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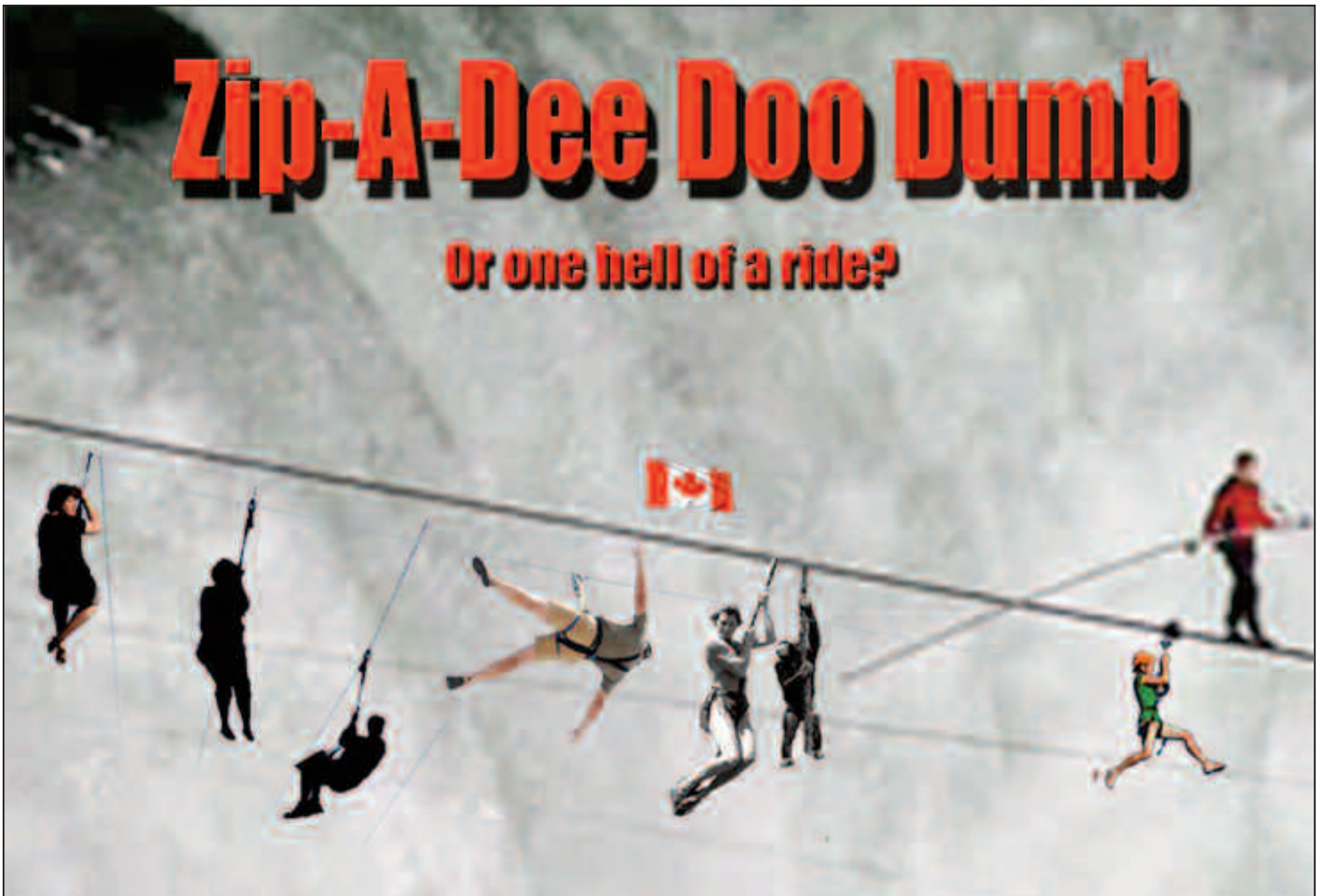
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Ontario's NPC Opts for Zip Lines Right Accross View of Falls



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Will Canadian Zip Line Blemish New York And Canadian Views of Falls?

Frank Parlato and James Hufnagel

Next year, Ontario's Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) hopes to offer customers a new vista from which to view Niagara Falls.

Four zip lines, carrying thousands of passengers, as they glide before the three waterfalls known as Niagara Falls, are planned to be up and running in the spring of 2016.

The planned zip line attraction, at an estimated \$50 per ride, will embark from the Grand View Market in Queen Victoria Park and, while making a high speed descent, carry harnessed passengers across the face of the American and Bridal Veil Falls, landing at the base of the former Ontario Power Company's generating station in the Niagara Gorge facing the Horseshoe Falls - some 2200 feet from the embarkation point.

A second attraction, an aerial adventure course, where customers will move from tree to tree using log ladders, rope swings, scrambling walls, hanging nets, spinning logs, wobbly bridges, tightropes, monkey bars and zip lines rising above the forest canopy is also planned above the Niagara Whirlpool at Thompson Point.

While most details of the attractions have not been made transparent to the public, what is known is that, if final approval is granted by the Province of Ontario, it will be designed, built and operated by a partnership consisting of WildPlay Ltd., of British Columbia, a developer of zip line/aerial adventure parks in a handful of arboreal settings in Canada, and a startup company called Niagara Adventure Excursions Inc., founded in 2013, whose corporate officers have not been publicly identified and are not listed on the company website or on the LinkedIn profile the company posted.

In late May, the NPC announced they received approval from the Province of Ontario to enter into an agreement with Niagara Adventure Excursions to develop and oper-

ate the zip line attractions.

However, the NPC acknowledged that additional studies are required before a final operating agreement can be signed and construction can begin.

To date the NPC has downplayed any potential adverse visual impacts the zip lines and their riders may have on the views of millions of visitors to Niagara Falls who are drawn here because of the visual resources of the area.

Instead the NPC focuses on the views zip line riders will enjoy.

"The new zip line attraction at Grand View Marketplace and aerial adventure course at Thompson Point will provide visitors with a breathtaking, authentic Niagara Falls and Niagara Parks experience," said NPC chair Janice Thomson. "These two new attractions are in keeping with Niagara Parks other natural attractions and provide another unique way to interpret the falls, the Niagara Gorge and all the lands along the Niagara Parkway, without impacting views or access enjoyed by other visitors to the falls."

Thompson has not released any studies to back up her claims about the impact on views enjoyed by other visitors.

Whether zip line riders will look like tiny ants scurrying down the gorge from one location and from another appear as an obnoxious distraction, usurping the pensive contemplation of nature once available there, or, from all vista points - as Thompson suggests - riders will glide by unobtrusively, cannot be asserted anecdotally.

Typically the standard required prior to development in aesthetically sensitive and world heritage settings (and there may be no world heritage setting superior to Niagara Falls) is that a series of computer-generated photo simulations where all significant public viewpoints within a radius of the proposed zip lines are presented and analyzed.

Thompson claims to know that the zip lines, with its sometimes screaming passengers in rows of four, side by side, speeding down the gorge, seated in harness, in the "Superman" position or upside down, right



below the railings at Victoria Park will create no visual impact there.

But she has not commented on whether the zip lines will impact the view from the

NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

"The Truth is Always Fair"

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Computer-generated photo images of visual impacts not released



New York State Park.

Visitors to Prospect Point, Hennepin Point, the Observation Tower, Maid of the Mist, Crows Nest, Luna Island, Cave of the Winds, and Terrapin Point will see an amusement ride descending into the gorge, a moving object carrying its objects at 35 plus miles per hour - between 300 to 1000 feet away.

This may enhance or distract the New York State Park viewer who has not come to ride a zip line but to witness Niagara Falls' natural grandeur.

On the other hand, the zip lines may lure tourists from the New York side and is its own advertisement, and will, as one of the men who stands to profit from the development of the attraction, Wildplay CEO, Tom Benson says, "enhance access to the local natural beauty of Niagara Parks, for a wide range of our guests."

The question is, while enhancing the natural beauty for some, will it detract from

the many?

Truly the citing of a zip line attraction before the millions of visitors at Niagara Falls is unique.

While zip lines are trending, they are commonly located in quiet and remote places of nature, where the zip line itself creates the access to the views of forest canopy and pristine scenes of nature.

The jungles of Costa Rica, Florida, Puerto Vallarta, and Nicaragua are popular destinations for zip line enthusiasts.

No zip line has been developed to date that will actually become a part of a world famous heritage view.

Wildplay owner Benson said the project would create a new class of visitors to Niagara Falls who will seek it as destination for eco-adventure.

"Niagara Falls is an incredible location but it's lacking a good eco-tourism presence right now," he said. "This will be phenom-

nal."

Visual impact is assessed in terms of the anticipated change in visual resources, including whether there would be a change in character or quality of the view with respect to significant and aesthetic resources.

The visual resources of Niagara Falls is its greatest asset.

The Niagara Falls Reporter will continue investigate and bring before the public a fair and candid analysis of not only the true visual impact but also - as we did once before - on the matter of a boat tour concession secretly handed out at discount rates by the NPC to the Glynn family of Lewiston New York - but what the terms are for the zip lines, who stands to profit, will this be another NPC sweetheart deal for unnamed developers and whether this attraction is something the NPC plunged into for mercenary or other equally dubious reasons.

Junke's Lawsuits Dead-ended, Tucker Now Driving Limo?

Times change.

It looks like the former City of Lockport's Director of Youth and Recreation, Melissa I. Junke, once at the heart of a city credit card investigation, has lost her chance to sue the city.

And the sudden resignation of her cousin, former Mayor Michael Tucker, on Friday, Feb. 21, 2014, in order, he said, to access more lucrative opportunities in the private sector, has led to him accepting work as a driver for Timkey Limousine, a limo service and airport shuttle, based in Lockport.

As for her lawsuits, on May 28, 2015, the state Division of Human Rights determined that Junke, who lost her \$57,000 a year job as Lockport Youth and Recreation Director when the position was eliminated, has no probable cause and therefore no case to bring against the City of Lockport for unlawful discrimination.

The Human Rights Division found that Junke's dismissal was based on the city's financial situation and not discrimination.

Without revealing the nature of what, if any, evidence Junke submitted supporting her claims of sexual harassment by one or more city officials, the Human Rights Division concluded that nothing she may have submitted was filed within the required one

year of date of occurrence time limitation.

Junke also chose not to commence a timely lawsuit against the city in state supreme court relative to the city making public her role in the use of a city credit card that help fund a private event.

Junke filed a notice of claim against the city but the time bar for her to file a lawsuit expired in May.

Back in June 2013, Junke used then Mayor Mike Tucker's city credit card to pay \$9080 in expenses for a fund raising event for her Youth and Recreation Department.

The event, a golf tournament followed by dinner at Lock 34 Bar & Grille, a restaurant owned by her brother, failed to raise enough funds to pay back the credit card.

