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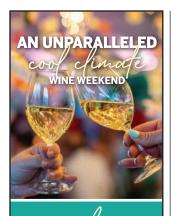




Vol. 8, Issue 25

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June 26, 2025



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Hot enough for you?

People seek refuge at NOTL beach, but is the water safe?



Swimmers try to beat the heat on Saturday, but were they aware the beach was unsafe due to E. coli? Until Wednesday, there was no sign warning people of the unsafe levels of bacteria. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Kevin MacLean | The Lake Report

summer's finally here and thanks to record-breaking temperatures and humidity this week, many people sought refuge in air-conditioned comfort, shade or a dip in Lake Ontario.

The mercury hit the high 30s Celsius but with the Florida-like oppressive humidity, it felt like 45 C or worse.

With school winding down, many Niagara-on-the-Lake children stayed home and those who didn't sought comfort wherever AC or shade was available. Pools and the Virgil splash pad were popular.

Many seasonal farmworkers, accustomed to working in the heat, were still on the job in sauna-like conditions, though fewer of them were seen toiling in the fields.

And a social media campaign was launched to buy cooling towels to help them cope with the crazy temperatures.

Over the weekend, particularly, dozens of visitors opted to take a soothing dunk in Lake Ontario.

But there was a problem: for the past week, starting last Thursday, the E. coli levels were unsafe at Niagara-on-the-Lake's only moni-

tored beach — at Queen's Royal Park, near the gazebo.

And unless you knew to check Niagara Region's online beach water advisories, you probably wouldn't be aware that dangerous E. coli counts had forced closure of Queen's Royal and several other beaches around the region.

The region tests Queen's Royal every Tuesday and Thursday from Victoria Day to Labour Day — and while many factors including heat, wind, larger numbers

Continued on Page 3



Former fire chief chosen as NOTL's new CAO

Zahraa Hmood The Lake Report

After a 17-month search for someone to step up and fill the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's top administrative role, the municipality has found its full-time replacement in former councillor and fire chief Nick Ruller.

Starting July 7, Ruller will begin serving as the town's chief administrative officer, taking over for interim chief administrator Bruce Zvaniga, who took on the role in January 2024 as a temporary replacement while the town began looking for its successor — a process mired by roadblocks along

Continued on Page 3

Man pleads guilty to hit-run that killed 84-year-old cyclist

Kevin MacLean The Lake Report

It is now up to a judge to decide what penalty a driver should receive for "recklessly" running over an 84-yearold Niagara-on-the-Lake cyclist who later died.

Richard Alan Moore pleaded guilty last Friday in the July 13, 2023, crash that left Nestor Chemerika severely injured and lying in a ditch on East and West Line.

He died at Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls 12 days later.

It was the second time Moore pleaded guilty to the single count of "reckless operation of a conveyance."

In an unusual twist, his initial plea, before a different judge in January, was tossed out after a dispute over certain information that should not have been presented to the court.

The driver left the scene, but last week before Superior Court Justice Michael Bordin, Moore admitted he was driving the pickup truck that struck Chemerika

The St. Catharines court heard that evidence showed Chemerika was riding in the

Continued on Page 5

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After 100 days with climate co-ordinator, activists want more action

Dan Smeenk Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

As climate change and the environment have seen more and more community interest and activism, the town responded in early February by hiring Kassie Burns as NOTL's climate change coordinator.

Burns, who graduated from Brock University last year with a master's in sustainability, has now been on the job for more than 100 days.

Her job thus far, she said, is one where she "couldn't be happier."

"I work with a variety of people," she said. "Different departments internally here but also externally."

She listed Niagara Region, Niagara Climate Change Action Network and "all the different municipalities in Niagara" as among those she works with outside of the municipality.

Burns said that her responsibilities with the town so far have included reviewing bylaws and policies that deal with climate change.

In the long term, she said there is a litany of things



Seniors for Climate in Niagara member Lidija Biro helped put on an event at the NOTL Community Centre on Monday to push back against bills 5 and 17. SUPPLIED

the town is looking to do to make an impact on the climate.

"The climate change adaptation plan, in particular, has a long list of action items," she said. "Like developing a stormwater management plant, advancing our urban forestry plan, or supporting our waterfront plan."

The NOTL climate change adaptation plan is an outline created by the municipality in 2022, which outlines six areas for them

to focus on: Climate change policy, urban forests, flood risks, building construction, risk assessment and public awareness and education.

Beyond the town's environmental efforts, there is also a somewhat different perspective on them by locals who have long focused on the town's environmental efforts, including the climate change adaptation

Take Lidija Biro, the founder of Seniors for Climate in Niagara and someone who lives in NOTL.

Her organization works on local environmental protection and advocacy that also connects to broader efforts beyond NOTL.

On top of activities like tree planting and other local environmental efforts, Biro said that there were also more immediate local environmental concerns they advocate for.

"Another concern for us is the high traffic volumes," she said. "There is high traffic gridlock and there are parking issues. We are still advocating a traffic cop and an (electric vehicle) shuttle to alleviate some of that traffic."

Biro's organization have also been operating at a policy level: Pushing the municipality, and others, to act.

"There were some town halls last year, she said. "We called our local municipal government out on the fact that they had plans for climate adaptation, and they were supposed to be getting a climate co-ordinator and that got put off and put off."

"That was when the lord mayor said that one had been hired a couple days before."

Biro said hiring Burns was a good thing, but overall, there has been "minimal, minimal action" by the municipality.

She also said that she and her organization were disappointed in past council actions on climate change.

She said, for example, that she was "disappointed" that Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa and NOTL councillors had refused to sign a letter aimed at federal government leaders called "Elbows Up For Climate Action," because it included a statement about pipelines.

"(Zalepa) said, 'I do agree with many points contained in the letter,'" said Biro.
"'But I cannot support the following statement: 'new pipelines require massive public havoc, trample on indigenous sovereignty, and mean more climate disasters hitting our cities and towns in years to come' ... 'That's an inaccurate statement and a generalization and does not reflect facts in all instances."

The lord mayor said he didn't remember anything about this letter.

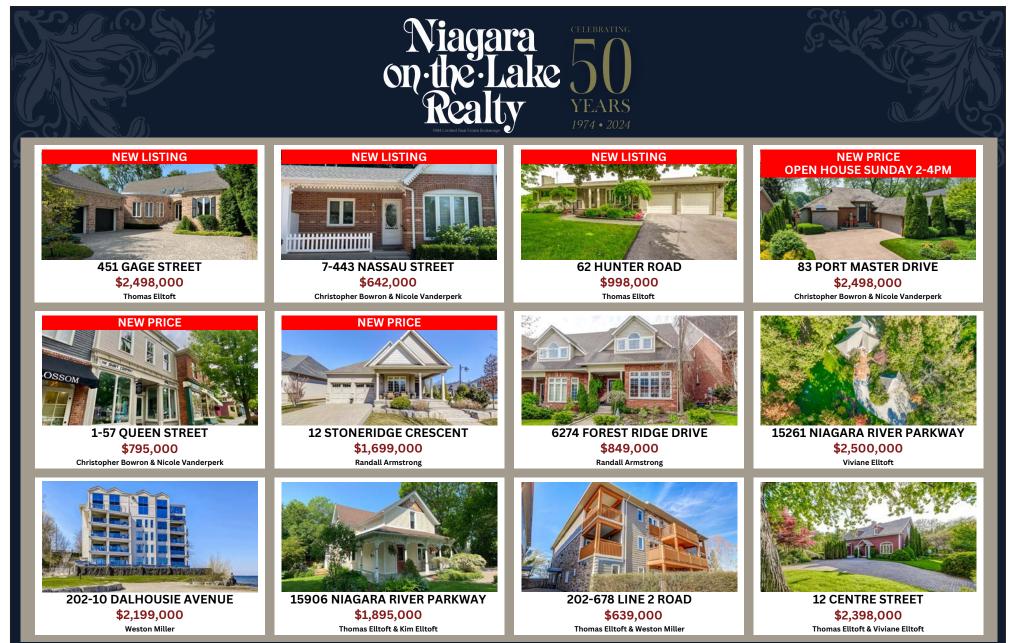
Biro said there are more than 50 environmental groups in the Niagara region currently pushing for action on the environment and climate change.

Niagara Region also pledged to get its corporate emissions down to net zero by 2050.

But after a long time of advocacy by these organizations, is the town more on the right path on environmental issues?

"It is very much narrowly more," said Biro.

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Nick Ruller returns to NOTL as CAO

Continued from Front Page

the way.

Zvaniga took over for former CAO Marnie Cluckie, who served for three years before resigning in December 2023 to become Hamilton's city manager.

Ruller, who grew up and currently lives in NOTL, was elected as a councillor in the 2022 election and served for two years, then stepped down last September to take on a role as Brampton's fire chief. Coun. Andrew Niven was appointed to his seat in council.

He previously served as NOTL's fire chief from 2019 to 2022 and has been a volunteer firefighter with NOTL's fire department for several years.

A June 19 media release from the Town of NOTL



Nick Ruller.

announcing Ruller as the new CAO states that Ruller "most recently served as the fire chief for the City of Brampton, where he provided executive oversight to nearly 600 staff and managed multi-million-dollar budgets."

"With over 25 years of experience in municipal government, Nick brings a wealth of expertise, stratetive approach to the role," the release states.

The town's search for a new, full-time CAO went longer than it expected originally, the town had planned to find a new CAO before the start of this year, but securing a replacement proved challenging.

Last year, approximately 70 people applied for the role, and following the interview process, the town had a top candidate on its list, but, as Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa shared at the time, "we weren't able to make terms with them," which he called "disappointing."

