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FREE August 1st, 2018 - August 7th, 2018 NiagaraReporter.com Vol. 19, No. 12 FREE

Despite Facing Stark Challenges, Board of Education President Robert Restaino Sees Brighter Future Ahead for NF

By: Tony Farina

Whether it is black discharge from the wastewater treatment plant or a looming \$13 million budget deficit that could mean a double hit next year for residents with possible service cuts and tax increases,

things don't look good in Niagara Falls.

It may not have come as a shock to many earlier this month when Wall Street's Fitch Ratings Service downgraded the city's credit worthiness and revised the outlook from

(Cont. on pg. 2)



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Photos from 'Reclaim Niagara Rally' on Saturday July 28th, 2018, at the Niagara Falls State Park



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Niagara Falls



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"We need to give people something to stay for . . . we need to give them hope for the future."

(Cont. from cover)

stable to negative.

The financial crisis stems, in large measure, from the gaming deadlock between the state and the Seneca Nation over revenue sharing from the casino; a portion of which the state shared with Niagara Falls.

Here's what Fitch had to say in its downgrade analysis:

"The downgrade and Outlook revision reflect an erosion of the city's gap-closing capacity given the Seneca Indian Nation's decision in mid-2017 to cut off casino gambling moneys it paid to the state. The resultant weakening of reserve level has weakened the city's financial resilience, with limited prospects for a near-term resumption of revenue transfers."

As we reported exclusively two weeks ago, the arbitration process between the state and the Senecas is now set to begin in December and it could take months, or possibly longer, for any resolution to take place that would result in payments resuming. If ever.

Never mind rumors that Governor Andrew Cuomo could find a way to help Niagara Falls financially after he wins re-election in November. The outlook right now is

grim and hovering over all of this is an upcoming mayoral election next year.

So who would want to lead a city facing so many challenges? One possibility, although he hasn't formally announced, is current Board of Education President and local Niagara Falls attorney Robert Restaino.

"We need to offer our citizens hope for the future, a new vision," says Restaino who is now in private practice after serving as a City Court Judge.

In a recent interview at his 800 Main Street law office, Restaino stopped short of saying he will run next year but it was clear he had a sparkle in his eye when talking about the city.

He seemed ready to jump out of his seat when talking about Niagara Falls and the problems it faces as if he could not wait to tackle them himself.

"We have large industrial areas of the city that are vacant and we need to do a better job of marketing those opportunities," says Restaino, noting that a major New York City software company recently expanded its operations to a site near

Rochester.

"I don't think we are doing enough to grow the non-tourism business side of the city," says the former jurist who said back in January of 2017, during an interview with this reporter, that he's been thinking about a mayoral run for a long time.

In that interview, he said "I think we need to put ourselves squarely in the job market, especially in the industries of the day; we need to be in the hunt."

That theme continues to dominate his outlook as he contemplates a formal announcement for mayor in the fall.

Incumbent Mayor Paul Dyster, a Democrat like Restaino, won a narrow election in 2015 and is now serving his third term. Dyster has not revealed his plans for next year but many political observers believe he is hoping for a state job from Governor Cuomo.

Dyster has supported the governor through thick and thin, including during the last gaming crisis that pushed Niagara Falls to the brink and the four-year struggle to get financing for the state-backed Hamister Hotel project.

As for the casino money, Restaino said it is hard to argue with the city using those funds for some city departments, "but the difficulty is when it becomes the principle piece of budget negotiations."

While conceding that residents could face a double hit with next year's budget, given the circumstances, Restaino says job cuts are not the answer because of the potential impact to services.

"It will probably take a combination of things [to get through crisis]," says Restaino, "and I believe there's an opportunity to do more in the way of shared government services that will help reduce costs. We need to be innovative and creative. Find ways to get it done."

"Restaino would be a very strong candidate," says Republican Mike Gawel, an observation suggesting that Restaino might have bipartisan support should he decide to run.

Despite the problems facing Niagara Falls, Restaino still believes in the City he has lived in throughout his life.

"We need to give people something to stay for," says Restaino.

"We need to give them hope for the future."