The City Council announced it had begun an investigation of the possible improper credit card use by an unnamed employee in February 2014.

Within hours, Buffalo News reporter Thomas Prohaska reported that Junke was the target of the investigation.

Within a month Junke slipped on ice and went on workers compensation - never to return to her duties, and Tucker abruptly resigned on less than 24 hours' notice.

When Tucker resigned he told the Lockport Union-Sun & Journal, "I want to go into the private sector. When an opportunity



Melissa Junke

knocks, you have to seize it."

Four months later while Junke was still out on compensation, the council decided to eliminate her job.

Today, her chances of vindication through the process of litigation are seemingly gone.

A call to Tucker at Timkey Limo went unanswered.

The dispatcher said that Tucker was unavailable since he was driving Limo at the time.


Melissa Junke can't sue the City of Lockport.

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Welfare Workers Ordered to Clean Up Hazardous Materials at County's Shaw Bldg.

Lives may be in danger following exposure to airborne asbestos

Mike Hudson

The old Niagara County Sanatorium on Upper Mountain Road in Lockport is about as spooky a place as any low budget horror film director could ask for. Built in 1916 in the Gothic style on a wooded hillside, the creepy old edifice has seen more than its share of human suffering.

Nowadays it's known as the Shaw Building, after William Shaw, the county commissioner who pushed for its construction. Today it serves as headquarters for the county Health Department.

The building itself, however, is anything but healthy.

About a year ago, county workers assigned to maintenance of the building were asked to help with the installation of a metal sink on the first floor of the building, for use by the county Dept. of Mental Health. The workers were directed to drill a hole in the floor and connect the pipes to those in the building's basement.

They balked, however, when they saw what the basement contained; a century's worth of debris, much of which consisted of asbestos insulation that had once been wrapped around the plumbing but had now decayed and deteriorated. There was a lot of it, and dust filled the air in the dank basement and crawl space to the extent that breathing was difficult.

Bill Rutland, president of ASFCME Local 132, which represents about 150 blue collar county workers including those at the Shaw Building, sat down with County Superintendent of Buildings Tom Williams about the matter, and both men agreed that the dangerous basement could be avoided by rerouting the sink pipe through a first floor wall and connecting to an already existing water main there.

And that's where things stood until May. County officials knew that the basement of the old sanatorium contained dangerous amounts of asbestos, a known cancer causing agent that is both difficult and expensive to remove. Exposure to airborne asbestos created by the remediation process itself has been linked to lung cancer and Mesothelioma, as well as many other respiratory problems.

Workers involved in asbestos remediation routinely wear full hazmat gear, "space suits" equipped with respirators and face shields, and whole buildings undergoing asbestos cleanup are often placed under a protective tent so as not to endanger the general public.

But last month, someone in the county's Dept. of Social Services had a bright idea. Why not round up a bunch of welfare recipients, send them down into the creepy and poisonous basement, and without hazmat suits, respirators or even gloves or the surgical masks county workers wear when blowing leaves, make them clean out the asbestos?

According to sources familiar with the basement job, about 20 welfare recipients



Ryan Mack was exposed to asbestos

who normally do painting, lawn mowing, snow shoveling and other odd jobs for the county in return for their welfare benefits, were sent into the basement for five full days over the course of the two weeks prior to Memorial Day weekend.

They removed four dumpsters full of pipe, insulation and other toxic trash that had accumulated there over the past century, under the most primitive conditions imaginable.

"There were only a few lights, spaced about 50 feet apart, and unless you were right by them you couldn't see anything in the dark," said Ryan Mack, one of the cleanup workers. "Then the basement turned into a crawlspace and there wasn't any light there at all.

The dust was thick in the air, and became worse as workers began moving items out for disposal, he added.

When Rutland became aware that the welfare workers were doing the dangerous work, he went and personally inspected the dumpsters, still sitting open in the parking lot of the Shaw Building. He immediately contacted the state Department of Labor and filed a formal complaint on behalf of his unionized workers.

The time clock those workers use is located on the wall adjacent to the doorway leading into the basement. Once the welfare workers began throwing up dust simply by moving around in the basement, anyone near the door was unwittingly exposed to the hazard as well.

"I felt my members were exposed to the asbestos," Rutland told the Niagara Falls Reporter. "When you disturb it, it is in the air and the time clock is right next to where the welfare workers were hauling out the asbestos and other debris."

Rutland said the welfare workers themselves are at the highest risk.

"This is very serious," he said. "It can't be known whether the welfare workers will contract the diseases associated with asbestos. It will require a lifetime of monitoring."

The state Department of Labor sent

their Senior Industrial Hygienist, Ann Marie Pfohl, to inspect the dumpsters and the site. A bulk test was made of the dumpster's contents and came back positive for asbestos.

Rutland immediately filed a grievance with the county.

The welfare workers, essentially slave laborers put in harm's way by uncaring county officials, were pulled out of the basement following a phone call from David Mokhiber, who heads up the county's welfare program, to the crew chief, who was with the workers.

Ryan Mack accidentally overheard the crew chief's end of the conversation.

"He was shocked," Mack said. "He was there with us. After he got off the phone I confronted him."

Although the job was nearly completed, the job was shut down immediately.



Bill Rutland filed a grievance with the county for exposing his men to hazardous conditions.

As Rutland said, the situation is very serious, and an ongoing investigation into the matter by the state Dept. Of Labor is continuing. Someone in county government, with full knowledge of the risks involved, sent 20 untrained and unprotected human beings into a potentially life threatening situation, the full ramifications of which won't be known for decades.

It was madness, something the old county sanatorium has seen much of over the past 100 years. And, for the 20 people whose lives may have been irrevocably altered by the decision, justice must be served.

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Dyster Nearly Torpedoed Rainforest Café Here, Now Wants Credit

Mike Hudson

When the DiCienzo family officially opened the Rainforest Café at its Sheraton Hotel downtown, Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster did everything possible to convey the impression that he'd all but built the place using his own bare hands.

There he was in front of the cameras, cutting the ribbon himself before taking to the podium and delivering some long winded remarks. Then, in front of television cameras and lowly print journalists scribbling in note-

books, he repeated the same things he'd just got done saying.

What wasn't mentioned at the ceremony was that the Rainforest Café was to have been the centerpiece of the DiCienzo's \$90 million proposed redevelopment of the long moribund Rainbow Center Mall, a proposal Dyster had a hand in rejecting.

The developer picked for the former mall was a partnership made up of the Delaware North and Uniland companies, which proposed a \$150 million project, with \$75 million of that coming from the local, state and federal taxpayer. In recent weeks,

reports of acrimony between Delaware North and Uniland suggest the project may not go off as planned.

The Rainforest Café is a small upscale international chain of restaurants. The DiCienzo's already own and operate one in Niagara Falls, Ont., and enjoy a good relationship with the corporate heads. The 14,000-square-foot downtown location can seat 238 in the dining room and another 60 on the patio.

In his rush to appease his political masters in Buffalo, Albany and Washington D.C., Dyster was instrumental in rejecting the DiCienzo's Rainbow Center proposal, forcing the family to build it themselves on property they already owned.

He forgot about the families and the thunderclouds appearing on the horizon and thought only of political advantage and endorsing a plan that now seems to be falling apart like a cardboard suitcase in the rain.

The guy in the middle had positively absolutely nothing to do with the development of the Rainforest Cafe in Niagara Falls NY. Owner Michael DiCienzo, left, and Keith Beitler of Landry's, the chain's corporate parent worked to make this deal happen. The new restaurant would have been part of a much bigger attraction complex but the Gov. and his poodle USA Niagara President Chris Schoepflin and his toy poodle Mayor Paul Dyster did nothing to make it happen. So instead of a mega project by a real developer - DiCienzo - which would have included a water park, an aquarium, the Rainforest cafe and a half a dozen other attractions, we got instead an imaginary Wonderfalls, and the Rainforest Cafe in its default location. While DiCienzo is too polite to mention it - all the guy in the middle did was show up to cut the ribbon. Nothing more.



It will provide 200 permanent jobs here and 120 construction workers were involved in its creation. The restaurant cost \$3.5 million to build, with just \$150,000 of that coming through the city's NFC Development Corp.

Uniland and Delaware North have created exactly zero jobs here, despite the promise of \$75 million and neither has do nothing developer Mark Hamister, whose proposed downtown hotel has yet to materialize in spite of his receiving \$9.4 million in taxpayer funding for his \$22.4 million imaginary project.

Unlike Hamister or Uniland, the DiCienzos have been doing business on both sides of the Niagara River here for many years and are known to run a hands on, can do company. What the Ontario-based company lacks is the political clout the Americans have amassed through campaign contributions and other means.

"We really believe in the market and understand the market and what's missing in the current marketplace is a high quality family attraction and restaurant," said company President Michael DiCienzo. "The Rainforest Café is a high quality restaurant and a fantastic attraction for families."

Bordering on the incomprehensible, Dyster got his two cents in as well.

"When it's warm and sunny in Niagara Falls, there's lots of things for people to do," he said. "But when thunderclouds appear on the horizon, even if it's Fourth of July weekend or when the sun goes down, or God forbid if you're here in January or February and it turns a little bit cold, it's always fantastic to have some place for people to go, where you can especially find entertainment for the family."



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— Francis of Assisi

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A List of Questions for Candidates Who Come Knocking at Your Door

Jim Walters Jr.

Too bad Anello is not in the race

The election season in Niagara Falls has begun, as the office of mayor and two city council seats are up for grabs.

Consequently various candidates in search of signatures of nominating petitions will be coming to voters doors.

Mayor Paul Dyster presently has the blessing of benefiting from a very reliable council majority of three: Kristen Grandinetti, Andrew Touma and Charles Walker.

None of these three council members currently face reelection and so, if Dyster is reelected, he will continue to benefit from the support of this largely unquestioning trio.

The five current council members and the mayor are all Democratic.

Councilman Robert Anderson is looking to be reelected while his fellow councilmember Glenn Choolokian, has chosen to challenge Dyster for mayor and forego the possibility of another term on the council. Joining Choolokian in challenging Dyster for mayor are Republican candidates, John Accardo and James Szwedo.

After listening to local talk radio and

reading the three area newspapers, two dailies and one weekly, I have formed one central notion regarding this year's mayoral race: The best candidate for mayor isn't in the race, and that candidate is former Mayor Vince Anello. Anello's plain talk as mayor has continued right on through his plain talk as a WJLL talk show host.

The recently endorsed Democratic council candidates, Ezra Scott and Alicia Laible, are part of the Dyster Machine. These candidates will certainly support Dyster in a third term if the mayor and they are elected.

The City Democratic Committee, with the influence of committee members, Ida Massaro, Becky Dyster, Alicia Laible and Kristen Grandinetti form a strong Dyster core in all that is Democratic in Niagara Falls and leave little room for inner party debate.

