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# THE NIAGARA REPORTER

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**Robert M. Restaino**  
*Attorney at Law*  
  
**285-8185**

## Dyster Using Uncertain \$12.3 Million to Keep Status Quo at City Hall



**By: Nicholas D. D'Angelo**  
The timing couldn't have been better. Days before Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster was to unveil his proposed budget for 2019, NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo announced he planned to propose in his

NYS budget to the legislature that they approve "advancing" up to \$12.3 million of future casino revenue to the City of Niagara Falls.  
It was a fine public gesture from the governor – during his election year - even if his proposal is not approved by the

(Cont. on pgs. 2-3)

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**FOOD AT THE FOLI**  
COUPONS - REVIEWS - SPECIALS  
@ THE CENTER PAGE

## Piccirillo Announces he will Run for Mayor; Gets Scolded by Dyster for not Clearing it with Him First



Seth Piccirillo, the director of Community Development, announced last week he is running for Mayor of Niagara Falls.  
His announcement came as no surprise to readers of the Reporter; we have mentioned for weeks that he planned to run.  
Evidently it did come as a surprise to his boss, Mayor Paul

Dyster.  
Or at least the timing of the announcement came as a surprise.  
A source at city hall told us that Dyster summoned his young employee and roundly scolded him for announcing he was running for mayor without getting permission from him

(Cont. on pg. 3)

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# NIAGARA FALLS

(Contd from cover)



legislature.

Yet for Dyster and company, it was akin to Happy Days.

For several months prior to Cuomo's announcement, word out of City Hall was this was going to be Dyster's "smallest budget ever."

City Administrator Nick Melson indicated there could be many city positions cut, along with a substantial reduction of expenses from the public safety budget. There were assurances that in these lean times there would be "no pay raises" for any member of the administration.

This changed the moment Dyster found out about Cuomo's proposal and – ignoring the fact that

Cuomo said he would propose to the legislature that the city get "up to" \$12.3 million – which means the legislature might approve less [or even nothing], Dyster put the entire \$12.3 million into his 2019 budget. This allowed him to not cut a single position from City Hall; as well as give pay raises to numerous individuals and add a raft of other new expenditures.

Of the five councilman, only Kenny Tompkins questioned whether it was wise for Dyster to put \$12.3 million into a city budget when there is – in fact - no guarantee the City will get the money. Tompkins wrote to the New York

State Comptroller's office asking them to review it.

Tompkins explained what should have been evident to all the council: "Even if Governor Cuomo includes [the \$12.3 million] in his proposed budget for 2019, that does not guarantee it will pass the legislature."

In response to Tompkins' concerns, Dyster released a statement that is misleading and exaggerated.

"Governor Cuomo made a commitment to the people of the City of Niagara Falls guaranteeing the advancement of the casino revenue owed to the City, and directed his administration to send a letter confirming this commitment, which has been provided to council.

Councilman Ken Tompkins is grandstanding in a gubernatorial election year for his Republican party bosses.

If he is serious about not using casino revenue in the 2019 budget, then he should present the administration with a list of layoffs and necessary tax increase to compensate for the loss of those revenues.

While the administration shares the council's objectives of reducing the use of casino revenues in the general fund over time, to try to do so in a single budget cycle would have catastrophic results.

Councilman Tompkins owes it

to our brave first responders and tireless public works employees to look them in the eye and explain that he would prefer to play partisan politics with their livelihoods rather than do his job."

Let's break down parts of Dyster's statements that are truly misleading.

Dyster: "Governor Cuomo made a commitment to the people of the City of Niagara Falls guaranteeing the advancement of the casino revenue owed to the City..."

Cuomo cannot commit money to the city. He can only propose it in his 2019 budget. It's up to the legislature to approve expenditures.

Dyster: Councilman Ken Tompkins is grandstanding in a gubernatorial election year for his Republican party bosses.

Isn't it possible that Tompkins is genuinely concerned about Dyster's extravagant budget and his proposal to include the use of state money the city may not receive? Perhaps it is Cuomo who is grandstanding in an election year. In this respect, Dyster too may be grandstanding for his party boss – Cuomo.

