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EXCLUSIVE

Restaino Announces New Cabinet



(Cont. on pg. 2-3)

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OFFICIAL HOME OF

THE CRIME PAGE 4
 Niagara Falls

HAMILTON: Now That's All I've Gotta Do Is to Put His Little Ass to Bed

By: Ken Hamilton

A friend of mine, who thinks much like you, was standing nearby two chatty women when she overheard their startling conversation.

One of the so-called mothers, upon hearing from the other woman that the

(Cont. on pg. 6)

Independence Party of Niagara County Endorses Undersheriff Michael Filicetti for Sheriff

By: Staff Reports

The Niagara County Independence Party has endorsed Niagara County Undersheriff Michael J. Filicetti for Niagara County Sheriff. Independence Party Chairperson Susan Agnello-Eberwein issued the following statement:

(Cont. on pgs. 7)

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Mayor-Elect's Choice for City Administrator Taking Pay Cut in Order to Serve in Brother's Administration



Police Chief Tom Licata will maintain his position as Police Chief under Mayor Robert Restaino.

the job after he retires from his Social Services position which pays in the \$100,000 range. As a public office retiree, he will only be able to earn \$35,000 as city administrator even though the budget number for the job is \$79,490.

Other key appointments by Mayor-elect Restaino with the budgeted salaries in parenthesis are Kathleen Liggamari, city clerk (\$50,861), who comes from the private sector; Dan Morello, controller



Daniel Morello will continue in his post as City Controller.

(\$100,663) who will continue in that post; and Christopher Mazur, corporation counsel (\$106,670), who currently serves as deputy corporation counsel.

Mayor-elect Restaino has opted to retain Police Supt. Tom Licata (\$115,436) and Fire Dept. Chief Joseph Pedulla (\$114,266) in their current positions.

Other appointments are two selections for economic development: Allen Booker and Thomas Tedesco. Also, Sanquin Starks, youth services director, and Ruby Pulliam who will continue as director of human resources.

Restaino says he is asking all his appointees to come prepared with a plan to lead their departments as they take over control of government in a city where the financial challenges are many, especially with the casino revenue-sharing money still in doubt although there is

hope that the Seneca Nation will in the end pay the state the \$256 million in back payments from 2017 that an arbitration panel and a federal court judge say they owe.

The Senecas have still not announced their plans although sources say the money has been put aside to make that \$256 million payment although in all likelihood, the Senecas will reserve the right to continue their appeal.

The mayor-elect says going through the applications of candidates for city positions was a very difficult challenge, and it took him a little longer than expected to finally make his decisions with the full list expected to be announced shortly.

Robert Restaino, the new mayor, has survived his own challenges to finally capture the city's top job and by every possible measure, he is eager to move forward and help

create that vision for the future that he has thought about for years and talked about to this newspaper several years ago.

It comes as no surprise that he selected his trusted brother as his go-to guy as city administrator, a throwback to the JFK days when President picked his brother Bobby to be attorney general. There's no question the new mayor will need all the help he can get trying to move the city forward, and having his brother on the team makes perfect sense.

Expect this team to hit the ground running come next week, and we can only hope that working with a new majority in the council, positive changes will occur and Niagara Falls will reclaim its past glory and begin the process of rebuilding from the ground up, starting with a new leader in city hall.



Fire Chief Joseph Pedulla will maintain his position as Chief under Mayor Robert Restaino.



THE CRIME

WEEKLY HEADLINES

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the Rainbow Bridge in the afternoon hours of Monday, December 16th, 2019, after being alerted that someone was trying to cross the bridge with two ounces of marijuana.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the area of Main Street across from the Public Library in the early morning hours of Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, after a person possibly driving a Ford F350 took out a tree, signs, and a light pole. Police say the vehicle fled the scene but were able to recover parts of the vehicle and hope to identify it.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the laundromat on Main Street in the morning hours of Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, after reports of a robbery. According to witness accounts, a suspect took a wallet and other items before fleeing on foot. Police are continuing to investigate the incident.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to a second hit and run call in the morning hours of Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, after a car took out a light pole on the 400 block of 5th Street.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to Niagara Falls High School in the morning hours of Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, after police officials reported threats being made against the school. School District Superintendent Mark Laurrie says potential threats were to "shoot up the school." According to police, the note said it would occur Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. Upon further investigation, the juvenile(s) responsible for the threats were discovered. Police say they wanted "more time off" of school.



