

Canterbury Place owner retiring after 30 years of service to community

BY JOSHUA MALONI

GM/Managing Editor

One of Lewiston's most popular merchants is calling it a career.

Pamela Karski is retiring and closing Canterbury Place – the 2018 Lewiston Business of the Year.

"I've been here for 30 years. And it just got to the point where I'm not able to do all the things that I want to do with my family, and at home," Karski explained. "And I said my goal was 20 years; I gave it 30. The timing just seemed to be right for me."

"The business did very well last year. It has done very well, actually, since the pandemic, so I feel like I'm going out on a high note. I feel good about what I did. You know, I enjoyed it. I love being here. I always felt like it was a privilege to come to work. I've met some great people. I know I'm going to miss my people, for sure. It's time for me to do something else."

"Like nothing!"

Laughing, Karski added, "I'm not getting any younger. I'm just at that time of my life where it's time to slow down. You know, it's getting harder and harder to keep up with everything."

In recognizing the business at the Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce Gala four years ago, President Jennifer Pauly wrote, "Canterbury Place has an eclectic mix of gift items, featuring many well-known products, as well as local artists. Candles and candle



accessories have been a mainstay.

"Karski selects products that provide a good value for the customers, while not compromising on quality. She chooses many traditional items for the store that will last a lifetime."

The storeowner said, "I've had great support from the community, from all of my customers. I have customers from all over Western New York, and all over

the country. I mean, this summer was crazy with people traveling, and a lot of them are out of state. When they come back to this area, they always come in, and so, even though they're not local, they're still repeat customers."

"Everybody seems to, fortunately, like what I like, in what I carry. I try to listen very carefully to my customers. I always have; to see what they're looking for. I



Pamela Karski is shown outside of her store, at 547 Center St., in this photo taken by the Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce ahead of the 2018 Chamber Gala. Karski was recognized as the village's businessperson of the year.

think Lewiston has a great sense of community, and that was always my goal, is to be a part of that community, and contribute to the community."

Karski's customers have made it a point to offer well wishes – while also emphasizing they'll miss seeing her on Center Street.

"I had one lady come in when I first announced it. And I think she was here for about an hour, and she just kept saying, 'I just can't believe this store won't be here.' In fact, I was here, had opened my shop, before she ever moved here. I keep hearing that a lot," Karski said. "A lot of my customers have said, 'You were here when I moved here, and I've been here for 25 years,' or whatever. And it's like, I had one young lady, she told me she was here with her son. And this was several years ago now. And she said, 'I don't ever remember you not being here.' And we figured it out. And she was 10 years old when I opened my shop. She basi-

cally grew up with me.

"I've had a lot of that."

"Like I said, everybody becomes my friends. I've had sales reps that I've worked with here in the shop and they've made the comment that, 'You have greeted everybody who has walked through that door by name.' I have gotten to know my customers quite well. And I think of them all as my family and friends."

Like many of Lewiston's merchants, Karski said she has noticed a change in consumer patterns since the coronavirus pandemic began two years ago.

"I have to say, if anything positive came out of COVID, it was that it kind of brought it to the forefront, how important small businesses are," she said. "I had a lot of customers that used to wander through off and on, but now they're shopping. They aren't just looking and then going home and ordering online."

"And the retailers group, getting together, being aware of what everybody else carries, I think is a very positive thing, because that way, if I don't have it, I can say, 'I don't have it, but you might be able to find it at such and such store.'"

"We have to keep people shopping in Lewiston. Don't give them a reason to leave."

April 16 is the last business day for Canterbury Place. Between now and then, customers can find deep, deep discounts on their favorite products.

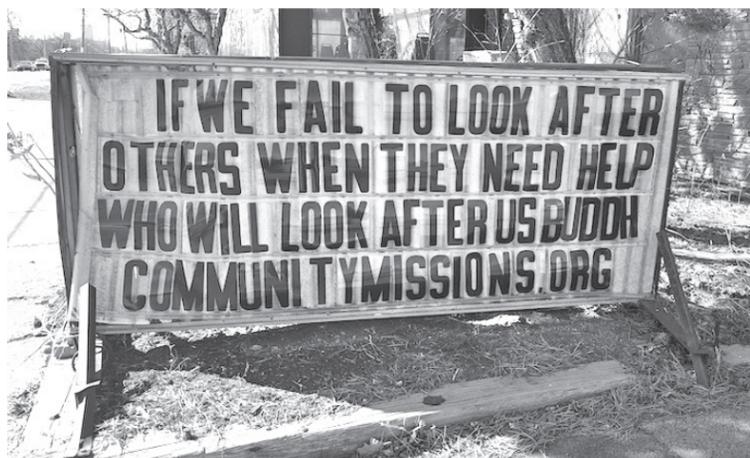
Community Missions celebrates 25th annual Sweetheart Dinner

Approximately 200 attendees expected at fundraising event

Community Missions will hold its 25th annual Sweetheart Dinner, presented by United Healthcare, on Friday, April 1, at Sheraton Niagara Falls. After holding last year's event virtually, this in-person celebration will benefit the agency's crisis services, including the Community Soup Kitchen, food pantry, clothes closet and emergency housing shelter, and will feature more than 100 baskets, gift cards, silent auction items, and games.

The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. with basket viewing and cocktail hour. During this time, guests may purchase basket, raffle and 50/50 tickets, bid on silent auction items, visit the cash bar, and enjoy hors d'oeuvres. Dinner and a short program will begin at 7 p.m., with the calling of winners to follow.

The event's chairs, "Team '82 & Bloom," including Eric and Tracy Bloom, Elaine Hertel, Cindy Naughton and Bob Bloom, will present the evening. The agency extended a special thank you to the following sponsors: United Healthcare, PCA Technology Group, WatchGuard, Lawley In-



surance, BXI Consultants, Catalano Law, Mount St. Mary's, Ken Young Paving, Parkview Health Services, Delaware North, Nate's Copiers & Computers, CRB Holdings, Niagara Wheatfield Teachers Association, Niagara County Community College, Lockport Orthodontics, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of WNY, Barn Dog Craft Distillery, Hard Rock Niagara Falls USA, Bloom's Relax Landscaping, Paul Game Construction, George S. Adamson Esq., BathFitter of Buffalo, Lumalon, Great Lakes Real Estate,

Coppins Service Center, Mawhinney Trucking, Elizabeth Zastrow DDS, LC Style, Campione Safety, PAC Imaging, Montie's Heating & Cooling, and numerous "Friends of the Mission" that have made donations. Further thanks to all those throughout the community that have already provided in-kind and basket dona-

tions to support the event. The event would not be possible without the event's hotel partner and venue, Sheraton Niagara Falls.

About Community Missions Since its founding in 1925, Community Missions has provided a unique blend of referral, crisis, community support, and residential services for youth and adults. Last year, Community Missions provided more than 110,000 meals and over 13,000 nights of care to neglected or abused children and homeless adults. Additional agency programs serve adults and youth with psychiatric disabilities, parolees, at-risk youth and other underserved populations in both residential and recovery-oriented settings. For more information, visit www.communitymissions.org.

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What is health, really? According to *Dorland's Medical Dictionary*: "Health, a state of optimum physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity." In *Webster's Dictionary*, "Health is a condition of wholeness in which all organs are functioning 100% all of the time."

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