



Blue heron takes flight

A blue heron takes off at a pond at Line 9 and Concession 3 roads. He hangs out there daily for several hours fishing amongst the reeds. He's all stealth. Narrow. Steady. Invisible to the fish. Until he strikes. He has long slender legs but yet huge claws, for stability. FRANK HAYES

Virgil teen's bridge status app tops the charts

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

After his story gained thousands of hits on social media, a Virgil teen's Welland Canal bridge status app shot to the top of the travel charts on the App Store.

Between The Lake Report and Niagara Now's Facebook accounts, the article, "Virgil teen beats the bridge," reached an astounding 129,847 people on Facebook – and counting.

The owner and creator of the app, Steven Shelestowsky, said more than 700 people have purchased the 99-cent app, Niagara Bridges, since last week, putting his app in the number one spot in the travel category on the App Store.

"It's weird, but cool," he told The Lake Report, adding that it's not something he expected.

His app is a convenient way for people to see real-time information on the lift bridges.

For those curious, Shelestowsky gets his data from the Great Lakes St.



More than 700 people have purchased Steven Shelestowsky's Niagara Bridges iPhone app since The Lake Report's story about it last week. SOMER SLOBODIAN

Lawrence Seaway System. Given the app's niche target demographic, he said he wonders what would happen if he created an app geared to a larger audience.

"Imagine how many people I could get," he said.

He said he's had his hands full answering emails and even decided to update the app to make the bridge name selection easier for customers.

Originally, he was going to wait to update the app in September, when Apple launches its latest operating

system update, but he felt it necessary to do it sooner.

"Although I've gotten emails with questions, I've also gotten emails from people just like, 'Oh, I think this is really cool,'" he said.

"That's been really nice to see."

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