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Home Buyer Seminar Pays Off for Young Falls Couple



(Cont. on pgs. 3)

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HAMILTON: Niagara's Minorities Are Amiss About County Jobs

By: Ken Hamilton

If the so-called black leadership of Niagara Falls' African-American community doesn't soon come to the realization that in order to properly and successfully "compete" for county jobs, then no amount of asking white politicians to give them to

(Cont. on pg. 2)

Chris's Corner: Sporting Event Tickets, Anyone?

By: Chris Voccio
NF City Councilman

I was fortunate to have a good 30-year career in the newspaper business, a career that took me across the country and gave me lots of opportunities to do things I probably wouldn't have done if I had cho-

(Cont. on pg. 7)

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HAMILTON: The "Price" of History Is Not Lost Cont. from Cover



Ken Hamilton

minorities -- over their own white friends and relatives -- will ever happen, nor should it.

Last week, representing his Niagara Organizing Alliance for Hope (NOAH), the Niagara Falls' Word of Life Church's Pastor Jesse Scott spoke into the near-deaf ears of the bulk of the county legislature on the issue of a resolution offered by 4th District Legislator Democrat Owen Steed.

While likely NOAH wrote Steed's resolution, it nonetheless said that it wanted the county to study the issue as to why "minority" hiring is so relatively low compared to "majority" hiring. The words "minority" and "majority" are there in the last sentence because they mean something. It's political affiliation; or more so, it is a measurement of the sensitivities of the county's residents. And overall, residents are evidently

in general contentment with how the county is being run. We will get back to real minority and majority issues in a moment, but let's first look at the numbers.

Yes, the estimate of Niagara County's minority population is about 13%, and at about 7%, African-Americans compose a little more than half that. And it is also true that the county's workforce is more than 96% white. Could race be the issue as to why relatively few blacks work for the county?

It could be, but let's first look at a clarifying situation that happened back in 1998 when the Democratic Party primary race for the then-138th Assembly District, that included Niagara Falls, was being run by Francine DelMonte, Michael Johnson, James Joyce and then-Legislator Renae Kimble. The GOP held firmly the State Senate, but the Assembly was firmly in the hands of the DEMS.

With that in mind, a mostly African-American group called the Niagara Ministerial Council (NMC) chose to endorse African-American Kimble over the more experienced DelMonte, who had long-served as chief of staff for the-then Assemblyman Joseph Pillittere. When I asked why they chose African-American Kimble, the president of the group hemmed and hawed for a moment and then said, "Well, she is the only one that asked."

Even though I was then a Republican, I then asked him if I could bring to their next meeting the three

Democrats that they didn't endorse.

Each of the non-endorsed did well; but to what is germane in this discussion is a statement that DelMonte made that flummoxed some of the preachers. As already being the odds-on favorite to win the primaries -- despite the snubbing of the NMC -- DelMonte's mind was already on the general election where she would run against Republican Robert Daly, the son of then-former State Senator and then-current Commissioner of Transportation John Daly.

Now here is where the words "race", "minority" and "majority" comes in. I sat in on the NMC interviews of the three non-endorsed when DelMonte made a statement that inconsequentially passed by me. Scott was not on the panel, but could perhaps explain this to Steed today.

DelMonte rightfully said, "... why should we send a minority to the Assembly ...". Her words appalled some of the ministers who didn't fully understand the nature of politics, and, obviously, how it plays into race. When I became aware of their concerns, I explained to the ministers who didn't understand what DelMonte meant, and how it is still germane to race and the limited number of minorities working for the county.

DelMonte knew and understood that whatever party had the "majority" of members in the Senate or the Assembly controlled the money and the jobs that the members and supporter of supporters of each group

would get. It was then-true in Senate with Republicans in the "majority" and Democrats in the "minority"; and it was just as true in the Assembly, with Democrats in the "majority" and Republicans in the "minority."

So then, what does race have to do with the lack of jobs in county employment?

Well, honestly, there's enough racial blame on both sides, but only one group has the power, if not the will, to change it -- and that responsibility falls on the shoulders of African-Americans.

Given the fact that Niagara County has a committee form of government, whereas the "majority" caucus are Republicans, those Republicans in the county's legislature largely pick and chooses who and, yes, what gives and gets the jobs. That true factor alone is enough to be the biggest issue. The best way for the county's "racial minority" to overcoming that issue is as simple as a checkmark on a Voter Registration Application and campaign contributions that leads to jobs.