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Lewiston

DiCamillo Bakery (535 Center St.)

Public Library (305 S. 8th St.)

Tim Hortons (2970 Saunders Settlement Rd.)

Tops (906 Center St.)

Rite Aid (731 Center St.)

Syros Restaurant (869 Cayuga St.)

Village Bakery (417 Center St.)

Lockport

Lockport City Court & County Courthouse

Save-A-Lot (5770 Transit Rd.)

Tops (5827 South Transit Rd.)

Niagara Falls

City Hall (basement)

The Como (restaurant, deli, & airport locations)

DiCamillo Bakery (all locations)

Frankies Donuts

John Duke Center (1202 Hyde Park Blvd.)

Key Bank (800 Main St.)

Memorial Medical Center (entrance to lobby)

Michael's Restaurant (3011 Pine Avenue)

Marketside Restaurant (708 E. Market St.)

Mom's Restaurant (2410 Military Rd.)

Niagara Towers (901 Cedar Ave.)

Niagara Falls Family Court (775 Third St.)

Niagara Falls Police Station (1925 Main St.)

Niagara Falls Public Library (Main St.)

Rite Aid (7804 Buffalo Ave. & 4407 Military Rd.)

Save-A-Lot (2429 Military Rd.)

North Tonawanda

Broadway Hotel (158 Main St.)

Budwey's Market (535 Division St.)

City Hall (216 Payne Ave.)

Lou's Diner (73 Webster St.)

Public Library (505 Meadow Dr.)

Olympia Restaurant (3312 Niag. Falls Blvd.)

Tops (301 Meadow Dr.)

Roman Café (797 Payne Ave.)

Save-A-Lot (1365 Nash Rd.)

Sanborn

Smokin Joes (gas station and store)

Tim Hortons (2970 Saunders Settlement Rd.)

Tops (2956 Saunders Settlement Rd.)

Tonawanda

Tops (890 Young St.)

Wilson

Lakeside Market (337 Lake St.)

Youngstown

Bandanas Bar & Grill (930 Lake Rd. (18F))

Public Library (240 Lockport St.)

Rite Aid (214 Lockport St.)

Village Diner (425 Main Street)

Spallino Towers (720 10th St.)

Supermarket Liquor (8438 Niag. Falls Blvd.)

Tops (Niag. Falls Blvd., Portage, & Military)

Tim Hortons (all locations)

Wedge Liquors (825 Pine Ave.)

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NIAGARA



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Chris's Corner: The Real Impact of Janus

Chris Voccio is a Niagara Falls City Council member and can be reached at ChrisVoccio@gmail.com.



**Chris Voccio
NF City Councilman**

We had a good show in front of City Hall just before the last City Council meeting just prior to our August recess. And since that show there have been multiple media reports and posts on social media demonizing me as anti-union (not true) and completely distorting the Janus issue.

For those of you who didn't follow the whole episode, it relates to a Supreme Court decision in the case of Janus v. AFSCME. AFSCME is a huge and powerful government employees union, and Janus was a member who sued his union and eventually won in front of the high court.

My friends and colleagues

on the Council decided to hold a press conference denouncing Janus. The mayor and other city leaders also participated in the festivities. I stated publicly that it was a mistake to do this because it could appear that the "management" of the city (the mayor, the administrator, the department heads and the council) would be less prone to make budget cuts when it came time to budgeting for 2019, meaning our \$13 million deficit would be foisted onto taxpayers.

Because of my position, I've been called a lot of names. "Anti-working-class extremist" was the best so far. The name-calling is OK. I get it. But an understanding of the true ramifications of Janus would be helpful.

Following is part of an analysis published in the Washington Post from two university professors, James Feigenbaum of Boston University and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez of Columbia University. They found that after similar rulings at the state level...

"...unions shift their efforts away from political mobilization and toward membership recruitment and retention. They make fewer campaign contributions and are



A photo of city officials and union members rallying in front of City Hall. Photo courtesy of Meg Rossman, Special Assistant to Mayor Dyster, on Twitter.

less likely to conduct campaigns to get Democratic voters to the polls. Democratic vote share and turnout falls in presidential, gubernatorial and congressional elections."

