

Lewiston Beautification wraps waterfront refresh



Lewiston Beautification Committee volunteers Tasia Fitzpatrick and Sue and Walter Lattka (seated). Fitzpatrick credited the Lattkas with motivating the group to improve the Lewiston waterfront park. (Photo by Joshua Maloni)



With the recent arrival of four new, black metal swings on Water Street, the Lewiston Beautification Committee has wrapped its waterfront park revitalization initiative. The goal was to make the public space more attractive for onlookers.

Working with the Department of Public Works and the Lewiston Garden Club, Beautification volunteers oversaw the swapping out of a wooden fence for a metal replacement – funded by a donation from Fran and Marie Williams; the installation of new metal benches and picnic tables (again replacing wood), garbage cans, and flowerpot light pole wraparound containers; and now the swings.

Volunteer Tasia Fitzpatrick explained the wooden swings were worn, splintered, and in need of replacement. Beautification purchased polyethylene swings last year – but those didn’t last the summer. Metal swings were much more expensive, but would last considerably longer. Beautification raised half the money, and the Garden Club donated the other half.

“We feel like, finally, this is in a really, really good place,” Fitzpatrick said of the waterfront park improvements.

She added, “It’s a joy to see people swinging again.”



Niagara County Italian Festival moves to Lewiston

Event set for this weekend at Academy Park

Italian heritage, outstanding food, live music and family traditions will take center stage July 17-19 as the inaugural Niagara County Italian Festival, presented by Joe Cecconi’s Chrysler Complex and Niagara Hyundai, debuts at Academy Park in the Village of Lewiston.

The three-day celebration will showcase more than 70 food and specialty vendors, live entertainment, Italian cultural performances, bocce tournaments, a classic car show, contests and activities designed to celebrate the rich Italian American heritage that has played such an important role throughout Niagara County and Western New York.

Admission is free.

Festival organizer Carmine Bianco presented the Italian Festival in Niagara Falls for more than a decade, ending it in 2024.

He said the goal in moving to Lewiston is to create a larger, signature event that annually brings families together while honoring the traditions, music and cuisine that have been passed down through generations.

“I think Lewiston is the focal point for the whole area,” Bianco said at a press conference Tuesday. “It’s beautiful here. And since I came here, when I came up a year and a half ago (to get municipal approval), everyone’s been great – welcoming.”

Bianco said the festival layout will be structured to resemble Italy’s unique boot shape – and “the bocce courts will be the heel.”

The festival will run Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and feature continuous entertainment throughout the weekend.

Friday, July 17 (noon-10 p.m.)

- ✓ Opening ceremony at 3:30 p.m.
- ✓ Music of Italy
- ✓ Jack Civiletto & April Mazzone
- ✓ National Van Halen tribute band Diver Down (7-10 p.m.)
- ✓ Fourth Annual Bobby Gravan-ti Classic Car Show
- ✓ Bocce for everyone

Saturday, July 18 (noon-10 p.m.)

- ✓ Spaghetti-eating contest
- ✓ Cake-eating contest
- ✓ Nick Battistella performing “Sinatra & More”
- ✓ Out on the Tiles, a Led Zeppe-lin tribute band (7-10 p.m.)
- ✓ Bocce competition through-out the day

Sunday, July 19 (10 a.m.-10 p.m.)

- ✓ Evan Dalporto performing the music of Frank Sinatra
- ✓ Familia Quadrilla Italian Danc-ers
- ✓ The Formula
- ✓ Operatic performance by Christine Custode



Honorary event chairman Lou Piccone, left, and Niagara County Italian Festival organizer Carmine Bianco.

- ✓ Television personality and psychic medium Tessa Groff
- ✓ Bocce throughout the day

Music will be performed on the Alphonso I. DiMino Memorial Band Shell at Academy Park.

Bianco said the cover bands were booked by popular demand.

Food facts

“This weekend – the next three days – everyone’s Italian,” Bianco said at a press conference on Tuesday. “Everyone’s welcome to come in. The food we have is some of the best in the area.”

Festivalgoers can enjoy authentic Italian cuisine (including tripe, polenta, arancini, sausage, pizza) from dozens of food vendors, along with sandwiches, seafood, Italian pastries, gelato, desserts and specialty treats.

There are no food tickets. Each merchant will offer different items priced how they see fit.

Former Buffalo Bills wideout and kick returner Lou Piccone will serve as honorary chairman and sing the national anthem on Friday. He was joined at the press conference by his wife, JoAnne, a former Niagara County Peach Queen.

“I anticipate just a wonderful three-day event,” Piccone said. “You’re not going to find anything better than the Italian food up here in Niagara County.”

Admission includes access to live entertainment, cultural demonstrations and family-friendly activities throughout Academy Park. Retail vendors will also offer Italian-themed merchandise, crafts and specialty products.

Visitors are reminded that dogs, coolers and backpacks are not permitted on festival grounds.

The Niagara County Italian Festival is made possible through the support of presenting sponsors Joe Cecconi’s Chrysler Complex and Niagara Hyundai, along with numerous community sponsors and local businesses.

Organizers anticipate thousands of visitors will attend the Niagara County Italian Festival.

“This festival is about celebrating our heritage, our families and our community,” Bianco said. “Whether you’re Italian or simply love the culture, there will be something for everyone to enjoy throughout the weekend.”

For more information, visit the Niagara County Italian Festival on social media.

(Joshua Maloni contributed to this report.)

Sanborn Farm Fest

The Sanborn Area Historical Society / Sanborn Farm Museum will host the annual Sanborn Farm Festival on Saturday and Sunday, July 25-26, at 2660 Saunders Settlement Road (Route 31). Enjoy breakfast from 8-11 a.m. (pancakes Saturday, French toast Sunday), then stay for the tractor parade, hayrides, vendors, a car show, a basket auction, games, prizes and live music. In addition, the VW Association of WNY will present a German and American car cruise-in from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

ATTENTION

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1. **Hydration** is important for cellular function, so make sure you remember to drink water regularly throughout the day. Add electrolytes and take salt if out in the heat or perspiring a lot.
2. The **phytonutrients** in plant-based foods are essential for health and wellness for our body and mind. Eat plenty of vegetables and low-sugar fruits, every day.
3. **Rest** is necessary for your body to run optimally, between 7-9 hours nightly.
4. Take time to **have fun**. Social support and positive experiences have been noted in studies to be very beneficial to health.
5. Make sure to **keep your body moving** every day, even if it’s just walking up and down the stairs at work or taking a noontime stroll around the block. Exercise is one of the keys to living a long, healthy life.
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