In April, the town shared that three different candidates were offered the role, all of whom declined, "for various personal and professional reasons."

didn't share how it came to be that Ruller would take on this new role, but shared a statement from him in which he said it is a "tremendous honour" to have been chosen as the new CAO.

"I look forward to working closely with the lord mayor, council, members of staff, and the community at large collaboratively and purposefully, ensuring that Niagara-on-the-Lake continues to be a place where its rich heritage is preserved while embracing opportunity, innovation, and high quality of life for all its residents," he said in the

The town's next meeting after July 7 is the committee of the whole planning meeting on Tuesday, July 8.

advice, a weblink and a QR

code to the region's test

However, those signs

have not been installed at

Queen's Royal yet. Instead,

all weekend and early this

week there was a sign say-

ing, "Welcome to the beach"

and "Help keep our beaches

information about what can

just wanted to relax and not

worry about any problems.

"I wouldn't go very far"

"I assume it's not safe to

swim here," added Mehmet

into the water, said Jeff

clean." Below that was

cause water problems.

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Up to swimmers to check water quality status

Continued from Front Page

of swimmers and heavy rainfall can all affect E. coli results, as of Wednesday, the beach was still considered unsafe.

The previous day's testing still showed high levels of E. coli.

On the weekend, and again Wednesday afternoon, that didn't stop people and pets from swimming, wading and frolicking in the water. On Sunday, young children were seen ingesting water as they played in the lake, because that's what kids will do.

E. coli is especially dangerous for children, seniors and those with depressed immune systems, the region warns on its website.

And the Mayo Clinic says swallowing water with high E. coli content can lead to an infection that causes stomach cramps, diarrhea and vomiting.

In severe cases, it can lead to kidney failure. It usually is more severe in children than adults.

But until The Lake Report started asking questions earlier this week, there were no signs posted warning people that E. coli counts are elevated and the NOTL beach is closed.

Signs on the beach are no longer the region's policy - although, by Wednesday afternoon, officials had replaced the innocuous "Welcome to the beach" sign at Queen's Royal with the formerly used bright yellow signs warning people to avoid the water.

That change only came





after repeated questions

region and the town. The region's public health department has changed how it lets you know that water problems might be lurking at the local beach. And it is now up to beachgoers to figure it out.

by The Lake Report to the

The bright yellow "warning" sign that resurfaced this week at Queen's Royal has been replaced by online notices that the public has to seek out.

"Posting beach water quality results on our website provides instant updates as soon as results are received, offering one trusted source of information and reflecting best practices in public health communication," Niagara

Meghan Marchand said in response to questions from The Lake Report.

dangerous. SOURCED

swimmers always consider weather and water quality indicators such as if there is a large number of swimmers, wind and high waves, large number of birds, recent heavy rainfall, and cloudy water," she added.

water can change rapidly, often faster than static signs can reflect. In addition to posting beach water test results on our website, educating the public is a key part of supporting safe swimming decisions."

state "This beach is monitored" offer educational

As well, "we recommend

"Bacteria levels in beach

Newly designed signs that

public health spokesperson

Oztemir. "I'm here to relax." However, Coltt Carthew felt that if "it's a health hazard, there should be notice," adding if he knew that he probably wouldn't have gone to the beach. Kaylee MacKay, who was there with Carthew, agreed

Pace.

problems. A Town of NOTL spokesperson said the town and region "work together to ensure that public notice signs are appropriately posted at designated locations.

she wouldn't hit the beach

if she knew it had E. coli

- With files from Dan Smeenk

kevin@niagaranow.com









Speed cam cut down a third time | Bus connects NOTL to Toronto

Dan Smeenk Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Third time's a charm for Niagara Region and police?

The automated speed enforcement camera in front of Crossroads Public School in Virgil came down for a third time in less than a month on Tuesday. This latest vandalism incident is sparking more concerns about who did this and what police and the region, with whom a contractor owns and operates the camera, are doing about this.

Unlike the last two times, when the camera was sawed off at the base, this time the camera was sawed down closer to the middle of the pole.

Scott Fraser, the region's associate director of transportation planning, says the region is aware of this most recent incident of vandalism and is working with the camera vendor to repair the speed camera and have it back and work "as soon as possible."

Fraser also said that this time, the region is looking into having extra reinforcements to help prevent



The region says it may install a closed-circuit TV near the speed camera to combat vandalism. DANIEL SMEENK

more cameras from being vandalized.

"We are also currently evaluating options and alternatives to best address the issue of vandalism of the automated speed enforcement camera near Crossroads, and this includes the potential of installing closed-circuit TV," he said.

"We have not made a final determination about this option, but we are reviewing this possibility, which includes addressing privacy and technical issues, among others. The use of closed-circuit TV is common practice in the region to safeguard infrastructure assets and increase public safety."

Fraser also said Niagara Region is not giving up on these speed enforcement

cameras and said it is an important part of the region's Vision Zero initiative, to decrease and eliminate serious injuries and deaths on regional roads.

"The presence of (automated speed enforcement) cameras has, overall, shown positive results in changing driver behaviour and reducing the number of speeding vehicles across the region."

The camera at Crossroads Public School was originally supposed to be there until August.

Anyone with information about this incident is encouraged to contact the Niagara Regional Police Service at (905)-688-4111 or Crimestoppers Niagara at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or crimestoppersniagara.ca.

daniel@niagaranow.com

Paige Seburn Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents can expect a bump in tourism — and a new, car-free way to travel from Old Town to Toronto or Niagara Falls — thanks to a seasonal bus service launching Thursday.

FlixBus, an intercity bus service, announced in a June 20 press release that as of June 26, it will offer direct service to and from Toronto Union Station's Bus Terminal, Rapidsview Park in Niagara Falls and 51 Queen's Parade in NOTL.

The seasonal service will run through Nov. 2 and offer two trips per day, six days a week, Wednesdays excluded.

"More people are going to be able to get to Niagaraon-the-Lake," said Kathy Weiss, executive director for Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake, the town's destination marketing organization.

Weiss said the schedule gives visitors about eight hours to explore, dine and shop in town between pickup and drop-off — plenty of time to support local



A new seasonal FlixBus bus service starts June 26 and will offer direct rides from both Toronto and Niagara Falls to Niagara-on-the-Lake — and back. SUPPLIED

restaurants, boutiques and attractions.

"That's eight hours of exploring our community," she said, adding the service makes it easy to check off Toronto, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake all in one go, on the same bus.

FlixBus and Niagara Region Transit are completely separate, said Weiss. FlixBus is privately run and operated, while regional transit is run by Niagara Region: "They have nothing to do with each other."

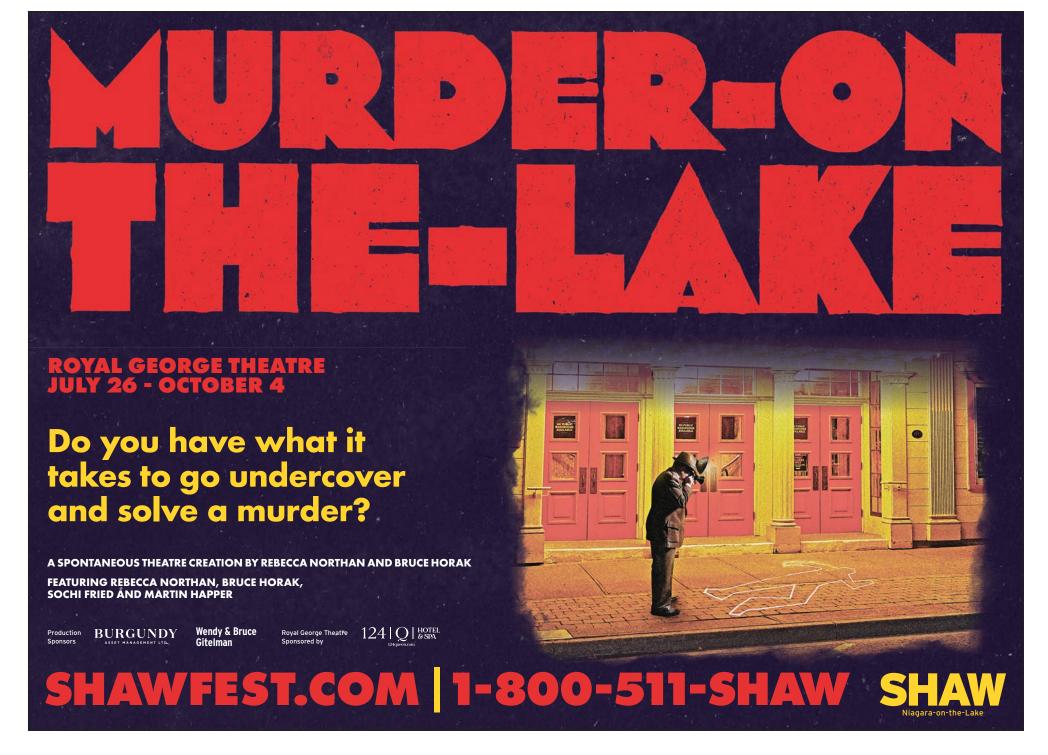
Karina Frayter, head of communications at Flix North America, said the company has had high demand from travellers looking for easy and cheap ways to get to NOTL, "without relying on a car or private shuttle service."

"Getting here by public transit hasn't always been easy," said Frayter in an email.

The seasonal service will help fill that gap — part of the company's broader mission to make travel more accessible across Ontario and beyond, she said.

Looking to pack up and head out? Two trips are leaving NOTL tomorrow — one for Niagara Falls and one for Toronto. Times, costs and more can be found at flixbus.ca.

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Crown seeks one year in jail for fatal hit-run

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Continued from Front Page

narrow, paved bike lane on East and West Line when he was hit from behind.