Too often personalities decide local races as hard facts take a back seat in the election process. With access to newspapers, the Internet, and talk radio available for information gathering (not to mention attendance at the council meetings) there's no excuse to remain an uninformed, unquestioning, voter.

Candidate personalities should be discounted and an emphasis must be placed on the candidate's knowledge and concept of

government along with the effect those concepts will have on the city's future over the next decade.

Does the candidate understand the city budget?

Does the candidate know the difference between civil service and appointed employees as well as the difference in powers and responsibilities of the mayor's executive branch and the council's legislative branch?

Does the candidate have a desire to learn what goes into a successfully negotiated bargaining agreement?

What is the candidate's understanding of how casino revenue should be spent?

Has the candidate taken time to read the NYS Comptroller's 2013 audit that explained how the city had gone so very wrong in handling its finances?

City personnel costs (with public safety at the top) continue to rise. In fact this administration has caused department head pay as well as employee overtime and stipends to skyrocket. What plans does the candidate seeking your vote have to roll back those costs where possible?

Ask the candidate standing at your door what their plans are to:

- * control the cost of government;
- * control health insurance expenses;
- * manage casino revenue;
- * operate the new train station;
- * pay the city debt;
- * end the costly use of consultant services;
- * hire a city engineer;
- * honor the city charter;
- * and, eliminate the city's recurring budget deficit.

Vince Anello could answer all these questions and had he continued to serve this city, it would be a far better place today. During his term from 2004-2007 he emphasized



Vince Anello, he never pandered to Buffalo interests.

fiscal responsibility and the need to maintain responsible control of personnel costs.

But Anello isn't in the race.

Let us turn to the next best.

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NOTE:
In the event that the festival is officially cancelled due to inclement weather, all application fees will be returned within 14 days.

AWARDS:
A crown, and pendant medalion will be given to the winner in each category. There will be 2 runners up in each category and each will receive a trophy.

TRAVEL:
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.

Crime Scene Investigators Probing What Actually Happened at Shaw Bldg.

Mike Hudson

The Niagara County Sheriff's Department Crime Scene Investigations Unit was on the scene at the Shaw building on Upper Mountain Road Monday morning, dusting for fingerprints and collecting evidence in what was likely the illegal removal of four dumpsters worth of asbestos contaminated material and an attempt to dispose of the hazardous waste.

Investigators from the state Department of Labor are conducting their own investigation, and county Social Services Director Anthony Restaino confirmed that his agency is working with the state's Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau to get to the bottom of the matter.

Restaino said his agency provides welfare workers to a number of Niagara County not-for-profits and government agencies.

"We would know who the individuals are assigned to a given work site, but we would not necessarily know what they would be doing on any particular day," he said.

The potentially deadly asbestos contamination existing in the basement of the building was well known to county officials and workers as long ago as 2002, sources confirmed yesterday. A study done by the county at that time showed high levels of asbestos present, and warned that human activity in the area would create a risk of causing the toxic substance to become airborne in the

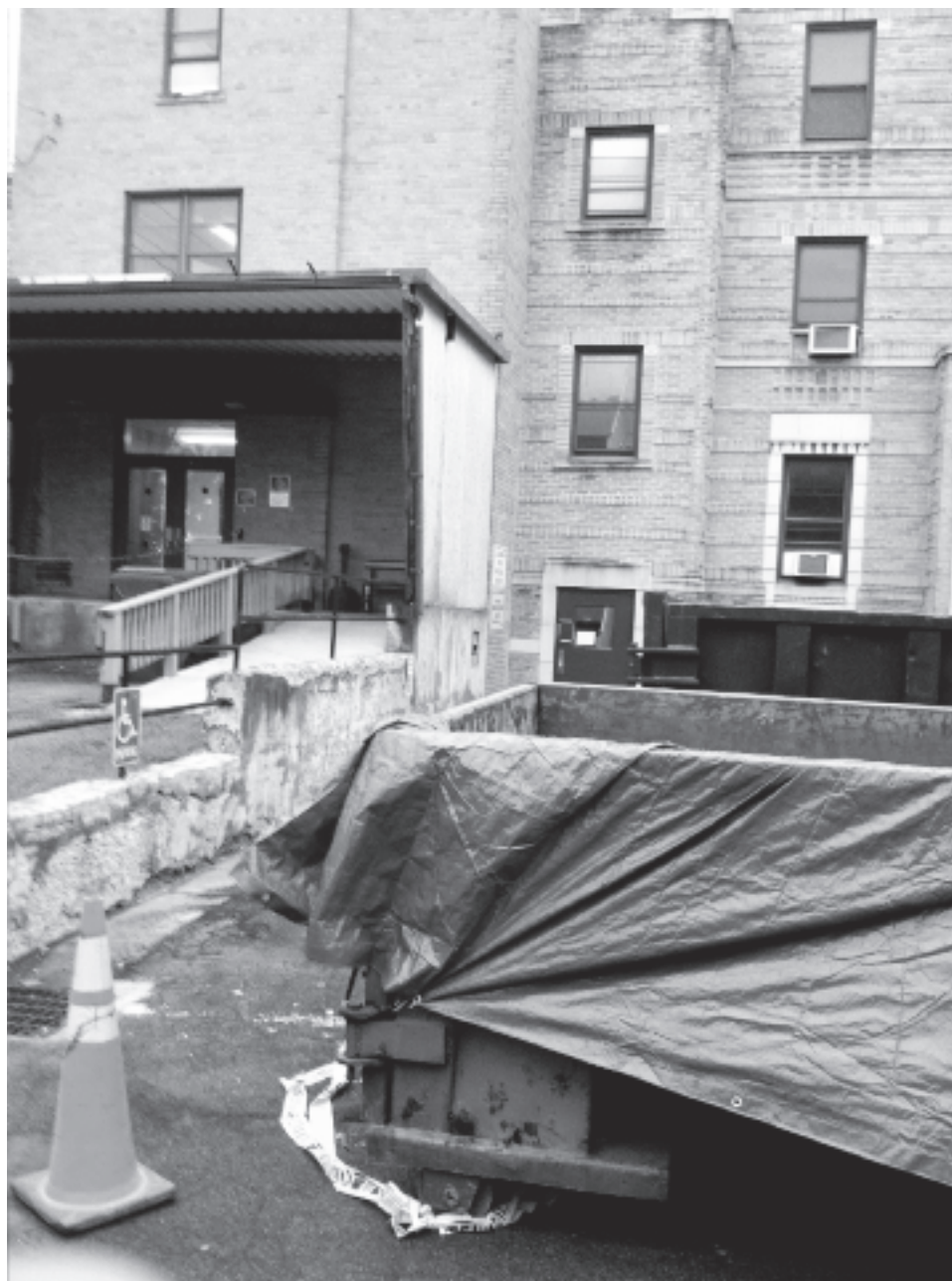


The door that led to the basement of horrors is right beside where the union workers have to punch in each day.

form of dust.

When a person breathes air containing asbestos dust, they risk contracting a wide variety of potentially fatal diseases, including lung cancer, mesothelioma and emphysema.

"We'd heard for years that there was asbestos down there," said Mike Weber, who worked for 16 years as a county carpenter.



The dumpster containing hazardous asbestos sits in the open, its tarp having blown off.

"Everybody knew you weren't supposed to go down there."

Weber said he and another carpenter were called out a year ago to install a sink on the first floor. When they arrived at the century old building, which formerly served as the Niagara County Sanatorium, the reported to the county Superintendent of Buildings, Tom Williams, who told them to drill a hole in the floor and hook the pipe up to a main in the basement.

The men refused, and left after Williams again ordered them to put themselves in harm's way, Weber said.

"We went back and talked to (Union President) Bill (Rutland) and it ended up we figured out a different way to put the sink in that didn't require anyone going into the basement," Weber said. "But Bill wasn't letting anybody go down there."

A year passed before Williams again got the idea to send people down into the contaminated basement. This time, rather than county workers with strong union backing, he chose unskilled welfare recipient, who do odd jobs for the county in exchange for food stamps and other benefits.

Around 20 of Niagara County's poorest were forced to go into the basement and perform the cleanup, without being warned of the possibly deadly danger the task pre-

sented. The workers were unprotected not only by the lack of union representation, but by the absence of any safety equipment including gloves, boots, respirators or even surgical masks.

"We had no idea at all that we were working with hazardous materials," said Ryan Mack, one of the basement workers. "And neither did our crew chief."

Again, the county's blue collar workers, in the form of union president Rutland, got involved. Because the welfare workers were using a door near to where union members punched in and out on a wall mounted time clock, the union workers were exposed to the same hazardous materials as the welfare recipients carried it out to the dumpsters in the parking lot.

Rutland filed a formal grievance with the county, charging that the work may have violated federal, state and local law, and demanding that the project be shut down immediately.

The task force of state and local agencies investigating this latest outrage leave little doubt that a crime has been committed here. The reckless disregard shown toward the health and safety of some of our poorest, most vulnerable citizens by highly paid and allegedly professional county executives here is inexcusable.



International Festival

SATURDAY, June 20th. 12 pm - 9 pm **FOOD & CRAFT VENDORS 12 - 8 pm**

<p>9 am Volleyball Tournament</p> <p>12 pm Opening</p> <p>12 pm International Children's Pageant <i>Sponsored by Danielle Restaino Candidate for City Court Judge</i></p> <p>2-5 pm Jamie Holka/Bruce Wojick Band <i>Sponsored by City of Niagara Falls</i></p> <p>3:30 - 6:00 pm PICNIC IN THE PARK BY ALPS CATERING \$10</p> <p>6-9 pm Soul Committee <i>Sponsored by City of Niagara Falls</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petting Zoo • Pony Rides • NF Fire Dept. Safety Unit / Smoke House (12-5pm) • Chinese Basket Auction & 50/50 Raffle <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>
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LaSalle Waterfront Park Bringing Residents Together

But that doesn't mean we should bite each other's fingertips off



Jesse P. Jamieson

Last Friday a man with strong teeth and a pit-bull-like jaw pedaled his bicycle to the LaSalle Waterfront Park, and under a pavilion, at a picnic table, along the scenic Niagara, he was imbibing alcoholic beverages in the company of frequently arrested, 57 year old Eric Mercilliot of LaSalle.

As the consumption of alcoholic beverages increased so did the displeasure of at least one of the men - the man with the strong teeth, who it turns out has also been frequently arrested.

What triggered it is unknown but discussion turned to argument and the man with the strong teeth bit onto the right ring finger of Mercilliot and bit off the tip.



**The human teeth are meant for chewing food not biting off people's fingertips.
Make sure to brush your teeth after every meal.**

The biter spat out the fingertip and fled on his bicycle.

Police were called.

Mercilliot's finger bled heavily but de-

spite being too drunk to explain how the argument started he was able to recover his fingertip.

