

YEAR IN REVIEW-2016

Inauguration of Newly Elected Officials - January 2016



From left seated; Town Clerk Pattie Frentzel, Town Justice Sybil Kennedy, Councilwoman Beverly Kinney. Standing; Supervisor Nathan McMurray and Councilman Michael Madigan.

The 2016 Inauguration of Elected Officials took place on Friday, January 1st at the Buffalo Launch Club. The Charles N. DeGlopper VFW Post #9249 Honor Guard presented flags and the Grand Island High School Quartet sang the National Anthem. Bible Fellowship Center Pastor Calvin VanderMey gave the Invocation and Benediction. The Master of Ceremonies was Philip Buchanan. Installation of Elected Officials included Nathan D. McMurray – Supervisor, Patricia A. Frentzel – Town Clerk, Michael H. Madigan – Councilman, Beverly A. Kinney – Councilwoman and Sybil E. Kennedy – Town Justice.

Driver Escapes Injury in Crash Through Bank Window - January 2016



Story by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

Shortly before 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday January 6th, Grand Island Fire Company rescue personnel responded to a MVA at the First Niagara Bank, 2300 Grand Island Blvd.

Fire Chief Matt Osinski reported that 87yr old Jean Niland of Grand Island was parked in front when she accidentally crashed through one of the banks plate glass windows and into office space. As a result, a bank employee, 41 year-old Eva Sander of Grand Island sustained a minor injury and was taken to Urgent Care by a family member. The driver was also evaluated by GIFC Medics but denied injury and declined hospitalization. Bank Manager Mike Samland expressed relief that injuries were not as bad as they could have been under the circumstances, in view of the amount of interior damage that actually occurred. Nevertheless, the bank was able to open for business as usual the following day. Damage estimate to the building and furnishings is \$15,000 to \$20,000

Fire Company 2016 Installation - January 2016

Newly elected Town Supervisor Nathan McMurray administered the oath of office to 2016 Grand Island Fire Company officers on Saturday, January 9th at Fire Headquarters, 2275 Baseline Rd. Both firematic and administrative officers were sworn to uphold their upcoming community protection duties. McMurray was joined by Erie County Legislator Kevin Hardwick, NYS Assemblyman John Ceretto and other Town Officials. Matt Osinski begins his third term as Fire Chief and will be joined by Deputy Chief Chris Soluri, 1st Ass't Chief Mark Sadkowski, 2nd Ass't Chief Omar Sortino; Fire Capts. Dan Mathes, Jon Cinelli, Tim Frecisz, Day Capt. Kevin Koch, Fire Police Capt. Don Portik, EMS Capts. Don Turner and Scott McCormick. President John Podlucky will be assisted by Vice President Scott Shaw, Recording Secretary Ambria Tim, Line Secretary Mike Anderson, Financial Secretary Nicole Gerber, Treasurer Tony Mastantuono and Sgt At Arms Dave Khreis. Kevin Koch and Pete Sukmanowski were returned to the Board of Directors and Dave Khreis was newly elected to his first term. Bill Wilson and Dave Cole were returned as Benevolent Association Trustees.

Islanders in the News, Fahim Mojawalla - January 2016



Our very own Fahim Fahim Mojawalla of Island Ship Center was recognized in MBC Today, a publication for the mail and business industry, for the months of January/February. The issue wrote...Welcome new AMBC Board member Fahim Mojawalla, Director of Social Media. AMBC (Association of Mail & Business Centers) is pleased to welcome a rising industry rock star to the board of directors. Fahim's outrageous energy and bold infectious enthusiasm are exactly what this industry needs.

R-2 Zoning Law Passed - January 2016

Tue., January 19, 2016 . . . A local law amending the R-2 Zoning District Regulations was passed 5-0 on Tuesday evening after a year of discussion. A notice of public hearing for a four-month moratorium on development approvals in the R-2 Zone, and the creation of a R-2 Review Committee was posted on January 23, 2015. The amendment includes the deletion of duplexes as an allowable use (in the future), the creation of buffers between higher and lower density parcels and a maximum of 4 units per building.

