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# NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

THE TRUTH IS ALWAYS FAIR

FREE

OCT 20, 2017 - OCT 26, 2017

VOL. 18, NO. 34

FREE

## Early Christmas for 300 city workers as Dyster, Touma, Grandinetti hand out raises



Dyster-Touma-Grandinetti math... average taxpayer doesn't vote... 300 city workers [and their families] do vote: **Raise** taxes, give city workers a **raise**

## New York Times picks up Reporter story on NXIVM cult woman branding

### Mike Hudson

Readers of the New York Times this week were treated to a series of blockbuster articles concerning the alleged torture and sexual exploitation of women at the hands of Keith Raniere and other high ranking members of his NXIVM cult.

The revelations will come as no surprise to readers of the Niagara Falls Reporter, which broke the horrific story in May.

The Times reports, written by top investigative journalist Barry Meier, reveals that numerous complaints by the victimized women to various state and local law enforcement and health agencies resulted in no action whatsoever.

In his articles, Mr. Meier credited Niagara Falls Reporter Publisher Frank Parlato for his work on breaking the sordid story.

Mr. Meier reported on Wednesday that a spokesman for Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the launch of a comprehensive review as to why the victims' traumatic accounts fell on deaf ears.

NXIVM describes itself as an organization offering courses and workshops designed to help improve self-fulfillment. Its website describes it as "new ethical understanding that allows us to build an internal civilization and have it manifest in the external world," whatever that means. The program is led by Mr. Raniere, who is known within the group as "Vanguard," and former members have alleged that he had sex with members and urged women in the group to follow "near starvation diets."

The group is largely funded by Sara and Clare Bronfman, the youngest daughters of the late billionaire philanthropist Edgar Bronfman Sr., who himself described NXIVM as a cult and is reported to have considered putting his daughters into a deprogramming facility.

The Times' story is based on numerous reports and firsthand accounts of a secret society within the already secretive NXIVM cult known as Dominus Servus, which is Latin for "master-slave." Entry into the group requires



Keith Raniere, also known as "Vanguard"

the all female membership to be branded with a hot iron on their pubic region with the initials of Mr. Raniere, the Times stated.

In order to enter into this necessarily exclusive group, where Mr. Raniere is willing to impart both his hidden teachings and afford, in some instances, personal communion with the women, the branding ceremony is required.

In this ritualistic ceremony, which takes about three hours, the women make what is known as "The Vow" which includes a life-long commitment to the service of Mr. Raniere.

After a probationary period, women are invited to participate in the ceremony and an instrument known as a cautery, made of metal, is heated to a dull red glow and applied to the cleanly shaven skin of the pubic area of the woman being initiated.

The hot iron cauterizes the pubic area, leaving permanent tissue scarring that forms the letters KR, Mr. Raniere's initials. The process is similar in effect to the branding of cattle. Dr. Danielle Roberts MD, a licensed physician, performs the branding to ensure the safety of the women. Dr. Roberts is a student of Mr. Raniere and one his ardent followers.



The Slave Brand with initials K-R and A-M

pledged their slavery to him – and in return will receive more fulsome instructions from him – will be less likely to flee as others have done in the past.

One of the women who was branded, Sarah Edmondson, told the Times she was first recruited into this "secret sisterhood" by Ms. Salzman. She described the group as a "force for good" that taught female members how to overcome "weaknesses" like being overemotional:

"Submission and obedience would be used as tools to achieve those goals, several women said. The sisterhood would comprise circles, each led by a "master" who would recruit six "slaves," according to two women. In time, they would recruit slaves of their own.

"She made it sound like a bad-ass bitch boot camp," Ms. Edmondson said.

Ms. Edmondson and others said that during training, the women were required to send their master texts that read "Morning M"

## NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

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and "Night M." During drills, a master text-ed her slaves "?" and they had 60 seconds to reply "Ready M." Trainees who failed had to pay penalties, including fasting, or could face physical punishments, two women said.

Although former members filed complaints about the branding and NXIVM with the New York State Department of Health, the police, and state medical regulators, the New York Times reports that they have not taken action against the group. After word of the branding spread among NXIVM followers, the Times reports that "panic ensued" with women instructed to delete encrypted messages and erase Google documents. A text message in the article also reveals that Raniere knew women were being branded.

It was unclear if Sara and Clare Bronfman underwent the painful procedure that burned a symbol into the bodies of some members of the cult.

Sara Bronfman, 41, has reportedly poured millions of her family's fortune into

the cult. Clare Bronfman is a member of the executive board of NXIVM and is vice president in charge of operations.

In the interest of full disclosure, the Bronfman sisters are the star witnesses in the federal case against Reporter Publisher Parlato, who once worked for them on a real estate deal in Los Angeles.

The case involves a \$1 million payment by the sisters to Mr. Parlato, which was winding its way through the civil court system when the sisters, perhaps at Mr. Raniere's urging, opted to make the business deal a criminal matter.

How the explosive Times expose and Gov. Cuomo's review of this sordid mess culminates is uncertain. What is certain is that it's been a bad week for Mr. Raniere, the Bronfman sisters and the prosecutors in the Parlato case.

Clare and Sara Bronfman



## NXIVM, Bronfman & Parlato; who is the victim?

On October 17, 2017, the New York Times published a story highlighting some of the brutal activities connected to the self-help organization known as NXIVM, which included branding women with the initials of its leader, Keith Raniere. NVIVM, and its affiliated entities, have been abusing women and exploiting its membership for years, apparently with unbridled impunity.