Mercilliot was taken by ambulance to

Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center for treatment. The Reporter contacted the hospital to determine if they were able to reattach the fingertip but were unable to find out before press time.

Police are confident they know the name of the biter and Police Supt. Bryan DalPorto said "an expedient arrest is expected."

"Anytime a person is assaulted, we investigate it to the fullest," DalPorto said explaining that the charges are expected to be assault in the 2nd degree, a D-felony.

DalPorto said he could not remember another incident where an extremity of a person was bitten off in a drunken fight, but admitted he was familiar with the suspect from his previous arrests.

The police chief who would not release the identity of the suspect prior to an arrest warrant being issued, could not say for certain whether the man, who the Reporter presently is referring to as "Fang", wore dentures or performed his amputation with his natural teeth.

Stay tuned.

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Choolokian's Campaign Website Draws Line in Sand For Dyster Race

Mike Hudson

Niagara Falls City Councilman Glenn Choolokian, who is running against two-term incumbent Mayor Paul Dyster for the Democratic nomination this September, has launched his official campaign website.

Type www.your-next-mayor.com into your computer and you'll be suddenly transported to a place where Dooley Wilson's version of "As Time Goes By" from the 1942 Humphrey Bogart classic "Casablanca" gives way only to the Chairman of the Board, Francis Albert Sinatra, and his definitive 1965 rendition of "Summer Wind."

The nostalgia invoked by the music gives way to images of the city as it exists today.

Main Street, with the long vacant Jense building dominating a thoroughfare so devastated and plywood covered it would be easy to imagine that a hurricane, flood or other natural catastrophe occurred when actually only poor and corrupt leadership caused the destruction.

A photo of the \$46.5 million city courthouse and police station complex, which Dyster said would act as a catalyst for the revitalization of Main Street, has served instead as a monument to poor planning, wasteful government spending and stupefying and hideous architecture.

Not a single vacant property was developed in the wake of the building's opening, the Choolokian website points out, and a number of struggling businesses in the neighborhood were forced to close to make way for construction. None reopened.



Glenn Choolokian pictured with his family wants to put Niagara Falls first.

Pointing out that passenger train travel to and from Niagara Falls has been a money losing proposition for at least the past half century, Choolokian states the great untold truth about Dyster's expensive project.

"The desire to build a train station ignores present travel habits of those coming to Niagara Falls - which is automobile and airplane," he said. "Was it something that was needed right now?"

Accusing Dyster of squandering more than \$175 million in revenue from the Seneca Niagara Casino, more than \$100 million of which was on projects Dyster himself proposed, Choolokian questions the need for layoffs and tax increases the mayor has proposed year after year.

"How, with an average of \$20 million a year coming into the city treasury from the Seneca Niagara casino, can the city of Niagara Falls be called a distressed city?" Choolokian asks. "We are not a distressed city, we are a mismanaged city."

From trash plans, to suppressing critical documents that showed the solution to the water line freeze problems in LaSalle were known for months and long before the pipes froze a second time, to not hiring a city engineer but hiring Buffalo engineering consultants for treble the price, to hiring outside Buffalo lawyers at quadruple the price, and more and more Buffalo consultants - never in the history of the city was the gargantuan, casino cash driven giveaway to

Buffalo interest ever greater and the basic services to residents ever poorer.

A search of recent New York State Board of Elections records show that Dyster raised more than \$200,000 during his last two campaigns. About half the donors were from outside the city, mostly from Buffalo.

A recent check of the campaign filings of Dyster since his first fund raiser about a year ago for this year's campaign shows 40 donations,

20 donors lived outside Niagara Falls.

Dyster once told the Reporter that an individual or company that makes a contribution to his campaign has no better chance of getting work with the city than a company that does not.

"Naturally, every politician solicits campaign donations," Dyster said. "Your hope is that the people who donate won't expect special favors from you, but (will donate) to get good government."

Choolokian said. "So why would someone who does not live in Niagara Falls care about how good the government is in Niagara Falls?"

A check of Choolokian's most recent campaign disclosures shows that of his last 30 donors, 28 were from Niagara Falls.

Whatever else it succeeds in doing, the Choolokian for mayor website clearly establishes the issues over which the coming campaign will be fought.

His underdog status doesn't mean he's not right.

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Latest Falls Audit More of the Same

Tony Farina

The NYS state comptroller criticized the City of Niagara Falls for relying on “one-shots” such as fund balance and surplus moneys in the capital projects fund to cover structural deficits during an audit covering the period between Jan. 1, 2009 and Jan. 9, 2013, a scathing summary that was not well received by Mayor Paul Dyster.

Dyster and Controller Maria Brown might not like the picture that was painted by the state comptroller back in the 2013 report, but there is more of the same for them to consider in the audit of the city released last night by Bonadio & C., LLP, certified public accountants which warns the city faces a “significant hardship” in the development of the 2016 budget in part because it used \$9.3 million in fund balance to cover 2014 and 2015.

“It just confirms what I’ve been saying all along,” said Councilmember Glenn Choolokian after reviewing the Bonadio audit presented to lawmakers by the administration at last night’s council session.

“The Dyster administration has spent down its reserves and had no money available when the pipes froze and people were without water for weeks during the winter,” said Choolokian who is challenging Dyster in a Democratic primary this year. “They’ve thrown money away time and again, and have not reined in the spending no matter how bad things have gotten, and that in-



Maria Brown refused to release a copy of the city's new audit to the Niagara Falls Reporter. After obtaining it elsewhere and reviewing the report on the job she has been doing, we can see why the controller was reluctant to release it

cludes on high-paid consultants and fast-talking con men looking to make a quick score.”

Among the latest audit findings:

-The city used \$4.4 million of its fund balance (reserve) as a form of property tax relief to balance the 2014 budget. The Mayor elected to use another \$4.9 million dollars in general fund balance in the development of the City’s 2015 budget. With the use of the \$4.9 million general fund balance in 2015, the estimated general fund balance will be approximately \$5.1 million.

Concern over the drop in casino revenue of \$1.5 million to city coffers from 2013 to 2014 is also noted by the auditors who wrote it has created that concern “since the city has been using over \$5 million in its General Fund operating budget to help offset increases in debt service payments, loss of tax revenue from the land the Seneca Niagara Casino is located on, to offset increases in public safety overtime costs in the area of the Seneca Niagara Casino and a very small portion for tax relief. If the City’s local share continues to drop, the City will not be able

to pay for its Capital Projects and Equipment as ‘Pay/Go’ and may have to look at future borrowing.”

According to the audit, the city’s revenues declined about \$31 million for the year to \$117,052,009 while expenses decreased only slightly from \$141,883,680 to \$137,788,709, the main factor in the city’s “net position” for the year going down from \$60.7 million in 2013 to \$40 million in 2014.

In case you didn’t notice, that’s a \$20 million decrease in the city’s “net position.”

Obviously, lawmakers and the Dyster administration will have their work cut out for them in trying to put together a 2016 budget given the current strain of recurring structural deficits that will only get worse if casino revenue continues to drop and the city keeps spending money it doesn’t have, something Choolokian has been preaching about for the last several years.

In a display hardly worthy of her position, Controller Brown would not give this reporter a copy of the latest public audit at last night’s meeting, saying “go get one from Choolokian.”

Whatever her problem is with this newspaper aside, she’s paid a hefty salary (more than the Buffalo and Erie County Comptrollers) to keep the city’s fiscal records in order, a job she may well keep because of her knowledge of where the bodies are buried at City Hall, much like J. Edgar Hoover did when he ran the FBI for so many years under several different presidents.



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A Tale of Two Audits and Both of Them Lousy But State Comptroller's Audit Touches on Dark Secrets

Anna Howard

Niagara Falls -- When I first learned

about the outburst of temper City Controller Maria Brown demonstrated at last night's council meeting - and her failure to turn over to reporter Tony Farina the latest audit of city finances - I thought it was because she didn't like the way some of the stories in our publication turned out - as if the press' right to access public information is contingent on how they write about her.

Later it struck me that maybe Brown was being defensive.

She simply didn't want the veteran investigative journalist Farina dissecting an audit which reflects poorly on her job performance.

Considering this audit was prepared by Dyster's Buffalo consultants, the Bonadio Group, and that it was bought and paid for by the taxpayers- at Dyster's direction - and therefore less likely to be as hard on the mayor as an independent audit might be, I decided to re-review the last independent audit of the city's finances -- made in 2013 by the NYS Comptroller's office, titled: The City of Niagara Falls Financial Management and Information Technology Report of Examination January 1, 2009 – January 9, 2013.

While the Bonadio audit gives bleak news - and paints a picture of a city in financial shambles - despite, as the Bonadio audit noted, the city taking in \$188.2 million in casino funds, the NYS comptroller's audit went much further - and reveals more than the waste of millions in casino cash.

Residents who are sincerely interested in learning how their city received a windfall of \$182 million and yet is on the verge of bankruptcy, we recommend they make an attempt to study the comptroller's audit for themselves.

It is available online at www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/cities/2013/niagarafalls.pdf

As a summary, the NYS Comptroller's audit (page 7) established three areas of interest and inquiry:

1. Do the Mayor and Council ensure that budgets are realistic and structurally balanced?
2. Does the Controller properly record financial activity?
3. Are City officials adequately safeguarding IT (information technology) assets?

The answers are found on:

- Page 9 under Financial Condition:

"We found that the City has had a pattern of structural budget deficits, meaning recurring revenue were not sufficient to fund recurring expenditures...."

- Page 10 under Financial Condition

"The City has funded these structural deficits by relying on "one-shots" such as fund balance (draining savings) and surplus moneys remaining in the capital projects fund.... "

"(T)he City also has not prepared a multi-year financial plan since the 2010 fiscal year... it is especially important for a city with financial difficulties to prepare such multiyear plans to develop a plan for elimination accumulated deficits."

- Page 12 under Recording Financial Activity



"The Controller (Maria Brown) has accounted for a substantial amount (\$7.1 million) of unassigned fund balance in the capital projects fund. The Controller also stated that she was aware that these moneys should be returned to the general fund as unassigned, but was reluctant to do so, expecting that City officials would use these moneys in their entirety to reduce the tax levy or increase appropriations... "

Translation: The NYS Comptroller said that City Controller Maria Brown admitted she refused to return money left over from projects that were over-budgeted or came in lower than expected - but kept millions in the wrong accounts - apparently without informing the mayor or the council.

Brown knew it was wrong but, as she admitted, but she did this to keep millions away from the elected mayor and the elected city council out of fear that these elected officials would spend the money, or seeing the surplus, reduce taxes for the people.

While her intentions may have been good, this tucking of money into savings accounts without the consent of the council or the mayor gave her unwarranted control at city hall.

As anyone familiar with city hall knows, when the mayor or the council come hat in hand to Brown to ask if there is money for a certain project, she will often say "Let me see if I can find the money."

