

YBPA has its eyes on 'more fun in 2021'

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brochure, which it developed at the urging of the late Neil C. Rioridan who served as a Village of Youngstown trustee and later as mayor.

"The brochure, actually the Village (of Youngstown) did this brochure, and Neil came to us (asking), 'Will you do this? We'll help you, we'll provide some support.' We said, 'sure!'" Mark said. "So, it became a cooperative effort with the village and that led into our tie-in."

Noting YBPA's longstanding relationship with the chamber, Mark continued, "We've always had a board seat, a seat at the table. We still do. Stephanie Cattarin, our board member, also sits on the board of the chamber. That is kind of how the connection goes."

Turning to the new website, Mark and Cheryl said YBPA's link here also comes from the chamber, which has owned the site with YBPA owning the domains and the webcam overlooking the lower Niagara River at the Youngstown Yacht Club.

"The upside of that was the YBPA back in those days bought the domains - (www.youngstownny and www.youngstownnewyork). So we've always had those domains," Mark said.

"We would contact Jennifer if we wanted to update, change anything," Cheryl said. "She had rights to it. ... Well, starting this weekend, the brochure goes out and the website goes live, (and) our board will have the rights to add (photos, articles and information) to it."

"We winged it in a lot of ways, but we never had YBPA email, now we will. So we'll have our own email; we'll have our own website; we'll have access to updating it, upgrading it."

The new website was developed by Matt Villnave of Lewiston Digital, thanks to funding the YBPA received from William G. Mayne Business Community Enhancement Program and the Town of Porter.

"It will be more outward-facing; including a members' directory, promotions of Youngstown, its history, its story," Villnave said.

"The grant program likes when the organization who's applying for the grant can partner with other groups and government agen-

cies in getting the program done," Mark said. "The Town of Porter is helping us financially as a partner (for the website and brochure); the YBPA (contributes) funds and the William G. Mayne Business Community Enhancement Program grant is providing a big share of it - 50% actually."

The website, "It will showcase Youngstown, the community, the Town of Porter, this complete brochure will be available on it. And importantly, every member, business member, will be listed, with their clickable links. It's a complete interactive, user-friendly website. When they're available, there will (even) be Facebook links," Mark said.

Other features include the webcam and email availability.

The other exciting news coming centers on YBPA's all-encompassing brochure. Originally planned for release earlier this year but delayed due to COVID-19, the brochure, titled "Welcome to Town of Porter - Open for Business," represents the business association's expanded focus into the lakeshore community of northern Niagara.

Both Cheryl and Mark spoke with enthusiasm as they discussed its new features.

"I'm rather proud of two things - 'Open for Business' (on the cover), like it's a stamp. 'Open for Business' - we're gonna' do this!" she said. "The #YBPA Strong for All is linked to (our brochure, website). Even if you are not a member, they're in here. Everything (Youngstown-related and more is in here)."

"The thing that is also important to mention is we list/support your local businesses," Mark said. "So, YBPA members have stars (in the brochure), but there are a lot of people (listed) who don't have stars. We do try to include anything that is appealing or could (be of) service to a tourist, to a visitor to this area."

"To someone camping down at 4-Mile or to sailors, they need to know (where to shop, dine, get things) in Youngstown, Porter, Ransomville," Cheryl said.

"It's not all-inclusive ... our members of course are here, but there are (also) hundreds of other businesses (listed)," Mark said.

Among the businesses are both new and familiar names, including Skydive the Falls, Ransomville

Speedway and Niagara Jet Adventures.

"They're all featured, whether they belong as a (YBPA) member or not," Cheryl said.

Recalling how YBPA developed the brochure, she continued, "We have about 80 members, so each board member got 20 businesses to contact and confirm with, get their phone numbers, websites, (whether they are) still in business - those kind of things, so that's how we did it, we broke it up. So, the board members have been working together (to reach out) to communicate as best we can. Then we triple-checked (all the details before printing)."

"We're all part of the Town of Porter," Mark said.

Discussing the brochure's schedule of events, Cheryl said, "Sadly, we couldn't have our Street Dance this year. That was one of those things that couldn't be (like a number of others)."

Instead, YBPA is including those events as highlighted "must do's" in both its brochure and website.

Looking over the brochure, Cheryl continued, "That's next year's Street Dance, that's next year's Summerfest. ... We started with September through December of 2020, and rather than (listing) dates for the events, we (included the events) and we put all the available websites (of each event)" for readers to check out at their leisure.

"Here's what normally goes on, and may go on, but you have to check," Mark said, as he scanned the brochure. "We decided to keep on going all through 2021. So, everything is by date heading, but the specific (event) date with the exception of the Street Dance and the St. Patrick's Day Parade don't have actual dates assigned to them."

Mark said YBPA's shaping of the brochure's event listings was intended to "provide a sense of normalcy - a bridge" for readers.

"And hope for the future," Cheryl said.

Noting the Street Dance theme she said, "We'll have more fun in 2021."

"I think as we look at it, it is something to be proud of," she said. "This way, residents, business owners, will see that the YBPA might be quiet (in 2020), but we have not gone away."

Heart, Love & Soul announces Mark Baetzhold as next executive director

After 11 years of faithful stewardship, Sr. Beth Brosmer to retire from Heart & Soul

In its 38th year of service to the community, Heart, Love & Soul has announced Mark Baetzhold will lead the organization as executive director beginning Oct. 1.

Baetzhold brings 20 years of experience in the public and nonprofit sectors. He started his career as a Jesuit volunteer at a Catholic Charities homeless shelter in Spokane, Washington, in 2000 and served as a Peace Corps response volunteer in Malawi from 2014-15. Since 2018, he has served as Heart & Soul's development director, helping guide the organization through a capital campaign and raising over \$1.1 million in grant funding. Baetzhold is a graduate of the State University of New York at Geneseo and holds a Master of Public Administration.

Since 1982, Heart, Love & Soul has provided services to the community and is poised to expand through the Daybreak program, a one-stop center opening later in 2020 that will bring more than 30 partner agencies to one location and provide a single point of access for people in need of services.

"I am excited to step into this new leadership role as Heart & Soul moves toward the future with Daybreak opening later this year, and humbled to be carrying on the legacy of Sister Beth Brosmer and all those at Heart

& Soul who have worked so hard to serve the community," Baetzhold said.

His goal for the agency is to nourish the community, and to continue positioning Heart & Soul through Daybreak to respond more fully to community needs.

After 11 years of service, Brosmer will step down from the executive director role on Sept. 30.

"I have cherished every moment of the past 11 years and feel deeply privileged to have served at Heart & Soul," she said. "In every job, there is a time to change. Now is my time. I leave Heart & Soul with a heart overflowing with gratitude."

Widely recognized for her leadership in the Niagara Falls community for social justice and service to people in need, Brosmer leaves Heart & Soul in a strong position to carry its mission forward in the future.

"After faithfully shepherding Heart & Soul for more than a decade, Sister Beth's departure leaves a big hole in our hearts," said board President Whitney Vantine, Ed.D. "But, at the same time, we are excited for the future that Mark's leadership will bring."

For additional information, call 282-5687 or email b.brosmer@heartloveandsoul.org.

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