The release of the New York Times story serves somewhat to vindicate the efforts of Niagara Falls Reporter publisher Frank Parlato, who broke the story of the branding in this newspaper and on his blog, the Frank Report, in June 2017. Mr. Parlato has been in the forefront of reporting on the abuses of Mr. Raniere and NXIVM for many years now, since he personally became ensnared in the organization's vicious web of litigious vindictiveness.

NXIVM has used the legal system against its enemies from the beginning, financed by the contributions of Clare and Sara Bronfman, heiresses to the Seagram liquor fortune, and willing thralls of Mr. Raniere. They primarily go after journalists who have written negative things about the group or its founder. They also will not hesitate to go after people who leave the organization, and reveal some of the unsavory aspects of the operation.

Mr. Parlato was never a member of NXIVM. He was initially brought on as a consultant to promote NXIVM and later on to help rescue a failing real estate deal in California. The Bronfmans later sued Mr. Parlato, claiming he had defrauded them of \$1 million. That suit would generate a criminal prosecution, which is currently winding its way through federal and state courts. Mr. Parlato vehemently denies the charges.

In 2008, Mr. Parlato signed a Letter of Intent (LOI), which detailed that he would receive 33.33% of net profits generated from his management of a real property development venture. That would serve as his compensation. He would also receive a one million dollar advance, which would be deducted from the net profits he was projected to

receive. That sum would also constitute a lien against his interest in a Niagara Falls property. Though Mr. Parlato signed the LOI, the Bronfmans apparently did not.

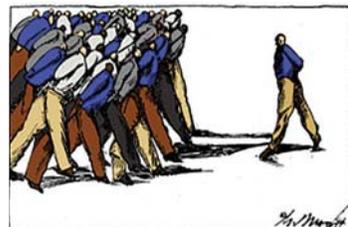
Subsequently, in March 2011, during a trial in California, Clare Bronfman was shown the LOI, identified Frank Parlato's signature, but was unsure about the agreement as it related to the million dollars. She felt there was an agreement to loan Mr. Parlato a million dollars in a separate agreement (that has never been produced) and that there was never any agreement to pay 33.33% of the net profits, which is why the LOI was not signed.

However, in June of 2011, before a grand jury, she testified that the LOI was the "initial agreement" that she recalled "actually being entered into."

When Clare Bronfman sued Mr. Parlato in New York, in April 2012, she stated in her verified complaint that the Bronfmans loaned Mr. Parlato one million dollars as a demand loan without a written agreement.

Yet when the federal government indicted Mr. Parlato, based on representations made by the Bronfmans, it was alleged that there was a written 2008 agreement to pay Mr. Parlato one million dollars for his services to the Bronfmans.

Consistently, Clare Bronfman has twisted the circumstances to suit her own goals under oath, obfuscating the truth and allowing the government to prosecute Mr. Parlato under the guise that she was defrauded.



**If the whole world stands against you sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right?**

She conveniently displayed certainty that the Letter of Intent was not entered into because of the 33.33% compensation deal in March 2011, but then relies on the terms of that same agreement to explain paying one million dollars to Mr. Parlato. Who's defrauding whom?

In other cases pursued by Mr. Raniere and Clare Bronfman, the judges often caught on to the vindictive nature of their litigation.

This is the guile and ingenuity that

operates at the top of NXIVM. Mr. Raniere has used the Bronfmans' money to perpetuate this scheme on hundreds of people. Now the national spotlight has finally fallen upon the self-proclaimed "Vanguard". Almost certainly, there will be other crimes uncovered. While it may be too late for the branded victims, hopefully the authorities will take heed and act in the interests of true justice.



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## Gov. Cuomo's jobs "Strikeforce" invades Niagara Falls Declares Victory, then retreats back to Albany

### James Hufnagel

"Niagara Falls Unemployment Rate highest in New York State" blared the headline for our lead story on August 13 of this year.

As we reported, the Niagara Falls unemployment figure for June, 2017 was an appalling 7.7%, by far the highest of any city with population above 25,000 in all of New York State, according to the state Department of Labor. The next closest was the southern tier city of Elmira, coming in at 7.0%. Buffalo was at 6.7%.

To the rescue comes Governor Cuomo and his state Department of Labor, sponsoring a jobs fair at the Conference and Events Center on Falls Street last week.

Was the governor's jobs fair a direct response to our unemployment story two months previous? You be the judge.

Sounding like something straight off the set of a Chuck Norris movie, Gov. Cuomo announced the creation of an "Unemployment Strikeforce" back in May of 2014. The inaugural Strikeforce's focus was initially limited to Bronx and Kings Counties in New York City and two adjoining counties in the extreme north of the state, Jefferson and Lewis.

"This new initiative brings together major players from both the public and private sectors in order to assist New Yorkers in areas with the highest unemployment rates overcome barriers to finding work," stated the governor in his press release, "This Strikeforce will go a long way toward connecting hard-working New Yorkers with job opportunities in their communities."

In what is a recurring theme with regards to Gov. Cuomo's Strikeforce efforts, it really didn't have anything to do with lowering taxes, streamlining regulations, reducing the size of government or doing anything else to foster a business-friendly atmosphere here in New York State, which perennially ranks at or near the bottom nationally in all of those categories.

Instead, it's about "working closely with local elected officials and community-based organizations to connect jobseekers



GET A REAL JOB! Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster explains to NYS Dept. of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon (left) why turn-out at the Conference Center jobs fair was less than half of that pre-registered. He told her, "It's the same with elections, LOL!"

with local business opportunities," and "business-driven training that will focus on New Yorkers who need it most, providing them with the skills they need to get back to work."

That's the way things work here in Andrew Cuomo's New York State: First get "trained," then you can be "connected to" non-existent jobs.