So then, much as Kimble did and failed to fully follow-up when she was in and DEMS had the power, is it really necessary to set up county legislative committees to investigate the racial disparity of jobs, especially when the county's African-American voters are still inextricably married to the party that has none?

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NIAGARA



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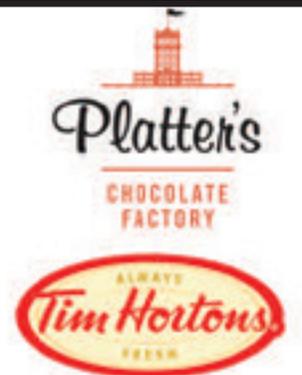
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Wilson: Lakeside Market

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

Home Buyer Seminar Pays Off for Young Falls Couple Cont. from Cover

Tony Farina

For Nick and Tori Jarzab, attending Deal Realty's Free Home Buyer Seminar last March in Niagara Falls has paid handsome dividends which they are just about to begin to enjoy.

The young Niagara Falls couple didn't know if they could really afford to buy a home as they begin their life's journey together only a year into their marriage, but they decided to attend the seminar and the experience convinced them that it was a realistic option and one they wanted to pursue.

Now, they are about to close on their new home in a residential area in Newfane and they are extremely excited about the road ahead as the high school sweethearts can't wait to move in. The new home has three bedrooms, 1/1/2 baths, and a nice yard, says Tori.

"We were really not sure we could do it, but after hearing about the possibilities from the experts, including investing money in a home rather than continuing to pay high rental prices, we decided to move ahead and started to save our money," said Nick during an interview at the Deal Realty offices on Center St. in Lewiston.

"It eased our minds and we decided to try and do it," says Tori, her face lighting up with a big smile as she talked about dealing with the experts at the seminar including a mortgage officer from Key Bank, a realtor (Cheryl Deal from Deal Realty), and others including an attorney and insurance agent who helped explain the process.

"They walked us through in a very helpful way and it gave us the motivation to give it a go, and we did," says Nick. "Now we can't wait to get in our new home."

"First-time buyers are often surprised when they see how affordable purchasing a home can be," says realtor Deal. "Many clients save thousands of dollars when they purchase rather than rent over a short 3-5 year period and they are very excited to find out they can afford to buy a new home utilizing the grants and bank programs that are available."

Besides Deal, John Whiting, a Key Bank mortgage officer, helps present the seminars and deal with



prospective home buyers and investors who want to get an up-close look at the process. Many of the clients, says Deal, do not realize that home ownership is a feasible option.

Indeed, that's exactly what Nick and Tori discovered when they attended the seminar and it helped them set their sights on preparing to make that investment and now that they have, they couldn't be happier.

The next seminar, which will be held Saturday, March 14, from 1:00pm - 3:00pm, at the Key Bank office at 2429 Military Rd. in Niagara Falls, is billed as an event for first-time buyers or experienced buyers to find out everything needed to know about the home buying process from leading area professionals.

"The message to buyers is: Let's work together as a team so we can get you to a successful closing and you can reap the benefits of home ownership," says Deal.

She explains seating is limited, so people looking to attend the March 16 seminar should call Deal at 754-3301 or register on line at DealRealtyOnline.com. Food, refreshments and giveaways are provided.

Judging from the smiles from Nick and Tori and their obvious delight about their new home, it looks like a wise investment for people

looking to explore buying a home to get the details on what is involved and if it might work for them.

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promote the process, they found the right people to do it. We wish them great happiness in their new home.

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THE CRIME

WEEKLY HEADLINES

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the 200 block of Hyde Park Blvd. in the afternoon hours of Wednesday, February 19th, 2020, after reports of shots fired. Upon arriving at the scene, police learned that it was not a firearm going off but rather an individual shooting a BB gun into the creek.

-Niagara Falls Police and Fire responded to the Niagara Falls Coach Lines parking Lot off of Buffalo Avenue in the early morning hours of Wednesday, February 19th, 2020, after reports of a bus fire. According to reports, a bus was fully engulfed. Firefighters believe that the fire started due to mechanical reasons when the engine was warming up. No injuries were reported and authorities do not suspect foul play.