Dyster: If he is serious about not using casino revenue in the 2019 budget, then he should present the administration with a list of layoffs and necessary tax increase to compensate for the loss of those reve-

## NIAGARA



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**Sanborn:** Smokin Joes (gas station and store), Tim Hortons & Tops

**Tonawanda:** Tops on Young Street

**Wilson:** Lakeside Market

**Youngstown:** Anchor Spirits & Wines, Bandanas Bar & Grill, Public Library, Rite Aid, Village Diner

nues.  
 But there are no casino revenues. The Senecas have not agreed to pay a single dime to the city or state. Why? Because Cuomo forgot to put any payment to the state [or the city] into the compact renewal with the Senecas, and Dyster failed to review the compact to ensure that payment to the city was included. He relied solely on Cuomo's word – much as he is doing now – that Cuomo will take care of everything.

Dyster: Councilman Tompkins owes it to our brave first responders and tireless public works employees to look them in the eye and explain that he would prefer to play partisan politics with their livelihoods rather than do his job."

This is where Dyster is truly dishonest and unfair. He brings in the "brave first responders" and "tireless public works employees" [are they really that "tireless?"]. Talk about "hollering before you're hurt" -- Tompkins didn't mention cutting first responders or public works. He only spoke of the extravagance of Dyster's budget and his potentially improper dependence in his proposed 2019 budget on state money that may never be received.

But Dyster raises the specter of hurting "brave first responders" and "tireless public works employees". This is Dyster playing the politics

of fear to obscure the fact that he playing fast and loose with public money.

\*\*\*\*\*

Let's also examine the actual letter from Governor Cuomo's administration:

"To provide certainty for your local budget deliberations, please be advised that the Executive Budget for State Fiscal Year 2019-20 will include authorization for the State to advance up to \$12.3. Million - the estimated amount of Seneca revenue that would otherwise be received for city purposes in 2019 - to the City of Niagara Falls..."

The "Executive Budget" is the budget the governor proposes. It has to be approved by the legislature. Please note, as Tompkins did, that the governor is saying that his proposal is that the city will get "up to" \$12.3 million. The legislature may not approve the full \$12.3 million. They may disallow it altogether or approve only part of it.

Yet Dyster is including the entire \$12.3 million in his proposed budget for 2019. Imagine owning a business where you allocate \$12.3 million - when you might get only \$10 million, or \$4 million or nothing at all - to balance your budget.

Does that sound like smart financial planning?

A number of other municipalities also hope to receive Seneca casino funds. Buffalo and the Niagara County have now sent requests asking Governor Cuomo to propose to the legislature that they get advances on their hoped-for casino money for 2019 as well.

Imagine, you are an assemblyman or senator with no connection to Niagara Falls. Won't one of the first questions you'll ask yourself is where's the equity and fairness in Niagara Falls receiving their share of "advanced" casino payments but not other municipalities?

And why is it my constituents' responsibility to bail out Niagara

Falls?

And suppose the Senecas never agree to pay a dime to the state [or any municipality]? Governor Cuomo failed to negotiate a payment to the state – Mayor Dyster failed to ensure that his city got a dime – so now why is it the legislature's responsibility to pay for his bloated budget?

Dyster is surely being disingenuous by presenting the \$12.3 million as a sure thing.

Finally, Dyster used the hoped-for \$12.3 million as an excuse to not cut expenses in City Hall whatsoever. Niagara Falls is currently in a \$13.9 million budget deficit and Dyster's proposed budget for 2019 did nothing to address it.

He did not cut any positions from City Hall and he did not reduce pay for any employees. In fact, a lot of them received a raise.

So, in the end, if the city does not get the full \$12.3 million, who will Dyster look to alleviate the deficit that the City will face in 2019?

That would be you, the residents of Niagara Falls.

# Piccirillo Cont.

first.

"You could hear the mayor yelling at Seth from the corridors, he was that angry," our source said. "It is only fair, after all. Seth works for the mayor who can fire him at will. You would think he would tell his boss first that he plans to run for his job."

The mayor may have been upset partly since his wife has not definitely ruled out him running for a 4th term as mayor – which would mean Seth would have to back down – or risk losing his job.

If Seth does run, there are details to be worked out - If Dyster chooses to step aside and let youth take the helm - like what present department heads would be kept and who would be fired should Seth win.

And what promises for raises to various city hall employees need to be made in order to ensure they will support his candidacy. There is a lot of patronage and it is no secret Seth has clashed with several of Dyster's inner circle – usually with Seth doing much of the yelling.

Several people in city hall found it refreshing that Seth – who is a screamer himself – was on the receiving end of a hearty lambasting by the mayor.

Meantime, Seth has informed us and the public that he does not think much of the Niagara Reporter.

