



## Greenway Update

**FALL 2013**  
NiagaraGreenway.org

### Paddles Up Niagara 2013 A Great Day on the Water!

The Niagara River Greenway Commission hosted their Eighth Annual "Paddles Up Niagara" on July 27<sup>th</sup> the event traveled 4.6 miles along the south river shoreline of Grand Island, New York, from the starting point at Beaver Island State Park to East River Marsh Restoration Project returning back to Beaver Island State Park, Little Beaver Island launch. This year's event again included a "Poker Run Drawing" where the lucky person with the winning ticket at the end of the run is the winner. Once again the event was free of charge, and a wonderful lunch was hosted by the Grand Island Historical Society along with a guided tour of the beautiful and historic River Lea House located on the grounds of Beaver Island State Park. This year entertainment was provided by "23 Skidoo" a New Orleans style quartet that brought entertainment to everyone. The rain held off till after the days activities which brought out a total registration of 275 participants and 260 water-craft, a very pleasant partly cloudy sky and cool breezes that everyone enjoyed.

A new addition this year was a "Celebrity Challenge" which pitted local political and non-political celebrities in a 200 meter sprint race to win the coveted "Leuchner Cup".

Participants in the race were Regional Vice-President of Empire State Development Sam Hoyt, Mayor Paul Dyster City of Niagara Falls, Mark Thomas Western District Director of New York State Parks, Greg Stevens Chairman Niagara River Greenway Commission, Paul Leuchner Chairman Paddles Up Niagara 2013 and Meg Rossman YNN Reporter. The race was



a run away by Paul Leuchner however others did get wet in their effort to get through the course. Next year we look to get all our elected officials in the race...

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### Upcoming Meetings:

#### NRGC Executive Committee

Tuesday, September 17, 2013  
2:00 p.m.

Beaver Island State Park Office,  
Grand Island

#### NRGC General Meeting

Tuesday, September 17, 2013  
3:00 p.m.

Beaver Island State Park Clubhouse,  
Grand Island

**Paddles Up Niagara 2012 Photos**  
visit [NiagaraGreenway.org](http://NiagaraGreenway.org)





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At this Paddles Up Niagara Island artist Dorothy Westhafer was honored with a certificate of appreciation from the Niagara River Greenway Commission. Dorothy was recognized for her outstanding artistic contributions that included the annual design of the artwork that appeared on the souvenir shirts worn during Paddles Up Niagara and her assistance during the public competition that led to the selection of the official logo of the Niagara River Greenway Commission. "Paddles Up Niagara" founder and Chair Paul Leuchner presented the award. He was joined by the newly appointed Chairman of the Niagara River Greenway Commission Greg Stevens, Town of Grand Island Supervisor Mary Cooke and Rob Belue the Executive Director of the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

## NRGC MISSION

To continue and advance the state's commitment to the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Niagara River Greenway Commission while continuing to emphasize economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule.



We could not have been successful without the help of our sponsors and volunteers. We would especially like to thank our host venue, Beaver Island State Park and host community, Grand Island, New York, for all the support they provided. We could not have been successful without their help. We would also like to extend a special thank you to the many sponsors that made the day great; **Anchor Marine, Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, WEKANU, Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Eastern Mountain Sports, Boy Scouts of America Troop #841, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Modern Disposal, Marine Division of New York State Parks, Coast Guard Auxiliary and of course New York State Parks** they along with **Grand Island Historical Society** continue to make Paddles Up Niagara the success it is.

## Plans for the Ninth Annual Paddles Up Niagara 2014

are currently underway with a early morning "Poker Run" scheduled. The date of July 26, 2014 has been identified so mark your calendars and plan to join us for a fun-filled day on the water and in the park.





# Greenway Update

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Bikers pass the City of Tonawanda's new pavilion during the building's open night, which more than 100 locals attended. The city is taking rental reservations for the structure, although most of the weekends are booked until the end of the year.

## Niawanda Park Pavilion Opens

By Jessica Bagley, *The Tonawanda News*

More than 100 locals were welcomed into the City of Tonawanda's newly completed \$1.25 million Niawanda Park Pavilion Tuesday as part of the structure's open house event.

The celebration came more than a year after construction began at the site in December 2011. Although the project did take longer than expected, the majority of construction came at no cost to the city, as Tonawanda received an \$877,000 grant from the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

"This is by far the best view in Western New York," Rob Belue, executive director of the Greenway Commission said Tuesday after the ribbon cutting. "And not only is this a great view, it provides for economic growth. The contractors hired were local folks, and that is part of the commission's mission statement."

The structure was completed in November. Amenities include a fully equipped industrial kitchen, including a stove with six burners, an oven, a double refrigerator, a freezer a microwave and large sink basins. The pavilion also has five 15-foot round tables that can accommodate up to eight people each, as well as eight long rectangular banquet tables. The building can hold up to 130 guests.

Residents who attended Tuesday night's event were able to sample food from the pavilion's preferred catering list, which includes Smoke on the Water, TC Wheelers and Lebro's restaurant.

The city began renting the structure out this spring. So far, the city has taken in \$17,300 from the rentals, Mayor Ron Piloizzi said Tuesday.

"Weekends are booked for much of the rest of the year," Piloizzi said.

After the city's operating costs and debt for the project is paid off, revenue from the structure will be put into an enterprise fund and will finance

improvements at all the city's parks.

"We are looking to see a full year's worth of experience to make sure we are charging enough and have enough coming in to not only pay off the debt service, but also pay for maintenance of the structure and the utilities," Piloizzi said.

During his ribbon cutting speech, Piloizzi also responded to the many residents who have criticized the project for taking too long and costing too much.

"Some people have called it Piloizzi's playhouse," he said. "But it should be Piloizzi's promise ... I made a promise and a commitment to this community and these residents when I campaigned. I'm really, really happy with the outcome and it is looking great."

Piloizzi said the city still needs to finish landscaping improvements around the structure. The remaining work will be done in stages, he said. Piloizzi also pointed to a number of other Greenway-funded projects, including the shoreline stabilization project and the city's new kayak launch in Eastern Park.

"Everything we have done has improved the waterfront," Piloizzi said.



Mayor Ron Piloizzi speaks at the City of Tonawanda's open night for the newly constructed pavilion in Niawanda Park along the river. Piloizzi said about 600,000 people walk by the structure every year and the city has already received \$17,300 from rentals of the building.



Open night attendees sample food from the pavilion's preferred caterer list, which includes The Grapevine Restaurant, Tonawanda Castle and Pane's Restaurant. More than 100

people came to the event to see inside the structure, which was completed in November.



Residents mill around the City of Tonawanda's new pavilion during the structure's open night, which took place Tuesday. Mayor Ron Piloizzi and other city officials held a ribbon cutting ceremony at the event, and residents were able to see inside the \$1.25 million building.





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## Projects for September 17, 2013

- **Niagara River Yacht Club** - Shoreline Stabilization & Native Habitat Plantings
- **New York State Parks & Town of Grand Island** - West River Connector Trail
- **Buffalo Lighthouse Assoc.** - Buffalo South Entrance Light
- **Town of Newfane** - Olcott Beach Enhancement

## Paddles Up Niagara

*Thank You All for a Successful  
Paddles Up Niagara 2013 on  
Saturday, July 27th! See you all in 2014.*

for photos from the event go to:  
**NiagaraGreenway.org**

## Contact Us

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