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Volume 3 • Issue 8 | February 23, 2026



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Far, Far Away

STAYCATION CHAUTAUQUA

Contributed by
Chautauqua County
Visitors Bureau

When things are “between seasons”, our area still offers great reasons to visit or enjoy it as a staycation spot. Here are some ideas for things to do and see in the Chautauqua County during late winter.

Our region offers several unique and appealing cultural and historic at-

tractions on a year-round basis. The city of Jamestown offers a robust collection of experiences, including:

The National Comedy Center is dedicated to the history and art form of comedy and is the “funniest museum” you will ever visit.

The Lucy Desi Museum showcases the lives and accomplishments of the “first Couple of Comedy” Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.

The Roger Tory Peterson Institute, dedicated to showcasing wildlife art.

The Robert H. Jackson Center features Jackson’s legacy as Chief Prosecutor of the Nazi’s at the Nuremberg War Tribunals, and as a US Supreme Court Justice and Attorney General.

Jamestown also boasts the Fenton History Center, highlighting local history, the Northwest Arena, of-

SEE PAGE 2

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... OR SPRING BREAK FUN

DESTINATION SUN & SAND

Featured Writer
Liz Nixon



I have always loved being on the water---pools, the ocean shore, lakes---but I have never had the desire to go on a week-long cruise in the middle of the ocean. Since my mom, Lynn, treated me to a Ca-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

DESTINATION DISNEY

Featured Writer
Nate Cornell



Last fall, I had the privilege of being a cast member at Walt Disney World Park and Resorts through the Disney College Program. When working in EPCOT and spending nearly all of my down time at the parks and the re-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

DESTINATION OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Featured Writer
James Nixon



Hiking in the summer and winter each presents unique challenges, so being prepared is key. In summer, start early to avoid the strongest heat of the day and the heavier

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Live CHQ. Love CHQ.
Read CHQ.

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THIS WEEK AROUND TOWN



WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 25

Movies at The Reg: Eternity 7 PM

Reg Lenna Center for The Arts | Jamestown
For Info: reglenna.com

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26

Hoppy Hour Yoga, Brews, & Live Music | 6:30 PM-8:30 PM

Wicked Warren's | Jamestown
For Info: 716-484-4070

Craft & Sip Group 7 PM-10 PM

Labyrinth Press Company | Jamestown
For Info: [Labyrinth Press Company Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/LabyrinthPressCompany)

Songwriters Circle | 7:30 PM

Lake Shore Center for the Arts | Westfield
For Info: lakeshorecenterforthearts.com

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27

Art After 5 | 5:30 PM-7:30 PM

Roger Tory Peterson Institution | Jamestown
For Info: rtpi.org

25 Years of Asking Questions: Who Gets to Go to School? | 6 PM

Robert H. Jackson Center | Jamestown
For Info: roberthjackson.org/event/25-years-equal-education

Movies at The Reg: The Choral | 7 PM

Reg Lenna Center for The Arts | Jamestown
For Info: reglenna.com

Line Dancing Night | 7 PM

Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House | Bemus Point
For Info: [Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/BemusPointGolfClubTapHouse)

SUNDAY MARCH 1

First Sunday Storytime 12:30 PM-1 PM

Audubon Community Nature Center | Jamestown
For Info: auduboncnc.org

In Concert: David M. Miller 2 PM

Lake Shore Center for the Arts | Westfield
For Info: lakeshorecenterforthearts.com

Staycation Chautauqua

Continued from Front Page

fering skating and ice bumper cars, and the Audubon Community Nature Center, which blends informative wildlife displays and accessible trails.

Due to favorable grape growing conditions in the region, Chautauqua and the surrounding Lake Erie, NY region is home to several wineries, known collectively as the Lake Erie Wine Country wine trail. These wineries are open throughout the year and offer wine tastings and sales, small plate food options and pairings, and often entertainment.

In addition, the area is one of the largest grape-growing regions in the world and is the original home of Welch's grape juice. Today, visitors

can explore the history of the region's grape-growing heritage at the Grape Discovery Center just outside the Village of Westfield.

Shopping throughout the region is centered around small, unique shops like gift boutiques, antique shops, art purveyors, pottery, and artisan food providers. These shops, often located in the area's small villages, are in keeping with the more relaxed pace of our area.

Art has a long and prominent heritage in our area. There are a number of galleries, art-oriented shops, exhibitions, and events in Chautauqua County. While there is a wide variety of styles of local art available, there is also a notable focus on art

that reflects the outdoors.

Cultural performances are available at the Reg Lenna Civic Center in Jamestown, the 1891 Fredonia Opera House, and at the Rockefeller Arts Center at the SUNY Fredonia campus. Additionally, many local taverns offer live music at select times. For complete information about concerts, performances, and live entertainment, visit the Events section of Tourchautauqua.com.

Last but not least, many area hotels and accommodations offer lower room rates during "between-season" timeframes. A great option for locals looking for a comfortable staycation spot.



"Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow."

~ Anita Desai



Editorial with Lori Cornell

To Stay-cay or Vacay. That is the question.



Publisher
Lori Cornell

snow is beginning to look not-so-pretty anymore.

Mud season. Shoulder season. It's get the heck-out-of-dodge season.

Or, you can choose to reinvest your hard-earned dollars locally while reaffirming the fact that Chautauqua County offers so much to enjoy all year round. Even in late winter, when you never know whether it's going to rain, snow, sleet or hail with a temperature range from 50 degrees to negative below, we can all find something meaningful with which to participate locally. For those of you wondering what such opportunities could possibly be, be sure to read our invaluable, front cover Visitors Bureau advisory.

Whichever path you choose, consider supporting local. Try a local travel planner if you're jetting or a creative DIY stay-cation if your hanging. Despite our annual winter doldrums, there are always magical options right here in Chautauqua County.

Well, it's that time of year...the weather is warming up (until we get the next snowstorm) and hopes are high that spring will some day arrive again. For many families in Chautauqua County, the perennial ponder "what to do" is in the forefront of our minds: save money and take advantage of the great options for fun that we have locally, or bank account be damned: plan that Spring Break!

Cabin fever. Winter blues. The

CHAUTAUQUA GAZETTE

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"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."

~ Marcel Proust



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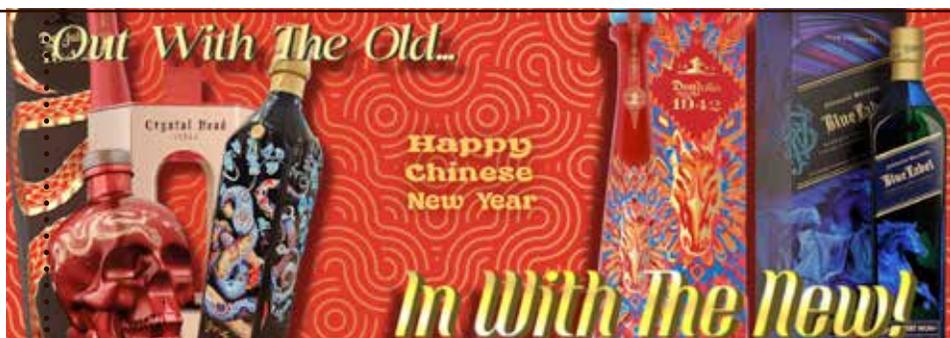


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"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

~ Lao Tzu



Faith Matters

Lenten Life Stories 2026: An Invitation to Transfiguration



Featured Writer

Rev. Tara Eastman

First Presbyterian Church of Warren

The season of Lent just started, with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 18th, 2026. Some folks choose to give something up for Lent: like sweets, spending money on themselves, or abstaining from TV/Cable/or /social media. It's important to note, that the tradition of giving something up for Lent is about more than self-discipline and determination of will. Giving something up for Lent allows us time, energy and resources to shift into new practices of prayer, study and acts of service. Lent extends an invitation to slow down and to lean into spiritual practices of prayer, study and service that lead us into space that opens us to spiritual transformation - or even transfiguration.

In Matthew chapter 16, we find the account of the Transfiguration of Jesus where the disciples - Peter, James and John travel up to the top of a high mountain to pray... and Jesus is dramatically transfigured before them. Christ's clothes and face shine brilliantly as somehow, he miraculously meets with Moses and Elijah. Peter, so enthralled by the scene, asks Jesus if he may build three shrines so that the group can stay and soak up the glory of the moment, but...

"While he (Peter) was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone... And then Jesus begins back down the mountain..." (The full story of Jesus Transfiguration is found at Matthew 17:1-9)

There is so much to appreciate in this fantastic Jesus story: the voice from the cloud, the dazzling light and the witness of Peter, James and John experiencing this holy moment.

But my favorite part of this Jesus story

is his call for the disciples, "Do not be afraid" followed by his choice to go back down the mountain and head towards the conflict that awaits him in Jerusalem. Secondly, even though the disciples can't grasp the challenges ahead, Jesus calls the disciples to join him in his trek back down in the valley - into their own ministries of change - and transfiguration. Jesus

knows that Peter and his colleagues will make mistakes, but Jesus' invitation stands. Peter, James and John are called into a new season of growth. Much like God's invitation for each of us to enter into Lent with openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit and Jesus affirmation: "Do not be afraid."

While this Lenten opportunity of change and growth can feel daunting, we are assured that we are not travelling alone. In the witness of scripture, the presence of the Holy Spirit - and our own life stories of faith; we are given fuel to fill our minds, hearts and spirits - for the 40-day Lenten journey ahead.

