

Much to look forward to in Niagara County

As we head into Memorial Day Weekend and the unofficial start of summer – though you wouldn't know it by some of the weather we have had lately – I wanted to use this week's column to cover several different issues related to the coming months. The better weather always means there is a lot of activity going on in county government.

•First, let me say how important it is to remember the reason for Memorial Day – to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice defending our freedoms. At a time when pundits everywhere talk about how divided our country is, let's remember there are heroes who gave their lives so we could all have our own opinions and live our lives the way we want.

In honor of those who were killed or injured in battle defending our country, I wanted to let you know ground has been broken on the new Purple Heart monument and courtyard at the Niagara County Courthouse in Lockport. It is anticipated all construction and site work will be ready for our Purple Heart ceremony the first week in



Becky Wydysz
Chairwoman

August. I'll have more details on that later this summer.

•Next, I'll use the old joke that there are only two seasons in WNY, winter and road construction. Our Department of Public Works has been preparing for what will be a busy year of repair and maintenance work on county roads and bridges. Over the last several years, we have made great progress in reducing the miles of county roads that are rated as poor or low, while increasing those rated as fair and good. This has been a concerted effort to focus on our infrastructure. Of course, roadwork can mean delays and/or detours for motorists, so I will ask you to please be patient as our crews do their job – and be particularly mindful in work zones.

•Last year, we made significant progress in improving the Niagara County Golf Course in Lockport, and we are excited to

see that progress continue. This year, there are new golf carts for the enjoyment of our golfers, and the course itself is in great shape. Already, we are seeing a lot of new faces at the course. The county course offers a good golfing experience at a reasonable price so, if you have not played it in a while, I encourage you to check it out.

•If you're not into traditional golf, perhaps this is the year to give disc golf a try. I have previously written about the two tremendous disc golf courses we have in Niagara County – Bond Lake at Burmaster Park and Royalton Ravine – both of which are viewed as top courses in the world by the disc golf publication – and that's out of more than 10,000 rated courses.

For those unfamiliar, disc golf is similar to traditional golf, but you are throwing Frisbees into a metal basket rather than hitting a ball into a hole. Our courses, which take players through a beautiful scenic tour of each park, will be hosting some disc golf tournaments this summer.

•Beyond Bond Lake and Royalton Ravine, the county also operates Oppenheim, Krull and

West Canal Marina. Our five-park system is first-class, and I hope everyone will take full advantage of the many amenities we have to offer. You can find splash pads, playgrounds, hiking trails, boat launches, picnic shelters and more. If you have not made your reservation for a picnic shelter, you can still do so at niagaracounty.com under the "Parks Department."

•The better weather also allows us to resume our outdoor career fairs, something that we started during the pandemic and proved to be very popular. The Niagara County Department of Employment and Training will hold an outdoor career fair on Wednesday, June 7, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Oppenheim Park, with 60 companies with open positions signed up to take part.

There continues to be more open jobs than employees to fill them across the county. So, whether you are not currently employed or perhaps looking for a change, the career fair is a chance to see what opportunities are out there that could be the right fit for you. Plus, our WorkSource1 team will be present to provide job seekers with

services like resume writing and interview prep, to further aid their job search. To learn more about the career fair, including a full list of participating businesses and open positions, visit <https://www.worksource1.com/job-seeker/career-fair>.

•For many of us, this holiday weekend also means a time to clean out from the long winter. As you go through your basements, garages and sheds, remember the county runs programs to help you get rid of unwanted household chemicals, old paint, paper and so on. As a matter of fact, we are hosting a paper shredding and paint collection event on Saturday, June 3, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Wheatfield Town Hall. Registration is required, so, if you would like to participate, please go to www.rethinkyourwaste.com/events.

•Last, as we enter what will hopefully be months of sunshine and warmth, I hope you and your family have fun and stay safe enjoying all the great things that make the quality of life in Niagara County second to none.

IN THE NEWS

50 U.S. state flags that will be part of this year's event.

"People are welcome to show up at 10:30 a.m. at the Ransomville American Legion without an RSVP," Buzzard said.

For more information, contact Buzzard at 716-791-4585.

Red Cross blood drive at Lewiston No. 1

The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Friday, May 26, at the Lewiston No. Fire Co., 145 N. Sixth St.

Appointments are preferred – register at www.redcrossblood.org (search "Lewiston community") or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Memorial Day Fair

The Wilson Historical Society announced the annual Memorial Day Fair would be held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, May 29, on the historical society grounds at 641 Lake St.

The largest vendor fair in Wilson, the event will feature museum and historical displays, foods include a Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ, hot dogs, burgers, snow cones, cotton candy and doughnuts. Food vendors will be selling roast beef, sausages and kettle corn, among other favorites.

Also included will be an antique car show and a giant flea market with hundreds of dealers; live music provided by The Bar Room Buzzards from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Tom Keefer and Celtic Cross from 2-4 p.m. in the band shelter; and a flag-raising ceremony at noon by the American Legion Martin F. Jennings Post 0836.

Youngstown VFW Post Memorial Day program

Members of Youngstown VFW Lake Ontario Post 313 will hold Memorial Day celebratory remembrances on Monday, May 29, including a 9 a.m. Mass at the

Catholic Cemetery in Youngstown and an 11 a.m. program at the Fort Niagara Cemetery.

Wild Kritters basket raffle

Wild Kritters of Niagara County has set the date and location of for its annual basket raffle. The fundraiser is set for Sunday, June 4, at the 3F Conservation Club, 904 Swann Road, Youngstown. Tickets go on sale at noon, with the drawing beginning at 4 p.m.

There will be hundreds of baskets and gift cards, as well as large-ticket items up for grabs. Tickets are \$5 a sheet for gift cards and regular baskets, and \$5 each or three for \$10 for large raffle baskets. Food, beverage and baked goods will be available for sale. Educational animals will also be available for viewing.

Wild Kritters will support Feathers of Love again this year by offering a free sheet of regular tickets with the donation of three nonperishable (human) food items and ticket purchase. Feathers of Love is a nonprofit dedicated to helping mankind. This is limited to one offer per family.

Incorporated in 2008, Wild Kritters is completely volunteer-based. Its purpose is to rescue and rehabilitate injured and orphaned wildlife and return them to their habitat.

"The only way we can continue our mission is with the support of the community," said Kathleen Britton, founder of Wild Kritters. "We receive no government funding, and rely completely on fundraising to pay for the care, food, caging and vet bills of those animals needing assistance."

"We only do one fundraiser a year, the remaining time is spent caring for animals. We also provide educational shows with live animals, and teach how humans can co-exist with nature."

For more information on Wild Kritters, visit www.wildkritters.com.

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