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43North's annual startup competition to attract startups to Buffalo

Lewiston Artisan Farmers Market to wrap winter season with special Mother's Day weekend event

Q&A: 'Unsung Hero' brings Rebecca St. James' origin story to big screen



Lewiston No. 1 celebrates 110 years of service to community

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Opinions

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Appeal 2024 HOPE Day is Wednesday, May 15

Annual day of match giving supports 100th Appeal's \$9.5 million goal; Resurgence Brewing to offer limited-edition 'Hops for Hope' Submitted on Behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo HOPE Day, the annual 24-hour match challenge day of giving to benefit Appeal 2024 is Wednesday, May 15, across Western New York. The first \$61,000 raised will be matched dollar-for-dollar from generous donors including Uniland Development, Catholic Health and OneBridge Benefits. All funds go toward the annual Appeal's \$9.5 million goal in support of Catholic Charities of Buffalo and the "Fund for the Faith." New this year to mark the 100th annual campaign, the Appeal is partnering with Resurgence Brewing Company on a limited-edition "Hops for HOPE" beer. This special renaming of a summer ale brew will only

be available on tap on HOPE Day at Resurgence located at 55 Chicago St., Buffalo. A limited amount of four packs will also be available for purchase at Resurgence while supplies last. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Appeal 2024. "Our community has embraced HOPE Day, with more than \$2 million raised to support the annual Appeal on these six days alone," said Deacon Steve Schumer, president and CEO of Catholic Charities. "Everything we do to serve our neighbors who are homeless, who are hungry, who are in need, and who are troubled, starts with HOPE. When you donate, your gift is more than just a hot meal or counseling; it is giving families and individuals HOPE." During HOPE Day, Appeal volunteers and Catholic Charities staff members will gather to make phone calls to those who haven't do-

nated yet this year, giving them the chance to double their gift. In addition, for each \$1,000 donated, a colorful two-dimensional tulip cutout will be placed in the lawn at Catholic Charities Administrative Center at 741 Delaware Ave., Buffalo. "For the past 100 years, the mission of the annual Appeal has been about raising money to provide HOPE and help for our most vulnerable neighbors," said Kevin Gannon, Appeal 2024 chair. "Your donation brings HOPE and plays a vital role in the growth and success of Catholic Charities. As we enter the final weeks of the annual Appeal, we thank those who have donated, and to those who haven't yet, we encourage you to join with us on HOPE Day." Appeal 2024, which continues until June 30, has currently raised \$5,481,170.73, or 57.6% of its goal to date. The annual Appeal helps

fund more than 50 programs and services administered by Catholic Charities along with several ministries through the "Fund for the Faith." As the most comprehensive human services provider serving people of all faiths across all eight counties of Western New York, Catholic Charities' programs and services include basic emergency assistance such as food pantries, education and workforce training, family safety and stabilization services, immigration and refugee assistance, behavioral health services, and youth and family support services. The "Fund for the Faith" provides needed funding for programs that benefit all parish faith communities, including hospital ministry, and seminarian and diaconate formation programs, among others. Donors can give at ccwny.org/hopeday or call 716-218-1400.

Received a letter from Tax Department? Don't ignore it!

Take advantage of resources to accurately & promptly respond to request for additional information about tax return

Submitted by the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance explained important steps taxpayers should take if they receive a letter or notice from the Tax Department asking for additional information about their tax return.

"Taxpayers who receive a letter from the Tax Department shouldn't panic," said New York State Department of Taxation and Finance Acting Commissioner Amanda Hiller. "The Tax Department needs to ensure that returns are filed accurately so refunds can be processed properly."

Taxpayers who receive a letter or notice:

- Don't panic - Receiving a letter from the Tax Department doesn't mean a taxpayer has done anything wrong. It's just an extra step the Tax Department takes to ensure refunds go out to only those who are entitled to them. Our goal is to review questionable refunds before they go out the door, not to delay taxpayer refunds.
•Read carefully - Each letter or notice has specific "next step" instructions. It will explain exactly what taxpayers need to do.
•Be organized - Make sure the information submitted is accurate and supports credits, expenses, or income claimed on the tax return. Review the request for additional information checklists to include everything needed to re-

- spond. In addition, keeping good records is an important part of being a responsible taxpayer.
•Respond promptly - Don't ignore the letter or notice. If taxpayers receive a request for additional information, the fastest and most convenient way to respond is through an online services account. For screen-by-screen instructions on responding through an online services account, see "Respond to Request for Information: walkthrough." If taxpayers don't already have an account, it's easy to create one.
For more guidance on responding to a letter requesting additional information, visit the Tax Department's website at www.tax.ny.gov (search: letter).

Taking steps to improve kidney health: Walk & 5K to help fight silent epidemic

Submitted by the Kidney Foundation of Western New York

Hundreds of Western New Yorkers will gather at the Buffalo Outer Harbor on Sunday, June 23, to support people with kidney disease and raise awareness. The Walk for Kidney Health is the largest annual event for members of the area's kidney community, families, friends and medical providers.

"We're excited to bring together so many people to raise awareness about kidney health and support people with kidney disease," said event co-chair Thomas Noonan. "As a transplant recipient myself, I'm grateful for the healing power

of kidney donation and know the importance of timely diagnosis and medical treatment." The walk and a 5K that morning will benefit the Kidney Foundation of Western New York. The local nonprofit foundation offers education and assistance to patients, organizes free health screenings, and increases community understanding of kidney disease. Nearly one in eight Western New York adults have been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. Many others have undiagnosed kidney problems. A person can permanently lose most of their kidney function before noticing symptoms, so

awareness and medical testing are important for those at increased risk. Someone who reaches kidney failure will require dialysis or a kidney transplant to stay alive. Kidney disease is considered a silent epidemic, as it is among the top 10 leading causes of death in the U.S., but remains underdiagnosed and often goes untreated. Detecting problems early can improve outcomes for people with kidney disease. Awareness and education give people opportunities to slow the progression of kidney disease, explore treatment options, and improve their quality of life. The June 23 event will include a

5K at 8 a.m., a one-mile fun walk at 9:30 a.m., outdoor games, health information and a basket raffle. Participation in the walk is free, but advance registration is requested at www.kfwny.org/walk or by calling 716-529-4390. The Kidney Foundation of Western New York works to increase awareness of kidney disease, provide education on kidney health, and support patients and their families. The locally based nonprofit serves Erie, Niagara, Wyoming, Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee and Orleans counties.

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