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# THE NIAGARA REPORTER

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APRIL 04, 2018 - APRIL 10, 2018

VOL. 18, NO. 47

FREE

## Niagara Falls Fire Hydrants Near 100% Operational

First Time in almost 40 years All Hydrants Expected to Work

By: Frank Parlato

There is little doubt that changes are occurring rather rapidly at the Niagara Falls Water Board.

Ever since Nick Forster and Dan O'Callaghan became board members in 2017 things are happening fast. O'Callaghan is chairman of the Water Board. Forster- a member of the five

person Water Board - is also chairman of the Niagara County Democratic Party.

Some thought when he was first appointed by the Niagara Falls City Council that his was a purely political appointment. In this case those

who thought so appear to be wrong.

Putting politics aside - since we all drink water - regardless of party affiliation - Forster and O'Callaghan have taken a novel approach to being a board member,



Instillation of a fire hydrant.

(Cont. on pg. 6)

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## Parlato Credited with Breaking Sex Cult Story

By: Nicholas D. D'Angelo

Whistleblower Frank Parlato is credited by international news outlets, including the New York Times, NY Post, Fox News, Heavy.com, and others with breaking the story, and bringing to light through his publications which include Frank-report.com, Artvoice, and the Niagara Reporter, of the human branding, sex trafficking, forced labor and other crimes perpetrated by Keith Raniere and members of his notorious sex-slave cult.

(Cont. on pgs. 2 & 3)

## TOP STORIES

**-Tow Truck Hijack: Niagara Falls Looks to Raise Rates Tow Truck Companies Pay to City** Pgs. 6-7

**-One Niagara Welcome Center Dressing Up for Season** Pg. 8-9

**-Chris's Corner: Golf Balls, Pastry & Cops** Pg. 11

**-Restaurant Review: Romana's Pizza & Grill** Pg. 12

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# Parlato Credited with Breaking Raniere/Bronfman Sex Cult Criminal Organization

(Cont. from cover)

On March 26, 2018, the District Court for the Eastern District of New York unsealed an affidavit and complaint when NXIVM, sex-slavery cult guru, Keith Raniere, was arrested in Mexico. Raniere is charged with felonies including sex trafficking, sex trafficking conspiracy, and conspiracy to commit forced labor.

International news outlets credited publisher Frank Parlato with breaking the story of human branding, sex trafficking, and the Bronfman heiresses' illicit funding and involvement in the multi-decade scheme of enslaving women, and using the courts to silence the victims.

Parlato first published reports in the Niagara Reporter, and on his blog, Frank-report.com, in June 2017, when he received reports from sex-cult members of being forcibly branded as part of initiation into the secret "sorority" DOS.

Inside Edition reported that Parlato "has worked for years to document the inner workings of the group, which purports

to be a self-help organization".

Heavy.com reported in October that "branding allegations published by the Times... first appeared online in June, when the anti-Raniere blog 'The Frank Report'" launched its miniseries on human branding."

Following Parlato's lead, mainstream media outlets have reported on "Smallville" actresses, Allison Mack and Kristin Kreuk's involvement in the sex-cult, with Fox News, New York Post noting Parlato breaking the story last June.

With Raniere in federal custody, the coverage has shifted to Parlato's predictions that Allison "Pimp" Mack, whom he has alleged since last summer was Raniere's second in command of the sex-slave cult, will be the next arrestee, reports The Sun and dozens of other media outlets.

Mirror.co.uk has styled Parlato a former "press officer," now reporting on Mack's and Kreuk's status in the cult to lure in young women. Presently, Raniere is reportedly en-route to the Eastern District of New York where a determination of



Photo of Frank Parlato, Jr. from a taping of Inside Edition.

his bail eligibility will be held. Raniere is currently in federal custody.

Prior to Raniere's arrest, the first mainstream coverage following Parlato's expose series of the illicit cult was by the New York Times, publishing an expose "Inside a Secretive Group Where Women are Branded," which described the cult, the human brandings, and, among other things, Sarah Edmondson's induction into DOS and how she was misled into receiving a brand.

The article further reported that many of Raniere's followers learned of DOS from Parlato's website, FrankReport.com.

Federal law enforcement in the Eastern District of New York appears to have taken its cue from Parlato's coverage of the cult via the New York Times, where FBI Special Agent Lever stated in his complaint against Raniere that several weeks after the New York Times publication in October 2017, the FBI began interviewing witnesses. The Albany Times Union also suggested that Parlato's raising the allegations about human branding piqued the Eastern District

DOJ's interest in the sex cult.

But the actual dissolution of the cult began before October 2017. Inside sources, consisting partly of scared and defected cult members, informed Parlato that beginning in June, when Parlato published news of the branding, and snowballing after the publication of the October 2017 New York Times Story, outer cult members began a mass exodus, ditching NXIVM and its subsidiary groups. FrankReport reported that the 2017 "V-Week," (an annual celebration of Raniere's birthday, who is called by members "The Vanguard," from which V-Week takes its name) had an exceptionally low attendance following Parlato's reports of human branding and the master-slave group. Victims of Raniere and the cult appeared on Dr. Oz in November.

On the show, Raniere's ex-girlfriend Toni Natalie explained the abuse she endured by Raniere, including being raped by him; cult expert and deprogrammer, Rick Ross, who was sued for years by the cult for publishing stories that were critical



Sketch of Keith Raniere appearing in court for his arraignment in Texas.

## NIAGARA



## REPORTER

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# Breaking Ranieri/Bronfman Sex Cult Cont.



Keith Ranieri in a police car when he was arrested in Mexico.

of the cult, and trying to deprogram a cult member at his parents' behest, told the audience about how the cult hired people to search Ross's garbage. By October, actress Catherine Oxenberg contributed to the public awareness of the sex-slave cult's crimes against humanity by sharing with People, and appearing on Megyn Kelly Today in an attempt to rescue her daughter, India Oxenberg. By December 15, 2017, ABC's 20/20 aired an hour-long special, detailing allegations against the cult, with extensive interviews of Sarah Edmondson.

While largely ignored before, victim and ex-girlfriend of Keith Ranieri, Toni Natalie, whom USA Today reports Ranieri has badgered and harassed with lawsuits, and a criminal indictment, since they broke up in 1999 is now being listened to

since Ranieri's arrest. Albany's WNYT reports that Natalie "says Ranieri uses the legal system as a stalking device. 'He almost waves them as flags, these possible lawsuits-- look what happens if you leave!' said Natalie." The "women that leave, look what happens to them."