Supervisor Nathan McMurray introduced a motion to re-institute the creation of a Long Range Planning Committee. The committee will be made up of members from Town advisory boards and the community. A discussion on who would be involved in the appointment to the committee went back and forth as Supervisor McMurray was under the impression it was at his discretion.

GIHS Girls Hockey Club Lose at State Final – February 2016

The girl's hockey team of Kenmore/Grand Island lost to Alexandria Bay in the state final on Saturday, February 6th by a score of 3-2 at Albany Academy. The girls beat Canton on Friday in the semi-final by a score of 4-3. This is the first year that Grand Island girls have participated in NYSPHSAA hockey. Congratulations on making it to the finals

Valentines for Vets Program - February 2015



Erie County Legislator Kevin Hardwick made his 6th annual visit to St. Stephen School on Tuesday, February 2nd for the Valentines for Vets program. All the students in the school filled the cafeteria and made Valentines cards for veterans in the area. In the past, Mr. Hardwick has delivered the Valentines to the Niagara Falls Air Base, the VA Hospital in Buffalo, and different Veterans organizations in Western New York. Certificates of appreciation were left for the participating students. After the students made cards they were going to have a mini Olympics.

GIHS Students Take CPR Training - February 2016



Story & photos by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

On Monday & Tuesday, February 1st & 2nd, Grand Island Fire Company personnel assisted the Grand Island High School Physical Education Department in conducting CPR training for approximately 920 students, as part of the GIFC ongoing community outreach/public education program. GIFC paramedics Scott McCormick, Joe Torregrossa, Fire Police Captain Don Portik and firefighter Nick Egloff provided technical support for phys ed instructors Dean Santorio and Daneen Gallagher. Students were reminded of a prior incident at which a student was resuscitated from a cardiac emergency. Learning CPR, including the use of an AED, can prepare them for such an emergency. GIHS staff members confirmed there are three wall mounted AED's, as well as two portable units available at the school.

Golden Age Center Sweethearts Luncheon – February 2016



The Golden Age Center Valentine's Day party and Sweethearts luncheon was held on Thursday, February 11th. NYS Senator Marc Panepinto and some of his staff helped serve lunch. The Sweethearts Luncheon celebrates Golden Age members that have been married 50 years or more. There were 7 couples, married 50 to 68 years participating. Music by Lyle Stang completed the luncheon with singing and dancing.

Vikings Headed to State Championships – February 2016



Top row: Joe Frailey, Genna Baldassarre and Kaitlynn Tuohy. Bottom row: Coaches Jason Bibler and Tim Fargino.

Congratulations to GIHS Indoor Track team members Kaitlynn Tuohy, Genna Baldassarre and Joe Frailey on qualifying for the State Championships, at the Section VI meet at Houghton College last weekend, Saturday, February 27th. Juniors Tuohy and Baldassarre came in 1st and 2nd respectively, with times of 7:27.98 and 7:31.49 at the meet in the girls 1500 Meter Race Walk finals. Frailey, also a junior, came in 1st place in the boys 600 meter, breaking his old school record with a time of 1:22.06. The athletes are headed to Cornell University in Ithaca NY this weekend for the NYSPHSAA Championship on Saturday, March 5th. Results: Genna Baldassarre: 7:36.55, placed 10th overall - 1500 meter race walk
Joe Frailey: 1:24.24, placed 10th overall - 600 meter dash. Kaitlyn Tuohy: 7:44.14 placed 14th overall - 1500 meter race walk.

Historic Artifact Recovered from the Niagara River - March 2016



On February 2nd the day arrived for the recovery of the old well from the river. Jeff Dinsmore and the LDC Construction crew arrived early in the morning and by 1:30 p.m. that same day completed the entire project. During the carefully orchestrated lifting and transport operation the well, which weighed more than six tons, arrived at Riverlea without incident. In fact, the rigging work was accomplished so expertly that not even one of the blocks of the Medina Sandstone comprising the old well was lost. Thanks to Paul Leuchner for spearheading this project over the course of many years.

Proclamation Honors Firefighters Long Service - March 2016



From left: Ray Pauley and Butch Myers.