Gov. Cuomo waited two years, until May of 2016, before unveiling his "Western New York Employment Strikeforce," losing the "Un-" prefix in the process. At least marketing consultants have found jobs under the Cuomo administration.

It took a year for Mr. Cuomo's Western New York Employment Strikeforce to hold its first jobs fair. In partnership with Concerned Clergy of Western New York, the event was advertised as offering access to over 60 employers with 2,200 job opportunities. Problem was, it was held at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in downtown Buffalo. Not much help to the New York State Capital of Unemployment, Niagara Falls.

Then came our August article on the grinding misery of joblessness here, and the rest is history.

Gov. Cuomo's Strikeforce was dispatched to storm the Falls, overcome resistance and establish an employment beachhead in the Cataract City.

This time around, with 90 employers attending, more than a thousand jobseekers were expected to apply for the usual, ballpark, pull-it-out-of-your-ass figure of "over 2,000 job openings" to be filled. However, WGRZ-TV, on the scene, reported that not all of the 90 were actually hiring, or even accepting applications. In addition, only approximately 400 of the pre-registered 850 bothered to show up. Perhaps word had gotten around that the state's Niagara Falls jobs fair was just more Cuomo-instigated public relations nonsense.

These so-called "jobs fairs" aren't the only silliness emanating from Gov. Cuomo's Western New York Employment Strikeforce. On the Dept. of Labor's website, at the Strikeforce page, you can click on "October 2017 Current Job Openings" for the "Niagara Area," not "Niagara Falls" or "Niagara County," "Niagara," whatever that is.

Two columns with headings "Vacancies" and "Companies With The Most Jobs" materialize, the first listing some 1,200 job openings in fields ranging from Architecture and Engineering to Construction to Health Care and Sales, and the second, varied employers from KeyCorp and Dollar General to Maid of the Mist.

Now say you were an Architect or Engineer and you clicked on vacancies. A box prompts you to enter your zip code, and the mile radius which you are willing to commute. We entered "14305" and "10 miles." Only 37 job openings came up - 8 in Niagara Falls, and half of those at one

NYS Dept of Labor @NYSLabor - Oct 12  
Today's the day! Join us at 11am for the Niagara Falls #JobFair! Check out our partners @WholeFoods while you're there!



One of dozens of tweets from the Labor Department promoting last week's jobs fair at the Conference Center spotlighted Whole Foods.

The problem is, only one Whole Foods exists in all of Western New York. It's in Amherst and it opened last month.

firm, Olin.

Oddly, of the 21 categories, not one is remotely tourism-related. Odd, because tourism is a \$100+ billion industry in New York State.

The closest category to tourism appears to be "Food preparation and serving related," and the good news is, 31 of the 57 listed jobs are in Niagara Falls!

But, Oh No, Mr. Bill, 15 of the 31 are at the Fashion Outlet mall, Olive Garden and Longhorn's Steakhouse, in the Town of Niagara, out on Military Road, far removed from downtown Niagara Falls. And some of the jobs have been listed since May.

It's a similar story with the links under "Companies." Maid of the Mist has 20 positions listed for 2018, all part-time, seasonal.

The top supposed employer, with the most job openings for "Niagara," is KeyCorp, with 133 openings. Problem is, those are scattered all over the state, from Tarrytown to Suffern, from Saranac Lake to Dunkirk. Most are in Amherst.

Luckily, there is an election next month, and the residents of Niagara Falls will get the chance to vote for change.



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## Open Letter to the Town of Lewiston from Supervisor Steve Broderick



**Steve Broderick**

Town of Lewiston Supervisor

When I decided two years ago to stand for election, I did my due diligence and understood our Town faced some serious issues. Our bond rating had been reduced, increasing interest expense, our water infrastructure was continuing to deteriorate, the Town had to face reduced revenue from outside sources including Modern and CWM, and contract negotiations with our unions had to be re-negotiated.

These problems and others, though difficult, I felt were manageable if I could provide the ingredient that had been missing but most essential: Leadership. I asked myself at the time, "Am I up to this challenge?" After thoughtful consideration, I answered "yes".

Your Town Board was immediately faced with the untimely death of our newly re-elected Highway Superintendent, Doug Janese. And what did we do? We appointed Dave Trane, a Democrat. I hope you heard that. A majority Republican Town Board hired a Democrat! We did this in the best interests of the citizens, the taxpayers of Lewiston. We picked the best qualified guy available... not the best "Republican." Similarly, our Budget Director, Marty Blazick, an appointee from the previous administration, was asked to remain in her critically important position. Once again, we chose her qualifications over "politics as usual"!

This has set the transparent, Open Government tone of my administration. "Do the right thing." And, if you study the record, more than 90% of the votes taken by the Town Board are unanimous, 5-0; that should tell you that this Town Board has serious people who are serving the public and not afraid to face our issues.

We have been very fiscally responsible. Among my first actions was to engage the services of a new auditing firm. They have given us a fresh outlook. We did find it necessary to impose a Town tax but have proposed no increase in 2018. Budget Director Marty Blazick has developed a bare bones budget that preserves services and cuts expenses. We have renegotiated

the union contracts for three of our unions. No fanfare, no public arguing; just common sense on both sides.

I have been very fortunate to serve with some great people in Town government. The Town staff has been uniformly excellent. Our Department heads are knowledgeable and cooperate with each other like never before. The tone at Town Hall is calm and friendly, with everyone pulling in the same direction. The days of public acrimony are past. Our Board lost the services of Beth Ceretto, an Independent, who is retiring. She will be missed. I am recommending that lifelong resident of Lewiston, Vic Eydt be elected to fill that open seat. My recommendation is always going to be to select the most qualified person. Please consider Vic Eydt's vast government experience and knowledge base when you cast your ballot.

