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# NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

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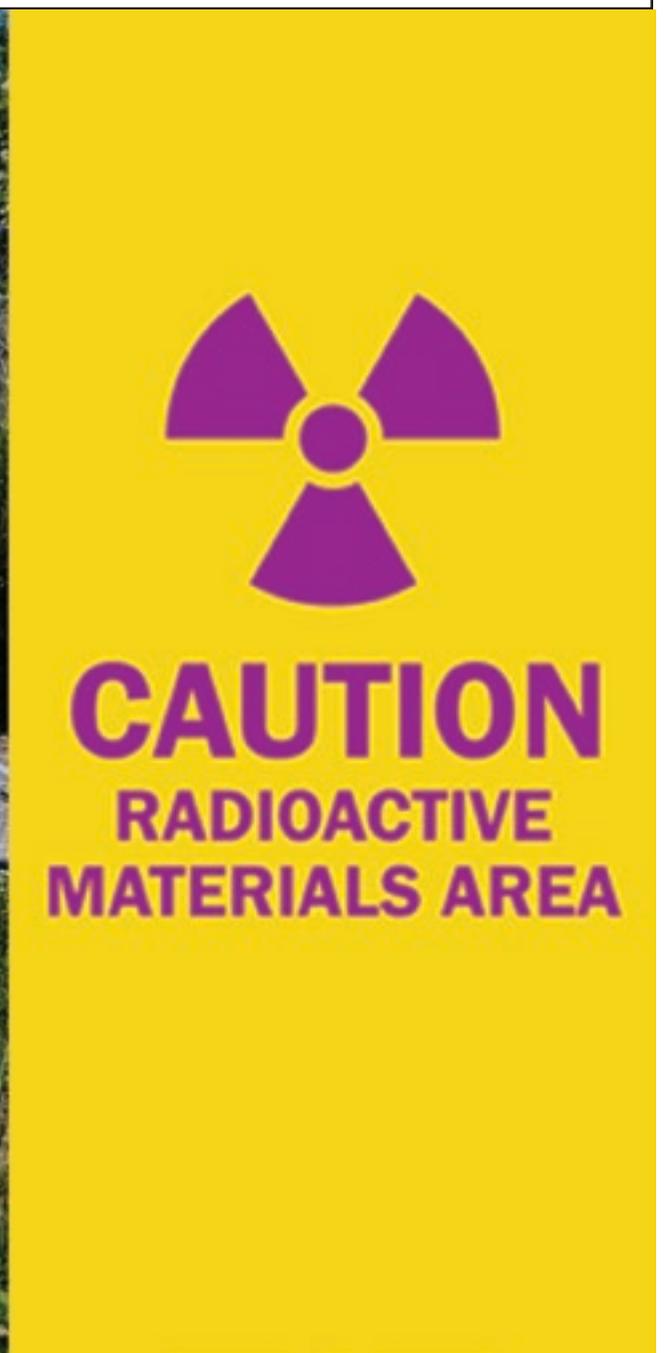
FREE

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## Nuclear Waste Site Lies Open and Exposed on North Ave. in Falls



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# Abandoned Nuclear Spoils Pile in Niagara Falls Presents Danger to Public, Despite Radioactive Warning Signs,

**By Louis Ricciuti &  
Frank Parlato**

NIAGARA FALLS, NY – A spoils pile – which has signs posted around it warning that it is radioactive -- at 915 North Ave. -- the past site of a Niagara University bar once known as McQ's, has been left abandoned and open to public access.

The security gate on the chain link fence around the site has been bowled-over allowing unrestricted access by the public and the sheet-plastic covering has blown off in places and is ripped in others allowing the hazardous materials in this waste to be carried away by rain and blown by winds into the open windows of the densely populated neighborhood which includes The Colt Block Apartments and Wrobel Towers at the corners of Main Street and Ontario Avenue.

The brand new \$44 million train station sits about 75 feet from the radioactive pile which has several yellow lawn-style signs around its perimeter which read "Caution Radioactive Materials Area."

#### How Long?

How long the radioactive pile has been located at this site is unclear as of press time but it is evident that it has been neglected for months, if not years.

Google street-view maps from 2007 show waste roll-off containers on this weed-strewn property, which lies only 100 feet from the sidewalks of Main Street and Ontario Avenue.

A 2011 satellite image of the area shows a large white splotch, presumably the white plastic covering that was earlier intact, now sitting in tatters.

The radioactive pile may contain uranium, radium, and/or thorium -- if records of similar sites around Niagara Falls

and Niagara County are an indicator. The possibility exists that the exposed site may also contain plutonium, called by some scientists as "one of the most toxic substances known to mankind."

All of these radiological materials were handled, enhanced, manipulated or otherwise produced in Niagara Falls in the chemistry labs and metallurgical furnaces powered by Niagara's abundant electricity. Many of these elements were subsequently buried locally, including direct-to-soils burials.

Nearly all recently discovered waste sites around Niagara Falls have been dubbed, "filled with slag," which is a catch-All term for waste material which contains radioactive materials.

Without laboratory analysis, public oversight and split laboratory sampling, it may be impossible to know the true danger of the pile on North Ave. since not every metallic smelting operation produced the same kind of waste materials or waste-stream.

The source of the pile is also unclear. With the train station being next door and because at least one contractor at the train station (Resetarits Construction) reported they were confronted with radiological problems during construction, it is possible that this North Ave. radioactive pile came from atomic waste buried during the 1940's or 1950's at the train station site which was unearthed during recent construction.

A large quantity of atomic age, nuclear slag was also buried underground along nearby Lewiston Road and was unearthed during the road reconstruction project completed in August 2013.

According to city officials and state records, all radioactive slag from the Lewiston Road reconstruction project (2009-2013) -- where a lawsuit emerged over the quantity of radioactive materials buried under the road -- were removed and sent to an out-of-state and



Another Atomic Age Spoils Pile -- this one having signs posted around it warning that it's radioactive - on North Ave., at the past site of the Niagara University bar and hangout once known as McQ's, has evidently been left abandoned, exposed and open to public access.

licensed landfill where they are to be stored radioactively "hot" for 100's of generations.

The location for this pile of radioactive waste raises additional questions.

Niagara Falls has been without a city engineer for years. The last one, Jeffrey Skurka, was fired while the Lewiston Road project was ongoing and just prior the commencement of the train station project.

What, if any environmental laws have been broken since Skurka's firing?

Skurka was fired because he raised safety concerns on Lewiston Road and elsewhere. Would this radioactive material

have been permitted to lie haphazardly and unprotected on North Ave. if there had been a city engineer?

Skurka is suing the City of Niagara Falls for unjust termination.

**How Radioactive material came to be buried**

Back in the 1940's and 1950's, Niagara Falls was the premier city for experimentation, research, development and production of atomic bomb materials (i.e. radioactive) throughout the Manhattan Project and into The Atomic Energy Commission (predecessor of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission) eras.

## NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

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# Broken Fence and Tattered Plastic Cover Allows Unrestricted Access and Possible Spread of Contaminants



Warning signs which read "Caution, radioactive materials area" are posted around the hazardous pile on North Ave.

According to U.S. Department of Energy records, Niagara Falls industry during that period was the largest production center for

uranium metal-from-ore in the nation. The production of these materials created nuclear wastes which needed special

licensing, handling and disposal. Regulations were lax then. Consequently, Niagara's nuclear waste was disposed of in a variety of ways including burying it under roads under the theory that submerged under gravel and blacktop the radioactive wastes would be harmless to residents

That theory has been proven over time to be flawed. Radioactive waste emanations have been demonstrated to penetrate through road materials and some believe that for decades people took a dose of radiation right through the bottom of their cars every time they drove down Lewiston Road.

In the meantime, the spoils pile on North Ave. – which was probably buried for decades - under either Lewiston Rd. or at the train station site - is now no longer buried.

A Geiger counter reading taken by the Reporter at the exposed site showed the pile exceeded natural background radiation rates by orders of magnitude, or by at least 1000 times what should be considered natural for any area.

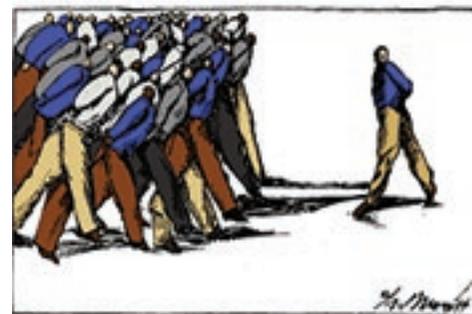
While how serious a health hazard it represents to nearby residents will not be known without testing, the U.S.E.P.A. warns that "all exposures to ionizing radiation carry a risk for inducing an associated disease,"

and, that there's "no such thing as a "safe dose," however small.

Regardless of the depth of danger, this exposed radioactive pile should be removed to a state and federally licensed radioactive waste storage facility as soon as possible.

For now this "biologically hazardous" pile, most likely made radioactive as part of the atomic age and Niagara Falls' role in it, then buried underground, sits amid the people of Niagara Falls.

Residents are advised to stay clear of the pile.



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# NBC News Story Bringing Niagara Falls to Millions Ignored by State Parks, NTCC, Dyster

## James Hufnagel

On the occasions that Niagara Falls is featured on Good Morning America or Entertainment Tonight, profiled in People magazine or plugged on a travel website like TripAdvisor, the collective public relations apparatus of the city, State Parks and the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation (NTCC) usually takes notice.

Whether it's a Wallenda walk, an episode of "The Office", visit by some royal or other celebrity to the falls or yet another meaningless tourism award for Maid of the Mist and its twenty-minute boat ride - the media coverage is invariably deemed desirable and momentous, and guaranteed to be touted by the local professional tourism bureaucracy as greatly promoting Niagara Falls as a vacation destination, enhancing the fortunes of the local tourist industry. Often, the NTCC takes credit for helping engineer the publicity, as if the millions of tourists who visit the world-famous attraction every year do so significantly because of the labors of John Percy and his crack media relations staff.

Therefore, it would seem something of a mystery why the tourism powers-at-be, in conjunction with local dailies and other news outlets, utterly failed to hype the fact that Niagara Falls figured prominently on a national network news show a couple of weeks ago. Normally, the kind of thing that the NTCC, State Parks and certain city officials like Mayor Paul Dyster would be falling over each other issuing press releases and plastering all over Facebook and other social media. On closer examination, however, it becomes clear why they instead opted to totally ignore a national TV News broadcast that put Niagara Falls front and center for millions of Americans at the very start of the tourist season.

On Wednesday evening, June 8, NBC



Nightly News anchor Lester Holt introduced a segment entitled, "Meet the Man Responsible for How Much Water Comes from Niagara Falls".

"If you've been to Niagara Falls, then you know first-hand the sheer power of the spectacular force of nature," intones Holt.

"Niagara Falls, one of the great natural wonders of the world" continues correspondent Harry Smith, narrating over breathtaking footage of the falls. "Every day hordes of plastic-ponchoed tourists purposely get as close as they can get. Spoiler alert... they get really wet!"

While the two-minute segment focuses primarily on water diversion as it impacts hydropower production on both sides of the border, the entire first thirty seconds of the clip prominently show tourists clad in ponchos getting drenched by the invigorating spray on tour boats below the falls. In fact, most of the interview with "the Man Responsible for How Much Water Comes from Niagara Falls", an individual by the name of Peter Kowalski, takes place on the boat, Smith and Kowalski shouting into the microphone in order to be heard over the roar of the cataracts, their pink ponchos flapping in the strong updrafts at the base of the falls.

That's right, pink. And as legendary radio host Paul Harvey used to say, now you know the rest of the story.

In a grievous affront to the sensibilities of Maid of the Mist owner James Glynn and his facilitators Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and NTCC chief John Percy, NBC news, interviewing Canadian Kowalski on the other side of the border, committed the ultimate faux pas by simply stepping onto a convenient Hornblower boat on the Canadian side (pink ponchos) for purposes of the story, filming on the sleek Hornblower catamarans rather than paying homage to Glynn and his antiquated fleet of floating barges, on which tourists are packed like sardines (blue ponchos).

An investigative series by Frank Parlato in the Niagara Falls Reporter seven years ago exposed Glynn's alleged corrupt relationship with the Canadian Niagara Parks Commission, which was caught secretly gifting him a new lease for Maid of the Mist, and then attempting to cover it up. Casualties of the resultant scandal included the Commission chairman and general manager, who both resigned in disgrace, the NPC business development director who, along with four commissioners, was fired, and the remaining four members of



It's not hard to figure out why NBC chose to film their report on the spacious Hornblower boat, rather than the cramped Maid of the Mist, on which most have to stand on their tiptoes to get a decent view.



NBC featured Niagara Falls on its Nightly News broadcast two weeks ago. Nobody took notice so as not to trod on Maid of the Mist owner Jimmy Glynn's feelings.



The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength...

--  
Swami Vivekananda

the board who were "replaced". Around the same time, Parlato exposed the astonishing fact that, under the terms of its 2002 contract, New York State Parks was actually paying Glynn rent for using the Observation Tower in the Niagara Falls State Park, instead of the other way around.

Jimmy Glynn's lease for the Canadian side was revoked, depriving him of winter dry dock quarters for his boats. Enter Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who set aside both SEQRA public process and a National Historic Landmark designation so that Glynn could have a new boatyard at the Schoellkopf site, with the active support of Mayor Paul Dyster, who dismissed those objecting to new Maid

infrastructure in the Niagara Gorge as "self-haters". Hornblower has a \$100 million standing offer to New York State in excess of what Glynn presently pays, if the state opens the bidding process on the attraction.

Glynn has unchallenged power and influence over the local tourism industry, thanks in large part to his control of the politicians and monopoly over Niagara Falls State Park.