On the gracious invitation of the Chautauqua Gazette, over the coming six weeks of Lent, I will use the vehicle of spiritual biography as spiritual practice to accompany you. Sharing story as spiritual practice is common in many faith traditions, that some may refer to as sharing a testimony or good news. No matter what name this practice is given, it offers us space to take notice of how God is engaged in our daily lives. When we share the stories of our joys and challenges, we become more engaged with one another and learn more about how to practice our faith. Shared story fortifies our relationships with God and one another - and makes essential space for ongoing spiritual transformation and growth. Lent has arrived, and Christ invites us to travel down from the glory of the mountains and into the valley, not alone, but together. It's time for us to get up and walk into a season of spiritual transformation. Do not be afraid.

Questions to ponder:

- What transformation or change do I need in this season of Lent?
- How might spiritual practices of prayer, service and study help facilitate spiritual growth?

Walking in grace,

Rev. Tara L. Eastman

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Warren, Pa and Host of Holy Shenanigans Podcast.

Pat's Pen with Pat Locke

Planning Spring Break



Contributing Writer
Pat Locke

Spring break isn't just about escape, but for reprieve or a pause to catch our breath to refresh and recharge while anxiously awaiting the season that follows spring that which is summer. It's all about renewal, freedom and the anticipation of warmer days ahead.

So however we spend spring break by traveling far, staying close to home or simply tending to memory, spring still finds us. In its return, there is comfort and a small promise that brighter days will be upon us soon with new beginnings. Enjoy.

Spring Break can mean very different things depending on where you are standing in life. For college students, it often conjures images of sunshine and escape from winter. Beaches in Florida or perhaps Cancun, loud music and a week that feels suspended from responsibility. Spring break, as a metaphor, symbolizes a "breath of fresh air" as a temporary release from academic pressures or a chance to "turn over a new leaf".

For families, it might look more like a road trip, a visit to grandparents or a few unhurried mornings when alarm clocks are blissfully silent. And for some, especially later in life, spring isn't about travel at all. It's the first warm breeze after a long winter with the sight of daffodils pushing up through cold soil. It's a reminder that renewal is patient and reliable even after a winter that feels especially long. During spring break the light lingers a little longer in the evening and the dogwoods bloom on schedule.



Many of you know me as a personal friend and as author of this special column, "Pat's Pen". But I also invite you enjoy my unique blog that features people, places, and preservation in our community. To those who already follow my blog, thank you. To those who might have interest, simply tap on the word, FOLLOW upon entering the blog site: offshoremuse2023.blogspot.com. I appreciate your help in increasing my readership.

Sincerely - Pat Locke.

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TRAVEL

Trivia

1. What is the only continent with no commercial airports?
2. Which country spans the most time zones when including overseas territories?
3. Which hamlet in Chautauqua County is internationally known for spiritualist mediums?
4. What timekeeping system do airlines use worldwide?
5. Which nature center near Jamestown is named after a famous ornithologist?
6. What ocean current warms climates along eastern North America?
7. What grape variety dominates vineyards along Lake Erie's shoreline?
8. What U.S. state receives the most domestic spring break travelers annually?
9. Which U.S. president once visited Chautauqua Lake and described it as "the most American thing in America?"
10. What direction must you travel to lose a calendar day?

1. Antarctica 2. France 3. Lily Dale 4. UTC 5. Audubon Community Nature Center 6. Gulf Stream 7. Concord 8. Florida 9. Roosevelt 10. Eastward

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Senator George Borrello Introduces Legislation to Address E-Bike Safety Concerns

*Contributed by
Office of Senator
George Borrello*

Senator George Borrello has introduced S8909 and S8910, legislation that strengthens enforcement tools for law enforcement and enhance penalties to protect pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists from unsafe and unlawful use of electric personal mobility devices, particularly e-bikes, which account for the vast majority of these devices on our streets.

“With the rapid rise of e-bikes and other types of electric mobility devices, we’ve seen a rise in dangerous, illegal, and unregulated use,” said Senator Borrello. “Communities across our state are dealing with e-bikes that are being operated where they are not permitted, as well as devices that have been modified to travel at unsafe speeds. This package gives law enforcement the tools they need to protect the public and ensure these devices are used responsibly.”

Senator Borrello noted that New York law clearly distinguishes among three classes of e-bikes, each defined by how the motor engages and the maximum assisted speed:

- **Class 1** – Pedal assist only, up to 20 mph
- **Class 2** – Throttle-assisted (can operate without pedaling), up to 20 mph
- **Class 3** – Pedal assist only, up to 25-28 mph (restricted to New York City)

Senate Bill 8909 specifically addresses class 3 e-bikes, authorizing police officers and peace officers to seize class 3 e-bikes being operated in any community outside New York City, which is currently the only location in the state where this class of e-bike can be operated lawfully.

By clarifying enforcement authority, the bill closes a critical gap that has limited officers’ ability to address illegal operation. It also establishes a schedule of graduated fines up to \$750 to ensure that the consequences of unlawful use outweigh any incentive to ignore the law.

“The intent of this legislation is not to prohibit the lawful use of e-bikes, but to deter the illegal use of class 3 e-bikes outside of New York City,” said Senator Borrello. “By providing clear enforcement authority and consistent penalties, this measure will improve public safety, support law enforcement, and promote safer streets throughout New York State.”

Senate Bill 8910 strengthens penalties for

the reckless operation of electric mobility devices as well as for unauthorized modifications that make these devices more dangerous. The legislation formally defines “electric skateboard” in statute and closes longstanding gaps in New York’s Vehicle and Traffic Law that have limited enforcement and created confusion around where and how these devices may be used.

The bill defines “reckless operation,” as operating on sidewalks in a manner that endangers pedestrians, disregarding traffic control devices such as stop signs and traffic signals, traveling against the flow of traffic, or riding at excessive speeds in pedestrian-heavy or school zones.

The measure establishes the penalty structure for reckless operation violations as follows:

- **First offense:** A fine of up to \$250 and mandatory completion of a safety education course
- **Second offense:** A fine of up to \$500 and potential temporary confiscation of the device for up to 30 days
- **Third offense:** A fine of up to \$1,000, permanent confiscation of the device, and potential misdemeanor charges if the reckless operation results in injury or property damage.

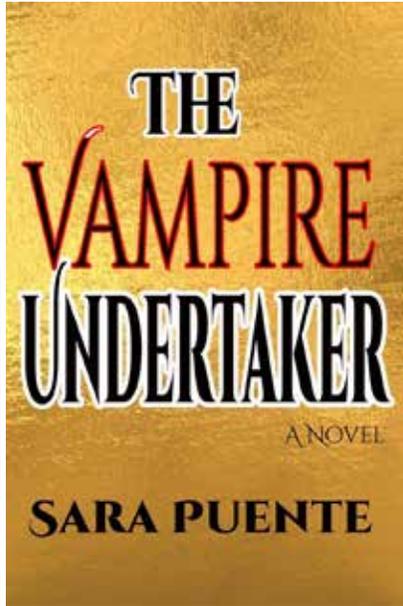
By establishing clear, graduated penalties and specific consequences for illegal modifications, the bill gives law enforcement meaningful tools to deter unsafe behavior and protect pedestrians, motorists, and riders. The legislation also directs the Department of Transportation to develop statewide public-education materials to ensure operators understand the rules, safety requirements, and consequences of reckless operation.

“Electric mobility devices have become a common part of daily travel, but our laws haven’t kept pace with the rapid growth of this technology,” said Senator Borrello. “By clarifying definitions and strengthening penalties, this legislation gives law enforcement the tools they need to address reckless operation and protect pedestrians, motorists, and riders.”



Together, S8909 and S8910 form a comprehensive approach to improving public safety and ensuring that electric mobility devices are used responsibly throughout New York State. By closing enforcement gaps, addressing illegal modifications, and prioritizing education, this legislative package balances the benefits of emerging transportation technologies with the need to safeguard communities across the state.

THE VAMPIRE UNDERTAKER



Contributed by
Good Neighbor Bookstore

NFB Publishing announces the release of *The Vampire Undertaker*, a Gothic erotic romance by Sara Puente, available January 18, 2026 on Amazon. This book explores the electrifying power of devotion and love through trials and tribulations in 1874 London, a macabre drama in the style of Wilde with a Gothic twist, offering readers a pleasurable escape into a dark Victorian romance.

This book is newsworthy because it is about a romance that perseveres no matter what and loneliness is defeated through reanimation. In our current times, divorce rates are undeniably high, and many couples aren't getting married anymore. Loneliness pervades the Earth.

NFB Publishing is a local publishing house located in Buffalo, New York, the publisher Mark Pogodzinski, and encourages aspiring authors passionate in their writing.

Sara Puente studied literature while in college and has a degree in Office Technology. She loves tea and studying the Gothic in all its different forms in media. She currently resides in a small city in New York where she believes vampires may roam the streets at night like clones.

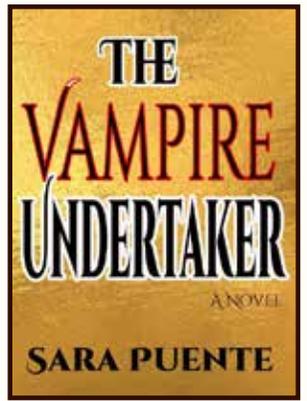
For interviews, covers, and/or author photographs, please contact the author Sara Puente at srpunte1995@gmail.com or (716) 294-0033.

There will be a book signing at Good Neighbor Bookstore on February 28th from 11am-1pm.

THE VAMPIRE UNDERTAKER

by Sara Puente

The Vampire Undertaker, a Gothic erotic romance by Sara Puente. This book explores the electrifying power of devotion and love through trials and tribulations in 1874 London, a macabre drama in the style of Wilde with a Gothic twist, offering readers a pleasurable escape into a dark Victorian romance.