A proclamation was given to Grand Island Fire Company members, Ray Pauley and Robert "Butch" Myers for Long Time Outstanding Service. Ray has served 53 years in the Fire Company and Butch has served 51 years.

JV Vikings Win Small School Championship - March 2016



The Grand Island JV Hockey team won the Western New York Club Hockey Small School Championship. The game was held on Saturday, February 27th (Super Saturday). Grand Island defeated Starpoint 2-1 in overtime and advanced to the state championships held in Jamestown on March 4-6. This is Grand Island's 4th consecutive JV Small School Championship! Grand Island defeated Canisius 3-2 in the Championship Game that went into 5 Overtime Periods.

Relay for Life Kickoff - March 2015

The Grand Island Relay For Life 2016 Kickoff was well attended on Tuesday, March 8th at Veronica Connor Middle School Cafeteria. This year's theme is Country Western to "Give Cancer The Boot". Two mother-daughter duos were honored for being cancer survivors and caregivers at the event. Grace Aswad and Lisa Dudley have both survived cancer and taken care of each other during the journey. Duke University student Sarah Stanczyk and mom Natalie have both gone through a cancer diagnosis and treatment over the past two years. These brave ladies will be at the head of the Survivor Lap at the Relay For Life in June. The event will take place on Friday, June 10th at Veterans Park from 4:30 p.m. - midnight.

Horrendous ATV Damage to Snowmobile Trails - March 2015



The damage done to the Grand Island Snowmobile Club trails by illegal ATV type vehicles is astounding. The snowmobile club spends money on grooming and insurance, plenty of volunteer time for trail work by a small portion of members, and have procured the consent of numerous private property owners. Rogue ATV riders contribute nothing and do the damage shown above. Gates have been locked behind Tim Horton's and the MOG properties. Bridges on the Powerline and near the Stony Point Extension have been blocked, all to prevent any additional damage to the trail.

No Injuries at Wallace Drive Fire - March 2015



At 7:25 p.m. on Thursday, March 24th, Grand Island firefighters responded to a reported structure fire at the unoccupied Wallace Drive residence of Martin Grisanti. Within three minutes, GIFIC Capt. Jon Cinelli arrived on location, observed heavy smoke and fire conditions and alerted all responding units to a working fire. Engines #3, 4, 5 and LT 6, along with fire suppression crews initiated an aggressive interior attack. The fire was declared out at 7:52 p.m.

Captain Cinelli indicated the fire appeared to have originated in a first floor wood burning fireplace which spread upwards through the ceiling into the second floor area where most damage occurred. Total damage estimate at \$100,000 to the structure and \$50,000 to the contents

Chamber Award Recipients Announced - March 2016

The Grand Island Chamber of Commerce 50th Annual Citizen of the Year Awards recipients are:

Business: Mallwitz Island Lanes / Business Development: Corey McGowan

Community Leadership: Fahim Mojawalla / Educator: Maggie Kennedy / Environmental Steward: LDC Construction

Lifetime Service: Joanne Kud / Organization: Islettes Elite

The awards ceremony and dinner will be held on April 28, 2016 at the Byblos Niagara Resort and Spa. The Grand Island Chamber of Commerce is proud to recognize those who so graciously give of their time and energy. These individuals are the foundation and spirit of our great community. Someone from the Grand Island community nominated each of our winning recipients.

Abby Blair-Gazette Player of the Year - March 2016



The Niagara Gazette announced Thursday, March 31st that Grand Island eighth grader Abby Blair was named Player of the Year for Girls Hockey. The scoop; "Her 20 points (9+ 11) were good for seventh among Section VI Girls Varsity Ice Hockey Federation teams....Scored the first goal in the Section VI semifinals to spark a 4-1 victory over No. 1 seed Williamsville. ...Helped Kenmore/GI capture its fifth straight sectional title and advance to the state finals for the second straight year.

