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Happy Earth Day!

Volume 3 • Issue 16 | April 20, 2026



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## MAKE EVERY DAY EARTH DAY

The Gazette Proudly Showcases  
SUNY Fredonia's Environmental Efforts

Earth Day is a reminder that environmental challenges don't only exist far away — they show up in our own lakes, streams and groundwater. Students and faculty in the Geology & Environmental Sciences Department at SUNY Fredonia are making a difference right here in Western New York. From algal blooms in Chautauqua Lake, to repeated water crises in Fredonia's aging reservoir, to local stream health and the search for minerals that will power a cleaner future, these projects reflect a department deeply engaged with the community. The students behind this work aren't just learning



Featured Writer

**Dr. Thomas Hegna**  
Chair, Geology &  
Environmental Sciences Dept.  
SUNY Fredonia



CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

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## CHERISH OUR LOCAL RESOURCES



Contributing Writer

Jordan Nicholson

There's a certain kind of morning in Chautauqua County when the fog hangs over Chautauqua Lake, the water still as glass, the hills just beginning to shake off winter's dull gray coat. It's the kind of scene that makes you stop—really stop—and take stock of where you are. Not in a grand, philosophical way, but in a quiet, almost instinctive sense that this place matters.

Earth Day arrives in that space between thaw and bloom, when everything feels just

a little bit dirty and a little bit hopeful at the same time.

Now, this isn't the place for some far-flung national park where the landscapes are so massive they swallow you whole. This is Chautauqua County—rolling hills, working farms, small towns stitched together by back roads. The beauty here is more intimate. It's the kind you grow into, the kind that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

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## THIS WEEK AROUND TOWN

### MONDAY, APRIL 20 - FRIDAY, APRIL 24

#### Earth Day Tree Giveaway

Handcrafted From The Heart | Mayville  
For Info: [connectingyou716@gmail.com](mailto:connectingyou716@gmail.com)

### TUESDAY, APRIL 21

#### Chautauqua Youth Symphony Fundraiser | 5 PM-8 PM

Guppy's Tavern & Restaurant | Bemus Point  
For Info: 716.386.4422

#### Earth Day Kickoff Film Screening of The Big Year 6:30 PM

Robert H. Jackson Center | Jamestown  
For Info: Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy Facebook Page

#### Lecture: George Washington's Connections to Chautauqua County | 7 PM-8 PM

Fenton History Center | Jamestown  
For Info: 716-664-6256

#### Free Classic Movie: Vertigo 7 PM

Lake Shore Center for the Arts | Westfield  
For Info: [lakeshorecenterforthearts.com](http://lakeshorecenterforthearts.com)

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

#### Earth Day Expo & Farmer's Market | 11 AM-2 PM

SUNY Fredonia's Department of Environmental Health, Safety, & Sustainability  
For Info: [fredonia.edu](http://fredonia.edu)

#### The Amazing Bubble Factory Live | 6 PM

Reg Lenna Center for The Arts | Jamestown  
For Info: [reglenna.com](http://reglenna.com)

### THURSDAY, APRIL 23

#### April Luncheon | 12 PM

The Marvin House | Jamestown  
For Info: (716) 488-6206

#### Paint CHQ Mural Festival Public Survey | 5:30 PM

Bemus Point Village Hall  
For Info: [choosechq.com/paintchq](http://choosechq.com/paintchq)

#### Craft & Sip Group | 7 PM-10 PM

Labyrinth Press Company | Jamestown  
For Info: Labyrinth Press Company Facebook Page

### FRIDAY, APRIL 24

#### Spring Fling Market | 5 PM-7 PM

PersNikkity Pies | Falconer  
For Info: PersNikkity Pies Facebook Page

#### Water Horse Celtic Duo | 7 PM

St. Luke's Episcopal Church | Jamestown  
For Info: 716-483-6405

#### Line Dancing

8:30 PM-10:30 PM  
Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House  
For Info: Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House Facebook Page

### FRIDAY, APRIL 24 & SATURDAY, APRIL 25

#### 50th Annual BANFF Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour | 7 PM-10 PM

Reg Lenna Center for The Arts | Jamestown  
For Info: [reglenna.com](http://reglenna.com)

#### Blithe Spirit | 7:30 PM

SUNY Fredonia's Rockefeller Arts Center  
For Info: [fredonia.edu/tickets](http://fredonia.edu/tickets)

### SATURDAY, APRIL 25

#### Bird Banding | 7 AM-10 AM

Audubon Community Nature Center  
Jamestown  
For Info: [auduboncn.org](http://auduboncn.org)

#### Chautauqua Sports Card & Pokemon / TCG Show 10 AM-8 PM

Chautauqua Mall | Lakewood  
For Info: [chautauquamall.com](http://chautauquamall.com)

#### Mayville Spring Market 10 AM-4 PM

Town of Chautauqua Offices | Mayville  
For Info: 716-269-4129

#### Independent Bookstore Day 11 AM-1 PM

Good Neighbor Bookstore | Lakewood  
For Info: [goodneighborbooks.com](http://goodneighborbooks.com)

#### Infinity's Annual Spring Showcase | 7 PM

Washington Middle School | Jamestown  
For Info: [infinityperformingarts.org](http://infinityperformingarts.org)

#### 1891 Fredonia Opera House 5k Run & Walk | 9 AM

Barker Common | Fredonia  
For Info: [fredopera.org](http://fredopera.org)

### SUNDAY, APRIL 26

#### Sing-Along Brunch 10 AM-2 PM

Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House  
For Info: Bemus Point Golf Club & Tap House Facebook Page

#### Marti Tillinger: Planting a Pollinator Garden | 10:30 AM

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Jamestown  
For Info: [uujamestown.org](http://uujamestown.org)

#### Chautauqua County Democratic Committee Bowling for Ballots | 2 PM-5 PM

Lucky Lanes | Fredonia  
For Info: 716-203-7241

#### Blithe Spirit | 2 PM

SUNY Fredonia's Rockefeller Arts Center  
For Info: [fredonia.edu/tickets](http://fredonia.edu/tickets)

#### Mayville Spring Market 10 AM-2 PM

Town of Chautauqua Offices | Mayville  
For Info: 716-269-4129



The 1962 publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson was a watershed moment for the environmental movement, according to EarthDay.org.

Earth Day is now a global event, but its origins are somewhat humble. Prior to the 1960s, awareness of the link between public health and pollution was minimal. However, according to EarthDay.org, the 1962 publication of *Silent Spring* by American marine biologist, writer and conservationist Rachel Carson was a watershed moment for the environmental movement. The book did much to raise awareness of the effects of pollution on public health. Indeed, the publication of Carson's book proved a pivotal step toward the eventual establishment of Earth Day in 1970, which EarthDay.org characterizes as the dawn of the modern environmental movement.



Editorial with Lori Cornell

# ALL THE COOL KIDS RECYCLE



*Publisher  
Lori Cornell*

Is it me or does anyone else feel the decline in passion for recycling? I'm respectfully aware that I have friends that don't choose to recycle - I love them all the same. I'm also not sitting on a high horse of perfection - I sometimes look at a peanut butter jar and sigh at how much work it's going to be to clean it and maybe don't always do "the right thing" myself..

But I feel like, at least in my experience (and maybe some of yours), general enthusiasm for recycling is at a concerning low.

In the past, I believe my conversations about everyday recycling encounters tended to go something like this:

Me: "I've got a can. Do you have a recycling container I can pitch it in?"

Store/public location/friend:

- 1) "Yes." Or,
- 2) "Oh geez, we really should recycle, but I'm sorry we don't have a container...."

Response No. 2 usually came somewhat sheepishly, with the respondent admittedly acknowledging that perhaps they weren't upholding a more ideal standard for the environ-

ment - seemingly aware and appreciative of the importance of doing their part to protect the earth.

But in recent years, I'm tending to hear something more like this:

Me: "I've got a can. Do you have a recycling container I can pitch it in?"

Store/public location/friend:

- 1) "Yes." (less often) Or,
- 2) "We don't do that. Just throw it away."

Again, maybe it's just me and my travels, but I feel like I seem to be experiencing more and more of that "Response No. 2", confidently accompanied by excuses as to why recycling is "not possible" or, in some cases, not that individual's "problem" (ie. responsibility) at that given location. Sometimes, it's provided with a glance of confusion a look of bother for even having been asked. Or, even worse, I've witnessed ridicule, accompanied by scoffs and jeers implying that recycling is useless, "only for tree huggers" and beneath one's time and attention.

I could turn this editorial into a major research project as to why I seem to be feeling this way and continue down the path of a Debbie Downer...which isn't the purpose of the Gazette and I won't. But I'll simply say that recycling isn't a political position. It's a human position. We love our environment, we love our community and it is important for us to take care of it as best as we can. So, hold your head high and sluff off any sneers. Around here, the cool kids recycle. Together, locally, we can do our part to keep making Chautauqua County the strong and sustainable region we love, for a long time to come!

*"To leave the world better than you found it, sometimes you have to pick up other people's trash."*

~ Bill Nye

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*"Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky."*

~ Matthew Edward Hall

*Faith Matters*

The Miracle of Salvation



*Featured Writer*

**Rev. Luke Fodor**  
 Rector, St. Luke Episcopal Church

Some days arrive with trumpets; others slip quietly into our lives and ask to be remembered. Earth Day is often one of those quieter invitations—less spectacle, more summons. Like tying a string around a finger or placing a ring on a hand, it calls us back to something we might otherwise forget: that we belong to the earth, and the earth has been entrusted to our care.

At its root, religion is about binding—about what we fasten ourselves to. That binding can feel like burden, even control. But it can also be love—like the bonds we choose to keep because they

give life, meaning, and joy. Earth Day holds both possibilities before us: anxiety about a fragile world, and gratitude for a beautiful one. Spring cleaning, then, becomes more than a seasonal chore. It is a small liturgy of release. We let go of what clutters and constrains. We make space for light, for air, for life to move again. In doing so, we mirror something of God's own work—bringing order from chaos, renewing the face of the ground, breathing life where things have grown stale.

So perhaps this year, as you open windows and clear rooms, you might also loosen your grip on the language of obligation. Let it be less about duty and more about freedom. Less about what you have to do, and more about what you are invited into: a deeper care for the world, a gentler stewardship of your own life, and a quiet joy in tending what has been given.

For in the end, that to which we bind ourselves shapes who we become. And to be bound to the earth in love is not a burden—it is a blessing.



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## In Loving Memory



### Kathleen Elsa Kennedy

November 20, 1950 ~ April 10, 2026 (age 75)

**K**athleen Elsa Kennedy completed her earthly journey on April 10, 2026. Passionate, vibrant and deeply connected with others, she lived a rich, full life and was visited in her last days by many family members and friends.

Kathy was born Nov. 20, 1950, in Corry, Pa., to John and Patricia Kennedy. Kathy attended Corry schools until her final year of high school. She graduated from Fairview High School in 1968 and attended Grove City College. She majored in English Literature and graduated in 1972. She married Ronald Holstein, her first husband, and the couple moved to North Carolina, where, in addition to helping Ron restore antique furniture, she taught at the Irene B. Wortham Center for children with special needs in Asheville. In 1976, they moved to Fairview to be closer to Kathy's parents, and she worked at the Sarah Reed Retirement Center as Activities Director, among many other jobs. Ron and Kathy were avid antiquers, and started an antique business and a re-furnishing shop.

They travelled widely in Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York on their antiquing trips. She later moved to Erie, Pa. and worked at Lake Erie Institute of Rehabilitation as a recreational therapist. She was ordained a deacon at Sarah Hearn Presbyterian Church, where she also sang in the choir.

Kathy moved to Baton Rouge, La., in 1987 to help her brother Jerry, Professor of English at LSU, with house remodeling. She soon earned a Master's Degree at Louisiana State University and began teaching courses in anthropology at LSU.