And this is the reason for the show in front of City Hall, and this is the reason so many politicians in states like New York want to scare you about Janus.

As Feigenbaum and Hertel-Fernandez point out, unions only increase their reason for being, service to their members. But they may spend less money on politicians. And that is a threat to many.

All of which means trouble for Governor Cuomo, who receives massive infusions of cash from union political action committees. If you support the governor, than opposition to Janus makes a lot of sense.

At the local level, consider this: Union political campaign contributions fund the very politicians condemning Janus. Also mixed into this wonderful little stew is the fact that there are people who work for the governor who used to work for the unions, and there are people who work for the unions who used to work for elected officials, elected officials who of course receive

campaign contribution from unions. There is nothing illegal with any of this, but it has led to the one-party rule that has created the Niagara Falls of today.

Niagara Falls is a one-party city. Sure, we've occasionally had Republican mayors. But the fact of the matter is the Niagara Falls City Council, the legislative body of the city, hasn't had a Republican majority in two generations, some say since 1964.

Look around you. Drive up and down Pine Avenue. Or Main Street. Or Highland Avenue. Drive along Buffalo Avenue.

If you like what you see, then one-party rule has done well for Niagara Falls. Janus is a threat to the ruling party, not just politicians but the bosses who throw so much money at them. So if you like the state of Niagara Falls today, then you should view Janus negatively.

But if you're not happy with things. If you don't think the ruling party has created a vibrant, prosperous Niagara Falls, perhaps it's time for a change.

Chris Voccio is a Niagara Falls City Councilman and can be reached at ChrisVoccio@gmail.com.

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WEEKLY HEADLINES

- Niagara Falls Fire Department responding to the 1900 block of Cudaback for a "bad reaction" to synthetic weed.
- A New York State DEC officer suffered minor injuries after he was reportedly hit and dragged approximately 300 feet by an ATV in Wheatfield along Liberty Drive. A helicopter has since been dispatched to find the ATV that caused the accident.
- There was a fatal stabbing in the City of Lockport Fatal at Pine Street and Heritage Court late Sunday evening / early Monday morning.
- Niagara Falls police surrounded a home where an unoccupied vehicle, that matches the description of one that was possibly involved in the armed robbery at the Family Dollar, was found.
- Lockport police confirm a 16-year-old male was stabbed and killed last night at Pine and Heritage Court.
- A North Tonawanda man faces life in prison after being convicted of a drug charge in federal court. Joel Jimenez-Rodriguez, 38, was caught with 30 kilograms of cocaine hidden in a vehicle and charged with possession with intent to distribute.
- A tourist from Ohio had her purse stolen just minutes after arriving at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Downtown Niagara Falls on Friday evening, police say. Just seconds after setting her purse on a flower planter, she turned back to retrieve it and discovered it was gone.
- A robber hid in the stock room of a Family Dollar for almost two hours Sunday evening before robbing the store at gunpoint. The robber emerged from the stock room & dragged an employee to the front of the store holding a gun to her head, according to police reports.
- Niagara Falls police responding to Welch Avenue for an assault using a bag of kitty litter.
- A Niagara Falls man, Nyjier Scott, plead not guilty on Monday to charges stemming from him shooting a man in the knee during an attempted robbery on Pierce Avenue. The victim, who had just withdrew money from an ATM, is recovering.
- Police are urging residents to be alert while driving by Packard Court after a truck driver had his window shattered after 10pm on Saturday, July 21st. Police say a group of fifteen to twenty young adults bolted in multiple directions after the incident occurred.
- The Niagara Falls Water Board is warning ratepayers of a possible scam where salespersons may attempt to persuade them into believing their company needs to test the water on behalf of the NFWB while trying to sell a water softener or water purification system.
- Niagara Falls police responded to 19th and Walnut for a car that crashed into a pole. Two male occupants fled on foot.
- Niagara Falls police responded to Walmart Thursday afternoon for a purse snatching. The suspect was a heavy-set white female wearing a floral dress with medium length hair. Suspect snatched the purse while inside the store and ran out.
- Niagara Falls Fire Department responding to Dunkin Donuts on 66th Street and Niagara Falls Boulevard for an overdose.
- Niagara Falls police responded to Pierce Avenue in the early morning hours of July 27th for reports of multiple shots fired. A house and car were struck with bullets and no injuries were reported.
- Niagara Falls police engaged in a foot chase near 15th and Pierce Avenue Friday afternoon. The suspect fled from a vehicle after being pulled over, at which time another individual entered the vehicle and drove off. The vehicle has not yet been located.
- Niagara Falls Police and Fire Department responded to a stabbing and possible robbery attempt on Cudaback Avenue. The victim is in stable condition.
- Niagara Falls Police arrested three individuals Saturday afternoon after they were seen shooting a paintball gun at people and houses.

