haudenosaunee cultures and the Americans during the Revolutionary War, noting that Brant was able to make herself respected and influential among all sides.

The event saw some 20 people gathered in the museum's outdoor community space. Tea and biscuits were served on fine china. And this was the good china, Chrystal Haverstock said.

Haverstock owns a vintage fashion store, Weirdorama, and knows a good deal about the history of fine china. As a colony of England, Canada usually got the blemished goods, she said.

"This is the perfect stuff. The colonies, like Canada, always got the rejects where the pattern would not be correct or the colours would be bleeding," she said.

Some of the china on hand was "worth big bucks."

Haverstock just moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake and saw the tea party as a way to steep herself in the rich history of the town.

Worthy wanted the example of women like Howe and McLaughlin to guide the people in attendance.

"I remember seeing Judy and Margherita sitting there and thinking, 'These women are our moral compass. Who is coming up behind them?'" Worthy told the crowd.

"There are people here right now that are coming up behind them. There are people here who have the same need to raise their voice and to carry on their legacy."

"Even when Margherita was cussing and cussing out councillors, we loved her because she raised her voice. We must continue to raise our voices and we must continue to make our mark."

Growing Together: More seeds key to fewer weeds in your lawn



Joanne Young
Garden Columnist



Left: Top dress is garden soil. Right: Grass seed. JOANNE YOUNG PHOTOS



seed available. Make sure that you are choosing a mix that works with your sunlight conditions.

Most mixes are a combination of Kentucky bluegrass, perennial rye and fescue grass. For a sunny area you will want to have a higher percentage of Kentucky bluegrass. For a shadier area, it is best to have a higher percentage of fescue grass. You can broadcast the grass seed by using a seed spreader or by hand.

After the seed goes down, keep the soil evenly moist. You do not want to water too heavily as it could wash the seed away.

After two weeks you should be seeing the grass seed germinating and your lawn will be on its way to better health. Just remember ... if the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, chances are that they have been topdressing.

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

Mirror, mirror on the wall ... who has the fairest lawn of all? Not you? Well then, let's change that.

This past summer our lawns fared well, overall, with the rainfalls that we received in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was only toward the end of summer that we were starting to see the grass turning brown and going dormant.

Over time, though, your lawn tends to become thinner and thinner, depending on the amount of sunlight and moisture it receives and its general health. No doubt you have learned that wherever nature has a bare spot, it fills it in with a weed or two or three.

The most important step that you can take to improve

your lawn for the coming year is to topdress and reseed it this fall. The cooler temperatures and more frequent rains are the perfect conditions for grass seed to germinate.

These two actions will help to thicken your lawn, which has a couple benefits. The first is that the thicker your lawn is, the less space for the weeds to grow.

The second benefit is that when your lawn is dense, the grass helps to shade the soil so that the sun does not dry it out as quickly. That means you need less water to keep your lawn green,

especially during the hot, dry months of summer.

If you have a lot of weeds already growing in your lawn, you will want to try to get those under control first, either by pulling them by hand, making sure to get as much root as possible, or by using a selective herbicide such as Weed B Gon.

The term "selective" herbicide means that the spray will only kill broadleaf weeds, such as dandelions, plantain and chickweed, and not grass-type plants. So, make sure that you are using a herbicide for lawns.

The next step of the pro-

cess is to mow your lawn a little shorter than what you were cutting it during the summer months. This will make it easier to spread a thin layer of soil or compost on top of your existing lawn.

Once the lawn has been cut, use a fan rake to loosen up the soil. Also, by raking the lawn first, you will be removing any extra thatch and debris from the area.

Now you are ready to start topdressing — the application of a thin layer (about one-quarter inch thick) of topsoil or

compost over an existing lawn.

Topdressing regularly can smooth out bumps in the lawn and help to fill in low areas. It can improve soil conditions and add nutrients back into the soil.

It also provides a looser mix for the grass seed to get a good start with its roots. You do not want to bury the existing grass, just add soil around the base. Once the soil or compost is put down, lightly rake over the area with a fan rake.

The next step is to put down the grass seed. There are different mixes of grass

A photograph showing three square plates of food. The first plate on the left contains a dish with black rice and vegetables. The middle plate contains a dish with a large piece of meat, possibly beef, with a glaze. The third plate on the right contains a colorful stir-fry dish with various vegetables and protein.

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