On Friday, Moore, now 38, re-entered his plea and later apologized for his actions after his GMC Sierra pickup truck hit Chemerika.

Bordin reserved sentencing in the case and will hand down the penalty later this year. No date for sentencing has been set yet.

Deputy Crown attorney Todd Morris urged him to send Moore to jail for 12 months, while defence lawyer Jeffrey Manishen argued that a two-year sentence of house arrest was more appropriate.

The maximum sentence for such a charge is life in prison.

In an emotional and heart-felt presentation, Chemerika's daughter, Dennise Falzoi, was on hand to tell the court in-person how the death of her father has affected the family.

The day of the crash "dramatically changed our lives forever," she said in her victim impact statement.

Her father, a retired GM worker who worked hard to stay fit, was on his daily bike ride along East and West Line, near Niagara Street, not far from his home when he "became a victim of a horrific hitand-run."

"There's not a day that goes by that I'm not tortured, wondering what my dad went through while he was lying in the ditch in agony and bleeding," Falzoi told the court.

"Will someone see me? Will someone help me? Or is this at the end for me?"

"This is unimaginable for me, his daughter. It's the unknown that is so unbearable. Seeing my dad in the hospital so helpless and terrified broke my heart."

"There wasn't a spot on his body that wasn't cut, bruised or broken," she said.

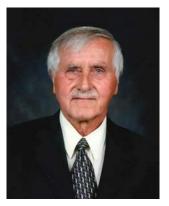
"I can't imagine and understand how Richard Alan Moore could just drive away and try to hide what he did and continue on with his life like nothing happened. It's mind-boggling."

Morris also read into the record victim statements from Falzoi's brother Nestor Jr. and her dad's older brother Walter.

They both reiterated the deep sense of loss the family felt and the pain that Nestor Sr. endured as a result of the incident.

In arguing for a 12-month jail sentence, Morris repeatedly stated that Moore was





Above: During their investigation into the crash that killed cyclist Nestor Chemerika, police issued this image of the suspect vehicle. NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE Left: At age 84, retired GM worker Nestor Chemerika rode his bicycle daily along East and West Line, his daughter told the court. FILE

reckless in not remaining at the scene or returning to help Chemerika.

Instead, as witnesses and surveillance video unearthed by investigators showed, Moore continued driving toward his home in Niagara Falls.

"We know that (Chemerika) did not die on impact," Morris said.

66 I can't imagine and understand how Richard Alan Moore could just drive away and try to hide what he did and continue on with his life like nothing happened. It's mind-boggling."

DENISE FALZOI DAUGHTER OF HIT-RUN VICTIM

"We also know that the accused's own assistance could have made a difference, especially since he's a volunteer firefighter."

Within days of the crash, when police questioned Moore at his home, his truck was still visibly damaged but "it was obvious" that some attempts had been made to repair the vehicle, Morris said in reading an agreed statement of facts.

Asked about the truck, which was parked in the driveway, Moore told police it was registered to his father, Alan.

When officers told Moore they were looking for the

vehicle involved in a hitand-run and asked if he had been on East and West Line on July 13, Moore answered, "I don't remember."

He also denied replacing the passenger side mirror.

It was a Thursday evening, not yet dark, when Chemerika was struck, likely between 7:40 and 7:54 p.m., Morris said.

Thursday is fish fry night at the NOTL Legion and police received a tip that Moore was a regular customer there. He worked as a contractor and had clients in NOTL.

On the night Chemerika was hit, Moore, wearing a "volunteer fire department" T-shirt, was captured on video at the Legion buying a pitcher of beer at 7:02 p.m.

However, Morris noted, there was no video showing Moore drinking beer that night.

NOTL fire chief Jay Plato confirmed Moore had been a volunteer with the department but resigned about six years ago.

Video from a home on Niagara Street in NOTL recorded Moore's pewtercoloured 1999 GMC Sierra pickup travelling toward East and West Line at 7:40 p.m., with no damage to the passenger side of the truck.

Less than 15 minutes later, at 7:54 p.m., video from a home in St. Davids showed Moore's truck headed toward Niagara Falls. Its passenger side mirror was missing.

Meanwhile, Const. Vincent St. Pierre was on patrol at 8:22 p.m. along East and West Line when he spotted

a single black running shoe and some vehicle debris in the middle of the road.

He stopped and found Chemerika in a roadside ditch, barely conscious and badly injured. His badly damaged blue bicycle was nearby, as was a large mirror assembly and other vehicle debris.

Paramedics arrived eight minutes later and the victim was taken first to a local hospital and then airlifted to Hamilton.

The section of East and West Line near where Chemerika was hit has a narrow, paved bicycle lane along the shoulder, Morris noted.

The investigation showed he was riding in the designated bike lane when he was struck.

When members of the Niagara police collision reconstruction unit checked the scene on the night of July 13, they found a "fresh gouge scratch and tire marks in the paved north side shoulder" and determined that's where the collision occurred.

That collision left Chemerika with a fractured skull and broken left arm, along with numerous other injuries, Morris said.

He was carrying no identification but one of the NOTL firefighters who responded to the call recognized him and knew he lived barely 250 metres away.

Chemerika died on July 25, 2023. Moore was arrested and charged on Oct. 3 following a lengthy investigation.









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Powwow and lacrosse will meet at Butler's Barracks this fall

Paige Seburn Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

As National Indigenous History Month comes to a close, the Niagara Regional Native Centre is giving residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake and beyond something big to look forward to: A huge traditional lacrosse tournament with hundreds of players at Butler's Barracks this fall.

A traditional powwow, with drumming, dancing and celebration, will take place alongside it.

Both the annual powwow and the centre's first-ever lacrosse tournament will take place on Saturday, Sept. 13 from noon to 5 p.m. and are free and open to the public.

"We're hoping for 400 people," said director of programming Michael Buck about the tournament. He grew up playing lacrosse in Niagara.

"It'll just be one really great, big festival-style day."



Niibin Buck plays lacrosse with a smile outside at the Niagara Regional Native Centre during the 2024 Youth and Elders Conference. His uncle, Michael Buck, is helping organize the upcoming traditional tournament at Butler's Barracks in Niagara-on-the-Lake and hopes to see 400 people take part. SUPPLIED

The Dewa'ë:ö' Charity Tournament, named after the Seneca word for lacrosse, will open with a traditional-format game on a 500-metre field, featuring wooden sticks, no nets or boundaries, just posts, and no set number of players,

although each team is expected to have about 150.

"Just a really good, wide open, fun game for anyone to join," said Buck.

Halley Irwin, the centre's director of development and community engagement, said the style of play reflects

historic games once held on the same grounds.

In the 1800s, she said, the Indian Council House on the Niagara Commons was where thousands of Indigenous people came annually to negotiate treaties with the British Crown — gatherings which often included traditional games like lacrosse.

The last recorded match there was in 1860, she said, between the Mohawk and Seneca nations. Seneca won.

To honour this return, Seneca elders in Irving, N.Y., gifted the tournament a traditional name: "Ëshënötganye' hëöweh tënötganye:ak onëhjih – 'They'll play again where they used to play a long time ago," Irwin said in an email.

Modern-format games will also take place to show lacrosse's evolution and Indigenous roots, she said.

Indigenous roots, she said.

The centre hopes to draw lacrosse communities from

across Ontario and New

York and even tourists passing through Old Town, said Buck, to show lacrosse as a responsibility, a form of medicine and a way of life. "It's more than just a sport," he said.

"Being indigenous, I have a deeper connection to lacrosse," he said, adding that he hopes the tournament helps younger, non-Indigenous players gain a better understanding of what the game means to Indigenous communities.

"I hope it helps them relate to Indigenous teams more and Indigenous players on their teams," he said.

Buck said both events will give the centre a chance to show it can host large gatherings for both Indigenous and wider Niagara communities.

Powwow coordinator Phil Davis said the powwow will be a place to "come together and give thanks for having the life that we have," said Davis. "It's a celebration of life, is what it is." After three years at the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines, the powwow is returning to an outdoor setting — this time, at Butler's Barracks, a site Irwin said is rich with Indigenous history and "provides the perfect backdrop."

"We're so excited to be outside again," said Buck.

"Our community and the public have been asking for it," added Davis.

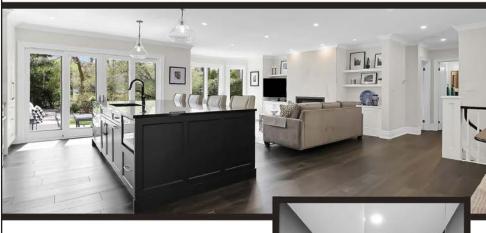
The family-friendly, alcohol and drug-free day will also feature traditional-style food, Indigenous craft, demonstrations of traditional games and more opportunities for cultural learning, Irwin said.

Pow wows were once banned under the Indian Act in 1876 and it wasn't until 1951 that those prohibitions were lifted, said Irwin.

"Today, powwows serve as powerful expressions of cultural resilience, pride and community connection," she said.

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Strawberry Festival goes 40 years strong

Andrew Hawlitzky The Lake Report

Strawberries, sunshine and 40 years of neighbourly know-how drew more than 5,000 people to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Saturday.

Run entirely by church volunteers, the annual strawberry festival showcased local berries with crepes, barbecue, live music and an expanded children's zone - making it a summer staple for residents and returning visitors.

The one-day fundraiser, held at the church on Simcoe Street, pumped tens of thousands of dollars into upkeep of the 231-year-old building.

"It's better than it was last year and it seems to be exceeding expectations," said organizer Kathy Hunter.

By 10:30 a.m., the event had already sold out of pies, though jams and preserves were still available throughout the day.