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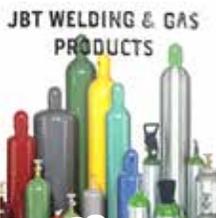
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**"Think of the tax
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~ Bradford Tax Institute



Tax breaks for Senior Citizens

Contributed by

Metro Creative

Growing older comes with many perks for those who are open to exploring the benefits. In addition to senior discounts on movies, meals and more, moving into one's golden years could offer some breaks when it comes to taxes and finances.

It is always best to go over tax- and finance-related plans with an accountant or certified financial planner to figure out what is in your best interest. However, generally speaking, here are some potential age-related tax perks.

Increase retirement savings

Older individuals can contribute more to employer-sponsored retirement accounts and Roth or traditional individual retirement accounts (IRAs), according to AARP. For 2023, the contribution limit for employees who participate in 401(k) and 403(b) programs, most 457 retirement savings plans and Thrift Savings Plan through the U.S. Federal Government can increase their contributions to \$22,500 - a jump of \$2,000 from last year. Those over age 50 can maximize contributions even more, up to a total of \$30,000.

Larger standard deduction

The Balance Money says for tax year 2022, people age 65 or older can add an extra \$1,750 to the standard deduction they're eligible for if they are unmarried and not a surviving spouse. Those who are married and file joint returns can add \$1,400. For tax year 2023, those amounts go up to \$1,850 and \$1,500. In addition, the standard eligible deductions increased. Most older taxpayers feel the bigger standard deduction plus the extra standard deduction is more than any itemized deductions they can claim and choose this option when filing their returns.

Reduce taxable income

The ability to contribute more to tax-deferred retirement accounts enables older adults to reduce their taxable incomes. This, in turn, reduces the amount that needs to be spent on income taxes.

Changes in filing threshold

According to The Arbor Company, which oversees senior living communities, the filing threshold is the income that must be made before being required to file a tax return. Typical taxpayers who are either employees or retired and drawing pensions or Social Security find the threshold increases over age 65. Single filers over age 65 do not need to file returns if their incomes are \$14,050 or under. Married filers over age 65 have a threshold of \$27,400. If primary or sole income comes from Social Security or a pension, those over age 65 may not have to file returns at all.

Elderly or disabled tax credit

Differing from deductions, a credit for taxpayers is available to people age 65 or older or retired persons on permanent and total disability who receive taxable disability income for the tax year, according to the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, this credit is for those who have an adjusted gross income or the total of nontaxable Social Security, pensions, annuities, or disability income under specific limits. The eligibility levels change from year to year. Credits range from \$3,750 to \$7,500.

These are some of the tax breaks American seniors can expect when filing their income tax returns. Speak with an accountant and financial planner about other perks that come with aging. Individuals also can visit www.irs.gov for further information.

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DoubleTree by Hilton Jamestown Employee Honored as Best NYS

Contributed by
DoubleTree by
Hilton Jamestown

The DoubleTree by Hilton Jamestown is celebrating one of its own after Amber Huber was named Lodging Employee of the Year for properties with 150 rooms or less by the New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association.

The award was presented during the 2025 Stars of the Industry Awards at The Otesaga Hotel in Cooperstown. Each year, NYSHTA honors individuals and properties across the state who demonstrate excellence, dedication and a lasting impact on New York's hospitality and tourism industry. More than 150 nominations were submitted, highlighting the depth of talent throughout the state.

Huber's recognition places Jamestown firmly on the statewide hospitality map. Judges selected winners based on their extraordinary contributions to their workplaces, communities and the industry at large. Honorees are recognized for setting the standard for service, leadership and innovation. For local residents planning a fall or winter staycation, the award is a reminder that high-caliber hospitality is available close to home. The

Submitted Photo



Front office manager Amber Huber accepts her award

DoubleTree by Hilton Jamestown offers a convenient downtown location within walking distance of the National Comedy Center, the Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Museum and local restaurants and shops. Guests can enjoy comfortable accommodations and on-site dining without leaving the city.

A staycation can be as simple as booking a night away to relax, ordering room service, visiting nearby attractions or enjoying a quiet evening downtown. With award-winning staff like Huber helping lead the guest experience, visitors can expect attentive service and hometown pride.

NYSHTA officials said the 2025 winners embody the very best of hospitality and continue to make New York State a premier travel destination. For Jamestown, that excellence is happening right here at the DoubleTree.

Patricia Graves Speaks Sunday on Preserving Our History

"Our Story, Our Strength, Our Responsibility" is the subject of Patricia Graves' message when she speaks this Sunday, March 1, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Jamestown's 10:30 a.m. hybrid service. Graves believes that the history of Jamestown belongs to everyone who has called it home, that it is the collective story of all who have lived, worked, struggled, and thrived here. We all share the responsibility to ensure that these stories are preserved and told, because they reflect who we are as a community. By empowering people to share their voices and experiences, we safeguard the richness, diversity, and truth of Jamestown's history for future generations. Driven by a personal commitment to support community growth and positive change, Graves serves on several local boards and committees, including the YWCA Jamestown, Rotary Club of Jamestown, and the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation. All are welcome to the service and coffee hour that follows at 1255 Prendergast Avenue. To participate virtually, use the link at UUJamestown.org/calendar.



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"Travel brings power and love back into your life."

~Rumi Jalalud-Din

Vacation means something different to everyone. For some, it's the sway of the ocean beneath their feet. For others, it's the quiet reward of a mountain summit earned step by step. In the features that follow, a pair of mother-son writers share their distinct travel experiences, offering personal insights, practical tips, and a reminder that the best getaways aren't just about where you go, but how you experience the journey.

Lessons from My First Cruise: Adventures of a Golden Girl in Training



Destination Sun & Sand

Continued from Front Page

ribbean getaway on the magnificent MSC Grandiosa, I knew it would be a special bonding experience, so I agreed to go. I have always been a fan of The Love Boat, so I guess you could say I finally got to live out my childhood dream...minus the captain's hat and dramatic slow-motion wave from the deck (although there were plenty of fast-motion waves!).

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with my mom and her "Golden Girls" friends. I was their "Golden Girl in Training," and I have to say, even though I was technically the trainee, they were all young at heart and some of the most fun people on the ship. Traveling with them made the experience unforgettable, and I truly appreciate every one of those wonderful ladies for welcoming me right into their circle.

Before I get into what I have learned and what might benefit you if you are preparing for a cruise vacation, I also want to say how grateful I am to my mom for inviting me on this trip. It meant more to me than she probably realizes, and I will always treasure the memories of our week together aboard the Grandiosa.

Here are some tips for first-time cruise vacationers from a "Golden Girl in Training":

- Expect Delays – On embarkment day, there was a long delay in boarding the ship due to a stowaway that they could not find. My advice? Expect the unexpected. Don't wait till you're on the cruise ship to start your vacation. Just lean into the delays, and have fun while you wait.
- Pack a "carry-on bag" – My mother's suitcase was one of the 50 bags that did not arrive at our room. At 10:00 pm, I went on a scavenger hunt to find my mother's suitcase. No worries! I found it – after looking inside a few other suitcases that looked like hers. Her tag was cut off, and her "AirTag" had no idea where it was.
- Packing tips: This advice may apply more to women, but pack less! You will never wear everything you pack, and you'll likely end up buying some cute sundresses on the ship!
- If you enjoy lively crowds, spontaneous games of human bumper cars, and elevators that encourage instant friendships, this is definitely the place to be!
- When it comes to the food, If your vacation philosophy is "try everything at least twice," the cruise ship will be your paradise. You may want to warn your waistband in advance and schedule a salad reunion when you get back.
- Make sure to study the ship map before arriving. You don't want to walk all the way down to one end of the ship to find out you have to be on the other end of the ship in 5 minutes and on a different floor.
- If you like to have your coffee in the morning in a quiet place, request that your coffee and breakfast be sent to your room. Make sure you pick a time that you want to wake



Liz Nixon and her mother, Lynn Osmer



Liz Nixon, "The Golden Girl in Training" and "The Golden Girls"

up because the crew will knock on your door bright and early. Plus, it just feels so luxurious having your coffee and breakfast brought to you! Speaking of the crew, I was beyond impressed with how hard they work. They are constantly moving, smiling, helping, cleaning, serving, and somehow still manage to be cheerful no matter what time of day it is. They truly keep the whole floating city running.

- If you want to go on an excursion to one of the Islands, make sure you do all your research before you get off the ship. Otherwise, you may be tasting rum in your cake, ice cream, tea, cold drink, lunch, etc., and by the end of the excursion, you will need help finding your way back to the ship. Or if you plan to spend the day on the beach on the ship's private island, make sure you know which beach your rental is at, or you might find yourself touring the whole island trying to find it!
- In the evening, be selective when choosing a lounge to hang out at. The music is great, and dancing can be fun, but there can be men who prey on the Golden Girls. I witnessed it firsthand with a young

gentleman who tried to get very chummy with my mom and her friends at the bar.

- Don't be alarmed when the captain makes an announcement (at 5:30 AM!!!) and stops the ship when you are outside Cuba. It is probably an emergency involving a crew member needing medical attention and being taken off the ship to the nearest hospital. Once again, expect the unexpected and remember you're on vacation.
- Lastly, learn how to flow with the boat when the ship flows through 6–7 foot waves. I tried to gracefully walk on the ship without falling over. I even tried to fly as Rose did on the Titanic, but the ship's crew yelled at me.

