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POSITIVE  
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**Contributed by Patty Garriock**  
“There is so much in the world for us all if only we have the eyes to see it, and the heart to love it, and the hand to gather it to ourselves.”  
- Lucy Maud Montgomer

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## Around and around



Cars take a drive around the newly opened roundabout in Glendale. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

### Editorial

## It’s not rocket science — yes, it’s a hate crime

Richard Harley  
Editor-In-Chief

It is shameful what has happened – repeatedly – to Niagara-on-the-Lake’s rainbow crosswalk. It also is hateful. The Niagara Regional Police Service says it is investigating the latest vandalism as a “potential” hate crime. Given the repeated vandalism and the anti-gay and other hateful messages, it is not a potential hate crime. It simply is a hate crime. Full stop. This is the fourth time

the Pride crosswalk in NOTL has been defaced in just over two months — 66 days to be exact. Every time the message is more vulgar, more hate-fuelled, more unhinged. Whoever is responsible for the last two incidents has pre-meditated their message of hatred and blacked out the town camera that faces the crosswalk. We wonder how pathetic and scared of sexuality an individual must be to act in such a way. Given some religious organizations’ anti-gay and

anti-Pride stances, we have to wonder if the people involved are also motivated by their personal religious beliefs. But one thing we don’t have to wonder about is whether or not this is a hate crime. The damage meets the definition of a crime — one fuelled by hatred of a specific group of people. Yet our Niagara police force only says it is “potentially” a hate crime. The message was disgustingly clear: “Die fags.” And more. The only debate should

be whether it constitutes a death threat — there is no question it’s a hate crime. Respectfully, our police service simply has to do better. Find the culprits and charge them with committing a hate crime. Treat these repeated acts of hate and vandalism with all the seriousness they deserve. Before someone does actually die. If police don’t treat this as a hate crime, then if someone is killed, we hope the community bands together to litigate and protest our “protectors.”



## Sometimes we need more government

Dear editor:  
I respectfully disagree with Alexander Evans’ suggestion that in a previous letter to the editor I labelled developer Benny Marotta’s life as “frivolous.” I also disagree with Mr. Evans’ portrayal of the Conservation Review Board and land tribunals as somehow denying Mr. Marotta his rights as a Canadian citizen, (Letter, “Town should disband its committees,” Aug. 3). Somehow Mr. Evans seems to have misunderstood the Canadian Charter

of Rights and Freedoms and equates community and government somehow with “mob rule” and that in order to end mob rule we need to vastly curtail the government’s responsibilities. That sounds like the reasoning behind the “freedom convoy,” which held hostage the city of Ottawa essentially demanding an end to the rule of law in Canada. In Canada we have many freedoms guaranteed by our Charter of Rights and Freedoms including: legal rights, mobility rights, Aboriginal People’s rights, right to

peaceful assembly, right to vote, freedom of thought, speech and religion. These rights come with responsibilities to: obey Canadian laws (including property law); express one’s opinions freely, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others; to participate and help those in your community; to take responsibility to protect our environment and preserve our heritage; to vote in elections and to serve on juries if called. It would seem to me those “volunteering” their time on

the municipal heritage and the urban design committees are living full lives and taking their responsibilities as citizens seriously. The current clamouring for individual rights seems to forget that the entirety of human civilization has evolved out of our species’ ability to co-operate in communities. When individual rights impinge on other people’s rights in favour of anarchy, we need more government not less.

Bob Bader  
NOTL



BARBEA



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