



TLR

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Happy 254th birthday, Brock



Jack Hill, 6, in costume as a Canadian soldier during a celebration of Maj-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock's 254th birthday at Queenston Heights on Friday. The afternoon was filled with historical lectures and tours. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

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

News Media Canada
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**POSITIVE
POWER**

Contributed by Patty Garriock

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or for some other time.

We are the ones we've been waiting for.

We are the change that we seek." - Barack Obama

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Editorial

An indoor swimming pool for NOTL

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Who wants an indoor swimming pool in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

Perhaps the better question is: Who doesn't want an indoor swimming pool in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

The idea has been batted about in NOTL for many years, because, really, how could you not want the option of taking a regular dip in a modern, indoor facility, having your kids take swim lessons there or maybe trying some aquafit classes in the middle of January?

An ad hoc committee of residents has now grabbed the torch and through petitions, meetings and pitching the concept publicly has again tried to put an indoor pool on the civic agenda.

We have yet to hear anyone dismiss it as wholly unnecessary, though there has been a lot of pushback.

The main criticism seems to suggest that, while it's a nice idea, it is simply not an affordable option for a community the size of NOTL.

Yet, some similar-sized towns (and some smaller ones) have managed to make it happen.

We agree that affordability is a huge concern – NOTLers already pay a lot in property taxes and with

a tax base of only 19,000 residents (and fewer than 10,000 households). There is little room for expanding spending on a major capital project the magnitude of an indoor pool.

We're just too small.

Not too small for a spanking new pool, just too small to be able to afford one by dumping the full cost on the taxpayer.

However, that is not to suggest the proponents of a pool should give up or fold their proverbial tent.

Saying no is simple. Dismissing the idea as pie-in-the-sky is the easy route.

Finding ways to make things happen or to seek out alternatives requires a lot more effort and dedication.

Indoor pools are big-ticket items and cost figures like \$15 million to \$20 million (or more) are common for a facility with a 25-metre pool and related facilities.

Plus annual operating costs could easily be many hundreds of thousands of dollars. So, no matter how you look at it, an indoor pool in a municipality is pricey – even with grants from other levels of government to help with the initial build.

(Of course, there's also the matter of serious repairs needed to the aging outdoor pool in St. Davids, but that is a separate issue.)

Some have suggested that with the planned growth coming to NOTL's Glendale community – up to 15,000 people (or more) eventually – that would be a logical location for an indoor swimming facility, perhaps in conjunction with a high school proposed for that area.

An interesting idea, but years off.

So, what can be done in the meantime? We'd like to see the committee of indoor pool advocates continue their push for a solution – because maybe they'll find one. Nothing ventured ...

NOTL certainly has a lot of very smart residents with experience in a wide variety of fields. Let's tap into that expertise, crowdsource it.

Or perhaps a major developer – maybe a group of developers – in town could find a way to help kickstart such a project, or fund it all. You never know what might be possible. Toronto has mandated such contributions under section 37 of the Planning Act for years. Could NOTL do something similar?

Or maybe the more common route – community fundraising – is the way to go, launching a campaign to try to raise enough to make it a reality.

And then there's some outside-the-box thinking, as some have already noted and columnist Ross Robinson mentioned last week in passing: could Old Town's existing pool at Veterans Memorial Park be temporarily enclosed under a dome from, say, September to May?

Wild and unworkable? Maybe. Let's find out.

Because we know outdoor soccer pitches, tennis courts and golf ranges can be put under a bubble. So what about swimming pools?

Or is this an opportunity for a unique public-private partnership that would enable NOTL to make an indoor pool a reality? Nothing ventured ...

One final note: like many small towns, NOTL has a long tradition of the community coalescing over a common cause.

Our special little town has attracted more than its share of extremely successful individuals, with deep pockets, who might be inclined to give generously to a grassroots campaign to build an indoor pool in town.

That might not help with operational costs, but given the right approach maybe there is a way around that stumbling block, too.

Because, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

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Vol. 7, Issue 31 Canada's most-decorated community newspaper August 1, 2024

NOTL protests town council

Residents want council to understand the 'vocal majority'

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Councillors arriving at Niagara-on-the-Lake's town hall on Tuesday for their monthly meeting were greeted by the sound of dozens of residents gathered outside, some calling them liars and calling for their resignations.

