

New York Power Authority, Canal Corp. unveil installation of iconic lighting program

LED lighting highlights CSX Railroad crossing over Erie Canal between Tonawanda & North Tonawanda

New York Power Authority Press Release

The New York Power Authority and New York State Canal Corp. recently unveiled the final installation of an iconic lighting program in Western New York. Spanning the Erie Canal between the City of Tonawanda and City of North Tonawanda in Niagara County, the CSX Railroad crossing is now illuminated nightly with LED lighting as a focal point over the historic waterway.

“As stewards of the New York State Canal system, and with the Erie Canal celebrating its bicentennial next year, the iconic lighting program is the perfect way to reflect on our past while considering the important role the canal will continue to play for future generations,” New York Power

Authority President and CEO Justin E. Driscoll said. “This lighting installation will draw new interest and enthusiasm for the waterway at its western terminus and to all the Tonawandas have to offer.”

The newly illuminated railroad crossing joins Erie Canal Lock E-17 in Little Falls, as well as the Fairport Lift Bridge over the Erie Canal in Monroe County, and two Oneida Lake lighthouses – one in Brewerton, in Oswego County, and another at Verona Beach in Oneida County.

New York State Canal Corp.’s Brian U. Stratton said, “This innovative program celebrates the canal waterway and its connection to so many communities by literally putting them in the spotlight. Residents and visitors



Iconic lighting for the CSX railroad bridge over the Erie Canal of the New York State Canal Corp. (Photo by Paul Pasquarello, for the New York Power Authority)

alike will enjoy these beacons of light across New York for years to come as they take advantage of the endless recreational opportunities the historic and very vibrant Erie Canal has to offer.”

City of Tonawanda Mayor John L. White said, “The lighting of the railroad bridge across the Erie Canal highlights our city’s connection to the historic waterway, rail industry, and to our neighbors in North Tonawanda. I cannot thank Gov. Hochul and our partners in government at the Power Authority and Canal Corp. enough for including us in this program.”

City of North Tonawanda Mayor Austin Tylec said, “North Tonawanda expresses our heart-

felt gratitude to Gov. Hochul, the New York Power Authority, and the New York State Canal Corp. for illuminating our iconic bridge connecting the Tonawandas over the historic Erie Canal.”

NYPA and the Canal Corp. contracted with New York City-based Office for Visual Interaction (OVI), an architectural lighting design firm, and LiRo Engineers Inc. (LiRo), based on Long Island, to create these energy-efficient lighting installations that complement the historic features of each canal structure.

In 2023, the iconic lighting program was internationally recognized with a prestigious LIT Lighting Design Award for the illumination of infrastructure along

the New York State Canal system. OVI and the program won in the “Community Building Lighting” category. Last year’s LIT Lighting Design Awards attracted over 800 submissions from 58 countries.

New York’s Canal system includes four canals: the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga – Seneca. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. The canals form the backbone of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and connect hundreds of unique and historic communities.

The New York State Canal Corp. is a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority.

IN THE NEWS

Gold Star Mothers event draws near

PART II SUBMITTED BY T. S. KONTAK

Wheatfield Veterans Committee Chairman

This part follows the birth of the Gold Star movement piece that appeared in the Tribune/Sentinel’s July 12 edition (see www.wnypapers.com). Part II is the continuation of that story, and the efforts of moms united by loss.

At 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, the Wheatfield Veterans Committee will honor all Gold Star Mothers for the dedication of a bronze statue placed on the current Veterans Memorial site, 2800 Church Road. This is a no-charge ceremony, and all are welcome. There is ample parking and facilities.

Grace Darling Seibold who, after the loss of her son in World War I, along with mothers who also suffered, worked tirelessly to make a special day of remembrance. They petitioned Congress and, in 1935, Congress established the last Sunday in September of each year as the observance of Gold Star Mother’s Day.

George’s mother, Grace Darling Seibold, accepted her son’s

death, but was not content to stop endeavors to recognize mothers everywhere. She organized a group consisting solely of these special mothers. Their purpose was not only to comfort each other, but give loving care to hospitalized veterans confined in government hospitals far from home.

Service flags displayed in homes, places of business, and churches indicate the number of family members serving in the armed forces. They have a deep-blue star for each member currently serving. It would be replaced with a gold star upon news of a death.

As World War I progressed and men and women were killed in combat and others wounded and died of their wounds or disease, there came about the accepted usage of the gold star.

The idea of the gold star was that the honor and glory accorded the person for their supreme sacrifice in offering for their country – the last full measure of devotion and pride of the family in this sacrifice, rather than the sense of personal loss, which would be represented by

the mourning symbols.

On June 4, 1928, after years of planning, 25 mothers met in Washington, D.C., to establish a national organization named American Gold Star Mothers Inc. The organization was named after the gold star banners that families hung in their windows in honor of a deceased veteran.

The success of this organization continues because of the bond of mutual love, sympathy and support of the many who, through sharing their grief and pride, have channeled their time, energy and efforts to lessening the pain of others. They stand tall, assist veterans, support our nation, and heal each other.

Excerpt from Public Resolution 12, Section 2, declaring official recognition of Gold Star Mothers: “That the last Sunday in September shall hereafter be designated and known as ‘Gold Star Mother’s Day,’ and it shall be the duty of the president to request its observance as provided for in this resolution.”

Above materials taken from Gold Star Mothers website.

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AUGUST 24 | WELLSVILLE

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find more events!

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