In the coming weeks, we will be giving him ample opportunity to present his plans, his hopes, as well as a complete airing of his beef with the Reporter, if he so chooses.

We will also review his record including his highly vaunted plan to pay people to live in Niagara Falls, his renovation work for Isaiah 61, his painting of fire hydrants and abandoned properties and other schemes.

We will look at how many people relocated to Niagara Falls and how much that cost; how many houses were actually renovated and how that turned out – how many new homeowners were placed in homes, and how the fire department feels about having their red and yellow coded fire hydrants turned into leprechaun and fairies. We will do this so people can judge Seth by a metric other than that he will merely continue in Dyster's footsteps.

That is if Mayor Dyster even lets him run for office.

Stay tuned.

(We reached out to Seth for comment on this story but he declined to be interviewed by phone)

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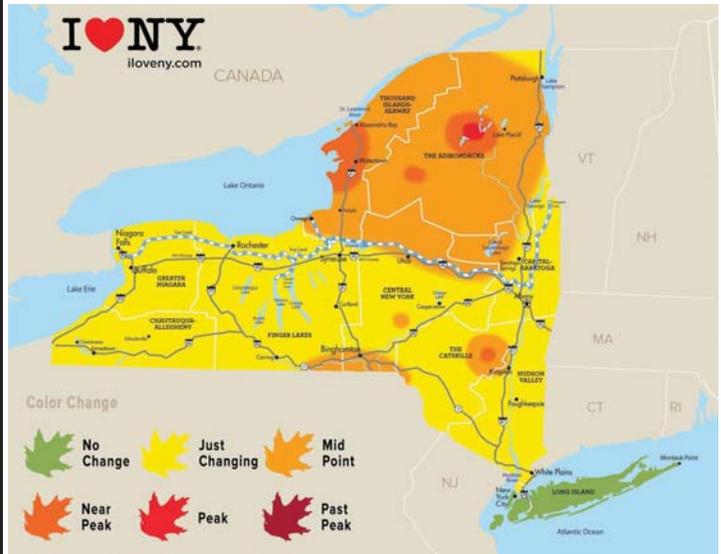
# THE ACTION

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## WEEKLY HEADLINES

- A Niagara Falls School District Official has confirmed that a fourth grade student at Harry F. Abate Elementary School was suspended today after an unloaded BB Gun was found in their backpack. According to the school, the BB Gun was put in the backpack by the student's uncle.
- A Niagara Falls man, Jermaine McQueen, was arrested Monday on drug possession charges after he was discovered "passed out" in a vehicle with the motor running outside a 7-Eleven on Buffalo Avenue. According to reports, police seized marijuana & cocaine from the vehicle.
- Niagara Falls Police responded Tuesday to an alleged burglary that took place, according to the victim, sometime between Saturday and Tuesday morning on the 8100 block of Buffalo Avenue. The victims says someone broke into his shed by cutting the screen out of a window.
- Niagara Falls Police responded Monday to the alleged theft of two drug testing kits and later arrested a man, William Reichart, who had the kits on him.
- Emergency crews dispatched to the 400 block of 16th Street for a heroin overdose - crews were dispatched to Cudaback earlier in the day for the same person who overdosed on 16th. Crews also responded to several other overdose calls within the last 24 hours.
- Niagara Falls Police responded to an alleged burglary on the 2700 block of Highland Avenue where the owner says someone broke into his building and stole a water meter and surveillance cameras.
- Police responded to reports of an armed robbery at the 7-Eleven on the 1500 block of Pine Ave. overnight. According to police, two young males wearing masks and dark hoodies jumped over the counter and took money from the register. One of the suspects had a large knife.
- Niagara Falls Police, Fire and Medical responded to the 1800 block of Ontario Avenue for reports of shots fired late Friday / early Saturday morning. The victim, who was shot in the face and the back, was transported to the hospital.
- Niagara Falls Police responded to a report of stolen property over the weekend. According to the Cleveland Avenue resident, a snowblower, chainsaw and hedge trimmer was stolen from his garage. The resident valued the snowblower at \$1,700.
- Niagara Falls Police took a man into custody after resisting arrest. Shawnee Saunders, 21, of Niagara Street, had refused to stop urinating on a building in the early morning hours of September 30th when he became belligerent.
- Niagara Falls Police and Medical responded to the 7-Eleven on 68th and Buffalo Avenue for a female who entered the store and then collapsed. Given the woman's physical condition (multiple injuries), Police and witnesses believe she was the victim of an assault.
- A cashier at the Seneca Niagara Casino gas station was viciously attacked by a woman who became irate after learning she did not have enough money to cover her intended purchases. Upon being asked to leave, the woman attacked the cashier causing bruising and multiple lacerations.

