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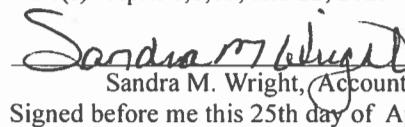
State of New York

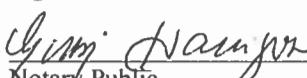
County of Chautauqua

City of Dunkirk

I, Sandra M. Wright, being duly sworn, deposes and says that she is the Principal Clerk for Ogden Newspapers of New York, Inc. the publisher of The OBSERVER, a daily newspaper published in the City of Dunkirk, Chautauqua County, State of New York, and that a notice of which the annexed is a printed copy, was inserted and published in said newspaper on the following

Date(s): April 1,8,15, and 22, 2025


Sandra M. Wright, Account Clerk
Signed before me this 25th day of April 2025


ERIN HARRISON
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 01HA6210883
Qualified in Chautauqua County
My Commission Expires Dec. 21, 2025

LOCAL/REGION**Community notebook****Church planning
rummage sale**

Spring has sprung and it's time for Trinity Episcopal Church Women's Spring Rummage Sale.

Come find your new treasures during our expanded hours on Friday, April 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m. to noon.

The sale is located in Garland Hall at the back of the church on 11 Day St. Fredonia.

As always there is a variety of items and the assortment is always different. There will

be clean spring, summer clothes, books, nicknacks, holiday items, kitchen items, linens, decorating items and so much more.

Chicken and biscuit dinner set for April 13

FORESTVILLE — The Forestville Chapter 247 Order of the Eastern Star will have a chicken and biscuits dinner on Sunday, April 13, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Forestville Masonic Lodge. Cost is \$13

Library plans**Wednesday workshop**

BROCTON — Poet and Author, John Brantingham, will be offering a mini workshop at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, in the Ahira Hall Memorial Library. This workshop is a part of the Library's Author Chat series and is open to teens and adults. For more information, contact the Ahira Hall Memorial Library at (716) 792-9418 or Director@AhiraHall.org.

Pre-sale only barbecue set May 20

GOWANDA — The Travel Club of Gowanda High School is facilitating a pre-sale-only chicken barbecue fundraiser on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, from 3-6 p.m. in

Hiring ban

Continued from Page 1

The executive order also apparently banned counties, cities, towns or villages from hiring fired employees for any positions, like secretaries, snowplow drivers or bookkeepers.

During the recent county legislature meeting, lawmakers voted to oppose the executive order.

Legislator Bob Banksiki of Dunkirk was one of the sponsors of the resolution.

"I believe the governor has overstepped her bounds," he said before the vote.

Banksiki, who is a Democrat like Hochul, said he understands that a public employee who violates the Taylor Law will face repercussions, but argued that

those who went on strike were seeking safer working conditions.

"It wasn't about money or benefits or anything like that," he said.

Legislator Tom Carle, D-Fredonia, said although he supports Banksiki's position, he said the county should be cautious before hiring any workers who participated in the strike.

"Whenever we're making decisions on hiring for the county anybody who was involved in the strike, we just have to keep in mind that they did put the public safety at risk," he said.

Carle added that he is in favor of the resolution because he agrees that Hochul "over-

stepped her bounds."

County Executive PJ Wendel said he was informed by some state officials that it is likely Hochul will not resign the executive order once it expires on April 9. However, that could change so he still encouraged the legislature to vote in favor of the resolution.

Wendel previously said he opposed the executive order.

He also took issue with Carle's comments, regarding if the public's safety was ever at risk.

"The prison maintained its operation. No one was in jeopardy outside of the prisons," Wendel said.

The resolution was unanimously approved.

Public Notice

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Changes are also in effect for standby, street lighting and economic development rates. Please check page 2 of your bill for bill messages and nyseg.com for detailed information.

Regarding energy supply: If you purchase energy supply from NYSEG, your price will continue to be based on market prices, we pass through that cost to you without profit; if you purchase your energy supply from a supplier other than NYSEG (also known as an energy services company or ESCO), your energy supply price depends on your agreement with your ESCO.

Dunkirk Youth & Recreation Department announces summer program

The city of Dunkirk Youth & Recreation Department will be collaborating with the Boys and Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County for this year's youth summer program. Order in advance online by May 6, and include the name of the student you're supporting: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zCaKgpkVpuFIwMt_teGQ-Z5fEfBmp34aZaHnzazQchok/edit

Catered by Weidner BBQ, meals cost \$15 and include spuds, coleslaw and a roll. Meals are gluten-free without a roll. Eat in the cafeteria or get take-out meals. Payments should be made by May 6, 2025. Checks payable to Gowanda Travel Club.

Questions? Contact Ms. Pickering at 1-716-532-3325, ext. 6004 or Ms. Chiappone at mschiappone@gcslearn.org.

Gowanda seeks community support

GOWANDA — Are you doing some spring cleaning? If so, Gowanda High School can help!