There, she met and married Kent Mathewson, her current husband, a geography professor, and with him began an adventurous life of world travel to Central and South America, Europe, the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

She also enjoyed her time as a stay-at-home mother, in addition to teaching Elderhostel classes, co-leading her daughter's Girl Scout troop, being an active volunteer in the community and hosting many wonderful parties. She also served as an informal adviser to many graduate students in the department of Geography and Anthropology.

In 2011, Kathy became the primary caregiver to her father as he battled and eventually succumbed to cancer. She moved to Mayville, NY where she looked after her mother, Patricia,

and daughter, Mariana, who entered high school. They maintained a residence in Baton Rouge, where Kent continued to teach until retirement. They were back and forth often.

Kathy took the utmost pride in restoring her dream home, the William Howell House, an 1822 brick Greek revival farmhouse on the outskirts of Mayville. In Mayville, Kathy made her mark in the community by hosting a Japanese exchange student, serving as Secretary of the Chautauqua Township Historical Society, volunteering for the local Democratic Party and the Mayville Food Pantry and was a member of the Tuesday Club. She and Kent continued to take memorable trips, including to Cuba, Costa Rica, Panama and Europe, and she remained fiercely committed to equality, women's rights and environmental justice. She enjoyed many hobbies, such as gardening, reading and spending time with her beloved cats.

Kathy was preceded in death by her father, John, her mother, Pat and her younger brother Chris and nephew Robert.

She is survived by her husband Kent; her daughter Mariana Bernstein (Greg), grandson Arthur, of Erie, Pa.; by her older brother, Jerry (Sarah) of Baton Rouge and by her nephew Benjamin, (Julie) and their children: Sam, Evelyn, and Miles, all of Charlottesville, Va.; and by her sibling, Micah of Oakland Ca.; by her Kennedy cousins, Charles Michael of Corry, Pa. and Thomas Allen (Linda) of Mechanicsville, Va., and by their children and grandchildren; and by her Platz cousins, Michael (Debbie) of Girard and Patrick (Karen) of Fairview and their children and grandchildren.

In her final weeks, she came to the understanding that through exceptionally compassionate care from the staff at AseraCare Hospice and Manchester Commons, and through many wonderful interactions with friends, family and strangers, that "Love is all there is, and it's more than enough."

In lieu of flowers, donations in her honor can be made to Planned Parenthood, Southern Poverty Law Center, SPLC, American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU, Westfield Stray Cat Rescue, the Mayville Food Pantry and the Erie Junior Philharmonic.

An outdoor and potentially irreverent celebration of Kathy's life will take place sometime this summer.

### Peace, Hope and Joy with Linda Kent

## ALONGSIDE FRIENDS A Bike Ride for Earth Day



Contributing Writer

Linda Kent

**I** remember the day I helped my sister learn to ride a bicycle. We lived in a newly built neighborhood with little traffic. The neighbor kids rode along the street, reluctantly moving when an occasional car passed. My sister joined on her tiny two-wheeler, but the training wheels slowed her down.

Mom left for an afternoon of shopping as the neighbors watched us kids. For some reason I decided that was going to be the day my sister was to learn how to ride without training wheels. So off they came, and out to the street we went.

I ran alongside her for what seemed like hours, one hand

gripping the back of her seat to keep her upright. If she wobbled and couldn't recover on her own, I was big enough to be able to keep her from falling. Then we'd try again. Soon, she could ride for a few seconds on her own. Then a minute or so. By the end of the day, to both of our delight, she was riding her bike, with no training wheels, and grinning ear to ear at her accomplishment!

Wouldn't it be nice if we all had someone run alongside us when we tried something new? My sister trusted me and tried because I didn't let her fall. She learned something new because she had someone who believed in her. We all need that, someone to come along and support us when we wobble and crash. Someone to pick us up, dust us off, and tell us to get going and try again.

I'm grateful to the people in my life who lift me up when I don't think I'm able anymore. They come alongside me as I come alongside them. They're called friends. I treasure them for how we've been there for each other throughout our years of friendship.

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## Earth Day: More than just a day at SUNY Fredonia's Geology and Environmental Sciences Department

*Continued from Front Page*

science — they're doing it, in the field and lab, on problems their neighbors live with every day.

### Research on Lake Chautauqua and its algal blooms

Lake Chautauqua's harmful algal blooms threaten water quality. SUNY Fredonia's Dr. Courtney Wigdahl-Perry and her students are studying the lake to help manage the problem.

A key starting point is what happens beneath the surface. When the sun warms the upper layers of a lake, it creates distinct temperature zones that don't easily mix — a process called thermal stratification. These layers influence everything from nutrient cycling to algal growth. Former Fredonia student Kasey Crandall collected high-frequency temperature data from multiple locations around the lake to map how and when these layers form, helping fill gaps in our understanding of how the lake circulates.

What gets added to the water matters just as much. Chloride levels in freshwater have climbed steadily due to road salt. Former Fredonia student Kameron Finch found through experiments that road salt runoff may harm zooplankton — tiny crustaceans key to the food chain — more than EPA guidelines suggest. As an undergraduate, Finch also used fossilized diatoms (microscopic algae preserved in lake mud) to reconstruct how environmental conditions in Chautauqua Lake have shifted over time.

Current student Sydney Hawkins has been investigating how algal blooms affect benthic algae — algae living on the lake bottom that form the foundation of much of the lake's biodiversity. Hawkins found that as surface blooms intensify, they block sunlight, suppressing benthic algal growth, especially in the lake's more nutrient-rich South Basin.

### Research on Fredonia's Reservoir

Fredonia has faced ten boil water orders in three years. Heavy rainfall stirs sediment in the 140-year-old reservoir, clouding the water and making disinfection difficult. An overhaul could cost \$20.4 million. SUNY Fredonia students are studying the reservoir from multiple angles to help the community make better-informed decisions.

Current student William Damiani, mentored by Dr. Courtney Wigdahl-Perry, is reconstructing the reservoir's environmental history using fossilized diatoms in sediment cores. Different diatom species thrive under different water conditions, so they serve as a biological record of past changes in water chemistry and temperature.

Recent graduate Abigail Roof, mentored by Dr. Thomas Hegna, established the first baseline record of zooplankton in the reservoir. She catalogued nearly 3,700 individual zooplankton and identified nine species — including two recognized water quality indicators.

Recent graduate Dominik Zimmer, mentored by Dr. Matthew Lanning, used X-ray fluorescence spectrometry to trace where the reservoir's sediment comes from — reading the chemical fingerprint of the material clouding the water. Together, these three projects form a science-based portrait of the Fredonia Reservoir for the community.

### Stream restoration research

A team of SUNY Fredonia students, all mentored by Dr. Matthew Purtill, has been monitoring two key watersheds to track whether restoration efforts are working.

Much of the work has centered on Dewittville Creek, a tributary of Chautauqua Lake, where a streambank restoration project installed a boulder wall and in-stream spurs to redirect water flow away from eroding banks. Long-term monitoring of such sites is rare — which is exactly what this team set out to do.

Former students Elizabeth Wightman, Abigail Nordwall, Gavin Kaminski and Hayden Backus, along with current student James Hepler, have each contributed pieces of the picture. Wightman and Nordwall measured stream velocity, water discharge and sediment loads over two years. Kaminski and Backus added data from an unusually dry stretch, finding that finer sediment had been flushed out and the channel may still be adjusting. Hepler used GIS to compare the creek's topography across multiple years, finding that water appears to be carving a new channel and erosion is occurring at the base of the boulder wall — suggesting the restoration

Submitted Photos



(L to R) Elizabeth Wightman, Brett Boyer, and Abigail Nordwall.



Syd Lamberton photographing core samples.



Bea Roof sampling zooplankton.

structures may be redirecting stress rather than eliminating it.

Wightman and Nordwall also contributed to a broader look at the Cattaraugus Creek Watershed, the largest tributary feeding Lake Erie. Working with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the team used a soil loss model combined with remote sensing to estimate where erosion and landslide risks are greatest.

### Research on critical minerals for a greener future

Wind turbines, solar panels and EV batteries all require rare earth elements like lanthanum and neodymium. The U.S. currently relies on foreign sources, creating both security and environmental tensions, because mining these minerals has its own costs. SUNY Fredonia students are searching for domestic deposits in Western New York and Pennsylvania.

Current student Mia Enders, mentored by Dr. Wentao Cao, analyzed Upper Devonian shale in Western New York for signs of critical mineral enrichment. Using X-ray fluorescence spectrometry, she found elevated concentrations

of vanadium, copper, zinc and the rare earth elements lanthanum and cerium. The work was preliminary, but shows these rocks merit further investigation.


A related project looked at coal-bearing rocks in Pennsylvania. Former student Syd Lamberton, mentored by Drs. Wentao Cao and Thomas Hegna, investigated whether clays found beneath coal deposits could serve as a domestic source of rare earth elements. Existing infrastructure from decades of coal mining could make these deposits easier and cheaper to access — potentially reducing environmental harm while bringing economic opportunity to communities still recovering from coal's decline. The team found that the original source of sediment did not drive enrichment; instead, the chemistry of clay minerals themselves may explain it. Understanding this is essential for predicting where the richest layers will be found.


*Dr. Thomas Hegna is an invertebrate paleontologist at SUNY Fredonia. He currently serves as chair of both the Physics Department and the Geology & Environmental Sciences Department. He earned his Ph.D at Yale University in 2012.*

***“Nature is always hinting at us.  
It hints over and over again. And  
suddenly we take the hint.”***

~ Robert Frost

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# Fredonia Theater Series Offers Classic Comedy from Noel Coward

Contributed by  
**SUNY Fredonia**

One husband, two wives – and one spirited evening. That’s the billing for a classic comedy from Noel Coward that is the next offering in the Walter Gloor Mainstage Series at the State University of New York at Fredonia.

The Department of Theatre and Dance presents six performances of Coward’s 1941 hit “Blithe Spirit” from April 24 to May 3 in the Robert W. Marvel Theatre of Rockefeller Arts Center. Tickets are available online 24/7 at [www.fredonia.edu/tickets](http://www.fredonia.edu/tickets). Tickets may also be purchased on Monday, Wednesday or Friday by phone at 716-673-3501 or in person at the Ticket Office in the Williams Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and at the door.

Performance dates and times are Friday, April 24 and Saturday, April 25 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, April 26 at 2 p.m.; Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2 at 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, May 3 at 2 p.m.

Described by Coward himself as “an improbable farce in three acts,” “Blithe Spirit” centers on a cantankerous novelist who finds himself haunted by the ghost of his late first wife after he remarries.

Director Paul W. Mockovak, a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, considers the play to be “very much in the signature style of Noel Coward — high-society wit with supernatural absurdity.”

The setting for the Mainstage production is “a traditional one” of an early 1940s country home.

“This allows for some great design elements for setting by co-designers Czerton Lim and Jharrel Liam Bernardo and beautiful costumes co-designed by Jessica Lustig and Indrid Wood, including stairs to a second floor and the requisite French doors to the garden,” Mockovak said.

Almost 100 students and faculty are involved in this Mainstage production.

“We have a fantastic cast who have absolutely taken to Coward’s style of delivery and period dialect as well as an acute sense of comedy,” the director said.

Mockovak hopes audiences will take away the sheer joy that comes from experiencing live theater.

“‘Blithe Spirit’ revels in illusion — séances, ghosts, visual tricks,” he said. “It allows us the magic of live performance and the escape that entertainment can provide.”

“Blithe Spirit” is presented as part of the 2025-26 Lake Shore Bank Season at SUNY Fredonia’s Rockefeller Arts Center. It is presented through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals, nc.



