

NEED TO READ

ONLINE wnypapers.com



► Shea's Performing Arts Center kicks off National Volunteer Month by extending round of applause to 1,000 volunteers

► FASNY seeks to boost volunteer firefighter recruitment with RecruitNY

► Date set for 3rd annual Col. Bruce Sutherland Golf Tournament

► Fortune Media & Great Place To Work name Wegmans to '100 Best Companies to Work For'

► Little Big Town & Sugarland announce show at Key-Bank Center

► Hibbard's Original Frozen Custard opens for 85th season

► Q&A: Judith Hill intent on telling her own story on 'Letters from a Black Widow'



► Lewiston Garden Club installs officers

In print and online, we are your No. 1 source for local news

Niagara Frontier Publications and www.wnypapers.com

TIME TO ACT IS NOW: Support Local Journalism Sustainability Act

Submitted by the Empire State Local News Coalition

A few short weeks ago, we told you about the newly formed Empire State Local News Coalition. Niagara Frontier Publications is proud to be a member of this fast-growing group of over 150 New York local news outlets that have joined forces to protect local journalism across the state.

The work of our coalition has raised awareness of the importance of local journalism as well as the challenges facing the local news industry. (New York has lost half of its newsrooms since 2004!) We are grateful to communities across the state who have united behind us.

In just the past month, we rallied in Westchester, where locals were stunned by the abrupt closure of three community newspapers. We went directly to Albany to appeal to lawmakers and where we also rallied with elected officials from both the senate and assembly.

Numerous localities have adopted resolutions expressing their support for legislation that would support local journalism, and more municipal resolutions are in the pipeline. Even unconventional allies like Microsoft have joined our calls to save local news.

Thanks to these collective efforts, the Local Journalism Sustainability Act – which would provide tax credits to local news organizations for retaining and creating newsroom jobs – was in-



Support the New York Local Journalism Sustainability Act

- Contact Gov. Kathy Hochul at 518-474-8390 or https://www.governor.ny.gov/content/governor-contact-form.
•Contact Sen. Rob Ortt at Ortt@nysenate.gov or 716-434-0680 or 518-455-2024.
•Contact Sen. Sean Ryan at ryan@nysenate.gov or 716-854-8705 or 518-455-3240.
•Contact Assemblyman Angelo Morinello at morinelloa@nyassembly.gov or 716-282-6062 or 518-455-5284.
Our newspaper is a proud member of the Empire State Local News Coalition. Support the coalition at SaveNYLocalNews.com.

cluded in the State Senate's recent budget proposal for fiscal year 2025. This is a key step for inclusion in the state's final budget, which is currently being negotiated by the Senate, Assembly and Gov. Hochul.

However, there is a lot of work to be done over the next few days,

when the final budget will likely be announced, to ensure the bill is actually included in the state's final budget. It is crucial that the Local Journalism Sustainability Act is included; otherwise, communities throughout the state risk thousands of newsroom jobs being lost and even more important stories

going untold.

The Local Journalism Sustainability Act is sponsored by New York State Sen. Brad Hoylman-Sigal with the bipartisan support of Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner and more than 70 co-sponsors.

As newspapers shutter and layoffs roil the industry, the bill is a necessary measure for incentivizing job creation, returning reporters to many of the state's emptying newsrooms. The bill is content-neutral and designed to ensure that truly local news outlets will receive this assistance. The leadership of the Legislature's Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus has also endorsed our bill, which is a major testament to the fact that this bill will improve access to news for all communities.

New Yorkers are standing with local news, and now lawmakers must answer the people's call to save community journalism. To get the Local Journalism Sustainability Act across the finish line, lawmakers must hear from you about why our newspaper matters – and why this bill is meaningful to you and your family.

So, if keeping local news alive in our state is important to you, please reach out to Gov. Hochul and your local representatives to let them know you stand with local news. Budget negotiations are wrapping up imminently – the time to act is now!

As Tax Day draws near, NYS DCP reminds New Yorkers about check-washing scams

Guest Editorial by the New York State Department of State Division of Consumer Protection

As tax season approaches, the NYS Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection is providing consumers with guidance to avoid mail theft and check-washing schemes.

Check-washing schemes involve thieves stealing checks, often in bulk from U.S. Postal Service mail collection boxes, and using common chemicals like nail polish remover to erase (or "wash") the payee and dollar amount while preserving the check's original signature. These scammers can then profit from making checks out to themselves or selling the stolen, signed blank checks.

According to the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), the number of check fraud crimes nationwide surged in 2020 and has worsened each year since. In 2022, FinCEN received over 680,000 suspicious activity reports

related to check fraud, almost twice the number recorded in 2021.

