

'In the Loop' with the Lewiston-Porter Board of Education

# Lewiston-Porter busily preparing for return to school

**BY JODEE RIORDAN**  
Board of Education President

With just over two weeks until school begins, we prepare for back-to-school as never before. Where we once spent these weeks packing backpacks with neatly labeled school supplies – or running around trying to find that last, elusive, yellow, plastic three-prong folder – we are now faced with unprecedented decisions. Returning to school during a pandemic is not something any of us have ever done before.

First, Lewiston-Porter asks that every family complete the learning and transportation commitment form by 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 21. This information is critical to planning for both teaching and learning and to determine accurate bus routes. The form is also located in the "COVID-19 Communication & Information Center" found on the Lewiston-Porter website, [www.lew-port.com](http://www.lew-port.com).

While we recognize we have two

forums next week, it is imperative that families make a decision by this Friday, Aug. 21, at 3 p.m. Lewiston-Porter has to move its scheduling process forward with both classes and transportation. The last two forums can certainly answer questions regarding these models, but we need the decision by Friday.

Family forums will be held next week as follows: The primary level forum (PEC and IEC: grades K-5) on Wednesday, Aug. 26, and secondary level forum (middle school and high school: grades 6-12) on Thursday, Aug. 27. Each forum begins at 5:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium. Attendance at each forum will be limited to 50 parents per event, with only one parent per family. To register to attend in-person, or for the links for each virtual meeting, go to "Community Forums" in the "COVID-19 Communication & Information Center" on the L-P website. The events will also be hosted live in a virtual, in-

teractive format. Families who attend virtually will be able to submit questions live online during the forums.

Visit the Lew-Port website for complete information. Click the "COVID-19 RE-OPENING" tab on the homepage to be directed to the "COVID-19 Communication & Information Center." There, you will have access to all plans, FAQs, documents, forms and a complete archive of COVID-19 communication from Superintendent Paul Casseri.

Supply lists are now posted to each school's homepage, as well as summer reading lists and course assignments. Each homepage also has a link to the PTSA online Spirit Store for your back-to-school spirit wear needs. Lew-Port's elementary schools – the Primary Education Center and Intermediate Education Center – have updated their family handbooks to include all COVID-19-related changes to policies and procedures. The handbooks are posted to their re-

spective homepages, along with school supply lists by grade and links to the virtual kindergarten orientation.

At the secondary level, incoming sixth grade students will attend a virtual orientation Thursday, Aug. 27. Eighth grade WEB leaders will guide the orientation and the new middle schoolers throughout the year. Supply lists per grade (sixth, seventh and eighth) are posted to the middle school homepage.

Freshmen orientation will take place in-person, with one-hour tours of the high school led by Assistant Principal John Evert. Orientations will be held at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday, Aug. 24; Wednesday, Aug. 26; and Thursday, Aug. 27. (Please check for availability, as sessions are reaching capacity and may be closed). Orientations are for students only and registration is required. Please visit the high school webpage for the link.

Course supply lists are posted to the high school homepage.

Summer assignments can be found through Google Classroom. Please have your student check in and wrap up their work, so as not to be writing a book report – or finishing "Catcher in the Rye" – on Sept. 7 at 11 p.m. (Some things do not change!).

As I prepare to send my son back to L-PhS, I just want to say: We are all in this together, Lewiston-Porter. Whatever decision your family makes, we will work together to make it the best for your child.

The Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. Monday, Aug. 24, in the boardroom at the CRC. You may Zoom into the meeting by following the link posted on the district homepage: Meeting ID: 740 3553 5685 Passcode: Lewport. If you would like to address the board during community comments, please email District Clerk Marisa Barile at [mbarile@lew-port.com](mailto:mbarile@lew-port.com) with your name, address and your comment.

We are here for you.

## Niagara County Pride to hold school supplies drive

For the next two weeks, Niagara County Pride – a program of The Pride Center of WNY – will collect backpacks and other school supplies to help kids in need this year. The group's goal is to collect 50 backpacks filled with supplies to be able to give to local children.

