

# Eclipse: No consensus on closing Center Street

Continued from Page 1

The partial eclipse is expected from 2:04-4:32 p.m., with totality from 3:18:24 to 3:21:41 p.m.

Historical Association of Lewiston President Ken Slaughenoupt added, "The event, as we were going to do it, was hinged upon having a whole series of historic venues on Center Street to kind of give it the old-timey feeling while this happened. When it became clear they're not going to shut down Center Street, and try to get us to go to Academy Park – on April 8, you could have a foot-and-a-half of snow or you could have mud up to your eyeballs. So, the concept that we had in mind really became dead.

"At this stage of the game, we might have the church bells ringing. We might have a couple of simple things. It's not going to be the event that we anticipated."

### Unknown Crowd Size a Factor

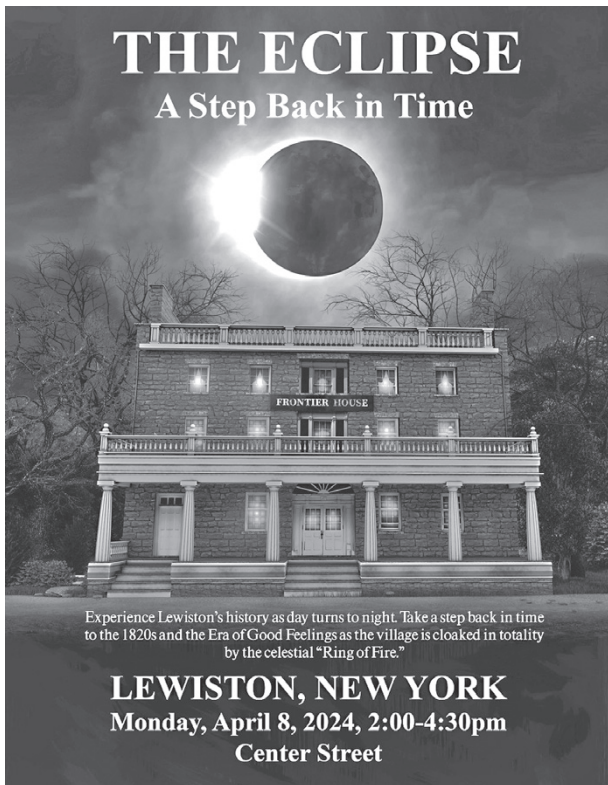
Lewiston Police Department Chief Frank Previte said his officers are able to handle any safety and traffic scenario – be it closing Center Street, or having an event at one of the parks – just as they do for festivals and concerts.

However, "In our standpoint with the police department, the biggest concern, I guess, would be the unknown," Previte said of the eclipse. "I mean, we've got everybody telling us in the meetings that we've gotten – the (police) chiefs meetings and some of the briefings – we've been told to expect maybe a standstill, after an event like this, of up to an hour. That's happened in different locations where you can't get anywhere.

"So, I guess one of the concerns is shutting down Center Street would just exacerbate that, depending on what kind of turnout we had or people that come in."

Welch said, "It's just safety. We've been told that people are going to be coming here in droves. It's just not a good idea to close the main street.

"And actually, we hadn't even applied to the (New York State Department of Transportation, which governs Center Street) for a permit yet. DOT might've



Pictured is a promotional poster for "The Eclipse: A Step Back in Time." The event, as first presented, is no longer happening in Lewiston. (Image courtesy of Lee Simonson)

weighed in and said, 'Not a good idea at this time.'

"All of the other communities are preparing for a lot of people, and we're not going to be any different."

Previte said, "This kind of harkens back to the (2010s-era Art-park free) concert days. There's just no way to tell. We might have 1,000 people show up for this. We might have 30,000. There's just no way to tell how many people are going to actually be here.

"The variables – the unknowns, I guess – would make it a little bit dicey. It could complicate things – shutting the street down, which is a major thoroughfare through the village, could just complicate things – if we're going to already have a traffic jam anyway."