If you never been on a cruise ship, I highly recommend you give it a try and don't expect anything, just go with the flow. Embrace the sway of the ship. And if you happen to find yourself surrounded by a fabulous group of "Golden Girls," consider yourself very fortunate. You'll laugh more, dance more, and realize they might just out-cruise you.

Smart Steps on the Trail: Practical Hiking Tips for Every Season

Destination Outdoor Adventure

Continued from Front Page

trail traffic that tends to build by late morning. Wear lightweight moisture-wicking clothing such as merino wool or some sort of merino wool/polyester blend, which helps regulate body temperature and keeps you comfortable even when you sweat. Carry plenty of water to prevent dehydration, and if you are planning a longer hike, consider bringing electrolyte packets to stay properly hydrated. Take regular breaks in shaded areas when possible so your body has time to cool down and recover.

In winter, preparation becomes even more important. Always bring extra layers because temperatures can shift quickly, especially if elevation changes are involved. You will want a base layer to keep moisture off your skin, a mid layer for insulation, and a shell to protect you from wind and snow. Snowshoes and micro-spikes or crampons are a necessity in winter, not only for traction but also for safety on icy or packed trails. Always check the weather forecast before heading out, as conditions can change quickly in colder months and storms can move in faster than expected.

In both seasons, bring a map and tell someone where you plan on hiking and what time you expect to return. Pack essentials like protein bars and other snacks, a first-aid kit, compass, phone, and a battery pack so you are not left without power if your hike runs longer than planned. Another great tool is the Garmin InReach, which allows you to send out texts

even with no service and, in an emergency, can send a distress message to local emergency services. Weather in the mountains during any season can change in an instant, so knowing when to call it a day and turn back is very important. Always remember: turning around is not failure. It is good judgment and the mark of a seasoned hiker.

Trail Picks from a Seasoned Hiker

In the Northeast:

The Adirondack Mountains offer endless trail options from relaxed forest walks to high peaks. The White Mountains in New Hampshire are known for their incredible views and rapidly changing weather. Vermont's Green Mountains offer beautiful wooded trails, especially during foliage season. Acadia National Park combines ocean scenery with mountain hikes, and Baxter State Park is a more rugged destination famous for its wilderness feel and Mount Katahdin.

Out West:

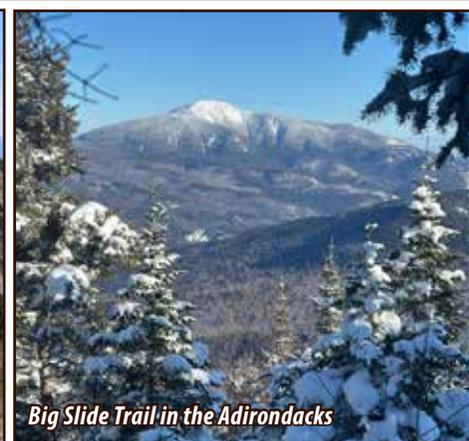
Rocky Mountain National Park features alpine lakes, wildlife, and high-elevation trails. Medicine Bow National Forest offers wide-open landscapes and peaceful backcountry routes. Zion National Park is known for its towering canyon walls and iconic hikes, while Grand Teton National Park delivers breathtaking mountain scenery and trails for every skill level.



Scarp Ridge Trail Near Aspen, Colorado



Scarp Ridge Trail Near Aspen, Colorado



Big Slide Trail in the Adirondacks



Big Slide Trail in the Adirondacks



Franconia Ridge, New Hampshire



Cottonwood Pass, Colorado

***"Not all those who
wander are lost."***



~ J.R.R. Tolkien

See more of James' photography
on Instagram @jamesnixonphoto

Destination Disney

Continued from Front Page

sorts, I learned lots of great tips on what to do and what not to do when vacationing at Walt Disney World. If your spring break happens to take you to Orlando this year, I hope you find my article helpful!

As most people know, Disney World can be very expensive, and many of us are only able to go once in a lifetime. So, you would want to make the most of your time and have the most magical experience that you can. Obviously, you can't do everything, no matter how long you stay. I was there for five months and feel like I still barely scratched the surface of the many activities that each park and resort has to offer. However, I did learn some tricks of the trade and must-dos for families that I'm glad to share for your happy Disney Vacation.

First, whether you stay at a Disney Resort or not, I highly recommend character dining. Character dining is one of the more inexpensive, immersive experiences that you can have at Walt Disney World, and the food is always insanely good. I found that some of the best character dining spots for breakfast, such as The Crystal Palace or The Whispering Canyon Cafe at The Wilderness Lodge, are great ways to start the day, especially if you have a big one planned. Of course, it all depends on what characters you'd like to see or what dining experience you prefer the most, but as I mentioned, the food is always good. I would suggest making reservations for the coveted character dining immediately after booking your trip.

On that thought, and not to sound contradictory, but one of the biggest mistakes I observed when interacting with the guests is overscheduling. Many would make too many reservations in a day, resulting in more focus on the strategy of timing rather than on availing themselves of the surprises and impromptu moments that the magical day can bring. I ran into too many moms stressed over FastPass fury, lug-

ging children broken down in tears with exhaustion. One key factor that families should know before vacationing at Walt Disney World is that Disney, especially park days, can never be fully anticipated. Sure, you should plan, but also know that you cannot control wait times nor the happy whims or emotional breakdowns of children at any random moment. The best thing to do, from my experience witnessing thousands of families, is to just go with the flow. You must be ready to deal with the uncertainty of the rides and attractions in the parks. It seemed consistently better to approach the park with less stringent expectations to allow for family flexibility, instead of overbooking. I recommend making no more than five reservations per day, including your ride fast passes, attractions and dining. Instead, learn how to follow the Disney apps to navigate your Disney day as it so moves you.

Before going on your trip, the two apps you should download on each of your travelers' phones are the My Disney Experience and the Magic Guide for Disney World. The experience app is a must-have for three main reasons. The first reason is to check the wait times for attractions and rides so you may assess which are popular on your visiting day and not. The second reason is for reservations for restaurants and fast passes. Fast passes will help ensure you can ride the more popular rides on busy days - but again, prioritize your top must-dos and don't overbook. The third major reason I suggest using the app is for mobile orders. Mobile orders at Disney World are a cheat code for saving time. Usually, mobile orders are the priority at counter service eateries and you may save as much as thirty minutes at each spot. At Disney, time is your enemy, so don't stress, but be smart. The Magic Guide for Disney World app can also be very helpful, showing the best times to go to each park and the specific weather all day.

Although you can't do everything at each



Submitted Photos from the Cornell family's visit to Disney's Cast Member Nate.

Epcot

park and resort, there are some rides and attractions that I recommend you make a priority. On the attractions side in Animal Kingdom, I highly recommend the Lion King show and the Macaw show at the Tree of Life. Both have low wait times and, in my opinion, are some of the best shows in all the parks. In Hollywood Studios, the Indiana Jones show and Fantasmic are both classics that your family would hate to miss. EPCOT is very popular for drinking and eating around the world. However, this park's fireworks show, The Symphony of Us, is a beautiful spectacle that I really think all Disney-goers must see. In Magic Kingdom, you obviously must see the evening Cinderella Castle show, but another attraction that is very entertaining and has no wait time is the Monsters Inc. Laugh Lab. In Disney, you can't do every ride, but there are at least

five that I'd call must-dos. The Guardians ride is the absolute best in all the parks, in my opinion, and must be experienced at least once before you leave. In the Magic Kingdom, Space Mountain and Tiana's Bayou are fun rides that usually don't have long wait times. In Hollywood Studios, the Tower of Terror is its worthy signature ride and in Animal Kingdom, the Flight of Passage Avatar ride is just amazing.

Bottom line: Even if you can't get everything done, Disney is still a great experience and its cast members must be the most welcoming and entertaining workers in the tourism industry!

Nate Cornell spent first semester of his sophomore year with the Disney College Program. He attends Ithaca College.



Magic Kingdom



Animal Kingdom



Hollywood Studios

New Neighbors Coalition Program at St. Luke's Hosts A Family Cultural Celebration of Purim

Contributed by
New Neighbors Coalition

The New Neighbors Coalition and St. Luke's Church warmly invite the community—parishioners, neighbors, and friends of all ages—to join us for a family-friendly cultural celebration of Purim on Monday, March 2 at 6pm in the St. Luke's Undercroft located at 410 N Main Street in Jamestown.

Purim is a joyful Jewish festival that celebrates courage, hope, and the triumph of light over darkness, rooted in the ancient story of Queen Esther.

Through storytelling, costumes, food, and laughter, Purim invites communities to remember how faith, bravery, and solidarity can change the course of history. At St. Luke's, we offer this gathering as an opportunity to learn, celebrate, and rejoice together, honoring our shared values of joy, resilience, and care for one another. Children are especially welcome, and costumes are encouraged.

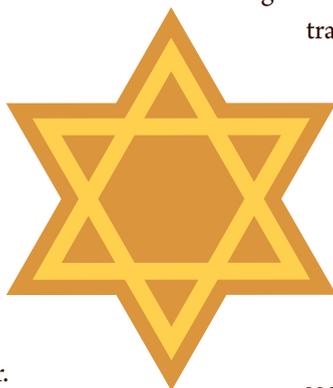
The celebration will include age-appropriate activities, learning how

to make hamantaschen and other festive treats, music, and storytelling moments that invite participation from the whole family. Members of the Winged Ox Players will stage the drama with audience participation, bringing the story of Purim to life in a joyful and engaging way.

This event is cultural and educational in nature and is open to everyone, regardless of background or tradition. Come celebrate joy, friendship, and the richness of our wider human family.

The event is free and open to the public. Donations of \$5-10 suggested to help offset cost of the event. However, money should not be a barrier, and all are welcome to attend regardless of ability to pay.