Coming in #1 in the TV ratings for the week, over 7.8 million viewers nationally saw the June 8 NBC News report on Niagara Falls.

You heard about it here, in the Reporter, and nowhere else.

# Dyster's Train Station to Nowhere Ready to Open, Where are Tenants?

## Mike Hudson

Earlier this year Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster assured taxpayers in this highly taxed city that his \$44 million, 20,000 square foot, International Railway and Intermodal Transportation Center and Underground Railroad Interpretive Center would open in June.

Unlike the old train 800 square foot station – which was funded entirely by Amtrak – the tenant – the new train station will be funded by taxpayers at an estimated cost of \$500,000 per year.

The added cost by the way will necessitate – all by itself – a tax increase of nearly two percent for property owners in the city.

Dyster however plans a more massive increase in taxes through a property tax reassessment which should hike property taxes for residents by more than 17 percent.

As of today, Thursday, June 24, 2016, the station is nearing completion, however not a single record exists that a contract has been signed with any prospective tenant to use the building in any way.

There is a 500-foot train platform, but no contract with Amtrak to use it. There is space for restaurants and retail shops, but no contracts with restaurant or retail shop owners to use it. There is a section where the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Interpretive Center is supposed to go, but the city still hasn't signed a contract with the Underground Railroad Commission that will operate the center.

There is an area on the second floor

earmarked for use by U.S. Customs and Border Protection that been outfitted with kevlar reinforced doors, bullet- and blast-resistant glass, 360 degree surveillance infrastructure and a series of grey and largely windowless “interview rooms” where those detained at the crossing could be questioned. Is there a contract with the federal law enforcement organization to use the facility in any way, shape or form?

Nope.

Out in the parking lot there is a large area for Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority buses to pick up rail passengers and Greyhound buses to bring even more tourists to the Cataract City. Inside the facility there are counters for the bus companies to service customers and ample waiting room for the customers themselves.

All that's missing is contracts with either of the bus companies to use the facility.

There is nothing that would compel Amtrak, U.S. Customs, the Underground Railroad Commission, the NFTA or Greyhound, or any store or restaurant from locating in the facility.

Niagara Falls already has a train station, at 2701 Willard Ave. No Amtrak official has ever publicly expressed any interest whatsoever in moving into Dyster's new facility.

Greyhound operates out of space it rents at Quality Inn and Suites in the heart of the tourist district. Like Amtrak, the company would seem to have little incentive to want to relocate in the comparatively scary North End neighborhood chosen by Dyster for his train station.



Train station nears completion but it doesn't matter. It's going to be empty anyway.

NFTA has several stops in the city, one of the busiest being on Portage Road, where the Route 40 line between Niagara Falls and downtown Buffalo attracts many riders. NFTA has been in the location for many years, why would they want to move?

U.S. Customs has its offices on Rainbow Boulevard at Third Street, near the foot of the Rainbow Bridge. This only makes sense, because as many as 5 million people cross the border using the Rainbow Bridge every year.

The number of train passengers coming in from Canada is fewer than 10 a day, well under 5,000 a year. Why would the feds want to establish a major presence there?

As for the restaurants and retail shops, they will only be interested in coming once it is demonstrated that the facility can attract enough traffic to make their operations profitable.

And thus far, there is nothing to generate any traffic at all.

Niagara Falls is one of the poorest performing train destinations in the state garnering only 32,000 riders per year coming and going.

That translates to about 40 passengers going each way per day.

Nowhere else does this translate into the need for a mammoth train station.

The new train station is doomed to be empty most of the time.

The project was evidently developer and engineer driven and Wendel Duscherer Engineers who designed the train station made millions in fees.

Dyster is a close friend of Dave Duscherer and the new train station might be called an elegant gift from one friend to another.

For years, Dyster has persuaded federal funding agencies, the local media and the voters of Niagara Falls with his “vision” of a new train station here.

When it came time to deliver, what the city got was a big, empty \$44 million building located in a dodgy part of town.

The train station to nowhere.

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# Chinese Ash Borer Poses Threat to Forests in Erie, Niagara Counties

## Mike Hudson

While cheap electronics, clothes and other goods come into this country in huge quantities from China every day, the emerald ash borer is the kind of Chinese import we don't need.

The small, metallic-looking green beetle – about the size of a grain of rice – previously unknown in North America, emigrated sometime around the turn of the century, as larvae burrowed into ash wood the Chinese used to make shipping pallets for auto parts heading to Detroit.

They spread rapidly, and now pose a threat to every one of the 90 million ash trees here in New York, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation. In Erie County, one out of every five trees is an ash.

“Every ash will be affected,” said David Paradowski, regional forester at the DEC. “There is no escaping it. If you want to save your tree you must treat it. You'll need to spend money every two years for the life of the tree.”

Most trees die within two to four years of becoming infested. The emerald ash borer



The emerald ash borer, currently decimating ash trees in forests in Erie, Niagara and Cattaraugus counties here, has caused more than a billion dollars in damage nationally since it was first discovered in 2002. Thank our friends in China, and the near total lack of regulation over what they import into our country.



is responsible for the destruction of over 50 million ash trees in the U.S. since its discovery in Michigan. The economic

loss is incalculable.

“It can be in the tree and the tree won't



Emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is an exotic, invasive, wood-boring insect that infests and kills native North American ash trees, both in forests and landscape plantings. Just like the Dutch elm disease that killed our native American elm trees, emerald ash borer (EAB) is capable of eliminating all ash trees from our forests and cities. This makes it one of the most serious environmental threats now facing North American forests.

show anything until it is dead,” Paradowski said. “It's not like storm damage.”

First reported in Randolph, in Cattaraugus County about 50 miles south of Buffalo, the borer had made its way to Erie County, specifically Lancaster, by 2011. By 2014, ash trees were dying at an alarming rate in the Niagara Frontier.

The impact on the ash has been compared to the effects of chestnut blight and Dutch Elm disease, which devastated forests in the 20th Century.

The DEC designated much of Erie and Niagara counties as a severe risk area, and has imposed a quarantine on the movement of firewood and the disposal of infected trees and their byproducts. Because the borer does not travel far on its own, limiting movement of infested material will slow its spread, officials said.

For both the DEC and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the biggest problem in dealing with the emerald ash borer has been that no research had been done on them prior to their introduction to North America. The Chinese are lackadaisical when it comes to

environmental concerns, which is one of the reasons they are able to sell their goods so cheaply here.

As it stands now, the only way for owners of ash trees can prevent them from falling victim to the ash borer is the use of pesticides. These can be administered with a variety of methods, but the DEC recommends tree injection as the safest for delivering pesticide.

It is also the most expensive. On average, injection treatments can run from \$100 to \$350, depending on tree size. As a rule, an infested ash tree with a minimum of 30 percent of its canopy remaining has a good chance of survival if treated. The treatments need to be repeated every two years for the life of the tree.

