

# Billy Club team to launch restaurant inside Lewiston's Frontier House

## FAIRBANKS set to debut this year



The historic Frontier House, a landmark of Lewiston since 1824, is about to welcome a new tenant that will delight food lovers and history buffs alike. Fairbanks, a restaurant by acclaimed restaurateurs Daniel Hagen and Jake Strawser (Billy Club), is set to open its doors in 2024, offering a unique dining experience that celebrates the rich terroir of the Northeast.

Fairbanks is the second venture

by Hagen and Strawser, who have earned rave reviews and loyal fans for their first restaurant, Billy Club, in Buffalo. At Fairbanks, they will showcase their signature style that combines local ingredients, seasonal flavors and creative techniques to create dishes that are both delicious and memorable.

"We are thrilled to bring our passion for food and hospitality to Lewiston," Hagen said. "We

have always admired the Frontier House for its historic charm and significance, and we are honored to be part of its revival. We hope to create a place that will become a destination for locals and visitors alike, where they can enjoy great food and drinks in a beautiful setting."

Fairbanks will feature a menu that changes frequently based on the availability and quality of the ingredients sourced from nearby

farms, orchards and vineyards. The restaurant will also offer a curated selection of wine, beer and cocktails that complement the food and reflect the region's diversity.

The restaurant's name pays homage to Joshua Fairbanks, who built the Frontier House in 1824 as a hotel and tavern. The building has served various purposes over the years, such as a post office, a bank, a museum and a gift

shop. It has been vacant since 2004, until a recent restoration project by Ellicott Development, the Town and Village of Lewiston, and the Williams family brought it back to life.

"We are delighted to welcome Fairbanks as our first tenant in the Frontier House," Ellicott Development Director of Development Tom Fox said. "We believe that Fairbanks will be a great addition to Lewiston's vibrant

culinary scene. We look forward to working with Dan and Jake to make their vision a reality."

Fairbanks will occupy the first floor of the Frontier House, which has been renovated to preserve its original features while adding modern amenities. The restaurant will seat approximately 100, including a bar area and a private dining room. The decor will reflect the restaurant's concept of blending tradition and innova-

tion, with rustic elements mixed with contemporary touches such as sleek lighting fixtures, colorful artwork and cozy seating.

Fairbanks is expected to open in 2024. The restaurant's hours are yet to be determined, but expect expanding availability in the spring and summer months.

For more information, visit [www.fairbankslewisston.com](http://www.fairbankslewisston.com) or follow @fairbankslewisston on social media.

### LOCAL LEADERS (cont.)

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Niagara County Legislature Chairwoman Rebecca Wydysch said, "The Village of Lewiston is such a vibrant community and now we are on the cusp of adding a significant development with the rebirth of the Frontier House. Fairbanks restaurant sounds like it will be a tremendous addition to the amazing culinary options

we already have in Lewiston. I can't believe it's been close to two decades since that historic building closed, so I consider us very fortunate that there were developers with a vision willing to take on this challenge. The Frontier House is an important piece of our history and it's exciting to think about it now being part of our future."

Upward Niagara Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Pauly said, "We are looking

Construction is well underway at the Frontier House in Lewiston.

forward to the opening of Fairbanks Lewiston. Having two experienced restaurateurs paired with a historic gem of a building in a beautiful village is a perfect match! Patrons won't want to miss dining in the historic Frontier House. It holds an allure of history, mystery and more!"

Community advocate and historian Lee Simonson is writing a coffee table book on the Frontier House. The manuscript will be released after the site's planned reopening this year.

He said, "This announcement is a huge leap forward in the

resurrection of Lewiston's most iconic and historic building.

"Was it destiny or just a coincidence that 2024 marks the 200th bicentennial of the moment when local bricklayers stacked the first stones at the base of what was to become the symbol of luxury and comfort on the American frontier? The Frontier House was known far and wide as offering the finest accommodations and was a sought-after destination for visitors arriving on stagecoaches.

"Because of our rich history, Lewiston is recognized today as one of the best small towns

in America – and Western New York's cultural centerpiece – and we thank and congratulate restaurateurs Daniel Hagen and Jake Strawser for investing in Lewiston and taking us to the next level.

"Within a few short months, we'll be able to sit and dine within the same walls that Benjamin Barton and Joshua Fairbanks, and their successors, hosted some of the most noted and celebrated personalities of their times."

Frontier House property principal Jeff Williams said Billy Club

will bring in Buffalo crowds, and "New traffic always brings new excitement. A new restaurant, with a good reputation, in an exceptional space, will always bring new people to town. Whenever new people are in town, Lewiston is always better."