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## Chautauqua County Democratic Committee Fourth Annual Bowling for Ballots



*Submitted Photo*

**The Chautauqua County Democratic Committee will hold its fourth annual “fun-raiser”, Bowling for Ballots, on Sunday April 26 at Lucky Lanes in Fredonia. From 2pm to 5pm, attendees will enjoy bowling, games, prizes, pizza and snacks. Bowlers and non-bowlers alike are invited for a fun time while supporting the county committee’s efforts to help local Democratic candidates with their campaigns. Reservations and/or donations may be made to the committee on [ActBlue.com/donate/chqbowling](http://ActBlue.com/donate/chqbowling), and walk-ins are also welcome. Information is available by emailing [CHQdem@gmail.com](mailto:CHQdem@gmail.com) or calling Sue at (716)203-7241.**

Photo of last year’s bowlers



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## EVERYDAY WONDERS: CELEBRATE SPRING WITH SKUNK CABBAGE



Contributing Writer

**Rachel Brown**

This humble native plant doesn't ask for much. Give it some mud and a bit of shade and it can take care of itself. After all, it's been doing just that since dinosaurs roamed the earth - and unlike those lumbering giants, it's still here!

Even when winter hasn't quite gotten the message that it's time to go, skunk cabbage begins pushing its way up through snow and ice to emerge as one of the earliest bloomers here in the Northeast. Using energy stored in its impressive root system, it can generate its own heat, maintaining an internal temperature up to 70 degrees, or 20 degrees warmer than the surrounding air! This helps activate another tool in its toolkit; its unique aroma. This is what really puts the "skunk" in skunk cabbage. While we humans may not appreciate

the smell produced by this feat of natural alchemy, insects most certainly do. Fooled into thinking it must be one of the dead critters they usually feast upon, they are drawn to crawl inside the "spathe", the name for the cozy hooded structure protecting the "spadix", or flower inside, and pollinating it in the process.

Skunk cabbage survived what was called the "fifth mass extinction event" when the majority of life on earth was wiped out. This was due in part to its remarkable roots, which have the ability to contract and pull the plant deeper into the ground with each passing year. This not only ensures the plant's longevity but also helps to stabilize its wetland habitat. I'd call that a win, win!

Once the rather bizarre looking spiky knob that passes for its flower has finished blooming, it forms compartments that are the compound fruit. Each of these sections contain a

seed that ripens and falls to the ground in late summer. Meanwhile, a single spear-shaped bud emerges from the base of the plant. It grows rapidly and unfurls to reveal leaves reaching up to 3 feet in length.

As a source of food or medicine for humans, skunk cabbage is not recommended. It has been used in the past to treat headaches, coughs and cramps, but its calcium oxalate crystals cause an unpleasant burning sensation in the mouth. Its diuretic and laxative effects, however, are appreciated by black bears, helping them to get things "moving" again after a long winter's nap.

As Henry David Thoreau advised,

*"If you are afflicted with melancholy at this season, go to the swamp and see the brave spears of skunk-cabbage buds already advanced toward a new year... They see over the brow of winter's hill. They see another summer ahead."*

In our area we are fortunate to have many places for skunk cabbage to grow and thrive. Marshes, bogs, streams, ponds, wetlands and woods are all around us. After the long, seemingly endless winter we've had, it has felt at times like spring would never come. But a trip to the nearby Bentley preserve in early March restored my hope. The sight of hundreds of skunk cabbage plants poking through old wet leaves and mud lifted my spirits and reminded me the cycle of renewal continues. As Henry David Thoreau advised, "If you are afflicted with melancholy at this season, go to the swamp and see the brave spears of skunk-cabbage buds already advanced toward a new year... They see over the brow of winter's hill. They see another summer ahead."

On this Earth Day, let us all appreciate the Everyday Wonders that fill this beautiful planet.

*Rachel is an artist, writer and bookseller who has lived here in Chautauqua County for more than 20 years. She cares deeply about the environment, as well as social and political issues. She endeavors to learn as much as she can about the living things with which we share this planet. She deems this collection of writing her "Everyday Wonders."*

## Chautauqua County Marks Earth Day 2026: A Renewed Commitment to Sustainability and Local Stewardship



Chautauqua County Landfill in Ellery, NY)

Contributed by

**Chautauqua County**

Earth Day is more than a date on the calendar; it is a vital reminder of our shared responsibility to protect the landscapes we call home. This Earth Day, the Chautauqua County Department of Public Facilities (DPF) Landfill Division is calling on all residents to renew and strengthen their commitment to recycling and waste reduction — simple actions with a profound and lasting impact on our local environment and economy.

### Why Your Small Actions Matter

Recycling and waste reduction serve as cornerstones of environmental health, offering benefits that extend far beyond the bin:

- **Waste Reduction:** Decreases the volume of material entering landfills, helping extend their lifespan and reduce long-term costs.
- **Pollution Prevention:** Diverts materials from disposal processes that can negatively impact air and water quality. A key strategy is organic diversion — keeping yard waste, food scraps, and other organic materials out of the waste stream. Residents can make a major impact through backyard composting, leaving grass clippings on lawns ("Leave It On The Lawn"), and using leaves and clippings as mulch. Removing organics from landfills reduces methane emissions and supports healthier ecosystems.
- **Resource & Energy Conservation:** Reusing paper, plastic, and metal conserves natural resources and requires significantly less energy than manufacturing from raw materials.
- **Economic Vitality:** Recycling initiatives support local jobs in collection, sorting, and processing — strengthening a sustainable, circular economy right here in Chautauqua County.

In addition, the County's landfill system plays an important economic role. Its comparatively low disposal costs help attract waste from outside the region, generating revenue that supports local ser-

vices and infrastructure. Maintaining this balance — economic benefit alongside environmental responsibility — is key to long-term sustainability.

"Stewardship is a collective effort," emphasizes Gustafson. "Protecting what we have requires every resident to do their part. When we work together, these individual actions create a powerful wave of positive change."

### Addressing the Bigger Picture

New York State is facing a growing challenge: dwindling landfill capacity. As space becomes more limited, the cost and complexity of waste disposal increases — and without action, more waste may ultimately be transported across state lines, shifting environmental burdens elsewhere.

At the same time, efforts are underway at the national, regional, and local levels to reduce harmful chemicals in manufacturing and product design. Consumer choices play a powerful role in this system — influencing what is produced, how it is packaged, and how much waste is generated.

Forward-thinking strategies like Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are gaining momentum. These policies encourage manufacturers to take responsibility for the full lifecycle of their products, reducing packaging waste and strengthening recycling markets. Strong oversight and enforcement of state regulations — particularly for businesses managing electronics, batteries, and other regulated materials — are also essential to maintaining environmental compliance and protecting public safety.

### Know Where to Go: County Recycling Hubs

The Division of Solid Waste makes it easy for residents to participate through four conveniently located transfer stations: Facility

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

## Water Horse Celtic Duo Performs at St. Luke's April 24th at 7pm



For videos & artist info, visit [waterhorse.org](http://waterhorse.org)

*Contributed by*  
**St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

Providing a place for connection and joy, St. Luke's is proud to continue this year's music series with the celebrated Celtic Duo Water Horse. Hailed as the "Celtic standard bearers of Chautauqua County," Water Horse's Sue Tillotson and Jim Cunningham are regular performers at the Jamestown Regional Celtic Festival, The Ligonier Highland games, and the Fredonia Free For All. Their combination of voice, violin, penny whistle, and stringed instruments including acoustic guitar, bouzouki, and cittern, will delight and propel us into the spring season.

"Music comforts and connects," says Karen Hewes Suber, Director of Music & Community Arts Integration at St. Luke's, "and providing diverse experiences in the space of the church gives people an opportunity to find their own sense of meaning and beauty. I'm so excited to experience Water Horse's

music our acoustic wonderland! I believe it will be a truly healing experience for listeners of all ages."

Celtic tunes often have familiar melodies that are adapted into hymn traditions. Water Horse will be presenting a few such hymns of Celtic origin during their performance accompanied by pianist K. Suber. Concertgoers will have the opportunity to hear tunes such as "Star of the County Down" and "Wild Mountain Thyme" in their original Celtic tradition and then sing the hymnic versions together to feel the history of these tunes come alive.

The performance will begin at 7 pm on Friday, April 24th. Free will donations are gratefully accepted. St. Luke's is located at 410 N. Main St., Jamestown, with the entrance on the left side of the church and an accessible entrance on 4th St. For questions or more information, call the church office at 716-483-6405 or email Karen Hewes Suber at [karen.suber@stlukesjamestown.org](mailto:karen.suber@stlukesjamestown.org)

## Family-Friendly Amazing Bubble Factory Live Performance Coming to Reg Lenna Center for The Arts April 22



*Contributed by*  
**Reg Lenna Center for the Arts**

The Amazing Bubble Factory brings the amazing art of bubbles to life right in front of the audience's eyes - live on stage at Reg Lenna Center for The Arts, Wed., April 22 at 6 p.m.

The Bubbleologists' humor and showmanship both excite and entertain as they create thousands of bubbles from the size of a pea to the size of a minivan. This family-friendly performance promises music, audience participation, smiles, laughs, and of course Bubbles!

The Amazing Bubble Factory performance is sponsored by Northwest Bank.

Tickets are \$9.50 for children aged 18 and under, and \$17 for adults. The Reg Lenna Center for The Arts box office is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12-5 p.m. and



one hour before movies and events. Tickets may also be purchased by calling 716.484.7070 or at [reglenna.com](http://reglenna.com). Reg Lenna Center for The Arts is located at 116 E. 3rd St. in Jamestown, NY.

The Reg Lenna Center for The Arts' programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

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# SUNY Fredonia Earth Day Event Looks to Keep Environmental Awareness at the Forefront



*Contributed by*  
**SUNY Fredonia**

Earth Day began more than 50 years ago with a goal of protecting the planet and raising environmental awareness.

Dr. Tracy Marafiotte, an associate professor in the Department of Communication at the State University of New York at Fredonia, thinks this initiative has only grown more important over time.

“We need it now more than ever,” said Dr. Marafiotte. “We’re facing significant environmental issues — from climate refugees to famine to the quality of our water — that we need to think about.”

To that end, SUNY Fredonia’s Department of Environmental Health, Safety and Sustainability will host its annual Earth Day Expo & Farmers’ Market on Wednesday, April 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the Williams Center Multipurpose room. The event is free, and the campus and community are invited to attend.

The goal of the event is to showcase sustainability and conservation work being done on campus, in the local community, and around Chautauqua County. It is coordinated by Marafiotte and Mia Ciechalski, a student event planning assistant.

“I would like for people to think about actions they can take to make a difference,” Marafiotte said. “It could be rethinking what they put in the trash, buying organic produce and supporting local farms or planting native species in gardens.”

The Expo & Farmers’ Market will feature 31 booths.

It includes programs/courses and semester projects such as the Environmental Communication “Life Cycle/Cradle-to-Grave Analyses of household objects,” the Intermediate 2D Animation storyboards/animation of a future Fredonia utopia, and the Science Education NASA connections.

Participating student groups will provide hands-on environmental and sustainable activities including painting plant pots, making seed bombs and upcycling t-shirts into no-sew, reusable tote bags. There will also be a clothing drive, plant giveaways, and gift bags comprised of sustainable hygiene products. Students will also provide live music and dance performances.

Local conservation organizations represented will be Greystone Nature Preserve, Wild Ones WNY Chapter, Audubon Community Nature Center of Jamestown, Western New York Land Conservancy, Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, the county Soil and Water Conservation District and the Nature Sanctuary Society of Western New York.

Nine vendors from the Fredonia Farmers Market will also participate — Royal Fern Nursery, Choose Violets, Roo Haven Farms, Miller Apples, Maggitti Farm, Dandelions & Dreams, EnJoyABLE Acres, Spider Herbs and Aeres Designs.

