



## Lord Mayors Report – June, 2025

### Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa

---

#### **June 2025**

June 2 – We hosted the Pride flag raising at Town Hall with Pride Niagara.

June 2 – Niagara College announced a transformative \$4 million bequest from the estate of long-time supporter Norris Walker, the largest estate gift in the College's history. I had the opportunity to be at the Daniel J. Patterson Campus for this special announcement.

June 4 – Tourism NOTL invited me to participate in a Tourism Broadcast with Nicholas Picholas from Kiss 98.5. Nicholas is a proud dual citizen who spotlighted the many reasons American Visitors should explore Niagara-on-the-Lake this season. The taping was at the Queens Royal Park Gazebo, with several other taping sites throughout the Town with other members of our business community. The broadcast aired on June 13, 2025.

June 5 - I joined Steph Vivers for a live broadcast to address concerns around changes in the Town's Tourism Strategy, specifically the shift from "wine country" to "food and wine" in the vision statement. I clarified that this wording broadens our tourism narrative, but wine remains central to our identity, and we continue to support our Destination Marketing Organization and tourism partners in using "wine country" in their marketing efforts.

June 6 - I had the pleasure of meeting with a group of retired Canadian Tire Dealers during their annual gathering at the Prince of Wales Hotel. I was invited by Jim Ryan, our NOTLHyro Chair to speak about the Town's history and to help welcome the group to our community. Many attendees shared their appreciation for how our Town has managed to retain its heritage charm while embracing modern amenities.

June 7 - I attended the Fire Recruitment Graduation Ceremony in Niagara-on-the-Lake, celebrating the achievements of 10 new graduates joining our local fire services. It was an honour to recognize their dedication, training, and commitment to serving and protecting our community.

June 7 – The Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library hosted a well-attended celebration marking its 225th anniversary. As part of the festivities, I had the honour of presenting a plaque on behalf of Council to Library Board Co-Chair Daryl Novak, recognizing this significant milestone. The event also featured a storytime with the children, the NOTL Museum, a bouncy castle, popcorn, Dog Man, and more.



## Lord Mayors Report – June, 2025

### Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa

---

June 7 - I participated in the community walk along the Heritage Trail in celebration of International Trail Day. The event was led by local Special Olympics World Games medalists Carter Simpson and Ewen Barclay. I had the privilege of walking alongside them as we completed the trail together.

June 8 - I attended the annual Polish Pilgrimage held at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and the adjacent Haller Army Cemetery. The pilgrimage is a longstanding tradition that brings together members of the Polish-Canadian-American community for a day of faith, remembrance, and cultural celebration. I was joined by Poland's Ambassador to Canada, and a member of the US Congress.

June 11 – Together with Deputy Lord Mayor Wiens and Ashleigh Myers, Government Relations, Economic Development, and Tourism Officer, we attended a provincial announcement held at 450 Eastchester Ave E. in St. Catharines regarding the next phase of the Garden City Skyway Expansion project. The twinning of the skyway will bring long-term benefits to Niagara-on-the-Lake by enhancing transportation efficiency, supporting the movement of goods and visitors, and strengthening economic connectivity throughout the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

June 13 - I took part in a podcast hosted by Craig Swanson from Arterra Canada, focused on what makes Niagara-on-the-Lake a unique and dynamic destination. The conversation highlighted our vibrant food, wine, and hospitality scene and offered a chance to share how these experiences contribute to NOTL's appeal as a place to live, work, and visit, particularly for a younger audience discovering the region.

June 14 - I attended the Niagara Ride for Dad, which began at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #124. This annual motorcycle ride supports prostate cancer research and awareness. Congratulations to local resident Mat King who organizes the Niagara ride.

June 14 - I participated in the United Empire Loyalist flag raising ceremony at the cenotaph on Queen Street to mark the beginning of UEL Week. As part of the commemoration, I presented the official proclamation on behalf of the Town, declaring the week as United Empire Loyalist Week in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

June 16 – One of my favourite annual events, the Strawberry Social, brought together 350 members of our senior community for a time of connection, music, and delicious local strawberries. It was a pleasure to spend time with residents and celebrate their contributions to our community. Volunteers also delivered 115 meals to residents in long term care homes in Town.



## Lord Mayors Report – June, 2025

### Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa

---

June 18 – Together with Staff, we welcomed a grade 5 and 7 class from St. Michael Catholic School to Town Hall for a mock council meeting and a tour of the building. This experience offers students a hands-on experience with how municipal government works. Engaging young people in this way helps spark their interest in civic life and encourages future involvement.

June 20 – I attended a tour at the Landscape of Nations in Queenston Heights to recognize National Indigenous Day, lead by Amanda Gamble, Friends of Fort George.

June 21 – I attend Smugglers Cove Boat Club for their annual sail past. Congratulations on their launch of their 76<sup>th</sup> season.

### **Special Announcement**

Over the past month, and especially during events such as the Library's 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, the Strawberry Social, and the Heritage Trail Walk, I was moved by the many residents and visitors who took a moment to express their appreciation for the path our Town is moving. In this role, it's easy to get caught up in the challenges and criticism that come with public service. But standing among our neighbours during these special moments, hearing their kind words and appreciation for the hard work of our staff and Council, is a powerful reminder of all the good happening around us. Thank you to everyone who continues to show up, support one another, and contribute to making our community stronger every day.