Sometimes she does and sometimes she doesn't.

Of course a city should not have an unelected controller having to find money.

But there is worse to follow: After learning that millions were kept outside the general fund by Brown, the state comptroller ordered her to return the money to general fund, however, some of the money was missing or unaccounted for:

The State Comptroller stated: "(A)dditional funds may remain in other projects which should also be returned to the

general fund. As of the end of our fieldwork, City officials were unable to demonstrate, and we were unable to definitively establish, the total amount of these other moneys. However, based on our review of the records, we conservatively estimate that the amount could range from \$1 million to \$1.4 million."

Translation: The NYS comptroller had to hunt down money that had been misdirected away from the general fund, and, yet, after spending considerable field time, the staff wrapped up the audit with the statement that they could not find all the money. "(B)ased on our review of the records, we conservatively estimate that the amount could range from \$1 million to \$1.4 million."

Meantime, the Dyster administration has trotted out a new audit by their outside consultant, Bonadio, which skirts around the serious issues raised by the NYS comptroller and tries to explain the city's financial woes without making the simple connection that had Dyster not wasted the better part of \$182.2 million in casino cash and had Brown operated as an unelected controller is required to do, this city would be nowhere near the jeopardy they now face.

It is time for Dyster and Brown to answer the serious issues raised by the state comptroller's audit and not use the Bonadio audit as the uncontested and definitive analysis of the city's financial situation.

(Next week we will delve into the secret part of the State Comptroller's audit - that has never been shared before with the public.)



"Our books are balanced. 50% of our numbers are real and 50% are made up."



"Chances are 50/50 that it's a total crapshoot, but it could go either way."



"Hey, we're government accountants. These numbers aren't supposed to add up."

Dyster's New Secretary Melson Posts Homophobic, Sexist Rants on Twitter

Mike Hudson

Boys will be boys. That's one way of

looking at it

Or it's doggone lucky he's not a Republican. That's another way.

A predicted on these pages more than a month ago, Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster hired political hack Nick Melson as his confidential City Hall secretary, a gambit that gives the mayor the luxury of having city taxpayers subsidize the cost of his sub rosa campaign manager.

The mayor announced his new hire on Friday, May 29, the same day he went out and ran the rainbow colored Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender flag up the pole out in front of City Hall. Dyster, known for his beer drinking, animal hunting ways, often enjoys presenting himself as a progressive liberal to the world at large.

So does Nick Melson, Albany insider, former aide to Francine Del Monte, unsuccessful county Legislature candidate and Democratic Party firebrand, Melson's public image is one of a sensitive, all inclusive, liberal individual. Which is why we were shocked when a series of more than 30 Twitter tweets posted by Melson and a couple of his frat boy friends found their way to our offices over the weekend.

A photograph of a pornographic magazine sitting on a table next to a cocktail and bearing the caption "Titty Tuesday" was taken down, but others -- referring to homosexuals as "hippie queers," foisting sexist japes at the cheerleaders for the Wichita State Shockers basketball team, lighthearted banter about drugs and alcohol and the repeated use of foul language unsuitable for publication in a family newspaper -- remained online as of press time.

Just last week, the Niagara Falls Reporter covered the case of Willie Price, an endorsed Republican candidate for City Council, who had his endorsement stripped by the City Republican committee because of a couple of Facebook posts that in no way approached Melson's Twitter tweets in terms of sheer offensiveness.

And Councilwoman Kristen Grandinetti's ongoing battle with Facebook oversharing is a story we've reported on numerous occasions. Various, Grandinetti renounced the Catholic Church she'd been raised in a week after being successfully reelected to the Council, posted a "cute" video depicting little girls as young as 5 uttering the f-word over and over again and, most recently, accusing her employer -- the Niagara Falls City School District -- of "borderline criminal" behavior for not teaching the specific sexual education curriculum she would prefer.

During Dyster's first term, his handpicked choice as city fire chief, Ronald Melchior, was fired after it was discovered he had made disparaging remarks about Arabs on a website for firefighters.

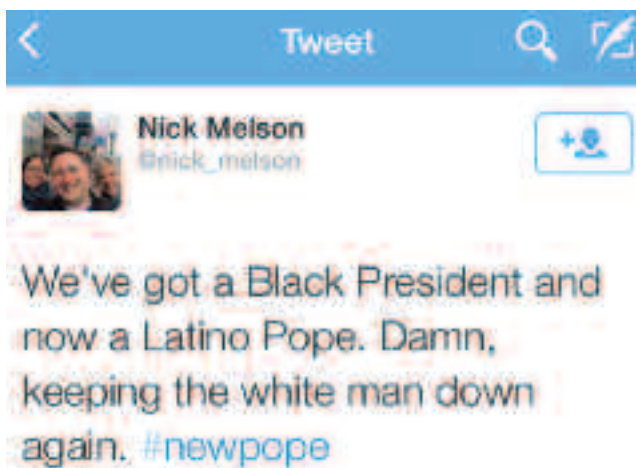
It is highly unlikely that Melson will suffer the same fate, despite the coarseness and vulgarity exhibited in his posts.

"Go back to Jamaica you hippy queer," he writes to someone named Michael Krull.

"I hope that dog shits all over the blanket," Melson tweeted someone who had posted a picture of their new puppy.

Other tweets are completely incomprehensible though nonetheless distasteful.

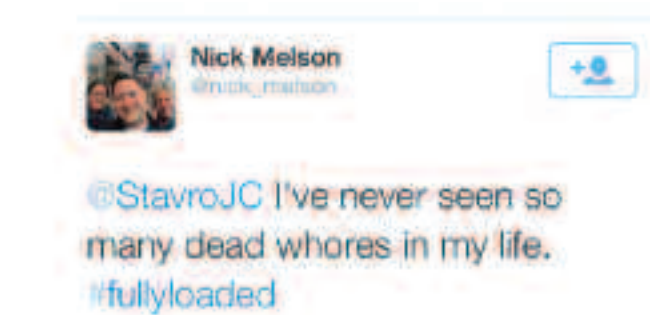
"About to rip clap bombs while drunk on the u16 girls



show them what 50 in 07 is all about. F-ck it. Whatever."

Melson always ends with the notice that he is "Executive Assistant to the Mayor of Niagara Falls" and a disclaimer that states "Unless stated, Tweets reflect my own opinion and not that of my office."

Clearly, the frat boy innuendo, over reliance on drinking and sex as subjects for humor and foul language also reflect our mayor's judgement, or lack thereof, when hiring candidates to important positions in city government. It's 2015, after all, and employers in the private sector have long run online checks of potential employees, red flagging exactly the sort of sexist, homophobic and offensive content Melson seems to revel in.



Melson is one of a group of recent hires that also includes Republican turned Democrat Johnny Destino, Ryan Undercoffer and Brooke D'Angelo, all brought on board by Dyster based on past political experience rather than any particular job qualifications.

Their reward for loyalty and service to the mayor is a taxpayer funded paycheck and, in some cases, what amounts to a job for life. While Niagara Falls has long lacked the services of a city engineer and a director of economic development, meaningless patronage jobs are filled with alacrity in this election year.

Undercoffer and D'Angelo masterminded the effort to unseat popular incumbent councilman Sam Fruscione in 2013 over a completely invented crisis having to do with the

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Fun-loving often drunk and always amusing, Nick Melson is a perfect fit for Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster's campaign manager/secretary.

still in the planning stages Hamster hotel project here. Although the project was nowhere near ready for construction, gullible voters were convinced that it was, and Fruscione was blamed for holding things up by asking questions.

After his Democratic conversion following a primary loss to George Maziarz for the 62nd District State Senate seat, Destino became Niagara County Democratic Chairman Nick Forster's right hand man, specializing in strategy for a number of local races.

Dyster wants another four years in office and is convinced that you, the taxpayer, should pick up the tab for his campaign staff. No one has challenged him on this, and thus far, other contenders for the office – Democratic Councilman Glenn Choolokian and Republicans Accardo and James Szewedo – have remained silent.

With former mayoral secretary Bridgette Myles now serving as secretary to the city Council, Dyster can keep an eye on Choolokian's comings and goings while Melson, Destino, Undercoffer and D'Angelo organize the Dyster campaign.

No mayor in the city's history has so blatantly used the office to advance his or her personal agenda.

And if his Twitter tweets are any indication, Nick Melson will be providing readers of this newspaper with unintentional entertainment for years to come.



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 *-Also available after 11:15 Sunday mass (before June 12th)

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Fri June 12 th	8:30 pm	STINGER
Sat June 13 th	8:30 pm	90 WEST
Sun June 14 th	4:00 pm	BILLY HICKEY
	6:00 pm	JJ SWING

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To Cricket or Not to Cricket, Now That Really is a Question!

Mike Hudson

Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster wrote an op-ed for the Niagara Gazette this week in which he challenged the veracity of a recent news feature in the Niagara Falls Reporter concerning his sudden concern for the English sport of cricket.

"Someone decided to start a rumor that we wanted to take facilities away from the Little Leagues to use them for cricket. That's silly. Why would we want to do that?" Dyster wrote.

In our coverage of the matter, we made it clear that we thought taking facilities away from the Little Leagues and using them for cricket was silly as well.

We asked, quite openly, why Dyster might want to do that. But by the time our article came out, the cricket vs. youth baseball controversy had already advanced far beyond the stage of a rumor.

It began on Opening Day for Niagara Falls Babe Ruth League play at Hyde Park on May 16. League President Jeff Cafarella said that, after arriving late and missing the opening ceremonies, the mayor approached him.

Cafarella said that Dyster told him that the league "may have to make room" for a new cricket field at Hyde Park.

"We're not going to get rid of Babe Ruth baseball, that's for sure," Cafarella remembered the mayor saying. "But they (the newly formed cricket league) need a place to play."

This newspaper contacted the city's Acting Public Works Director John Caso, who said he had indeed been asked by Dyster what it would take to set up a cricket field at Hyde Park or perhaps elsewhere.

We then contacted Amol Salunkhe, vice president of the Buffalo-Niagara Cricket Club, who said that the league had submitted an application for a cricket field.



Babe Ruth often posed with children.

Dyster returned the call, and that Hyde Park was discussed as a possible location for play.

A cricket field is as big as two baseball diamonds, and all of the baseball diamonds at Hyde Park are used regularly, as they have been for the half century that organized youth baseball has been an institution here.

Clearly, more than rumor was afoot.

In any event, public outrage – as gauged by radio call-in show commentators and various Niagara Falls forum pages on Facebook – came swiftly.

Few thought this was a good idea, and more were upset that they had to learn about in the pages of this newspaper, rather than by the more normal channel of the elected official in question, Dyster, simply telling them what he planned to do.