For the second time in about a week, Niagara Falls Firefighters responded to Nor-Lock Park for playground equipment on fire on Saturday July 28th.



Photo courtesy of Samar Hamilton, The Action Niagara Falls

Gorge Rescue



RobShots



Photos courtesy of Rob Bennett, RobShots

Niagara Active, Upper Mountain, Lewiston 1, and New York State Parks Police assisted an elderly man up the stairs at Devils Hole after he took a tumble while walking the path on Sunday July 29th. The man was taken to the hospital to be checked out and be treated for some abrasions he suffered during the fall. It was reported that the man started to walk back up on his own but at some point it became too much and needed help.

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Rally Participants Swarm NF State Park in Effort to 'Reclaim Niagara'



Photos courtesy of Samar Hamilton



A message from Reclaim Niagara: Niagara Falls was once a very prosperous city. But little by little, over the course of generations, the State and its Authorities took all of the profitable resources from our City for itself.

Our world wonder, the Niagara Falls, was taken away and is now a State Park that only the State profits from. The Power Project was once a privately owned entity that paid a huge sum of property taxes to the City. Now, it is a State Authority that pays our City zero property taxes.

The State even took all of our waterfront land. The State has also profited more on the Seneca Niagara Casino money, too, despite the fact that our City provides all of the public safety and infrastructure to the casino, the State takes 75% of the profits.

The list of injustices that Niagara Falls has suffered from the hands of the State goes on and on. And there is not one person or politician to blame. It is

just the way things have been done to us for generations. But that does not have to be the end result. It is time that we grab Albany's attention. We are not asking for more. We are asking the State to take less!

Steve Jobs said, "the ones who see things differently, they're not fond of rules, they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify and vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things."

We understand that we have an impossible road ahead. We understand that the State may continue to ignore our efforts and pleas for help. But that will not stop us! That will not deter us! Reclaim Niagara will not go away under the State changes its parasitic relationship with the City of Niagara Falls.

Paintball Shooters Arrested



Photos courtesy of Rob Bennett, RobShots

Niagara Falls Police arrested three individuals after they were seen shooting a paintball gun at people and houses on Saturday afternoon.

It was first reported that the occupants were seen shooting at a guy on a bike on Niagara Street. A little while later, there was another report that a house on 77th Street was shot at.

Niagara Falls Police caught up with the vehicle at 61st & Stephenson and all three occupants were arrested. Vehicle description and license plate matched that given by the callers. The suspect were positively identified by several witnesses of each event.

Police recovered a paintball gun, a face shield, and CO2 canisters.

Shots Fired!!



Photo courtesy of Samar Hamilton, The Action Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls Police responded to the 1500 block of Pierce Ave Friday morning for reports of multiple shots fired in the area. A house and car were struck and bullet casings recovered from the scene. No injuries were reported and no info on the suspect.

Sinking Quickly



Photo courtesy of Samar Hamilton, The Action Niagara Falls

Residents living in the 700 block of Spruce Avenue are growing increasingly concerned about this sink hole forming on their street. One resident told us that he went out and found a cone to put over the sinkhole after running it over and damaging his vehicle so that hopefully this wont happen to anyone else.



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Restaurant Review: ACAPULCO Mexican Restaurant



Jamie DePetris
Food Expert/Critic

ACAPULCO Mexican Restaurant, located at 707 Main Street, Tonawanda is my newest find.

