

Salvation Army of Greater Niagara gets help from local jazz artists

The Salvation Army of the Greater Niagara Region will get a helping hand from local jazz artists Custode & Parisi. A special streaming concert is planned for Sunday, Dec. 20. Beginning at 6 p.m., Facebook subscribers can tune in (@CustodeandParisi) and hear a special Christmas concert featuring Custode and Parisi performing holiday music in their own jazz style.

Lew Custode (Niagara Falls Music Hall of Fame Inductee) and Steve Parisi will host an evening of entertainment with a unique personal angle – all performers are family members. Joining them will be Lew's daughter and multi-Grammy Award nominee Christina Custode (piano and vocals), along with Steve's wife, Kristen Parisi (vocals), and his son Stephen Parisi Jr. (bass).

Lew Custode, who has volunteered for years and is no stranger to the Red Kettle Campaign, stated, "This year is completely different and much more difficult than prior years. With the onset of the pandemic, the general public has suffered greatly, the economy is struggling and fundraising is especially challenging."

Maj. Steve Carroll of the Salvation Army added, "The impacts of COVID-19 are presenting especially difficult challenges for our communities, which is jeopardizing funding at a time when the need for community support services offered by local Salvation Army chapters is at an all-time high. I'm thrilled that we are able to partner with Lew Custode and Steve Parisi and I am looking forward to a great event!"

The local Salvation Army's 2020 Red Kettle Campaign goal is \$100,000. It's reportedly only halfway there with less than two weeks left in this year's effort.

A press release stated, "As the final day for fundraising (Dec. 24) looms near, it is crucial for people to understand the importance of supporting this year's campaign. Throughout the streaming event, viewers will be reminded that 100% of the money donated stays within our local community and encouraged to donate directly to the Salvation Army through a dedicated donation link."

For more information, contact Carroll at 283-7697.

Intandem's holiday raffle winner gets a 'Supermarket Sweep' experience courtesy of DiMino's Lewiston Tops

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO

Who doesn't love "Supermarket Sweep"? The frantic, fast-paced, shop-til-you drop game show ruled the airwaves in the 1960s, and again in the early 1990s. It even has a reboot currently airing on ABC.

One lucky shopper got to have that experience herself on Monday, courtesy of DiMino's Lewiston Tops. During week four of Intandem's holiday raffle – a fundraising effort to support the disability service – Tracy Paonessa of Lewiston won an opportunity to participate in a "shopping experience" where she was given two minutes to fill her shopping cart with as many groceries as she could fit.

As the horn sounded, Paonessa rocketed off the starting line and blazed her way throughout the store as family members and fellow shoppers cheered her on. In total, Paonessa snagged \$266.70 worth of groceries before the timer ended (just over \$300 before Bonus Card savings).

Asked about the experience afterward, Paonessa called it "a lot of fun" and said the hardest part was running with her mask on. She admitted being a little nervous about the experience beforehand even though, as a frequent shopper, she knew the store's layout pretty well.

However, as Paonessa explained, she wasn't nervous about simply not getting enough groceries for herself. She had a heartwarming reason for trying to rack up the final bills.

Per the giveaway, the groceries themselves were paid for by DiMino's Lewiston Tops owner Anthony DiMino. Paonessa announced afterward she would be matching the price of the groceries with a monetary donation to Intandem.

"(I was) pinpointed to what I really wanted to get to make it worth it, so I could pay it forward. That was my philosophy," she said.

Asked about her decision, Paonessa explained the organization was near and dear to her family's heart as her cousin, who has special needs, works for the organization.

Intandem (formerly Oppor-



Above, Tracy Paonessa starts her shopping spree. Below, she surveys the shopping spree results with Lewiston Tops owner Anthony DiMino (Photos by Wayne Peters; find more at www.wnypapers.com)



tunities Unlimited of Niagara) counts on the fundraising efforts of the Opportunities Unlimited of Niagara Foundation to provide financial support for the programs and services it provides to hundreds of Niagara County residents with developmental disabilities and behavioral health concerns.

Unfortunately, as Intandem Special Events Coordinator Cindy Hyde explained, the ongoing public health crisis has forced the organization to cancel three of its most important fundraising

events.

"We started this holiday raffle because 2020 has not been very friendly to us," she said. "We had to cancel our first three fundraising events. So this raffle has made up some of that progress. We've had some great sponsors. Upstate Pharmacy is our principal sponsor and Mr. DiMino has been very generous on doing this for us. So, it's been very successful. All proceeds benefit individuals with disabilities that Intandem services. And the individual population right now needs our help more than ever."

Intandem's holiday raffle began Nov. 4 and will conclude Jan. 6, with cash and prizes drawn each week via Facebook Live. Tickets are still available and can be purchased at www.intandem.org/2020-raffle-events.

•See more photos online at www.wnypapers.com.

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Get the "white" out of this Holiday Season

Lots of white flour, white sugar and dairy products are the usual fare of our holiday traditions. Cookies galore, eggnog, chocolates, candies, fancy cakes, crackers, cheese, alcohol (fermented sugar), etc. tend to become an overindulgence for most and an all out attack on our health from Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve.

We all know "it's bad for you", but it really is toxic, uses up vitamins, depletes minerals and is suppressive to your immune system. Also, white flour and dairy are major mucous formers. It never surprises me that more people are sick with colds and flu come January. The body has to get rid of all that "gunk" somehow and the germs in the body just thrive on it.

I'm not saying don't be eat good tasty treats. Take those old traditional recipes and use healthier ingredients. Small changes add up! Avoid chemical dyes, artificial sweeteners, baking powder containing aluminum, canola oil, margarine and vegetable shortening. Substitute whole grain flours; to sweeten: Stevia, raw honey, maple syrup, coconut sugar, organic unsulfured dried fruit. Use raw nuts, organic butter, organic cold-pressed nut or seed oils, and almond/rice/coconut/oat milk. Use spiced cider or no sugar added fruit punch, instead of eggnog.

Grilled or sautéed vegetables are always a good and colorful dish – toss them with olive oil, fresh garlic, sea salt, pepper, oregano and basil. Look up other healthy recipe substitutes on line. The main change is getting the "white" out. Artificial sweeteners should be avoided.

Call 754-9039, if your HO, HO, HO becomes OH, OH, OH. Wishing you and yours, Happy, Healthy Holidays... naturally!

Happy holidays from NFP

Let's face it: It's been a long year – and we all can't wait for 2021!

To reward our staffers for their continued work and dedication over the pandemic's past nine months, we are giving them a week off to celebrate the season. As such, there will be no newspaper printed the week of Dec. 28. Regular newspaper delivery will resume the week of Jan. 4.

News will continue to be posted online at www.wnypapers.com.

Thank you for your continued support in 2020. Please have a safe and happy holiday season.

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"Wishing you & your Family an Old Fashioned Country Christmas"