-Niagara Falls Police responded to the 1700 block of Whitney Avenue in the afternoon hours of Thursday, December 19th, 2019, for a structure fire. This incident did not start off requiring the assistance of the NFPD. However, police were alerted once a witness stated that a person walked out of the building right before flames erupted from the home. Police are continuing to investigate the incident.

-Michael Ciskiewicz, who had previously been arrested and charged with kidnapping and rape related to a home invasion where he took a woman captive and held her hostage in his basement, pleaded guilty on Friday, December 20th, 2019, to predatory sexual assault. As a result of the conviction, Ciskiewicz will serve 12 years to life in prison.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the Denny's on Niagara Falls Boulevard in the early morning hours of Saturday, December 21st, 2019, after reports of nearly a dozen people fighting inside the restaurant.

-Town of Niagara Police, assisted by multiple other law enforcement agencies, responded to Lockport Road between Military and Norman in the morning hours of Saturday, December 21st, 2019, after reports of a fatal hit and run. According to police, an individual walking along Lockport Road was hit and killed. The driver who hit the individual fled the scene.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the 1400 block of Pine Avenue after a disgruntled customer alleged the wife of a sub shop owner pointed a gun at her. As a result of the incident, Nicole E. Marino, 33, of Whitney Avenue, was charged with second-degree menacing following the incident. The customer told police that tensions began to rise after he complained that a cook was touching his head with an ungloved hand while preparing his order. The customer told police that the store owner became increasingly hostile and pushed him out the door while his wife pointed a shotgun at him. Police confirmed that they confiscated an unloaded shotgun inside of the shop. Police say that Marino said she used the shotgun out of fear because the customer kept a hand in his pocket, alluding to a knife or gun, while baiting her husband outside as if to fight him; or worse. Marino further stated that she kept the shotgun at her side and did not point it at anyone.

-Niagara Falls Police engaged in a vehicle chase in the morning hours of Monday, December 23rd, 2019. According to police, two individuals were arrested and are facing possession of stolen property charges after being caught. However, police say that a third person is still on the loose. Police received a tip that a vehicle stolen from Buffalo was in the vicinity of Tops on Portage Road. As police attempted to pull the vehicle over, the driver took off and Police followed the vehicle until it came to a stop around the 700 block of 13th Street. The driver exited the vehicle and fled the scene. A New York State Trooper, with a K-9, assisted Niagara Falls Police to search a nearby building but the search turned up negative results. Two passengers were detained on scene and charges are pending.

PERSONAL INJURY

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Now That's All I've Gotta Do Is to Put His Little Ass to Bed Cont. from Cover



Ken Hamilton

Niagara Falls NY Board of Education, already now feeding her son both free breakfasts and lunches in school, but that if the boy also stayed for his much-needed after-school programs, that they'd also feed him dinners as well. My friend then heard one of them say, "Good. Now I don't have to feed the little mother-!@#&% anymore; all that I gotta do is to put his little ass to bed."

When former NFBOE board member Don King was a part of advocating such a program some years ago, I thought that it was the dumbest idea that anyone could possibly have had. In fact, there was also discussions about packing their backpacks with weekend rations as

well.

But isn't true that many, if not most of the school-aged families in Niagara Falls are in poverty, a situation that qualifies all of the school's students for a no-cost-to-them meals? If that is the case, then what's left of their families that are already receiving what used to be called food stamps to do with 'that' money, if not actually feeding their children?"

