

# Tribune/Sentinel

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## Village of Lewiston rescinds eclipse street closing

Board hears from fire co. volunteer about need for members

BY JOSHUA MALONI

GM/Managing Editor

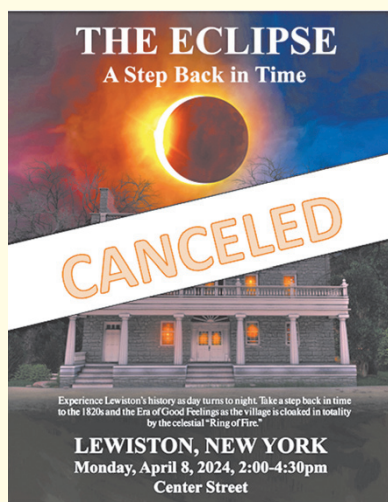
The Village of Lewiston Board voted Tuesday to rescind prior approval given to the Historical Association of Lewiston to close Center Street on April 8 for an eclipse viewing event. Trustees Tina Coppins and Dan Gibson voted "no," preferring the roadway remain available to HAL for reenactment programming that had been billed, "The Eclipse: A Step Back in Time."

Welch and Lewiston Police Department Chief Frank Previte recently expressed concern about closing the village's main thoroughfare while upward of thousands of people could be clustered together to watch the rare celestial event. HAL was set to augment the occasion with historical reenactments, and organizer Lee Simonson asked to have street and business lights dimmed.

Welch said, "After talking to the chief and Niagara County about everybody coming in these communities, the chief was really worried about closing the street. He said ... if anything happens, they can't draw (in extra first responders) from another community, because they have their own set of people there. And, safety wise, it wasn't a good idea. They don't know if we're going to get 10,000, or 100,000 people, or whatever. And I don't know if (New York State) DOT would have allowed it anyway, because it is their street."

Coppins said there's always a risk when Center Street is closed, as is the case with summer festivals and fall/winter parades, or when people come to the village for a popular concert.

But Welch said the difference is that eclipse viewing events will simultaneously be taking place across Western New York. When Lewiston has an event of its own,



"(Previte) calls other police agencies in (for extra manpower and support) when we have big festivals. He said, 'I can't do that. That's just us, and if anything goes wrong. ...'"

Previte was unable to attend the board meeting.

### Pavilion Plan Moving Forward

A pavilion at Academy Park is one step closer to being constructed now that the Niagara River Greenway Commission has approved funding. Welch said that board recently approved the Town of Lewiston's project endorsement – which comes with \$190,000 in funding for the 110-foot-by-60-foot structure, set to go next to the Alphonso I. DiMino Memorial Band Shell.

Welch said the municipality has received \$120,000 in private donations. She suggested another \$40,000 could be pulled from proceeds of the sale of the "Big Yellow House" on Ridge Street. The Village of Lewiston could then put \$350,000 toward the project, which will go to bid following input from the Historic Preservation and Planning commissions.

SEE VOLUNTEER, on Page 2



Academy Park pavilion drawing courtesy of Fittante Architecture.

## United Way of Greater Niagara accepted into national Read in Color program



United Way of Greater Niagara Release

The United Way of Greater Niagara is proud to share that it has been accepted into Little Free Library's Read in Color spring 2024 cohort. UWGN will be the first Read in Color program provider in New York state outside of New York City.

Beginning this spring, United Way plans to install additional Little Free Library boxes in communities of need across Niagara County and the City of Tonawanda, filling them with books that represent the diverse community of the Greater Niagara Region.

As described by Read in Color of Little Free Library, this international program works to bring diverse books to Little Free Library boxes around the world, distributing "books that provide perspectives on racism and social justice; celebrate BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized voices; and incorporate experiences from all identities for all readers."

"We are so proud to have been chosen to be a part of this incredible group of change-makers from across the country," said William Briggs, United Way of Greater Niagara's marketing/business development associate. "We believe that every child in our community should grow up knowing they can succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances. The media we consume shapes us and, through Read in Color, we look forward to helping our diverse community see themselves in the stories they read, no matter who they are or where they live."

As part of United Way's existing Little Free Library program, free book boxes are already available at Youth Mentoring Services of Niagara County Inc. (86 Park Ave, Lockport); Boys & Girls Clubs of the Northtowns' Newman Family Clubhouse (325 Franklin St., Tonawanda); Niagara Falls Boys & Girls Club (725 17th St., Niagara Falls); and at the United Way of Greater Niagara office (6420 Inducon Drive West, Suite B2, Sanborn).

Special thanks to Little Free Library for the chance to be a part of this incredible program, and to the UAW Local 686 members who gave back to the community by helping with the installation of the existing boxes in Lockport and the City of Tonawanda.

For more information about this program, contact Briggs at [william@uwgn.org](mailto:william@uwgn.org) or 716-731-4580.

Briggs is pictured with Youth Mentoring Services of Niagara County staff after the installation of their library box this fall.

## Rotary welcomes regional, international guests

On Wednesday, the Lewiston/Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary met up with a contingent of Rotarians from Rochester, India and Indonesia after the guests visited Niagara Falls. Everyone had lunch together at Syros Restaurant.

A press release noted, "Rotary, according to the Rotary International Website, is a global network of 1.4 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves. New members are always welcome to join."

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