Spraying and putting pesticides in the ground around the trees roots are less expensive, but have a greater impact on air and groundwater.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has even turned to biocontrol to stop the borer by releasing predatory wasps in Randolph, the Hudson Valley and also the Lancaster-Cheektowaga area.

Ash, along with hickory, is one of the most commonly used hardwoods for tool handles in North America—particularly in shovels and hammers where toughness and impact resistance is important. It is also the wood used to make Major League baseball bats, and the people at Louisville Slugger are taking the potential extinction of the North American ash forests so seriously they've been experimenting with various other woods.

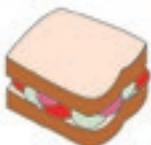
The wood is also popular for kitchen cabinets, but three of its uses are particularly dear in Western New York – White ash is used to make hockey and lacrosse sticks, and black ash is used by Seneca artists to make the beautiful baskets sought after by collectors around the world.

To protect your ash trees, contact the DEC @ 866- 640-0652.

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5/19/16, 5/26/16, 6/2/16, 6/9/16, 6/16/16, 6/23/16

# At Devil's Hole: We Don't Need No Stinking Historic Preservation!

## Mike Hudson

Ask anyone who's been there. The Custer Battlefield National Monument is a haunting and sacred place. The breeze blows through the long prairie grass as visitors wander among the scattered small markers placed following the June 25, 1876 fight, each marking the spot where a trooper fell and was buried.

Later, the bodies were exhumed and placed beneath a monument at the crest of the hill there, but the markers were left in place, testimony to the confusion and panic that set in once Gen. George Armstrong Custer and his men realized they were facing not just the guard of an isolated Indian encampment, but a fighting force that outnumbered them by 10 to one.

The Gettysburg battlefield in Pennsylvania has been similarly preserved, though the grass is green and there are trees when it's not covered in snow. You can't stand on that ground and not think of Abraham Lincoln and the ultimate sacrifice made by more than 8,000 Union and Confederate soldiers for what they believed in.

Let your mind wander a bit and you can

almost hear the screaming, feel the sweat and mortal fear of the combatants.

The Bunker Hill Monument in Boston, commemorating the first battle of the Revolutionary War, and the Perry Victory Memorial at Put-in-Bay, Ohio, celebrating the decisive Battle of Lake Erie in the War of 1812, are similarly reverential, homages to the brave men who fought and died there.

We have our own battlefield right here in Niagara Falls, up in the DeVeaux section. It sits on a 42-acre preserve owned by the New York State Parks Commission.

The Battle of Devil's Hole, fought on Sept. 14, 1763, was the largest fought during what is known as Pontiac's Rebellion, an Indian uprising that engulfed the frontier of Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York in full blown warfare.

More than 100 pioneers and British soldiers were killed. Casualties among the Seneca attackers are not known.

Whole books have been written about the battle, and accounts of it appear in every important history of the colonial era in North America.

And what did the Parks Commission decide to do with this hallowed ground?



Hallowed ground? The battlefield at Devil's Hole State Park is now a parking lot for tourists. No monument exists to commemorate the more than 100 men who died there.

Pave over it so tourists could park there. There is no monument to commemorate the battle, and no mention of it on the Parks Commission website describing Devil's Hole.

"Devil's Hole State Park overlooks the Devil's Hole Rapids," the website states. "The park has picnic areas, scenic overlooks and hiking trails, and is one of the more popular spots for fishing. A stone staircase leads down to the base of the gorge and the Devil's Hole Trail, which offers spectacular views of the rapids and gorge rock layers."

The memories of the valiant command of Lt. George Campbell and his detachment of

the 80th Regiment of Light Armed Foot have been subsumed for the benefit of modern day picnickers.

Campbell and his 81 redcoats were ambushed by more than 300 Seneca warriors under the command of Farmer's Brother enroute to the scene of a civilian wagon train massacre perpetrated by the Seneca earlier in the day. They never stood a chance.

Likewise, they never stood a chance with the New York Parks Commission, which poured hot asphalt over the earth that once soaked in their blood.

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# “Independence Day: Resurgence” May Succeed Without the Critics this Summer

## Mike Hudson

For whatever reason, 20th Century Fox has decided to launch its’ entry into the summer blockbuster sweepstakes – “Independence Day: Resurgence” – without screening it for critics in advance and with a mostly on-line and in-theater promotional campaign that has been unimpressive, to say the least.

That’s usually a very bad sign.

It’s been 20 years since the original “Independence Day” largely transformed the way we look at summer action adventure sci-fi movies, and the intervening decades have not been particularly kind to the stars. Jeff Goldblum, who was edgy and funny and off the wall in the original, now looks as old as his father, played by Judd Hirsch, who remarkably made it back for the sequel.

A huge, gaping hole has been left by the refusal of Goldblum’s co-star in the original, Will Smith, to do the sequel. Roland Emmerich, who directed both films, told the London Daily Mirror that he felt “half hearted” about the new movie because of Smith’s refusal.

“That’s the point where I thought, let’s not do this movie,” he said. “Friends said I

should carry on, that the ideas were really great, but I carried on in a half-hearted way.”

But there was a lot of money to be made. Fox had budgeted \$200 million for the sequel, and there are easier things to walk away from. Emmerich persevered, rewriting the script to feature an army of orphans who lost their parents in the original alien invasion depicted in the first movie.

The battle to save the planet from the alien invaders proceeds apace.

As with Goldblum, the 20-years that have passed have not been particularly kind to Emmerich, who directed a string of turkeys including “10,000 BC,” “2012” and “White House Down.”

So we’re left with the biggest star of the ensemble cast refusing to do the picture, a half hearted director, a last minute script rewrite and \$200 million of Rupert Murdoch’s money.

Did I hear somebody say, “Hooray for Hollywood”?

If the movie was good, delivering the kind of action, adventure and laughs that the first one did, Fox would want everyone to know about it. The studio would have screened it last week, and Goldblum, Emmer-



Brent Spiner reprises his role as the crazy Dr. Brakish Okun, premiering at a multiplex theater near you this weekend. Dr. Okun, from the first “Independence Day,” was killed off. But they’ve brought him back, saying he’d spent the past 20 years in a coma.

ich and other cast members would be making the talk show rounds relentlessly to pump it up.

They’re not, and while the movie may make back what was spent on it – both the

Johnny Depp atrocity “Alice Through the Looking Glass” and the Ellen DeGeneres cartoon “Finding Dory” have managed it – chances are that opening weekend audiences will be disappointed.

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# No Sign Yet of Major Groundbreaking Ceremony for Hamister Hotel

**Tony Farina**

It all seems so long ago that the state and the administration of Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster announced with great fanfare that the Hamister Group based in Buffalo had been selected for a \$25.3 million downtown development project at 310 Rainbow Blvd. that would include an upscale hotel, apartment and retail complex just minutes from the world wonder.