Supporters of Ranieri have circulated a petition later in support of Ranieri, dated March 27, as shared with the Albany Times Union, stating "Sadly, we have seen justice corrupted by prejudice, lies and hate." Critics respond that the statement is ironic: justice has indeed been corrupted, but not against Ranieri, but by Ranieri and the Bronfman sisters over the course of multiple decades, where defectors and victims were sued (sometimes into bankruptcy), were the victims of bogus criminal complaints, and some were even indicted with resulting dismissals. The FBI alleges further that a search of Ranieri's Yahoo! Email account revealed that Clare Bronfman "orchestrated" sending "cease and desist" letters to DOS defectors, and that Clare Bronfman made multiple attempts to have criminal charges brought against Sarah Edmondson, who defected from the cult last year.

Ranieri and Bronfman have gone to great lengths to silence media critics, as well, intimidating members of the media through a state criminal complaint and subsequent federal civil litigation, including a questionable lawsuit predicated on unauthorized computer access gained from an ex-cult member. The civil litigation was brought against, among others, the Albany Times Union's James Odato and Suzanne Andrews, based on her freelance expose on



Allison Mack in Mexico chasing the police after Keith's arrest.

the Bronfmans in Vanity Fair. The lawsuit was purely retaliatory. Reported The Nation, Odato began reporting on NXIVM when he discovered the Bronfmans had donated large amounts of cash to then New York Senate majority leader, Joseph Bruno, how the Bronfman sisters funneled "a huge pile of" cash to Ranieri, writing over 35 articles about Ranieri and the cult.

After the stories ran, the Ranieri-Bronfman cult filed its suit to silence Odato, he went on leave. The civil lawsuit was ultimately dismissed in 2015. The companion state criminal case against co-defendants, including ex-girlfriends of Ranieri Toni Natalie and Barbara Bouchey, was also dismissed.

Ranieri and Bronfman employed a similar strategy in the case of Frank Parlato. Parlato was engaged by the Bronfmans and Ranieri in 2007 to rehabilitate their poor public image, and rebrand them as something other than a cult. In the course of his work, Parlato succeeded in securing the title to over \$26 million in real estate assets the not-too-business-savvy Bronfmans had allowed to be squandered in L.A. by Russian con artists, Yuri and Natalie Plyam. As an expression of gratitude, the Bronfmans, at Ranieri's behest, terminated Parlato, and demanded Parlato return any money received from the Bronfmans relative to the project, which Parlato refused to do. As soon as Parlato later helped the Bronfman sisters win a civil suit against the Russian conman who defrauded them, the Bronfmans filed a federal criminal complaint against Parlato.

Soon after that, and in signature fashion, the Bronfmans initiated a civil lawsuit, based on the same grounds, with the help

of Buffalo attorney, William F. Savino. Between the civil and criminal actions, Clare Bronfman committed perjury, between California, New York, and the Western District of New York. However, federal authorities in Buffalo, rather than investigating into allegations of the sex-cult's, and Bronfmans' criminal activities, and examine Bronfman's obvious perjury, they elected to act upon sex-cult-attorney Savino's allegations that Parlato defrauded the sex-cult heiresses. Sources suggest that Savino, (who like NXIVM's attorneys in the criminal case against Barbara Bouchey met dozens of times with the lead investigator and pressed the case), pressed the Parlato case by communicating regularly with the FBI, IRS, and infamous retired federal prosecutor, Anthony M. Bruce. Reported the Buffalo News in 2015, "[t]he indictment refers to the Bronfmans by the initials C.B. and S.B. and claims Parlato cheated them out of the \$1 million, an allegation that dates back to at least 2011 when the sisters filed a notice of claim against him." Sources report that Bruce informed a Parlato attorney that "while Savino doesn't run this [Federal] office, his clients [Bronfmans] want an indictment of [Parlato] soon." The federal criminal case in which the Bronfmans are alleged victims of Parlato is ongoing.

While it is difficult to know how many women could have been saved if New York State and Federal law enforcement in the Northern and Western Districts of New York had acted upon numerous complaints and tips provided years earlier, it is clear Parlato's unrelenting coverage of the sex-slave cult's inhumane practices led to the breakup of the cult, and the mainstream news coverage that led to Ranieri's arrest. Parlato continues to report on continuous developments of the criminal case involving Keith Ranieri, and the expected broadening of the investigation to include massive financial crimes perpetrated by the Bronfman sex-cult heiresses and Ranieri.



Keith fled the US and was seen walking in Monterrey, Mexico

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# Tow Truck Hijack: Niagara Falls Looks to Raise Rates Tow Truck Companies Pay to City

**Nicholas D. D'Angelo**

A business that normally goes unnoticed — tow truck operators in the City of Niagara Falls may soon experience some unwanted attention.

According to sources in City Hall, the Mayor's office proposed a mammoth fee increase for tow trucks operating within the city who wish to be on an authorized tow list that Niagara Falls Police Officers use when utilizing a tow company's services.

The fee for operators to be on the list in Niagara Falls is currently \$300 every other year, or \$150 per year, which mirrors the county rate.

"The rate hasn't gone up in over 10 years," said Niagara Falls City Councilman Ken Tompkins, "so the administration clearly sees an opportunity."

According to Councilman Tompkins, the initial proposal from the Mayor's office was to raise the fee to \$5,000.



"That didn't go very far," said Tompkins, saying that four of 5 councilmembers voted against the mayor's huge increase.

"The proposal at that amount was pulled, but now they are proposing \$2,500 and I'm trying to get them down to \$1,500."

When asked what the mentality would be behind raising it, Councilman Tompkins responded, "to cover costs for police to inspect the shop, vendors, and things like that."

Niagara Falls City Councilman Chris Voccio understands why such an increase might be necessary.

"We are in a pickle financially," said Councilman Voccio, "so we're going to have to make a lot of decisions like this. I would rather have user fees or fees for permits and things of that nature go up instead of property taxes increasing, which are already

too high."