According to Ronald Piasieczny, Niagara County Pride's group leader, "2020 has been a very challenging year for many families and children. There are a lot of families in WNY who are financially struggling as a result of the COVID pandemic or other factors. We recognize that the school year is going to look a lot different, with more virtual instruction, social distancing and other safety precautions in place. We hope that, by being able to provide school supplies to kids this year,

we are able to take some burden off those families who might not be able to afford to buy all the supplies their children need."

Donation drop-off locations and times are as follows:

- Sunday, Aug. 23, from 10 a.m. to noon at Hyde Park in Niagara Falls, near the Veterans Memorial. Look for the rainbow Pride flag and a banner at the donation drop-off table.

- Sunday, Aug. 30, from 10 a.m. to noon on Canal Street in Lockport, next to Lake Effect Ice Cream. Look for the rainbow Pride flag and a banner at the donation drop-off table.

Over the past several years, Niagara County Pride has served as the only LGBTQ+ social organization for all of Niagara County. A press release said, "We have host-

ed several successful and free events, which have been open to all LGBTQ and ally community members in WNY, including a mass wedding ceremony in Niagara Falls State Park and Pride Street Festival (June 2019), an annual Pride summer picnic, an annual all-inclusive Thanksgiving dinner. Our monthly meetings have served as an important community resource for individuals to be able to have a safe space and accepting place to meet one another, share our stories, and build lasting connections. Currently, we are holding virtual online meetings on the second and fourth Thursdays of every month.

"For more information on our meetings or to donate if you are unable to attend one of the aforementioned drop off times, please feel free to contact Ronald Piasieczny via email at [niagarapride@gmail.com](mailto:niagarapride@gmail.com)."

## NU folklorist Yong Jun Millar awarded fellowship from Library of Congress

Niagara University folklorist Edward Yong Jun Millar recently received an Archie Green Fellowship from the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to document and preserve the stories, experiences, knowledge and traditions of workers involved with the Ransomville Speedway. His is one of only seven projects in 2020 to have been awarded this competitive annual national fellowship.

Millar, curator of folk arts at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University and adjunct professor in the art history with museum studies program, will interview drivers, mechanics, ticket sellers, facility workers, maintenance crews, track managers, pit crew members and con-

cessionaires over the next year. The interviews will be available to the general public through the American Folklife Center's Occupational Folklife Project webpage and to researchers in person at the AFC.

"I was excited to learn that we received the Archie Green Fellowship as I knew what it could mean for preserving an important part of Niagara County's heritage and raising national awareness of the Ransomville Speedway. After being brought to my first race by a co-worker two years ago, I knew this fellowship represented a great opportunity, as there are so many moving parts, and knowledge, skill, and experience needed to host each race," Millar noted. "The fellowship recognizes the need to preserve the voices and experiences of workers in this country – that their knowledge and skills are an important part of the narrative of America's history, despite historically being overlooked or under-represented. As a resident of the county, it feels great to be able to help and be involved in sharing the voices and experiences of my neighbors in a national archive."

The Ransomville Speedway is rich with history, culture, legends and stories from its early founding with Ed Ortiz and the Ransomville Slo-Pokes to the present.

"We are very excited to be working with Edward on this project," said Jennifer Martin, general manager of the speedway. "Racing is not generally a sport that most think would have history, but that is certainly not the case. Ransomville Speedway is a huge part of Niagara County, and we are excited to help with interviews, pictures, and anything else that may be needed. When this is all said and done, we will encourage everyone to go take a look at the completed project."

For more information about this project, contact Edward Yong Jun Millar at [emillar@niagara.edu](mailto:emillar@niagara.edu) or 286 8290.

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**Lutheran Church of the Messiah**  
915 Oneida Street, Lewiston  
Phone: 754-4944 Fax: 754-903  
[www.messiahlewiston.org](http://www.messiahlewiston.org)

**The Reverend Ashlin Marchese, Pastor**  
The Reverend Thomas R. Mason, Pastor Emeritus

- Outdoor Worship Services (weather permitting) 9:00am on August 30th at the church.
- Online worship can be viewed at [MessiahLewiston.org](http://MessiahLewiston.org)
- Worship will continue on a regular basis starting on September 13th at 8 and 9:30 am

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