“I think this is just the beginning for downtown Niagara Falls,” said Dyster in February of 2012 shortly after Hamister was awarded the rights to develop the prime parcel over six other bidders in a process that was held mostly behind closed doors. Now, here we are more than four years later and despite the recent announcement that Hamister had finally secured the financing to build a scaled-down Hyatt Place hotel after years of delay, there is not much activity at the site and no announcement has been made of a formal groundbreaking.

Just for the record, Mark Hamister said back in 2013-- after a hesitant city council was politically strong-armed into approving the project--that he expected a formal groundbreaking in the second half of 2014. He apparently made that lame forecast even though he didn't have the financing to do anything as we now know because according to the governor

the financing was finally cobbled together just a few weeks ago, and according to the calendar it is now 2016. And of course the grand plan for the site has been scaled back although the cost has gone up to more than \$35 million with nearly a quarter of that number on the backs of taxpayers in the form of a state grant and tax breaks.

Hamister said earlier this month after it was finally announced the financing was in place that there would be a formal groundbreaking ceremony later in the month, but there's no sign that anything is planned.

“There was some talk [of a groundbreaking], but it seems to have slowed down,” said Council President Andrew Touma on Wednesday. “But my hope is they get started and keep going and get it built.” It would appear that having a few workers on site may have kept in place the Hamister Group's building permit which was due to expire this week, but there's certainly no sign that anything too serious is underway at this point.

It is probably fair comment to say the air has been let out of the Hamister balloon because of all the delays and false starts and most people probably have lost interest in what was supposed to be the project that kick-starts a downtown development revival. More than three years after the council approval and more than four years after the announcement that

Hamister had won the bid, there is nothing at 310 Rainbow Blvd., and my guess is that most people feel like Touma and simply hope something gets done, even if it is not the do-or-die project that will save downtown as promised and in its new version will only create a handful of jobs.

Of course the mayor and state officials could still find the courage to get out there and have a ribbon-cutting ceremony, but maybe they are still not sure Hamister is really going to build anything, and so they are holding back, hoping, like Touma, that something does get built at some point in the future and there's no reason to get out there and answer questions about why the project has taken so long after all that incredible hype, especially since no serious work seems to be taking place.

I guess we'll just have to wait and see what happens at 310 Rainbow Blvd. like everyone else since the key players are sticking to the script of keeping the public in the dark



Not much activity at Hamister hotel site...officials mum so far on formal groundbreaking

about how their tax dollars are being spent.

We still don't know how Hamister closed his funding gap and whether the state has coughed up even more money to avoid further embarrassing delays. And the truth is we may never know. And perhaps the biggest question of all is how did the state award this project to the politically-connected Hamister in the first place without knowing if he had the financing in place to do the job? I guess you just have to know how to play the game, and Hamister apparently did. And here we are four years later and the taxpayers are out on a limb on a project that can't seem to get off the ground.

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# Old Stone Chimney Moved and Dedicated Seems a Little Crooked

Mike Hudson



An early 19th Century print of the Old Stone Chimney, executed nearly two centuries before it got crooked up.

*There was a crooked mayor,  
And he had a crooked town.  
It had a crooked chimney and....*

Oh, sorry. Just thinking to myself.

They moved the Old Stone Chimney from its spot at Porter Park downtown out to LaSalle off the former Robert Moses Parkway, much closer to where it was built in the first

place, by the French soldier and Indian agent Daniel de Joncaire way back in 1750.

It was officially dedicated in its new location Monday, by Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and others. The New York State Power Authority paid around \$1.4 million to have the 60 ton, 31-foot tall piece of history moved.

“I am noticing it,” Rob Panepinto, the NYPA Cultural Resources Specialist said. “Although I’m not sure if it’s crooked or a parallax effect.”

It’s definitely crooked. You just have to look at a picture of it before it was moved. There’s an iron fence around it now, benches, signage, a new road off the former Robert Moses and a parking lot big enough to hold 10 midsized cars.

The cannons that used to guard it at Porter Park are nowhere in evidence. When you look at it now, the first thing you notice – aside from the fact that the top is crooked – is that, across the mighty Niagara River behind it, the skyline of the bustling city of Niagara Falls, Ont., serves as the backdrop.

In case anyone was wondering who won the War of 1812.

When the project was begun in December, local history buffs questioned why a number of dumpsters at the Porter Park site appeared to be filled with rocks and cement that were indistinguishable from the chimney’s construction material. Panepinto said it was “fill rock” from the center of the chimney helped used to support it and that it had to be broken up to free the rest of the stones. Historically it was not significant, he said.

This was the third move for what is considered one of the oldest pieces of architecture existing in Western New York. The only structure that predates it is the French Castle at Fort Niagara, which was built in 1726.



The Old Stone Chimney before it was moved. Nothing crooked about it.

The chimney was moved from its original location at the site of Joncaire’s Fort Petite Niagara – near Cayuga Island – in 1902 so that the Niagara Falls Power Co., precursor to NYPA, could expand its facilities. At that time, local historian Thomas Vincent Welsh penned a Tin Pan Alley song about it.

*“Long may the old stone chimney stand,  
Upon Niagara’s shore;  
The sons of France and Britain’s band,  
They battle there no more;  
The pioneers, and sweethearts dear,  
Are sleepin on the hill,  
Where the stone chimney stands,  
In the evening gray and still,”* it went.

Like many novelty songs then and now, “The Old Stone Chimney” became a minor hit and Welsh, who happened to be a close personal friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, pulled strings and led the fight for the structure’s preservation.

It stayed there for 40 years. After Walsh’s death, Carborundum decided it needed to expand, and the chimney was moved to Porter Park, only to be undermined by the construction of the Robert Moses Parkway in 1962.

The historical treasure languished and deteriorated, falling into further disrepair with each passing year given that no governmental entity was prepared to take responsibility for maintaining it.

Interestingly, like Fort Niagara itself, the flags of France, Great Britain and the United States all once flew over the old chimney and the various forts and residences that employed it.

Fort Petite Niagara was burned by the French when they left the Niagara Frontier after losing the French and Indian war to the British, but the chimney survived the fire. The British, never ones to look a gift horse in the mouth, built Fort Schlosser around the chimney at the same location in 1760.

During the War of 1812, the Americans occupied the fort, but it was captured and again burned by the British and their Indian allies the following year.

After the war, the Porter family built a private residence at the location, again using



NYPA spent \$1.4 million to move the Old Stone Chimney to its new location at the “spoils pile” in Niagara Falls off the Niagara Scenic Parkway. It’s kind of crooked but, hey, this is Niagara Falls!

the chimney. That structure was torn down when the chimney was first moved in 1902.

The secret to the Old Stone Chimney’s longevity seems to be its usefulness. One could build a house around it today and want only for firewood to make it through next winter.

Mayor Dyster has recently built a \$44 million train station that will undoubtedly be an unpleasant memory a century from now, while the Old Stone Chimney will remain standing proud, if a bit crooked.

“There are a whole lot of interesting things that have happened here in Niagara Falls and here in Western New York,” Dyster said. “The problem is we’ve had so much history that the latest wave of history tends to sweep aside all traces of the previous wave of history.”