"There are definitely people in the industry who said they would be happy with a \$5,000 fee because it would take some of the smaller guys off the list," said Councilman Tompkins. "On that same token though there are also people who we know want to get on the list that are willing to pay that kind of money."

As for the smaller towing companies, said Tompkins, "I definitely think it is a shot at the little guys. Regardless of whether it's \$2,500 or \$1,500, that's a big jump from \$150 a year."

Henry Walerowicz, who owns and operates Home Maintenance Enterprises, Inc., in Niagara Falls, and whose business offers towing as a service, is totally opposed to the idea.

"That's crazy," said Walerowicz. "This administration shouldn't be try-



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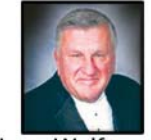
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## Tow Truck Cont.



Any increase would need to be approved by the Niagara Falls City Council

ing to make up for money they lost by taking it from small businesses operating in the city."

"It doesn't make sense," he said. "Niagara Falls Police do inspections all the time and give tickets for late inspections or expired registrations every day. I can see it doubling to \$300 a year, or even \$500, but not \$2,500."

Councilman Tompkins had an alternative idea for the city to explore instead.

"I would love to see us start storing cars at the DPW lot so that money goes to us," said Councilman Tompkins. "Buffalo does it. A lot of cities do it."

"Money is in the storage. The DPW lot is already fenced in and has 24-hour security, so there would hardly be any overhead costs."

Councilman Voccio sees similar increases happening in the future as

well.

"While I agree that a tenfold, or more than tenfold, fee increase is dramatic, there are probably a lot of other things that will come down the pipe that won't be very appetizing either," said Councilman Voccio.

"The people elected us to make some very difficult decisions and we need to be strong. If we do the right thing, we will put the city in a stronger and more financially solid position. But if we do the wrong thing and cave to various interest groups, then we're going to put the city in a worse financial position than it is now."

There will be a meeting at the end of this week between Council Chairman Andrew Touma, Councilman Tompkins, and local tow truck operators to discuss what would be fair for a fee increase.



## Registered Apprenticeship

The US and New York State Departments of Labor recognize and monitor registered skilled apprenticeship programs in NYS and throughout the United States. The Laborers' International Union of North America publicly promotes our successful model of labor-management registered apprenticeship programs to combat the growing emphasis on employer programs supported by taxpayers.

### What is Registered Apprenticeship?

It's a job. Apprentices start working from day one with incremental wage increases as they become more proficient. It's on-the-job learning and education. Registered Apprenticeship includes on-the-job learning from an assigned mentor combined with technical training provided by apprenticeship training centers, technical schools, community colleges, and institutions employing distance and computer-based learning systems.

It's a credential. At the end of the apprenticeship, all apprentices receive a nationally recognized credential. Some apprenticeship programs offer interim credentials as apprentices achieve important milestones during their apprenticeship.

### What are some advantages of Registered Apprenticeship?

The benefits to employers are: more highly skilled employees, reduced turnover rates, higher productivity, lower investment in recruitment, a more diverse workforce, a new pool of workers and the creation of career pathways. The benefits to registered apprentices are: being nationally recognized and portable credentials, improved skills and competencies, higher wages as skills increase and career advancement.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are operated by partnerships of employers, labor management organizations and government. Apprenticeship sponsors – employers, employer associations and labor-management organizations – register programs with federal and state government agencies. Sponsors provide mentors, on-the-job learning opportunities and required technical instruction to apprentices. Incorporating Registered Apprenticeship directly into your workforce development system will strengthen your local and regional economy by offering highly trained and educated residents. Let Registered Apprenticeship be your competitive advantage. Laborers' Local 91 accepts apprenticeship applications the first Tuesday of every month from 8 AM – 12 noon at our training facility located at 4500 Witmer Industrial Estates Niagara Falls, NY 14305.

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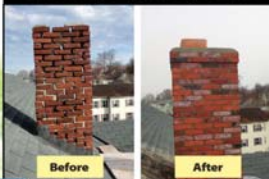
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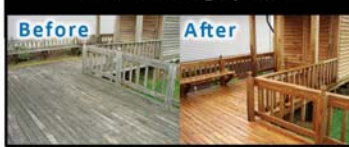
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## Hydrants Cont.



something virtually unheard of in the history of the Water Board.

They have taken a hands-on approach to managing the Water Board. The changes have been dramatic.

In previous weeks we reported that the Board:

- Appointed a top shelf executive director, Rolfe Porter, a former Cleveland Ohio deputy commissioner of water who has also worked in Buffalo as a chief engineer.

- Changed the curious rule of the ethics code prohibiting board members from speaking to union employees at the water board.

- Addressed employee grievances and violations of collective bargaining agreements.

- Cut massive overtime abuses.
- Fixed a record number of leaks - and during regular working hours.

- Eliminated the huge backlog of leaks that has plagued Niagara Falls for years.

- Cut by more than half the underground water leakage/wastage of treated water.

- Set in motion a campaign to get residents to realize that Niagara Falls has the cleanest, safest water in the USA; and is far better [and far less

expensive] than plastic-laden water purchased in plastic-bottled water.

Another thing Forster and O'Callaghan - with help from Porter - insisted on doing - is fix the fire hydrants.

Call it a symbol of an efficiently run water board: These men resolved to make sure that every single fire hydrant in the city actually worked.

Maybe it is a matter of pride. A lot of things in this city don't work. But when they first came on board, - all three of them - Forster, O'Callaghan and Porter - they learned - to their immense surprise - that, out of the city's 2600 fire hydrants, some 152 did not work.

It may not sound like much, a mere seven percent or so -- but if the fire hydrant near your house doesn't work - and you might never know it until the once in a lifetime need for it - you would be awfully blue about it.



New fire hydrants at the Waste Water Treatment Plant awaiting installation.

For Forster and O'Callaghan, they did not want to risk it. Porter with his enormous experience backed them up in this: A well run city does not allow any fire hydrant to be broken. They fix them, they test them and then constantly monitor them.

And here in the Falls, 152 did not work. Some were not even hooked up to the water main.

In their zeal to do this hydrant fix, they found out that the last time every single hydrant worked was in 1980 - almost 40 years ago.

Fast forward one year and - as of April 3, 2018 - the total number of fire hydrants not working in this city are nine, down from 152 and Forster said - the last nine will be replaced next week.