Dyster's op-ed accused us of playing "silly season" politics – echoing a Reporter headline of a week earlier – and referred to comments made by the campaign chairman on one of his opponents.

Those comments did not appear in this newspaper.

There was absolutely nothing "political" about our coverage of this latest crashingly boneheaded idea to emerge from the complicated mind of Paul Dyster.

In any event, if his writing is to be believed, he no longer wants to eliminate youth baseball diamonds at Hyde Park in order to make room for a cricket field.



Mayor Paul Dyster poses with children who are in the Babe Ruth little league and posted it on his Facebook page.

If he wins reelection in November, the idea may come up again, just as the urbanization of Jayne Park on Cayuga Island has been resurrected.

If the coverage by this newspaper had anything to do with the preservation of the baseball diamonds for another season at least though, we'll take satisfaction in a job well done.

NT Treasures Back in Stock

The North Tonawanda History Museum has reissued their illustrated book, "North Tonawanda: Historic Treasures, Volumes I & II".

The first edition sold out shortly after it was first released in December 2011. Edited by Donna Zellner Neal, the executive director of the museum, the two vol-

ume set reveals historically significant sites and the deeds associated with them on a street by street, location by location basis.

The two volume set is \$40. Stop by the museum at 54 Webster St and buy a copy.

Archie Fires Back With a Rejoinder An open letter to Mayor Paul Dyster

Sam Archie

Mr. Mayor, did you think you could call me out and then think I wouldn't respond to your editorial in the Niagara Gazette?

First let me address one of your false statements, you stated I tried to fuel the fire on the cricket controversy on the TV news.

My seven-minute interview, reduced to five seconds of me saying, "I didn't know there was an interest in cricket here," has wound up becoming political because you characterized it as such.

I am involved in many groups such as the Niagara Falls Music & Arts Festival and the Niagara LaSalle Lodge #132 F&A.M.

On behalf of the Babe Ruth Little League president Jeff Cafarella, I represented their concerns for the park.



Sam Archie

For you to state that I was fueling the fire as campaign manager for Councilman Glenn Choolokian who is opposing you in the Democratic primary for mayor was an outright lie.

If the full interview was shown you would have heard me state that I was speaking on behalf of Babe Ruth League president and officers.

Once the league was made aware of the cricket field- by you - when you told the league president that he might have to give up little league paying space for the adult, affluent and cricket players who don't live in this city, it blew up on Facebook, fueled by many angry parents and board members of the league.

Is this the reason you are now back peddling?

Did you think the league would go

silently into the night?

If you were in touch with the families of the city, you would have seen how the Little Leagues have grown, with a group of dedicated young men who spend countless hours with our children.

It has grown so that they have a fall league as well as a traveling team, and what they really need now is new fields.

Who's playing politics now?

Of course if 9-and-10-year-olds could write campaign checks, maybe you would have helped them out.

You are well aware that for Glenn Choolokian and myself the bottom line is it's about our families - those living in Niagara Falls - and doing right by them, something I feel your administration has failed to do these past seven and one half years.

Grandinetti Wants Tubman on \$20, Sponsors Council Resolution Here

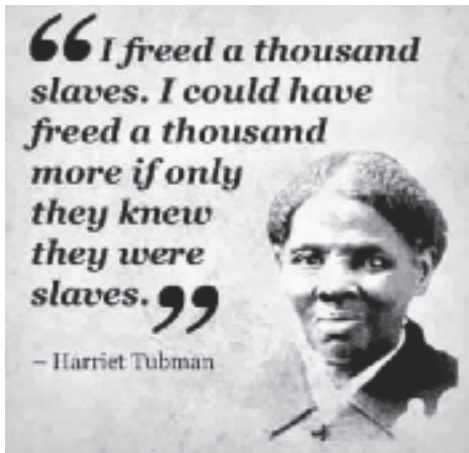
Mike Hudson

As a boy, he served in the Revolutionary War. He later became an attorney, helped found the state of Tennessee and served as a U.S. Congressman and Senator. As a military commander, he beat the bloody British in the town of New Orleans during the War of 1812 before heading to Florida to defeat the Spanish garrison and make Florida a part of the United States. He was elected President of the United States in 1824 and, much later, Charlton Heston played him in a major motion picture.

His name was Andrew Jackson and, for all that, all he got was his picture on the \$20 bill. Now Niagara Falls City Councilwoman Kristin Grandinetti is trying to even take that away.

She thinks that Harriet Tubman's picture should be on the \$20 bill. A big deal has been made about Tubman here in Niagara Falls because she may have passed through what is now the city's North End on a train once.

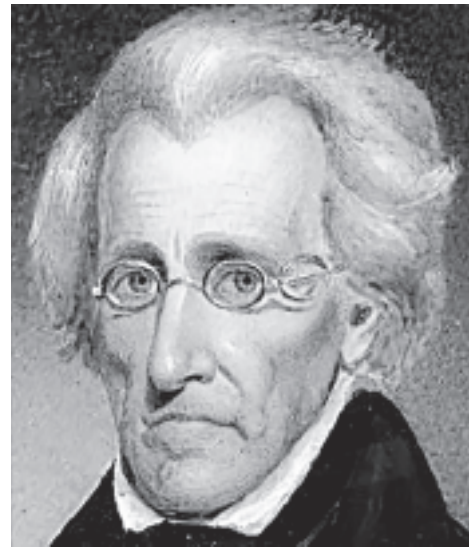
Compared to Jackson, little of Tubman's life is documented. Nearly everything that is known about her is based on a short book written by Sarah Hopkins Bradford, an author of children's books, when Tubman was an elderly woman. Whether her age, a brain injury she suffered as a



Not true. Harriet Tubman did not free 1000 slaves. Historians peg the number at 19 - most of them family members. Much of her so-called "history" has been rejected by all serious historians as myth and for those not afraid of being politically incorrect - "exaggeration" or more bluntly BS.

child or deliberate embellishment is to blame, the book – "Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman" – is riddled with factual inaccuracies.

The book was written to raise money for Tubman's support, as Social Security hadn't gone into effect yet. It did succeed



Andrew Jackson did a lot for this country.

in making her famous.

After escaping from slavery on a Maryland plantation, Tubman returned to lead family members and friends north in the years prior to the Civil War. She used to tell people she led 300 former slaves to freedom but most historians today believe the actual number was much closer to 19 and even the most sympathetic won't go any higher than 70.

And that was pretty much her lifetime accomplishment.

The impetus to replace Jackson on the twenty began a couple months ago when a woman named Barbara Ortiz Howard noticed and apparently became upset about the fact that no women were depicted on American paper currency. An informal online poll was taken and Tubman came out on top with 34 percent of the vote.

She beat out Wilma Mankiller, a chief of the Cherokee Nation of Indians, and Eleanor Roosevelt, who put up with the philandering of her husband, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whose image graces the American ten-cent piece.

Here at the Niagara Falls Reporter, we did our own informal poll and the newsroom had Marilyn Monroe finishing first with Elizabeth Taylor coming in a close second.

As a historical figure, Tubman is a footnote, even among her contemporaries. Certainly, Lizzie Borden, who was acquitted of killing her parents in 1892 even though most people then and now believe she did it, has been the subject of far more scholarship, academic and popular.

Grandinetti should be more worried about the grinding poverty, high crime, declining property values and continuing exodus of educated, hardworking people the city labors under, the issues she was elected to address.

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Former Pol Fruscione Turns to Ice cream to Celebrate Summer

Mike Hudson

What could be more American than apple pie?

Ice cream, of course! And if there's anything more American than good old ice cream it's ice cream served up by the ever smiling former city Council chairman and dedicated school teacher Sam Fruscione.

Back in 1984, President Ronald Reagan declared July as National Ice Cream Month, and the third Saturday in July as National Ice Cream Day.

A brilliant man, Reagan recognized ice cream as a fun and nutritious food, and one that is enjoyed by a full 90 percent of the nation's population. In his proclamation, Reagan called upon all right thinking Americans to observe these events with "appropriate ceremonies and activities."

And Fruscione is ready to help celebrate the blessed event in a big way.

The Ice Bridge restaurant at 2648 Main St. in Deveau was a landmark, dispensing delicious frozen treats to boys and girls of all ages after being founded by Don Mosacco in the early 1970s. Family members continued to run the business until 2010, when the seemingly never ending Lewiston Road reconstruction project forced it out of business.



Fruscione and partners bought the old Ice Bridge and renovated it (without government subsidy- think of that!)



Sam Fruscione at his former Mafia museum and souvenir store on Old Falls St.

"It's been for sale, and I thought, why the heck not?" Fruscione told the Niagara Falls Reporter. The new Ice Bridge officially opened last week.

Serving Hershey's ice cream and hot dogs Fruscione and his partners Dave Fruscione and Jerry Genova will keep the Ice Bridge open from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Mon-

day, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays, and Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 9 p.m.

Several leading indicators seem to point to success for the new enterprise.

According to the International Ice

Cream Association, sales of ice cream rose a whopping 2.1 percent in 2014, with sales of \$5.4 billion. Ice cream production, in fact, involved about 9 percent of all the milk produced by farmers during the year.

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Outside the new Ice Bridge two elegant ice cream lovers enjoy the streetscape.

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ECC, Key Union Face Key Test in Negotiations

Tony Farina

Erie Community College is swimming in red ink, as we've reported over the last several weeks, but financial help is not likely on the way anytime soon.

The GOP-controlled Erie County Legislature will likely approve the county budget proposal of Democratic County Executive Mark Poloncarz later this month, but given recent history they are not likely to make any changes to the plan they received last week which includes a modest \$125,000 increase in the subsidy from the county for a total of \$17,554,317, or about 15.6 percent of the school's budget, not the more than 26 percent called for in the community college funding formula.

"We'll invite the ECC administration to come before the Enrichment Committee on Thursday, June 18," said Committee Chairman Kevin Hardwick, a Republican, "and the members and other legislators will probably have lots of questions. But I think the budget will likely be approved as submitted by the full legislature on June 26. That is the way it has been and that's likely to be the case this year."

Any increase in the county's subsidy, if it is in the political cards, will probably be contained in Poloncarz's 2016 budget plan due at the legislature in October, which is

before the November election where Poloncarz is seeking a second term. It could well become a political debating point between the incumbent and his challenger, Amherst Assemblyman Ray Walter.

But an important meeting on the road to October is scheduled today (Tuesday, June 9) when the school administration, the county, and the union representing more than 1,300 faculty and staff hold what FFECC union President Andy Sako calls a meeting "that could be very telling" in the future of ECC.

The union has been without a contract since 2009 and amid signs of some progress in negotiating a new agreement the parties will try again today to find a solution. "This is a very important meeting," said Sako after speaking at last week's presentation of the Poloncarz budget to the legislature.