Secretary of State Robert J. Rodriguez said, "When paying your taxes, deposit your check in the lobby of your post office for maximum security. Check-washing scams can really hurt your wallet, which is why I encourage New Yorkers to follow our tips to protect yourself and your business."

Acting Tax Commissioner Amanda Hiller said, "Taxpayers need to be especially careful when conveying payments through the mail. Follow the steps recommended below and consider electronic filing of state and federal taxes to protect yourself."

U.S. Postal Inspection Service Inspector in Charge of the New York Division Daniel B. Brubaker said, "When thieves violate the sanctity of the mail, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service will spare no resource to bring these nefarious individuals to justice for their crimes. Our

persistence in investigating these crimes, along with recent enhancements to USPS equipment and other prevention efforts, are the many ways we ensure the public's trust in the U.S. mail."

Follow these tips to avoid mail theft and check-washing scams:
Tips to avoid check washing

✓ For maximum security: Go directly to the post office to deposit mail. If you need to use a public U.S. Postal Service collection box, try to do so before the last pickup of the day to minimize the amount of time the check spends in the box.

✓ Check your mailbox frequently: Don't leave mail in your mailbox overnight.

✓ Hold mail at your local post office: If you are going to be away from home and can't check your mail, request to have your mail held at your local post office, or have a trusted neighbor pick it up until your return. You can submit a USPS hold mail request online at www.usps.com/manage/hold-mail.htm or in-person at your local post office.

✓ Use black gel pens: Gel pens may have ink that thieves have greater difficulty erasing compared to standard ballpoint pens.

✓ Sign up for informed delivery from USPS: Informed delivery services allow consumers to receive a daily email with pictures of all letter-sized mail for that address each day. You can sign up online at www.usps.com/manage/informed-delivery.htm

✓ Review your checking account regularly: Look out for unusual or unexpected withdrawals from your bank account, and take time to confirm when your checks clear.

What to do if you experience check washing:

- ✓ Contact your bank immediately.
✓ File a police report.
✓ Report the check washing to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service at 1-877-876-2455 or www.uspis.gov/report.

Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel

Founded February 14, 1987

PUBLISHER Skip Mazenauer
GM/MANAGING EDITOR Joshua Maloni

EDITOR IN CHIEF/SENTINEL EDITOR Terrence P. Duffy

WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR Joshua Maloni

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES Colleen Rebmann, Jeff Calarco

ACCOUNTING/OFFICE MANAGER Kim Stacharczyk

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Jennifer Walowitz

PRODUCTION MANAGER/ GRAPHIC DESIGNER Wendy Juzwicksi

CLASSIFIED MANAGER Wendy Puffer

CIRCULATION Kim Stacharczyk

SENIOR REPORTERS Michael J. Billoni, Patrick J. Bradley, Alice Gerard, Karen Keefe

CONTRIBUTORS Timothy Chipp, Kevin and Dawn Cobello, Michelle Blackley Glynn, Wayne Peters, Elijah Robinson, Lauren Zaepfel

©2024 Niagara Frontier Publications
1859 Whitehaven Road
Grand Island, N.Y. 14072

Phone 716-773-7676
Fax 716-773-7190

Editorial:

Dispatch@wnypapers.com
Sentinel@wnypapers.com

Advertising:

NFPDesign@wnypapers.com

Classifieds:

NFPClassifieds@wnypapers.com

Circulation:

NFPCirculation@wnypapers.com

Legals:

legalnotice@wnypapers.com

Website:

wnypapers.com

Grand Island Publishing Corp. Newspaper is printed in the U.S.A. and all rights reserved. © 2024 by Grand Island Publishing Corp. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission of the publisher. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

All letters, news releases and photos received will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication or brochure and are subject to Grand Island Publishing Corp's. unrestricted right to edit, comment or reject.

All original artwork, layout and design remain sole property of Grand Island Publishing Corp. Reproduction in whole or part of any advertisement is strictly forbidden.

Grand Island Publishing Corp. will not be liable for errors appearing in advertisements beyond replacement of the space occupied by the error. The

publisher reserves the right to reject any advertisement at his sole discretion. Notification must be made in writing within one week of publication. Verbal notifications will not be accepted.

Grand Island Publishing Corp. does not knowingly accept any kind of fraudulent advertising. We suggest you investigate thoroughly any advertisement before you reply.

Verbal cancellations will not be accepted. Written authorization to cancel a display or commercial classified ad must be received by Grand Island Publishing Corp. before deadline for insertion.

The Tribune is published weekly.

Display Ads Deadline: MONDAY 5 PM

New York State Press Association, Niagara County Builders Association, Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, Wheatfield Business Association Inc., Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce, The Niagara USA Chamber.



NIAGARA FRONTIER PUBLICATIONS