Ruth Hunter serves strawberry shortcake up during the annual St. Andrew's festival. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

By noon, festival-goers had purchased more than 14,000 food tickets, which could be traded in for crepes, ice cream and other treats.

"We start making jam in January or February and go right through until the end of May," Hunter said.

She credited four decades of trial and error for the festival's smooth operation.

"We've got it sort of down to where we like it," she

Festival proceeds go directly into preserving the historic church, which was rebuilt in 1831 after

the original structure was burned during the War of 1812.

The Rev. Bernie Skelding praised the festival's outreach beyond the congrega-

"The event is something the congregation anticipates every year and works together on. It's a real anchoring point for us," he said.

The festival also included a silent auction, where attendees could bid on more than 300 items, many of which were donated to the church to support the fundraising effort.

The NOTL Writers' Circle also took part, setting up a book-laden table across the street from the church to promote the group and showcase members' books.

Next up on the local festival calendar is the St. Mark's Cherry Festival on July 5, followed by the Peach Festival, hosted by St. Vincent de Paul Parish, on Aug. 8 and 9.

andrew@niagaranow.com

Cherry Festival returns to St. Mark's July 5

Andrew Hawlitzky The Lake Report

Hundreds of homemade cherry pies will be up for grabs when St. Mark's Anglican Church hosts its annual Cherry Festival on Friday, July 5.

The event runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the church's Byron Street grounds and includes fresh cherries, a barbecue, bake table, children's games, live music and a new silent auction.

Admission is free and all proceeds support upkeep of the 1804 church and its historic stained-glass windows.

"The highlight is the cherry pies, which are made from local cherries by volunteers at the church, and this year we have 550 pies made," said organizer Andrea Douglas.

The pies took two months to prepare, with help from the kitchen at St. John's An-



glican Church. Cherries are sourced from Vineland and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A pre-sale of silent auction items and donated treasures takes place Thursday, July 4, from 4 to 6 p.m. in Addison Hall.

The Fort George Fife and Drum Corps will perform at noon, with a DJ spinning music throughout the day.

"It's important as a fundraiser for our church operations, but it's equally important as a community event that's truly valued," said Douglas.

Visitors are encouraged to arrive early — the pies tend to sell out fast.

JULY I, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE Celebrate Canada C FRIENDS OF FORT GEORGE AND PARKS CANADA



SIMCOE PARK

11:00 am - 3 pm

Rotary Club of NOTL BBQ Lunch

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- Antique car display, Tiny Museum

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Food Services at Fort George

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- Musket Demonstrations

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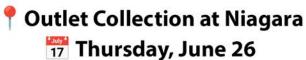








Join the NOTL Chamber of Commerce and the Outlet Collection at Niagara for a special **Chamber on Tap** networking event!



5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

(Note the later start time to allow for travel)

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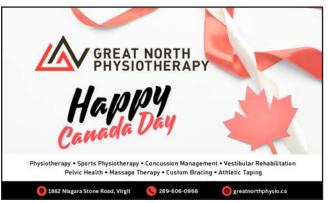


















What's on for Canada Day in town?

The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake is set to celebrate Canada's 158th birthday in style this Tuesday, with a full day of festivities ranging from fireworks to fine art and free museum access.

Family fun at Simcoe Park

From 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Rotary Club will serve up a barbecue lunch at Simcoe Park alongside live music and a fife and drum parade. The celebration will feature a Canada Day cakecutting, a classic car show and a visit from the NOTL Tiny Museum.

Free entry and fireworks at Fort George

Parks Canada is offering free admission to Fort George from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday. The Howling Horns, an eight-piece brass band, perform at 7 p.m., with fireworks to follow at 10.

Ravine fireworks and live music

St. Davids will light up the sky as Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery hosts a night of live entertainment and fireworks. The fun begins at



A free fireworks show at Fort George will begin at 10 p.m. on July 1. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

5 p.m., with wine tastings available until 6 p.m. The fireworks are expected to launch around 10 p.m. and yes, dogs are welcome.

Guests are encouraged to bring a donation for Gillian's Place or the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund.

Legion party on King Street

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 will host a full slate of Canada Day celebrations on King Street, open to the public from

noon to 8 p.m.

A DJ will spin tunes from noon to 3 p.m., followed by live music from Marty Hopkins and the Honky Tonk Heroes from 3 to 7 p.m.

The event will feature a barbecue, a beer and wine tent, and prize giveaways throughout the day. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome.

Artistry by the Lake

More than 60 Canadian artists will showcase paintings, jewellery, textiles and other works at Queen's

Royal Park during Artistry by the Lake, running daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Canada Day. Admission is free.

Museum open house

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum will open both its Castlereagh Street location and Tiny Museum from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with free admission all day.

Whether you're into history or art, fireworks or food, there's something for everyone this Canada Day in NOTL.

Lake Report

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- Holding our elected leaders accountable
- Charities and local non-profit organizations
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The Lake Report

OPINION



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



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Your Lake Report is the proud winner of 131 national and provincial awards for journalism and advertising excellence.



#33: For a special person's birthday, give an experience rather than a material gift. Shared memories are priceless.

This tiny column gives tips to help promote kindness in our lives and spread joy and happiness.



Contributed by Patty Garriock

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." - C.S. Lewis

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Elusive four-leaf clover found

Luck is on seven-year-old Kaiden Alexander's side this June, as he managed to find a four-leaf clover outside at his grandparents' place in Old Town a few weeks ago, after spending much of spring on the hunt for one. SUPPLIED



Opinion

Citizens resist Shaw's latest drama



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner Columnist

The Battle Royal of Queen Street. July 8th.

That day our lordly mayor and his crew will consider the Shaw Festival's request to bloat the quaint, ancient Royal George Theatre into a sprawling complex.

If approved it would eat four existing buildings, three of them historic, soar five storeys high, host a restaurant to compete with those now existing, throttle the main drag during 30 months of construction and extend for half a block around the corner, treating neighbours to permanent loading docks, ramps and garbage bins.

"A massive reconstruction of inappropriate size, location and an invasion of historic residential properties," says longtime NOT-Ler Susan Chapman. "It will open doors for further commercial development for all residents."

On the weekend the Prideaux Street resident started an email campaign to get bums in chairs at the coming meeting as the \$85-million behemoth (a third of that money's coming from Doug Ford) is debated. Already council has exempted it from a development freeze in Old Town. The Shaw's special, apparently.

There's a Facebook campaign now launched as well. Meanwhile, the rebels in the NOTL Residents' Association are backing redevelopment of the site. But not this plan. "We do not support the present proposal as it appears inconsistent with the heritage nature of the district," says Stuart Mc-Cormack. "We are putting together a position paper on the matter and a delegation will be made to council."

Others agree. "I find this change to what is effectively the prominent centre of Old Town disproportionate and once again, indicative of the town's consistently contradictory, random sense of historical assessment," Mark Smith writes me. And he wonders why we need a Mississauga-sized industrial theatre complex smack in the middle of our heritage

"To address the required theatre/additional seating capacity, I'd look to the Shaw property on Queen's Parade which presents as enormous," he says.

"It's adjacent to what are huge, likely federal, open fields on one side, an actor's housing project on another side and across the street from a tired-looking seemingly empty building on yet still more open ground. Although I may be unaware of important factors that invalidate my focus toward this end of town, am I missing what seems to me to be so obvious?"



The yellow signs have gone up indicating which structures in Old Town will be demolished for the Shaw's mega-expansion.

Dunno. But the Shaw is fighting back.

"The building must be demolished as the foundation is failing," CEO Tim Jennings says in response to last week's column.

"It was built in 1916 as a temporary building ... we have been mitigating it for 25-plus years and the structure can no longer be mitigated in any reasonable way. Our options are to demolish and redo the theatre to 21st-century requirements (and looking beyond the 21st century) or close the facility and sell the property to other kinds of developers."

Jennings argues that neighbours have been consulted, buildings to be razed are insignificant, the new structure will only be a couple of metres taller than the tip of the existing one, that elevators, washrooms and a huge lobby are required along with facilitating 24-foot trucks, and that they have "chosen" to exceed code and overbuild for generations yet unborn. Now, this is not an anti-

artistic rant. The Shaw is famous and worthy. It brings millions into the town and region. Last year it entertained 239,000 visitors, a third from across the line. There are 600 employees, a yearly budget of \$40 million and, despite a smallish operating loss, the non-profit's foundation has over \$30 million in its beefy investment portfolio.

So, clearly, this is an economic force. And a political one, as shown by the unheard-of contribution from Ontario's Conservative government (most of an entire department's grant budget is being directed to the Shaw alone).

But does that mean it gets a pass on erecting the biggest single structure in the historic Old Town, bringing down the iconic Royal George façade, gobbling up half a block of residences, building a 61-foot-high tower and forever replacing clapboard and carved wood with concrete and glass?

Lately this town has been bristling with concern over hotel creep, ersatz replica architecture, unhosted Airbnb disruption, heritage loss and the gnawing-away at the very authenticity that makes Niagara-on-the-Lake unique.

Dear Shaw Festival, we want you to stay and prosper. But there's a reason you're here in paradise and not in Brampton.

Don't blow it.

Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.

garth@garth.ca



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An illustration shows the height of the Royal George development, which will alter the look of Old Town. SUPPLIED

A meeting place for the community

Tim Carroll Tim Jennings Special to The Lake Report

Since the site plan for the rebuild of the Royal George Theatre became public last week, we've been overwhelmed by messages of support, encouragement, and excitement from across the community.

Rebuilding the theatre is something we've spent many years thinking about - and almost as many years seeking funding for — so we're thrilled that it's finally happening. Niagaraon-the-Lake deserves a world-class Royal George Theatre, and we're determined to deliver just that.