Councilman Al Bax is on the ballot again this year for his 4th term serving the Town. Please return him to office. Al is our longest sitting Councilman and an essential part of our team. His knowledge is an extremely important asset to the Town and the Board. He has earned your vote for his contributions to our Town. Like myself, Al Bax has vision and bases his votes on the long range fiscal stability of the Town and preserving the great quality of life in Lewiston.

As I ask for your vote on November 7th for another term as your Supervisor, I am optimistic about our future. However, new challenges await. The pace of development has increased and must be carefully considered. Legislation must be written to manage wind power and solar power projects. Financial issues will never go away, infrastructure needs will continue, budgets must be defended and at the same time, our primary goal that must always be foremost in our minds is to protect the taxpayers and the quality of life that make Lewiston so special.

Thank you for your faith in me. I respectfully ask for your vote on November 7th.

Sincerely,  
Steve Broderick

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## Dyster's whopping tax increases to pass as homeowners, businesses take the fall

### Mike Hudson

The 2018 Niagara Falls city budget, otherwise known as Mayor Paul Dyster's massive tax increase, has every chance of passing, despite the outcry raised by taxpayers in what is already the most highly taxed municipality in the state.

At Monday night's City Council meeting a vote was taken on a resolution to postpone the dates of some of the budget hearings, put forth by Councilmembers Andrew Touma and Kristen Grandinetti, who are both running for re-election in a six way race.

They also managed to get the starting times of the hearings changed from 5 p.m. to 4 p.m. in an apparent attempt to prevent working taxpayers from witnessing the process.

Additionally, whatever changes are made to Mayor Dyster's budget need to be subsequently reviewed by the mayor, who has the power to veto any and all changes. The Council needs four votes to override these vetos, and with the pro-Dyster Council majority of Mr. Touma, Ms. Grandinetti and Charles Walker remaining in office until January 1, regardless of who wins the election, the chances of any significant overrides are slim to none.

Slim just left town, by the way.

Dr. Dyster has proposed whopping property tax increases of nearly three percent for homeowners and 14 percent for businesses. He claims the increases are necessary due to the loss of revenue from the Seneca Niagara Casino, which handed the city between \$16 million and \$22 million a year.

The mayor blew through nearly \$250 million of this cash, mostly plugging holes

in previous city budgets. When longtime City Controller Maria Brown called him out on it publicly, he fired her.

An audit released by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli agreed with Ms. Brown's assessment 100 percent and stated frankly that the city would be flat broke in December.

And asked whether the city could expect any additional aid from the state to stave off the looming crisis, Gov. Andrew Cuomo laughed out loud before saying, "No."

Interestingly, Mayor Dyster's 2018 budget contains no belt tightening at City Hall, no layoffs or anything else that might ameliorate the need for such a massive tax increase.

City Hall sources told the Niagara Falls Reporter that there will be only one budget hearing that will allow public input, scheduled for November 30, and the actual vote on the tax hike will likely occur on December 3.

In other words, nothing can be done by anyone to prevent one of the most fiscally reckless administrations in the city's history from what it is about to do.

The result will be even more abandoned homes in Niagara Falls as hardworking, taxpaying families continue to flee the most crime ridden municipality in the state, and more and more already struggling businesses close up shop for good.

That is the legacy of Paul Dyster. The Dyster who has been elected three times as mayor with the help of the city unions and the teacher's union, along with tens of thousands of dollars sent by out of town and out of state donors seeking favor at City Hall.

All of those groups have done very well under the mayor's nine year reign of error, while everyone else here has suffered.

## MAYOR PAUL DYSTER

### CAUSES OF TERMINATION

**[X] FAILED TO KEEP HIS PROMISE:**

Mayor Dyster promised not to use the city's share of casino funds to cover gaps in his budget, but now he wants to spend \$12.5 million in casino revenue to do just that. Instead of investing it in the city's economic development, as the funds are meant to be.

**[X] FAILED TO BALANCE THE BUDGET:**

A top priority of the city government is a balanced budget, but Mayor Dyster is moving in the wrong direction—using \$8 million of casino cash to plug the holes in this year's budget and seeking \$12.5 million for next year's while still raising taxes and running a deficit.

**REMOVE MAYOR DYSTER NOV 3**

**THE BUFFALO NEWS**

"Dyster relies on casino cash to balance his proposed budget."

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN - An old campaign ad presages the city's present budget predicament.

## More pollution of mighty Niagara River inevitable, Water Board member says



The offensive blackwater discharge into the Niagara River nauseated thousands of tourists on the Maid of the Mist and surrounding parkland.

### Mike Hudson

Ever since 2002, when then city councilman and now Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster spearheaded the creation of the Water Board here, it's been one excuse after another.

No water service to your house for months on end? Not our problem, the Water Board said. Sewage backing up in your basement? Call a plumber. The stench from the Buffalo Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant pervading the surrounding neighborhood? Of course it's gonna stink, it's summer.

Meanwhile, a series of constant rate increases has contributed to a multimillion dollar surplus in the Water Board's slush fund.

Or should we say "sludge fund"?

But no fewer than five incidents since July, involving the discharge of millions of gallons of raw, untreated sewage into the Ni-

agara River, seems to have brought matters to a head.

Water Board member Nick Forster came clean this week and told City Council members that nothing less than a cash infusion of at least \$120 million would stanch the bleeding.

To be fair, Mr. Forster has only been on the Water Board since January. But \$120 million problems don't happen overnight. The real question is why didn't the board bring any of this up before the crisis developed this past tourist season.