New Neighbors Coalition is a community-based immigration support effort housed at St. Luke's Episcopal Church and funded through a NYS Office of New American grant. For general inquiry, to volunteer and to stay connected, follow www.facebook.com/NewNeighborsCoalition, email Momina Di Blasio at momina@stlukesjamestown.org or call the St. Luke's office at (716) 483 - 6405.



First Sunday Story Time; Volunteers and Sponsors Needed for Audubon Lights



Submitted Photos



Bring your favorite 2-8-year-old(s) to Audubon Community Nature Center this Sunday, 12:30-1 p.m., and let storyteller Claire Certo (left) take you on nature reading adventures at First Sunday Story Time. To reserve your space, call (716) 569-2345 or go online to AudubonCNC.org/March-First-Sunday. The Nature Center is at 1600 Riverside Road, one-quarter mile east of Route 62 between Jamestown and Warren.

Audubon Lights is Fridays and Saturdays from March 20 to April 4. This year the spectacular LED light technology features a new rainbow tunnel. Volunteers are needed for all kinds of tasks: to be a trail walker or fire tender or to help with luminary trail lighting, admission booths, snack stand, clean-up, or trinket sales, like Audubon Board Second Vice Chair Dr. Eugenie Poignard pictured here (right). To take part, contact Volunteer Coordinator Sharon Tefft at STefft@AudubonCNC.org or (716) 569-2345. To be a sponsor of Audubon Lights, contact Executive Director Aaron Sidder at ASidder@auduboncnc.org or visit AudubonCNC.org/sponsor.

How families can navigate spring break vacations

Courtesy of
Metro Creative

Spring break offers an ideal respite for families looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Students can use a restful spring break to recharge their batteries for the home stretch of the school year, while parents will enjoy a pause from work and a school year filled with kids' activities.

A family-friendly spring break will require some planning to ensure such an excursion is within budget and appropriate for travelers of all ages. With that in mind, parents planning a spring break getaway with their children can consider these tips.

- Book flights as early as possible. If the family aspires to take to the friendly skies during spring break, then book flights well in advance so the cost of air travel doesn't bust the budget. According to the affordable travel experts at Dollar Flight Club, fares for flights between mid-March and early April can spike by anywhere from 20 percent to 50 percent. That's because airlines know spring break is a popular time to travel. While booking early might not lead to huge savings, it will give parents more freedom to pick and choose flights based on variables important to them, like flight times and ticket costs. The longer you wait, the more expensive and less accommodating a flight may be.

- Avoid hotspots. Spring break hotspots tend to be overcrowded and a little raucous, which is less than ideal for families with young children. When planning a family-friendly spring break, look for locales off the beaten path. Early to mid-March is peak spring break season for many colleges and universities, so if children's schools let out for spring during this time it may be wise to avoid oceanfront destinations that typically attract lots of college students. If the budget allows, spring break might prove an ideal time for an international trip with the family.

- Emphasize outdoor activities. As winter winds down, people from all ages tend to get a little cabin fever. Come spring break, look for destinations where outdoor activities abound. Access to activities like hiking, kayaking, swimming, and other outdoor favorites can provide a necessary escape from the cold weather back home.
- Visit a big city. Beaches draw crowds come spring break, but cities tend to be less overrun by tourists during this time of year. Consider visiting a big city and taking in all it has to offer. Flights and accommodations to such locales might not cost as much as travel and lodging to oceanfront destinations, so this can be a great time to visit a big city and take advantage of the cultural and culinary offerings it serves up.

Spring break need not be a budget buster for families looking to get away this March or April.

"An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered."

~ G.K. Chesterton



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10:00 AM- Thomas J. Warren, Esq., Center
for Elder Law and Justice, Inc.
"Identifying and Remediating Elder Abuse:
A Multi-Pronged Approach"

11:15 AM- Patricia E. McCalister, LMHC,
Autism Coach
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Prepare Now and be Road Trip-Ready

Contributed by
Metro Creative

The allure of the open road compels millions of people to get behind the wheel and set off in the direction of new horizons every year. A freedom of adventure is an inherent trait of road trips, and these excursions can be incredible ways to explore the sights. But vehicle preparation is important before taking to the open road.

Vehicle breakdowns can derail a road trip quite quickly. Breakdowns can be costly and are always inconvenient. According to AAA, tire-related issues consistently rank among the top reasons for roadside assistance calls. AAA data also shows battery-related issues account for a significant portion of roadside calls. Here are some key areas to address when preparing a vehicle for a road trip.

- Tires, tires, tires: Incorrect tire pressure can affect fuel efficiency and handling. Ensure tires are inflated to the correct PSI as indicated in the driver's side door jamb or in the vehicle's owner's manual. Inspect the tread depth on all tires to ensure it is adequate, and also look for any tire damage like cracks, embedded objects or bulges. While you're checking the tires, make sure the spare is inflated and in good condition.
- Battery life: Many automotive centers offer free battery testing. If the battery is between three and five years old, consider having it checked or replaced. Use a wire brush to clean battery terminals of corrosion.
- Under the hood: If a road trip is close to the next oil change, do it before leaving.

Ensure that all coolant levels are correct, and that the brake fluid isn't low. Transmission fluid and power steering fluid also should be checked. Refill the wiper fluid reservoir to maintain visibility on the trip.

- Belts and hoses: Inspect the belts for cracks and fraying. Check the hoses for leaks and bulges.
- Brakes: Brakes are the primary safety system. If the brakes squeal, grind or pulse when you are braking, they may need to be replaced. The same can be said if a visual brake pad inspection indicates the pads are thinning.
- Essentials kit: Even with the best preparation, unexpected issues can happen on road trips. That's why it's a good idea to have a kit stocked with jumper cables, a portable air compressor to fill tires, first-aid kit, flashlight with extra batteries, basic tools, flares, water, and non-perishable snacks. A blanket or warm clothing or reflective vest also is helpful.
- Documentation: Don't leave home without a driver's license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance. If you are part of a roadside assistance program, keep the contact information and member number handy. While GPS tools on phones and other devices are very efficient, they're only as good as the cellular signal. Paper maps or printed directions are a backup for GPS.

A successful road trip starts with preparation. Ensuring the car or truck is road-ready is very important.

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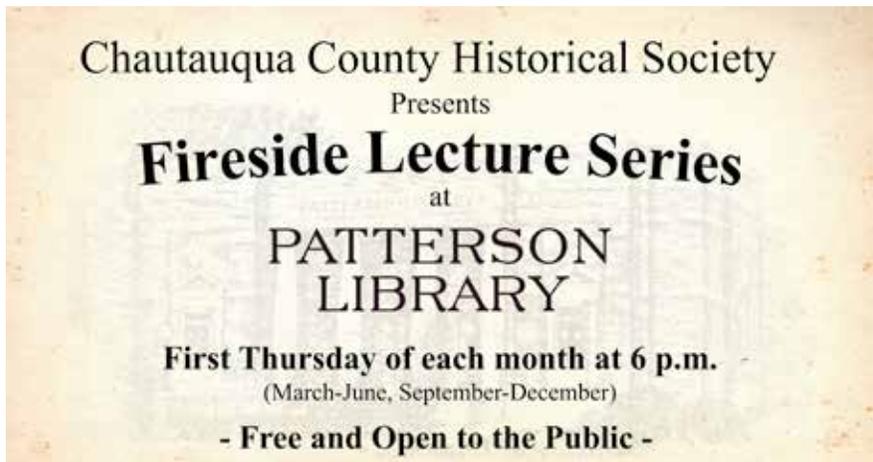
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Chautauqua County Historical Society Announces Fireside Lecture Series



Contributed by
Chautauqua County Historical Society

A new historical lecture series, free and open to the public, will begin this March at Patterson Library in Westfield. Known as the "Fireside Lecture Series," this new programming is a collaboration between the Chautauqua County Historical Society (CCHS) and the library. The first lecture in this series is scheduled for March 5 and will feature Norman Carlson, Chautauqua County Historian, who will present on the Chautauqua County's ties to American Independence on its 250th anniversary year.

The Fireside Lecture Series was developed after the library approached CCHS in late 2025, seeking collaboration to develop programming that focuses on history and, more specifically, local and regional history covering Chautauqua County and Western New York. After meeting and discussing further, the two organizations settled on a lecture series that focuses primarily on local history, but would also cover other topics related to general history, as the opportunity allowed.

In all, eight lectures are planned for the inaugural year. The Fireside Lecture

Series for 2026 will take place on the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. in March, April, May, June, September, October, November, and December. The schedule of lectures for the first half of the year includes: Chautauqua County Celebrates America's 250th with Norman Carlson, Chautauqua County historian (March 5); The History of the Grange with Pamela Brown, Harmony town historian (April 2); Westfield Native and Kentucky Derby Champion Vince Powers, with Randy Anderson, Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame director (May 7); and the Geological History of Western New York with Dr. Thomas Hegna from SUNY Fredonia (June 4).

Additional lectures for the second half of the year will be announced this summer.

All lectures will take place at Patterson Library (40 S. Portage St., Westfield), again beginning at 6 p.m., and are free and open to the public.

To learn more about the Fireside Lecture Series, visit CCHSMcClurg.org or PattersonLib.org. To learn more about the Chautauqua County Historical Society, visit its website or stop by its headquarters at the McClurg Museum, 20 E. Main Street in Westfield, during regular hours of operation.



