

NFP's famous 'Best Fish Fry' contest returns



Fish fry season has begun again – and we want to know where to eat!

As part of Niagara Frontier Publications' annual "Best Fish Fry" contest, vote for the restaurant serving your favorite fish fry. The eatery with the most votes will be featured in The Tribune/Sentinel and Dispatch, with additional photos and a video posted at www.wnypapers.com.

Voting begins Friday, Feb. 12, and will conclude at midnight Sunday, March 21. Vote and find rules online; or fill out an entry form found in one of our newspapers in coming weeks. Mail the entry back to NFP at 1859 Whitehaven Road, Grand Island, NY 14072.

When you cast a vote telling us which restaurant offers

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE FISH FRY

Visit the Tribune/Sentinel website, www.wnypapers.com, to cast a vote

the freshest catches served in the tastiest batter, you'll be entered to win a fish fry for two, or a general food gift certificate, courtesy of an area restaurant.

One winner will be selected each Monday by random draw and be notified by phone or email.

Good luck, and happy eating!

First 'Free Fishing Weekend' of 2021

New Yorkers can fish without a license across state on Feb. 13-14

DEC urges fishers to practice ice safety while outdoors

Gov. Andrew Cuomo recently encouraged New Yorkers to take advantage of the first "Free Fishing Weekend" of 2021, on Feb. 13 and 14, when anglers are permitted to fish for free without a license.

"New York is home to some of the best lakes, ponds, rivers and streams in the world, all offering exceptional fishing opportunities all year round," Cuomo said. "As the nation continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, families are seeking outdoor activities that don't break the bank or require extensive travel, and this 'Free Fishing Weekend' is a perfect option for anglers of all experience levels to enjoy the very best that the Empire State has to offer."

Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul added, "During these tremendously challenging times, 'Free Fishing Days' give New Yorkers a chance to enjoy the peace and solace of the outdoors year-round. No matter the season, we are committed to promoting all of the great things to do outdoors in New York and enhance quality of life for all New Yorkers across the state."

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos said, "Every year, more and more New Yorkers discover there are just as many fantastic fishing opportunities during the winter months as during the summer. Ice fishing is a great activity for families to do together, and the annual February 'Free Fishing Weekend' is the perfect time for first timers to give it a try on waters with ice thick enough to access safely."

Those new to ice fishing are encouraged to download the ice fishing chapter of DEC's I FISH NY Beginners' Guide to Freshwater Fishing for information on how to get started. Additional information, including a list of waters where ice fishing is permitted, can found on the DEC ice fishing webpage.

Recent cold weather has improved ice conditions across the state and DEC reminds those venturing onto the ice that 4 inches or more of solid ice is considered safe for accessing bodies of water on foot. Ice anglers should note that ice thickness can vary on different bodies of water and even on the same body of water. Anglers should be particularly wary of areas of moving water and around boat docks and houses where bubble traps may be installed to reduce ice buildup. The presence of



snowmobile tracks or footprints on the ice should not be considered evidence of safe ice conditions. Individuals are strongly encouraged to check ice conditions and avoid situations that appear to present even a remote risk. It's easy to test ice thickness with an auger or ice spud at various spots.

New York's "Free Fishing Days" program began in 1991 to give people who might not fish a chance to try the sport at no cost, to introduce people to a new hobby, and to encourage people to support the management of the state's freshwater fisheries by purchasing a New York state fishing license. February's "Free Fishing Days" are the first of several planned for 2021. Additional days include June 26-27, Sept. 25 (National Hunting and Fishing Day) and Nov. 11 (Veterans Day). During "Free Fishing Days," residents and visitors can fish for free on any of the state's 7,500 lakes and ponds or 70,000 miles of rivers and streams.

A press release stated, "Ice fishing is a great way to enjoy the outdoors during the winter months while practicing social distancing. Unlike some other styles of fishing, ice fishing is unique because groups can spread out and fish safely."

DEC is reminding anglers to be "SMART" when fishing this year: Socially distance at least 6 feet apart.

Mask – wear one when you cannot maintain social distancing, especially in parking lots and along footpaths.

Avoid sharing gear when possible.

Respect fellow anglers and the resource by providing space and practicing ethical angling.

Take out what you bring in or place trash in receptacles.

The "Free Fishing Days" program is part of the governor's "NY Open for Fishing and Hunt-

ing" initiative. The release noted, "Fishing and hunting in New York build a sense of stewardship of fish and wildlife resources and habitats, provide an opportunity for experienced hunters and anglers to share their knowledge with others, and promote participation in hunting, fishing and recreational shooting through the mentoring of young hunters and anglers. New York's hunters and anglers contribute an estimated \$4.9 billion to the economy in spending, which supports more than 56,000 jobs and \$623 million in state and local taxes."

"Cuomo's 2021-22 State of the State address included several measures to safely enhance recreational and cultural programs in a manner that improves these experiences for all New Yorkers, including hunting and fishing. It includes the proposal for DEC to create a new interactive trout stream fishing map and app to provide anglers one-stop-shopping for trout stream fishing opportunities, including easy access to information about access points, applicable regulations, and stocking schedules, making it easy to choose a fishing experience based on interest and experience."

Outside Safely, Responsibly & Locally

New York's "PLAY SMART * PLAY SAFE * PLAY LOCAL" campaign encourages residents to engage in responsible recreation during the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and DEC recommendations for getting outside safely incorporate guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health for reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

"Lori & Friends"



Guest: Mary Ann Hess
Niagara Chocolate Company

hosted by Lori Caso

LCTV Channel 1301
February 1st - 14th
Mon 3am, 10am, 3pm • Wed 4am, 4pm, 10pm
Thur 3am, 10pm • Fri 10:30am
Sat 3:30am, 5:30pm • Sun 11:30am, 10pm

www.loricaso.com



THE GRANITE SHOP
402-1046

A Milestone Video Production. Made possible by funds from...

NIAGARA FRONTIER PUBLICATIONS
SENTINEL • TRIBUNE
DISPATCH • PENNSAVER
wnypapers.com

TOPS
Friendly Markets
906 CENTER ST., LEWISTON

Shine Studio
Ask for Toni
297-0181

OLD FORT NIAGARA



Have you visited a Fort lately?

Daily hours of operation

Wednesday - Sunday 10am-4pm

Closed Monday & Tuesday

The Fort is open year round with the exception of New Years Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Docents are posted at each of our historic buildings and we continue to offer living history programs.

Open: Wed-Sun 10am-4pm • Closed Mon & Tue
www.oldfortniagara.org

THE SOUND OF THE CITY



• The GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK •

Sara Vaughn • Ella Fitzgerald • Lena Horne
Nat King Cole • Frank Sinatra • Tony Bennett

STREAMING LIVE AT WEBRRADIO.COM