Since its creation in 1970, Earth Day has grown into the world’s largest environmental movement designed to protect the planet. It is estimated that more than one billion people in almost 200 countries participate every April 22.

The theme for Earth Day 2026 is “Our Planet, Our Power.”




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April 25, 2026

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## Independent Bookstores Day Celebrates its 13th Anniversary

*Featured Writer*

**Bob Lingle**

Owner, Good Neighbor Bookstore

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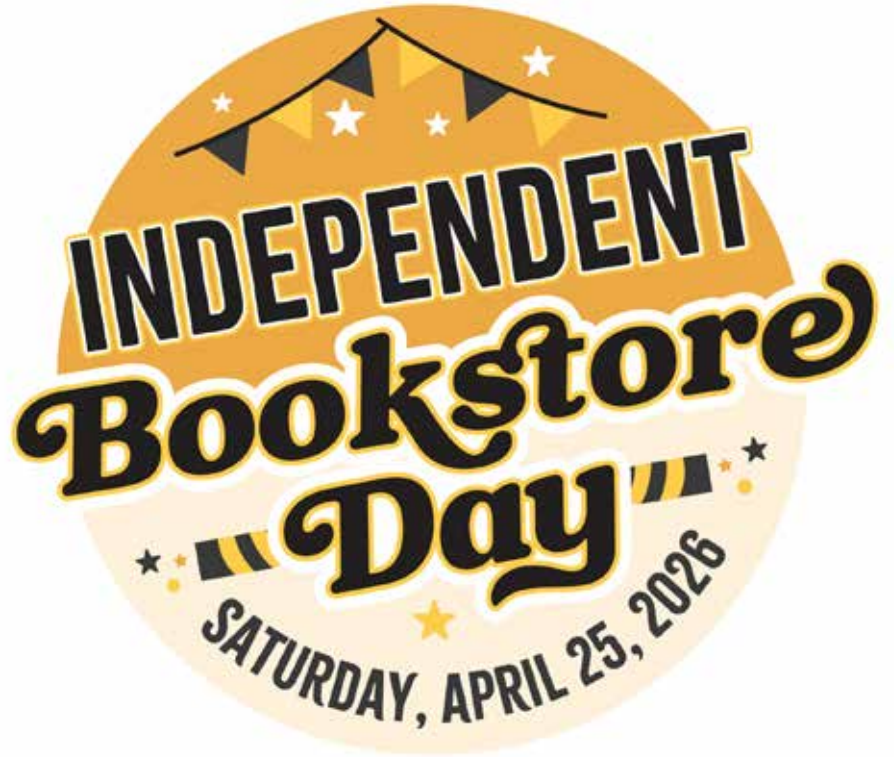
Good Neighbor Bookstore in the Village of Lakewood comes together with our community to celebrate the 13th Anniversary of Independent Bookstore Day and to applaud our fellow independent bookstore owners in Chautauqua County: Mumpsimus Books and Genres Bookstore, both in Westfield, and Next Chapter Bookstore in Fredonia.

Independent Bookstore Day (Indie Bookstore Day) was established in 2013 to promote, celebrate, and highlight the value of the independent bookstore community. The day has been observed on the last Saturday of April every year since 2013. This year there are over 1,600 stores participating across the country.

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## Audubon Has So Many Ways to Celebrate Earth Day!



Contributed by  
**Audubon Community  
Nature Center**

If you've decided you want to celebrate Earth Day this year, either by reconnecting to the Earth for yourself or by finding a way to give back, Audubon Community Nature Center (ACNC) has many opportunities for both.

You can have some fun while you give back by taking part in Audubon's April 25-May 3 Birdathon. Create your own team of birders and spend up to 24 hours between Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, May 3 to raise money for the Ryan Exline Memorial Scholarship and to provide ongoing care and habitat improvements for Audubon's Animal Ambassadors. Spread the word to get friends and family to pledge your team by sharing the link to the Birdathon website, [AudubonCNC.org/birdathon-2026](http://AudubonCNC.org/birdathon-2026). Not a birder? Visit the website to offer your support or contact Aaron Sidder at [ASidder@AudubonCNC.org](mailto:ASidder@AudubonCNC.org) to join or form a Birding Team.

Make reservations by Monday, April 20, to join the Birdathon kick-off Breakfast With the Birds this Saturday morning. Come anytime from 9 to 10 a.m. for breakfast and birding at the feeders. A short bird program with some tips and tricks for those hard-to-identify birds starts at 10 a.m., followed by a short walk, weather-permitting. Bring your own binoculars if you have them; there will also be some to borrow.

Don't miss your chance to experience Bird Banding on one of the next four Saturdays, April 25-May 16. Come by yourself or bring the family to observe bird scientists in action and birds up close anytime from 7 to 11 a.m. See how the birds that have been caught in "mist" nets are fitted with identifi-

cation bands, measured, weighed, and then released. You might even be selected to help release a bird!

The picture here of a Flicker being released after it was banded was taken by D. Arlene Bonnett of Jamestown and recognized in an Audubon Nature Photography Contest. With \$1,600 in prize money in the 2026 contest and one of the categories for both Youth (ages 8-18) and Adults being ACNC Outdoors, you'll want to be sure to have your camera with you whenever you're at Audubon. Find all the Contest information, including the June 30 entry and voting deadline, at [AudubonCNC.org/Photo-Contest](http://AudubonCNC.org/Photo-Contest).

You can make any day an Earth Day when you treat yourself to a visit at Audubon's nearly 600-acre nature preserve. Look at the live birds of prey, enjoy the Natural Play Space, relax on the crow swing, and hike the six miles of trails dawn until dusk - for free! ACNC can always use volunteers to help maintain those trails and grounds, as well as other tasks, any time of the year. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Sharon Tefft at (716) 569-2345 or [STefft@AudubonCNC.org](mailto:STefft@AudubonCNC.org) to explore the possibilities.

And finally, a big way you can give back to the Earth is by being an Audubon Trail Guide volunteer for student groups coming for Discovery Walks this spring. Just bring your love of nature to the training on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, April 28 and 29, and the education staff will teach you all you need to know for this important work.

Audubon Community Nature Center is located at 1600 Riverside Road, one-quarter mile east of Route 62 between Jamestown and Warren. For details on all opportunities, call (716) 569-2345 or visit [AudubonCNC.org/events](http://AudubonCNC.org/events).



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# Business of the Week

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Falconer Location



Salamanca Location



Austin, Kirby & Max

## "Don't Trash It" Turns Returnables Into Community Value



Editor-in-Chief

Katrina Fuller

grew for 14 consecutive years before leveling off. It has since resumed its upward trajectory.

The Falconer location operates primarily as an indoor drive-thru. Customers drive around the back of the building, pull through a bay door and are met by staff who unload their containers, run them through a high-speed counting machine and bring payment directly to the vehicle. The process is quick, efficient and professional, thanks to Don't Trash It staff members.

"You may enter through the front door if you are dropping off for an account, Venmo or PayPal or have a small amount that we can quickly fit into the mix," Fisher said.

Don't Trash It accepts all New York state refundable aluminum, plastic and glass containers purchased in-state. The service is free, and customers receive back the 5-cent deposit they originally paid at the register. Fisher notes they do ask customers fully empty their containers, and that glass bottles are kept in a separate box. Likewise, no garbage should be included with returnables.

The business also manages accounts for more than 100 schools, churches, businesses and charitable organizations across the region. Fisher said the shop offers a seamless process to collect containers from business account holders and securely manage

their deposits in the same manner they handle the large can drives they manage.

Fisher sees Earth Day as a timely reminder of what consistent, small-scale action can accomplish. He said the act itself can be small, but it "makes a big difference."

"Every bottle or can that gets returned is one less item ending up in landfills, along roadsides or in our local waterways," Fisher said. "Materials like aluminum and plastic can take years to break down, but when we recycle them, they can be reused again and again instead of becoming waste. But, beyond the environmental impact, there are community benefits, too. Bottle returns help keep our neighborhoods cleaner, support local jobs and give people a chance to earn or donate money back into the community. At the end of the day, it's a simple habit that adds up quickly when everyone does their part."

He pointed to New York's Bottle Bill as a concrete example of policy-driven environmental impact. Since the state mandates a deposit on beverage containers, those containers are recycled at roughly 70% higher rates than in states without such a law, where the same containers can account for 40% to 60% of roadside litter.

"It's a simple example of the real impact recycling can have on our local environment," he said. "The best way our community can support our mission is by simply

staying engaged and returning their bottles and cans consistently."

In recent years, Fisher's two sons, Austin and Max, have taken on managerial roles within the business, a development their father describes as the most meaningful chapter yet.

"Having my boys work with me over the last couple of years has been the uttermost privilege and honor I could've asked for," Fisher said. "I have always enjoyed and been challenged to build my business for my personal gain, but since my boys have joined me, it has given me a different mindset and set of goals to achieve for them down the road if they decide to follow."

Their involvement also gave Fisher the bandwidth to expand, opening the Salamanca location on Nov. 1, 2025.

The Falconer location is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Salamanca location is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Don't Trash It can be reached by phone at (716) 499-4816 and is listed on Google with directions for both locations. The business is also active on Facebook and Instagram. [dates](#) and [travel tips](#).

While recycling was becoming a trending topic, Kirby Fisher was quietly building something in Chautauqua County that would outlast any hashtag.

Don't Trash It, a bottle and can redemption center headquartered in Falconer, has grown from a modest storefront into a multi-year institution with a second location now open in Salamanca. As Earth Day approaches on April 22, Fisher says the mission behind the business is as relevant as ever.

The idea came from an unlikely source: a family member with a vision and a willingness to work.

"My uncle approached me one day asking if I would be interested in starting 'A Can Joint,' as he called it," Fisher said. "I had always wanted to own my own business and was still searching for my niche, so I decided to give it a shot and began the research process."

The two men cleaned up an empty storefront on the backside of the old Agway barn in Falconer. They worked six days a week, forgoing salaries for the first year. Word spread gradually, and the business

# 2025 WETLANDS REGULATIONS ANNULLED CLPOA To Continue The Fight For Reasonable Regulations

Earth Day 2026



Earth Day 2026

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[chqlpoa@gmail.com](mailto:chqlpoa@gmail.com)



# EARTH DAY *Trivia*

1. What date is officially designated as Earth Day each year?
2. In what year was the first Earth Day held?
3. Who organized the first Earth Day in 1970?
4. How many participants joined the first Earth Day in the United States?
5. In what year did Earth Day become a global event?
6. What organization manages Earth Day globally today?
7. What U.S. federal agency was established in 1970 after Earth Day?
8. What major U.S. environmental law passed in 1970 followed Earth Day?
9. What year did the United Nations recognize Earth Day?
10. What is the UN's official name for April 22 observance?

1. April 22 2. 1970 3. Gaylord Nelson & Denis Hayes 4. 20 million 5. 1990 6. EARTH DAY.ORG 7. EPA 8. Clean Air Act 9. 2009 10. International Mother Earth Day



# HAPPY EARTH MONTH!



NASA astronaut and Artemis II Commander Reid Wiseman took this picture of Earth from the Orion spacecraft's window on April 2, 2026, after completing the translunar injection burn. Image Credit: NASA/Reid Wiseman

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<https://www.cccwaters.org/>



# PROTECT OUR LAKES & WATERWAYS

## Cherish our Local Resources

### Continued from Front Page

sneaks up on you over years of early mornings, long summers, and cold, stubborn winters.

And at the geographical center of it all is Chautauqua Lake.

Not just as a postcard image or a tourist draw, but as a living, breathing presence that shapes nearly everything around it. It feeds the local economy, anchors family traditions, and gives this county a sense of place that's hard to replicate. But if you spend enough time around it—really pay attention—you start to notice the fragility of it all.