Once every broken fire hydrant is

replaced, the Water Board will then test them to ensure they not only work, but work properly, with proper water flow or pressure - the amount that is needed to put out a fire.

"We have to test every hydrant so that the public can rest assured that every hydrant in Niagara Falls has been tested for water flow," said Forster. "It's the only way we can know whether or not the hydrant is working as it should."

For the first time in years, the Water Board will test hydrants by flushing the system and afterwards putting a system in place to do it regularly.

"It makes sense," Forster said, "for it's what you or I would want and expect - a working fire hydrant - in the event of a fire. I would call it a basic necessity."



A newly installed fire hydrant.



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## Barricaded Man Taken into Custody in Police Stand-Off Shows Alarming Militarization of Lewiston Police

### Opinion

On Tuesday March 27th, 2018, police forced their way into the Plain St. home of a 34-year-old man who had barricaded himself inside.

Police Chief Frank Previte said the man was believed to be a military veteran suffering from mental health issues.

The Niagara County Sheriff's Office asked Village of Lewiston residents to shelter in place as State Police, Border Patrol, Lewiston Police, and the Niagara County Sheriff's emergency response team flooded Plain Street.

The incident began after a 911 call which resulted in the caller hanging up. Chief Previte said that the man's parents were standing outside of the home when police arrived at the scene.

Police made multiple attempts to contact him.

"We were trying to get a hold of him on his phone," said Previte, "but we were unsuccessful."

The police went so far as throwing the man a 'drop phone.'

Officers finally entered the man's home using a flash band device and took him into

custody.

Chief Previte confirmed the man was not armed and no shots were fired by him or law enforcement.

"He was not discovered with a weapon," said Previte, and "there was nothing in the home that concerned us."

Most fascinating about the incident is - right-ly or wrongly - the use of military type equipment by police.



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# One Niagara Welcome Center Dressing Up for Season

## Tony Farina



When Parlato purchased the One Niagara building, there was a 40 foot deep hole in front of it.

With the tourist season about



In 2006, Parlato filled the hole.

to begin, the bustling welcome center known as One Niagara at 360 Rainbow Blvd., adjacent to the Rainbow Bridge, is getting ready to greet visitors from near and far with an improved look that will include replacing the temporary vending booths with permanent structures and dressing up the pedestrian experience along O'Laughlin Dr.

"We are committed to making One Niagara a world class destination," said Paul Grena who co-owns the former Occidental Building with Gordon Reger, the son of the late Larry Reger who was a key early investor in the property that was literally on the scrap heap in 2004 and ready to be leveled.

It was back in 2004 that developer Frank Parlato took a chance on the property which was run down, virtually empty save a government tenant about to leave, and featuring a huge hole the length of the property that was empty, the legacy of the failed aquarium development efforts of the former owner.

Parlato acquired the property and despite a long-running battle with one of the former owner's partners and lingering tax problems, he somehow managed to transform One Niagara into a welcome center featuring restau-



Paving of the filled lot.

rants, gift shops, and a tour company. Without taking a dime in tax subsidies, Parlato managed to create more than 60 full time equivalent jobs. It was an incredible transformation that eventually saw the property emerge as a featured downtown attraction in an otherwise barren landscape.

Grena and several investors including Larry Reger purchased the building from Parlato in 2010 and settled the back tax debt for \$1.5 million in 2014 after months of difficult negotiations.


"That settlement has allowed us



Paul Grena

to move forward, finally, and that's just what we are doing," says Grena who says One Niagara is continuing to pay its taxes and working with the city on a new site plan which should significantly improve the exterior of the building.

"We want to have the look and dignity appropriate to a facility adjacent to the State Park," said Grena, "and so, too, with our neighbors in this important downtown location. It is our hope that everyone will experience the benefits of our efforts and the area will thrive as the tourists from near and far come once and come again to see our mighty world wonder."



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# One Niagara Cont.



Larry Reger

Frank D'Agostino, the owner of Cataract Tours, says his fleet of buses is already at work giving customers a first-class look of the best tourist sites, including the Maid of the Mist, the State Park, and hopefully the Cave of the Winds.

"We've been here from the start, and when Easter comes, we know the season is ready to roll, and so are our buses," says the man known as Chick. "We want to give every one of our customers a great experience on their visit, and my drivers are well versed in the history of the region and can help bring it life for our riders. I'm looking forward to a great year."

So the glass building that not long ago was ready to be knocked down is experiencing a new life as a downtown mecca for visitors featuring tours, restaurants, gift shops, and much more.

"We're hoping for a great season for One Niagara and for Niagara Falls," says Grenga.

It all started back in 2004 when Buffalo developer Parlato saw something in the empty glass building with the empty hole in front that caught his eye and convinced him, despite the odds, to give it a try. He did, and now the fruits of his early efforts are paying great dividends for downtown Niagara



After filling the hole, Parlato converted it into a busy tourist parking lot.

Falls.

"We want to have the look and dignity appropriate to a facility adjacent to the State Park," said Grenga, "and so, too,

with our neighbors in this important downtown location. It is our hope that everyone will experience the benefits of our efforts and the area will thrive as the tourists from near and far come once and come again to see our mighty world wonder."

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<b>Jimmy's Bar</b>  3044 Niagara St. 345-3779 Try our Steak & Cheese Subs!!	<b>SPECIAL</b> <b>1/2 Tray Pizza &amp; 20 Wings ... \$21</b>	<b>Romana's Pizza</b>  4900 Saunders Settlement Rd. NF, NY   297-0990 <b>Dine-In or Take-Out</b>	<b>COUPON</b> <b>BUY ONE SUB GET ONE FREE</b>	<b>CATARACT Grill</b>  2501 Pine Avenue NF, NY   215-6217	<b>COUPON</b> <b>10% OFF</b> ORDER OF \$20 OR MORE CITY-WIDE DELIVERY!!
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# Chris's Corner: Golf Balls, Pastry and Cops



**Niagara Falls City Councilman Chris Voccio**

First, I should disclose that I am not a golfer. I took a few lessons years ago but I just never took to it.

Second, I should also disclose that I believe public safety to be the primary role of government. Public safety, not golf.

So the long-running argument over the Hyde Park golf course isn't very controversial to me. But I went to DiCamillo's on Niagara Falls Boulevard recently to satisfy my sweet tooth and one of the ladies working behind the counter, recognizing me as a Council member, told me she hoped that the golf course wouldn't go away.