Community members are invited to donate gently used and cleaned spring and summer clothing to the Thrifty Panther until April 17. Items can be dropped off at Gowanda High School on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The Thrifty Panther, a free resource for all students, is also accepting new school supplies, deodorant, chapstick, toothbrushes, and toothpaste.

With any questions, contact Mrs. Draeger at (716) 532-3325, ext. 6014 or e-mail msdraeger@gcslearn.org.

The District is also seeking support for its School Counseling Advisory Council. The group is seeking insight into its program goals, recommendations, and feedback.

Parents/guardians of grade K-12 students and community stakeholders are invited to participate. The council meets two times per year — once in early fall and again in late spring.

If interested in joining, email Ms. Gerardi at msgerardi@gcslearn.org.

are available for an extra fee. One child summer registration is \$400, two children is \$750, and three children is \$1,050. and community service, and sports and recreation activities will occur throughout the program.

The program includes breakfast, lunch, and a snack daily. Field trips, community engagement activities, and engaging programs that follow the Boys and Girls Club 5 core areas including, arts, career exploration and creation, health and wellness, leadership

and community service, and food addiction, codependent men and women, and many others.

The program began in 1991 and now has over 35,000 groups throughout the United States.

States. We believe that a personal relationship with Christ is the life changing step that will bring recovery and happiness. We invite all who are mired in habits they cannot change on their own to try Celebrate Recovery.

"If you need more information or have questions regarding this opportunity for recovery that we are providing, I can be reached by email or by phone at 585-609-7923," said Geraldine Rapino, pastor.

Celebrate Recovery group meeting weekly

A Celebrate Recovery group for adults that is being sponsored by the Dunkirk United Methodist Church, at Sixth Street and Washington Avenue in Dunkirk is meeting Fridays at 6 p.m. There is no charge or commitment to be found while working in a group of people that understand the challenges participants face.

Celebrate Recovery is a 12-step program based on Biblical principles and the power of Jesus Christ to heal and make whole people suffering from (bad) Habits, (long-held) Hurts, and (limiting) Hang ups. It has eight guiding principles based on the Beatitudes and unlike other programs that look back at the past or rehash painful memories, this program looks forward at the opportunity for

change based on making wise choices, taking responsibility for poor choices made in the past, and a spiritual commitment to Jesus Christ. There is happiness and satisfaction to be found while working in a group of people that understand the challenges participants face.

Celebrate Recovery addresses all types of habits, hurts and hang-ups. It is a large umbrella program that deals with any problem that keeps people from living a happy, healthy life. Groups are divided into men and women. The group has sections for the chemically dependent and for their adult children, for battered women, the sexually abused, unresolved or uncontrolled anger,

Area police**CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

— SHERMAN — Darryl Thompson Jr., 39, of Sherman was charged Wednesday with second-degree assault and second-degree obstructing governmental administration. At around 1 a.m. deputies responded to an address in the town to investigate a reported altercation between two people. It is alleged that Thompson became combative, did not cooperate in the investigation and engaged in a physical altercation with a deputy. He was taken into custody and transported to the Chautauqua County Jail to await centralized arraignment.

FREDONIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

— Richard Pickens, no age or address listed, was arrested March 3 and charged with second-degree harassment.

— Chelsi Mikowski, 36, no address listed, was arrested March 12 and charged with aggravated driving while intoxicated.

— Gregory Rosier, 59, of Fredonia, was arrested March 13 and charged with second-degree harassment.

— Patrick Olmsted, 27, no address listed, was arrested March 21 and charged with driving while intoxicated.

— Lauren Carlson, 35, of Fredonia, was arrested March 20 and charged with petit larceny.

— Shaina Love, 34, of Cassadaga, was arrested March 22 and charged with fourth-degree criminal mischief.

— Rico Acevedo, 28, of Fredonia, was arrested Wednesday and charged with disorderly conduct and second-degree obstruction of governmental administration.

— Donato Schade, 21, of Dunkirk, was arrested Thursday and charged with third-degree aggravated unlicensed operation, operating with suspended registration, and operating with no insurance.

— The following people were arrested on bench warrants: Dominique White, 28, on March 9; Morgan Eppinger, 24, on March 11; Heather Payne, 33, on March 12; Erica Lindgren, 28, on March 14; Kimberly Ramey, 47, on March 15; and Timothy Kelley, 45, on Thursday.

EVs

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One problem some electric vehicle owners face is the lack of the ability to easily mount front license plates on their cars and trucks. This has resulted in many drivers being ticketed, in some instances on multiple occasions."

Tesla drivers have reported being ticketed for not having a front license plate in states that require front plates. Thirty states require front license plates to allow law enforcement to more easily identify a vehicle. States with cashless tolling also use the front license plate to identify vehicles that don't have an E-Z pass transponder.