Mr. Forster offered "my personal apologies and that of the whole board for any harm caused the city and tourists by the inky black water discharges into the Niagara River."

The whole thing started on July 29 when, the Water Board claims, a worker failed to follow verbal instructions during the process of



Water Board member Nick Forster and Gov. Cuomo in a 2013 photo.

dewatering a sewage sediment basin.

The pump ran too long and caused the release of the discolored water, according to the board's report to the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Water Board can't even get it stories straight. An earlier statement said a worker left his post during the procedure to help with a problem elsewhere in the sewer plant.

Thousands of tourists were exposed to the black, smelly sewer residue from the Falls Street Tunnel, a discharge pipe located near the Maid of the Mist dock in the Niagara River Gorge below the Falls.

An aerial video of the black cloud, shot by a pilot for Rainbow Air, a helicopter tour company, went viral on the internet.

The DEC concluded that the Water Board had violated water quality standards.

On Sept. 14, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo came to Niagara Falls to announce that the

DEC was fining the Water Board a measly \$75,000.

Since then, there have been four additional overflows, the most recent blamed on what the National Weather Service reported to be a half inch of rain in the city.

"In wet weather events we're going to continue to overflow. We can't stop it. We have no place to put the water," said Mr. Forster. "We're going to have put in tanks that are 30 million gallons. We don't have the property that we can grab, nor the money."

Mr. Forster estimated the cost of fixing the problem at \$120 million.

"If we had the money today and the shovel tomorrow, we're still talking five years down the road," he said. "So unfortunately, this issue of the Niagara Falls wastewater treatment plant and overflows are going to continue."

## An early Christmas for 300 city workers; Dyster, Grandinetti, Touma hand out raises

### Mike Hudson

With a recent state audit confirming that the city will be completely broke by December, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo stating unequivocally that no addition aid would be forthcoming in the wake of the abrupt end of cash from the Seneca Niagara Casino, Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and Councilmembers Kristen Grandinetti, Andrew Touma and Charles Walker responded this week by handing out raises to around 300 mostly unionized city employees.

"The Steelworkers have been waiting a long time to get their contract settled," Ms. Grandinetti said. "I'm going to sleep just fine tonight knowing that I did this."

Mr. Touma also defended the raises.

"These folks work hard for a living. And I think they deserve a fair wage and they conceded with the city, worked with the city, to cut back on healthcare," he said.

Two of the deals were for members of the Steelworkers Union, while the third



Two of these three City Councilmembers are up for re-election in a couple of weeks and the third is retiring, leaving open the possibility of a clean sweep.

covered non-union city workers.

With Councilman Ezra Scott absent from the meeting, Councilman Ken Tompkins provided the lone voice of reason. Unlike Mr. Touma and Ms. Grandi-

netti, Mr. Tompkins is a long time businessman.

"We are in financial trouble with the casino money in limbo right now possibly to never come our way again," he said.

"We really got to start to be looking at things and tighten our belt."

The state audit projects the city's reserve fund will be wiped out by the end of next year, and a projected budget gap of \$12 million in 2019.

Even Mayor Dyster's massive tax increase won't help, since it will only raise around \$2.8 million in additional revenue.

Repeated warnings by the state and former City Controller Maria Brown regarding the practice of using casino revenue to plug holes in the general fund fell on the mayor's deaf ears.

"It's crazy," Councilman Tompkins told the Niagara Falls Reporter. "Handing out raises when the city's about to go bankrupt?"

You can bet that all 300 of those city workers will turn out on Election Day to help re-elect Ms. Grandinetti and Mr. Touma in a six way race for three open council seats.

The raises handed out this week amount to little more than bribes.

# State DEC finally cracks down on Allied Waste, worse than skunks

## Mike Hudson

Even stinkier than the skunk invasion written about just weeks ago on these pages, a smelly landfill rivals only the city's own Buffalo Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant in terms of the putrid, nauseating stench that now blankets much of the city, particularly during the summer tourist season.

Complaints about the landfill's obscene aroma have poured into City Hall for the past few years. But Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and his City Council majority of Kristen Grandinetti, Andrew Touma and Charles Walker put it on the pay no mind list.

So residents went to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), which launched an investigation, the results of which were announced last week.

The Allied Waste Niagara Falls Landfill, near the corner of I-190 and Niagara Falls Boulevard here, has been fined \$75,000 after the investigation confirmed the landfill as the primary source of repeated sulfur and garbage-type odor complaints, the DEC confirmed. Under the terms of the consent order, the facility must undertake specific actions to reduce or eliminate odors at the landfill.

"DEC continues to vigorously enforce New York's strict environmental rules and regulations to protect public health and the environment," said DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos. "This order includes a lengthy list of requirements to address the numerous



Located behind this Town of Niagara mall, the Allied Waste dump that permeating the city with a sickening smell has been fined by the state DEC.

odor complaints from the public that DEC has tracked related to this facility."

In addition to the penalty imposed, DEC's consent order requires Allied Landfill to:

- Install and operate a gas collection and control system in the working face of the landfill and any future active landfill areas at the site;

- Operate flares to burn landfill gas at several locations on the landfill;

- Initiate a pilot project for treatment of landfill leachate to mitigate sulfur odors in wastewater prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer system;

- Revise the Odor Management Plan

for the facility;

- Evaluate options for restricting the type of odor-causing waste material the landfill accepts for disposal;

- Perform a study of the gas emitted from the landfill to identify all potential air contaminant emissions to determine what additional controls should be installed at the landfill.

As is usual when he gets caught with his pants down, Mayor Dyster – and Councilmembers Touma, Grandinetti and Walker – didn't utter a peep.

