

# Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel

September 1, 2023 FREE 20 Pages Vol. 36 / No. 30 • Vol. 39 / No. 25



School Physicals  
Camp Physicals  
Check Ups  
Evening Hours & Saturday Hours Available!  
733 Center Street, Lewiston  
754-7337  
www.LewistonVillagePediatrics.com



This graphic shows the design of the planned inclusive playground for Fairmount Park in Wheatfield. (Submitted)

## Wheatfield building inclusive playground

BY KAREN CARR KEEFE

Senior Contributing Writer

The Town of Wheatfield is constructing a new, inclusive playground at Fairmount Park, and the project committee wants the community's help to name it.

The winner of the naming contest gets a \$250 gift card. The contest is open to the public – including students. The survey is live now, runs through Sunday, Oct. 15, and can be found on the town website, [www.wheatfield.ny.us](http://www.wheatfield.ny.us).

Parkitects, a playground design and build company based in Buffalo, has been selected to build the playground. Construction will start in late September, Councilmember Curt Doktor said.

"Inclusive play spaces welcome people, and especially children of all abilities to play, learn and grow together," the website [www.inclusiveplaygrounds.net](http://www.inclusiveplaygrounds.net) stated.

Adults of various ages and abilities also can actively engage with the children in their care, according to the website, so the playground can become an enjoy-

able, multigenerational gathering space.

The grand-opening of the playground is planned for 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 4, but the date is weather-dependent.

"Warm drinks will be served for adults and children ... as the weather could be a little chilly," Doktor said. "We will announce the selected name and congratulate the winner of our naming contest at the event. We invite all community members to attend."

The whole idea started a little over a year ago when Wheatfield resident Cary Newman suggested it was something the town needed and should consider pursuing. Town Recreation Director Mike Ranalli said he and Doktor shared an enthusiasm for the project, as did the Wheatfield Town Council, including Supervisor Don MacSwan, and councilmembers Larry Helwig, Gil Doucet and Randy Retzlaff. Niagara County Legislator Jesse Gooch also assisted the project committee.

"From there, it kind of just took off like a rocket ship," Ranalli said. "We were very cohesive, very efficient. It was a fun and educational process," he said. "The way we said it to each other, it's like we get one shot at this, so we want to make sure we do it right. The town and the residents are counting on us." He said residents from surrounding towns will also be interested in the playground.

"I think it's something the community is very excited about," he said.

"Safety is the No.1 thing when you design and put in a playground," Ranalli said. He said Newman's original idea and her knowledge of pertinent law and safety measures were invaluable in steering the course toward the best inclusive playground.

Funds the town received from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 supercharged the timeline and were used to fund the entire project. The estimated cost for the playground, itself, is \$208,000, **SEE PLAYGROUND, on Page 5**



## Peach Festival is next weekend

The Kiwanis Club of Lewiston will present the 65th annual Niagara County Peach Festival the weekend of Sept. 7-10 at Academy Park on Center Street in Lewiston.

Free parking is available at the upper Artpark parking lot off Portage Road on Thursday, Friday and Sunday, with Gray Line Tours shuttle buses providing courtesy rides to and from Academy Park.

Look inside today's paper for a full preview.

Pictured is some of that famous peach shortcake that will be served to thousands of patrons at the festival. (Photo by Terry Duffy)



### The Nutcracker Auditions

Sunday, SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> See website for times


The NACC - 1201 Pine Avenue, Niagara Falls • Purple Door (Portage Road entrance)

Visit our website at [www.GreaterNiagaraBalletCompany.org](http://www.GreaterNiagaraBalletCompany.org)

**Ages 6 & up boys & girls welcome**

**No Dance Experience for some parts**

Questions or Conflicts, email: [greaterniagaraballet@gmail.com](mailto:greaterniagaraballet@gmail.com)



**Look inside:**

Today's Peach Festival coverage and schedule is sponsored by Modern Disposal Services

Supporting our community

Your No. 1 source for waste & recycling services

**Modern Disposal Services, Inc. 4746 Model City Road, Model City, NY 716-754-8226**

**GEORGE'S APPLIANCE AND TELEVISION**

Serving Niagara For Over 87 Years

1422 PINE AVE.  
Rte. 62A & 15th St., Niagara Falls, NY

www.ShopGeorges.com • 716-282-2121

**HERITAGE STRUCTURES**

We build, repair, remove & level on site.  
Best Prices! • Free Delivery  
Lifetime Warranty

**WG & G**

at Wheatfield Garden & Gifts

2921 Niagara Falls Blvd. 14120  
716-946-3364

Trust your biggest investment to Lewiston's hometown realtor...

**Cyndi Van Dusen-Roemer**  
716-531-1577  
24/7 Working for You!

Hunt ERA  
716 Center Street • Lewiston, NY  
Your Hometown Realtor