That's where Earth Day stops being a pleasant annual ritual and starts feeling a little more urgent.

Because the truth—plain and unvarnished—is that the health of Chautauqua Lake is not guaranteed. It's tied up in a complicated web of runoff, development, invasive species, weather patterns, and complicated public decision making. None of this is the result of a single bad actor or a simple mistake. It's the slow accumulation of pressure on a system that, for a long time, seemed like it could take it.

It can't—not indefinitely.

But before this turns into a sermon, it's worth saying this: there's a different kind of energy in the air these days. A recognition that something has to give—and that giving up isn't an option.

Across the county, there are people—plenty of them—who have rolled up their sleeves and gotten to work. Scientists tracking water quality with the precision of air traffic controllers. Local officials trying to balance budgets with environmental realities. Volunteers hauling debris, planting buffers, cutting weeds, and attending meetings that stretch late into the evening. Farmers are adjusting practices to protect the soil and the streams that feed the lake.

It's not glamorous work. There are no parades for it. But it matters.

It matters to the waters like Cassadaga Lakes, Findley Lake, and Bear Lake tell their own quieter, more

complicated stories. Each has its own personality—and its own set of challenges. They too wrestle with invasive species creeping in unnoticed until they are suddenly everywhere.

They too deal with shoreline development that chips away at natural buffers, or nutrient loading that fuels weed growth and algae. Smaller systems can be even more sensitive, reacting faster and sometimes more dramatically to changes in land use, weather, and human activity.

They may not draw the same attention as Chautauqua Lake, but they are no less important to the people who live beside them, depend on them, and pass them down through generations. Their health is part of the same larger equation—and ignoring them only shifts the problem, it never solves it.

Then there's the largest source of fresh water in the world; located along our westernmost coast and producing the best damn sunsets known to man, Lake Erie and her sisters are the engines that drive everything. They are subject to strict international regulation. They are governed by treaty. Their sheer size and importance mean that billions are available to be spent on their study and cleanup.

And that's the thing about sustainability—it rarely announces itself with fireworks. It's built in the day-to-day decisions. The unglamorous ones. The ones that don't make headlines but quietly shape the future.

It's in how land is used and managed. It's in the push for cleaner energy that doesn't sacrifice the character of the region. It's in supporting local agriculture that respects both tradition and the environment. It's in the simple act of paying attention—of refusing to look away when something feels off.

Earth Day, at its best, is a reminder of that responsibility. Not in a way that scolds or lectures, but in a way that sharpens your awareness. It asks you to look around—at the lake, the hills, the fields—and understand that none of it is static. It's all in motion, shaped by forces both natural and human.

And here in Chautauqua County, those forces are close enough to touch.

That proximity is a strength, if we choose to treat it that way.

Because protecting this place doesn't require grand gestures from afar. It requires steady, deliberate action from the people who live here—who understand what's at stake not just in economic terms, but in something harder to define. A sense of continuity. A connection to place.

So yes, celebrate Earth Day. Take the walk. Enjoy the view. Let yourself appreciate what makes this county special.

But don't stop there.

Pay attention to the lake. Support the efforts to keep it healthy. Be mindful of the impact of everyday choices. Stay engaged in the conversations that shape how this region grows and changes.

Because the truth, stripped of all the rhetoric, is simple enough: places like Chautauqua County don't stay the way they are by accident.

They stay that way because people decide—year after year—that they're worth the effort.

And that's a decision that must be made again, right now.



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Interior



Interior



No lights on dash



Current mileage- but daily Driver- mileage will go up until The vehicle is sold

# THE EFFECTS OF TRASH ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Courtesy of  
**Metro Creative**

Earth Day is an annual holiday celebrated on April 22. Earth Day celebrates the planet and the dawn of the modern environmental movement that began in 1970.

Efforts to draw attention to environmental issues affecting the planet have always been important. But the significance of such efforts grows each year, as climate experts and environmental researchers continue to warn that something must be done to change behaviors that could be adversely affecting the planet.

One area that might require change concerns trash. According to EarthDay.org, two billion metric tons of unsustainable, municipally generated trash are thrown away across the globe every year. That trash subsequently enters the environment and affects the climate and the health of animals and humans. And some research suggests that the effects of trash on the environment might be underestimated.

A 2024 study from researchers at Harvard University's John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences noted that estimates from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) indicating methane emissions from landfills have been greatly underestimated. Researchers behind the Harvard study found that methane emissions from landfills are 51 percent higher than EPA estimates suggest. That's a notable miscalculation, as methane emissions are a significant contributor to climate change. In fact,

EarthDay.org notes that methane has a warming potential more than 80 times greater than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period. The warming potential of methane underscores the need to incorporate waste management practices that may help reduce methane emissions into any strategies designed to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Trash also can have a harmful effect on wildlife. Trash can get into natural settings, including waterways, where it has an adverse effect on marine species. EarthDay.org notes that plastic or solid waste gradually degrades into smaller pieces, making it difficult for wildlife, including marine species, to distinguish between what is food they

can eat and what is plastic that they should avoid. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, as much as 23 million tons of plastic enters aquatic environments each year.

Trash also can have an adverse effect on human health. Thousands of chemicals are utilized to manufacture products that ultimately end up in landfills each year, and EarthDay.org notes that landfills provide a pathway for those chemicals to enter the environment. Some of those chemicals are endocrine-disrupting and/or carcinogenic, and exposure to them may increase a person's risk for health issues including infertility, cancer and Alzheimer's disease, among others.

Trash is a part of daily life. Recognition of the harmful environmental impact trash can have is vital as the world looks to alter behaviors that could be jeopardizing the health of the planet and the species on it.



## SUDOKU

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

### 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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| 14 |    |    |    |    | 15 |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |    |
| 17 |    |    |    |    | 18 |    |    |    |    |    | 19 |    |    |    |
| 20 |    |    |    | 21 |    | 22 |    |    |    | 23 |    |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 24 |    | 25 |    |    |    | 26 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 27 | 28 | 29 |    | 30 |    |    |    | 31 |    |    |    | 32 | 33 | 34 |
| 35 |    |    | 36 |    |    |    | 37 |    |    |    | 38 |    |    |    |
| 39 |    |    |    |    |    | 40 |    |    |    | 41 |    |    |    |    |
| 42 |    |    |    |    | 43 |    |    |    | 44 |    |    |    |    |    |
| 45 |    |    |    | 46 |    |    |    | 47 |    |    |    | 48 |    |    |
|    |    |    | 49 |    |    |    | 50 |    |    |    | 51 |    |    |    |
| 52 | 53 | 54 |    |    |    | 55 |    |    |    | 56 |    | 57 | 58 | 59 |
| 60 |    |    |    |    | 61 |    |    |    | 62 |    | 63 |    |    |    |
| 64 |    |    |    |    | 65 |    |    |    |    |    | 66 |    |    |    |
| 67 |    |    |    |    | 68 |    |    |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |    |

- 1. Greek goddess of marriage
- 5. Tropical American blue jay-like bird
- 10. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
- 14. Dark olive black
- 15. Light, crinkled fabric
- 16. Notre Dame has a golden one
- 17. Leaked blood
- 18. Confronted
- 19. Negligible amount
- 20. Facilitated
- 22. Hill or rocky peak
- 23. Minneapolis suburb
- 24. Songs to one's beloved
- 27. Brake horsepower
- 30. Angry
- 31. Children's game
- 32. Spelling is a type of one
- 35. Obtained in return for labor
- 37. Indicates center
- 38. Chinese dynasty
- 39. Old World buffaloes
- 40. Slang for time off
- 41. Fabric
- 42. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 43. Defunct regional economic organization
- 44. Philly footballers
- 45. Female sibling
- 46. Peter Griffin's daughter
- 47. Digital audiotape
- 48. Insecticide
- 49. Scientific instrument
- 52. Pages may be dog-\_\_
- 55. Israeli city \_\_ Aviv
- 56. Type of sword
- 60. Middle Eastern military title
- 61. Wise individuals
- 63. French Polynesian island Bora \_
- 64. Popular shoe type
- 65. One of 50
- 66. Divulge a secret
- 67. Dish of cooked meat mixed with potatoes
- 68. Actress Zellweger
- 69. Romanian city

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Greek cupbearer of the Gods
- 2. Ancient Syrian city
- 3. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
- 4. Range of mountains
- 5. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
- 6. Spoke
- 7. City in Georgia
- 8. Theatrical
- 9. CNN's founder
- 10. Icelandic poems
- 11. Bjorn \_\_, tennis player
- 12. Bowfin genus
- 13. One point north of northeast
- 21. Political divisions in ancient Greece
- 23. Electroencephalograph
- 25. Cool!
- 26. Male parent
- 27. Where some gymnasts work
- 28. Capital of Vietnam
- 29. Sailboats
- 32. Shelter (Scottish)
- 34. Discharge
- 36. Arrest
- 37. Partner to cheese
- 38. Coffee receptacle
- 40. Stagnate
- 41. Satisfies
- 43. Snakelike fish
- 44. Consume food
- 46. Type of school
- 47. Erase
- 49. Inform
- 50. Girl's given name
- 51. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 52. Every one of two or more things
- 53. Northern India city
- 54. Seventeenth stars in a constellation
- 57. Weapon
- 58. Amounts of time
- 59. Isodor \_\_, American Nobel physicist
- 61. Soviet Socialist Republic



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## Local, Regional Artists Encouraged to Apply for Paint CHQ's 2026 Mural Project

### Public Input Session for new Bemus Point Mural Scheduled for April 23



Submitted Photo

The 2026 Paint CHQ Mural Festival will return in September with the installation of a public mural in the Village of Bemus Point. The program will build off of the success of the 2025 Paint CHQ Mural Festival, which saw three new murals installed in Chautauqua County, including Westfield. Organizers are now accepting applications from qualified artists. A public input session for the Bemus Point Mural is also scheduled for Thursday, April 23.

*Contributed by*  
**Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth**

The Paint CHQ Mural Festival is returning to Chautauqua County in 2026, with Bemus Point serving as the new community to feature a professionally designed public mural, scheduled for completion in September. In preparation for the new mural, the Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth (CCPEG) and Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Development (CCDPD) are seeking qualified artists to submit an application, with local and regional artists encouraged to apply before the deadline on May 11.

The goals and purpose of the Paint CHQ Mural Festival include highlighting community assets, embracing the value of public art investment, bringing visitors to the community, encouraging economic growth, building a foundation for more public art investment, and improving quality of place. Paint CHQ is intended to build on the quality of place efforts accelerated by CCPEG and CCDPD, growing regional pride and garnering significant attention and exposure, both regionally and nationally.

This year, CCPEG and CCDPD will work with the Village of Bemus Point to program the Paint CHQ Mural Festival. As the participating municipality, the village will work with a local advisory committee to determine and finalize the mural design with the selected artist.

"Steering committee members will

work with CCPEG to develop a mood board, or creative brief, to help the mural artists better understand what makes Chautauqua County and specifically Bemus Point unique," said Rebecca Wurster, CCPEG and CCDPD Special Project Coordinator. "This brief will inform creatives and ensure designs that resonate with the Village and represent the community. The jury that reviews the mural designs is made up of local community members."

Wurster is also encouraging local residents to provide input through an online survey or by attending an upcoming public workshop in Bemus Point. The workshop will take place on Thursday, April 23 at 5:30 p.m. in the Bemus Point Village Hall (13 Alburtus Ave.). The public survey, which is anonymous, will provide the Paint CHQ team with valuable community feedback, which will further inform the artwork themes. A link to the survey can be found online at [ChooseCHQ.com/PaintCHQ](http://ChooseCHQ.com/PaintCHQ).