I don't think I have ever mentioned that Mexican is probably my favorite type of food, but that also means that I am a little tougher when it comes to what's good and what's not.

This restaurant is brand new and at lunchtime it was slammed with people!

Along with me for this review was my partner-in-crime Mandy and we (obviously) started with a frozen margarita. What's that saying about day drinking? It's five o'clock somewhere!!

We couldn't resist the margarita after sitting at the bar and having two machines mixing them right in front of us.

We started off with the Nacho's supreme, which consisted of homemade tortilla chips smothered and topped with cheese, beef, lettuce, tomato, gua-

camole and yes more cheese!

Every chip had all the ingredients on it, which is a rarity because most of the time you find only the chips on top are loaded and the ones underneath are dry.

I love nachos but hate ordering them and having to turn the plate around just to get a bit here and bit there. I know many of you can probably relate!

Anyway, these were perfectly situated so all of the chips had a little bit of everything on them, which is a HUGE plus in my book.

For an entre, I had the shrimp taco and the Tilapia taco while Mandy had the chicken quesadilla. Although I love Mandy, she is absolutely boring and gets the same thing wherever she goes. Live a little Mandy!

The tacos come out plain and there is a topping bar that you walk up to and top your own food (which is kind of a cool idea). There is a wide variety of toppings such as Pico de Gallo, jalapenos, radishes, guacamole sauce, cilantro, and a variety of sauces.

Both of my tacos were as fresh as can be and cooked perfectly after I choose my toppings. I honestly could not have enjoyed them more!

Unfortunately, I was in a hurry or would have ordered more. The chicken quesadilla was seasoned perfectly and was very tasty. Mandy says it was the best she has ever had, which is saying a lot because it's all she ever eats (and I mean ever).

My margarita hit the spot on such a hot day and I longed for another of them for hours after we left. All in all we were in and out of there in a flash



and it was fantastic to say the least.

No waiting, great food, and tasty drinks is my go-to kind of place. I will definitely be back very soon to try many of the other menu items.

Give it a try! I know you will enjoy it.

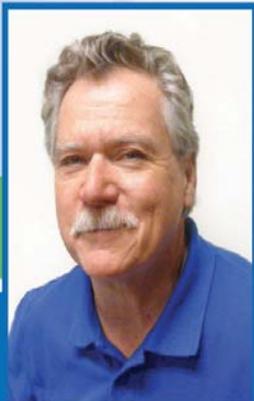
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ANALYSIS

Trump's Opportunity Development Zones May be a Good Thing



Ken Hamilton

The Internal Revenue Service will soon be rolling out more of the details of President Trump's Opportunity Zone initiative that was passed on December 22, 2017. The program may be a federal tax cut for investors, but it may also be a jobs program for the cities of Niagara County and its poorest neighborhoods, if done right.

According to the IRS, an Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. The IRS goes on to say that, "Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated for that designation by the state and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury via his delegation authority to the Internal Revenue Service."

Apparently, several areas of Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda, Lockport and the Tuscarora Reservation have actually and sadly passed muster in those qualifications.

Highland Avenue's Census Tract 202 is one. Others include North Main Street's Tract 205, which runs along the gorge and includes Mayor Paul Dyster's home, City Hall and

school board member Russ Petrozzi's Capitol Cleaners. Tract 211 qualifies and include the Aquarium of Niagara Falls and most of the downtown tourist area. Tract 212's area south of Pine Avenue between the 9th Street alley and 17th Street containing the NFM-MC, the NACC, and the bulk of NFR's holdings qualify; as well as Tract 217 running south of Niagara Street, east of Hyde Park and then south of Pine Avenue, and containing the bulk of the city's heavy industrial areas have also qualified.

Additionally, North Tonawanda's Census Tract 229, which is centered on the Oliver Street corridor between Ward & Wheatfield roads, spreading four or more blocks on either side also qualify, as does Fisherman's and Gratwick Riverside parks, and much of the city's industrial area. The benefits include all of the Tuscarora Reservation and most of the city of Lockport as well.

Here's what I mean by, "if done right."