Most vehicles sold come with brackets for front and back license plates. Teslas, though, have been sold with sticky tape that can be placed on the front bumper to hold a front license plate, or Tesla owners have to get a special license plate frame and drill into the bumper of their car.

Woerner says the state should do more to accommodate electric vehicle manufacturers.

"To mount a standard license plate on the front of some electric vehicles, drivers must purchase special license plate frames and drill into their bumpers to attach them. Such frames can block important sensors that are used for cruise control and collision avoidance and may compromise the structural integrity of the bumpers. This bill authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles to develop a license sticker that would make it easier for electric vehicle owners to display a front license number without having to buy after-market products or drill into their vehicles. License stickers could be easily installed by wrapping them around the front bumper of an electric vehicle without covering any sensors."

Place a Special
Mother's Day Remembrance
For Your Loved One
In Our
SPECIAL MEMORIAL SECTION
Printing On Mother's Day Weekend
Saturday, May 10th, 2025

"Call or Email Today"

Payment required before publication.

We accept Visa, Master Card,

Discover & American Express.

Deadline for Placement & Payment
Wednesday, May 7th, 2025

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Classified Dept.

716-487-1234 ext 220

To Place Your Order Today or

email photo & request to

classified@observertoday.com

LOCAL/STATE

New York sued over delays on climate change law

By CHRIS WADE

The Center Square contributor

A coalition of green groups are taking New York state to court in an effort to force the Hochul administration to implement a 2019 climate change law.

A lawsuit filed in the state Supreme Court asks justices to order the state Department of Environmental Conservation to issue draft regulations to implement the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act "immediately" and to declare that by failing to do so, the agency "has violated the climate law and the state constitutional right to clean air."

The climate law, signed by then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo, in 2019, requires New York to reduce its excess greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

The regulations, billed at the time as the most aggressive environmental protections in the nation, also called for planting more trees and capturing carbon for storage underground to cut carbon emissions.

"However, with only

five years until the first deadline, New York's emissions are rising rather than falling," lawyers

for the plaintiffs wrote in the 34-page complaint. "The state must not only reverse this trend but must rapidly decrease emissions in the next few years."

The plaintiffs point to a January DEC decision not to release draft environmental regulations for updated clean air standards this year as planned.

The agency hasn't provided a date for their release, the litigants said.

Green groups say New York is suffering from rising temperatures, more intense air pollution, health impacts, and more frequent and more severe extreme weather events such as storms, flooding, heat waves and wildfires.

The Trump administration is also rolling back federal environmental protections and climate change funding for states as part of efforts to reduce taxpayer "fraud and waste" in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is headed by former New York congressman Lee Zeldin.

In the face of the current federal assault on climate and environmental protections, it is more important than ever that New York meets its statutory obligations to protect its residents from harmful greenhouse gases and air pollution," said Roger

Downs, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter. "New York must demonstrate its leadership and set an example for other states by advancing critical climate protections."

Rachel Spector, senior attorney at Earthjustice, said regulations spurring the shift to "zero emission" buildings and transportation "will help New Yorkers breathe cleaner air, live healthier lives, and move away from burning fossil fuels."

"New York's climate law charges DEC to issue regulations that will reduce climate emissions statewide, and the state has failed to do so," she said in a statement.

"These regulations are not just a technicality — they are the primary means of ensuring the state meets its climate mandates."

Meanwhile, New York is facing a lawsuit filed by a group of 22 Republican attorneys general over a state law requiring fossil fuel companies to pay for alleged damages caused by climate change.

Republican, business and industry groups argue that the law will do little to blunt the impact of climate change while passing on the costs to the state's consumers in the form of higher energy bills.

At the recent Board meeting, the District passed a resolution recognizing Janisch as the basketball score/clock operator and public address announcer through the winter sports season, as well as his time as an intramural baseball coach.

Janisch volunteered his time for all 12 dates as an operator and announcer,

estimated at \$780, and 21 sessions as a coach, estimated at \$597. He completed all of the work — that the district would typically pay for — and later submitted a letter to Ralston and the Board of Education stating he wished to donate his time and effort.

"It was a very nice motion on his behalf," Ralston said.

The Board also approved Nate Shuart as a varsity girls flag football assistant coach and Chris VanCheri as a volunteer junior varsity baseball assistant coach.

A trial period of a High School Garden Club was also approved, as well as 2025 Summer School Coordinators: Kelly Pieniazek, Rose Battleson, and Kevin Rice.

Hires

Continued from Page 1

Wendel added that this change will not impact the budget. He said the budget already reflects the financial reduction of the position, but there was the potential that savings was going to go away once the position was filled.

The salary range of the new combined position is \$84,682, something that Legislator Fred Larson, D-Jamestown, noted during the full legislature meeting.

"It did strike me that this is one huge range," he said.

Larson said he was not going to vote against the

change but said he would like to see salary ranges investigated.

"I would hope that one of our committees someday would re-examine whether a range of \$20,000 or \$30,000, or some cap might be appropriate," he said.