While experienced local and regional artists are strongly encouraged to apply for this project, other local artists who are interested in learning more about how to install a mural may also want to participate in the Paint CHQ Mural Apprentice Program. The Apprentice Program is meant to offer aspiring artists an opportunity to garner valuable experience installing large-scale murals.

"This is an excellent resume builder for an aspiring muralist!" Wurster said. "Volunteer apprentices will be asked to help assist in the mural installation during the mural festival.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 22**

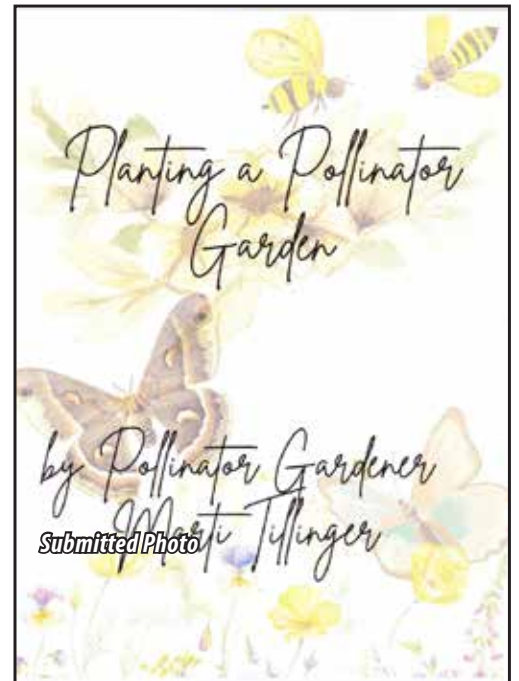
## MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION EXTENDS DUNKIRK HOURS



The Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County (MHA) is happy to announce that the hours have been extended at their North County recovery center. It is now open Tuesday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 601 Eagle Street in Dunkirk. Grant Manager Michelle Colaiacovo can provide Narcan training for individuals on a walk-in basis every Thursday and can accommodate large groups with notice. The MHA is seeking a part-time bilingual (Spanish and English) peer for the Dunkirk center; visit [MHACHautauqua.org/jobs](http://MHACHautauqua.org/jobs) for details. All funding for the Dunkirk location for 2026 is from the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation. For information about the MHA's recovery centers in Jamestown and Dunkirk, call (716) 661-9044 or visit [MHACHautauqua.org](http://MHACHautauqua.org) or [Facebook.com/MHACHautauqua](https://www.facebook.com/MHACHautauqua).

## THIS SUNDAY: PLANTING A POLLINATOR GARDEN

Allegheny, N.Y., resident Marti Tillinger has been an avid and successful pollinator gardener for 15 years. With five certifications, she is eager to share her expertise to help others promote our vital pollinators. This Sunday, April 26, she speaks at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Jamestown's 10:30 a.m. hybrid service on "Planting a Pollinator Garden." Tillinger says, "One in three bites of food and some textiles and medicines are made available due to pollinators. You don't need a large area to make an impact, so please join us!" All are welcome to the service at 1255 Prendergast Avenue. To participate virtually, use the link at [UUJamestown.org/calendar](http://UUJamestown.org/calendar).



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## Mayville/Chautauqua Lions Club Environmental Clean Up Service Project



Submitted Photo

Contributed by  
**Mayville/Chautauqua  
Lions Club**

The Mayville/Chautauqua Lions Club will hold a Service Project to pick-up trash and other debris on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at 12:30 pm at the Chautauqua Lakeside Park. We will meet in front of the Carlson Building. Our goal will be to help the community keep the park pristine and begin an ongoing effort to do our part as stewards of the environment.

Lions members will work in groups and comb the ground for anything that looks

unsightly including the shoreline. We are excited about the 2026 season, and we want to make sure the park continues to look great. This event is sponsored by North Shore Specialties Inc. who is providing Grabber Trash Pickers, Plastic bags and water. It will last two hours, and we invite anyone who wishes to help.

This is the first in a series of service projects we will be doing during the 2026 season. The Lions Club is international organization that supports numerous creative and small-scale community service efforts including environment clean-ups. Learn more about who we are and how to join at lionsclubs.org.

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## Alice Putnam Chapter Colonial Dames XVII Century Attend National Convention



A grand time was enjoyed by members of the Alice Putnam Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the XVII Century at the Annual National Convention of the Colonial Dames of the XVII Century. The event was held at the Washington Marriott Georgetown from April 9-11, 2026 in Washington, DC. A Grand Tea was held at the Colonial Dames Headquarters Building on Dupont Circle to kick off the outstanding Convention. The event was the perfect respite before the chapter resumed their good work.

Pictured from L to R: Bonnie Larkin, Treasurer; Deborah Ayers, Honorary Past New York State President; National President General, Rebecca Eisenman; Brenda Johnson, New York State President; Deborah Stauring, President Treaty of Breda. All are members of the Alice Putnam Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the XVII Century located in Western New York.

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|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 8 |
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| 4 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 9 |
| 8 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| 2 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
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PUZZLES ON PAGE 17

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To schedule an appointment, call 716-664-8510, or visit [UPMC.com/HereforHer](http://UPMC.com/HereforHer).

UPMC Chautauqua was recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as a Maternity Care Access Hospital.



**UPMC | CHAUTAUQUA**

## Jeff Winton to speak at League of Women Voters Luncheon

*Contributed by*  
**League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County**



Jeff Winton, founder and chairman of Rural Minds™

The League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County is pleased to be hosting a luncheon which will feature speaker, Jeff Winton, founder and chairman of Rural Minds™, the only national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves as an advocate and informed voice for mental health equality in rural America. Jeff is also the founder and owner of Wall Street Dairy LLC, a working family dairy farm in Chautauqua County. He is chief executive officer of Jeff Winton Associates, a full-service communications and corporate affairs agency for agricultural and healthcare corporations. An alumnus of Cornell University, he currently serves on the Dean's Advisory Council for the College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Advisory Board of NY FarmNet, a Cornell University affiliated nonprofit organization that helps NYS farm families through educational programming and consulting.

The luncheon will be held at the White Inn on Main Street in Fredonia, on Wednesday April 29 at noon. The

speaker will be introduced at 12:45. This event is open to the public, in addition to all members of the LWV of Chautauqua County being encouraged to attend. League members who wish to make reservations for the optional lunch are directed to the recent Leaguer newsletter sent via email for a coupon to be mailed in with meal selections and payment. This RSVP is requested by April 20th. Non-members who are interested in hearing the speaker and who wish to also make reservations for the lunch may obtain further information by calling program chair Beckie Ross at (716)679-8452 or Susan Bigler at (716)203-7241.



**HOURS:**

Monday & Tuesday - Closed  
Wednesday & Thursday - 5 pm – 12 am  
Friday & Saturday - 5 pm – 2 am  
Sunday - 6 pm – 11 pm

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- Thursdays** – \$4 House Spirits & Mixers and \$2 House Shots
- Fridays & Saturdays**– \$3 Blue Devil Shots
- Sundays** – Trivia with Prizes
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays** – Dark Romance Book Club
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## Falconer Kiwanis hears from Prevention Works



Submitted Photo

The Kiwanis Club of Falconer recently welcomed Anthony Frangione, South County Program Services Manager, as their featured speaker. Frangione provided an overview of Prevention Works, an organization dedicated to empowering communities, preventing substance abuse, and promoting wellness. He explained that Prevention Works currently holds contracts with 13 out of the 18 school districts in Chautauqua County, offering a range of programs not only for youth but also for parents, employers, and senior citizens.

During the meeting, club members discussed preparations for their upcoming Chicken Barbecue. The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, and will take place at the Falconer Moose Club. Additionally, the Falconer Kiwanis Club is preparing for its biannual Bike Rodeo, which will be held outside the Falconer Fire Hall on

**Saturday, May 9.**

For further details about the Kiwanis Club of Falconer, interested individuals are encouraged to reach out to any club member.

Senior Scene with Bridgette Paoletta

## Medicare Savings Program: A Lifeline for Eligible Seniors

Contributed by

**Bridgette Paoletta**Coordinator of Aging Services  
Chautauqua County Office for Aging

Healthcare costs can be challenging for many older adults and people with disabilities. The Medicare Savings Program (MSP) is offering much-needed financial relief for eligible seniors and individuals with disabilities in New York. This state and federally funded initiative is designed to help individuals with limited income and resources pay for some or all of their Medicare premiums, deductibles, and co-payments.

### What Is the Medicare Savings Program?

The Medicare Savings Program is available to people who are eligible for Medicare and meet certain income and resource limits. The program consists of different categories, including:

- **Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB):** Covers Medicare Part A and Part B premiums, deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments.
- **Qualified Individual (QI):** Pays for the Part B premium.

For many seniors, paying the Medicare premium can be a financial strain, especially when combined with other medical expenses. The Medicare Savings Program helps ease this burden, allowing individuals to maintain their health insurance coverage without depleting their savings. If you are found eligible, you will also automatically get Extra Help. The program is a federal assistance program managed by the Social Security Administration (SSA) that helps people with limited income and resources pay for the costs related to Medicare Part D, including Monthly premiums, Annual deductibles, and Prescription co-payments.

### Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for the Medicare Savings Program in New York, applicants must meet certain financial thresholds. For instance:

- For the **QMB** program, an individual's monthly income must be at or below \$1,856, or \$2,509 for a couple.
- The **QI** program has slightly higher limits at \$2,494 for an individual or \$3,375 or below for a couple.

Additionally, applicants usually need to meet certain resource limits, which

are set by the state. In New York State there is no resource limit.

### How to Apply

Individuals interested in applying for the Medicare Savings Program can do so through several ways. You can print an application at: <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4328.pdf> or call the Chautauqua County Office for Aging Services NY Connects Helpline at 716-753-4582. You can also contact the local Medicaid office (Department of Health and Human Services) and ask for a copy of the application to mail in or apply in person. If you are in need of enrollment assistance, please contact NY Connects at 716-753-4582 or the Medicare Rights Center helpline 1-800-333-4114 or visit [www.medicareinteractive.org/mspny](http://www.medicareinteractive.org/mspny).

For MSP enrollment you will need to complete an application as well as to provide required documentation. You will need a copy of your Medicare card, proof of income (Social Security award letter, pensions, retirements and pay stubs), proof of your date of birth, proof of residency and any premiums other than your Medicare premiums that you may pay. Beginning in **2026**, applicants are **no longer required to pursue other potential income sources**, such as Social Security benefits, before qualifying for Medicaid or MSP assistance.

The Medicare Savings Program is becoming an increasingly essential resource. The aging population often faces fixed incomes, and healthcare costs can be a significant burden. For some, this program has been a lifeline, ensuring they can access the necessary healthcare services without the added stress of unaffordable premiums.

### Looking Ahead

With healthcare costs rising, programs like the MSP are crucial in ensuring that no senior has to choose between paying for medication and covering basic needs. Individuals who think they may be eligible are urged to act now and explore the potential benefits of this important program.

For more information on the Medicare Savings Program and how to apply, visit the New York State Department of Health website or contact the Chautauqua County Office for Aging Services NY Connects Helpline. NY Connects can be reached either by stopping at one of our office locations, via email at [ccnyc@chqgov.com](mailto:ccnyc@chqgov.com) or by phone at 716-753-4582.

## Chautauqua County Seeks to Resolve Unpaid ALS Intercept Bills Owed by Forestville and Frewsburg

*Continued Nonpayment Could Result in  
Suspension of Certain County-Provided Services*



Contributed by

**Chautauqua County**

The Chautauqua County Office of the County Attorney is taking steps to resolve unpaid fees owed by the Forestville and Frewsburg Fire Districts for Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance intercepts and is preparing next actions to ensure compliance. If the Districts continue to refuse payment of the amounts due, the County may be forced to suspend certain services currently provided to the Districts.