GAC Director Barbara Gannon Celebrates 15th Anniversary - April 2016



Golden Age Center Director Barbara Gannon celebrates her 15th anniversary in that position in April 2016

Two Arrested in Meth Lab Raid - March 2015

Erie County Undersheriff Mark Wipperman reports the Sheriff's Narcotic Unit raided a meth lab in Grand Island on Thursday, March 19th. Working from information developed from investigators, The Narcotics Unit, along with the Drug Enforcement Agency, executed a search warrant signed by Judge Mark Frentzel for a commercial complex located at 2735 Bedell Road. Detectives charged Timothy Homa, 32, and Jennifer Carrigan, 44, both of Grand Island, with Felony Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance - methamphetamine, Unlawful Manufacturing of Methamphetamine, and criminal possession of agents to manufacture meth. Both are held at the Erie County Holding Center pending their arraignment on March 20, 4:30 p.m. in Grand Island Town Court.

Operation Safe Stop - April 2016



Buffalo, NY - Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard announces Deputies will be taking part in Operation Safe Stop Thursday, April, 21. The sheriff's office will have eighteen marked and unmarked vehicles patrolling selected bus routes that have a history of illegal passing complaints within the sheriff's primary patrol districts. In addition to the primary patrol districts, the sheriff's office will have roving patrols throughout the county.

Liz and Greg Barker Sponsor Rescue Transport - April 2016



(716) 372-3661 Fax (716) 372-7887
E-mail: info@joyfulrescues.org
1119 Torack Dr., Cuba, NY 14727 (near Olean NY)

The ten (plus puppies!) Barker dogs available for adoption.

Grand Island residents Liz and Greg Barker are happy to announce that ten amazing dogs, one very pregnant and about to deliver, a second pregnant and possibly a third, were recently rescued. The Barkers adopted Mollie seven years ago and then became involved with the Joyful Rescues group. Members of the group take the Joyful Rescues vehicle down to

one of three Virginia "high kill" shelters when they get notice of overcrowding. Transport sponsors donate \$500 to pay for gas, food, etc. for the trip, then the transport is named after the sponsors. The ten saved dogs from the Barker transport will have "Barker" as their last name. Other Island families have adopted their pets from this group. Before adoption, all dogs and cats are spayed or neutered, micro chipped, given first shots and vet visit. If you are looking for a new family pet, check out the Joyful Rescues website, www.joyfulrescues.org.

River Oaks Drive House Fire - May 2016



The Grand Island Fire Company, Sheridan Park, and Brighton fire units were on scene working a fully involved house fire at 85 River Oaks Dr. on Thursday, May 5th. In a report from the GIFC, defensive tactics were being used and the homeowner reported no one inside the home. No injuries were reported, the fire was still out of control one hour in. Roof and floor collapse. Some minor exposure damage was reported to the exterior of a neighboring home on Hazelwood Lane. Fire reported under control at 1:24 p.m. The Grand Island Fire Company reported the final damage totals: \$300,000 to structure, \$300,000 to content (including 3 vehicles in garage area). \$2000 damage to exposure house (143 Hazelwood).

Rash of Car Break-Ins Throughout Area - May 2016

Buffalo, NY...May 10, 2016 - Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard reports his office has responded to nearly twenty larceny calls over the past few days. The larcenies have occurred during the overnight hours and in the day time; the thieves are grabbing any items they can from the cabin of the vehicle. The towns that have had reported car larcenies so far are Boston, Concord, Elma and Grand Island. Sheriff Timothy Howard is urging residents not to leave anything in their cars and eliminate the thieves' opportunity. Sheriff Howard is also reminding everyone to lock their vehicle as an extra measure of security, even if it is in a garage.

Byblos to Become Radisson Hotel - May 2016

The hotel that most Grand Islanders still refer to as the Holiday Inn will become part of the Radisson chain on May 17th. \$5 million in renovations are planned

GI Rugby Bus Involved in MVA - May 2016

Story by Peter Sukmanowski, GIFC Public Information Officer

The bus that the Grand Island High School rugby team was riding on was involved in a three-vehicle motor vehicle accident on Saturday, May 14th, near Rochester, NY. Players Zane Johnson and Ryan Schwinn, both Fire Cadets at the

Grand Island Fire Company (GIFC), began assisting those that were injured prior to the arrival of the fire department. Fire Chief Matt Osinski couldn't be more proud of the quick actions taken by Zane and Ryan to assist those who were injured after the accident! Both cadets joined the GIFC cadet program this past fall, which is led by 1st Assistant Chief Mark Sadkowski. Great job Zane and Ryan!!