Sako and Jill O'Malley, an assistant biology professor, both told lawmakers that ECC needs financial help, and needs it now. O'Malley said the inadequate funding from the county "is not allowing us to do our jobs properly," urging lawmakers to put students first to get the college back on course. That's not likely to happen this year, of course, but Hardwick is hopeful a long-term plan to increase the county subsidy can begin to come together as the deepening crisis is threatening the school's

Middle States accreditation.

Hardwick also thinks negotiations with the major union have been moving forward "and I think they are very close, although sometimes the last few yards are the toughest. But I'm optimistic."

Where the money will come from to pay for a new labor pact is unknown, although while he doesn't want any funding guarantees for a new pact in his budget plan, Poloncarz would certainly like to settle a contract in this, an election year, and probably has some money put aside if there's a chance for an agreement.

But while the contract is one thing, Poloncarz has until October to decide what he is going to recommend going forward, perhaps finding bipartisan common ground with Hardwick and others who are hoping for the development of a long-term plan to put ECC on firm financial footing despite declining enrollment and a school adminis-

tration that has lost the support of most at the college.

"Obviously there are long-term issues that need to be addressed," said Lynne Dixon (I - Hamburg) who caucuses with the legislature's GOP majority. "Looking ahead, the administration and the county will have to consider the financial challenges—and how we address that in the budget. And additionally, the school will need to tackle the internal issues it is now facing."

We've identified some of those "internal" issues over the last several weeks, including President Quinn's heavy schedule of outside business interests and a leadership team that is viewed as the enemy by many long-term staffers at ECC who are saddened by the school's decline.



"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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The Strange Saga of Political Candidates in NT!

Sweeney Payne

We are likely to have a mayoral campaign between two gentlemen who both have long-time North Tonawanda school connections: Arthur Pappas and John Tylec.

Other than Pappas' having been very late with property taxes on his boathouse properties during a previous unsuccessful campaign about a decade ago, both appear to be good men.

Tylec has serious Niagara County experience as well.

The question is, do either of them have the guts to stand on their own two feet in making decisions if we elect them?

How much does each owe to his party?

We repeat, we don't want Democrats or Republicans. We want candidates who represent us as our public servants.

In their campaigns, will we learn why Pappas was selected over Tylec in December to replace Rob Ortt after we'd already elected Pappas as our alderman-at-large?

We're grateful of course that carpet-bagger David Burgio wasn't selected.

It would seem that the more qualified person for appointment as mayor in December would be the one who had both the School District experience and the Niagara County experience: Tylec.

Other than that these two are pretty evenly matched.

They certainly don't have the guerilla vs. the peons mentality we've had from



Our appointed Mayor Pappas will try to be our elected mayor. Will he succeed?

some in the past from both parties.

However, in NT, politicians are born and raised and fed for life by the cronyism that makes jobs for them in City Hall, city departments, the NT School District, Niagara County or New York State government entities.

Happily neither Tylec nor Pappas appears to be interested in using the office of mayor as a steppingstone to become state senator, assemblyman, or Niagara County



P. Russell Rizzo - is running - but hopefully not for his life!

legislator or clerk.

But there are still income generating positions out there for loyal party members, for friends and family.

Wouldn't it be great if whoever is elected as mayor would publicly ask for volunteers for positions he needs to fill on city boards and commissions next year instead of making appointments as political payback?

Until endorsed to run in the fall and elected, Pappas is not able to be anything other than a ceremonial mayor.

A year ago he was endorsed, ran and was elected by us to serve as alderman-at-large after running to be an alderman unsuccessfully in the past and for mayor once also.

He'd have had a year to prove himself to us as alderman-at-large since he was elected to complete the term we'd previously elected Bob Clark to.

Instead, he accepted the appointed mayoral role where we all know he has to mind his p's and q's (meaning positions and questions) and be sure they all stay in line with the party line.

Fortunately, Ortt probably knew he didn't know how to run city government so he brought on Robert Welch as his executive assistant and left him behind when he went to Albany.

Pappas is the beneficiary of the knowledge and experience of Welch, who, although lacking the title, is doing the work of a city manager.

Perhaps we should change the charter and revert back to a ceremonial mayor and have a city manager, since we already have one in place?

In May we learned that Russ Rizzo was finally retiring and Cathy Schwandt had been set up to become president of the Council again IF she gets elected.

Now, she's appointed, not elected, as are Pecoraro, Quinn—and Mayor Pappas!

Are we the only ones who think that smells?

It's good that we didn't celebrate too soon at the news that Rizzo wasn't running for re-election. He's changed his mind—or it was changed for him.

It seems that no one else was interested in representing us on the Common Council

from that party!

Ortt had been appointed as a 27-year-old financial analyst in April 2007 to fill the post of City Treasurer as successor to Leslie Stolzenfels who stepped down after 24 years "to become deputy treasurer of Niagara County" after the school board complained loudly about inefficiencies in her office.

At the time, Rizzo voted against appointing Ortt!

But that was before Rizzo climbed deeply under the covers in the bed of the local Republican Party during the Ortt administration.

In 2007 when Mayor Soos was trying to get proper staffing in the mayor's office, the common council, controlled then by the Republicans, except for Kevin Brick, refused.

Rizzo always voted with the Republicans.

However, in 2010 when Ortt became Mayor, he had both a full-time executive assistant and secretary and no one complained, not even Rizzo.

Surely there is someone else out there who wants to represent us on the Common Council!



Thus spake Swami Vivekananda to his disciples, "We are not weak. And if you are weak it is because you love your own weakness!"



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Sirianni Seeks to Bring Experience to Town Board

Niagara Town Council Candidate Enters The Race With Fresh Ideas

NIAGARA— A prominent local labor leader and Niagara Wheatfield School Board trustee announced his candidacy for the Niagara Town Board today, saying that, in light of recent announcements of council members Danny Sklarski and Rob Clark that they would not seek reelection, the town needs “hard-working leaders committed to fixing what’s broken.”

Richard Sirianni, who served as financial officer for the P.A.C.E. Region Two Council, which spans four states, said he wants to “roll up [his] sleeves and get this town back on track,” identifying a number of issues he hopes to tackle once elected to the Town Board.

“I will focus on long-term road repair and improvement, because our town’s transportation infrastructure is critical, especially as we expand our commercial areas,” Sirianni said.

He also pointed to “Niagara’s greatest shortcoming” as an area he wanted to address as early as his first spring on the board.

“I will zero in, especially, on the flooding in our communities, and also work to ensure that new development doesn’t result in even more flooding problems,” Sirianni said.



What a resume! Rick Sirianni's credentials speak volumes

“Our residents should feel confident that the town’s infrastructure is working for them and protecting their homes.”

“There have been too many flooding issues in our community and especially the Tuscarora Road and Belden Center areas,”

Sirianni said. “These residents have been patient for way too long, and we need to put in place a plan to prevent this and help those residents who live there.”

Sirianni noted that, with planned expansion at the Fashion Outlets and along the Military Road corridor, public safety and living-wage jobs need to be addressed.

“We need to work with good companies that will create good jobs in our community,” Sirianni said. “But we also must support our police and fire departments.”

Sirianni noted he has been attending Town Board and town government workshop meetings for years.

“We live in a beautiful area, but we need to stay focused on jobs so we can keep our children in this area,” he said. “My most important promise: I will work hard to make the Town of Niagara an excellent place to live.”

Sirianni spent more than 30 years in private industry, is a Niagara Wheatfield School Board member and has served on the audit and policy committees.

He is a member of the Town of Niagara Recreational Committee, and president and financial officer of Niagara Wheatfield

Credit Union Board of Directors.

A member of LaSalle Sportsmen Club, he has been a Life member of the NRA for 38 years.

Sirianni’s labor organization experience includes 28 years as union officer and eight years as union president of O.C.A.W, P.A.C.E International Union, and serving as a member of Steel Workers Organization of Action Retirees (SOAR).

He is also a member of the Niagara Orleans Labor Council PAC.

Sirianni noted, “I’ve been involved in contract negotiations, arbitrations, creating new medical plans, and establishing and funding 401K plans. I’ve also worked hard to hold unionized employees to fair standards. I will bring that experience to the table working with our town workforce, and I will never forget the taxpayers that are paying the bills.”

Sirianni lives on Miller Road with his wife, Cheri, and son, Richard J.

Sirianni, who calls himself a “lifelong conservative Democrat” is seeking the Democratic, as well as the Republican, Independence, and Conservative lines in November.

On the Road Again, with Campaign Trail Tales

James Szwedo

The best part of running for office has finally begun: that is, talking to the citizens, listening to their problems, and asking them to allow me to help them by signing my petitions, so that together, our voices will finally be heard.

What saddens me is learning that the citizens have been waiting 4, 5, and even 6 years to have their concerns addressed, if they would ever be addressed at all. The good news, my fellow citizens, is that most of these problems are easily fixed, if we had a government that just listened and acted, rather than one that pays outside interests to study the problems and then reacts as they grow worse.

This, my friends, is something that we would immediately change. We need to fix the small problems quickly and correctly, so that we don’t have to do them twice. It seems in Niagara Falls that, over the last several years, we always find money to do the jobs over, but never the money to do the jobs right the first time. This is consistent, it seems, through all aspects of work performed, whether it be in roads, water, or infrastructure.

Perhaps hiring an engineer with actual experience in roads and aging infrastructure could help to address those problems. Maybe the Mayor should hire another Buf-

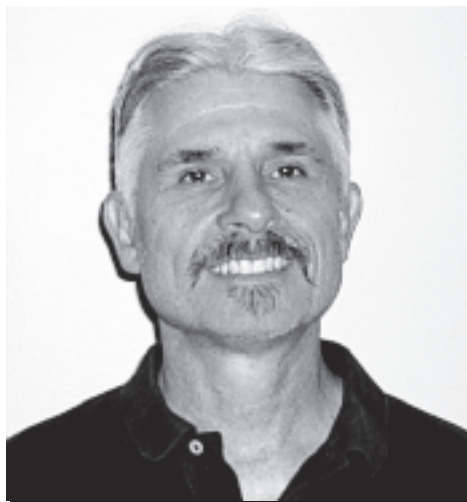
falo firm to study that.

Another thing that bothers me is, how come, when we enter into contracts with developers and businesses, we never seem to have recourse when they don’t live up to their end of the deal? (Real estate contracts, Hamister deal, grants for businesses, tax incentives, etc.)

Could it be the City Law Department? But wait, I’ve been told we have at least one very talented and capable attorney working for the city. I guess it’s too bad he’s been instructed to hand out the work to outside-favored law firms, rather than to do the work within his Department.

While I’m going down this road, let’s talk about the City Police Department, which was sold out by a Mayor who didn’t have the courage to stand up for the men and women who, every day, put themselves in harm’s way to protect the citizens and businesses of Niagara Falls.