State Assemblyman John Ceretto, who had as little to do with the chimney relocation project as Dyster, groped similarly for something to say.

“We need little pockets of areas where people can pull off, view our waterfront, the beautiful Niagara River and the rapids downriver, and we need it in an area where you can talk about our history and people can pull off and see it,” he asserted. “This represents one of those things that makes a parkway scenic.”

Local historian Paul Gromosiak, who has long advocated for the preservation of the chimney, was wheeled out to deliver his remarks.

“We have so many things that have happened here that have not happened any place else on Earth,” he said. “We stand out, not just with the water going over the falls but with our history, the people that came here and what they did.”

The Old Stone Chimney stands today as a reminder of what was, a glorious past carved out by bold men from an unforgiving frontier.

The fact that it is now kind of crooked serves to remind us of our most recent history.

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<p><b>RAIN</b></p> <p>In the event that the festival is officially cancelled due to inclement weather, all application fees will be returned within 14 days.</p> <p><b>AWARDS</b></p> <p>A crown, and pendant medallion will be given to the winner in each category. There will be 2 runners up in each category and each will receive a trophy.</p> <p><b>JUDGING</b></p> <p>Contestants will be judged on-stage in their "Sunday best." There are no dressing or changing facilities available. Contestants should arrive ready to go on stage. All contestants three and older will be asked simple questions by the MC at the microphone. International costumes are optional, but would add to the festival theme.</p>																				

# Orlando Shooting: The Cold, Cold Monster Strikes Again

**Jim Ostrowski**

I could write a book about the Orlando shooting, its antecedents and its exploitation by the Progressive State of America. Alas, that won't be necessary. If you understand two key concepts, you can unravel the whole puzzle very quickly. If you don't understand them, you will be quickly swept out to sea by a progressive rip tide, not ever knowing what hit you.

First, government creates its own demand. Second, once you understand what progressivism is, you then immediately understand how pros robotically react to each new crisis.

The government is perhaps the least understood institution because so far as we are led to believe, it always existed, must always exist and no alternative to it can possibly be imagined. Further, the words used to describe it and what it does do not remotely convey the true facts. Because the state's existence is never questioned anymore than we question the existence of air, water or soil, the plethora of problems caused by the state are rarely if ever recognized, let alone delineated and evaluated. We don't even have a concept or a word for them, an oversight I hope to cure in my next book.

Presently, the state, especially "our" own, has the world at each other's throats. The state, by its very nature, is continually at war with the innate desire of individuals to do what they wish with what they own: liberty! This creates continual conflict, micro and macro, creates resentments and hostilities, reduces wealth, kills dreams and generates an endless supply of problems that would not otherwise exist. All that the state does creates winners and losers which are often grouped along racial, ethnic or religious lines. Accordingly, because of the state, different groups begin to view other groups as enemies or potential enemies. The state is the reason we cannot "all get along." The brute force approach of the state in all it does makes peaceful, voluntary coexistence among disparate groups impossible.

The American State has been at war with or monkeying around with the greater Middle East for about 100 years, not coincidentally, co-extensive with the era of progressivism, the belief that violent state action can cure

all human problems. The Progressive State of America is currently at war with or in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. ISIS is a by-product of the Iraq War of 2003 and the Libyan intervention of 2011. Barack Obama has been the prime mover behind these wars which have killed tens of thousands and created thousands of terrorists bent on retaliation of the kind George Washington warned us about in his Farewell address.

Last week, Omar Mateen, a son of Afghanistan, speaking in Arabic, explained his terrorist attack in Orlando as follows:

"In the name of God the Merciful, the beneficial [said in Arabic]. Praise be to God, and prayers as well as peace be upon the prophet of God [said in Arabic]. I let you know, I'm in Orlando and I did the shootings. I pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State. . . ."

ISIS is calling Mateen an "Islamic State fighter." On Facebook, Mateen wrote:

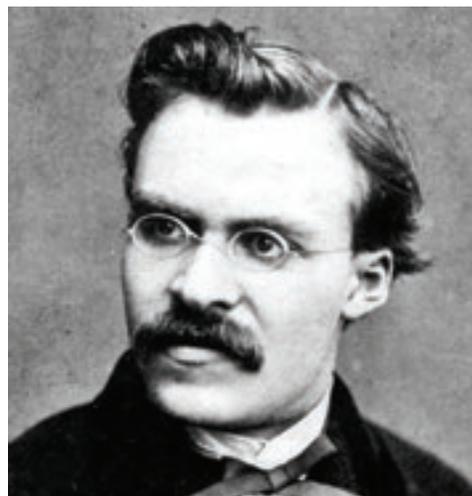
"I pledge my alliance to (ISIS leader) abu bakr al Baghdadi . . . may Allah accept me,"

"The real muslims will never accept the filthy ways of the west . . . You kill innocent women and children by doing us airstrikes.. now taste the Islamic state vengeance." [1]

While the US is out and about in the world, manufacturing terrorists, it is busy at home making it more difficult for us to protect ourselves, for example, by making bars into legal gun-free zones. Of course, as the victims found out, bars aren't actually gun-free. The state also extracts funds from us and promises police protection but in Orlando, the police arrived just in time to draw chalk lines around the bodies. They are often "crime historians" at such events in the words of Professor Thomas DiLorenzo.

Thus, based on what we know now, in this instance, the state pointlessly manufactured enemies for ordinary Americans, helped disarm them, and then failed to protect them as it promised to do. Alas, government creates its own demand. The sociopaths immediately responded to their failure in Orlando by promising to solve the problems they created by of course, grabbing more and more power and promising to use force against millions of peaceful and lawful Americans who own rifles.

Where does progressivism enter the picture? Progressivism is a form of self-help



Friedrich Nietzsche: Socialism is the fantastic younger brother of despotism, which it wants to inherit. Socialism wants to have the fullness of state force which before only existed in despotism. . . . However, it goes further than anything in the past because it aims at the formal destruction of the individual . . . who . . . can be used to improve communities by an expedient organ of government.

therapy whereby the patient prescribes himself the medication of more government force as the magical solution to whatever ails him. I have identified a formula for how progressive politicians and journalists respond to crises:

1. The notion that government action itself caused the problem is ignored.
2. Non-governmental scapegoats for problems are sought.
3. Non-governmental solutions to problems are not considered.
4. Only governmental solutions to problems, even problems caused by government itself, are considered.

Thus, with Orlando, the alleged need for stricter gun control was discussed within a few hours of the shooting and before the details of the attack were known. Private gun owners are ideal scapegoats for progressives as they are non-governmental entities. There was virtually no mention in the mainstream media of how various government policies may have caused or contributed to the mass shooting, for example, American intervention in the Middle East for the last 100 years. Nor was there any real discussion of non-governmental solutions such as arming more citizens with handguns. Apparently, few of the people inside the bar were armed, a fact the shooter presumably counted on.