The new salary range change was unanimously approved.

In other business:

— The legislature approved a lease agreement with Jamestown's Rental Properties, LLC for the county to lease 95 East Chautauqua St., Mayville for

the county Law Department. This is the former Family Health Medical Services, where Dr. Robert Burke had operated out of in the past.

The lease is for 10 years and will be for \$8,750 a month.

— Daniel Ingrao of Falconer and Christopher Witkowski of Dunkirk and Legislator Lisa Vanstrom, R-West Ellicott were appointed to the Traffic Safety Board.

— Sagan Sheffield-Smith of Bemus Point was reappointed to the county Industrial Development Agency Board of Directors.

Main

Continued from Page 1

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, the vehicle count was more than 2,500, for four straight years from 2016-19.

The vehicle classification breakdown on the stat sheet covered 2020, the COVID year. It reported 24 medium- and heavy-weight trucks per day on the section of street to be closed.

Traffic is to be detoured down Marsden and Newton Streets, using Washington Avenue to connect. Plans shown by Wells call for "detour ahead" signs on Main Street at East 9th Street (north end) and near Hazleton Dog Park (south end).

"Road closed ahead signs" would get erected on Main Street just ahead of the railroad tracks (north end) and at the Williams Street intersection (south end).

Wells intends to expand the turning radius at the Marsden Street intersection to help large trucks navigate

the turn during the detour.

Michael Przybycien, deputy Department of Public Works Director, wondered who would repair damage to the road while it was closed for the year. The Wells representatives promised to repair any damage done to Main Street during the construction work.

"What if this (detour) does not work out, is there a Plan B?" Przybycien asked. "We haven't really done so in a specific way but we've looked at other options," Metzger replied.

Przybycien said he doesn't really have an issue with closing the road, other than blacktop restoration. His boss, DPW Director Randy Woodbury, worried that confused truckers might turn left onto Main Street Extension from Williams — but stated "that's out of my jurisdiction." The section of Williams Street nearest Route 60 is in the town of Dunkirk, not the city of

Dunkirk.

Police Chief Chris Witkowski and Fire Chief Nick Barter also attended the DPW meeting and said they could deal with the detour, after receiving assurances from Wells that their emergency vehicles can go down Main Street if needed. Metzger said that was a prime reason movable barriers were chosen to block the street.

Woodbury said he would prepare a Common Council resolution to shut Main Street and enact the detour, in time for the council's next meeting April 16.

The DPW chief has taken the attitude that Wells' multimillion-dollar expansion project, which will add production lines and jobs, is worth the year-long inconvenience of closing a stretch of Main Street.

"If DPW sees issues, we'll negotiate at that time. We don't want to get in the way," he said.

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Signs

Continued from Page 1

"Counseling for All: The Cost of Exclusion" will be examined in a non-partisan, civic engagement talk on Wednesday at the State University of New York at Fredonia.

College of Education, Health Sciences, and Human Services Assistant Professor Sabrina G. Musson will lead a meaningful exploration of the implications of recent White House executive orders. Her insights will assist students and colleagues to better understand how these executive actions might impact society, industries and communities.

The talk, in the Williams Center Blue Lounge from noon to 12:50 p.m., is free and open to the public.

Musson will provide expert, research-based perspectives on policy implications; engage students in critical thinking about governance and societal impacts; encourage

age interdisciplinary learning and discussion; and contribute to civic awareness in a non-partisan academic setting.

Musson is program director of the university's Clinical Mental Health Counseling M.S. program.

Draejen Hicks, a first-year student majoring in Theatre Arts who also serves as a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Accessibility Student Ambassador, from Fredonia, NY, will serve as moderator.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is sponsoring "The Cost of Exclusion" as an event in its Non-partisan Civic Engagement Talks series.

"The purpose is to make sure people understand that having a gun could lead to death, including

warnings in May 2022. Warnings are required to be posted where weapons or firearms are displayed or delivered to the purchaser at the entrance to the site and in at least one additional area where sales occur conspicuously stating the warning in no smaller than 24-point type and on paper at least 8 and 1/2 inches by 11 inches.

"For me it's just another example, as I spoke in the previous bill, that when it comes to the Second Amendment, New York stops at nothing to adopt a death by 1,000 cuts strategy to make it onerous and difficult for citizens to exercise their rights under the Second Amendment," said Assemblyman Robert Smullen, R-Herkimer.

"For that reason we voted

against the bill in chief

last year, all my colleagues should vote no on this chapter amendment because what it does is it

infringes on your Second Amendment rights."