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Molitor, Borrello Sponsor Bill to Modernize County Forest Lands

Assemblyman Andrew Molitor (R,C-Westfield) and Sen. George Borrello (SD-57) are sponsoring legislation (A.10161) that would allow Chautauqua County to swap several small, isolated parcels of reforested land for a larger, more accessible property that can better serve residents and future generations.

The parcels identified in the bill are currently difficult to access and are not being used for recreation or conservation. The legislation would allow the county to discontinue those underutilized parcels only after acquiring and dedicating replacement land of equal or greater value.

"This legislation allows Chautauqua County to manage its public lands more effectively while strengthening long-term environmental stewardship," said Molitor. "We are not reducing protected land. We are improving how it's organized and used."

The bill includes safeguards to protect the public interest. If the discontinued land is ever used for any purpose outside what the legislation allows, it must be restored and maintained as reforested land under county law.

Molitor emphasized that the proposal modernizes the county's land holdings and better aligns conservation areas with existing parkland.

"This is about smart land management," said Borrello. "By consolidating small, isolated parcels into larger, more practical acreage, we are investing in conservation, responsible governance and the long-term benefit of Chautauqua County residents."

Assemblyman Molitor represents the 150th Assembly District, encompassing all of Chautauqua County. For more information on Assemblyman Molitor, please follow him on Facebook.

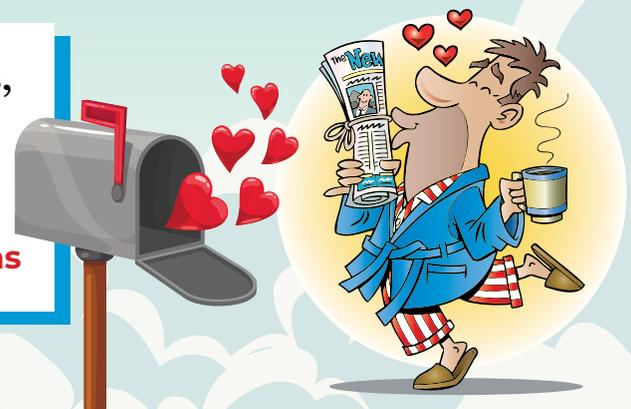
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National Comedy Center Named #1 Best Pop Culture Museum in the Country by USA Today



Contributed by

National Comedy Center

The National Comedy Center, the United States' museum and national archive dedicated to the art form of comedy, was named the #1 Best Pop Culture Museum in the country by USA Today as part of the 2026 USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice Awards, it was announced today. <https://10best.usatoday.com/awards/best-pop-culture-museum/>

The National Comedy Center was one of 20 institutions nationwide nominated as the best in the U.S. in the pop culture category by a panel of nationally recognized travel and lifestyle experts for the USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice Awards, which highlight outstanding travel destinations, attractions and experiences, lodging, shopping, food and drink, sports and outdoors, and more. Fellow nominees in the category included the American Sign Museum, Charles M. Schulz Museum, World of Coca-Cola, Strong National Museum of Play, and Comic-Con Museum. As USA Today notes, "America has long been a hotbed of pop culture, and these museums celebrate the very best of it, from movies and food to beloved characters and urban legends."

The National Comedy Center was ultimately named the nation's #1 Best Pop Culture Museum by popular vote following a four-week national online voting period from January 12 through February 9, 2026.

"This national recognition from USA Today is a powerful acknowledgment of the extraordinary artists who have shaped comedy — the great minds, singular voices, and time-honed creative processes that have elevated this art form throughout its history," stated Journey Gunderson, Executive Director of the National Comedy Center. "Comedians past and present have helped us see the world differently, challenge conventions, and bring people together through laughter. We're honored to celebrate their work and grateful to the artists, supporters, and audiences who believe in preser-

ving comedy's heritage while inspiring new generations."

"For Jamestown and Chautauqua County — and all of Western New York — this honor shines a national spotlight on our region as a cultural destination," added Gunderson. "The National Comedy Center has become a powerful economic and tourism driver, drawing visitors from across the country and nearly 30 countries. This recognition belongs to the community and its partners across the region who have helped build this cultural institution in 'Comedy's Hometown,' and continue to believe in its meaningful impact."

"Comedy sits at the heart of American pop culture, and at the National Comedy Center, visitors can experience it in a deeply personal and engaging way," stated Gary Hahn, Vice President of Marketing and Communications at the National Comedy Center. "Our interactive exhibits connect people to the moments, memories, and cultural touchstones that shaped their lives — it's what draws them to Jamestown and helps make it a destination for visitors from across the country and around the world."

The National Comedy Center has previously received top honors from USA Today across multiple categories. In 2020, it was voted the nation's #1 "Best New Museum," and in 2019, it was voted the #2 "Best New Attraction" while ranking as the #1 museum and #1 ticketed attraction in the USA Today poll. The museum has also been named one of Time magazine's "World's Greatest Places," and to U.S. News & World Report's "25 Top Family Weekend Getaways in the U.S."

This past fall, the National Comedy Center's Memory Café program won two Gold Anthem Awards — a global honor from the Webby Awards organization recognizing purpose and mission-driven work — for excellence in Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Engagement, among fellow honorees including Google, PBS, UNICEF

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

Business and Community Leader Announces Bid for County Office

Contributed by

Nikki Fagerstrom

"The Villages of Falconer and Celeron, as well as the Town of Ellicott, have tremendous potential. I'm interested in the many ways we might achieve that potential," said Nikki Fagerstrom Pierce, who is seeking candidacy for the Chautauqua County Legislature District 15.

Fagerstrom Pierce is a Village of Falconer trustee and a downtown Falconer small business owner. She has spent years amassing the necessary and relevant experience to assist County government in increasing the overall economic and industrial successes as well as the quality of life for residents of Chautauqua County.

Fagerstrom Pierce comes from a strong familial line of County, municipal and Civil Service workers, in addition to having spent more than a decade as a Chautauqua County employee herself. She is the granddaughter of the late Jane Fagerstrom, first and only female chair of the County Legislature in history. She counts past employers as The Winifred Dibert Boys and Girls Club of Jamestown, Jamestown After School Program, Heritage Ministries, Chautauqua Opportunities, Chautauqua Works and the Chautauqua County Office of Probation. She has also served for Warren Forrest Human Services, in Warren, PA.

In addition to her wealth of knowledge and experience working with the public, she has spent the past 20+ years in various volunteer roles within the community. She has worked with the Joint Neighborhood Project. Additionally, she has given her time and effort to Girls on the Run, Falconer Central School District, where she served as the PTO President from 2013-2015. She served as a Team Mom for her son's Little League team and worked with Kallies Krusade as well as other local organizations.

She is currently the proprietor and head baker at PersNikkity Pies Bakery and Cafe, located at 9 E Main St, Falconer, NY. PersNikkity Pies began as a NYS Home Bakery in 2021 and quickly rose in success to opening at the storefront location in May 2023. Since opening, PersNikkity Pies has been awarded the CHQ Chamber Business of the Year Award in 2024 and has been named a finalist in the Desert Category of the Post-Journal Best of the Best for years 2023, 2024 and 2025. Fagerstrom Pierce was awarded the 2024 Jamestown Community



Nikki Fagerstrom

College Alumni Community Career Award-Entrepreneurship.

She has been serving as a Village of Falconer Trustee since her appointment in February 2025 and her election to the seat in November 2025. Within that position, she has worked with the Village and community to reimagine the Falconer Farmers Market as the Falconer Farmers and Artisan Market. She used funds from the vendor fees from the FFAAM to host the first Community Movie Night in Davis Park in August 2025. She also brought a vision for a large community gathering to life by working with others to create the first Annual FALLconerFEST, which was held on Sept. 21, 2025, and marketed to and enjoyed by many Chautauqua County residents.

Regarding her current interest in county government, she stated, "Several community and business leaders have reached out to me about increasing our voice and representation within county government", said Fagerstrom Pierce. "There are so many opportunities to move our local villages and towns forward by encouraging collaboration of the people in our businesses, local government, and schools. I have seen the potential, personally, working with so many good people in our community. I believe we will see many benefits by having a person dedicated to the success of our small businesses and local community who is in the county legislature."

Fagerstrom Pierce will seek a nomination from the Democratic Party of Chautauqua County this Saturday, Feb. 21, 2026, in Mayville, NY.

County Legislature District 15 contains two villages and a town, a section of Chautauqua Lake and both the Falconer Central and Southwestern School Districts.

National Comedy Center Named #1 Best Pop Culture Museum in the Country by USA Today

Continued from Page 19

USA, AARP, World Central Kitchen, Sesame Workshop and more.

About the National Comedy Center

The National Comedy Center is the United States' cultural institution, museum and national archive dedicated to presenting the vital story of comedy and preserving its heritage for future generations. Through its exhibits, archives, and educational initiatives, the National Comedy Center explores the full breadth of comedy's great history — spanning influential artists, iconic works, and the cultural moments that shaped the art form — and has collaborated with dozens of artists, estates, and industry partners to preserve materials representing comedy's significant artistic, social, and political contributions to American culture.

Opened in 2018 in Jamestown, New York, the museum complex offers an unprecedented, immersive visitor experience using state-of-the-art technology, interactivity, and personalization. Condé Nast Traveler called it "one of the best museums in the country," and People magazine named it one of "100 Reasons to Love America." The museum has been featured in The New York Times, CBS Sunday Morning and on NBC's TODAY Show, which called it "the Smithsonian of Comedy."

Based on the vision of Jamestown native Lucille Ball for her hometown to become a destination for comedy, the non-profit National Comedy Center's mission is to provide education on the

comedic arts in the form of commentary and contextualization of its bodies of work across all eras and genres of the art form.