I assured her that it wouldn't. The questions related to the golf course relate to who should operate the course and what that may mean for the rates and services that golfers pay for and receive during their recreational pursuit. And, of course, this matter impacts the financial condition of the city. But the course will not "go away."

Our city controller recently presented to city council information that shows the golf course cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars last year, meaning

that non-golfing taxpayers had to subsidize golfers. I love golfers, but perhaps the financials of the golf course should be self-sustaining and not require taxpayer subsidies. But that often happens when government is involved.

Some argue that the city should make some adjustments as to how the course is run, that we could operate it more efficiently. That's a legitimate point, and if we decide the city should continue to operate the course, then digging in and looking for efficiencies will be important to the course's sustainability.

A question pertinent to all of this is whether the private sector can operate more efficiently than the public sector. When I was speaking with the lady at DiCamillo's I suggested to her that the DiCamillo family probably operates their bakery more efficient than the government could.

If you believe that private sector operators are more efficient than government operators, then you can see where allowing someone to come in and manage the Hyde Park golf course might make sense. And that's why the city may be able to find an operator willing to pay us, via a lease arrangement, to manage the affairs of the course.

A private-sector operator might come in, make some adjustments to the operation, including adjusting pricing (up or down) to maximize market opportunities, and turn it into a profitable enterprise.

I've heard some argue that prices would go up if a private operator took



Hyde Park Golf Course.

over. Perhaps. But maybe a private operator would try to gain market share by lowering prices to attract golfers from other courses. Pricing decisions would be untethered from political pressure, and instead be based on market forces.

To those golfers concerned about higher prices or anything else related to private operation of the course, imagine this: What if, years ago, city government decided to open a bakery. Imagine that prices were kept low because taxpayer subsidies could always be pumped into the operation. Then imagine that the DiCamillo's paid the city to run the bakery. Do you think service and quality would get better or worse?

Imagine if Michael's Restaurant was owned by the city. Then one day the Capizzi family paid the city to run it. Would food quality and service get better

or worse?

I'm sure we would all agree that government is inherently unsuited to run bakeries and restaurants. So why a golf course?

I'm not sure which way the city will go with the golf course, but my preference would be for us to find a private-sector operator who would lease the golf course and pay us for that privilege. Instead of taking taxpayer dollars and pumping them into the golf course, perhaps the city could invest those resources in public safety. In cops on the streets.

Maybe someone from DiCamillo's or Michael's could take over the course.

Chris Voccio is a Niagara Falls City Council member and can be reached at [ChrisVoccio@gmail.com](mailto:ChrisVoccio@gmail.com).

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## Restaurant Review: Romana's Pizza & Grill



**Jamie DePetris**  
Food Expert/Critic

This weeks review was truly a treat!

Romana's Pizza & Grill is located at 4900 Saunders Settlement Road in Niagara Falls (connected to Dave's Last Chance Saloon).

It is a quaint and cozy family-owned restaurant. In fact, they actually came up with the name by combining letters from their four children; RObert, MAriah, ARiaNa, and SAMmy. Neat right?!

You are treated like family soon as you walk in.

I personally believe that the name "Romana's Pizza" is some sort of cover up for the many other delicious choices they have.



**Meatball & Stuffed Banana Pepper Submarine**

One of my favorite things about Romana's is that everything is homemade (and I mean everything!).

I ordered the "meatball and stuffed banana pepper submarine," which was 'blow your mind' good! I'm craving another as I write this.

Homemade meatballs covered in sauce topped with Ricotta stuffed banana peppers on a toasted roll (umm, YUM).

I also had the spicy mac & cheese and, holy cow, if the sub didn't throw me over the edge, this definitely did! They take their homemade mac & cheese and blend it with a pureed banana pepper soup that they make fresh.

It is cream, gooey and cheesy with the perfect balance of zest and tang. Wow!!!!

Last but certainly not least, it was



**Spicy Mac & Cheese**

time for pizza and wings. The pizza is crisp and cooked just right.

The wings are meaty, crispy, saucy and delicious.

Western New York is an area known for its pizza and wings, and trust me when I tell you Romana's did not let me down!

Truthfully, I feel as though I'm not giving the pizza and wings enough justice in this article because of my unexpected love for the sub and mac & cheese, but don't let that stop you from trying it yourself!! You won't be disappointed.

Romana's has so many selections that there's sure to be someone everyone would enjoy. I suggest you take my word for it and give them a try! Tell them Jamie sent you!

## Liberty Tax Ready to Help You Get Return Filed

If you haven't filed your tax return yet, you may want to visit Liberty Tax at 6509 S. Transit Rd., in Lockport, and take care of getting your return filed before time runs out.

The professionals at Liberty Tax Service are ready to help you take care of your taxes and get your refund before time runs out in just a matter of days.

Liberty owner Edwin Garey reminds taxpayers that April 15 is the last day to file and get your refund for the 12/31/2014 tax year and 2017 returns are due by April 17.

You must file if you had income over \$4,350; received health insurance from the market place; received 1099-interest or 109-dividend interest over \$400, or received advanced premium credit. Also, earned income credit, tip income, child care tax credit, American Opportunity credits or other credits.

Garey also reminds taxpayers that they should file if they have sold real property, had a business, had capital gains, rental income, gambling income over \$1,200 or had a spouse pass away in 2017.

For those of you who need to take care of your taxes, you can call Liberty Tax at 716-650-4076 or 716-622-0700 to schedule an appointment. Or you can walk in and drop off your information Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Remember, the hour is growing late and Liberty Tax professionals are ready to help you take care of your taxes just as soon as you can bring them the information and records needed to file your return.

"Don't wait until the last hour," says Garey. "We're here and we have a very strong staff of professional tax accountants ready to give you the help that you need to get your return filed."