-On Thursday February 20th at approximately 2:00 a.m., NFPD responded to Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center to investigate an assault. Responding officers found that the 29 year old victim had been stabbed in the neck at another location.

It was learned that the victim was sitting in the front passenger seat of a vehicle being driven by a friend. The offender was seated behind the victim. While parked on Old Main St, the victim and offender began to argue and it quickly escalated and the offender stabbed to victim in the neck area. He then exited the vehicle and walked away. The driver of the vehicle, seeing a large amount of blood appear, drove the victim to the ER. Officers located the area where the crime occurred and secured a knife found on the side of the road which is believed to be the one used in the assault. Other officers responded to 626 15th St which is the address of the suspect. He



was found, detained and brought to police headquarters, interviewed by detectives where he ultimately confessed to the assault. The victim lost a large amount of blood and has been at ECMC in critical condition since the assault. The suspect is Spencer Groom, 55 years old of Niagara Falls, charged with Assault in the first degree. He was arraigned Friday morning and his bail was set at \$50,000. Many people have commented on the charge, believing it should have been Attempted Murder. To clarify, both Attempted Murder and Assault in the First Degree are B level felonies.

However charging Attempted Murder forces investigators and prosecutors to prove that the defendant intended to cause the victim's death. With Assault 1st the proof is only that the defendant caused a serious injury using, in this case, a knife. If the victim were not to survive, the charge can be upgraded.

-Niagara Falls Police responded in the early morning hours of Saturday, February 22nd, 2020, after reports of a stolen vehicle. According to police, the caller stated the vehicle was taken from outside the home it was parked at.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the NFTA bus Station on Portage Road in the morning hours of Saturday, February 22nd, 2020, for reports of a male trying to take another person's phone, harassing bus drivers and urinating on the floor.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to a criminal mischief complaint in the evening hours of Sunday, February 23rd, 2020, after a complainant states that someone broke into his room because they thought he was Chris Tucker.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the 9800 block of Niagara Falls Boulevard in the evening hours of Sunday, February 23rd, 2020, during the course of which a gun was drawn and backup was requested. Police stated that at least one individual was arrested as a result of the incident. No injuries were reported.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to the 7-Eleven on Niagara Falls Boulevard in the early morning hours of Monday, February 24th, 2020, after reports of an armed robbery. The suspect, according to police, was not captured.

-Niagara Falls Police and Fire responded to the 900 block of Niagara Avenue in the late evening hours of Wednesday, February 26th, 2020, after reports of a robbery and assault. The victim was taken for medical treatment and police are continuing to investigate the incident.

-Niagara Falls Police responded to a vehicle that was allegedly stolen by knife-point from the Coastal Gas Station in the afternoon hours of Monday, March 2nd, 2020. According to reports, the victim stated that her 2008 Chevy Malibu was taken by a Hispanic male who displayed a razorblade/box cutter style knife. The suspects were later found by New York State Police and both taken into custody.

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The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to life-long learning and through the Community Education Center offers programs for people of all ages. Our course list contains opportunities for participation in activities that promote physical fitness during the Spring Term of 2020.

Please note that we are interested in expanding the number of future course offerings and invite community experts who are willing to share their expertise to contact the Community Education Center.

Registration begins on April 1, 2020. If you have any questions, or would like more information about a specific program, please call us at 716-286-0771

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NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER



DAILY PROGRAMS O/N BOCES

****There are no fees for these programs**

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This course is designed for the adult learner interested in completing their High School Equivalency diploma. It is also recommended for anyone who has been away from school for a long period of time or for those who feel they need prior preparation for the TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) Exam. The course reviews the basics of Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Reading. Applications are available at the Community Education Center. The course and TASC exam are free of charge. New York State has selected a new high school equivalency test called the TASC™ to replace the GED® as the primary pathway to a NYS High School Equivalency Diploma.

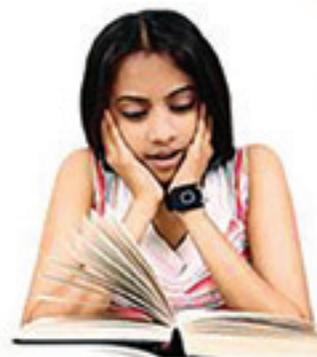
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NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER



Are you a community expert willing to share your expertise? Are you interested in offering a future course? Please contact the Community Education Center at 716-286-0771.