The National Comedy Center operates the Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Museum, which explores the lives, careers, and legacy of the "First Couple of Comedy" and the incredible impact they had on the world, as well as the pioneering role and remarkable influence that I Love Lucy and Desilu Studios had on the entertainment industry.

The annual Lucille Ball Comedy Festival, produced and presented by the National Comedy Center, has showcased comedy's great voices over 35 years, including Jerry Seinfeld, Jon Stewart, Trevor Noah, Nate Bargatze, Lily Tomlin, John Mulaney, Bill Murray, Taylor Tomlinson, Gabriel "Fluffy" Iglesias, Jeff Foxworthy, Nicole Byer, Jay Leno, Joan Rivers, Margaret Cho, Amy Schumer, Sebastian Maniscalco, W. Kamau Bell, David Spade, Jim Gaffigan, Paula Poundstone, Kevin Nealon, The Smothers Brothers, and more than 300 comedic artists.

The National Comedy Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit cultural institution whose mission is funded by philanthropic support. Donations and grants support the museum and its work to present the vital story of comedy and preserve its heritage for future generations.

www.ComedyCenter.org
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Tips for a Safe and Fun Spring Break Road Trip

*Contributed by
Metro Creative*

Arriving months after the holiday season and right around the end of winter, spring break comes at the perfect time for families and students. A winter spent largely indoors can excite anyone about the prospect of soaking up some sun from the comforts of a sandy beach, and millions will do whatever it takes to make such a trip possible.

Many spring breakers may fly to their destination, but that can be costly for families paying for multiple flights. Indeed, spring break can be one of the more costly times to travel by air, as it's considered a peak travel period. Families who want to get away but don't want to spend thousands of dollars on flights alone can take to the road and drive to their destinations. If a road trip is in the cards, families can consider these strategies to ensure a safe and fun excursion.

- Have your vehicle fully serviced before your trip. Winter can be hard on a vehicle, particularly when a car is parked outside in locations where harsh weather is the standard between December and March. A full checkup that tops off fluids, tests the brakes (and replaces them, if necessary), inflates the tires (and again, replaces them, if necessary), tests the battery, and checks headlights and wiper blades to ensure they're operating at peak capacity can prepare a vehicle for the journey to your spring break destination.
- Make some pit stops along the way. If it's an especially long trip to your desti-

nation, extend your travels by a day or two and make an extra stop along your way to your destination and on your return home. Find a fun activity along the way, such as a trip to a local indoor water park or a must-see hiking spot, so everyone can spend a day moving around before getting back in the car.

- Don't be a motorized martyr. When your ultimate destination is a warm, sun-soaked beach, it can be tempting to make the trip in a single day. But fatigued drivers are dangerous drivers, so it's best to build in some time to take a break and even share driving duty with another licensed driver. Moms and dads can switch halfway through the trip. If you already know the trip will take multiple days on the road, then stop driving no later than sundown to ensure you and your fellow drivers get a good night's rest.
- Line up some in-vehicle entertainment. A long road trip with young children will require some in-vehicle entertainment. Load up a tablet with movies to keep the kids occupied during the drive but also arrange for some non-device game play as well. A book of puzzles, a family sing-along, a round or two of I spy, the license plate game, and even some kid-friendly trivia can provide some fun distractions on the way to your destination.

The cost of air travel can be prohibitive for families looking to get away this spring break. Some simple strategies can make road trips a safe, fun and cost-effective means to getting away when school lets out this spring.

WE ♥ OUR COMMUNITY

The Chautauqua Gazette is committed to supporting nonprofit organizations across Chautauqua County that strengthen our communities and enrich local life. From community services and arts initiatives to education, health, and advocacy, the many organizations of Chautauqua are the backbone of our county and their impact deserves to be seen, celebrated, and supported.

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Business of the Week

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HIDEAWAY BAY RESORT: REST, RELAX AND RECHARGE



Editor-in-Chief
Katrina Fuller

Chautauqua County residents have a secret oasis right in their backyard, and they may not even know it. Hideaway Bay Resort in Silver Creek offers a relaxing retreat for all seasons, according to Christian Edie, Hideaway Bay Resort owner. Located at 42 Lake Ave., the lakefront resort offers the full resort experience, including an onsite restaurant called Drift; a full-service spa, various adventure sports, cottage rentals, wedding and event spaces; and more.

“Hideaway Bay Resort was born from a simple idea: to create a place where people could truly step away from the noise of everyday life and reconnect—with nature, with loved ones, and with themselves,” Edie said. “What started as a vision for a peaceful waterfront escape has grown into a full resort experience built around comfort, relaxation and unforgettable moments. From the beginning, the goal has always been to offer something special: a true hidden gem where guests feel welcomed like family.”

This “hidden gem” is great for a staycation, a honeymoon or a day out for residents. Edie said the hope is to offer guests a chance to relax and find balance in a beautiful location.

“A typical day at Hideaway Bay is all about ease and balance,” she said. “Guests often start their mornings with coffee and beautiful bay views, followed by a walk down to the water, lounging on the beach, or exploring the surrounding area. Afternoons are perfect for dining, enjoying the amenities, or simply unwinding in the calm atmosphere. Evenings tend to be the highlight—sunsets over the bay, cozy gatherings and that peaceful feeling of being completely away from it all.”

While the beach may be chillier during the colder months, the resort is well-equipped to offer hospitality to guests throughout the winter. Cabin rentals, handcrafted dinners and more are available at the year-round retreat.

Edie said the guests, no matter what time of year, still find a way to connect with the resort in memorable ways. From a short getaway to making memories with milestone events, visitors are excited to add Hideaway Bay Resort to their travel itineraries.

“When people started returning year after year—and telling others about us—that was a huge moment,” she said. “Another standout has been the growth of Hideaway Bay as a destination not just for vacations, but for celebrations and major life events. Watching it become part of people’s stories

has been incredibly rewarding.”

Edie said it is a true pleasure to be included in these milestones.

“Being trusted with someone’s wedding day or a major life celebration is a true honor,” she said. “These moments are deeply personal, and knowing Hideaway Bay is part of those memories is incredibly special. There’s something powerful about seeing love, family, and joy come together here. It’s one of the most meaningful parts of what we do.”

Edie said she and her staff make it their priority to make sure guests are treated to the ultimate experience when they visit, whether they visit for a weekend or host an event. Customer service and compassionate care are key in the hospitality arena, and Hideaway Bay Resort is stalwart in instituting them.

“Something people may not realize right away is how personal the experience here is,” she said. “Hideaway Bay isn’t just a resort—it’s a place built with care, attention to detail, and a genuine desire to make guests feel at home. It’s the kind of place where the atmosphere is just as memorable as the setting.”

Edie said guests are immediately drawn to the waterfront views and the peaceful, tucked-away atmosphere. Highlights include the wood-burning sauna, hot tub and outdoor gathering spaces. Another highlight is the dining experience.

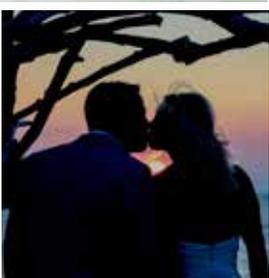
“Our on-site restaurant, Drift, has also become a standout feature of the resort,”

she said. “Whether guests are enjoying a high-end steak or fresh seafood, or keeping it casual with artisanal pizzas, Drift offers something for every mood while maintaining an elevated dining experience.”

Edie said the resort is looking forward to offering new experiences for guests, more events and continued improvements in the future.

“The most exciting part is knowing we’re still building the story, and the best is yet to come,” she said.

Hideaway Bay Resort is located at 42 Lake Ave. in Silver Creek. Drift is open from Thursday to Saturday from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information on offerings, event hosting, spa series and more, visit hideaway-bayresortny.com, call 716-401-5762 or email events@hideawaybayresortny.com.



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DOUBLE TREE by Hilton

Community Helping Hands Updates

Contributed by

Community Helping Hands

Need another sweatshirt or sweater? Are the kids outgrowing everything – again? Maybe you need a project to do during these winter days. Come down to Community Helping Hands – we have what you need! The Depot is filled with clothes and new items are added weekly. The furniture area has some nice chairs and sofas as well as dressers, tables lamps, pictures, etc. There are chests, small magazine racks and other unique pieces you could grab up, take home and creatively refinish to enjoy as something entirely new!

Because of ongoing preconstruction work, the area known as “Pickers Place”, is closed for now. It is being cleaned out and readied for the contractors to do some work there.

Agencies, churches and other organization can continue to refer clients to CHH and we will continue to provide for their needs. Clothing and furniture can be selected as always and houseware items are available because the staff and volunteers have filled totes from Pickers Place with necessary dishes, silverware, and small appliances to give to clients.

Like many other places that accept donated items, Community Helping Hands can only accept clothing that is still wearable (stained, ragged items that you would not wear cannot be worn by others either), furniture must be useable (a broken recliner, a chair with only three legs, or a dresser without drawers can't be used by anyone) and household items must be practical, needed and in good working order to be donated. CHH helps clients who

need items that are used every day so wearable, useable, and practical are the only items we can accept.

In the past, CHH like other organizations, accepted anything others could use and you wanted to donate. Please do not drop off items that nobody can use and should be taken directly to the transfer station. It is costly for CHH when we have to take your trash to the landfill. And, due to limited space now that testing and pre-construction work is beginning, we are only accepting household goods that are practical items used on a daily basis. Figurines, fancy vases, stemware, 8 track tapes, and all other impractical objects can no longer be accepted. Please think wearable, useable and practical before bringing any donations to CHH.