It was the culmination of escalating tensions between municipal leaders and many NOTL residents fed up with what they see as the rubber-stamping of new developments that don't belong in town, whether it be the proposed Parliament Oak hotel or Glendale highrises.

Organized by resident Karen Taylor-Jones, the rally attracted about 200 people who met outside town hall at 4:30 p.m., before the 6 p.m. council meeting.

"To put out an official plan and then to ignore it is shameful. That's shameful," resident Janet Rody told The Lake Report.

"Do they have no vision for this town and what its needs are in the future?" she said.

Protesters stood outside town hall with signs and petitions, garnering attention, honks and cheers from oncoming traffic.

When councillors began

Continued on Page 3



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa is followed by protesters as he enters the municipal offices for a council meeting Tuesday. A crowd of about 200 people were gathered outside town hall to protest development decisions. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

St. Davids carnival sees sunny skies



Ten-year-old Damian going for a spin on the Himalaya ride at this summer's Lions Carnival, which was blessed with sunny skies for most of its four-day run. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

This year's St. Davids Lions Carnival was met with sunny skies after a rainy run last year.

Among the usual attractions including carnival games, rides, bingo, a nickel sale and a Toronto Argonauts kickoff, the ever-so-popular dog show made its return.

"This year was quite a bit easier, the weather was better and there was more

Continued on Page 13

Have you been affected by floods?

It seems like the Summer of the Deluge, with heavy rains pouring down, sometimes causing extreme flooding events around areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Have you been affected by flooding this year? Have you seen flooding or snapped photos or videos of flooding in town?

Please send your stories and photos to us. We're looking to gather a comprehensive look at areas of NOTL that are prone to flooding, so we can evaluate infrastructure decisions sur-

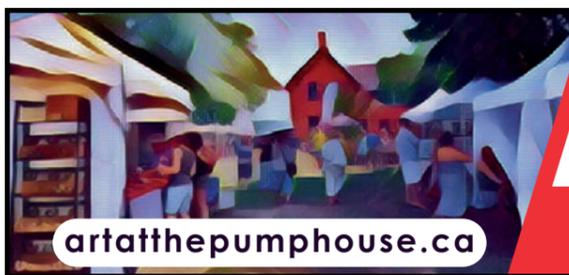
rounding the affected areas.

We are encouraging residents from all areas of Niagara-on-the-Lake to participate, so we can get a firm gauge on the situation.

Since initially posting this call for photos two weeks ago, The Lake Report has received dozens of images and videos of flooding, damage, and heavy running water in areas of NOTL.

We're working on a comprehensive story about flooding and the causes for an upcoming edition.

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Get rid of your "stuff" | Page 12

Laurie Harley named 2023 Citizen of the Year

Staff
The Lake Report

Laurie Harley, one of the founders and leaders of Niagara-on-the-Lake's innovative Ambassadors program, is the town's Citizen of the Year.

Harley was among several residents honoured Tuesday night at a gala dinner as the Chamber of Commerce's NOTL Spirit Awards were handed out at Ravine Winery.

The Ambassadors program grew out of the CO-

VID pandemic and for the past few summers, clad in blue vests adorned with big "Ask Me" buttons, its volunteers have roamed Queen Street in Old Town offering advice and answering questions from the thousands of tourists who visit NOTL

every week.

In prepared remarks, Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said Harley also "has devoted countless hours" to volunteering at the Shaw Festival and NOTL Museum.

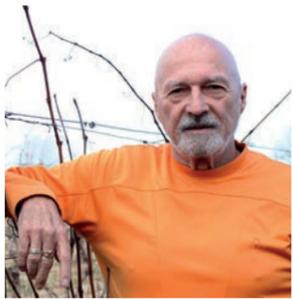
Zalepa could not attend due to a council meeting,

but he noted the Ambassadors "take immense pride in contributing their time to promote tourism in Niagara-on-the-Lake."

For photos and details about the other winners from the Spirit Awards gala, see Page 6 and 8.



Laurie Harley.



Donald Ziraldo.

Time for national VQA standard: Ziraldo

Richard Hutton
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Two members involved in Niagara's wine industry feel that creating a national standard will help promote Canadian vintages internationally and help winemakers and grape growers deal with crop failures – such as one vintners are experiencing right now in British Columbia.