It all makes me wonder if within our good hearts we are doing the best thing, you know, by making sure that the child is fed prior-to and during their day in school, which aids in their ability to get an education, a diploma and an opportunity to escape the gripping poverty that have often kept their families incarcerated in a cageless socio-economic prison of codependency, while at the same time reducing the crime rate in the city. After all, how else would the child then escape their parents' poverty of money and mindset if not for a bellyful of nourishment and a headful of knowledge – this, despite the parental apathy?

I have mixed thoughts about it; I don't like it, but I understand it. There was a time, not so long ago, that the singular hour of "fam-

ily-time" was at the dinner table.

As a divorced father whom often had my sons with me, I enjoyed the times that I spent with them sledding in the winter; and in the summery months at the Buffalo Zoo, the Aquarium of Niagara Falls NY, Clifton Hill and African Lion Safari in Niagara Falls and Cambridge Ontario, and on the many road trips that we took together. But honestly, not a moment with my sons was more satisfying for me than to sit at the dinner table with the youngest one often upon my lap and picking from my plate, while the oldest one sitting in his chair, legs above the floor and rhythmically swaying in time with his jaw as he enjoyed what he often called the best food that he ever had.

In all of the things that we did, we talked about things, including their educations. Now, with at least one so-called mother, what's left for a parent to do besides putting her child's "little ass to bed?" Because of where this event took place, you can bet that we are paying for that as well.

I was recently at the copy counter at the local Office Max store one evening; and there I stood next to a teacher who wanted to make copies

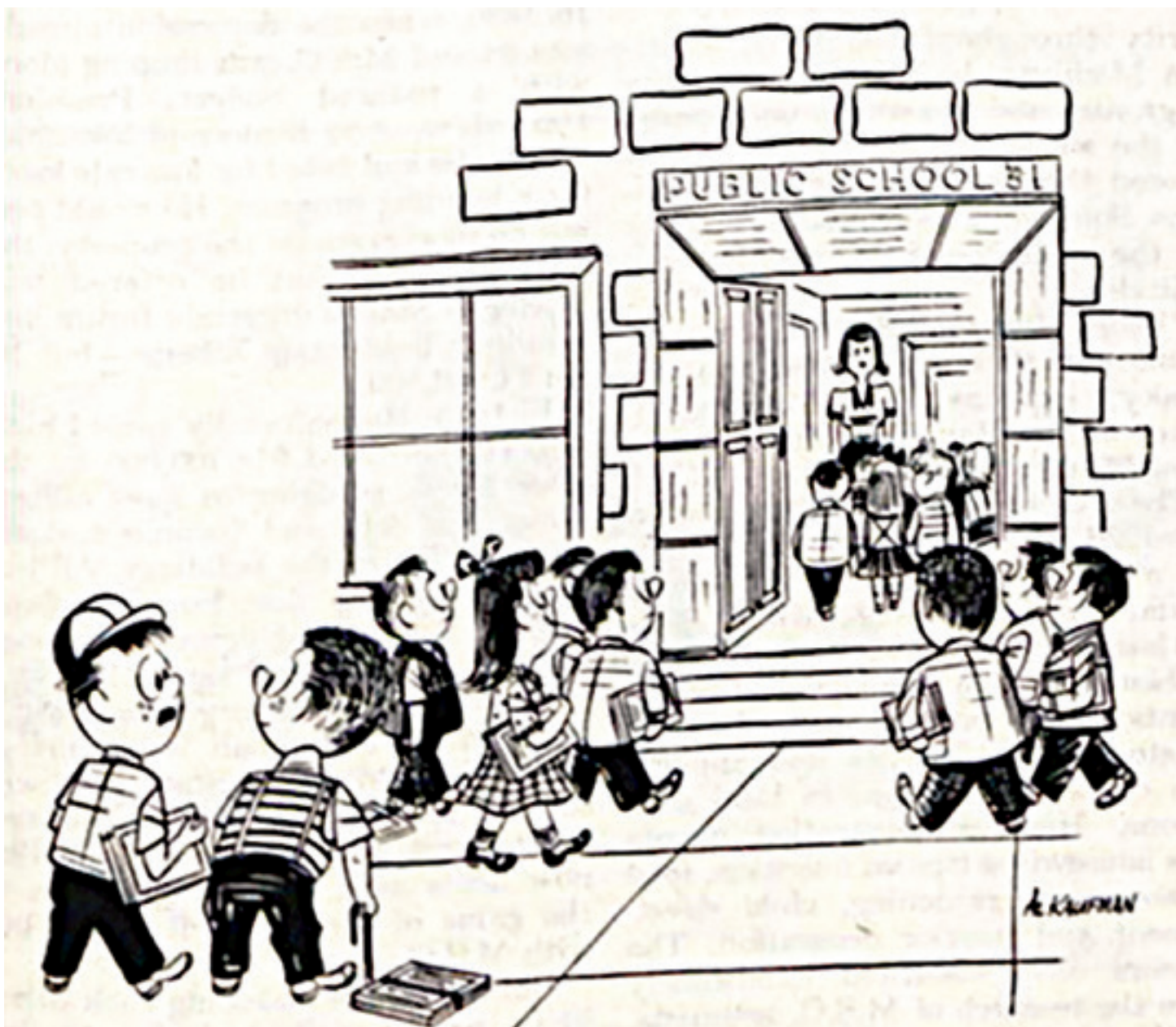
of thematic cartoon characters that she could hang in her classroom for the kids. She had to decide the size of the copies that she wanted so that they didn't break her budget. While the children are in her classroom during the day, that and other teachers are considered "in loco parentis." Thanks to Mr. Tom Patti, my 8th and 9th grade Latin teacher, I understood the term to be Latin for "in the place of a parent. You can be that the teacher was spending her own money on the project for the class, and not the money that the parent might have given her for the project.