So far, the state and the sociopaths who run it have escaped all responsibility for their contribution to the tragedy in Orlando. On the contrary, they openly and brazenly blame those who played no role in the shooting at all, for the purpose of seizing ever more power and money from their victims.

I will let Nietzsche have the final word on all this: "A state? What is that? Well! Open now your ears to me, for now I will speak to you about the death of peoples. State is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it lies; and this lie slips from its mouth: 'I, the state, am the people.'"

Jim Ostrowski is a trial and appellate lawyer in Buffalo, NY. He is CEO of Libertymovement.org and author of several books including *Progressivism: A Primer on the Idea Destroying America*.

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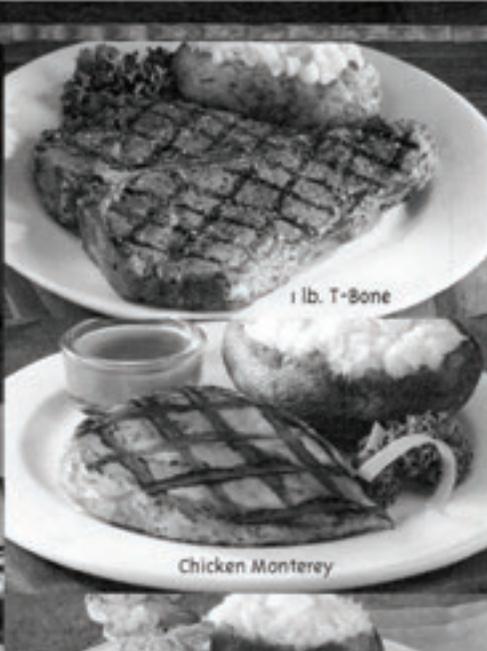
Friedrich Nietzsche

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# Signs Of The Times: Rough Road Signs are Easier to Install Than Fixing Rough Roads

## Frank Parlato

Despite having an unprecedented \$180 million in casino revenue to spend, the administration of Mayor Paul Dyster has hardly kept up with paving the rough roads in this dwindling city of now about 40,000 people.

Niagara Falls is unhappily officially the highest taxed city in New York State and New York State is the highest taxed state in America making the Falls a wonder of the nation, if not the world.

On top of that, it has the greatest natural hydro power in the world and is a small city that gets eight million tourists a year - all with money in their pockets - and somehow manages to be broke - again qualifying it as a world wonder.

Despite the scores of millions Mayor Paul Dyster has had at his disposal over the last eight years of casino cash he has not been able to fix the roads very well here as anybody who drives around here can easily verify.

While he may spend millions on Hard Rock concerts, parties and events on Old Falls St, and giveaways on Third Street to campaign contributors, he - rather than fix the rough roads- he puts up signs warning motorists that there are rough roads ahead.

One would think that in the time that it



takes to make the sign and installed it you might just fix the rough road instead.

But at least he has the grace to warn motorists of the rough road ahead even if he can't get around to fixing it.

By the way these photos are of Portage Road near Pine - one of the main thoroughfares of the city.



## "THANK YOU"

On behalf of my family and the 37 local residents who inquired about potential employment at my proposed franchise restaurant located across from the Seneca Niagara Casino I wish to thank the following City of Niagara Falls officials:

First:  
I wish to thank Mayor Paul Dyster for losing interest in my project right after your re-election

Second:  
Anthony Vilaro, City of Niagara Falls "HEAD" Director of Business Development, for your temper tantrums over the phone and via email;



Third:  
Seth Piccirillo, Director of Community Development, for refusing to answer one simple question, in writing, "What is the status of my facade grant?"

And a very special thank you to Richard "Dicky" Zucco Community Developments only "cubicle" attorney, for dragging your feet and denying development and jobs in the blighted Niagara Street area.



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## DON'T BARREL THROUGH WORK ZONES

Roadway work zones are hazardous both to motorists who drive through the complex array of signs, barrels, and lane changes and for workers who build, repair and maintain our Nation's streets, bridges and highways. In 2012 there were 609 fatalities in construction and maintenance work zones. Motorists and occupants accounted for almost 80% of deaths but 130 worker fatalities were reported to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Transportation incidents were responsible for 100 worker fatalities with 66 of them involving a worker on foot being struck by a vehicle.

Laborers employed in highway work zones face hazards that include motor vehicles speeding by at 55 to 75 miles per hour, just inches from their work space. The most effective method to combat work zone related hazards is through engineering controls such as training, personal protective equipment, speed reduction, barriers and lighting. Workers in construction, maintenance and utility work zones should receive site specific training regarding all hazards including being struck by motorists and moving construction equipment.

We all need to appreciate the complexities of work zones and the need for awareness and planning on the part of everyone affected by work zones – DOTs, road workers, drivers, bicyclists, motorcycles, pedestrians, emergency response, law enforcement, utility workers.

Road construction season is upon us, so drivers are reminded to: reduce speeds in work zones, be alert for traffic lanes that may change, watch for people and vehicles working on or near the road, obey all orange warning signs, be prepared to obey the flagger's directions, and expect delays. Work zones are not there to personally inconvenience you. They are necessary to improve the roads for everyone. Support the men and women working to improve your highways, roadways and streets. These workers could be your family, friends or the neighbor down the street. Help us encourage everyone to pay attention in work zones and help save lives. We urge our NYS DOT officials to include a section on their website to promote this important message throughout the year.

## Bob Dylan at Artpark? What could you possibly have better to do?

### Mike Hudson

Bob Dylan doesn't have to tour, he doesn't have to play shows. He's got nothing to prove. If, at the age of 75, that's what he chooses to do, and clearly he does, it's because he loves it.

He'll be at Artpark up in Lewiston a week from today, on Thursday, June 30, and if you need a newspaper article to suggest you go see him you haven't been paying much attention.

Dylan defines the word "rock star" in the United States and makes most of the fey British competition look as weak as they are. He doesn't prance like Jagger, never had much of a voice to begin with and thus has been spared Robert Plant's sad ending and wasn't ever actually what you might call "pretty," as have been so many male rockers on both sides of the Atlantic.

What Dylan has been and always will be is an icon, in the same sense as the hero of his youth, Woody Guthrie, and a poet of the downtrodden, the brokenhearted and the open road.

His career has been full of steps that might have looked false when he made them. Booed badly as the headline act at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965 for using a backup band the played electric guitars, his near fatal motorcycle accident the next year, his apparently now resolved problems with booze and dope and the probably more welcome amorous difficulties engendered by a long string of ladyloves it would take a book to simply enumerate, Dylan has continued to emerge triumphant.

Dylan played the Red Rocks Amphitheater in Colorado on Father's Day. Opening was Mavis Staples, the Chicago R&B singer who will open for him in Buffalo, and the audience was enamored. He's doing standards now, Sinatra and others, and wearing loose white striped tuxedo pants instead of the old tight blue jeans, but the one octave voice he's pretty much always had is still there.