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Erica Kopp
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Call for information: 716-278-8154
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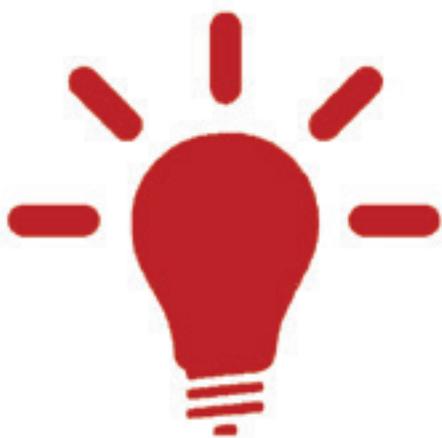
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Registration begins on April 20,2020. If you have any questions, or would like more information about a specific program, please call us at 716-286-0771.



NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

REGISTRATION

The Spring Term begins on April 20, 2020. Classes are held for 10 consecutive weeks unless otherwise noted. Classes will not be held on:

Monday, May 25, 2020 – Memorial Day

Registration by mail is preferred and will only be accepted with a postmark **PRIOR** to the start of classes from April 20, 2020 – May 29, 2020. There will be no registration on the first day of class. Please make checks or money orders payable to: **Niagara Falls City School District**

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Please forward registration and payment to:

Niagara Falls Community Education Center
ATTN: Kelly Perri
 6040 Lindbergh Avenue
 Niagara Falls, New York 14304

You may register in person from April 1, 2020 through April 20, 2020 at the Community Education Center Main Office from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.

FEES: As a self-sustaining division of the Niagara Falls City School District, all costs for instructors and staff are covered by course fees. Fees must be paid at time of registration. Residents of the City of Niagara Falls who are 65 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER may register for fitness activity courses for a fee of \$25.00.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS: Classes may be canceled or rescheduled if enrollment is low or if an instructor becomes unavailable. **If classes are canceled due to weather conditions, the community will be notified by local television and radio stations.**

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- If you withdraw during the first or second week of class – refund, less \$6.
- No refunds will be issued after the second week of class.
- To receive a refund you must notify the Community Education Center Office of your intent to withdraw from the class.

Please Remember:

- Register from April 1, 2020 – April 20, 2020.
- There will be no registration on first day of class

- Make checks and/or money orders payable to:
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- If you have questions, please call 286-0771

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Send to: Niagara Falls Community Education Center, Attn: Kelly Perri, 6040 Lindbergh Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14304

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Course Title	Location	Day/Time	Fee & Check/ M.O. #

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Joint Statement on Leadership Summit from Niagara Falls Mayor Bob Restaino and Niagara County Legislature Chair Becky Wydysz

“Last night, leadership teams from the City of Niagara Falls and Niagara County met to discuss how we can better work together to advance our collective interests. We acknowledged that with new leadership in the city and county, we hoped this could be the beginning of a very productive relationship.

“While we discussed several issues, the conversation kept coming back to economic development and the resources and programs the county’s Center for Economic Development had that could help Niagara Falls. All agreed that a rejuvenated economy in the city was great for all of Niagara County and would mean new jobs and tax revenue to everyone’s benefit.

“The immediate action items following the meeting include the county providing the city a de-



tailed presentation on its wide array of economic development functions and the city providing the county with asset information, particularly in areas that are to be targeted for

development. “

“The leadership teams agreed to reconvene after these initial steps are complete to further coordinate economic development efforts and

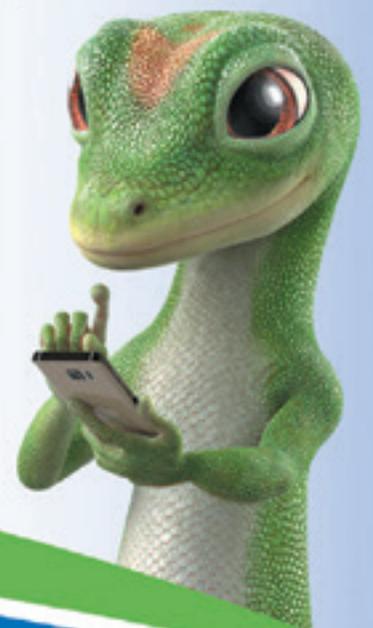
to discuss additional areas of cooperation.”