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# WITH THE FLOW

Special Edition  
April 2018

## Executive Director's Message

Spring is here so I hope we are all starting to feel the sense of renewal and growth that the new season will bring. I always liked the idea of spring cleaning (even though I didn't always take part in it.... sorry Mom) because it offers the opportunity to not only clean up the winter's debris, but also to rid yourself of stuff that you have hung on to for far too long. As that applies to the present, I see it as an opportunity to change the way things have been done here for a long, long, time. Of course, we are at the start of the second full year in which a re-constituted board has aggressively stressed a policy, in a positive way, of: "it's broke, fix it." That policy has resulted in very substantial changes in our operations and procedures with many more to come. On that point, my guess is that the Board would say that change hasn't come fast enough, that management can do better in carrying out board policy and reaching a point of operational effectiveness that meets or exceeds that of any other similar institution in the area. I certainly share that goal and remain committed to my agenda of maximizing the utilization of technology, system-wide training and team building as the three keys to organizational excellence.



## Contents

- 1 Message
- 2 Review and Updates
- 4 Profile:  
Cortez Bradberry
- 5 Report from Bob Drury
- 6 Correspondence,  
Publications and Misc.
  - 6 WTP DOH 2017 Inspection
  - 6 Ralph Aversa
  - 6 Building America's Future
  - 7 Tours of the WWTP
- 7 Feedback

## Contact

Rolfe Porter  
e-mail: [rporter@nfwb.org](mailto:rporter@nfwb.org)  
office: 716-283-9770 x 232  
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**OVERTIME**  
↓  
**\$140,000**  
2017

One area that the Board has identified and continued to focus on with the "fix it" approach is employee overtime. While the Board recognizes the necessity of overtime on a case by case basis, they have identified more than a few specific, and recurring, instances where one pretty much must conclude that the overtime being charged was far more to the benefit of an employee than to the employer. While noting that the

total 2017 overtime dollars paid were reduced by \$140,000 from the 2016 overtime amount, there are still savings to be achieved. At the Board's direction we have started a new practice in which newly appointed Director of Operations Bob Drury and Jim Perry, along with appropriate line supervisors, conduct a daily overtime review and are collectively looking at a wide range of actions designed to lead to more effective ways to complete work on straight time. Acknowledging the Board's overriding interest in this issue, I'm sure Bob, Jim and their colleagues will keep up a sharp focus – until consistent procedures and uniform practices are wholly implemented to the point that we can confidently state that overtime paid is for overtime worked. I should add that overtime paid is in fact earned by many of the hardworking men and women of this institution and their extra effort is always appreciated.





# Executive Director's Message *continued*



Part of the on-going leadership development program that was initiated last year involves studying, reviewing and learning the habits contained in Steven Covey's "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People". The first habit is "be proactive", meaning, to me, that we should use resourcefulness and initiative to find solutions rather than just reporting problems and waiting for other people to solve them. Proof of our "proactivity" during the last year, I can say with confidence, includes, but is not limited to:

- Resolution of long delayed union contracts
- The introducing of the multidimensional Hydrant Truck
- Vehicle tracking and maintenance
- Work order management (everybody loves Lucy and New World, right?)
- Hydraulic modelling to facilitate needed leak detection
- A communications strategy to keep the workforce and public informed through this periodic newsletter and a focused public information campaign

- Comprehensive training for licensing purposes and general job performance
- Increased emphasis on grant writing
- Cooperation with the city of Niagara Falls at the level of the mayor, the chief of police and fire commissioner as well as the City Engineer and the staff of the Engineering Dept.
- An increased and in-depth focus on safety and security with recommendations and improvements initiated, in progress, and to be announced.

Of course, another area that has required much proactivity is the carrying out of the myriad tasks identified in the Consent Order that was negotiated with the DEC after the summer of 2017 incidents at the WWTP. As has been previously reported, we have been allocated \$500,000 through the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation for specific engineering studies identified in the consent order. The studies have now begun with the identification of 17 key tasks. The team assembled to address these complex and myriad issues includes consultants from the engineering firms of GHD, AECOM, and Clark Patterson Lee. To date, I am very satisfied that the work performed has been carried out with the highest degree of professional competence and in the best interests of the NFWB and I look forward to working with the team in creating and implementing lasting solutions to the issues identified in the Consent Order. ■

## Review and Update

### 47TH STREET MAIN REPLACEMENT

The project is now fully complete and the pressures in the system are higher than they've ever been. Our crews and the outside contractor worked together to restore service as fast as could have been humanly possible. ■





# Review and Update continued

## HYDRANT REPAIR



Due to the new hydrant truck routinely checking/ winterizing hydrants this winter, during the entire season only two hydrants were found to be frozen and were immediately thawed. For further details on the hydrant repair and replacement project see the report from Bob Drury on p.5. ■

## PROGRESS MEETING AGENDA



Left to right, Jeff Konsella, Rob Locey. Not shown: Denine Jackson

**Project:** Niagara Falls Water Board Consent Order  
**Date/Time:** February 9, 2018 at 9.00 a.m  
**Location:** NFWB Water Treatment Plant Conference Room.

AT the DEC meeting of February 9, 2018 NYS DEC representatives Denine Jackson, Jeff Konsella and Rob Locey listened intently and offered thoughtful suggestions on a variety of topics including: our computerized O & M Manual, December 2017 Consent Order issues, the pending LaSalle Consent Order and planned NFWB capital projects. ■



# Employee Profile: Cortez Bradberry



Cortez Bradberry with Executive Director Rolfe Porter

I've noticed that there are some people who, when you are in their presence, almost immediately put you at ease; and, I must admit, there are other people who have the opposite effect on me. Cortez Bradberry is unquestionably one of the former. The interesting thing about that is, he seems to make you at ease

without trying. In other words, his goal may not be to make you comfortable, but he does it anyway. That's an innate talent that I'm sure we all wish we possessed. Now, don't get me wrong, Cortez is no shrinking violet, he'll stand up for himself and others when called for, but his demeanor can more generally be described as consistent with his professed taste in music: "mellow."

After graduation from Niagara Falls High School and working for the city in the DPW and purchasing departments, Cortez joined the NFWB in 2011 and is currently the Crew Leader for "outside sewer". This is a position, from what I've observed in a little less than a year as Executive Director, that, along with the foreman and others who are called upon to keep our system running - no small task - requires a combination of construction, labor relations and "self-preservation" skills. The self-preservation aspect relates to coping with weather conditions that range from summer temperatures approaching 100 degrees F to sub-zero conditions in our WNY winters. On this point, I'm pleased to report, outside crews are now provided with an increased clothing and footwear allowance, that, along with new portable heaters and other improvements, are manifestations of the current Board's and management policy of continuously addressing the needs of the workforce. Cortez provides sound advice to new hires by strongly suggesting that they not skimp on the boots they buy. His practical, and no doubt proven theory, is that when your feet are cold or wet your body feels cold or wet all over.