“Our duty is straightforward: when the County lawfully bills for the services it provides, we must pursue payment for those services so that taxpayers are treated fairly,” said County Attorney Emily Woodard. “This is not a dispute the County sought out, but it is one we must resolve responsibly.”

Chautauqua County Emergency Medical Services (CCEMS) began providing ALS ambulance intercepts to Forestville and Frewsburg in 2022 as part of its standard support for districts that require higher-level medical care during emergency responses. ALS intercepts occur when a basic-life-support agency requests advanced-life-support assistance from CCEMS to ensure patients receive appropriate care during transport. These services were provided at the request of the Districts and delivered in accordance with state law and established protocols.

During 2022 and 2023, CCEMS responded to multiple such requests from both districts, billing the standard \$250 per intercept — the same rate applied uniformly across all municipalities in the county. The debt accrued only after services were completed and

billed, consistent with the County's established EMS cost-recovery procedures.

Under the EMS Cost Recovery Act signed by Governor Kathy Hochul in 2022, any ambulance service that requests an ALS intercept from another provider must compensate that agency at a negotiated or reasonable “usual and customary” rate, as outlined in General Municipal Law 209-b(4)(C).

Forestville currently owes \$2,500, and Frewsburg owes \$20,250. Despite multiple outreach attempts — including an offer to establish payment plans — both have declined to pay and instead retained outside legal counsel, claiming novel constitutional objections to the state statute. All other Fire Districts and Departments in Chautauqua County with similar obligations have paid in full.

“When two Districts decline to meet an obligation that every other municipality has met, it creates an imbalance that unfairly affects all other taxpayers across the county,” Woodard said. “Our goal is to resolve this cooperatively, but the current situation is not equitable.”

The County also highlighted its long-standing support for local responders, including a \$50,000 loan provided to Forestville in 2023 to assist with the purchase of a rescue truck.

While the County remains open to working collaboratively with both Districts/Departments, officials noted that inaction is no longer sustainable. “We hope to reach a reasonable resolution,” Woodard added, “but if payment continues to be refused, the County will have to consider its options.”

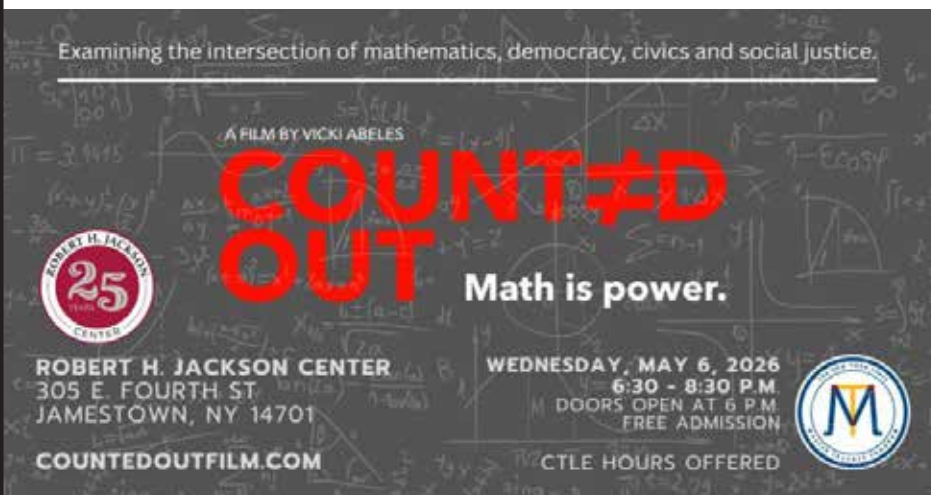


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## Counted Out Screening at the Robert H. Jackson Center May 6



### Contributed by NYS Master Teacher Program

The New York State Master Teacher Program and the Robert H. Jackson Center are offering a free screening of the award-winning documentary Counted Out on May 6 at 6:30 p.m.

From the film's website (countedout-film.com):

Counted Out investigates the biggest crises of our time through an unexpected lens: math.

In our current information economy, math is everywhere. The people we date, the news we see, the influence of our votes, the candidates who win elections, the education we have access to, the jobs we get—all of it is underwritten by an invisible layer of math that few of us understand, or even notice.

But whether we know it or not, our numeric literacy—whether we can speak the language of math—is a critical determinant of social and economic power.

Through a mosaic of personal stories, expert interviews, and scenes of math transformation in action, Counted Out shows what's at risk if we keep the status quo. Do we want an America in which most of us don't consider ourselves "math people"? Where math proficiency goes down as students grow up? Or do we want a country where everyone can understand the math that undergirds our society—and can help shape it?

Doors will open at the Jackson Center at 6 p.m. CTLE credits will be made available to educators. The 90 minute film is appropriate for anyone interested in the intersection of mathematics literacy, a healthy democracy, civics and social justice. A short discussion will follow, facilitated by Dr. David Wilson of Buffalo State College and the NYS Master Teacher Program, and local educator Ms. Mary Plumb, NYS Master Teacher Emerita.



## Chautauqua County Marks Earth Day 2026: A Renewed Commitment to Sustainability and Local Stewardship

Continued from Page 8

| Facility     | Address                           | Hours of Operation  |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| North County | 3688 Webster Rd.,<br>Fredonia     | Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat:<br>7:00 am – 3:00 pm                        |
| South County | 2570 South Work St.,<br>Falconer  | Tue, Thu, Sat:<br>7:00 am – 3:00 pm;<br>Fri: 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm |
| West County  | 121 Osborne St.,<br>Sherman       | Tue & Sat:<br>7:00 am – 3:00 pm                                 |
| Ellery       | 3889 Towerville Rd.,<br>Jamestown | Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat:<br>8:00 am – 4:00 pm                        |

**Accepted Materials:** Cardboard, paper, plastic, scrap metal, used clothing, glass (food and beverage containers only), propane tanks, Freon-containing appliances (refrigerators, air conditioners), tires, and electronics (*Note: Electronics are not accepted at the Ellery location.*)

### A Critical Reminder on Hazardous Waste

To protect staff, facilities, and the environment, certain materials cannot be accepted at these locations:

- **Used Motor Oil:** Take to local service stations or auto parts retailers.
- **Rechargeable Batteries:** Do not dispose of in regular trash. These pose serious fire and environmental hazards and should be returned to retailers that sell them.

### Everyday Actions That Make a Difference

Residents and businesses alike can take additional steps to reduce waste and environmental impact:

- Opt for digital communication by removing your name or organization from junk mail lists.
- Switch to electronic billing, receipts,

and monthly statements to reduce paper use.

- Politely refuse single-use items like straws, stirrers, and plastic utensils at restaurants and events.
- Choose reusable cutlery, dishes, linens, and decorations whenever possible.
- When shopping, buy in bulk to reduce packaging waste. When packaging is necessary, choose recyclable materials or those made from post-consumer content.

### A Shared Commitment

As we celebrate Earth Day, let it serve as more than a moment — let it be a turning point. By making recycling and organic waste diversion consistent, year-round habits, supporting smarter waste policies, and making mindful purchasing decisions, we can reduce environmental harm at every stage — from production to disposal.

Together, we can protect our environment, strengthen our economy, and ensure that Chautauqua County remains a place of natural beauty and community pride for generations to come.

## Local, Regional Artists Encouraged to Apply for Paint CHQ's 2026 Mural Project

Continued from Page 18

Apprentices may learn how to scale a design to fit a building, learn about different mediums, and expand their artist-network."

The applications for both the Paint CHQ Mural Apprentice Program and the Paint CHQ Open Artist Call can also be found online at [ChooseCHQ.com/PaintCHQ](http://ChooseCHQ.com/PaintCHQ).

Funding for the mural festival is earmarked for placemaking-related projects. Funding is provided through the Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth's placemaking initiative. Additional funding may come from grant applications, local foundation support, and corporate sponsorships. Leaders of the project include the Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation

(CREDC), the parent organization of CCPEG, and CCDPD.

**About CCPEG** - The Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth (CCPEG) serves as the main convener of economic development partners and resources to advance key projects that achieve economic prosperity in Chautauqua County. It also serves as the catalyst and broker of resources for advancing economic prosperity efforts and is the central coordinating entity for improving the quality of life in our communities, thereby attracting people and businesses to Chautauqua County to live, work, recreate, and invest. It is an initiative of the Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC). For more information visit [CHQPartnership.org](http://CHQPartnership.org).

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## YWCA Jamestown to Host 2026 Women of Achievement Ceremony on July 31

*Contributed by*  
**YWCA Jamestown**

YWCA Jamestown will host its annual Women of Achievement Ceremony on Friday, July 31, 2026, honoring outstanding women who have made significant contributions to the Jamestown community through leadership, service, and advocacy.

The Women of Achievement event is one of YWCA Jamestown's signature celebrations, highlighting individuals who embody the organization's mission of eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

"This event is an opportunity to recognize women who lead with courage, compassion, and commitment," said Amanda Gesing, Executive Director of YWCA Jamestown. "Their work strengthens our community and inspires others to create meaningful change."

The 2026 ceremony will bring together community leaders, supporters, and families to celebrate the achievements of this year's honorees. Proceeds from the event will support YWCA Jamestown programs and services that benefit women, youth, and families throughout Chautauqua County.

**Event Details:**  
Women of Achievement Ceremony  
**Date:** Friday, July 31, 2026  
**Time:** 5:30pm- 8:30pm  
**Location:** Chautauqua Harbor Hotel, 10 Dunham Avenue, Celoron, NY

Honorees for the 2026 Women of Achievement ceremony will be announced closer to the event date. Sponsorship opportunities and ticket information will also be available soon.

To learn more about the event, sponsorships, or how to support YWCA Jamestown, please contact Deborah Brannon or Katrina McMaster at 716-488-2237 or [womenofachievement@ywcajamestown.com](mailto:womenofachievement@ywcajamestown.com) or visit <https://www.ywcajamestown.com/2026-woa>.



**About YWCA Jamestown**  
*YWCA Jamestown is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Through programs and services that support youth development, leadership, and community empowerment, YWCA Jamestown continues to be a trusted resource for individuals and families in Chautauqua County.*

## National disability provider association names Robin Kestler recipient of 2026 Direct Support Professional of the Year award for New York State

*Contributed by*  
**The Resource Center**

ANCOR, a national association for community-based disability service providers, has announced that Robin Kestler, a direct support professional (DSP) at The Resource Center, has been named the recipient of the 2026 Direct Support Professional of the Year award. Kestler is part of the largest-ever class of DSP of the Year honorees, with 57 outstanding professionals being chosen from a record-breaking 544 nominations from around the country.

"We are absolutely thrilled that ANCOR selected Robin as its DSP of the Year in New York State. To be chosen as the Empire State's honoree among many other worthy nominees speaks volumes to Robin's commitment, dedication and devotion to the people we support," said Denise Jones, The Resource Center's chief executive officer. "She's a trailblazer, and her career exemplifies the transformative power of community-based, person-centered supports and services. Robin's efforts have resulted in true community inclusion for the people we support."

Since 2007, ANCOR's annual DSP of the Year awards have recognized outstanding DSPs who deliver long-term services and supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). ANCOR officials said the awards celebrate the important role DSPs play in ensuring people with I/DD have what they need to thrive and be included in the community.

"Celebrating the nation's most outstanding direct support professionals is one of the great joys I have as a leader within the national provider community, and Robin Kestler is a perfect reminder why," said Lori Kress, president of ANCOR's Board of Directors and chief executive officer for Dungarvin, a provider of I/DD services based in Mendota Heights, Minn. "Each of this year's honorees exemplifies what it means to deliver supports that are truly person-centered, and each one demonstrates what it means to be a bridge between people and their communities."