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Chris's Corner Cont. from Cover: Sporting Event Tickets, Anyone?

Chris Voccio is a Niagara Falls City Council member and can be reached at ChrisVoccio@gmail.com.



Chris Voccio
NF City Councilman

sen another field for my career.

Beyond many business accomplishments I'm proud of, which helped fund good journalism, I also had a lot of fun. I got to see Dallas Cowboys games from a luxury suite at the old Texas Stadium in Irving. I attended the inaugural race of the Coca Cola 300 at the then brand new Texas Motor Speedway and watched the race in a quiet climate controlled suite with catered food. I watched many Indianapolis Colts games from a luxury suite. I got to dine privately with the owners of the Pittsburgh Pirates, who also happen to own newspapers, in their luxury box. And shortly after moving to Niagara Falls, I got to see the Buffalo Sabres play, ironically from the comforts of the Buffalo News'



luxury suite. (Ironically because they were a competitor at the time.) I've attended many other such events, which is also ironic in that I'm not really a sports fan.

These very expensive luxury boxes were considered investments by the companies that paid handsomely for them, ways to develop relationships with large advertisers, relationships that were crucial to our business.

I mention all of this because this topic seems to have become a focal point for local media outlets, locked onto the idea that having these types of luxury suites at sporting venues may somehow be unethical.

Out of all the sporting events I've attended in these luxury boxes, they were all packed with employees of the media companies. It only makes sense. Why would a newspaper company invest in these high priced suites to build better relationships with customers, only to send customers to the suites without people with which to build relationships? That would make no sense whatsoever. So at any given game you'd have a mix of auto dealers, grocers, retailers...and a bunch of newspaper people.

So now I read, seemingly often, that a publicly owned gambling institution has invested in suites at sporting venues, just as newspaper



companies do. And of course, they are used to develop relationships (substitute players for advertisers), which means, by the definition of the word "relationship", that they would send employees along with the players/customers. And somehow, this is wrong?

What am I missing?

But wait a minute, Chris, it's different if it's done with public funds! Is it?

If media companies invest in these luxury suites for business development purposes, and if it's in the public interest to further develop business in the enterprises owned by the public, then shouldn't we want those charged with developing these businesses to use methods that are used in the private sector?

There's a legitimate question of whether this institution, or any institution, including newspaper companies, should invest in these suites as opposed to other business development options. There's also a legitimate question as to whether the names of attendees should be made public, although I'm not sure whether that would impact a potential guest's inclination to attend. Es-

pecially if they thought they would be publicly shamed for attending. But the idea that the people who run this organization should not attend is borne of ignorance.

Maybe if media companies invited editors and reporters to attend some of these sporting events, and maybe if they did a better job of integrating them into their business operations (something journalists usually resist, sometimes vehemently), perhaps some of the reporting you read in the media would be balanced by an at least surface understanding of the reasoning behind some of the decisions businesses make.

But despite these imperfections in the process, journalism is incredibly important. So while I may shake my head as I read media reports fraught with insinuations that are off base, I'm glad my journalist friends are out there, asking questions and digging for stories. We need them. Now more than ever.

I just wish they were slightly more informed. Perhaps their employers can take them along to the next big game.

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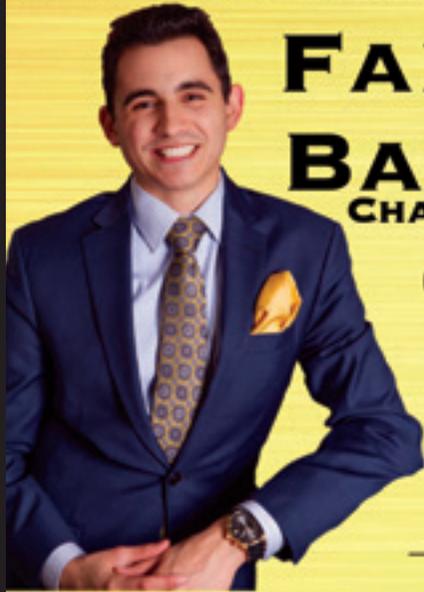
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