Bradberry notes that the construction and teamwork aspects of the job develop over time through training and experience. Training may come in a formal setting, say, as with the recently acquired Vac truck, learning from a dealer or manufacturer representative how to operate a new piece of equipment, or, as is more frequently the case, good old "OJT". This, he suggests, is where teamwork develops, adding: "someone who knew what they were doing trained me so that I am able to train the next person and on to the person after that."

He stresses team preparedness as one of the most important aspects of the job. Such things as the proper scheduling of training programs (summer is the best time) and coordination with other outside crews can make a big difference in response time when emergency situations arise. He's pleased that a "cross-over" process has gained greater acceptance so that the so-called "outside sewer" and "outside water" crews frequently work together - no matter the project - to unplug sewer lines or repair water lines. Now, he says, "all hands on deck means **all hands on deck.**" Confirmation of Bradberry's commitment to teamwork on the job comes from his long-time co-worker, Foreman Mike Eagler, "Cortez and I started working at the Water Board at

nearly the same time. He has become a trusted friend. He has shown the ability to lead with determination and compassion and has become a vital part of the renaissance at the Water Board. I look forward to working with him in the years ahead of us".

What makes Cortez Bradberry tick? Family comes first. His wife Kimberly is a 10 year employee in HR at City Hall; his son Stephon is a senior majoring in political science at the University of North Texas; another son, Cortez, Jr. is a senior at Niagara Falls High School and his youngest child, daughter Aniyah, is in elementary school at the Catholic Academy of Niagara Falls, (formerly Prince of Peace School) on Military Rd. Cortez Jr. has generated recent buzz in the bowling community (and presumably among college recruiters) bowling a 299 game and being featured as a scholar-athlete on local TV station Ch. 4. You can watch the feature at: <http://wivb.com/2018/01/25/scholar-athlete-cortez-bradberry/>.



The family has resided for over 15 years in a neat residence on 22nd Street, north of Niagara Street.

As is apparent from the thickness of the grass cover in the accompanying picture, Cortez is particular about his yard. While his main motive is keeping his residence and surroundings looking good, he allows that he has added incentive to keep things looking better than those of co-worker Mike Eagler, his friendly rival in a yard beautification contest.

Cortez is proud to be a Niagara Falls native and, though he acknowledges the problems facing the city, he argues that rather than merely complaining about such problems (some see this as the "Niagara Falls way") the whiners should become active and do something. He wonders about such people, asking: "do they ever have a good day?"

Faith is also important to Cortez; a member of St John's AME Church, a vibrant congregation off 10th Street in the North End of Niagara Falls.

As for hobbies and pastimes, again, the operative word may be "mellow." As a youngster he often fished the upper and lower Niagara River with his father and several uncles and remembers digging up nightcrawlers for use the next day. Now, on the occasional outing on a buddy's boat, they stop and buy their bait! Times change.

About his ambitions, Cortez has a steady view of the future. His commitment to provide for and take care of his family will continue to drive him forward. He explains to his son when the late night "show-up" calls come in that "if you want something you've got to work for it", a valuable lesson that Cortez Jr. seems to have grown to understand at a relatively early age.

When asked when he is truly relaxed, Bradberry leans back and thinks a while, then speaks, "you know what, I like to get home, have a nice dinner with my family, and if the weather is even half way-decent, just sit quietly on my front porch and take in the passing world." That's mellow.



# Report from Bob Drury, Director of Operations



I'd like to express my gratitude to the NFWB Board for recently appointing me as the Director of Operations and for the confidence they have shown in me. I look forward to working with the Executive Director and others in carrying out a shared mission of doing the best job possible for our ratepayers and the city of Niagara Falls.

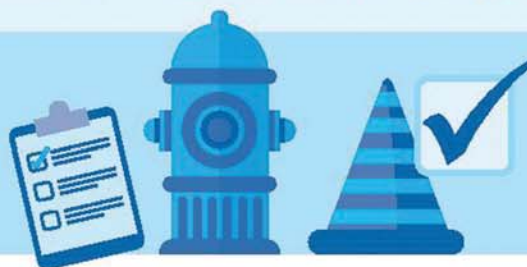
While I consider my background in law enforcement, executive leadership and organizational management as providing me with the essential tools to manage the day to day operations that I am assuming responsibility for, as in any position, there is a learning curve period where one gets to really know the people he will be working closely with and the priorities that should be addressed. I feel I'm well into the learning curve.... including an understanding of the finer details of the water and waste-water "industries". My overriding initial impression is that we have a dedicated workforce that has, in some areas, lacked adequate motivation and incentive to "row together" in a cooperative and mutually beneficial arrangement. The NFWB Board and the executive staff have worked hard to turn around that perception and I am committed to doing my part to continue that process.

Meanwhile, there are several areas that I will be focusing on in the months ahead that I believe deserve special attention and upon which I will, from time to time, take the opportunity to report to the readers of "With the Flow."

One area that the Board identified last year and in which significant progress has been made is that of hydrant repair and replacement. This initiative provides a good example of the new cooperative workforce environment can be found in the short history of the Board's directive of 2017 on fire hydrant replacement and repair. Executive Director Porter commented in his message in this newsletter on the valuable addition of the multidimensional Hydrant Truck in insuring proper hydrant maintenance; that truck represents an investment by the Board that will benefit this organization for years to come.

As for other aspects of the hydrant repair and replacement program, I'd like to recap developments over the last 10 months or so. Thus far, there are several overriding take a-ways from the program:

- Bill Wright, recently promoted to the position of Superintendent of Operations, did an exceptional job of managing the program every step of the way.
- Bill received outstanding support from Mike Eagler and the outside crews; Eagler aggressively pursued the process of identifying non-working hydrants and supervising the on-site replacement work. Of course, as is Mike's style, he often goes beyond supervision and gets right into a "fixit" mode.
- Cooperation with the city of Niagara Falls Fire Dept has never been better.
- Public safety has improved through the substantial reduction in the number of non-working fire hydrants.