The "little ass" that the wayward mother spoke of as only having to put to bed may have been one of the students of the teacher at the Office Max copy counter. If not, then likely a similar child who had a similarly dispositioned mother -- that being the kind who if the child feels hurt by what the teacher says to them, even if it is that they have to try harder not to fail the test the next time, would likely race to the school to cuss out that very same classroom teacher who daily makes the "in loco parentis" walk with her class to the free lunch, and then spends her evenings and money to prepare or teaching them the next day. I wonder if miserable mom would go to the parent-teacher conference though.

It's a sad state of affairs, though maybe a necessary one, that the school has to all but board the children in order to do for them what the parent should be doing. It is also sad that the children would rather be in the safe and warm school with their friends and teachers than in the turmoil of their own houses: note that I didn't say homes.

Sadder still in that all of it is a form of institutionalization, and we have to be careful that the children do not become wards or pets of the state.

Where do we go from here?



LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of formation of Peaceful Gardens LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. Of State of NY (SSNY) on 5/18/14. Office location: Niagara County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: c/o The LLC, 14 The Ridge, Wheatfield, NY 14272. Purpose: any lawful activity.

Filicetti Cont. from Cover



Undersheriff Michael Filicetti.

Ordinarily, the unexpected and early retirement of an outstanding public servant like Niagara County Sheriff James Voutour would be cause for concern. However, the deft leadership hand of Undersheriff Mike Filicetti fits perfectly into Niagara County's law enforcement glove. This will be a seamless transition. The undersheriff will become Acting Sheriff effective December 31, 2019, and serve in that capacity for calendar year 2020. It is why after an extensive interview and careful review of his qualifications, the Independence Party of Niagara County has enthusiastically endorsed Niagara County Undersheriff Michael J. Filicetti for Niagara County Sheriff in the November 2020 election.

Undersheriff Filicetti is a much-decorated professional law enforcement officer with 27 years experience and in-depth knowledge of all areas of law enforcement. He has been undersheriff, second-in-command of the Niagara County Sheriff's Office, for the last eight years after being selected by Sheriff Voutour. Undersheriff Filicetti has overseen every operational element of the Sheriff's Office. The position of Niagara County Sheriff is too important for on-the-job training. Mike Filicetti will hit the ground running on day one. No one knows more about the Sheriff's Office than Undersheriff Filicetti.