Little League Opening Day – May 2016



Grand Island Little League Opening Day was on Saturday, May 7th. Awards went to: Dominic Loss - David M. Haller Award; Raven Khreis -, International Softball Sportsmanship Award; Madisyn Martinos - Minors Softball Sportsmanship Award.

Gus Macker Press Conference - May 2016



From left Supervisor Nathan McMurray and Corey McGowan.

A press conference for the Gus Macker 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament was held on Tuesday, May 17th at the Grand Island Town Hall. The tournament took place on Friday-Sunday, June 3-5 along a closed Grand Island Blvd, between Whitehaven and Baseline Roads.

Grand Island Fire Company Celebrates 78 Years of Service - May 2016



Story & photo by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

Local government officials, family members and special guests gathered at fire headquarters on Saturday, May 21st to thank the Grand Island Fire Company for 78 years of outstanding community protection. Board of Directors Chairman

Greg Butcher noted that the 1938 founding fathers carefully laid the groundwork for the solid GFC infrastructure that exists today, including an ALS (Advanced Life Support) paramedic unit that is second to none. Fire Chief Matt Osinski made special mention of the cadet program which was established in 2005 to prepare young participants for subsequent recruit training. The most recent cadets to transition are Ben Shaw, Evan Shaw, Mo Osinski and Brent Mendel.

Roundabout Area Facelift - May 2016



A press conference was held at the roundabout at Staley and Grand Island Blvd. on Thursday, May 26th. At the urgings of Supervisor Nate McMurray and Assemblyman John Ceretto, DOT officials okayed a facelift for the area, at no cost to the Town. DOT landscape architect Alisia Vilonen reported that after much of the old plantings were removed, 3 more tree lilacs were added and 80 yards of river rock. Fourteen white oak trees were added on either side of the first Island exit from the I-190. Upkeep will be shared by Town Highway & Recreation Departments and Supervisor's Office.

Sidway Tree Removal - June 2016



UPDATE, June 1, 2016 - 9:09 a.m.: Superintendent Teresa Lawrence emailed "The decision is being further explored."

An email was sent in by Island resident Terrie Sledziewski stated the following: "The 100 + year old tree in front of Sidway School is scheduled to be cut down this Saturday, June 4th so that a sign can be installed to declare that it is Charlotte Sidway School. As part of the School District Capital Improvement projects, the architect in charge at Cannon Design has specified that a sign be placed exactly where the tree has been living for over 100 years! You can call me a "tree hugger", but this seems rather pathetic and I hope that it will be re-evaluated by Cannon Design and the Town of Grand Island. I think that another location could be chosen and or a smaller sign be considered. I'm fairly confident in saying that a sign will not last as long as that tree has stood the test of time!" Many people have commented on the FaceBook site of "You know you grew up on Grand Island, NY when you remember..." against the tree removal. Sidway Principal Denise Dunbar reported that last year the tree was described as not in the best of health and the location was the only spot for a sign due to parking lot constraints.

DeGlopper Park Expansion Project – June 2016

DeGlopper
Memorial ★



The Charles N. DeGlopper Memorial Expansion Committee, Grand Island VFW Memorial Post 9249, Grand Island American Legion and Grand Island Moose Lodge #180 announce the groundbreaking of the DeGlopper Memorial expansion on June 9, 2016 at 7PM. The expansion of the DeGlopper Memorial site will not only honor Charles N. DeGlopper, but all Grand Island residents, past, present, and future, who have proudly served the United States as a member of the military. Design features will include a Gold Star for mothers of the fallen, personalized memorial pavers, flagpoles with the flags from each arm of the military, black granite walls with engravings of the names of Grand Island residents who have served, benches for visitors, parking, and much more. Donation opportunities for the expansion were recently announced by the committee on Memorial Day. The expansion is projected to cost about \$750,000 and take about one year to complete. Tax deductible donations are being accepted through the Grand Island VFW Memorial Post 9249. For more information on how to donate individuals can visit the DeGlopper Memorial Facebook page at www.facebook.com/DeGlopperMemorial or email DeGlopperMemorial@gmail.com.

