

Grant to aid Town of Niagara in purchase of new ladder truck

ARTICLE AND PHOTO BY BENJAMIN JOE

Senior Contributing Writer

The Niagara Active Hose Fire Co. has put an order in for a brand-new ladder truck that will be capable of reaching all five stories of the Amazon Robotics Fulfillment Center on Lockport Road, thanks to a \$2 million grant from Gov. Kathy Hochul's office.

Town of Niagara Supervisor Sylvia Virtuoso said she received a call earlier in the month from Hochul's secretary.

Virtuoso had reached out to the governor's office asking for any leads on grants, remembering a similar situation when the Fashion Outlets of Niagara had expanded, and the office being helpful.

"They were very helpful at sending me links for grants

and everything," Virtuoso said. "And then, to my surprise last week, the governor called me and said that she is well aware of how budget constraints are and how difficult it is to fund this equipment, and she was happy to grant us \$2 million."

The new specialty firefighting engine has been ordered, but will not be ready for a couple of years, Virtuoso said.

In other news

•Six structures in the Town of Niagara are a step closer to being taken down after Town of Niagara Council members voted unanimously to put to bid the demolition of 2920 Birch Ave., 6321 Edgewood Drive, 3002 Rhode Island Ave., 6701 Elsa Place, 4316 Military Road and 3488 Rhode Island Ave.

"They're deplorable; they're ready to fall down," Virtuoso



said, in part, after comments from councilmen Mike Lee and Johnny Parks. "We've reached out many, many times. Our at-

torneys have been with them. We called a hearing for each and every one of them. We've gone above and beyond allow-

Collin Durandetto has been hired as a part-time officer with the Town of Niagara Police Department. Here, Durandetto shakes hands with Town of Niagara Police Chief Craig Giuliani.

ing them to repair the properties, which they have not. Not whatsoever. So, they're coming down."

•Collin Durandetto, a Niagara-Wheatfield graduate, is set to become a part time police officer, pending completion of the Police Academy in February 2027.

Durandetto said he previously joined the U.S. Army and has since decided to become a policeman.

So far, things are off to a good start, and "I'm excited," Durandetto said.

Old Falls Street USA to host family-friendly carnival in downtown Niagara Falls

Destination Niagara USA press release

Old Falls Street USA is bringing a new, family-friendly attraction to downtown Niagara Falls this summer with the debut of a summer carnival on Old Falls Street, taking place Friday, June 19, through Sunday, June 21.

Designed to create an affordable and entertaining experience for local families and visitors, the three-day carnival will feature rides, games, food trucks and live entertainment in the heart of downtown Niagara Falls. The event will take place on Old Falls Street USA, the three-block cobblestone street connecting Niagara Falls State Park with the Niagara Falls Convention Center.

The summer carnival is part of a continued effort to create more activities and experiences that encourage local residents to enjoy downtown Niagara Falls throughout the summer season. With attractions for children, teens and adults, the carnival is intended to provide a fun and accessible outing for families looking to enjoy entertainment close to home.

"This event is all about creating a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere where local residents can come together and enjoy the energy of downtown Niagara Falls," said Kim Barrus, director of events for Old Falls Street. "The summer carnival adds another exciting attraction

to Old Falls Street USA and gives families an affordable way to experience rides, games, food and entertainment right in the center of the city."

The carnival will feature a variety of rides and midway games, along with food trucks and festival-style concessions. Guests can purchase all-day ride wristbands for \$30, and ride tickets and family ticket packs will also be available for purchase onsite. Local residents in the 716 area code can receive \$5 off carnival wristbands when mentioning their residency at the time of purchase.

Event hours are 5-10 p.m. Friday, noon to 10 p.m. Saturday and noon to 8 p.m. Sunday.

All events on Old Falls Street USA are free to attend and open to guests of all ages, though fees apply for rides, games, food and beverages purchased onsite.

Programming on Old Falls Street USA is made possible through the continued support of Niagara Falls State Park, Empire State Development via its subsidiary USA Niagara Development Corp. (USAN), and the City of Niagara Falls.

For more information about the summer carnival and other events happening on Old Falls Street USA, visit <https://www.niagarafallsusa.com/old-falls-street/>.

The mission of Destination Niagara USA is to expand the economic prosperity of the Niagara Falls USA communities by generating individual and group visitation. For more information, visit www.niagarafallsusa.com.

Niagara Falls Culinary Institute announces 2026 youth camps for ages 8-17

SUNY Niagara press release

The Niagara Falls Culinary Institute (NFCI) has opened registration for its 2026 culinary youth camps. Designed for food enthusiasts ages 8-17, these week-long day camps offer immersive, hands-on education inside professional kitchens located at 28 Old Falls St., Niagara Falls.

NFCI groups each session by age to ensure an appropriate curriculum, with themes ranging from kitchen fundamentals and global cuisine to baking and competitive challenges. Campers prepare and enjoy a full menu daily – including breakfast, lunch, a snack and dessert – made from scratch under the guidance of expert instructors.

"Our youth camps give kids a genuine culinary experience in a professional setting," said Emily

Lonigan, director of community education at NFCI. "Every camper leaves with real skills, confidence in the kitchen, and a passion for food – and we are proud to offer that right here in Western New York."

2026 camp sessions include:

•Ages 8-10 (culinary): June 29-July 3 or July 6-10

•Ages 11-13 (culinary): July 13-17 or July 20-24

•Ages 11-13 (baking): July 27-31

•Ages 14-17 (culinary): Aug. 3-7

Tuition is \$500 per week and includes all meals prepared during camp. Registration is available online at sunyniagara.edu/nfci/community-education/youth-camps/.

Families are encouraged to explore programs that may offset tuition costs. Parents with De-

pendent Care Flexible Spending Accounts may be eligible to use pre-tax dollars for children under 13. Families may also qualify for the federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. Additionally, the New York State Child Care Assistance Program recently expanded eligibility to include families of four earning up to \$108,000. Families requiring documentation for these programs should contact NFCI directly.

More about Niagara Falls Culinary Institute: NFCI is a SUNY Niagara facility focused on coursework related to the culinary and hospitality industries. Located in Niagara Falls, it houses fully equipped kitchen classrooms; a retail pastry shop; and Savor, which offers patrons a fine dining experience in a restaurant staffed, in part, by students.

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"Around the House"

Home Projects & Improvements

Political ad correction

The Lewiston Democrat Party ad on Page 24 of the June 12 edition of the Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel • Dispatch does not note that it was paid for by the Lewiston Democratic Committee. It was inadvertently omitted. We apologize and regret this error.

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