Most people know or have become aware that the Royal George was built as a temporary building in the First World War out of a clay speed tile, and that foundation has now dissolved to the point of being irreparable. No one seems surprised that we need to rebuild the theatre.

But one comment we have heard several times, and feel is worth addressing, is about the size of the new building. Yes, the new Royal George will need to be significantly larger than the current theatre.

To be clear, the theatre auditorium itself will remain a similar size, increasing to around 358 seats from its 335 norm, and preserving that same jewel-box, intimate feel but the building's overall footprint will definitely be bigger.

So why is this? Why can't we just rebuild the

Royal George exactly as it is today?

There are a few good reasons.

Let's start with the lobby, which is currently about eight feet deep and has a capacity of 13 people. For a building with a 335-person capacity, modern building and fire codes would not allow such a small lobby space today.

In fact, it really has to be able to accommodate the whole group of attendees. Some of the space required to meet current building and evacuation codes will be created by pushing the theatre back; the rest by using the space that is currently taken up by the box office building next door to the Royal George.

This will allow us to expand the footprint of the new Royal George without taking up more of Queen Street.

Building code requirements also now, quite rightly, require significant accessibility options and support systems. A modern theatre building must have elevators, more washrooms and accessible washrooms, and enough space for wheelchairs or walkers to move safely through its spaces.

One of the most common concerns we hear from patrons is how difficult the current building is to navigate. Accessing the small downstairs bar area and the current washrooms is nearly impossible unless you're fully able, and the only cur rent accessible washroom is outside, down an alley, and in another building.

The new Royal George in-

tends not just to meet code but to meet Rick Hansen Foundation gold certification standards, which go beyond current minimum requirements to create truly accessible spaces for the next century. This means, among other things, ensuring that every part of the building is accessible not only to audiences but to technical staff and crews.

That is also why the tower, which will move back on the property to be more hidden from main street or side street views, needs to be five feet taller than it is currently. True accessibility means that the current crawl spaces become head-height working spaces reachable by workers with physical constraints.

But, to be clear, the tower itself (which most people currently don't notice from the street) will be only that slight bit (five feet) taller and even more out of view from the street, especially during the green months of the year when the green wall on the back of it will make it disappear among the treescape.

Over the years, hundreds if not thousands — of you have told us you wish the Royal George could be open during the day, not just at showtimes. We agree, but we've never had the infrastructure to make that happen.

Since we have to have a larger lobby anyway, we have the chance to make the new Royal George a vibrant community hub, open from morning to evening, thanks to our ground-floor café - a place to sit, meet with

friends or family, or write that novel.

Finally, our buildings aren't just structures; they're gateways to the art and programming within. The Shaw is a charity (in fact, Niagara's largest cultural charity) and our mission is to bring art and creativity to as many people as possible.

We envisage a future where every high school student in Niagara comes to the Shaw annually not just to see a play, but for a full day. A morning of workshops with our artists, designers, and artisans, learning about theatre trades or building communication skills, followed by an afternoon show that showcases those skills in action.

We have everything we need to offer these lifechanging opportunities except the physical space to host them. That's why we're including in the new Royal George a flexible, multi-purpose room for youth workshops, postshow discussions, seminars, rehearsals, and more. When not in use by us, this will be a space (the only one of its kind in downtown NOTL) for the community to gather, talk, play — the possibilities are endless.

So yes, the new Royal George will be a bigger, grander complex than the current one. It has to be, by law, but more importantly, it will offer far more to the communities it serves and most especially to our friends and neighbours here in Niagara.

Tim Carroll is artistic director for the Shaw Festival. Tim Jennings is the executive director.

This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style. Category: IN THE FRUIT BASKET

Rainier, Montmorency, Maraschino

Last issue: FAIR AND SQUARE

Clue: The Texas State Fair "no rules" cook-off for this food does have rules: it must have fillers such as beans and onions.

Answer: What is chili?

Answered first by: Claudia Grimwood

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Randie Topps, Jane Morris, Bill Hamilton, Margie Enns, Bob Wheatley, Susan Hamilton, Becky Creager, Jeff Lake, Nancy Rocca, Peter Pepperman, Katie Reimer, Wade Durling, Jim Dandy, Wesley Mann, Howard Jones, Sylvia Wiens, Catherine Clarke, Edna Groff, David Spencer, Lainie Wagner, Sheila Meloche

Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com, with your name, for a chance to win a \$25 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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

Love games? Join us for fun events every week at the Irish Harp Pub. Details at www.theirishharppub.com

Elizabeth Gordon, Executor of the Estate for the Estate of Norman J. Edmondson (Deceased March 31st, 2025) 1591 Concession 4 Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON LOS 1J0 June 2, 2025

NOTICE TO CLAIM PERSONAL BELONGINGS

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to advise that the Estate of Norman John Edmondson located at 1591 Concession 4 Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, LOS 1J0, is in the process of being administered. Any persons who have left personal belongings at this property are hereby requested to make arrangements to retrieve their items.

All items must be collected no later than June 30th. 2025. Unclaimed property may be considered abandoned and will be disposed of at the discretion of the estate.

To arrange a pickup or verify ownership, please contact the undersigned at the contact information provided

Proof of ownership will be required.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Gordon, Executor - Estate of Norman J. Edmondson

Contact Information:

Mark Gordon 416 729-3752 Email: mark_gordonca@yahoo.ca

wishing to use it. They should pay just as all those have in the past. The question to ask is:

Why are our tax dollars now going to repair and upgrade the irrigation and municipal drainage system that has not been maintained properly for years and should be paid for by those that benefit from it?

Kip Voege **NOTL**

Irrigation funding is not 'transformational homeowners, the town, the important and more are

The heading "'It's transformational': New \$1.8 million funding to help boost NOTL irrigation systems" (The Lake Report, June 19) is very misleading. This is an Erwin Wiens exaggerated statement. The Lake Report can do better. The town is not getting the full \$1.8 million.

The irrigation system for NOTL mainly uses the municipal drains, of which there are many throughout the town. Many have not been maintained properly over the last 20 years. Thus leading to problems with the irrigation systems and adding to the flooding problems throughout the town.

The town is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of these municipal drains. The costs are shared by and assessed against all those properties that benefit from them: Farmers,

region, the Niagara Parks Commission, etc. An engineer's report is required to detail the work or adjust, or redo the assessments.

The NOTL irrigation system is paid for by those that use it, by an annual fee, based on the number of acres they irrigate. Those that have access to water directly from the river or lake do not pay into the system. Yes, irrigation is





Focus on the real housing issue — the lack of affordable homes



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall Columnist

Well, a few days ago, Canada Mortgage and Housing issued their report card on housing starts, which took place during the period of Jan. 1 to May 31, 2025, and it isn't pretty.

Despite having passed a series of legislative bills into law between 2019 and 2025 that purported to be the "solution" to Ontario's housing crisis — including Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act (2019), Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act (2022), and etcetera — it appears that the Ford government simply cannot put rubber on the road to get results.

Even handing out bags of taxpayers' money to municipalities through their 2023 Building Faster Fund, established to "reward municipalities that make significant progress" towards their provincially

set housing targets — in the second round of cash rewards, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland received a combined total of nearly \$6.8 million doesn't seem to have made any real difference.

Bluntly, housing starts in Ontario during the first five months of 2025 are down 29 per cent compared to the same period in 2024, while here in Niagara we're a little better than the averaged provincial stat, coming in at a reduction of 23 per cent.

Now, your immediate reaction may be to blame this situation on the economic chaos and uncertainty created by the mercurial, flyby-the-moment, generally confrontational actions of U.S. President Trump south of the border.

And, insofar as the current resale market in real estate is concerned which, in a recent conversation with an IT professional who has worked in the real estate sector for more than 20 years, he described as "unlike anything I have ever seen with massive numbers of listings while committed buyers are very few and far between" — it may be partially true.

That said, the reduction of year-over-year new housing starts did not begin in 2025. In fact, this trend began



Modest and affordable Wartime housing solved a problem then and remains viable today, writes Brian Marshall.

several years ago and is simply a continuation of a downward trend.

Ontario's new housing starts in 2024 versus 2023 showed a reduction of 16.5 per cent, while the yearover-year stats for 2023 compared to 2022 reveal a decline of 7.1 per cent; an erosion which began with the 3.5 per cent drop in 2022 from 2021 numbers.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to participate in the introduction of multiple new products to the market and have observed that if, despite the best studies and marketing campaigns, a product does not resonate with the needs of consumers, in very short order sales indicate a

mistake and a fundamental re-think is required.

May I humbly suggest that, for some time, the market has been stating that the need is for housing that is affordable for the firsttime buyer or retired folks living on fixed incomes, not for more of the typical developments geared to the more affluent.

And, by "affordable" I mean the definition used by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Statistics Canada as a ratio of cost to income - specifically, mortgage-carrying cost or rent being less than 30 per cent of a household's total before-tax income.

Here in Ontario, the Ford government has arbitrarily

pegged "affordable" housing as an offering priced at 80 per cent of average market cost, far in excess of the aforementioned definition. Moreover, in Bill 17, they have limited the authority of municipalities to negotiate any requirement for the inclusion of "affordable" housing in proposed developments to a mere five per cent.

Apparently, the powers that be in Queen's Park have missed or are simply ignoring the facts that the market has been sending for years. Building more of the same type of homes faster will do nothing but add to the current glut on the market of properties that a significant segment of our society simply cannot afford or, in other cases, do not want.

Based on the past several years of declining new housing starts, I suspect that a fair number of developers have recognized this reality and factored it into their business plans.

In addition, even should they wish to respond to the market and build desirable affordable housing, their ability to do so is distinctly impaired by the internal overhead costs and charges — just the latter sitting at 31 per cent of a new home's purchase price — imposed by all levels of government.