Miracle League Kick Off - June 2016



The Miracle League of Western New York kicked off its fifth year at Veterans Park on Grand Island. Over 350 players will utilize the field this season. The Buffalo Sabres and the Buffalo Sabres Alumni were instrumental in providing financial support for the building of the field. The concept for the Miracle League of Western New York began in June of 2010. By the summer of 2011 the field was constructed and in the spring of 2012 the first league was started. The Miracle League helps disabled children and adults fulfill their dream of playing the game of baseball.

Transportation Center Ribbon Cutting - June 2016



The new transportation center located behind Sidway School was dedicated with a ribbon cutting on Tuesday, June 14th. The Grand Island Schools Naming Committee announced recently that the building will be called the "Jack Burns Transportation Center" after previous transportation supervisor, Jack Burns, retired in 2015, after 33 years of service. The building has four maintenance bays in the garage, spacious office for administration and driver lounge and locker space.

Lawn Mower Race Photos & Results - June 2016



The Father's Day Lawn Mower Race on Saturday, June 17th Race Results:

Kids class - Pete Marston III

Vintage - Scott Endres

Stock - Pete Marston Sr.

Modified - Pete Marston Jr...

Pro-Stock - Scott Endres.

Super Modified - Mitch Wendling (top speed reached at the end of the 300' track was 74 mph) .

GIFC Receives Allstate Award - June 2016



Chief Matt Osinski with Allstate Agent Phil Mastantuono.

Fire Chief Matt Osinski reports that the Grand Island Fire Company has been the recipient of a special 2016 "Hands in the Community" Award through the Mastantuono Allstate Agency. This \$1000 grant will be applied towards training needs for firefighter/medics, new recruits, and fire cadets.

Luke Gworek, Ride For Roswell - June 2016



Luke Gworek posing behind his name on the pavement.

TEAM LUKE had another amazing year raising money for the 21st Ride For Roswell. This year the team had 32 riders who raised over \$31,000 thanks to generous sponsors and donations from the community. Fourteen riders raised over \$1000 each, earning them a coveted spot in the Extra Mile Club. This brings the total raised to \$67,000 in 3 short years!

Unusual Amount of MVA's - July 2016



Grand Island Fire Chief Matt Osinski stated that firefighters and medics have had to contend with an unusually high rate of MVA's recently. There have been eight MVA's from July 29th – July 12th.

Mobile Traffic Speed Monitor - July 2016



After a long sought after grant, the Grand Island Traffic Safety Advisory Board has obtained a mobile traffic speed monitor. The monitor is intended to help promote driver awareness and get drivers in the habit of constantly checking their speedometer. It is believed that many drivers do not intentionally disobey speed limits, which leads them to a habit of not keeping check on their speed.

New Recruits Enter Ranks of GIFC - July 2016



From left Dan Robinson, Ashley Gorman, Ben Shaw, Lt. Tim Krecisz, Mike Haynes, Jeremy Stepp and Paul Valera.

Fire Chief Matt Osinski announced that six new recruits have joined the Grand Island Fire Company in 2016 and have started training in basic firefighting and EMS skills. The new rookies are Ashley Gorman, Mike Haynes, Dan Robinson, Ben Shaw, Jeremy Stepp and Paul Valera. Congratulations to the new volunteers.

Grand Island Lions Club Special Kids Picnic - July 2016



On July 20, 2016, the Grand Island Lions Club held their 58th annual "Special Kids Picnic" on the grounds of the Buffalo Launch Club. More than one thousand children with special needs and their caregivers were treated to a day of fun that included pony rides, boat rides, Shriner Mini Kar rides, face painting and entertainment by Step in Time Baton Dancers.

