

Former board of ed. member backs Mooradian

As Election Day nears, I am writing in support of Doug Mooradian for New York State Assembly in the 145th District. It is refreshing to see our younger generation wanting to become leaders in our community, and I commend Mr. Mooradian for his desire to serve.

I have had the pleasure of knowing many generations of the Mooradian family throughout my life, and they have a rich history in the City of Niagara Falls. Starting with Doug's great-grandparents, who in the early 20th century opened a hotel (which today we would call a hostel)

for Armenian immigrants who were coming to this country to escape the Armenian genocide. The building was located on the corner of 10th Street and Buffalo Avenue, and came to be known as the Mooradian Block.

For those arriving in Niagara Falls – many without family living here – it became their first “home,” as they were welcomed by the Mooradian family, who provided meals and housing – while also helping them find work so that they were able to start a new life in this country.

That tradition and dedication to this community continued

with Doug's great-uncle, Sam Mooradian, who served as a city councilman, and also Doug's father, the late Carl Mooradian, who served many years as the corporation council for the City of Niagara Falls. Carl was a hero to my generation, as he was an Ivy League graduate, star football player, and Army veteran who always found time to spend with the younger Armenian kids in the neighborhood.

And I'd be remiss if I did not mention Doug's mother, Kathy, who taught in the Niagara Falls City School District. She is well known as an educator who was

tremendously dedicated to her students and went well above and beyond in her classroom to ensure they received a quality education.

It brings me great pride to see Doug follow the Mooradian tradition and become a difference-maker in our community. Over the years, he has shown true passion and dedication to this district, and has given his time and expertise to many organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club and Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, whenever and wherever his talents have been needed.

The Mooradian family has always been like family to me, and I know the type of professionalism Doug will display as an assemblyman. Integrity, compassion and a willingness to share his talents Doug will bring with him to Albany. Both my wife, Claudia, and I strongly support his campaign, and we encourage you to vote for Doug Mooradian on Nov. 8.

*Robert “Butch” Kazeangin
Former Member
Niagara Falls
Board of Education*

Sabres partner with ConnectLife for November blood drive

The Buffalo Sabres are partnering with ConnectLife for a monthlong blood drive. All presenting donors will receive a voucher good for two complimentary tickets to an upcoming Buffalo Sabres game.

ConnectLife is the primary supplier of blood for Western New York, including Kaleida Health, ECMC, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, Eastern Niagara Health, Wyoming County Community Health System, Olean General Hospital, Brooks-TLC Health System and Bradford Regional Medi-

cal Center.

A press release said, “Blood supply remains at a critical level, and ConnectLife requires ongoing support from the community to ensure hospitals have the blood necessary to save lives.”

“ConnectLife is a vital part of our community, and their vision and values align seamlessly with our own,” said Daniel Misko, senior vice president of business development with Pegula Sports & Entertainment. “Each year, ConnectLife positively impacts so

many people in our community, and we are honored to partner with them once again for this event.”

Those interested in the promotion can donate at any ConnectLife blood drive or Neighborhood Blood Donation Center. To make an appointment, call 716-529-4270 or visit www.connectlifegiveblood.org. Walk-ins are also welcome. Donors should bring their photo ID, and must be 17 years of age or older. Those 16 years of age may donate blood with parental consent.

“As Western New York's only community blood bank, it is our responsibility to ensure there is an adequate blood supply for patients in need,” said Mark J. Simon, president of ConnectLife. “We are proud to call the Buffalo Sabres a partner in this life-saving endeavor, and we look forward to working with them this November.”

ConnectLife is Western New York's only community blood bank and federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization.

Home heating assistance available for eligible New Yorkers

Gov. Kathy Hochul on Monday announced New Yorkers needing help paying their heating bills can begin applying for home heating assistance.

The Home Energy Assistance Program, also known as HEAP, can provide up to \$976 this winter to help low- and middle-income households and senior citizens keep their homes warm and help defray high energy costs.

“We remain committed to ensuring our most vulnerable New Yorkers have access to assistance and programs that will help address rising costs for heating their homes this winter,” Hochul said. “The Home Energy Assistance Program is a vital lifeline for countless New York families, and I encourage all who are eligible to apply for these benefits, which will provide much-needed financial relief.”

The program, overseen by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, is federally funded. Eligible households can receive one regular benefit per season, and could also be eligible for an emergency benefit if they are in danger of running out of heating fuel or having their utility service shut off. Applications for emergency benefits will be accepted beginning Jan. 3, 2023.

Eligible homeowners and renters may receive up to \$976 in heating assistance, depending on their income, household size, how they heat their home, and if the household contains a vulnerable member. A family of four may have a maximum gross monthly income of \$5,485, or an annual gross income of \$65,829, and still qualify for benefits.

The value of the regular HEAP benefits has been increased due to the higher heating costs forecast for this winter. The benefit was increased 33% for households that heat with oil, kerosene or propane; 21% for households that heat with wood, wood pellets, coal or corn; and 14% for households that heat with electricity or natural gas.

Applications for assistance are accepted at local departments of social services in person, or by telephone, with funding provided

on a first-come, first-served basis. Residents outside of New York City may also apply online for regular heating assistance benefits. New York City residents may download an application and obtain program information here.

New York State OTDA Commissioner Daniel W. Tietz said, “Higher heating costs this winter will threaten household budgets throughout New York. The Home Energy Assistance Program provides vital relief, especially for low-income working families, as well as senior citizens on a fixed income. I encourage anyone in need of this assistance to apply before the coldest weather sets in.”

Hochul's team said, “Nearly 1.7 million HEAP benefits were issued last winter, the highest in at least the past five years. Similar demand for assistance is expected again this winter.”

New Yorkers who receive

HEAP assistance this season and continue to fall behind on their utility bills or are running short on heating fuel may also qualify for a one-time emergency HEAP benefit. Applications for emergency benefits will be accepted starting Jan. 3.

Help is also now available to assist eligible homeowners if their primary heating equipment is unsafe, or not operating, and their furnace or boiler must be repaired or replaced. Benefit amounts through the HEAP heating equipment repair and replacement program are based on the actual cost

incurred to repair or replace the essential heating equipment – up to \$4,000 for a repair, and \$8,000 for a replacement. The maximum amounts were also increased from last year, due to higher costs of labor and materials.

Eligible homeowners can also now apply for a HEAP heating equipment clean and tune benefit to keep their home's primary heating source working at peak efficiency. Applicants for these benefits can contact their local department of social services for more information.

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