I'd observe that Canada's post-Second World War Wartime Housing worked because it was an endeavour supported by all levels of government to construct modest and affordable housing in accordance with pre-defined parameters in the most efficient and costeffective manner possible.

Sadly, the Fed's Build Canada Homes overture remains bogged down in partisan and bureaucratic debates (and that's before any consultation with lower levels of government), with little expectation of developing a solid goforward position soon, as a CBC article penned by Verity Stevenson ("Housing proposals during federal campaign hearken back to a different kind of war," April 2) pointed out.

Indeed, in that same article, the University of Toronto's Carolyn Whitzman is quoted as stating, "Supply is important, but it needs to be the right supply in the right places at the right prices."

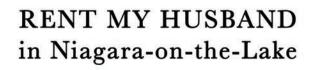
Perhaps the province and the feds should simply focus on what really needs to be done and then get it done.

Brian Marshall is a NOTL realtor, author and expert consultant on architectural design, restoration and heritage.









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NEWS (%)

Residents concerned about size of Royal George rebuild

Dan Smeenk Local Journalism Initiative The Lake Report

While the tone of the open house meeting on the future of the Royal George remained calm, it doesn't mean there weren't questions and concerns from NOTLers about the Shaw Festival's plans for the 110-year-old theatre.

Residents in attendance at the town's virtual open house last Monday were given the opportunity to comment on the Shaw's proposed plans for rebuilding the Royal George Theatre after it is closed at the end of this year.

The new theatre being proposed would be noticeably larger and occupy more of downtown Old Town, moved slightly further north from its current location on Queen Street and seat around 360 people.

The building would be made out of stone and have three levels, plus a basement, and would be wheelchair accessible and have elevators installed.

"We want this building to last well into the 22nd century and beyond," said



The building being proposed to replace the current Royal George Theatre would be larger and occupy more of Queen Street. SOURCED/TOWN OF NOTL

Tim Jennings, the Shaw's executive director.

One resident who shared her opinion during the open house was Caroline Polgrabia, who said she was surprised by how large the proposed building is.

"The lobby alone is bigger than the existing footprint of the current theatre," she said. "This is a lot of space for 360 people ... Why is this needed?"

Another, Maria Vaneva, said she questions whether the building fits into the heritage character of the neighbourhood she lives in, which is on Victoria Street.

"From the plans, this does not look really historic," said Vaneva.

Meika McCunn is an architect at Unity Design Studio and the designer of the new theatre. She said the goal is for the new theatre to fit into the historical character of its surroundings - the proposal includes plans to build it with Edwardian-era tools and stone.

The team also plans to do landscaping around the proposed theatre to protect the heritage character of the

"It may be considered an

interpretation," she said. "But it's trying to be sensitive to the heritage district."

As for its size, in response, McCunn said that given the multi-purpose nature of the theatre, as is common in modern theatres, including multipurpose rooms, the amount of space allocated isn't unusual.

Jennings said that modern code requirements, including installing elevators and conforming to fire codes, require more space.

The current theatre is 110 years old. Tim Jennings, executive director of the Shaw

Festival organization, said it was "never supposed to last this long," as it was originally meant as a temporary building built with a clay foundation and clay tiles.

The proposal, therefore, is to move the building slightly, to 178 and 188 Victoria St. and 79-83 Queen St., which is slightly further north than its current location.

NOTL town council would have to rezone this area from residential to commercial for the theatre to be built there.

A particular point was made of keeping the historical Queen Street façade of the building during the construction.

Stuart McCormack asked the town's manager of development planning, Aimee Alderman, about whether the Royal George Theatre project is exempt from a current town freeze on new construction in a proposed heritage area.

The freeze was put in place by council because of a study currently being conducted about whether to make the protected Queen-Picton heritage area larger, which would include the site of the Royal George

Alderman said the project was made exempt through Section 7 of the Old Town Community District bylaw and was established during a pre-consultation meeting about the project. Jennings said Shaw Festival representatives specifically applied for an exemption.

Vaneva also said that there's no parking on the site in the plans, which Mc-Cunn confirmed. The only parking directly on the site will be bus parking in front of the building.

The Shaw Festival organization received \$35 million from the provincial government in April to rebuild the Royal George Theatre, a little less than half of the \$78 to \$82-million project the Royal George Theatre rebuild would cost.

Jennings said the project is a public-private partnership, with financial support split in thirds between the federal government, provincial government and private donations.

The town also plans to have an in-person town hall on this topic on July 8 at 6 p.m. in council chambers.

daniel@niagaranow.com





'Tons of Money' just needs more time to gel

TONS OF MONEY

(out of five)

Royal George Theatre, 2 hours 15 minutes, one intermission, ends Oct. 5. By Will Evans and Valentine. Directed by Eda Holmes.

Penny-Lynn Cookson Special to The Lake Report

What if you were deep in debt and an unexpected inheritance suddenly gave you a large windfall? Tons of money. Would you go mad with joy?

But what if that windfall wouldn't cover your debts? Would a eureka moment cause you to let fly and throw all those unpaid bills into the air?

This premise sends a failed inventor and eccentric English aristocrat named Aubrey Allington, brilliantly played by Mike Nadajewski, into wild contortions, somersaults and backflips of glee.

His wife, Louise, has an idea. He must die. Commit suicide. That will cancel his



Lindsay Wu as Jean Everard, André Morin as Henery, Qasim Khan as James Chesterman and Julia Course as Louise Allington in "Tons of Money." The show is on now until Oct. 5 at the Shaw Festival. DAVID COOPER

He must then assume the identity of the next beneficiary of the will, his long-lost cousin, Henery, in Mexico, in order to recoup the money.

And here we have the classic farce of mistaken identities, comic absurdities, extreme exaggeration, improbable situations and very physical action.

Nadajewski excels with

acrobatic prowess and brings an abundance of zaniness to the role. He may be influenced by the short silent film of 1899, "The Musical Eccentric," featuring playwright Will Evans dramatically engaged with

As a play, "Tons of Money" first appeared in London in 1922 and has been successfully adapted many times for film, television, musicals and a National Theatre revival in 1986.

This Shaw production has strong performances by Graeme Somerville as Sprules, the deferential but class-conscious scheming butler. He too has an idea of how to get the money.

Lindsay Wu provides ditzy sex appeal as the "hot" wife of the missing cousin. Nehassaiu deGannes delights as the hard of hearing, comatose aunt who never misses a thing and has us expecting her repetitive line admonishing others that she isn't deaf.

The point of a farce is to make us laugh. There are stereotypical characters, ridiculous situations and slapstick humour. There were no loud guffaws from the audience at the Royal George. Some people slipped out. Others left at intermission. Why?

One was left pondering whether the English accents and the rapidity of the verbal exchanges between Nadajewski and Marla McLean, in this performance as Louise Allington, were not always understood.

Or was it the reality of cultural differences of humour? Canada's population is increasingly diverse and exaggerated class accents may not be comprehensible to all.

Farce has a long history from the Greek plays of Aristophanes to the Roman comedies of Plautus and Terence.

The English tradition is

best known from Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" to Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and the famous Aldwych Farces for theatre, which included "Tons of Money" from 1923 to 1933.

Italy had commedia dell'arte and Carlo Goldoni. France had Feydeau and Labiche.

Canada is no slouch in a long list of renowned comic writers and actors including Martin Short, Jim Carrey, Mike Myers, Andrea Martin, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara and John Candy. "Saturday Night Live," co-founded by Canadian Lorne Michaels is celebrating 50 years of irreverent farce.

"Tons of Money" has a strong farcical plot, fine performances by a talented cast, stunning set and 1920s costume designs by Judith Bowden and original music by Andy Ballantyne.

It simply needs to more cohesively come together.

Penny-Lynn Cookson is an arts and culture historian, writer and lecturer living in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Studio tour connects like-minded artists from across NOTL

Maddy Gordon The Lake Report

From stained glass and ceramic dishes to abstract paintings and self-portraits, this June offered art lovers and creatives a chance to explore the diversity of work made by Niagara-on-the-Lake's artists — and see where they bring their artistic visions to life.

Thirty artists took part in the art studio tours earlier this month, hosted across town at home and public studios, small galleries, the RiverBrink Art Museum and Between the Lines Winery.

Nancy Wardle, a painter who works with acrylic and oils, was one of three artists who set up camp at Ronald Boaks' studio on Niagara Stone Road. She says her paintings give her a chance to bring old memories back to life

Wardle takes old blackand-white snippets of film,



Landscape artist Tim Sullivan in his home studio. His was one of several studios open for people to stop in and peruse during the NOTL tour. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

blows them up and adds the colour she remembers from that moment, she explained.

Because her art style involves using personal memories, Wardle focuses on making commissioned pieces. In contrast, Lynne Gaetz's work incorporates multimedia elements to create more abstract visuals.

Gaetz was also stationed at Boaks' studio and said she was pleased to have around 170 guests come and see her art throughout the tour. She has been making art since she was a teenager, but only turned it into a career 10 years ago.

"It's been the best working years of my life," Gaetz said.

She added that the tour is a good way to connect with other artists, a sentiment that Boaks, who was at his studio on Sunday, echoed.

"It's nice to meet fellow, like-minded artists," he

Boaks' style of art marries different, often contrasting, materials and approaches. For example, one piece called "Duo" is split into two halves — one with elements of realism and the other with modern abstract traits.

"I consider myself to be a mix between a modernist and a romantic," Boaks said.

By participating in events like the studio tour, Boaks said he's able to connect with similar artists whom he may not have otherwise found. Over on Green Street, Ruth Aspinall invited guests into her home studio, occupied by artists such as Patricia Paquin, who works in pottery.

