

# Niagara County Department of Health encourages safely enjoying outdoors

**BY THE NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

With warmer weather and gradual reopening of Niagara County, the Niagara County Department of Health encourages individuals to enjoy the outdoors safely during COVID-19.

“Getting outdoors to experience nature and exercise, especially during this uncertain time, can be beneficial to physical, mental and emotional health,” Public Health Director Daniel J. Stapleton said. “We want to remind everyone to do it safely.”

The virus is spread mainly by close proximity with other people, primarily through respiratory droplets that people can exhale. As businesses and parks are opening, it is especially important that precautions are taken to include social distancing, hand washing, and using face coverings to help prevent people from getting sick.

The Niagara County Department of Health partnered with Niagara County Parks to create and place new signs in county parks. The signs include social distancing key points.

“We are pleased to partner with public health to ensure the public safely enjoys the many wonderful parks Niagara County has to offer,” Commissioner of Public Works Garret A. Meal said.

For a list of county parks or to check their status, visit <https://www.niagaracounty.com/parks/>.

Visit a favorite park, or try a new one. There is so much to enjoy and explore in the outdoors.

During the pandemic, follow key tips for enjoying the outdoors safely:

- ✓ Check the status of the place you want to visit. If it is closed, do not go. If it is crowded, have an alternate place to you can go to enjoy.



- ✓ Prepare for facilities to be closed. Pack a lunch and bring protective items like hand sanitizer and a face covering.

- ✓ Maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet from people who are not members of your household –

including at trailheads, scenic areas and in parking lots.

- ✓ Respect public lands and communities. Ensure proper disposal of garbage (including masks, gloves).

- ✓ Stay home if you are sick or

may have had contact with someone who is sick.

For more information about how to visit parks and recreational facilities safely, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html>.

•At a press conference on Thursday, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the state is allowing localities to open public pools and playgrounds at their discretion while following state guidance.

“As we’re entering the summer public pools and playgrounds we’re going to leave to open or keep closed in the discretion of local governments. But they have to use their judgment here. Again, they have the test data, they should be studying the test data,” Cuomo said.

## Opinions

### Help support Old Fort Niagara

**BY ROBERT EMERSON**  
Executive Director

Over the centuries, Old Fort Niagara has withstood famines, sieges, surprise attacks and the storms of Lake Ontario. If you’ve wondered how Old Fort Niagara has been doing during the pandemic, it’s been tough. On March 20, our doors closed in the interest of public health. Like other closed museums and historic sites right now, our resources are dwindling. Without

visitors, we’re without revenues that sustain us. We also had to lay off 80% of our staff. It’s been tough, but we are doing our best to keep operations running smoothly in the spirit of the fort’s 300-year history of defending itself.

And we could certainly use your help!

Would you please help Old Fort Niagara with a donation today? Your gift would be matched by David Rogers, a long-serving

member of our board of directors, who has put forward a gift of \$125,000 in matching funds. Every little bit helps – and it will be matched, dollar for dollar, through July 15! We know times are tough for everyone right now, but every little bit helps. Truly.

Your generosity today, no matter the amount, would help us greatly. You would help keep the Old Fort Niagara Association self-sufficient. You would aid us

in carrying out our mission to preserve and protect the 18th-century site and our unique artifacts. You would keep us going for another century!

As you know, Old Fort Niagara is located in Fort Niagara State Park. But did you know that we operate independently and without operating subsidies from New York state? During these tough times, when we cannot depend on revenues from visitors’ admissions and museum

shop sales, your generosity is even more important. In fact, it’s critical to our future.

Please respond to our request today by going to our website, [www.oldfortniagara.org](http://www.oldfortniagara.org), and clicking the donate button. You can also donate by phone by calling 745-7611.

Thank you!

### What does the American flag mean to me?

**BY LUKAS LARSON**

As submitted by Veterans of Foreign Wars Downriver Post 7487

In our earliest memories of elementary school, we are taught the Pledge of Allegiance. We are taught to recognize our nation’s flag and we are taught the symbols found with that Star-Spangled Banner. Fifty stars. Thirteen stripes. Our unified 50 states that grew from those original 13 colonies. Bright red, white and blue – the colors of a true American patriot. Those early lessons of American patriotism train our eyes and prepare our minds, but it is the experiences over the course of our lifetime where we see the flag wave that develop the deep feelings that come to our hearts when we see our flag wave. To me, the flag represents a country made up of people who give all they can to bring hope to us all.

We all know the story of Betsy Ross sewing the first national flag that would fly through the events that led to the birth of our nation. She finished it in June of 1776, just in time for the July reading of the Declaration of Independence. The events in Betsy’s personal life as she sewed the flag of our new nation are a strong representation of the service to others and American resilience our flag represents. As a newlywed, Betsy was disowned by her family and Quaker community for marrying someone outside her faith. After leaving her community and starting an embroidery business with her

husband, they began to struggle when the rising conflict with the British made coming by fabrics nearly impossible. Her husband joined the Pennsylvania militia and was fatally wounded in January of 1776.

Imagine a young grieving widow lonely and separated from family. A failing business, financial insecurity and now the loss of her husband. And yet, through that pain she joined the cause and accepted the invitation from George Washington to sew a flag that would unify us and help rally our nation to freedom. A flag Washington carried across the Delaware River; a flag that stood on Mount Suribachi in World War II and was raised at ground zero after the tragedy of 9/11.

Old Glory, even when tattered and torn, reveals to every American that no matter the struggle, hardship, or wars that may occur, we will rise as a nation united as we have done so many times in the past.

Today, I watch as flags fly over hospitals where first responders are working to serve and treat thousands infected with COVID-19, where scientists work around the clock to find cures and vaccines and where legislatures are trying to work across party lines to find solutions for suffering Americans. It is flying over homes where citizens who have lost loved ones or have lost jobs turn to sewing masks to protect those trying to contain this current pandemic. The flag is a constant in a world where wars

wage, disease spreads and we all experience heartache. It signals to me that in our darkest moments, we are still stronger and better together. People will rise to the occasion; we will work together. We will sacrifice together and we will eventually overcome together. Because in America we put the collective good and others before self.

As the son of an Air Force colonel, I have had a unique perspective of the sacrifice our flag stands for. An experience not many youth my age are privileged to have. I have watched as men and women deployed overseas, never truly knowing if they would return to their homes and families. They honorably wear the American flag on their military uniform. I was able to witness, first hand, the honor and respect they each had for the flag and their duty to defend the freedoms and liberties it represented. Their sacrifice and the sacrifice of all before them is embodied in our flag. It is our duty to honor the flag and its

representation of those who sacrifice in so many different ways to build and protect this great nation.



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**Chiropractor**

**Spring is in the Air**

Just as the dust begins to fly inside, pollen starts to fly outside. Seasonal stresses, such as pollen sensitivity, are one of the most common problems in the United States. Pollen, a fine, yellowish powder from flowering plants, budding trees and grasses, is very prevalent in the spring air. **The beauty of spring burdens many with itchy, watery eyes, headaches, runny or clogged nose, sneezing and coughing; making this time of year miserable.**

To help cope with pollen, many people choose to limit their exposure by closing their windows, using air conditioning and showering after outdoor activities to remove pollen from skin and hair.

**Chiropractic patients often remark about improvement in their sinus and allergy conditions as a result of being under chiropractic care. Accelerated Intolerances Elimination Technique** is an effective procedure we use for helping our patients with environmental intolerances and sensitivities. It is safe, natural, non-invasive and assists the body to reset its reactivity. I personally have experienced tremendous relief from seasonal pollens, cats, foods, and molds, after doing this procedure.

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