Just as a reminder, donations are accepted on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 3:30 to 6:00 at the Gateway Center, 31 Water St in Jamestown. Likewise, the Depot and Furniture Store are open for shopping on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 3:30 to 6 PM. As we move into spring and see how the building is affected by preconstruction work, we may open Pickers Place again and expand our open hours.

Thank you for your patience as we work toward having the Gateway Lofts Project done. The housing Project is needed so we are dealing with a few inconveniences now to reach the desired goal in the end. Our mantra for the next few years is, “Blessed are the flexible, for they will not be bent out of shape.” Any questions, please call the Community Helping Hands office Tuesday through Friday, from 9 to 3.



SUDOKU

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| 3 | | | 9 | | | 7 | 8 | 1 |
| | | | 6 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | 7 | | 4 | 9 |
| | | 5 | 1 | | | | | 2 |
| | 2 | | 3 | | 8 | | | |
| | | | | 2 | | | | 8 |

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Level: Beginner

CROSSWORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
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| 59 | | | | | | | 60 | | | | 61 | | | | |
| 62 | | | | | | | 63 | | | | | 64 | | | |

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. What travelers must do
- 5. Calendar month
- 8. Hopefully quickly
- 12. Once more
- 14. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 15. “Cheers” actress Perlman
- 16. Astronomy unit
- 18. Savings vehicle
- 19. Get your ducks in this
- 20. Right away
- 21. Popular sports league
- 22. Containers
- 23. Entireties
- 26. One who wassails
- 30. Turned-up position
- 31. Extreme modesty
- 32. Writing utensil
- 33. Rewards (archaic)
- 34. Ancient capital
- 39. S. American wood sorrel
- 42. General discomfort
- 44. Philippine island
- 46. A witty saying
- 47. One who summarizes
- 49. Covered in
- 50. Mimic
- 51. Henry was a notable one
- 56. Daughter of Hera and Zeus
- 57. Retired NFLer Newton
- 58. Playground equipment
- 59. Concept
- 60. Satisfaction
- 61. Fishing net
- 62. Hammer end
- 63. A father's male child
- 64. Japanese drink

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Off-Broadway figure
- 2. Gelatinous substance
- 3. Concern
- 4. “Lick It Up” rockers
- 5. Serbian river
- 6. Part of a hat
- 7. Bowl-shaped drinking vessel
- 8. Semitic language
- 9. Utter a shrill cry
- 10. Long times
- 11. Animal parts
- 13. Causing annoyance
- 17. Amorous talker
- 24. Attempt
- 25. Harmonic effects
- 26. Cost per mile
- 27. They ___
- 28. Bitterly regret
- 29. Not even
- 35. A way to drop
- 36. Title of respect
- 37. World leader
- 38. Georgia rockers
- 40. National capital
- 41. Great Plains people
- 42. Duck-sized dinosaur genus
- 43. Architectural recesses
- 44. Member of U.S. Navy
- 45. Mountainous
- 47. Kite bird
- 48. Sweetheart (archaic)
- 49. Popular snack made of potato
- 52. 70s songsters The Bee ___
- 53. SE China port ___-men
- 54. Something to fill up
- 55. League of Legends character



"Travel far, travel often, and travel without regrets."

~ Oscar Wilde





CHAMBER CORNER

Strategically Guiding Our Future

Contributed by

Daniel J. Heitzenrater
Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce
President and CEO

Smith Agency in Buffalo. Following a lengthy process that included crucial board input, we established a new name (CHQ Chamber) and logo that reflects connections and speaks to the nature of our inclusive work throughout the county. The new brand was approved in 2024.

The mission statement and rebranding do not stand alone. They are intertwined with all the work we do as the CHQ Chamber has reframed its efforts around the strategic plan to work more closely with local businesses, elected officials, and partner organizations as a convener around crucial economic issues facing small businesses in our communities. We have worked harder to create meaningful programs and provide resources that meet our mission, we have focused on engagement with our small businesses in a variety of ways including the development of Small Business Sit-down sessions throughout the county, and we have structured our advocacy efforts around the business community and partner organizations. We continue to work on messaging and crafting communications that speak to our members and the community as a whole.

None of this work could happen without our board of directors, our members, and our sponsors. Their support means so much as the CHQ Chamber continues to do the necessary work of supporting our business community. If you haven't attended a CHQ Chamber function in a while, we invite you to do so this year. We have a full calendar of events posted on our website including Business After Hours networking opportunities in a variety of locations, Business Builder Workshops on numerous topics, advocacy events, and community-focused events that advance the interests of our small businesses.

Register for Business After Hours at Audubon Community Nature Center

For the second year in a row the CHQ Chamber and the Warren County Chamber of Business and Industry are collaborating with Audubon Community Nature center to provide a region-wide Business After Hours event. It will be held Wednesday, March 25 from 5:30-7:30pm.

All local businesspeople are invited to attend this special networking event, which will include complimentary appetizers and beverages, with tip proceeds to benefit Audubon Community Nature Center's mission of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

As a non-profit business association, the CHQ Chamber is guided by a board of directors made up of a diverse group of people from varying types of businesses across Chautauqua County. These dedicated volunteers play a critical role in providing direction, ensuring effective governance, and upholding the organization's fiduciary responsibilities. They also serve as advocates for the CHQ Chamber and act as stewards, helping to build relationships and to ensure accountability.

When our board convened this past week for an afternoon-long planning session, one of their tasks was a review of the Chamber's strategic plan for an overall look at how the organization is doing. The strategic plan was adopted by our board in November of 2022, and while it's not a checklist of items to do, we are proud to say that we are accomplishing many of the objectives outlined in that document.

The strategic plan outlined four strategic recommendations:

1. Facilitate collaborative relationships between businesses to promote economic activity for our county;
2. Unify and streamline the CC-COC through the utilization of a consistent brand structure;
3. Clarify who we (the Chamber) are and what we do;
4. And lead the way and excel at boosterism and serve as spokespeople for business.

Working hand in hand with the staff, our board went straight to the heart of the issues. The board felt a top priority was to clarify our work, and so a new mission statement was approved in 2023, and it reads: Our mission is to build vital connections, provide professional resources, and champion our local businesses in Chautauqua County. The board also approved a new vision statement: The Chamber of Commerce is a critical partner in achieving consistent economic growth, resiliency, and prosperity to increase the collective opportunity for local businesses and organizations in Chautauqua County. These two pieces speak to the heart of who we are and what we do – working to serve the needs and interests of the business community countywide.

A strategic re-brand was next on our list as the Chamber worked with Mr.

Eternity and The Choral to show at Reg Lenna Center for The Arts



Contributed by

The Reg Lenna Center for the Arts

Eternity (Wed., February 25 at 7 p.m.) stars Elizabeth Olsen, Miles Teller and Callum Turner. In an afterlife where souls have one week to decide where to spend eternity, Joan (Olsen) is faced with the impossible choice between the man she spent her life with (Teller) and her first love (Turner), who died young and has waited decades for her to arrive. *Eternity* is rated PG-13 and is 114 minutes long.

Ralph Fiennes stars in *The Choral* (Fri., February 27 at 7 p.m.) As war rages on the Western Front, the Choral Society in Ramsden, Yorkshire has lost most of its men to the army. The Choral's ambitious committee, determined to press

ahead, decides to recruit local young males to swell their ranks and engage a new chorus master - Dr. Henry Guthrie (Fiennes). As conscription papers start to arrive, the whole community discovers that the best response to the chaos that is laying waste to their lives is to make music together. *The Choral* is rated R and is 114 minutes long.

Tickets for most Movies at The Reg are \$8 in-person at the box office and \$10 online (reglenna.com) & by phone - 716.484.7070. Family showings are \$7 in-person at the box office and \$9 online & by phone. Special engagements are priced differently. The theater and box office at The Reg are located at 116 E. 3rd St. in Jamestown, NY. The box office is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 12 - 5 p.m. and one hour before movies and events.



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- Hans Christian Andersen

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MHA Has Visitor From Chautauqua Works



At the **Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County's (MHA)** February recovery luncheon, Executive Director Michael Nordin introduced Julie Flaker, the disability resource coordinator for Chautauqua Works. Flaker explained that she assists individuals and employers to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. With offices in both Jamestown and Dunkirk, she can be reached at (716) 487-5127. Nordin also awarded certificates to three participants for their accomplishments. The MHA is a peer recovery center offering support groups and individual coaching for people looking to improve their lives, deepen wellness, thrive in recovery, or support those on a recovery path. **For more information about the recovery centers in both Jamestown and Dunkirk, call (716) 661-9044 or visit MHACHautauqua.org or Facebook.com/MHACHautauqua.**

Chamber Corner

Continued from Page 20

connecting people to nature. Bring business cards for networking and door prize drawings.

Attendees are invited to stay for a special private viewing of Audubon Lights after the networking event. The display features a half-mile trail of wonder, where visitors can walk among thousands of lights—from twinkling trailside luminaries to towering trees bathed in color.

CHQ Chamber member organizations can send two people free of charge to

all Business After Hours events. Non-members or anyone above the two-person limit will be \$10. Registration for CHQ Chamber members is open online now through the Chamber's web calendar at www.chqchamber.org. Members of the Warren County Chamber of Business and Industry should email Savannah Casey at szimmerman@wccbi.org to register free of charge. Business After Hours at Audubon Community Nature Center is sponsored by the Media One Radio Group, and State University of New York at Fredonia.




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PUZZLES ON PAGE 23

Cabin Fever Cure Around Town



Laura Becker



Leslie Calimeri



Kate Rinko, Karlie Blodien & Sara Edstom



Candi & Bo George, Randy Anderson



Sukanya Burman



Ashley Snyder, Deb Eck, Sarah Brown-Millspaw



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