## Fall is on the Horizon



*According to the latest New York Fall Foliage Report, Niagara County should expect a 10% color change this week. Trees are mostly green with some shades of yellow and orange beginning to emerge.*

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# Taking Back Niagara Falls Begins with the Citizens!

## Terri Kline

In a perfect world, when we elect City Officials we should be able to trust that they will do what is best for the city and the citizens within the city. During campaigning, the promises flow like the Niagara Falls!

But in the real world, if we are not holding them accountable, no one is! If we are not being present to express our concerns, than that is when the corruption begins. It than continues until we end up how the City of Niagara Falls is today. This didn't happen overnight, this is decades of corruption!

I hold myself accountable as well. I should have been more in-



involved in previous years; attending council meetings, voting regularly, expressing concerns to my City Officials, etc. I cannot expect to show up at a few council meetings and expect things to change overnight; it is not a realistic demand.

I have observed during the last few Council Meetings I have attended, that with the increased presence of citizens, I think the City Council is ready to fight! Yes, they should have been fighting the "corruption" with the City Government all along, but I feel that with the citizens actually coming out and speaking their concerns, it's giving them a new view on the way things are being run.

They are demanding answers, requesting documentation, and beginning to hold the Administration accountable. I for one can say it was amazing to see, at Wednesday's Council Meeting. (Special shot out to Ken Tompkins and Chris Vocco) You guys were really representing the citizens of Niagara Falls!

We as citizens need to come out



and hold all City Officials accountable; express concerns, demand answers, remind them that they work for us. Without us, there would be no city.

We as citizens also need to vote regularly! We are the ones that put these City Officials in office. If you are not voting, than your voice is not being heard as well!

I encourage everyone to visit and like our page on Facebook; Taking Back Niagara Falls – Be Informed. We will be posting articles and information pertaining

to the long, but very possible road ahead of us! We also will be posting events to upcoming Council Meetings, "Let's Talk Budget" and other community events, to get everyone involved. We will be posting information on voting registration and important voting dates that are coming up!

Please help us have our voices heard. The greater numbers, the more impact we will have!! Niagara Falls is home to a lot of us, let's take her Back!! I hope you will join us in this fight!!!



**Ken Tompkins**  
NF City Councilman

Given that this is our fifth update from the original story, I thought it would be smart to give some context about what we are trying to do here.

Timothy and Colleen Degenhardt thought they did their homework when looking for a contractor to build an addition onto their home.

Timothy, a disabled army veteran, has health ailments that limit his ability to use his legs. As a result, the Degenhardt's were looking to add a bedroom to the back of the house so that Timothy would not have to climb any stairs.

Unfortunately, a project that at

first seemed quick and easy, did not stay that way for long.

The "so-called contractor," Kyle Edwards, who Colleen calls a "criminal" and a "thief," took their money and left them with nothing but huge trenches in the ground. Some of which were at least two feet deep.

Degenhardt gave Edwards roughly \$12,000 towards the project.

The Degenhardt's filed in Small Claims Court seeking their \$12,000 back, but were ultimately unsuccessful. Despite Edwards not showing up to court, the judge only entered a judgment in their favor for \$5,000.

Timothy and Colleen found out the hard way that a judgement and collecting on a judgment are two different things. As a result, not one cent has been collected.

In a true showing of community, numerous businesses have donated their time, supplies and money to make this project a reality.

After a couple weeks of rain and materials delays, I finally received

## Weekly Update on Veteran House Renovation

a much anticipated phone call on Friday. Phil Cortese, from Cortese Construction Services, was letting me know that all looked good to start the framing of the house on Monday, October 8th. I could not have been more pleased.

Monday morning I received a message from Colleen, the homeowner, that a crew was on site. I went there and introduced myself and relayed to them a few special details. They already had the sill plate on before I left.

Tim provided me with pictures before lunch; the floor joist were in place and the decking had been started.

Mark Grozio, of Local 237 IBEW, came by to move some electrical boxes that are connected to the solar panel system on the roof of the existing structure.

Phil Cortese and his foreman showed up on site to review more details and make sure we are set for the next phase of the projects.