She said the tour helped her make a few extra sales and helped her business gain exposure.

"The economy is different than it was last year, but we're still making sales," Paquin said.

Her pottery journey began more than 35 years ago and was inspired by the appearance of the ceramics she works with. Each piece has a unique face drawn in her style but is based on the shape of the object it belongs to.

For instance, tall vases are painted with long faces, while teapots are painted with wider faces.

After several decades of her craft, Paquin says she still loves it. She explained that as the years have passed, the faces have become more realistic and, in her eyes, can be pictured on "just about any shape or surface."

Also at Aspinall's studio was Susan Holly, who specializes in glasswork. She said one of her creations can take anywhere from a few hours to several weeks to finish, depending on the size and detail.

"Design, cut, put on the light table, grind, foil, solder, wash and polish," Holly said, describing her process.

Like Paquin, Holly said she was happy to be making sales and growing her business.

Her art journey was once centred around painting and drawing, but since retirement, it has shifted to stained glass.

For artists like Holly, the studio tours, held June 7 to 8, gave local creatives a chance to show off their work to both their peers and fans of the arts in all its forms.

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BRING THIS COUPON

SPORTS



Hitting the links for Canada Day

Kevin MacLean The Lake Report

Resplendent in red and white, members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club's nine and 18-hole women's leagues celebrated their annual Canada Day scramble on Tuesday.

The women battled sweltering heat, but persevered. The team of Sharron Marlow, Louise Robitaille, Susan Horne and Charlotte Kainola finished first, with an even-par score of 36.

Susan Gagne, Val Chubey, Barb Werner and Sue Sherk also shot 36 but placed second thanks to the magic of scoring retrogression.

Other winners: Barb Hastings (longest drive); Shelley Samson, Susan Horne and Marg Ketcheson (closest to the Canadian flag pin on #4) and Sally Miller, Chris Walker and Joan Maida (most honest team).

Also Tuesday, the men's Woofs league played its Canada Strong scramble and 64 players turned out despite the 40 Celsius temperatures.



Members of the NOTL Golf Club's nine and 18-hole women's leagues go "elbows up" for Canada Day. They held their annual July 1 celebration on Tuesday. KEVIN MACLEAN

The team of Gary Stuggins, Alan Rod and Joe Interisano was tops, with an impressive 8-under 28.

Four groups tied at 5-under 31: Jim Meszaros, Neil Robinson, Stephen Fraser and Mike Mott; Glenn Murray, Mark Harris, Randy Churchill and Jon Schmidt; Mike Egan, Charles Swanepoel, Jim Garrett and Gord Horne; and Ted Carmichael, Randy McCartney, Todd Watson and Peter Chili-

Tony Sanfelice notched a birdie on #4 and also won closest to the pin.

Reigning club champion Ricky Watson was back at the top of the leaderboard in Thursday's men's league thanks to a 1-under 35.

He also sank the longest putt on #2.

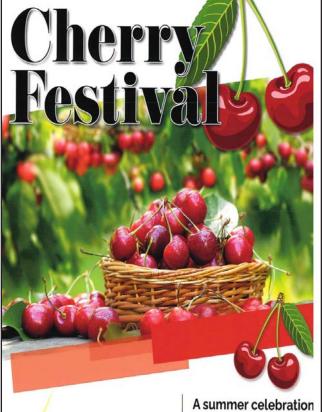
The steady Jim Meszaros shot a 38 and shared low net honours with Jim Garrett with 33.

Tom Elltoft was a big money winner, taking home

\$600 for sinking his long putt in the weekly putting contest.

Other winners were: Martin Vagners (longest drive #3), Charles Swanepoel (closest to pin #4) and Al Kavanagh (closest to pin #9).

Birdies earned \$25 gross skins for Rob Yamamoto (#3), Jim McMacken (#4), Jim Rye (#6) and Kavanagh (#9). Swanepoel (#4) and Don Stewart (#7) won \$95 net skins.



Saturday, July 5, 2025 9 am to 3 pm

St. Mark's Church. 41 Byron St., Niagara-on-the-Lake A summer celebration for the whole family

Cherry pies, BBQ, jewellery, treasures, bake table, books, children's area, music

NOTL golfers qualify for Ontario seniors final



Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club members Jim McMacken and Stephen Warboys have qualified for the Ontario Seniors Golf Championship in the age 70-plus division. The pair, two of the most consistent scorers at the club, competed in the western Ontario qualifying tournament amid Monday's sweltering heat at Twenty Valley Golf Club in Vineland. Teeing off against some of the best seniors in the province, they battled tough greens that had been specially cut and rolled for the match. Warboys finished five shots behind the winner and tied for sixth. McMacken was two shots further back, tied for 12th and had to sweat out a retrogression count back before securing the final spot in the championship. The tournament will be played at Lara Bay Golf Club in Collingwood July 22 to 24. SUPPLIED

Memorial tournament honours late softball coach

Maddy Gordon The Lake Report

Adults who grew up playing softball in Niagara-on-the-Lake returned to the diamond June 14 to celebrate Tina Pollak, the late softball coach whose loved ones say did everything she could to help aspiring young players be able to play the game.

Steph Pollak, Tina's daughter, organized the tournament to celebrate her mother's contributions to the league and, in turn, to bring some old teammates back together.

"These players were coached by [Tina] from as young as tee-ball, so a lot of them came back for this tournament," Steph said.

Two teams played in the



ball after the tournament.

one-game tournament — a boys team and a girls team. But based on the chatter and compliments on the field, it was clear players were really on one team to support the charity event and remember Tina.

The teams were sponsored

by MJ's Own Munchies,
Auto View, Phil's Independent Grocer and Corks
Restaurant. The tournament
raised money for Wellspring
Niagara, a cancer support
group in Pelham.

Tina, who was a board member of the NOTL Minor Softball Association, died of cancer in 2005 but remained active in the league and with the kids throughout her treatment and up until her death.

Charlie Pollak, Steph's father, said it was important to Tina to continue her work right up until she couldn't anymore. He served as a board member alongside her for 12 years.

"It was all about getting the kids involved," Charlie said. "She gave her all to softball."

Charlie said her biggest effort was ensuring any child, despite financial circumstances, could get in the game.

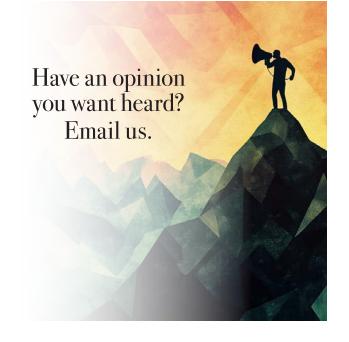
If a family couldn't afford for their child to join the league, Tina would privately take care of their fees, Charlie explained.

"One child who came never knew anything about baseball and we took him in [...] his family said that was the most fun that he ever had in the summer," he said. "That's what it was all about for her."

Each player sported a jersey with the letters "TP" written on the front to honour Tina's work to make softball in NOTL more inclusive and popular.

Steph said she is proud to carry on her mother's legacy in this way.







Across

- 1. Gossamer (6)
- 5. Like many Sherpas (8)
- 9. Affliction of cats and other furlickers (8)
- 10. Skin condition sought by beachgoers (6)
- 11. Science of logic, quantity, shape and arrangement (Abbr.) (5)
- 12. Tacit (7)
- 15. Owner of a business (10)
- 17. Inert gaseous element (4)
- 18. Sour (4)
- 20. Place for American children in the holidays (6,4)
- 22. Galilee native (7)
- 23. Spread out (5)
- 27. Small restaurant (6)
- 28. Elongate (8)
- 29. South American boa (8)
- 30. Person in the petroleum industry (6) **Down**

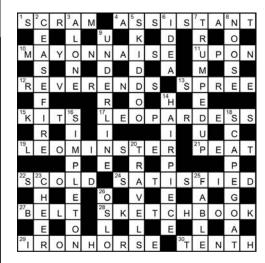
2. D-Day beach (5)

- 3. Navy vessel (7) 4. Spoiled child (4)
- 5. World's longest river (4)
- 6. Autopsy (4-6)
- 7. Wool fat (7)
- 8. Private room on a passenger ship (9)
- 13. Hollywood (10)
- 14. Stub (5)
- 16. Economic decline (9)
- 19. Severe (7)
- 21. Uppercase (7)
- 24. Cub leader (5)
- 25. Entreaty (4)
- 26. Keen on (4)

Have some fun

Crossword Puzzle 10 17 18 30

Last issue's answers



							3	
5		4		6	9			
		8			1			
		2	8			6		1
7								8
9		1			7	5		
			3			8		
			1	8		9		6
	4							



MAXIMIZE EXPOSUR



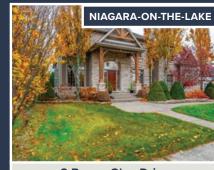
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"Source: Google Trends and Google Reviews "Source: REMAY LLC Tankings for Large Team Residential, 2024. "Source: REDATUM Agents by units—listing and selling combined performance in TRREB Jan 1- June 30, 2024. REMAX Excarpment Golff Realty Inc., Exiderage, Independently owned and operated

EXPLORING HISTORY



Happy last day of school!

To all our local students who have worked hard all year, we say congratulations on making it to the end. We're proud of all our graduates, too. This week's photo is in your honour, showing Wayne Gordon receiving a school award in June 1953. The ceremony was for champions who won their competitions on Field Day. Here, Wayne is receiving his award from teachers on the steps of Parliament Oak School, formerly located in the Old Town area of Niagara-on-the-Lake. If any locals can share more about this event, please reach out to the museum. Enjoy the summer, kids — you deserve it!