In terms of the details of the task, last year 152 hydrants were identified for replacement or repair. Now, as of April 2, 2018, we are very near or at having an **unprecedented total of -0- remaining inoperable hydrants.**

Finally, although the remarks below have been published elsewhere, I think it is important to repeat them here so that the readers of this newsletter can fully appreciate the difference that is being made at the Board and executive level with a shared commitment to doing the best job possible. For example, NFWB Chair Dan O'Callaghan said the Board has "made it a top priority to fix as many hydrants as possible and we have been extremely successful in doing so." He added, "after years of neglect, we have fixed or replaced more than 100 hydrants over the last several months, with a goal of finishing up this effort by the upcoming summer." In response, Thomas Colangelo, chief of the city's fire department, said the number of non-working hydrants in the falls has been at least "cut in half," which has "drastically" improved the operations of the department during structure fires. He concluded: "This vast transformation is due in no small part to new and proactive leadership at the Niagara Falls Water Board. We thank them for their commitment to the people of Niagara Falls and look forward to continued partnership in the future." ■





# Correspondence, Publications, Misc., etc.

## WTP DOH 2017 ANNUAL INSPECTION

**From:** Rolfe Porter [mailto:rporter@NFWB.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2018 6:00 PM  
**To:** Distribution

**Subject:** WTP DOH 2017 annual inspection

On December 6, 2017 the Niagara County Department of Health conducted its annual Public Water System Inspection at NFWB. DOH Annual inspection (Sanitary survey). A relevant section states:



NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION  
5467 Upper Mountain Road, Suite 100  
Lockport, New York 14094-1894

RE: Niagara Falls Water Board Public Water System Annual Inspection

*"This annual inspection of the water supply indicates that the overall system operation is satisfactory. The general level of maintenance, record keeping, and housekeeping at the treatment facility is considered to be excellent and your staff's efforts in this regard are appreciated."*

Congratulations and thanks to Rob Rowe, his operations staff, Joe Argona, his maintenance staff, Pat Fama, his lab staff, Bill Wright, all outside crews that have collaboratively helped keep the water flowing, Randy Burns, cross control, Gina Senia, Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency response plan. -Rolfe Porter

## FROM THE DESK OF RALPH AVERSA

**To:** Nick Forster, member,  
Niagara Falls Water Board  
**From:** Ralph Aversa  
**Subject:** Water Main break

Nick,

I wanted to say thanks for the unbelievable response from the NFWB to the water main break in front of my home yesterday morning at Madison and College Ave. and to extend my appreciation to all that were involved.

When I was the Director at the Water Board I was often the first responder after hours, so I know that to get a crew out there on a weekend so quickly is very commendable. The crew on the scene acted very quickly to shut down the line, make the needed repair to the pipe and get the road ready for vehicle use.

Great job by all.

Best regards,

*RA*

## BUILDING AMERICA'S FUTURE



This organization highlights infrastructure policy – including funding for water and waste water projects – that is forward-thinking and comprehensive in scope, yet grounded in the need for environmental sustainability, lower carbon emissions, and reduced U.S. dependence on foreign oil. Hopefully, 2018 federal infrastructure funding legislation will adequately address these needs. For more information see: <http://bafuture.org/key-topics/water>.



# Correspondence, Publications, Misc., etc. *continued*

## TOURS OF THE WWTP



Chairman O'Callaghan and Board Member Forster have been conducting periodic tours of the WWTP, here is their impression from the latest tour taken on 3/12:

From: Nick Forster  
To: R Dunn  
Sent: Mon, Mar 12, 2018 at 3:01 PM  
Subject: Tour WWTP

Bob,

Please extend our gratitude to both operations and maintenance staff of the WWTP, for exceptional improvement in overall plant repair and operational needs. It's very clear, the WWTP has finally turned the corner in both aspects.

Dan and I agree, it's vastly improved, by a margin of eighty-five percent better than our last tour.

Keep up the good work.

Dan O'Callaghan  
Nick Forster



## Feedback

As always, your comments or suggestions on the subjects in this newsletter or other areas of interest are welcome and encouraged. Please contact me via email, phone or stop in to my office, if I'm not there say hello to Erika and make an appointment to come back and see me.

Thank you and best regards,

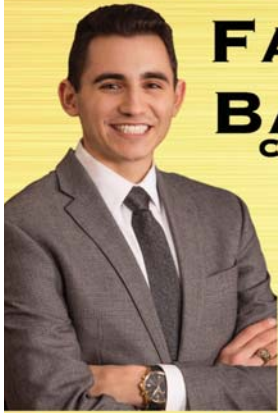
A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized letters.

RP





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- FIXING MINOR PLUMBING LEAK
- REPLACING KITCHEN FAUCET
- REPLACING LIGHT BULBS
- UNPLUG SINKS
- CHANGE OR REPLACE FURNACE FILTER
- HANGING CURTAINS/BLINDS/PICTURES
- RAKE YARD
- CHANGE LOCKS (2 PER CALL)
- REPLACE TOILET SEAT

**GOLD PACKAGE** (\$115 MONTHLY)

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- INSTALL WINDOW (2 PER CALL)
- UNPLUG TOILET
- FIX SWITCHES OR OUTLETS
- REPLACE SINK • CLEAN FURNACE
- REPLACE SMOKE DETECTOR OR CO (4)
- RE-ROUTE CABLE FOR TV
- FIX HOLE IN WALL (UP TO 12")
- REPLACE MIRROR
- MOVE FURNITURE IN HOUSE
- ASSEMBLE STORE • FIX SIDING BOUGHT PRODUCTS
- INSTALL DRYWALL (3 SHEETS UNFINISHED)
- FIX MINOR FENCE PROBLEMS
- REPLACE INTERIOR DOOR

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- REPLACE EXTERIOR DOOR
- FIX GARAGE DOOR
- JUMP START VEHICLE
- PAINT ROOM (12' BY 15')
- CLEAN SEWER
- REPLACE SHOWER FIXTURES
- CLEAN WINDOWS (4, DOUBLE HUNG)
- REPLACE LIGHT FIXTURE (2 PER CALL)
- FIX ROOF LEAKS (1 SQUARE)
- INTERIOR PAINTING (1 HOUR)
- VEHICLE TOW WITHIN 15 MILES
- REPLACE TOILET
- FIX TILE (ONE SQUARE)

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