

Lord Mayor's Message to NOTL ~ for 5 Aug 09

Just about everywhere you look, local fruits and vegetables are available at the many produce stands around town. I hope you'll pull over and indulge.

The Saturday morning Farmers' Market in Garrison Village has vegetables (lots of organic produce), flowers, baked goods, herbs, granola and fresh bbq pork. Why not make shopping at local markets part of your weekend routine?

Sometimes we have to be reminded that's its ok for locals to stop and smell the roses or walk along the waterfront or soak up the beautiful view of rolling green fields and blue skies. Don't just read about what's happening in NOTL... be part of it.

Music Niagara's selection of outstanding local and international talents will be playing amazing music in unique settings during the next few weeks. The Shaw Theatre Festival program is in full swing with a wonderful playbill.

The weather is perfect for walking, riding, sailing, fishing or just doing nothing.

These are some of the fabulous things that make our quality of life in NOTL the envy of so many.

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The GO train is a wonderful success! GO was anticipating 500 uses per day but in the first nine days, the average was over 1300 uses.

Encourage your friends and family to take the GO from Union Station. It looks like the St. Catharines VIA train station is the most convenient stop to pick up and drop off visitors. It is a very comfortable and smooth ride with announcements about the points of interest along the way.

Right now, the service runs on weekends until Thanksgiving weekend.

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It is amazing to me that the problems we're having with the flawed ARC process and the challenges of dealing with the school board are happening around the province. It is a sad reality that we're not alone.

With that in mind, this Council has voted to support a Resolution asking that the Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne call for a smart moratorium on disputed school closings. The 'smart' part is that while the moratorium is in effect, we're going to be busy working with the Ministry, municipalities and school boards to develop policies that will really work and actually benefit communities and education.

As the Resolution says, many schools are the hubs of their communities. We need to find a better way to build, protect and support these integral parts of our community infrastructure.

The Community Schools Alliances is asking municipalities across Ontario to support this Resolution. The Ontario Public School Boards Association (which includes DSBN) “sees this as an opportunity for opening up broad-based collaboration between municipalities and school boards on the valuable role of schools in our local communities.”

For more information, visit www.communityschoolsalliance.com

NDSS “Our School of Choice”!