Both Donald Ziraldo, who helped create what became the Vintners Quality Alli-

Continued on Page 4

Preds ousted in first round of playoffs



It was an emotional end to the season as the Niagara Predators were eliminated from the Greater Metro Hockey League playoffs Friday. Tyler Gearing consoled all-star goalie Zane Clausen after their shootout loss. **Full story, Page 16.** DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Legion bringing home flag that flew at Normandy's Juno Beach Centre

Richard Hutton
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Legion will be flying a flag with a special origin to honour our veterans past and present.

The Royal Canadian Legion branch 124 has purchased a Canadian flag that flew over the Juno Beach Centre in Normandy, France.

The centre is a museum that opened in 2003, an

effort by volunteers and veterans to create a permanent memorial to Canadians who served in the Second World War and preserve this legacy for future generations through education and remembrance.

As a fundraiser to continue its work, the centre is offering Canadian flags that have flown over the centre for \$500.

Each flag will come with a certificate of authenticity indicating the flag was

flown at Juno Beach.

"The goal is to have a tangible item that we can refer to when talking about (the Second World War) and as a displayed item," said branch president Al Howse. "It can draw attention to veterans."

By purchasing the flag, the Legion will be helping the centre with financial support and its continuing mission to highlight through online history lessons and

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Busy weekend | Pages 4, 15, 20, 26

Vol. 7, Issue 32 Canada's most-decorated community newspaper August 8, 2024



HOME SWEET HOME

A group of Niagara-on-the-Lake residents conducted a detailed survey on seniors' housing needs. The results of the survey were sent to NOTL politicians, including Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. The Lake Report met with Zalepa to learn his feelings about the results of the survey. This is the first in a series of stories exploring the survey results and potential solutions to the problem.

Need for seniors housing is real: Zalepa

Richard Harley
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake's lord mayor says he understands there's a growing need for options for seniors who want to stay in town as they age.

"A lot of the things that are in the report are things that I think I always believed, because I've been in real estate for almost 30

years here," Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said in an interview.

It's more of a "validation" of things people likely already know, he said.

But it's helpful to have a survey done that seems to hold water.

"I felt pretty confident in what I saw. I'm by no means an expert on validating a survey. But it seems to be well thought-out," he said.

The Lake Report sat down with Zalepa to discuss the results of a seniors housing survey, conducted by a group of NOTL residents and overseen by research experts Michael Ennamora-to and Stephen Ferley.

The survey, among other findings, showed that a majority of NOTL residents aged 55 and up want to stay in NOTL as they get older, and maintain as much inde-

pendence as possible.

They had concerns for access to health care, both family physicians and emergency services, and want to have a structured living situation that meets their changing needs.

Most said they would prefer to live at home, or independently, with options for assisted living and

Continued on Page 5



Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa says he understands the dire need for living options for aging seniors who want to stay in town and is looking at ways the town can help, including diverse housing options and building incentives. FILE

Tail wagging fun at Palatine winery

Julia Sacco
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Dogs of all breeds, sizes and experience are welcome to join the Dog Frisbee League at Palatine Hills Estate Winery this summer.

Wednesday evenings starting at 6 p.m. your furry friends can meet at the backfield of 911 Lakeshore Rd.

The league runs in a five-week session, with the next starting in three more weeks.

Kait Ripley, a trainer and assistant manager at Walk, Play Love obedience and guidance school encourages people to come out with their pups to watch the current league and get a feel for it.

The league, led by the school, will feature frisbee games and challenges along with tips and tricks from experienced handlers and a welcoming community for dog lovers.

"It's played all over Canada and the U.S., we work as a team to make points and those are added up as a team and you rank by your location,"

Palatine Hills also hosts a dog-friendly patio where owners and their furry companions can stop for a drink and a bite.

For more information on joining the league, email nikki@walkplaylove.com.

See more photos of pups and frisbees on Page 6.



Maxine Mclellan throws a frisbee to Stormy the German shepherd at Palatine Hills Estate Winery during its Dog Frisbee League, which takes place every Wednesday in the winery's back field. All dogs are welcome. DAVE VAN DE LAAR



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Frisbee goes to the dogs

Clockwise from top left: Jaclyn throws a frisbee to Mossie the Corgi. Atlas the Australian Shepherd catches the frisbee in mid-air. Leighton Dyck throws the frisbee to Monte the Australian Kelpie. Jeff Riley throws the frisbee to Quin. Dori the Papillon chases down the frisbee. Kirstin Webb and Atlas. Monte leaps to catch the frisbee. Riley throws a frisbee to Dublin the Australian cattle dog.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE VAN DE LAAR