Multiple Break-Ins on GI - July 2016

Buffalo, NY - Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard is warning residents of Grand Island to secure their residences and vehicles after a string of break-ins over the past 24-hours. Tuesday, July 26th, and through the overnight hours, Deputies and Detectives have been responding to multiple calls on Harvey Road, Grand Island Boulevard, First Street and Center Terrace for car larcenies and home burglaries. The subjects took laptops, cash, credit cards, electronics and personal items. In the car larceny incidents, the victims' vehicles were unlocked and items were taken at various times throughout the day; one of the burglaries entailed the subject or subjects removing a window air conditioning unit to gain access to the residence. On Thursday, July 28th, Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard reported the arrest of Robert Rovison in connection with a Grand Island burglary where a gun was stolen.

Paddles Up – July 2016





Photos courtesy of K & D Aerial Imaging.

The 11th Annual Paddles Up Niagara took place on Saturday, July 30th at Beaver Island State Park. The morning Eco Tour was full and Early Bird Paddle was well attended.

Multi Agency Search Locates Niagara River Swimming Victim - August 2016

Story by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

At 8:31 p.m. on Friday, August 5th, Grand Island Fire Company rescue personnel responded to a report of a possible drowning in the Niagara River near Buckhorn Island State Park. Fire Capt. Tim Krecisz confirmed that 47 year-old Rajesh Chopra of Clarence, NY had been swimming with friends when he failed to surface after jumping from their boat into the river. GIFC Marine Unit 1 commenced a grid search and was soon joined by the US Coast Guard, Erie County Sheriff Department, NYS Parks Police and NY State Police Helicopter. After a lengthy search, the victim was located in eight feet of water near Grass Island at 10:22 p.m.

Farm Cooperative Market - August 2016



The GI Farms Cooperative Farmers located at 2487 Long Road, near Grand Island Blvd opened this summer to the delight of Island residents. Over a dozen vendors were on hand to serve a large crowd from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Vendors supply vegetables, fruits, baked goods, eggs, meats, honey, and other products. See website www.gifarms.org. The market will reopen in the spring.

Attempted Murder of Police Officer - August 2016

Buffalo, NY...Thursday, August 25, 2016

Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard reports his Deputies arrested Sammy Abdellatif for Attempted Murder of a Police Officer, an A-1 felony, after a traffic stop on East River Road in Grand Island. The incident began around 8:30 p.m. Wednesday when Deputy Clark was investigating an unrelated suspicious vehicle report at a hotel on East River Road. During his investigation, a vehicle drove back and forth by the scene, at least twice, with the passenger shouting threats and obscenities at Deputy Clark. The Deputy cleared the suspicious person call and performed a traffic stop on the vehicle from which the threats originated. During the traffic stop, Deputy Clark identified the person making the threats as Sammy Abdellatif. When the Deputy attempted to arrest Abdellatif on disorderly conduct charges, Abdellatif rolled up the window nearly trapping the Deputy's hand; the Deputy was forced to break the vehicle's window to prevent being trapped between the glass and the vehicle.

Abdellatif exited the vehicle and immediately began physically and violently assaulting Deputy Clark. The driver, identified as Brittany Ashley-Graser, exited the vehicle and jumped on the back of the Deputy. As the Deputy attempted to gain control of Abdellatif and fight off Ashley-Graser, a pit bull exited the vehicle and was aggressive toward the Deputy. At this point Peter O'Brien a civilian passer-by stopped and engaged the assailants freeing Deputy Clark from Abdellatif's choke hold; O'Brien was then attacked by the dog.

A second Deputy assigned to Grand Island arrived at the scene and observed his partner on the ground bleeding and gasping for air; Abdellatif took an aggressive and offensive posture toward Deputy Coniglio. At gunpoint, Deputy Coniglio, in a clear and loud tone, ordered the subject to the ground however it took several commands to gain Abdellatif's compliance. When Abdellatif finally complied with Deputy Coniglio's orders, the injured Deputy crawled over to Abdellatif and handcuffed him. During this time Ashley-Graser stepped between Deputy Coniglio and Abdellatif interfering with Deputy Coniglio's attempt to approach Abdellatif. Deputy Coniglio ordered Ashley-Graser to step aside and Abdellatif was finally escorted to a patrol vehicle. There Abdellatif again became aggressive and kicked Deputy Coniglio. The Deputy gained control of Abdellatif and placed him in the back of the sheriff's vehicle.