Billy Club is located at 228 Allen St. Menu items include a farm-beef burger on brioche with caramelized onion, provolone, barbecue sauce, fries and pickles; a duck breast with polenta and spaghetti squash panisse,

fig, onion soubise, and blackberry; gnocchi with crab, fennel, acorn squash, kale and lemon; a 14-ounce ribeye steak with salt-roasted potato, oyster mushroom, and beet chimichurri; and halibut with fennel, kale, and saffron aioli.

The restaurant offers dinner, brunch, cocktails, beer and wine. Williams noted, "It's exceptional food in a beautiful space."

"They're good guys, and it's great," he said of the new partnership.



## Soup's on! (Stew and chili, too)

Now that the holiday season is over, we can all focus on the one thing that unites us: the weather.

It's winter, and it's cold outside. Even the sun hides for most of the day, opting to stay inside and watch Netflix instead.

While now might not be the ideal time to do, well, many things, it is a perfect opportunity to stock up on comfort food.

Food for the soul. Soup! Help us find the top local eateries for soup (stews and chili, count, too), and we'll share the results with our audience. One top-vote-getter will be featured in a future article.

By voting, you enter to win a food prize from an area restaurant.

But that's not all. It occurs to us that Western New York is filled with top-notch home chefs – people with their own amazing soup, stew and chili recipes. Send them on in, and we'll publish the most interesting meal details.

The contest begins Jan. 12. Vote and find rules online at [www.wnypapers.com](http://www.wnypapers.com), or fill out the form located inside today's newspaper.

Where do you go to find the BEST WINGS, BEST PIZZA and BEST PLACE TO WATCH THE GAME? **TELL US & WIN!**

**Vote for your favorite**

Niagara Frontier Publications is expanding its fall food contest this year. Now through the end of the football season, we want your input in naming the area's best chicken wings, pizza, and place to watch a game. It could be a bar, a restaurant or a social club – the only requirement is that the nominee(s) be Western New York-based. Find complete rules online at [www.wnypapers.com/2023-chicken-wing-contest](http://www.wnypapers.com/2023-chicken-wing-contest).

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## Pusateri anticipates dinner destination will open this spring



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"My intention when taking over the Villa was always to incorporate a dinner program, but life just got in the way for a while – and I don't mean that in a negative way," Pusateri said. "So many great things have happened in our lives, my wife and I, since embarking on the Villa in February of 2018 – she being one of them, as we got married in the summer of that year.

"We finally decided to

start our dinner program in the early months of 2022, to very positive reviews, and quickly established a loyal following. Unfortunately, it never took off the way we anticipated it, and decided to end the program in the spring of 2023.

"We also caught wind of the location on Center Street and decided to go in that direction with dinner.

"I didn't know what to expect when we started to offer dinner at the Villa, and I don't know what to expect at Avera; all I know is I have a passion for cooking and making people happy through it."

Pusateri has developed a sterling

reputation for his culinary vision, earning positive reviews online and in different publications.

"We are very appreciative of all the support we have received locally since opening the Villa, whether it was breakfast, lunch, dinner or catering," he said. "I was born and raised here and want to continue to be a part of the community. But we don't want to stop at the people of Lewiston; we are aiming to be a destination."

Though Villa Coffee is listed as for sale, Pusateri emphasized the restaurant will remain open.

### IN THE NEWS

#### 'Coffee with Chris,' and Assemblyman Morinello

Assemblyman Angelo Morinello will join Niagara County Legislator Chris Voccio as his guest at "Coffee with Chris" at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, inside the Cristoforo Colombo Society at 2223 Pine Ave., Niagara Falls.

"Angelo Morinello, as a current state assemblyman and a former City Court judge, brings a great perspective on happenings in Al-

bany and here locally," Voccio said. No reservations are required. Voccio brings Tim Hortons coffee. For more information, call 716-696-0086.

#### Sheeran elected president-elect of New York State Magistrates Association

Submitted by Niagara University Dr. Thomas Sheeran, a longtime

member of the faculty in Niagara University's College of Education, was elected to the position of president-elect of the New York State Magistrate's Association at its annual meeting in November. This position is a prelude to moving to the position of the association's presidency in the fall of 2024.

In addition to his service to the university, Sheeran has served as the town justice in Lewiston for the past 32 years and was recently re-elected to a ninth, four-year term.

Sheeran also serves the state's judiciary as a member of the advisory committee on judicial ethics. This organization advises judges at all levels of New York state's judiciary on the rules of behavior that must be followed in both their public and private lives. Sheeran has served in

that role for the past 16 years.

The New York State Magistrate's Association represents over 2,200 town and village judges in the 1,300 local courts across New York state and is the largest judicial association in the country.

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