Dinowitz' bill was originally introduced in 2023 before it was passed in 2024. It requires warnings be posted and provided by firearm dealers warning people of the dangers of gun ownership, including the increased risk of suicide, death during domestic disputes, and unintentional death to children, household members and others and of the availability of the 988 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

According to a CBS News report, placing warning labels on firearms is an idea promoted by the Gun Shop Project — a nationwide partnership of gun owner groups and suicide prevention advocates. Westchester County unanimously passed legislation requiring the

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LOCAL/REGION

Ambassador

Continued from Page 1

Tourette Syndrome is a condition of the nervous system that causes people to have "tics" or sudden movements or sounds that people do repeatedly, without any control over it. Meyers was diagnosed with it last summer, but Lemelin said she has had symptoms since she was very young.

The family's experience with Tourette Syndrome was a difficult one at first, Lemelin said, but one that prompted Meyers to apply to be a Junior Youth Ambassador.

"There was an application process we had to go through, which I encouraged her to do, and we had to do things like raise awareness at her school with things like stickers she made," Lemelin said. "She was the youngest in the nation to do this, and it went very well."

Meyers and the other 24 Junior Youth Ambassadors went to Washington DC and Capitol Hill during Advocacy Week from March 3 to 6. National Advocacy Day was March 5, which is the day Lemelin said they were at Capitol Hill. During this time, the focus for the kids was advocacy awareness, specifically in the form of self-advocacy and finding their own voice. They also helped to get funding on Capitol Hill for the school year, along with talking with senators and repre-



Ava Meyers holds up a flyer, advertising her newly started Kind Kids Club at Sinclairville Elementary.

sentatives to talk about their experiences and tell their stories of living with Tourette Syndrome.

"Before we went, Ava really had no voice," Lemelin said. "She was embarrassed and often got teased, and was really very quiet. This is the first time she was able to meet other kids with TS, and she came back as a different kid."

Lemelin said Meyers received a lot of support from a few specific staff members at Sinclairville Elementary, and on their return, Meyers began a Kind Kids Club at the school with their help.

The Kind Kids Club is looking to focus on finding areas to spread kindness throughout the school and

to bring in other kids to do this as well. The first meeting of the club will be April 24.

"We talked about doing it while we were in DC, and I didn't know where it would go," Lemelin said. "It's a brand new club looking to spread kindness in the school community. It's exciting for a seven year old to be able to make her own club and be supported by these educators. I never could've imagined it."

One other part of the DC experience was meeting Baylen Dupree, who has her own TLC show, "Baylen Out Loud", and which Lemelin said showed Meyers that there are well-known people out there with Tourette Syndrome as well. She added that part of raising awareness on the trip was the sharing not only of the stickers that Meyers made but a card as well, detailing Tourette Syndrome and how it affects both children and adults, making them make noises or say things that they have no control over.

Lemelin expressed her gratitude to the Tourette Association of America for the opportunity.

"They really do things to change our lives and make things for the TS community better," Lemelin said.

For more information on the Tourette Association of America visit tourette.org.

Cruelty

Continued from Page 1

"I hope that this isn't put an additional burden on the court that is making this determination, sometimes at 2 a.m. or 3 a.m., whenever these TERPO requests come in, to have to go to some other kind of registry to try to determine if there's been any acts of animal cruelty" Walsh said.

"Only probable cause is necessary to actually issue the TERPO, so I just hope that as the evidence comes in to support it that it doesn't put too much additional burden on the court or the judges that are trying to make these determination, sometimes very often in the middle of the night."

Water

Continued from Page 1

Pacos said the district is also about to have a lot of debt service coming in, from its ongoing capital projects.

The current rate for North County Water District customers is \$5.16 per 1,000 gallons. Pacos said about a dollar of the proposed hike was due to debt service. The rest

is from rising operations and maintenance costs, including the city's water sales rate increase.

The Chautauqua County Legislature must officially set the North County Water District water rate. The district board's proposal last week is merely a recommendation.

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Changes are also in effect for standby, street lighting and economic development rates. Please check page 2 of your bill for bill messages and nyseg.com for detailed information.

Regarding energy supply: If you purchase energy supply from NYSEG, your price will continue to be based on market prices, we pass through that cost to you without profit; if you purchase your energy supply from a supplier other than NYSEG (also known as an energy services company or ESCO), your energy supply price depends on your agreement with your ESCO.

Olean man accused of selling drugs in Jamestown

U.S. Attorney Michael DiGiacomo has announced that a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging Chauncy J. Robinson a/k/a Cbear, 39, of Olean with narcotics conspiracy, which carries a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years in prison and a maximum of life.

Robinson was arraigned before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael J. Roemer and detained.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Joshua A. Violanti and Louis A. Testani, who are handling the case, stated that according to the indictment, between 2018 and May 26, 2022, Robinson conspired with Joseph S. Zaso and others, to sell heroin and fentanyl in the Jamestown area. Co-defendants include Andres Pizzaro Campos, Max Pizzaro Campos, and

of violent crime. Operation Take Back America streamlines efforts and resources from the Department's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETFs) and Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN).

The indictment is the result of an investigation by the Jamestown Police Department,

under the direction of Chief Timothy Jackson, the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Frank A. Tarentino III, New York Field Division, and the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office, under the direction of Sheriff James Quattrone.

