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Welch offers thanks to community, village leaders, family

GUEST EDITORIAL BY VILLAGE OF LEWISTON MAYOR ANNE WELCH

As I conclude my second term as mayor, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to the many people who have supported me throughout this incredible journey.

First and foremost, I want to thank my family. Public service requires countless hours, sacrifices, and unwavering support from those closest to you. I could not have served our community without their encouragement, patience and love.

I also want to thank the residents who placed their trust in me, voted for me, and supported me over the years. Serving this village has been one of the greatest honors of my life. After 43 years of service to the village in various capacities, I leave with a heart full of gratitude and pride in



we worked to make our community stronger, improve services, support local businesses, and enhance the quality of life for our residents. These accomplishments belong to all of us.

A special thank you goes to my deputy mayor, Vic Eydt, whose guidance, friendship and support over the years have meant more than words can express. I am also grateful to my running mate, Rob Nichols, for his dedication, hard work, and commitment to

all that we have accomplished together.

While election results did not go our way this time, I am incredibly proud of what we achieved during my tenure. Together, our community throughout this campaign. Over the years, I had the privilege of working alongside four mayors – learning valuable lessons from each – and gaining a deeper appreciation for the importance of public service. I have also had the opportunity to collaborate with countless government officials, community organizations, business leaders, and residents. Through those relationships, I have developed many lasting friendships that I will always cherish.

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To our village staff: Thank you for your dedication, professionalism and friendship. To the Department of Public Works, the Recreation Department, Police Department, boards and commissions and all village employees: Your hard work often happens behind the scenes, but it is essential to the success of our

community. I am deeply grateful for everything you do.

I would also like to thank my fellow board members, both past and present. While we did not always agree on every issue, we shared a common goal of serving the best interests of our residents and moving our village forward.

Finally, to our residents and business owners: Thank you for your investment in our community, your ideas, your support, and your belief in our future. It has been a privilege to serve you.

As I step away from this role, I do so with tremendous pride, gratitude, and optimism for what lies ahead for our village. Public service has been an important part of my life, and I will always be thankful for the opportunity to have served this community that I love.

Thank you for allowing me the honor of being your mayor.

Be an educated boater: Know & follow 'rules of the waterways'

Do not to leave safety at the dock this summer

By Erie County Clerk Michael P. Kearns

As summer arrives in Erie County, boating season is officially underway. From the Erie Basin Marina and Canalside to the Niagara River and the scenic waters near the Point Abino Lighthouse, Western New York offers endless opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy our beautiful waterways.

Just as motorists follow the "rules of the road," boaters and jet skiers must also understand and follow the "rules of the waterways" to ensure everyone stays safe on the water. I encourage all recreational boaters to understand the risks, know the laws, and be properly prepared before heading out this season.

New York state requires anyone operating a motorboat or personal watercraft who was born on or after May 1, 1996, to successfully

complete a state-approved boater safety course. Studies conducted by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators show that nearly 70% of boating fatalities involved operators who had never taken a boating safety course. A list of approved classes can be found at New York State Parks' website: parks.ny.gov/boating.

State law also requires all motorized watercraft to be registered through the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. Whether your boat is powered by a gas engine or electric motor, registration is required regardless of the vessel's size. Erie County residents are encouraged to "Renew Local" by completing their boat registration at any Erie County Auto Bureau branch, helping keep a portion of those fees here in our

community.

To register a boat, residents must complete the required application and provide proof of identity, date of birth, and ownership. To schedule an in-person appointment you can visit erie.gov/clerk or call the clerk's outreach center at 716-858-8864.

Boaters should also remember that operating a vessel while impaired by alcohol or drugs is illegal and extremely dangerous. Alcohol remains a leading factor in boating fatalities nationwide, impairing judgment, coordination, and reaction time. New York state also imposes strict penalties for underage operators caught drinking while operating a vessel, including suspension or revocation of operating privileges.

One of the simplest and most

effective ways to stay safe on the water is by wearing a life jacket. Statistics show that the overwhelming majority of recreational boating drowning victims were not wearing one at the time of the accident. Wearing a life jacket – and ensuring every passenger does the same – can save lives.

Our waterways are one of Western New York's greatest summer attractions. By boating responsibly, following safety laws, and looking out for one another, everyone can enjoy a safe and memorable season on the water. Boat smart, boat responsibly, and have a safe summer.

For more information on registering your watercraft and/or trailer, visit erie.gov/clerk or call the clerk's outreach center at 716-858-8864.

IN THE NEWS

NFHS CLASS OF '64 REUNION

Attention NFHS Class of 1964:

Niagara Falls High School Class of 1964 is having an 80th birthday party and reunion! It will be held from 4-8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24, at the LaSalle Yacht Club on Buffalo Avenue with dinner, mingling and music. On Friday, there will be a tour of the old NFHS building on Portage Road and Pine Avenue from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Organizers said, "We've had many reunions

through the years but, since all the class members will be or are turning 80 this year, this reunion will be something very special. Dinner, dancing with a partner, wheelchair, walker or cane (all modes of assistance welcome), listening and singing along to the songs of the '50s and '60s, reminiscing about the good old days, favorite teachers and classes, and then having a birthday cake to signify this very special celebration will make it a fun time for all.

"Committee members have been earnestly trying to contact classmates in surrounding areas and those out of town. If you are a NFHS '64 grad, haven't received an email or call from someone, or know a classmate who may like to attend, please have them contact Jennifer Vitello by email at javern46@yahoo.com or 716-799-9337.

Looking forward to a fun-filled reunion!

Circa 1944 • Sentinel Vol. 39 / No. 16 • Tribune Vol. 45 / No. 8 • Dispatch Vol. 82 / No. 7

Tribune/Sentinel

Founded February 14, 1987

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This newspaper is published weekly.

Display Ads Deadline: Friday 5 p.m.

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