His career has included numerous citations and commendations. He received multiple awards for a water rescue at Niagara Falls. His actions resulted in a Certificate of Exceptional Valor from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Undersheriff Filicetti's other recognitions include a total of six excellence awards and departmental citations, all for service above and beyond the ordinary course of duty. He also earned a Sheriff's Office distinguished service award for implementing procedures which have brought about improved safety measures for residents throughout Niagara County.

He graduated from the prestigious Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. This demanding ten-week program featured specialized classroom and field interaction with command-level officers from throughout the world, including Europe and Asia.

Undersheriff Filicetti is Vice-chairman of the Niagara County Traffic

Safety Committee, Vice-chairman of the Niagara County Law Enforcement Foundation and Past President of the Judges and Police Executives Conference of Niagara County. He is also a graduate of Leadership Niagara.

As impressive as his accomplishments are, he made it clear his focus is on what he wants to continue to do for the people of Niagara County. His energies are directed toward the future. He stressed some of his most recent efforts - being a member of the law enforcement subcommittee for the Niagara County Opioid Committee which is combating the spread of conditions that have ravaged so many in all parts of Niagara County; pushing for more school safety technology and School Resource Officers (SROs); increasing technology in law enforcement by using body cameras and keeping pace with other advancements in technology; making available Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to members of the Sheriff's Office to better confront mental health issues present in those they encounter when discharging their duties in order to ensure the proper law enforcement reaction. He underscored that each of these measures is designed to protect law abiding members of our society and guarantee due process for all.

He recounted his lifelong quest to become a police officer. He was born and raised in Niagara County and when growing up told everyone within earshot he was going to be a police officer as an adult because he wanted to help people. Undersheriff Filicetti renewed his pledge to his fellow citizens that as sheriff he would report to work each day infused with energy and determination to enforce society's laws with fairness and independence in order to enhance the quality of life in every area of Niagara County. Fortunately, his hard work has led to his dream being realized. The citizens of Niagara County are better off because he was determined to complete what he set out to do.

Undersheriff Filicetti reminded interviewers that he has sworn an oath to serve and protect the children, women and men of Niagara County and that nowhere in that oath did it mention partisan politics. He said there is only one affiliation that matters to him - 'citizen.'

One of the Independence Party's core principles is looking beyond political party labels and seeking candidates for public office who are devoted to delivering the best government possible by exercising common sense. On this key point, Undersheriff Filicetti's belief aligns with the Independence Party's. His commitment to the people of Niagara County makes him the party's choice for sheriff. The Independence Party is fully confident that as Niagara County Sheriff he will be an outstanding law enforcement leader for the people of Niagara County. He has demonstrated personal courage, unquestioned integrity, skilled leadership and willingness to work with other law enforcement agencies, community organizations and individual stakeholders. We are proud to proclaim our support for this rock solid career public servant.



Merry Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR

This holiday season serves as the perfect time to reflect on the past year and all of the things, people and acts we are most thankful for.

Laborers' Local #91 would like to extend a sincere thank you to the New York State Power Authority (NYPA), the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, New York State Parks, and all Niagara County School Districts for the extensive amount of good paying jobs they provided this past year to all of our locally employed workers who performed the updates, renovations and expansions to their properties. We would also like to commend those organizations on their outstanding safety practices which ensure all workers are able to enjoy a safe and productive work environment every day.

From everybody associated with Laborers' Local #91 and the Armand E. Sabitoni Training Facility, we would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a safe, prosperous new year - especially all of our members, retirees and their families, all of our signatory contractors and their families, everyone at the New York State Power Authority, the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, New York State Parks, and all Niagara County School Districts and their families, all members of the community who actively work to provide our members with the union employment that allows them to provide for their families, and to all men and women who are or have served this nation in our armed forces to ensure we can celebrate Christmas in safety and peace. Celebrate the true meaning of this holiday and give thanks for what we each have.



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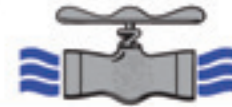
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