He noted elected leaders are "starting to get an honest kind of headcount of what this might turn into," with some expecting to have guests of their own in Lewiston. Doing the math, "Shutting down Center Street – that could turn it into a bigger mess."

**Trustees Reverse Course**  
Village trustees voted to approve the eclipse event at their Nov. 20 board meeting, speaking highly of the occasion and suggesting closing Center Street could benefit local merchants.

However, as part of the discussion that night, Deputy Clerk Donna Vazquez noted the Upward Niagara Chamber of Commerce

conducted a quick survey of business owners. She said the polling revealed merchants do not favor closing Center Street.

Chamber President Jennifer Pauly said, "The mayor's office asked us to poll the Center Street businesses. The majority of the businesses that answered the phone/responded did not show interest in having the street closed and wanted more details. Obviously this wasn't a full survey, as it was asked to be done fairly quickly and we didn't have full details to provide.

"We don't have an official position on it, as it's not our event, and I'm not exactly sure how far along the planning was for it, other than info. that was given at one meeting and an email as to what type of vendors and entertain-

ment they wanted to do. We did provide guidance to organizers that they need to meet with fire/police/DPW to go over plans for the event."

Trustee Tina Coppins stated, "I voted for the closing of Center Street, but the businesses have spoken to the mayor, and they do not want us to close Center Street.

"Everyone is thinking that 100,000 people may show up. They may, but who really knows? This event is not just happening in Lewiston.

"Everyone will be able to experience this eclipse throughout Western New York. I think every city, town and village will be using this event to attract people to come together to witness this 'once-in-a-lifetime' event and show off their local businesses.

"I do like the idea that event organizer Lee Simonson and his committee is trying to achieve. I would think the businesses would benefit from the people being front and center (no pun intended)."

Coppins said the eclipse viewing could still work in Academy Park.

"It will be a shame if the committee doesn't move forward with this event," she said.

The next Village Board meeting is 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16, in the Red Brick Municipal Building at 145 N. Fourth St.

# Weatherization kits available



First District Niagara County Legislator Irene Myers announced weatherization kits are available free of charge for residents of both the towns of Porter and Lewiston.

"The kits include a window insulation kit, a heat and air deflector, window and door insulation foam, and an electric outlet sealer," she said. National Fuel is making the kits available.

"I thought it could really help a lot of folks in our district who could use a little help preparing for the winter," Myers said.

Residents may pick up a weatherization kit at town halls in each community during regular business hours. (Submitted photo)

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1. See your chiropractor regularly, especially if you are ill, under a lot of stress, pregnant or in an accident.
2. Lose weight if you need to. Losing one pound takes ten pounds of stress off your lower back.
3. Quit smoking – smoking cuts blood supply to the discs between spinal bones, so they degenerate faster.
4. Keep your wallet out of your back pocket when sitting, especially driving; avoid sleeping on your stomach as it can misalign your neck.
5. Eat organic, unrefined foods and drink 8 glasses of pure water every day. Eat more raw vegetables daily.
6. Take a walk after dinner, it aids digestion and weight loss.
7. Look for safe, natural alternatives to health issues, first. Alcohol and caffeine in moderation, ideally avoid.
8. Plan to get enough sleep, 7-8 hours. Take naps when you can, if tired.
9. Take time to relax, meditate/pray/contemplate, appreciate nature and play every day.
10. Find fulfillment and creativity in your work.
11. Communicate with others. The more relationships and love in your life, the healthier, happier and longer you will live.
12. Have goals and work toward them. Do well and prosper – it's the best way to beat those few who want to bring you down.

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THURS 6AM-2PM - Breaded Pork Chops with Sauerkraut & Potatoes or Fish  
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7:00PM-8:00PM

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- RESIDENTS - \$40
- NON-RESIDENTS - \$50

\*an exercise pass is also available

Registration forms can be obtained at the N.T. Recreation Department located at 500 Wheatfield St., N. Tonawanda. You may also register on line at NTParksrec.com