Dr. Dyster, who had the backing of many area environmentalists early on in his cam-

paign, proclaimed himself to be the city's first "Green Mayor."

Instead, his actions and inaction have shown him to be just another "filthy lucre mayor," in a tradition that is as old as the city itself.

In addition, the Dyster administration has never looked into accusations that Allied Waste has transported fracking waste over city streets in direct violation of a strict city ban.

Allied Waste is a national company with a long list of environmental and other successful prosecutions against it.

The company once paid out a massive \$44,237,336 fine for environmental violations and lesser amounts for crimes and misdemeanors including (but not limited to) employment discrimination, civil contempt, labor relations violations, workplace safety or health violations, wage and hour violations and violations of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

They've got a record longer than both your arms and these are the people your mayor and his council minions choose to do business with. Allied Waste Industries Inc. have been the target of federal and state investigations from New York to California.

Here, Paul Dyster's Sgt. Schultz defense – "I know nothing!" – just doesn't wash.

Don't take our word for it. Google it yourself.



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## More subsidized housing on the way; Is it a blessing, or a curse?

### Mike Hudson

Another day, another scheme to spend millions of taxpayer dollars on low rent housing in a city already so vacant that private landlords are just giving up.

You can't throw a rock around here and not hit some politically connected insider with a yen to house the downtrodden and walk away with a nice piece of change in the bargain.

Rev. Darius G. Pridgen, pastor at True Bethel Baptist Church and president of the Buffalo Common Council, is the brains behind this particular, um, "development."

The former Sacred Heart Catholic Church on South Avenue and its elementary school became True Bethel's Niagara Falls campus about six years ago.

The plan for True Bethel Gardens, the project's name, calls for converting the two-story school into 30 apartments. Twenty of the 30 units would have one bedroom, and the rest two or three bedrooms.

"We're still working on confirming the financing," True Bethel spokesperson Janice McKinnie told the Buffalo News. The developer anticipates some state funding, she added.

The Niagara Falls Zoning Board of Appeals granted variances to the church Tuesday for parking on the property. The parking spaces now assigned to the church would be made available to the tenants of the apartments.

"We are looking to make sure that people in the low- to moderate-income (brackets) are able to rent these apartments," Ms. McKinnie said. "They are not designated for any particular population."

The church-owned True Community Development Corp. is already heavily involved in government subsidized housing. It operates two housing projects near its main church on East Ferry Street in Buffalo comprising 30 townhouses and 50 units of senior housing. It's also building single-family homes on East Ferry, Ms. McKinnie said. The corporation previously built three single-family homes on Woodlawn Avenue in Buffalo.

The question is why Niagara Falls, already up to its ears in "low to moderate" government subsidized housing, as well as hundreds of Section 8 qualified units offered by private landlords, needs any more.



"I get sick of people saying, you know, well it's never been done here," remarked Rev. Darius Pridgen on a self-produced video promoting his Affordable Rent and Housing (ARH) program.

One thing is for certain.

than a lifetime away.

The time when a developer steps forward to build a luxury condominium development here, or even proposes to build a single home priced at over \$100,000, may be more



The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration.

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## Jingle Falls USA another accident waiting to happen for Dyster here

### Mike Hudson

When an idea fails miserably twice in recent memory, why not try it a third time?

That seems to be the logic being applied by Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and John Percy's publicly funded Destination Niagara USA in announcing yet another winter festival here, this one called "Jingle Falls USA."

Previously, largely taxpayer funded failed attempts at drawing tourists to Niagara Falls have included Mayor Dyster's failed Holiday Market in 2011 and the Festival of Lights, which had its plug pulled in 2001 while the future mayor was serving on the City Council.

In a statement issued over the weekend, Mayor Dyster failed to mention either of the two previous fiascos in once again calling for a taxpayer funded event, hoping to entice mostly Florida or Las Vegas-bound tourists into coming to Niagara Falls and enjoying the 21 degree temperatures while trudging through as much as three feet of snow accumulation.

"Downtown Niagara Falls is changing," Mayor Dyster said, pointing to the construction of new hotels and other taxpayer subsidi-

dized development.

"We can all agree, however, that more activities and events are needed to complement bricks and mortar investment here," he added.

Although occupancy is trending upward at all times of the year, the mayor claimed, Niagara Falls hotel operators still face what he called "a seasonality gap," with winter the slowest season.

He said much the same back in 2011, when the city and the state spent a combined \$500,000 on the disastrous Holiday Market, which promoter Larry Rivers later claimed lost \$1 million.

Mr. Rivers proposed to develop a Holiday Market that would "feature approximately 80 vendors from various parts of the region and country."

He delivered 35.

He estimated 250,000 would attend the Market. He delivered no more than 75,000 or at best, 30 percent of the number promised in the contract he signed.

Several local media outlets, including the Niagara Falls Reporter, were outraged and some even called for a state investigation.

Of course, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, then in office less than a year, was loath to investigate anything having to do with Paul Dyster, per-



Mayor Dyster announces the latest reincarnation of his childhood Christmas memories.



The Festival of Lights and the Wintergarden - both now only live in our memories.



Mayor Dyster's forlorn Holiday Market on a Saturday afternoon during the height of the shopping season, a big lump of coal in the city's budgetary stocking.

haps his strongest ally in Western New York.

The Festival of Lights saga is in many ways even sadder. The event used to draw thousands to downtown in Niagara Falls, N.Y., and to its Convention Center and Winter Garden.

Both the convention center and Winter Garden are long gone, and so is the Festival of Lights.