Our cities have a propensity to believe that 'exterior decorating' and creating jobs are one and the same. They are not. Simply because a new industry comes into your town it isn't a huge benefit if it doesn't change the poverty levels of those living within the area's borders. Those are the citizens who will circulate their wages with the existing and new businesses, raise families, send their children to school every day, and take pride in building their homes and maintaining their properties.

Similar programs have come to the city before. I know, because I was the a founder and VP of the Area One Community Preservation Corporation and its chief operating officer back in the 1980s when the Economic Development

Zone came to Niagara County through our organization. Highland's Braun Horticulture was within the 1-square mile footprint and was the 1st company to apply. While they no longer manufacture there, they are still operating as a product forwarder.

While Braun saw some successes with the program, eventually the walk-up workers from the community were replaced by suburbanites who soon parked their new pickup trucks alongside the buildings.

With the general lackluster results of the EDZ program, the 1-square mile footprint of the zone was whittled through, removing every street, sidewalk, medium, park, school, church, residential area and the likes where industry was unlikely to develop; and then the slices were then proposed to be sprinkled along the Buffalo Avenue corridor and the 47th Street and Royal Avenue-area to aid those businesses' development.

Now, here's the rub. The thing about which many residents have long complained is that the residents in the communities whose measurements of their poverty either created or aided in the development of the new and/or sustaining jobs weren't mandated to be

included in those companies' payrolls.

I protested to the city council that the debit of those jobs should be credited to the people of the community from which the benefit came. Kudos to then-Councilman John Accardo who tabled the proposed distribution until he could see if my request of resident inclusion was possible. The next month, with nothing that could be done, it was off the table, voted upon and reluctantly passed.

Now some 35-years later, BOHICA, here it comes again? Not only is the Highland community far poorer than it was back then, and is still the poster child of poverty that attracts funding to the city, actually proving a need for Trump's program, the massive poverty has sadly trickled down and through the neighborhood in which the mayor lives, and then up the river to North Tonawanda and down the Erie Canal to Lockport. The results clearly show that have to do it better this time.

And maybe this time we can actually help the people of Niagara Falls, North Tonawanda, Lockport and the Tuscarora Reservation who need it the most, taking the burden off the shoulders of those working poor who have long carried them. Just maybe?

SPRING SPECIALS

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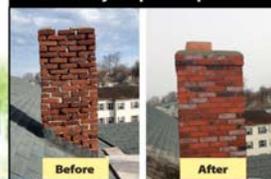
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NORTH TONAWANDA

Community Rallies to Support Durkin Family After Fire Destroys Home

Brendan McDonough

On Saturday, July 28th, people across North Tonawanda came together to help a family affected by tragedy.

On the early morning hours of July 8th, flames ripped through 6730 MacIntosh Lane. Despite the family living there escaping, they



lost everything in the fire.

It was at this point the North Tonawanda community came together to help raise money for the family. Residents organized a benefit, called the 'Durkin's Benefit,' to benefit Cindy Durkin and her family.

MacIntosh Lane might have been closed to vehicles, but there was plenty of foot traffic as people came out to support their fellow North Tonawanda neighbors. Dunk tanks, live music, gift baskets and bounce houses lined the street for all to enjoy.

It is a true example of neighbors helping neighbors for a brighter community.

"We all came together to help them," said Dylan Randall. "It was as simple as that. The loss Cindy and her family suffered was a shock to all of us. I was there that morning. I saw it and how scary it was for everyone. All I wanted

to do from that point on was help them get back on their feet as fast as possible."

Randall organized the event and has been trying to promote it through Facebook and other social media outlets. All items have been donated from local businesses to help the family.

A common theme from the event, and from speaking with Randall, was that when one family in North Tonawanda is in trouble, the community rallies to help them.

"Friends, family, and strangers - it didn't matter - they all wanted to step up and help," said Randall. "We even had golf carts to get people in and out of the event. There simply is no better neighborhood than the one we have here."

The Red Cross did help the family with housing and other necessities after the fire, but the help they need does not end there. Randall says they hope to raise at least \$30,000 from the event.



"Within forty-eight hours of attending a Town Hall meeting they approved us to shut down the street for the event," said Randall. "I thank our community leaders as well for making this possible."