I have to say putting this together and working with so many great suppliers and true tradesmen has



been a fantastic experience.

Phil Cortese, Dick Paladino, Peter Fontanarosa, Jeff Bryk, and Mark Grozio, to name a few, have all been so helpful in making this project run smoothly thus far. The groundwork is laid and we now go up from here.



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# ANALYSIS

## Piccirillo's Post Mayoral Race Announcement Results: None of the Above Wins!



**Ken Hamilton**

In a recent Facebook Niagara Community Forum survey, members were told that the city's Community Development Chief Seth Piccirillo had announced his intention to run for the next mayor of the city of Niagara Falls, NY and that his likely-soon-to-announced opponent is Niagara Falls Board of Education member and Attorney Robert Bob Restaino. And then members were asked that, though it's early, but if the 2019 Mayoral Election was held today, which one of four possible straw candidates would you vote.

In alphabetical order, the real possible were current mayor Paul Dyster, Piccirillo, Restaino, or the last one fictional, "None of the Above?" The results were a bit surprising. None won!

And that speaks volumes about the current political climate – not just in the city, but – everywhere.

The Clinton-Trump race for president was largely seen by many Americans as a choice between the lesser of two evils; Trump winning, not because of what he is (a somewhat questionable but rich businessman), but because of what he wasn't. He wasn't a politician, and despite his list of successes, it is very evident that he certainly isn't the latter.

Also surprising is that of those 70 of 1437 members who voted, but not counting the singular vote for Mayor Dyster and the 29 votes for the fictional straw candidate, 59% were cast for the unannounced Restaino and 41% for Piccirillo.

Aside for voting for an unannounced candidate, one of the ironies is that like Trump, Piccirillo's initial written announcement was that, "... I became a politician for the first time in my career and that does not feel natural for me, to be honest."

Again, only 70 of 1437 members voted, or about 5%, which is closer to what a board of education vote looks like.

One of the virtues of the Niagara Community Forum is that it is intentionally not a partisan platform. Though not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, members have to request to be selected and are vetted as best as possible to bring balance

to the Forum. As Forum administrator, I have accepted people with whom I vehemently disagree because the Forum is about us, and not me – though I occasionally get in my digs and even sometimes get dug.

On the admonishment of posting a poll that included an unannounced candidate, one member said that I may as well have thrown in Candace Corsaro, who also haven't announced. So I partially ran with her idea and the Forum made another poll that was based upon the Niagara Reporter's February 23, 2018 article of Who Wants to be the Next Mayor of Niagara Falls? I was surprised to find my face in that article.

Not much can really be inferred by the results of that poll because members were allowed to cast one vote for any or all of those listed. The results of this very non-scientific poll of 50 votes among 16 candidates were as follows:

- Three votes were average for this course, and former mayoral candidate Glenn Choolokian, Councilman Bill Kennedy and former Mayor Vince Anello got their three.

- Former mayoral candidate Carnell Burch, Dyster and former City Councilwoman Kristen Grandinetti were all skunked.

- Former City Controller Maria

Brown, Piccirillo and Councilman Ezra Scott accounted for one each;

- Former city council candidates Sam Archie, Bob Pascoal and Ken Hamilton (me) each polled 2.

- Fireman Jason Zona rescued 5 votes.

- The unannounced Restaino polled twice the average at six.

But with a show of popularity, City Councilman Kenny Tompkins paced more than 3-times average with 14 votes, and Assemblyman Angelo Morinello with 7.

Are the Republicans now voting like old-time Chicago Democrats?

I am familiar with all of the candidates and have worked on one thing or another with most. With the two likely candidates at this time, I have worked with Restaino and others on Highland's Community Center issues and had even did a letter of support for him during his judicial situation; and with Piccirillo for my basketball courts, skateboard park and soapbox derby initiatives, among other matters. As of now, it is early and I don't have a dog in the fight.

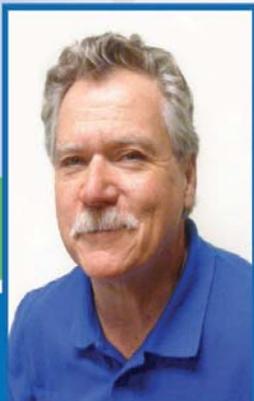
I phoned Piccirillo and asked for an interview, and he did send me an email statement; however it was at about the time that I was finishing this piece and too close to deadline to review. Please look for it next week.