Since the turn of the century, the carpers have complained that Dylan, sick and tired of sticking to the original arrangements and treatments of classics like "she Belongs to Me" and "Like a Rolling Stone," simply went too far afield. They couldn't recognize their favorite songs from the versions



Bob Dylan played to a sold out audience at Red Rocks Colorado on Father's Day. Next Thursday, he will play to a sold out audience at Artpark. It will be without question the most important June 30 show to take place on the Niagara Frontier.

they first heard on the radio a half century ago.

Dylan apparently gave this some thought, and has gone back to the old arrangements. But it remains clear that he's still playing for an audience of one – Bob Dylan.

If you really need a reason to go see Bob Dylan, what can I say?

If you haven't seen him before, it's the chance to be in the same room with a cat – like the late great Muhammed Ali – whose legend will be as enduring in American history as that of Niagara Falls.

He's an American icon. Louis Armstrong and Billie Holliday, Francis Albert Sinatra and Elvis Presley all rolled into one. His songs will live on long after you and everyone you know are dead.

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# Your Weekly Horoscope

By Jean Topascani



**Aries: (March 21 - April 19)**

Well . . ." begins your mother as she attempts to answer your question, amid fuzzy memories of a balmy night in Cuba, several empty bottles of pineapple rum lying around the bed she had shared with the Captain accompanied by the worst headache she could remember, "I wouldn't use the word 'accident.'.... Mon. Am: Start taking non-drowsy antihistamines and change your name to Brian.



**Taurus: (April 20 - May 20)**

Your personality is like chocolate – not the smoky, tangy, exquisitely rich and full-bodied type, but the over-sweet, tooth-cracking, factory-processed, made-with-vegetable-oil kind that leaves one with diabetes and an aneurysm the size of a grape. "I'm nothing without you," your lover tells you, which is true on many levels, but primarily because your lover is an imaginary friend.



**Gemini: (May 21 - June 20)**

You are a stolid person, prone to excessive and extended bursts of emotionlessness; but when you love, you love with the passion of a dog itching its face against the grain of a firm pile carpet. Weds: You think of your ex and smile--with any luck the tide will carry her body out to deeper water by nightfall.



**Cancer: (June 21 - July 22)**

You kiss not in a lingering manner as a connoisseur might sip a glass of '82 La Pin, but open-mouthed and desperate, like a hobo wrapping his mouth around a bottle of Strawberry Ripple in the alley behind the 7-11. Life on the home front has never been more serene since you left.



**Leo: (July 23 - August 22)**

You are like a well-watered topiary: lush, widespread, and in need of a good pruning. You and your lovers' lips latch to each other like two coital snails entwined, with much slime and suction, frothing as if someone had just poured salt on them. Beware of arguments at home boiling over and dividing the house as food levels run low. Wed. PM: Supervisor notices embroidered bathroom curtains missing.



**Virgo: (August 23 - September 22)**

Chiron in retrograde signals fame when your record low IQ test score is used to prove accuracy of IQ testing and couples your name forever with landmark study. A prospective employer, during the course of a job interview, will ask what you believe to be your worst quality, a question which inexorably leads to his suicide three days later. You excel at social events. Sun AM: Good time to buy breath mints wholesale.



**Libra: (September 23 - October 22)**

Your new lovers' passionate kisses will send a warm shiver down your tender spine and make the coarse hair on your knuckles erect. You are unable to select a bedspread, due to your raging ennui; however, you are able to purchase an assault rifle, which is probably why your lover left you, although it may have been the ferrets.



**Scorpio: (October 23 - November 21)**

Five week old puppy arrives at doorstep. You feed, nurture and get veterinary care. In return, it gives you unconditional love until it dies three days later. Mars in 8th house prompts boring discussion. Your reference to boss' wife as "deer face" make boss question your powers of observation since he calls her "mule face." Go to Las Vegas and drink smoothies.



**Sagittarius: (November 22 - December 21)**

As he caresses your hair, cheek, forehead, chin, collarbone, shoulder, upper arm, and stomach, you realize that your decision to take Octoman as a lover is the correct one. The stars indicate you will find a young, vibrant, attractive person, with similar interests, a fun, laughing, outgoing person who loves the outdoors, who is allergic to you. A person more repulsive than you will become an avid admirer.



**Capricorn: (December 22 - January 19)**

It will be debatable what you will enjoy most about Friday night – the delicious dinner, the marvelous movie, or the satisfying sex – but one thing is clear and that is that you hope you won't be doing it alone again next time. Weds.: Venus creates joy with cute Capricorn. Your resolve to wait until you are married is very creditable.



**Aquarius: (January 20 - February 18)**

Your mother died when you were nine, your father when you were twelve, which left you somewhat cold, and hardened and unable to love, though you are partial to Nando's Portuguese style prawns. Neptune semi-square with Pluto offers romance with a sporting twist. You will fall in love with someone whose head is like a football.



**Pisces: (February 19 - March 20)**

You look like a pizza that relies more on the quality of the sauce than the amount of cheese. Every once in a while you feel the inconceivable, unintelligible force of loneliness come down from the far reaches of the cold, dark universe and crush you in a manner that leaves you pondering the significance of your sad, meandering existence in the face of this meaningless mass of nothing we call life, but not today, because today is Taco Tuesday.

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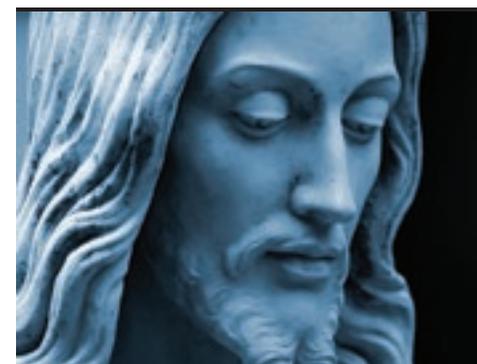


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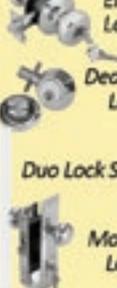


"Such was the will of the Father that his Son, blessed and glorious, whom he gave to us, and who was born for us, should by his own blood, sacrifice, and oblation, offer himself on the altar of the cross, not for himself, by whom "all things were made," but for our sins, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps."

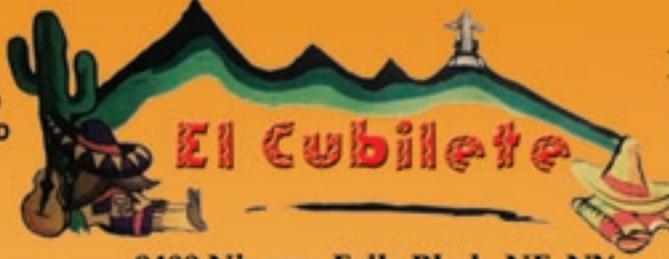
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- Tractor Trailer Accident - \$10.5 Million - Recovery - Unsafe Load of Steel Coils
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