It's Time For Sunglasses

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St. Andrew's Presbyterian Strawberry Festival Committee & Congregation Thanks You!

The 2025 Strawberry Festival Committee from St. Andrews
Presbyterian Church would like to express our appreciation to the
Niagara Community and Visitors for making our 40th Annual Festival
on June 21, 2025 another successful event. We would like to make a
special mention to those businesses and organizations that gave a
helping hand to the Festival Committee in preparation for this
important fundraising event to maintain the upkeep of the historic
Church and continue outreach programs in our great community.

Thank You:

Harvest Barn St. Catharines

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Tigchelaar Berry Farms
Independent Grocer Queen Street NOTL
The Niagara on the Lake Tiny Museum
Simpsons Pharmacy
Christian Assembly Hall
Jack Custers from Your TV The Source & The Cogeco Team
The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
The Region of Niagara
The Lake Report

And all of those who so graciously donated to our Silent Auction, Bake Table and New Vintage Booths.

Lake Report

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- Local businesses and entrepreneurs
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- Historic organizations

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Contact us at editor@niagaranow.com to let us know of endowment plans





Give your roses special care with pruning



GROWING TOGETHER

Joanne Young Columnist

In an earlier article, published March 13, I wrote about the importance of the proper pruning techniques of roses ("Growing Together: How to prune your roses to keep them healthy and blooming"). Regular removal of dead, damaged and diseased stems encourages healthy growth and helps prevent diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew.

Pruning also improves air circulation through the plant, helping to reduce diseases as well. Another benefit of proper pruning of roses is that it encourages more flowers.

When you remove spent flowers and old growth, the plant responds by producing new growth that then will produce more flower buds. Most likely, your roses are in full bloom at the time. As blooms begin to fade, it is important to remove the spent blooms.

For us, the reason we plant certain things in our garden is to enjoy the flowers. The plant's goal, though, is not just to flower but to produce seeds to reproduce itself. By removing the flowers as soon as they are done, the plant produces more flowers to produce more seeds. So, deadheading produces more blooms.

Start to deadhead when you see the rose petals begin to droop or fall off. All that you will need is a pair of secateurs (hand pruners) and gloves.

When removing the flowers that have finished blooming, do not just remove the flower itself. The correct way to deadhead a rose is to cut just above a leaf set that has five or more leaves. The five-leaf set (sometimes called a true leaf) should be facing the direction you want your





shoot to grow.

Normally, you want your rose shoot to grow outward — cut just above a five-leaf set that is pointing outwards as well. Cutting at the three-leaf set level can result in a non-flowering

your roses it it encourages more flowers to bloom, writes Joanne Young.

A huge benefit of pruning

shoot called "blind wood." This means the shoot can no longer flower or grow any more roses.

However, the blind wood may flower the next season. You do not have to cut your shoot at the first five-leaf set you see. Sometimes, a leaf set might be facing the wrong direction, and you'll need to cut further down.

It is best to cut the stem at a 45-degree angle, sloping down from the fiveleaf set. This method of deadheading is for all types of roses — hybrid teas, grandifloras, floribundas and climbing roses.

In my article from March 13, I also wrote about training a climbing rose. In fact, with climbing roses, the training of the rose is more important than the pruning.

Most plants, including roses, just bloom at the tips of the branches, but you can manipulate the canes so that you can get blossoms all along the cane and not just at the tips. You want to start training the main canes from the time that you plant them.

The main canes need to be trained in a fanned-out shape, training them to run horizontally. By doing this, not only will you get flowers at the tip of the cane, but you will get flowers all along the cane.

Even during the summer, you can train the canes to increase flowering for the

next season. Here are the steps to training a climbing rose:

Step 1: Remove any dead, diseased or damaged branches. Also, remove any weak canes or canes that are growing out away from the structure that you are training the rose on.

Step 2: Fasten any remaining main canes to the structure in a horizontal fashion.

Step 3: Off of the main canes, you will have lateral stems growing – prune back the lateral stems to two or three buds.

You can see from the photos how training the cane horizontally greatly increases the number of flowers to be enjoyed.

After deadheading your rose plant, consider applying a balanced fertilizer to provide nutrients to the rose bush. Additionally, keep an eye on the plant for any signs of pests, diseases or nutrient deficiencies.

Following these steps will help to keep your roses healthy and floriferous.

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

Holy cow! It's been hot — but there's still lots to see and do



ROSS'S RAMBLINGS

Ross Robinson Columnist

I made time to wander around town on Sunday, and it was hot! Several images jumped out at me and provided fodder for this Ross' Ramblings column.

A true ramble.
Please bear with me as
I try to describe a variety
of visuals I saw in Old
Town, featuring some of the
hard-working people who
provide a favourite place to
visit for so many thousands
of tourists every year —
and such a delightful place
to live for lucky locals.
NOTLers, give thanks.

The lucky horses who pull carriages around town had decided to take the steamy day off, perhaps because of the protesters holding their signs at the corner of King and Queen the day before. Being downtown virtually every day, I witness so many very happy horse and carriage riders, absolutely delighted to be touring our town with the clip-clopping cadence enhancing their experience.

And many local folks enjoy taking out-of-town visitors for a carriage ride around town on special occasions. Each year, it seems the carriage drivers look smarter. Dashing black top hats have added to the photogenic effect this year.

Let me proffer a quick tip of the hat to Beau Chapeau, which seemed to be doing a land-office business. Merchandised to perfection, their creatively presented shop was aggressively cooled, and as usual, their windows were shining. The hat shops in town have figured out the marketing concept of synergism, and there are few things more festive and elegant than gentlemen and ladies sporting broad-brimmed

Talk about subtle peer pressure. Especially while



Local professional ice cream scooper Marek and his enthusiastic cow workers (pun intended) keep the lines moving during the heat wave. ROSS ROBINSON

walking on a really hot day, it's easy to get swept away by the need to purchase a sharp hat to be worn jauntily on one's head.

It was no surprise that our main street sidewalks were full of people of all ages doing their best to eat their gelato treats and ice cream cones 'n' cups before the heat wave cheated them. It was a losing battle on Sunday, but several creatively presented shops were non-stop scooping.

My discerning pal Rick Leitch was at his favourite table at the recently expanded II Gelato di Carlotta, and down a few doors the sharp young workers at Nina Gelateria were smiling their way through the busiest day of the year so far.

Permit me to mention the smash success being enjoyed by Cows, as their back door entrance continues to be busier than the front entrance on Queen Street. Somehow, the ice cream lovers police themselves in the two lineups, and I don't even want to guess how thrilled the owners of this Canadian success story must be when they review their financial statements.

Watching Marek and his dozen or more cow workers is inspirational, as they efficiently process the many, many customers buying summer day treats.

Having said that, Cows' ice cream and gelato are not my thing, so my mediumsized chocolate-dipped Dairy Queen cone gets to hit my spot. It defies the laws of physics we learned back in high school, but to date, no vanilla ice cream has ended up in the chocolate sauce.

On Monday, it was just as hot, and perhaps even more humid. After my free walking tour, I had a conversation with Fred the UPS driver in his big brown delivery truck. What an inspiration!

"We're all working, and today I will drink about 10 bottles of water." Enough said — and a reminder it's all about attitude. Fred has been enjoying this job for 39 years.

For whatever reason, on this very toasty Sunday, there weren't many walkers carrying bright and colourful shopping bags. Lots of Cool As A Moose and NEOB Lavender bags, but most tourists seemed to be content licking their way along the sidewalks.

I don't purport to possess any expertise on retail marketing or human nature, but a few things should perhaps be mentioned. Firstly, Norris Brown at the Apothecary was happily welcoming dozens of guests into the normally closed historic store at the busiest corner in town.

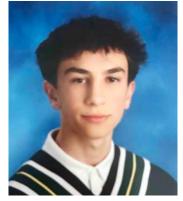
He loves volunteering with the provincial body that operates this gem of a retail store, and told me (with a straight face) that over 1,000 people had been in the shop that day.

The public pool in Veterans Memorial Park was, as expected, busy with families seeking a reprieve from the oppressive heat. There must be a good reason, but why was the wading pool in Simcoe Park not open?

The nearby swings and slides were providing lots of smiles for lots of local and visiting youngsters.

Like I rambled about a few months ago after the awkward Family Day on Monday: Let's make a decision. Are we open? Or are we closed?

TASSELS WORTH THE HASSLES



Alex Amodeo, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Calo Zambito, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Catherine Dubois, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Chase Dubroy, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Dylan Price, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Jacob Cook, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Jacob Dulas, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Jayden Dulas, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Joshua Dulas, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Kaleb Dietsch, Grade 12, Blyth Academy in Ottawa



Liam Bruce, Grade 12, A.N. Myer



Logan Rossi, Grade 12, A.N. Myer



Lucy Hopkins, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Madison Dubroy, Grade 8, Crossroads



Marley Clements, Grade 8,

Crossroads



William Pillitteri-Smith, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Michael Miele, Grade 8, St. Davids School



Olivia Ferguson, Grade 8, St. Michael



Ori Vanderlee, Grade 12, Laura Secord



Teresa Cole, Brock University, Bachelor of Arts in Music



Quinten Davis, Grade 12, Holy Cross



Bella Gilchrist, Grade 8, St. Davids School



Heather Petrick, UGuelph and Maastricht University, PhD in Biological Sciences



Hannah Gilchrist, Grade 12, A.N. Myer



Bastion Mullen Michael, Kindergarten

Congratulations to all of NOTL's grads! The hard work paid off!



Lake Report

SELLING YOUR HOME?

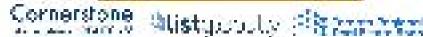


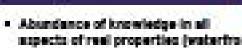
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