The magnificent glass and steel Winter Garden was demolished in 2009, while Dr. Dyster served as mayor, and the Convention Center was given to the Seneca Nation of Indians for use as a casino in 2002, when he was a city councilman.

The lavish Festival of Lights was launched in 1981 and was named the number one attraction in North America by the American Bus Association in 1989. In 1991 it was estimated that nearly one million people attended the 10th annual Festival of Lights, setting a new attendance record far surpassing previous years' crowds.

Lavish fireworks displays and an impressive parade that began at the Aquarium of Niagara and ended at the Convention Center along a route lit by thousands of Christmas Lights and other decorations made attending the 44-day event a holiday tradition for many in the region.

Lackey Plaza, now a parking lot for the Seneca Niagara Casino, was watered down by the city Fire Department so visitors could go ice skating.

But declining attendance, increased costs and fewer Falls-based corporate sponsors doomed the festival which, unlike the Dyster-conceived Holiday Market and "Jingle Falls USA" schemes, was largely privately funded, and set up with the work of

hundreds of volunteers.

Ironically, the Festival of Lights held in Niagara Falls, Ont., is thriving. Of course there are a lot more attractions and fun things to do on Clifton Hill than there are in the jumble of faceless hotels and empty buildings of Mayor Dyster's crime ridden downtown.

The "Jingle Falls USA" activities are scheduled on three Saturdays: Dec. 2, 9 and 16. There will be the usual scrum of street vendors and other "attractions."

"It's a wonderful opportunity to attract visitors during typically a slower time of year, and also bring local residents down to downtown Niagara Falls USA," said Julie Gilbert, vice president for marketing at Destination Niagara USA, the official tourism promotion agency.

"We have a responsibility to provide them with more things to do here," Mayor Dyster said last week of "Jingle Falls USA."

It is no coincidence that the most successful winter promotion in Niagara Falls history, A Festival of Lights, was staged by private entrepreneurs. At one point, the event boosted hotel occupancy here from 11 percent to 50 percent.

Dyster's failed Holiday Market and his soon to fail "Jingle Falls USA" have been conceived and executed by hack politicians whose experience in the private sector economy amounts to zilch.

As we've seen with the disastrous \$38 million train station project here, the mayor's "If you build it, they will come," philosophy might well be amended.

"If you build it, using other people's money, they probably still won't come anyway, but who cares?" seems more apt.

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DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>

DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>



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**The Right Side**

place of US citizens, in our medical schools! Then how about police and fire? You're not even close... there, "they" lowered the mental, physical and criminal record requirement standards to allow under privileged minorities an equal opportunity!

In 1978, Judge John Curtin, Western District of NY, instituted a "quota" for minority police and fire applicants. As part of his order, he required the Buffalo Police Department to ignore arrests and only look at convictions when screening minority applicants and forced the Buffalo PD to skip hundreds of higher scoring white candidates to find the highest scoring minority!

I asked Judge Curtin why he issued the police arrest/record decision, because one police cadet we had at the Police Academy, was "arrested" for shooting at a police officer but was "convicted" of a misdemeanor! The judge said a misdemeanor conviction for a felony arrest is all that was proven and he therefore must be given the opportunity; but he never said they couldn't be fired!

Well, if you haven't figured out the

profession in which employment, salary, position of importance... everything, is based on ability, talent and merit only... It's professional sports! Isn't that unbelievable? Airlines give preference to female and minority pilots, fire departments hire people who can't carry the required weight, the FBI and police departments lowered all their physical requirements from size and strength and testing methods... but not the NBA or NFL!

I wanted to be the center for the Boston Celtics but I'm too short, too fat, too old and can't perform minimum requirements (in other words, can't do the job). None of those reasons will get a minority police or FBI cadet booted out of training school. They need more training, so provide it! That's what happens all the time and anyone who says I'm wrong has no idea of what they speak!

So now, if I were to say, "Pro-athletes don't have 'standing' to take a knee and disrespect my flag," I would be called a "racist." But, if I were to say Black people are better athletes than whites, that's ok. If I said

Blacks are physically stronger than whites, that's ok also. They are bigger than whites, ok again. Whites are smarter than Blacks... hold it right there... "You are a racist, a bigot, you can't stereo-type Black people."

Black people can have an all Black TV channel, all Black awards shows, even an all Black caucus in Congress... but not whites! That would be racist! Guess what... those "all Black" things are all in violation of our Constitution, so why aren't the America Civil Liberty Lawyers doing something about it?!

So here's a few "non-bigot" facts... 70% of the NFL is now Black. 75% of all Black children are raised by one parent families. That means 75% of all NFL Black players were raised the same way. Most Black NFL players came from the inner city, under privileged and likely joined gangs. Average pay for NFL players is over \$1 million per year. NFL players seldom obtain college degrees in academically challenging fields such as math, science, engineering and more often obtain degrees in social or PT fields. That last one is my opinion and not fact checked because I don't really care!

So here we have the epitome of hypocrisy... a nation providing minority, underprivileged, former gangbanger kids, with no male influence in their upbringing, an "opportunity" that no other nation in the history of the world ever gave anybody and these kids are protesting the American Flag that military lives were sacrificed defending, to give them the right to protest... for no freaking reason!

They have absolutely no complaints, whatsoever, having been given the unrestricted opportunity to excel in their fullest, with seemingly no hope as a child, to be successful!

I have not heard one of these college graduates articulate what the hell they are protesting. If they are protesting for others and not themselves then how many millions have they donated to their "Brothers" who are going through what they went through? They can't possibly claim they are protesting over how many Blacks are shot by the police (Black Lives Matter), because Black males kill more Black people (9,000) in a three year period compared to 450 people of all races killed by the police in the same time period!

