



TLR

Publisher: Richard Harley

Editor-In-Chief: Richard Harley

Managing Editor: Kevin MacLean

Design & Layout: Richard Harley

Advertising: Megan Vanderlee

Contributors: Evan Saunders, Jill Troyer, Somer Slobodian, Evan Loree, Tim Taylor, Joanne Young, Denise Ascenzo, Brittany Carter, Linda Fritz, Elizabeth Masson, Dr. William Brown, Brian Marshall, Molly Bowron, NOTL Museum, Kyra Simone, Gail Kendall, Patty Garriock, Bill Auchterlonie, Steve Hardaker, Ross Robinson, Penny-Lynn Cookson, Dave Van de Laar, Janice White and many more members of the NOTL community

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

News Media Canada
Médias d'Info Canada



Your Lake Report is the proud winner of 61 national and provincial awards for journalism and advertising excellence.

**POSITIVE
POWER+**

Contributed by Patty Garriock

"A new life begins for us with every second.

Let us go forward joyously to meet it."

- Jerome K. Jerome

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Email:

Letters: editor@niagaranow.com

Story Ideas: editor@niagaranow.com

Advertising: advertising@niagaranow.com

Phone

Newsroom: 905-359-2270

Advertising Department: 905-932-5646

Office Address

496 Mississauga St., NOTL, Ontario, Canada.

Mailing Address

PO Box 724, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S1J0

Have a lead on a story?

Call 905.359.2270 or send an email to editor@niagaranow.com

A rainy Saturday



People with umbrellas shuffle under the marquee at the Royal George Theatre on Saturday, trying to stay dry. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



Editorial

Important questions for NOTL's councillors

Kevin MacLean
Richard Harley
Editors

A week ago now, we reported in great detail about an incident in which Niagara-on-the-Lake developer Benny Marotta gave Coun. Gary Burroughs an envelope containing \$10,000 in cash.

After Burroughs reported the exchange to the town, council asked for investigations by police and the town's integrity commissioner. This is a serious issue and we will leave it to those investigators to get to the bottom of it.

However, in the wake of The Lake Report's story, it is odd and disconcerting that no other media organization anywhere in Niagara (not just NOTL) chose to report the details. That is worrisome, because if we had not reported it, would anyone know it happened?

As happens nowadays when a serious issue makes the news, all manner of comment and speculation runs rampant.

That aside, in response to queries from readers and the community, last Saturday we put a series of questions to all of NOTL's elected

municipal representatives.

While these questions were spurred by the exchange between Marotta and Burroughs, they are definitely not about that encounter.

Here is an abbreviated version of the message sent in writing to your council representatives:

In response to The Lake Report's story, there has been a great deal of talk in the community, on social media and elsewhere. There also has been a lot of innuendo, nastiness and speculation, unfortunately.

As public servants, elected by the community to serve the best interests of the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake, we expect that you would want to clear the air.

So, we are contacting each councillor with a series of simple but relevant questions. We emphasize that these questions have nothing to do with any pending investigations sought by council. Those investigations are an entirely different issue.

We are giving you each a public forum to briefly describe your interactions and relationships as council members.

This an attempt to provide the community with accurate information and give council members a platform for transparency, accountability and openness – about all councillors' relationships and business dealings (if any) with people, companies and institutions in NOTL.

It is a chance for each of you to go on the record regarding any interactions or relationships you might have had with people having business before the Town of NOTL, including but not at all limited to Mr. Marotta.

Like ourselves and everyone else in a small town like NOTL, every elected official has friends in town. Some of them do business with or have business before the town, some could be developers, some could be citizen groups opposed to certain developments etc.

We are NOT looking for skeletons in anyone's closet. We simply want to give readers and the community some honest and forthright information – from you.

We will publish everyone's answers in The Lake Report. If you decline or

choose not to answer, we will report that.

Do you have a personal, private or business relationship with anyone or any company that has or may have business before the Town of NOTL? Please provide details, briefly.

Have you ever met privately with any person (including developers) having business with the Town of NOTL, discussed town matters with them in a venue other than a council or committee meeting? Who and why?

In your time as a councillor, have you ever declared a conflict of interest due to a personal, business or professional relationship you have with anyone or any company that has or may have business before the Town of NOTL? Please provide details, briefly.

Is there anything else that residents of NOTL should know about any of your interactions or relationships in your capacity as an elected member of council?

We have asked for responses in writing by this Friday at noon and will let readers know what your elected representatives have to say about these important issues.

Correction: An article in last week's paper said that Benny Marotta and his companies own the Old Winery restaurant on Niagara Stone Road. In fact, Marotta owns the building, but not the business.

Ruffino's
Naples-on-the-Lake PASTA BAR & GRILL

takeout & delivery
289-819-0179 | 7 days a week