Area police

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SINCLAIRVILLE — The cause of a fire at a trailer park remains unknown.

On Sunday at around 2:15 p.m. the Sinclairville Fire Department along with Gerry and Cassadaga Fire Departments responded to a reported structure fire at 27 Main St., Lot 9 in the village of Sinclairville.

Once the fire was extinguished, the Chautauqua County Fire Investigation Team was requested for an origin and cause investigation. After a hands-on investigation, the cause of the fire remains undetermined.

DUNKIRK POLICE DEPARTMENT

— Patrick Phillips, 43, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 1 and charged with seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance.

— Leanne Moore, 38, of Fredonia, was arrested April 1 and charged with two counts of seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance, and single counts of driving while intoxicated and moving from lane unsafely.

— Anthony Currenton, 30, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 2 and charged with two counts of disorderly conduct.

— Jorge Nieves Jr., 48, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 2 and charged with third-degree aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and passing a red signal.

— Elizabeth Robinson, 47, of Olean, was arrested April 3 and charged with petit larceny.

— Juan Ortiz, 41, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 3 and charged with seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance.

— Ingrid Collins, 48, of Cassadaga,

was arrested April 4 and charged with seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance.

— David Payne 3rd, 35, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 4 and charged with disorderly conduct.

— James Hurley Jr., 32, of Silver Creek, was arrested April 4 and charged with petit larceny.

— Christopher Ley, 64, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 5 and charged with driving while intoxicated and no or inadequate headlight.

— Scott Randall, 45, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 5 and charged with third-degree aggravated unlicensed operation and four vehicle and traffic law infractions.

— Dawn Stein, 48, homeless, was arrested April 5 and charged with trespass.

— Genesis Vazquez Gonzalez, 21, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 6 and charged with operating with suspended registration and no or inadequate headlight.

— Anthony Anderson, 44, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 6 and charged with first-degree criminal contempt and second-degree harassment.

— Richard Conway, 46, of Westfield, was arrested April 7 and charged with second-degree aggravated unlicensed operation and five vehicle and traffic law infractions.

— Jamal Robinson, 27, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 7 and charged with second-degree aggravated unlicensed operation and no plates.

— Omar Contreras, 44, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 7 and charged with third-degree assault.

— Merranda Reid, 33, of Dunkirk, was arrested April 7 and charged with endangering the welfare of a child.

New York plane crash claims lives of high-achieving family celebrating a birthday

NEW YORK (AP) — When they boarded a small plane bound for upstate New York this past weekend, the six passengers — a pair of close-knit siblings, their parents and partners — were on the cusp of a new chapter in a family life already replete with personal and professional accomplishment.

Kareenna Groff, a one-time collegiate soccer star at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was celebrating her 25th birthday with her longtime boyfriend, investment banker James Santoro, to whom she planned to get engaged this summer.

They were joined by Kareenna's brother, Jared Groff, 26, a former basketball player at Swarthmore planning his own proposal to his girlfriend Alexia Couyutas Duarte, a 24-year-old Colombia native set to start at Harvard Law School in the fall.

Shortly after noon on Saturday, the twin-engine plane they were traveling in crashed into a muddy field in Copake, New York, killing both young couples and the Groffs' parents, Dr. Michael Groff and Dr. Joy Saini — each celebrated surgeons.

"They were all so accomplished, but it was never about their accomplishments," James Santoro's father, John Santoro, told The Associated Press. "Everyone considered them such a bright spot in their life. I'm sad for myself and my family, but I'm sad for everyone else who've lost them too."

Piloted by Michael Groff, the plane left the Boston suburbs early Saturday morning, picking up Kareenna Groff and James Santoro at Westchester County Airport in White Plains, New York, and then making the short trip north toward the Catskills.

Minutes before the landing, officials said, Michael Groff radioed air traffic control at Columbia County Airport to say he had missed the initial approach. As air traffic controllers prepared new coordinates, they attempted to relay a low-altitude warning but received no response.

At a briefing on Monday, Todd Inman, an official with the National Transportation Safety Board, said the overcast conditions may have impacted the pilot's visibility, though the exact cause of the crash remains unknown. The initial investigation had not turned up any issues with the aircraft, a Mitsubishi MU-2B, Inman said.

The tragedy has prompted an outpouring of grief and raised questions about the cause of the crash. Friends of Michael Groff

described him as an experienced pilot who started flying as a teenager and often made the trip to his sister's country house in upstate New York.

In October, he completed an additional safety course required to fly the high-performance plane, officials said.

"Michael and Joy were wonderful, warm parents and distinguished physicians who treasured their children," said Jonathan Becker, a family friend.

Their youngest daughter, Anika, was not on the flight.

As a student athlete at MIT, Kareenna Groff was named the NCAA Woman of the Year in 2022 for both athletic and academic achievements, including peer-reviewed papers on epilepsy and global health equities.