It was a one day event that organizers hoped would go a long way



in helping the family get back on their feet.

For Randall, the event is

something that he hopes can be a building block for helping the next person in need in the future.

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Riding to Honor Fallen Heroes

Brendan McDonough

Hundreds of people across North Tonawanda were putting their 'pedal to the metal' in an effort to help families of police officers killed in the line of duty at the Second Annual Badge Honor Run on Saturday July 28th.

The event was organized by Legion Riders, Chapter 264, and the Badge of Honor Association, and featured live music, drinks and food. For many it is a way to raise money and help those who need it the most.

The Badge Of Honor Association is a Non-for-Profit Organization that exists to honor Men and Women in Law Enforcement who gave the ultimate sacrifice and those who go above and beyond the call of duty.

"What we do," said Thomas Moss, Event Organizer, "is we get money and use it for the families of officers who have died in the line of duty or those who have been in traumatic accidents. Our main goal is to help people."

The ride starts at Erie Avenue in North Tonawanda and goes through Lockport, Amherst and ends in Tonawanda.

Nearly two-hundred riders participated in this years event and organizers say the ride will help families here in Buffalo and across all of New York State.

"Some of the other things we do," said Moss, "is take the officer's children back to school shopping. We get them gift cards and anything else they might need."

Moss says they do not have a goal but simply hope to raise as much money as possible.

Next year he says he hopes even more riders will be participating.



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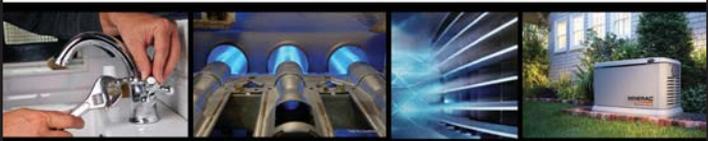
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New Invasive Tick Species Causing Concern

Construction sites are often considered dangerous places due to the potential hazards present and the fast-paced, constantly changing work environment. Workers receive training to recognize and avoid the most common hazards associated with their job tasks. However, construction workers are seldom taught about the dangers transmitted by pests like ticks, mosquitoes and fleas. In the U.S., ticks infect more humans and domestic animals with diseases than any other pest, even mosquitoes. Because ticks are small (some no bigger than the tip of a pen), they are often overlooked, despite their ability to pass along dangerous, potentially life-threatening illnesses. Here in the U.S., ticks are notorious for the spread of Lyme disease, which can cause nausea, chills, fever, neurological problems and even death.

While the deer tick (also called the blacklegged tick) gets most of our attention, a new invasive tick species, known as the East Asian or Longhorned tick, has been found now in 6 states in the United States. Health officials aren't sure how this tick entered the U.S., but are concerned about its ability to multiply without mating and its resilience to extremely cold temperatures. East Asian ticks can carry a deadly tick-borne virus called severe fever with thrombocytopenia syndrome virus, also known as SFTSV. Symptoms of SFTSV include:

- Fever, fatigue, chills
- Headache, nausea, muscle pain
- Diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain
- Conjunctival congestion (pink eye)

SFTSV poses a threat to public health due to its wide range of animal hosts and its ability to cause severe infections in humans, especially in the elderly. There is currently no vaccine available to prevent the spread of SFTSV. Workers are encouraged to be vigilant in protecting themselves from all tick-borne diseases by following these steps:

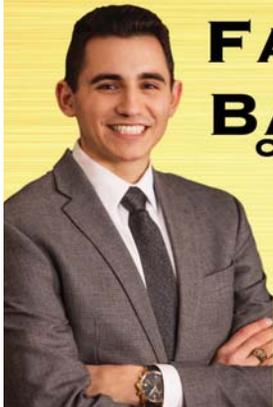
- Using a chemical repellent with DEET, permethrin or picaridin
- Wearing light-colored, protective clothing
- Tucking pant legs into socks
- Conducting a full-body inspection of yourself, especially in or around the hair and ears, underarms, inside the belly button, between the legs and at the back of the knees
- Reporting symptoms associated with tick bites immediately to your doctor

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