I have to stop this train of thought right now, because it seems that everything this Mayor has done was to benefit outside interests at the expense of the citizens he swore to represent. People tell me they’ve been waiting over a year to get a meeting with the Mayor. Please, learn one thing: this is not how it should be! We need to demand more. Good government includes the people, not excludes them. Problems don’t become issues if we don’t ignore them.



James "Jim" Szwedo had this message about the reaction he is getting from the people of this city based on a series of articles he has written for this newspaper: "People really are hearing you. They are reading your paper, and they are listening. As always, thanks for allowing me this opportunity, to share this experience with you and the citizens."

And citizens don’t become angry if we

would just listen and involve them. SO WRONG FOR SO LONG HAS TO END.

How can we justify a Mayor who chooses to run his business outside of the city that he represents? How can we justify a Mayor that holds major fundraisers in Erie County, rather than having the courtesy to choose businesses in the city that he represents? And finally, how can we justify a Mayor that only begins to address the needs of his citizens once every four years?

I’m walking, I’m talking, but most importantly, I’m listening. I am not making you promises. I am not paying someone to make phone calls to you and tell you what to do. I’m knocking on your door, I’m looking you in the eye, and I’m feeling your pain. But most of all, I’m telling you to expect more. To demand more than just empty promises and candy once every four years.

Together, and only together, can we change things. All I can promise you is a voice in the future of Niagara Falls, and that I will always put the citizens and businesses of Niagara Falls ahead of outside interests. I don’t have a magic wand, powerful and rich political backers, or outside interests I owe allegiance to. It’s just me, listening to you.

This is about your voice, and your future.

Uncle Gus' Poetry Corner.....



To the Tune of: "Once There Were Greenfields"

A Work Of Satire and Garish Rhyme By that "Guy" From The Swamp



once in a city
with a waterfall
lived a proud people
with jobs and hope and all

once there were houses
and folks could live and work
before that city
was governed by a jerk

once we had safe streets where I used
to run

proud people left
or simply they got old
waiting for something
hopes and dreams now sold

sold by the gangsters
drunk men selling beer
sold to the rich men
the ones not living here

once there were leaders who really
seemed to care

I don't know why
the people went away
what is there to keep them
no reason left to stay

and now the children
have nothing left to do
maybe one day cricket
a train station for two

where is the city that I used to know

once there was water
throughout this city fair
now there's no water
to even wash my hair

I'm running hoses
just to take a crap
why do I stay here
I must be quite the sap

where is the "service" paid for but not
received

once there was garbage
service now bereft
though we have green bins
that I can't even lift

why in this city
with so many cops
might I be mugged
if I dare to go to tops

where is the freedom that I used to
know

I don't know why
it's such a bitter pill
once we were called
the honeymoon capital

I only know there's
nothing left to do
now that the 'game changer'
the hamster is through

where is the hotel that we will never
know

now paulie dyster
seems he never leaves
wants to remain here
with his band of thieves

and his consultants
dollars yet to carve
in the private sector
his ship of fools would starve

where is the city that once was long
ago



LIUNA HEALTH & SAFETY LAUNCHES EXPANDED SUN SENSE CAMPAIGN



For over 15 years, the Laborers' Health & Safety Fund of North America has run an annual Sun Sense campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of skin cancer. According to the American & Canadian Cancer Societies, nearly 3 million people in North America are diagnosed with skin cancer each year. Overexposure to the sun is the most common cause of skin cancer. LHSFNA through Laborers' Local 91 distributes sunscreen, lip balm, and neck flaps to protect laborers from the exposure to sunlight. Laborers or anyone spending time outdoors should take the necessary precautions to minimize their skin exposure to harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Of course, being outdoors for many is unavoidable so when you go outside, take these precautions:

- Most importantly, always wear sunscreen. Men, women and children should put it on every day and reapply throughout the day. Using an SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 is recommended. Any lower SPF will not protect your skin from harmful UV rays and any higher SPF gives a false sense of protection.

- Try to avoid sun in the middle of the day, from about 10 am to 3 pm. The ultraviolet rays, which cause sunburn, are strongest during this time. When you do go outdoors, especially for long periods in the middle of the day, wear protective clothing. Wear sunglasses that filter UV light. This year in addition to the precautions of sun exposure, we are focusing on preventing heat stress. Working long days under the hot sun, sometimes in confined spaces or wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), puts Laborers at high risk for heat stress. Heat stress occurs when high heat or exertion levels do not allow the body to cool off fast enough. It leads to dehydration, muscle cramps, heat exhaustion and in extreme cases, heat stroke. New information on preventing heat stress and ways to stay cool at work will be available at the training facility this summer.

The Laborers - Employers Cooperation and Training Trust encourages all members and employers to incorporate sun protection measures into their daily routine just as they would any other safety behavior. Regular and liberal application of sunscreen and minimizing midday and high sun exposures throughout the year will usually prevent skin cancer. Laborers need to use lip balm, neck flaps, cooling clothes and sun block towelettes available free at the Union hall to protect against damaging exposure to sunlight. The Laborers encourage everyone to take appropriate steps to protect themselves from harmful sun exposure.

Retired FBI Agent Wants You to Consider Two Constitutional Amendments



J. Gary DiLaura

The Right Side

Based on the challenges facing our country today both from terrorists masquerading as religious groups - usually under the banner of some type of Muslim creed - and the astounding ignorance of many of the members of congress, I am proposing two constitutional amendments for you, the reader, to consider.

Because Law enforcement Agencies cannot investigate groups claiming to be a religion we need to redefine religion.

It is a fact - and I know it first hand as a retired agent that these are hardened and desperate criminals.

For example, the first twin towers bombing in 1993 is a typical example.

FBI New York alerted FBI headquarters in Washington DC and the Department of Justice about the activities of the violence spewing, Omar Abdel Rahman, blind cleric

in Brooklyn, but their investigation was stopped cold by the then Attorney General of the United States, Janet Reno!

And just prior to 9-11-2001, FBI Minneapolis agent Harry Samit had the computer in hand belonging to Zacarias Moussaoui, the 20th terrorist, with all the 9/11 flight plans and pleaded with FBI HQ supervisors to authorize a search warrant but was denied!

I know two of the HQ supervisors involved in the decision (based upon what they believed were DOJ regulations) and trust me they were morons and both were in the Buffalo FBI office at one point. The most frustrating aspect of the job was to trace a hotbed of criminality to a group of terrorists only to get the red light on the investigations because this band of criminals called itself a religious group.

Groups that preached and practiced violence and trained with military weapons and tactics on US soil at tax exempt encampments were officially religions and they could not be lawfully investigated.

We must stop this insanity!

So therefore I am again proposing my constitutional amendment to address this issue - before these issues address us and our safety again!

Here it is the 28th amendment:

1. No group, of two or more people, that preaches or practices violence of any type, where that violence is in direct conflict with the Constitution or the laws of the United

States or the laws of the States, may be considered a religion, as set forth in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

2. No such group shall be afforded any of the protections, either criminal or civil, afforded to religions by the Constitution or the laws of the United States or laws of any State, and is by this amendment, defined as a Criminal Organization, and may be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by law enforcement agencies of the United States and the States in accordance with the laws of the United States and the laws of the States.

3. No investigation of any group, as defined in 1 above, by any sworn and duly appointed law enforcement agency may be thwarted, infringed, or hindered by anyone or any agency or any judicial jurisdiction under the claim of religion, religious group or faith.

4. Gunfire, explosions, military training, the practice of assault techniques by any group of 2 or more people who claim to be a religion, are all probable cause to believe that the group is not a religion.

When a proposed 3,000 page bill came before the House of Representatives, former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi urged her goose stepping colleagues, "Just sign it so we can see what's in it."

This and many similar examples that can be found has given rise to my Proposed 29th Amendment

Here's the 29th amendment

1. Congress shall pass no law, the Bill for which is in excess of 500 pages in total length including all references and footnotes which must be spelled out in full text. No references or footnotes not included in full text may be included as part of any Bill in either House.

2. No member of the House of Representatives or member of the Senate may vote on any Bill without first swearing or affirming under oath and in writing that he or she has read the entire text of the particular Bill.

I would have liked to have added a No. 3 to the 29th amendment which is that each and every member of both houses also are required to swear an oath that they understood the bill that they read and even answer a short multiple choice test. If they failed they could not vote on the bill.

After due consideration it seems unrealistic to require this since so few would pass the test that it would be impossible to get a quorum.

On the other hand "within the last 10 years", as one political outsider observed a few years back, "we had a quarter of a million laws passed. How many of these ever gave you a right? Not one. They all dilute your rights."

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City Hall Jokes

Political irony. Dyster is spending \$13,000,000 to bring ice to youth hockey with his ice pavilion renovation project, but never had to spend a dime to bring ice to 72nd and 77th streets in LaSalle.



Taxpayers are complaining about the mayor's \$5000 "test trenches" on 72nd Street. The residents should remember that in a city with a \$50,000,000 courthouse and a \$45,000,000 train station, \$5000 for a hole in the ground sounds just about right.



Introducing the "critical thinking" corner: If a \$32,000,000 courthouse ends up costing \$50,000,000 where did the \$18,000,000 go?



The initials are still the same. The city's Community Development department is now being referred to as the



Covert Department in light of the way its director, Seth Piccirillo, operates Isaiah 61 and manages his department finances.



Answer: Sherlock Holmes, Colombo and Mark Furman.

Question: Name three famous detectives that never had a crack at solving the Paul Dyster anonymous fund mystery.



Overheard on the third floor of city hall: "After reading Nick Melson's tweets it looks like Dyster hired Bluto from Animal House to be his administrative assistant.



For those who think Dyster is paying too much for the holes on 72nd Street they should remember he's paying about \$100,000 for every hole running a city



department.

How deep are those "test trenches" in LaSalle? Deep enough to hide some city hall dirty laundry.



Question: How do you make \$18,000,000 disappear?

Answer: Build a courthouse in Niagara Falls.



"Some people read the offensive and bigoted remarks made by my administrative assistant and think, 'that's outrageous!' I read those same offensive and bigoted remarks and think, 'I need this joker to get reelected!'" Paul Dyster in a rare moment of candor.



The sneaky folks at city hall have slowly moved the Internet release of the council agenda from the Wednesday before the meeting to the Friday before the meeting, and moved the release of the council meeting support material from the Thursday before the meeting to the Friday before the meeting. At this rate the agenda and support material will eventually be posted on the Internet after the meetings.

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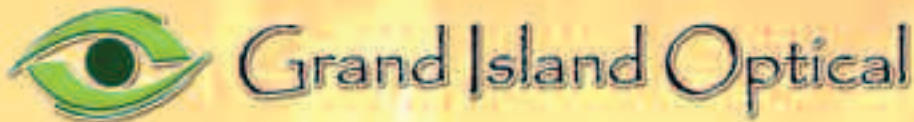
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