She stayed at MIT an extra year to earn a master's degree in biomedical engineering, then moved with Santoro last summer to a Manhattan apartment where they frequently hosted friends and family.

"James and Kareenna loved living in the city," John Santoro said. "My son would be walking for hours, for miles just to be part of it."

Jared Groff's friends described him as a buoyant presence and a formidable athlete, scoring over 1,000 points as a point guard at Weston High School in Massachusetts before joining the team at Swarthmore College. There, he met Couyutas Duarte, an economics and political science major whose childhood living on the border between Colombia and Venezuela had stirred a passion for helping others navigate migration challenges.

"That was one of the main things that drove her to focus on immigration law," her sister, Maria Claudia Couyutas Duarte, told the AP. "She saw what she had here as a privilege to support others who needed us."

On the day before the crash, Couyutas Duarte had attended an accepted students event at Harvard Law School.

"That was her dream — to go to Harvard," her sister added. "We've never even met anyone who's ever gone to Harvard. It was so outside of her reach, and yet she made it happen."

Authorities said they expected to fully extract the wreckage of the aircraft by Tuesday night. A preliminary report on the causes of the crash will be released within 30 days.

LOCAL/COMMUNITY NEWS**Woman accused of illegally receiving \$27,000 of benefits**

A Fredonia woman has been charged with accepting thousands of dollars worth of benefits that she was not entitled to.

On Monday, Investigators from the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office arrested 30-year-old Tiffany A. Pratt after a combined investigation from the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division, the Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services Program Integrity Unit and the Chautauqua County District Attorney's Office.

From May of 2022 through January 2025 Tiffany Pratt allegedly filed multiple SNAP applications with Chautauqua

County Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services but failed to disclose income resources when she filed the applications.

By failing to disclose the income, deputies said she received more than \$27,000 SNAP benefits.

Pratt was charged with six counts of offering a false instrument for filing-felony, third-degree grand larceny, third-degree welfare fraud-felony and misuse of food stamps-felony.

Pratt was issued an appearance ticket to appear in the Village of Fredonia Court to answer the charges.

Instances of suspected welfare fraud or food stamp misuse should be reported by calling the hotline 1-800-388-5365.

Community notebook**Parks Commission to meet**

JAMESTOWN — The Chautauqua County Parks Commission will be meeting on Thursday, April 24 at 10 a.m. at the Chautauqua County Airport. The public is welcome to attend.

Access Chautauqua Programming announced

Access Chautauqua Programming for April

26-May 2 is as follows:

Chautauqua Sunrise, hosted by Doc Hamels, will have guest Dr. Rodney Buchanon from Westfield Memorial Hospital. The program is live at 9 a.m. on Saturday, then repeats at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. each day.

Fresh Perspectives, hosted by Gail Erb, features Tina Newell, CHQ Wellness, discussing fats. The program is at 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Repeat programming is typically re-aired throughout the week at other various time slots.

All programming starts on Saturday, April 26 with the final airing on Friday, May 2.

Access Chautauqua is available to cable viewers in the Chautauqua, Mayville, North Harmony, Portland, Ripley, Sherman, and Westfield areas, and can be found on cable channel 1301.

The programs may also be viewed after the initial airing at the station's website <https://accesschautauquacountytv.org>.

JCC

Continued from Page 1

During her appearance last week at Audit and Control, Dennison said that if the county refused to pay for 25%, the state would not pay for its share, which would be 50% of the entire cost.

The good news, however, was the project cost was reduced.

Dennison said the original budget had \$104,000 for contingency.

Since discovering the asbestos, Dennison said the work at the Hultquist Library Project continued and they no longer need the entire \$104,000 for contingency expenses. "While the architects did not have complete foresight in looking or thinking about asbestos, some of our other quotations came in lower than expected," she said.

Also, the work for the asbestos project was lowered to \$187,000.

Additionally, JCC has completed asbestos removal from the old School 7, which came in under budget and is using the remaining funds from that project to cover the Hultquist Library asbestos project.

With the reduced costs, JCC is now seeking \$23,194 from the county.

Should that be approved, JCC will fund the same amount and the state will cover the remaining portion, around \$46,400.

Dennison said if the county and state refused to pay the 75% for the asbestos abatement, JCC would be forced to cover the costs because the work couldn't be delayed.

She said they would likely have to shelve some other approved projects.

Dennison said the college does not want to try to get funds from the foundation because the foundation is focused on raising money for the combined YMCA/JCC athletic complex and does not want to burden the foundation with any additional projects.

Both the legislature's Audit and Control, and Administrative Services committees both approved the request at their April meetings. The full legislature will vote for final approval at the full meeting on Wednesday.

Wetlands

Continued from Page 1

The court had ruled wetlands that have a "significant nexus" to larger bodies of water had been the standard for evaluating whether permits were required for discharges under the 1972 landmark environmental law. Opponents had objected that the standard was vague and unworkable.