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# NORTH TONAWANDA

## Disposing of Hazardous Chemical Waste: Keeping Residents of NT A Little Bit Safer

### Brendan McDonough



The North Tonawanda Department of Public Works took an extra step to help protect the environment this past Saturday as they held a special waste drop off day for residents.

The special event offered a chance for people to drop off paint cans or hazardous chemicals for

free.

The City holds the event three times every year to allow residents across North Tonawanda to dispose of hazardous chemicals and other items they might not otherwise know how to get rid of or where to get rid of it at.

“The majority of what people bring are paints, old fuels, automotive fluids, cleaners, various household chemicals, thermometers, and other mercury-based items,” said Dawn Timm, Niagara County Environmental Coordinator.

Once collected the items are then sorted and distributed to various disposal places across Niagara County. Some of it gets also gets recycled; helping to protect the



environment and the people who live here.

“You find a lot of desperate people that cannot get rid of liquids,” said Timm. “Putting it into a landfill is illegal because you are not supposed to have them transported on a truck. Some people even get desperate and will dump it down a drain, sewer, or leave it in their garage. So, no matter what, it is an environmental issue and a public health safety issue that we are trying to resolve. If a garage or house were to ever catch fire, a lot of accelerants would be in there and that is what we are trying to get rid of today.”

Over the past four years more than 110,000 household chemicals

have been disposed of as a result of these events.

“The people seem to really appreciate it because they are getting to dispose of these chemicals and some electronics the proper way,” said Mayor Art Pappas. “The people are saying what do we do with this, so it really helps dispose of this stuff properly and everyone is leaving with a smile.”

The DEC covers 50% of reimbursable expenses for event. A third of the \$100,000 budget is covered by the state and the rest comes from Niagara County.

The next drop off will held next year around the time of Earth Day.



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# The 2019 Budget: One-on-One with Mayor Pappas

## Brendan McDonough

It's a tough budget year for North Tonawanda and Mayor Art Pappas could be making some of the toughest choices in the coming weeks.

One of the main issues is what programs to keep and which ones to get rid of. Pappas says he - along with several other members of the budget committee - are reviewing everything down to the penny.

"It is a tough budget year," said Pappas. "Things are very, very tight. We are going over everything line by line to see just what we have to do."

No major decisions have been reached yet about possible cuts.

Although no year is easy, Mayor Pappas says this year is

especially difficult to navigate due to a lower fund balance.

"Every year is always a tough budget year to a degree because you want to do the most you can with the resources that you have," said Pappas. "You try and keep the tax rate as low as you can keep it. Every year you have to really scrutinize things. This year is a little tougher, though. Our fund balance was not as high as usual so we have to really be careful."

Pappas says once the budget is complete it will be reviewed by the council for approval.

"It is referred to as a Mayor's Budget because I present it but, in reality, it is a team effort," said Pappas.



"The budget I propose is a result of the City Accountant, members of the budget committee, and I putting our heads together. We listen to recommendations and do what we

believe is in the best interest of our residents moving forward.

Pappas says he will present the budget to the Council sometime in November.



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# North Tonawanda Fall Festival



By: **Brendan McDonough**

Fall feelings were in the air this past weekend in North Tonawanda as members of the Park Department held their annual Fall Festival.

Inside the North Tonawanda Intermediate School more than 30 vendors set up shop hoping to show residents everything they have to offer.

Organizers have been holding the event for the past seven years and money raised for the event will help benefit the youth board.

"It is our main fundraiser for the youth board," said Alex Domaradzki, Event Organizer. "We use it help with student government day, post prom breakfast, and for scholarships. It's really the scholarships where a lot of the money from this event will be going."

There was also plenty for kids, too.

Lined up outside were

firetrucks where fireman helped educate kids about fire safety and what they do. Inside there was a kid-friendly donut eating contest, bounce house, and more.

There was truly a little bit of everything for everyone.

"We got a lot of kids activ-



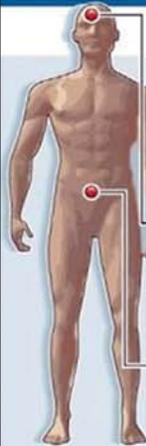
ities, a wood carver outside, food and beverage sale; it is just something nice for people to come out and do in the fall," said Domaradzki.

Organizers says next year they are hoping the event will be even bigger.