ANCOR said these awards also seek to raise awareness about a direct support workforce in crisis, maintaining that inadequate investments in this workforce have led to a decades-long shortage of DSPs. ANCOR officials believe these challenges are on the brink of getting worse in light of fun-



Robin Kestler

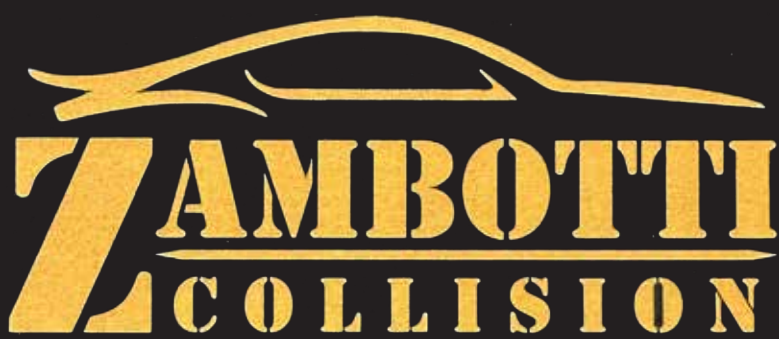
ding cuts to Medicaid — which funds the majority of services DSPs deliver — at the federal level and in many states.

"Being recognized with a DSP of the Year Award is a tremendous honor every year. But this year it's particularly significant given the enormous pool of talented professionals from which our judges had to choose," said Barbara Merrill, ANCOR's chief executive officer. "And the timing couldn't be better, as funding cuts at the federal level and in many states mean that our nation's direct support professionals need recognition now more than ever."

Kestler and the other 2026 honorees will be recognized during an awards ceremony in Boston, Mass., on Thursday, April 23, from 8:45-10:15 am EDT during ANCOR Connect '26, the association's annual conference. Members of the press interested in attending the awards presentation should contact Sean Luechtefeld, ANCOR's vice president for membership and communications, at [sluechtefeld@ancor.org](mailto:sluechtefeld@ancor.org) or 571.207.9108.

**About ANCOR**  
*For more than 55 years, ANCOR has sought to advance the future of supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As the trusted conduit of resources for providers, policymakers and the public, ANCOR enhances providers' ability to support people with I/DD to be fully included and empowered in their communities.*

**About The Resource Center**  
*Since 1958, The Resource Center has provided supports to people with disabling conditions and their families in Chautauqua County. In addition to a range of comprehensive services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Resource Center provides behavioral health and outpatient therapeutic services that are available to anyone in the community. And TRC's Allied Industries division performs subcontracting services to area industry and the federal government, as well as janitorial services, providing employment to people with and without disabilities.*



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**"I only feel angry when I see waste. When I see people throwing away things we could use."**

~ Mother Teresa



CHAMBER CORNER

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

Article Contributed by

**Daniel J. Heitzenrater**

Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce  
President and CEO

Our mission is to build vital connections... that's the beginning of the mission statement of the CHQ Chamber, but what does that mean, how do we do it, and why? It may seem simple enough. We want to connect our area businesses with tools, resources, education, and people. Quite frequently the people that best support our area businesses are other local business owners and/or their employees. But why?

At our most recent Business After Hours at Sensory Smokehouse in Ripley we asked the ice-breaker question, "if your business were to host a BBQ, who is the first business that you would invite?" Answers to this question varied from The Robert H Jackson Center to Sensory Smokehouse, from Hot-Spot Café to the Southwest Region Small Business Development Center. The reasons given were, "they match our values" "they're organized" "they have great food" and frequently, "we work well together." It's important to find the businesses and organizations in the community that you can rely on

and build with.

At our most recent Small Business Sit-Down in Westfield, the question was asked, "how do we best support each other?" Again, the answers ranged. Financial support is an obvious answer, buying from each other is a great way to show support, but it's far from the only option. A cheap and easy way to support fellow business owners is to follow each other on social media. Engage with each other's posts. Share each other's posts. It's important to show up for each other both in-person and virtually.

Part of our mission is to build connections, but why? Being a small business owner can feel like you are stranded on a deserted island as you navigate the complicated problems of sole proprietorship. But it doesn't have to be. Find the fellow business owners who are going to lend an ear, share a post, become a regular customer, and find the opportunities where you can do the same for someone else. The CHQ Chamber can help build these relationships through our Small Business Sit-Downs, Business After Hours, and other networking opportunities. But you can also take the first step by visiting the business next door.

From Practice Rooms to the Stage: Infinity Students Prepare for Spring Showcase



Submitted Photos



Contributed by

**Infinity**

**Visual & Performing Arts**

On any given afternoon at the Infinity Center the sound of a guitar riff might spill into the hallway while a group of students rehearses vocals down the hall, a dance routine takes shape in another room, and a theater scene is being brought to life just around the corner.

On Saturday, April 25, that creative energy comes together on one stage for **Infinity's Annual Spring Showcase presented by Merrill Lynch of Jamestown**, beginning at 7:00pm at Washington Middle School.

Featuring nearly 100 student performers, Infinity's Annual Spring Showcase is more than a performance, it's a reflection of months of growth, collaboration, and confidence built through Infinity's mentorship-driven programs.

Throughout the evening, audiences will experience a wide range of performances, from student bands and vocalists to small ensembles, theater pieces, and dance. Many of the performers take the stage as part of Infinity's student performance groups, where they've spent months rehearsing together, learning how to listen, adapt, and create as a team.

For some students, this will be their first time stepping onto a stage of this size. For others, it marks another milestone in their journey; taking on more challenging material, performing with greater confidence, or leading within their group. No matter where they are in that journey, the Showcase offers a moment to be seen and celebrated.

"This event is about our students and the progress they've achieved with their instructors," said Shane Hawkins, Executive Director of Infinity. "You will see their talent on stage, but you will also see their confidence, the connections they've built, and the pride they take in what they're doing. Performance events bring everything together!"

Infinity, a nonprofit organization founded in 1998, provides young people

with access to music, art, dance, and theater in a supportive environment where participation is based solely on a student's desire to learn. Through one-to-one instruction, group classes, and performance opportunities, students are guided by professional artists who mentor them both creatively and personally.

Infinity's Annual Spring Showcase reflects not only what students accomplish on stage, but the community that makes that experience possible. As a nonprofit organization, Infinity relies on a combination of community support, grants, and earned revenue to sustain its programs; ensuring that students have access to instruction, performance opportunities, mentorship, and the resources that support their growth as artists.

That support is visible throughout the Showcase, from the instructors and staff who mentor students each week, to the parents and board members who help bring the event together behind the scenes, to the sponsors whose contributions help make the night possible.

**Infinity's Annual Spring Showcase presented by Merrill Lynch** of Jamestown is supported by Chautauqua Eagles Aerie #2145, Courier Capital, Fessenden, Laumer and DeAngelo, Honest John's Pizza, Lawley Insurance Agency, Peter A. Pillitteri, Esq., Saxton, Kocur and Associates, Three Sixty Graphics, and Wegmans, with additional thanks to Axiom Business Machines for their support in printing event posters.

As part of the evening, guests will also have the opportunity to participate in a raffle featuring themed baskets and items generously donated by community members and local businesses; another way the community comes together to support Infinity's work.

Together, that network of support ensures that the opportunities seen on stage continue long after the final performance ends.

Admission is free for attendees under 18 when accompanied by a ticketed adult. Ticket pricing and additional details are available at [www.infinityperformingarts.org](http://www.infinityperformingarts.org).

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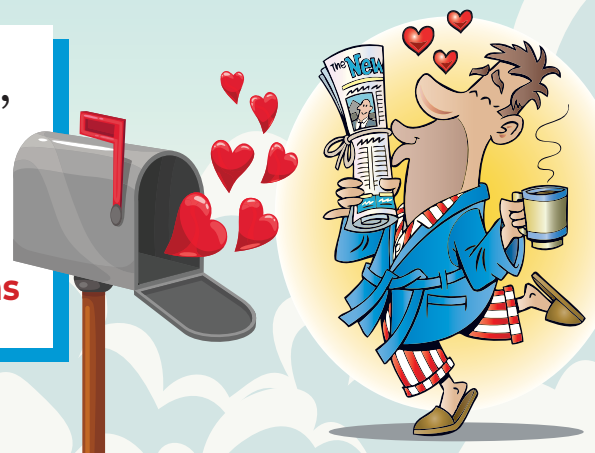
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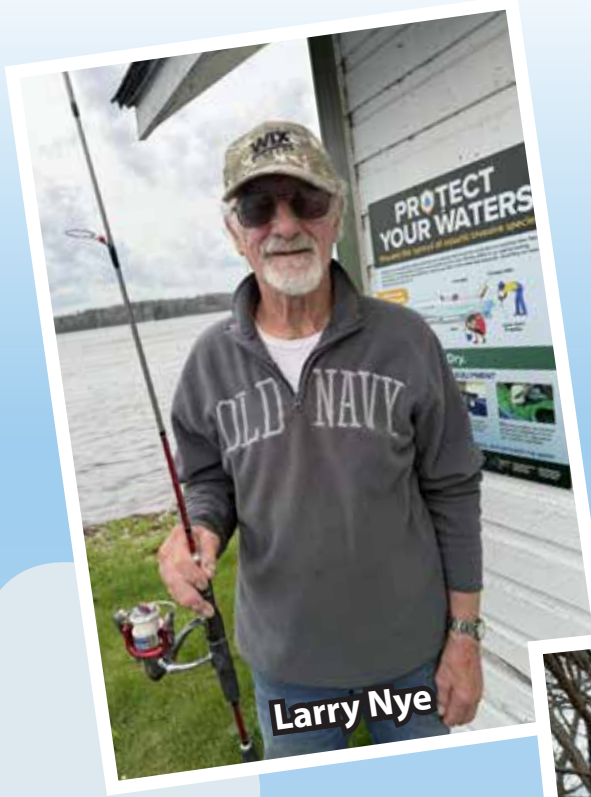
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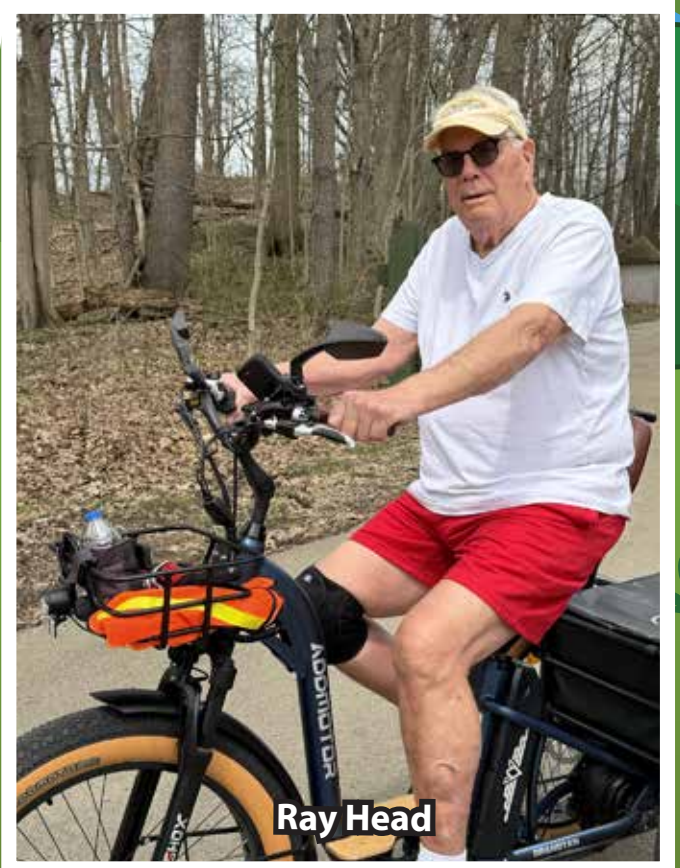
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