Hurst argues that New York's changes to its Freshwater Wetlands Act don't comply with the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett v. U.S.* and, in fact, fall in line with previous court law that has now been overruled.

"The timing could not be more revealing," Hurst wrote in his Memorandum of Law filed alongside the lawsuit. "Just as the nation's highest court underscored the constitutional dangers of vague and boundless environmental regulation, New York chose to double down—empowering its environmental agency with the very kind of unfettered discretion the Court explicitly warned against. Where the Supreme Court drew a hard constitutional line to protect landowners from capricious enforcement, New York blurred that line it could find."

"These legal infirmities are particularly acute when the consequences of the DEC's regime now rests not on fixed definitions or clearly drawn

jurisdictional maps, but on presumption, abstraction, and limitless agency discretion. In doing so, the State has effectively dared to fill the regulatory vacuum left by the federal rollback—using a blunt state-law instrument to impose a wetlands regime arguably more expansive than the one the court just struck down. In short, while Sackett reaffirms that there are constitutional boundaries to environmental authority, New York's response has been to sidestep them entirely."

Due process concerns lie in what the CLPOA and its fellow plaintiffs say is the elimination of procedural safeguards afforded to property owners, including prior requirements that there be individualized notice, public hearings and an established administrative record before property is designated a regulated wetland. The lawsuit states landowners no longer have an meaningful opportunity to contest wetland designations, in part because the DEC now presumes to have jurisdiction that can only be overturned through a costly and burdensome administrative process.

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regulatory designation are

Creek

Continued from Page 1

While the Willow Road bridge project is approaching, the Town of Dunkirk welcomed a representative from the County to discuss potential projects further down the road. Rebecca Wurster, Special Projects Coordinator with the Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Development, discussed the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) with the Town Board during a presentation that lasted nearly 20 minutes at a recent meeting.

Wurster discussed the benefits of an approved LWRP, including focused collaboration between multiple levels of government and a defined vision for the community with input from stakeholders. Wurster stated that an approved LWRP increases a community's chances to obtain grant funding for projects pertaining to the development and installation of waterfront projects.

"It's guiding your vision of the future of what you expect and want to see in your waterfront in your community," Wurster said.

Among several projects discussed recently include increased access to Canadaway Creek where it meets Lake Erie; development of land near the waterfront on both Wilbur Road and Temple Road; flood mitigation along Canadaway Creek; stabilization of land along Canadaway Creek near bridges; and development of signs that detail the history of the region.

Wurster noted that throughout discussions regarding the Town of Dunkirk, the consistent focus has been on recreation activities along Canadaway Creek to promote tourism, while not disrupting the "rural character" of the Town.

In the coming months, a meeting will be scheduled for additional public input. Wurster expects to present a final draft of a plan to the Town Board for review this coming fall.

Also at its recent meeting, the Town Board approved replacing its servers with updated equipment through SynchroNet, at a cost of \$14,193.38.

"We knew this was coming, so we did put that in the budget," said Deputy Supervisor Jean Crane.

The Town Board also amended an agreement with Municipal Solutions to facilitate payment of the money owed to Chadwick Bay Intermunicipal Water Works (CBI) by the Town.

The Town of Dunkirk Justice Court collected \$23,995 stemming from a total of 305 cases in the month of March. The Town Clerk's Office collected \$2,490.24 in the month of March.

The Town Board and Feinen asked City of Dunkirk Police to monitor activity on Williams Street as large trucks are often driving on the street despite signs posted restricting access for such vehicles.

The Town Board also thanked Dunkirk Police Lieutenant Doug Switzer for attending the recent meeting and commended the City Police for its new format in its detailed monthly reports.

The next regular meeting of the Dunkirk Town Board is Tuesday, May 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Prior to that meeting, an open meeting for residents to discuss matters pertaining to the town will be held on Thursday, May 8 at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Articles

Continued from Page 1

The mayor continued, "You may not hear about the plan until its fruition—that's the idea of executing a plan—but plans are already underway to continue discussions for future (on campus Fred Fest) events."

Ferguson went on to add that "college student leadership, event coordinators, and others have met with us to provide activities, and suggestions, to diffuse negativity off campus. (Fredonia Police) Chief Dave Price stated he has been here 30 years and not seen a meeting nor collaboration between the two entities like this in the past."

After thanking local law enforcement agencies for their help on Fred Fest

plans, Fredonia's mayor while you were here."

The mayor later added, "I will say that the water issue is not a reason nor license to invite drug dealers and ne'er-do-wells in our community. The few

ruin it for the many. It's not all college students... 95% of (students at the school) are standup citizens who have done great things in this community, and we hope that they will consider the village as a permanent location somewhere in their future."

"The village water plan is focused and moving along as we will have a strong bond between the village, college, our residents and our temporary residents—the students of Fredonia State University," Ferguson concluded.

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