## Lead poisoning

*Lead buildup in the body causes serious health problems*



Symptoms	Additional complications for children:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Headaches</li> <li>- Irritability</li> <li>- Reduced sensations</li> <li>- Aggressive behavior</li> <li>- Difficulty sleeping</li> </ul>	<p>Lead is more harmful to children as it can affect developing nerves and brains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Loss of developmental skills</li> <li>▶ Behavior, attention problems</li> <li>▶ Hearing loss</li> <li>▶ Kidney damage</li> <li>▶ Reduced IQ</li> <li>▶ Slowed body growth</li> </ul>

Source: MedlinePlus/Mayo Clinic



## More Research Shows There's No Safe Level of Lead Exposure

Over the past 50 years, OSHA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal and state partners have worked together to eliminate or drastically reduce exposure to lead. OSHA established a lead standard for general industry in 1978, although construction workers were not covered under their own standard until 1993. The EPA banned lead from gasoline in the early 90s, and more recently has cleaned up lead-contaminated waste sites and established standards for dealing with lead-based paint. The public health and medical communities have worked together to increase awareness, identify at-risk populations and provide communities with blood lead level (BLL) testing. As a result of these collective actions, blood lead levels have declined by more than 90 percent since the mid-1970s.

As exposures have declined, our understanding of the health effects of lead exposure has improved. We now know that even small amounts of lead can be harmful. We also know that, despite an overall decline in lead exposure around the country, some communities are still experiencing high levels of lead exposure from old lead-based paint, corroding lead pipes and industrial waste sites. Continuing to reduce lead exposure, especially in communities that are still highly exposed, remains a public health priority.

Lead exposure causes various acute and chronic effects, with some symptoms being difficult to observe and others being life-threatening. More and more evidence indicates that even low doses of lead exposure can have harmful effects on the heart, kidneys, brain and reproductive systems. Blood lead levels of five micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ) or lower have been associated with decreased kidney function; increased risk of hypertension and tremors have been seen at BLLs below  $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ . Worker safety advocates, researchers and some state OSHA programs have contended for years that OSHA's permissible exposure levels (PEL) for lead in the workplace do not adequately protect workers. In 2015, NIOSH designated a five  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  BLL as the reference level for adults, meaning that NIOSH views BLLs greater than five  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  as elevated and a risk to worker health. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that BLLs among adults be reduced to under  $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

Current OSHA lead standards require workers to be removed from lead exposure when BLLs are at or above  $50 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  (construction industry) or  $60 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  (general industry) and allow workers to return to work when BLLs fall below  $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ . OSHA has acknowledged that current lead PELs are many times higher than the level needed to protect worker health, yet there is no movement toward updating these standards, this is why it's problematic to rely too much on PELs as a benchmark to protect workers.



# Fall Cleanup Tips from the Niagara Falls Water Board

*As October arrives and brings with it both changing colors and falling leaves, the Niagara Falls Water Board would like to share some tips on how to properly clean up this fall season.*

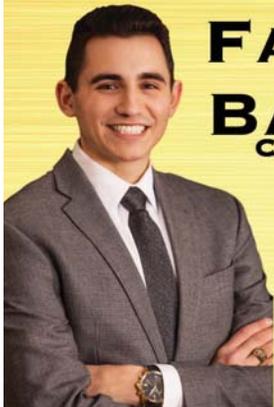
- **Remember your gutters:** Even if the leaves in your yard haven't completely fallen, get ahead of clogs and start cleaning your gutters now. This will help avoid blockages and overflows of water. When water cannot drain properly from gutters, it could be forced down the side of the house and may cause water damage or rotting to occur.
- **Protect yourself:** Always wear protective gloves when cleaning gutters to protect your hands from sharp debris or sticks that are typically hidden under leaves. Put your ladder on a flat surface and make sure someone is around to spot you.
- **Rake up:** Prevent storm drains (also known as catch basins) from clogging by cleaning up your yard regularly. Rake or blow leaves into a pile and place them in a trash bag for collection. Leaves that blow into the street will eventually end up in catch basins, and when catch basins get clogged with leaves and debris, water flow to the street may be severely reduced and lead to other issues.



Whether it's an emergency or just a general concern, you can always contact the NFWB at **716-283-9770 x202**. An operator will be available to assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please have a safe and enjoyable fall season, from your friends at the NFWB!

For more information on the NFWB, visit: [www.nfwb.org](http://www.nfwb.org)

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

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

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

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