Listen, men, don't try thinking about anything except your playbook, meetings and curfew. Many of you can't handle that much! That's enough on your plate!

Colin Kaepernick was adopted, from the ghetto, by two white parents and still became a gangbanger (look at his tattoos). He went to college but failed to learn how to speak English. He doesn't talk like a college educated person! Maybe he went to school but simply didn't learn anything... that's possible... isn't it?

He then went onto become an NFL starting quarterback, making millions, and then "lost the edge" and got fired. Sorry, Colin, a fitting name, but there's no "Affirmative Action" in the NFL, which stands for Not For Long when you lose the edge. Move on, get a job in your academic field (huh!), drop your purse, man up and quit looking for a scapegoat, you caused enough trouble!

The rest of you... have an opinion, but don't bring it to work! We paid for the football stadium in Western NY, to enjoy football and not listen to anything you have to say about anything except football! We don't care what you think! By the way, "no standing" means no justifiable reason and not the opposite of kneeling!

My opinion and I'm, sticking to it!

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## Jumpstart Your Day: Drink a Glass of Water

Do you ever feel like you're not up to par? Maybe you've got a bit of headache or you're feeling fatigued even before your shift has started? You might be dehydrated. Drinking a glass of water might be all you need to feel better and begin the workday at the top of your game. Most people know that drinking water throughout the day is essential for staying hydrated when working outdoors in hot weather or when wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). What they may not realize is that it's also important to stay hydrated when outdoor temperatures are comfortable or when the workday is inside an air-conditioned office.

Chronic dehydration may not lead to heat stress or heat stroke, but it can affect overall health, worksite productivity and safety. Even one percent dehydration can affect short-term memory and attention span in both men and women. This can lower productivity and increase the risk for injury. Regardless of the time of year or whether a job requires PPE, it's important that employers schedule water breaks and encourage employees to drink.

The best way to encourage workers to drink more water is to ensure that it's accessible. Dehydration is less likely to be an issue at worksites when water is made available, placed where it's easily seen and convenient to access. The fact is most Americans and Canadians are chronically dehydrated and don't know it. In the United States alone, 75 percent of Americans consume considerably less water than the recommended eight cups a day.

The adult body is 60 percent water, and in order to carry out functions that include digestion, flushing toxins and regulating body temperature, this proportion needs to be maintained. During a normal day, breathing, sweating and urinating cause the average person to lose about eight cups of water. That's about three quarts that need to be replenished. Construction workers can lose even more due to the strenuous nature of their job, from taking medications for common conditions like high blood pressure or if they are diabetic. That's why it's particularly important that construction workers don't wait until they're thirsty to drink water. By the time a person feels the need to drink, they're already dehydrated.

# Niagara Falls Jokes

Mayor Dyster complained to Nick Melson that his wife was driving him to drink. Melson thought he's very lucky, because his mom makes him walk.

\*\*\*

All of Gov. Cuomo's top aides and campaign contributors were sitting in the dock when the jury foreman called out, "Not guilty!"

"That's wonderful!" shouted Lou Ciminelli, "Does that mean I can keep the money?"

\*\*\*

If the mayor retired and decided to start a new heavy metal rock band, do you think its name would be "Blue Dyster Cult?"

\*\*\*

Included in the price was a certificate of the skull's authenticity, signed by Harriet Tubman herself.

A few years later the mayor returned to the antique shop and asked the owner if he had any more bargains.

"I've got the very thing for you," said the shopkeeper, "It's the genuine skull of Harriet Tubman."

"You cheat!" exploded Mayor Dyster, "That's what you told me fifteen years ago, and look, they're not even the same size!"

"You have it wrong," responded the seller, "This is the skull of Harriet Tubman when she was a young girl."

\*\*\*

A Niagara Falls woman who, with her husband, owed the city of Niagara Falls several hundred dollars in unpaid parking tickets, was very upset, because she was afraid their only vehicle, a busted down old car, was going to "get the boot."

The husband came home from work and she told him, "Honey, this morning a letter from the city came in the mail and it said 'FINAL NOTICE.'"

"Great!" said the husband, "that means we won't be hearing from them again."

\*\*\*



Mayor Dyster was traveling down south when he came across a little antique shop in which he was lucky enough to pick up, for a mere \$300, the skull of Harriet Tubman, of Underground Railroad fame. He planned to bring it back to Niagara Falls and respectfully intern it in the Underground Railroad Museum at the new Amtrak train station.

One day Mayor Dyster was complaining to Seth Piccirillo that on the rare occasions that Gov. Cuomo visits Niagara Falls, he stops in for just an hour or two and never spends the night here.

"I just don't understand it," the mayor said, sitting at his desk at City Hall as his Community Development director was giving him a pedicure, "Why won't the governor stay at the fancy hotel I recommend to him?"

"Are you sure it's a fancy hotel?" asked Seth, not even looking up, as he was deep in concentration.

"Of course it's fancy, it's the Super 8 on the Boulevard," exclaimed Dyster, "It even has the word 'Super' in its name!"

### Important Message for Niagara Falls Taxpayers

From The Committee to Stop the Reassessments & Continuous Tax Increases



We, the taxpayers, must unite to "Stop the Reassessments" at the voting booth on November 7<sup>th</sup>.  
We must vote for all three of the candidates that we know are against the reassessments!

**WE MUST VOTE FOR ALL THREE CANDIDATES LISTED BELOW**

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**Touma & Grandinetti** led the charge to reassess us last summer and they will do it again if re-elected. They want to raise our assessments on average from between 17 and 40%. **We must not vote for them!**

Committee to Stop the Reassessments & Continuous Tax Increases

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