Abdellatif, 22 of Grand Island, was charged with attempted murder and is held at the Erie County Holding Center pending his arraignment in Grand Island Town Court. Brittany Ashley-Graser, 21 of Grand Island, was arrested and charged with felony assault, obstruction of governmental administration, and resisting arrest and is held at the holding center pending her arraignment. Deputy Clark was taken to Erie County Medical Center for serious but non-life-threatening injuries and was released Thursday morning. The investigation continues and additional charges may be pending.

First Place Honors at Chalk Walk - August 2016



From left: Lovepreet Kaur, Alexis Hy, and Julie Klein.

On Saturday, August 13th, the talented Grand Island High School Chalk Walk team received the coveted First Place ribbon, trophy, and cash prize at the 50th anniversary of the Lewiston Art Festival. This year's theme was "50 years of modern art from 1966 to present day". The team of Alexis Hy, Lovepreet Kaur, and Julie Klein used the style and characteristics of Fernando Botero, who is an 84 year old Colombian figurative artist.

Stony Point Head-On Crash - August 2016



Story & photo by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

At 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, August 30th, Grand Island Fire Company rescue personnel responded to a two car MVA on Stony Point Road between Bedell Road and Regency Drive. Fire Chief Matt Osinski stated that this horrific head-on crash injured all three occupants who were evaluated and treated by GIFC medics. 37 year-old Jeremy Wallens of Grand Island sustained severe trauma and was transported to ECMC, (he later died). A passenger, 47 year-old Lori Niemann of Grand Island sustained lessor injuries and was also transported to ECMC. The other driver, 23 year-old Brandy Whiting of Grand Island was transported to Niagara Falls Medical Center for precautionary treatment. Stony Point Rd. was reopened to traffic at 9:21 p.m.

Family Pet Alerts Occupants to Residential Fire - August 2016



Granddaughter Haley with hero Morgan.

Story and photos by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

At 12:43 a.m. on Sunday, August 28th, Grand Island firefighters responded to a report of a structure fire at the East River Road home of Kerwin Pine. A pet dog Morgan was credited with alerting sleeping family members by barking loudly, which was not normal for her. This aroused Mr. Pine who then discovered hot embers falling from the ceiling of an enclosed rear sun porch and 911 was called for emergency GIFIC assistance. Other family members, including a visiting granddaughter were able to exit prior to the arrival of GIFIC units.

Town Removing Diseased Ash Trees - August 2016



A crew from the GI Highway Department was busy on Friday, August 26th, starting the removal of a dozen diseased Ash trees from the Highway Department property on Whitehaven Road. The Town will be removing all affected trees from Grand Island Parks, municipal buildings and right of ways. The prognosis for the many Ash trees located in our area is not good. For more information, check out these websites: [New York Invasive Species Info](#) or [DEC Site](#) or [Emerald Ash Borer Information Network](#).

DeGlopper Memorial Expansion Deed Signing - September 2016



Members of the Charles DeGlopper Memorial Expansion project met on Tuesday, September 13th to sign the deed for the old Exxon property over to the VFW. The expansion is a cooperative effort by the Grand Island VFW Memorial Post 9249, Grand Island American Legion and Grand Island Moose Lodge #180. The property is located between Adrian's Custard and Beef and DeGlopper Memorial Park.

The expansion of the DeGlopper Memorial site will not only honor Charles N. DeGlopper, but all Grand Island residents, past, present, and future, who have proudly served the United States as a member of the military. Design features will include a Gold Star for mothers of the fallen, personalized memorial pavers, flagpoles with the flags from each arm of the military, black granite walls with engravings of the names of Grand Island residents who have served, benches for visitors, parking, and much more. Donation opportunities for the expansion were recently announced by the committee on Memorial Day. The expansion is projected to cost about \$750,000 and take about one year to complete.

Tax deductible donations are being accepted through the Grand Island VFW Memorial Post 9249. For more information on how to donate individuals can visit the DeGlopper Memorial [website](#), [Facebook page](#) at or email DeGlopperMemorial@gmail.com.

Taste of Grand Island Photos - September 2016



River Lea Quilters

Mary Stewart Photos.



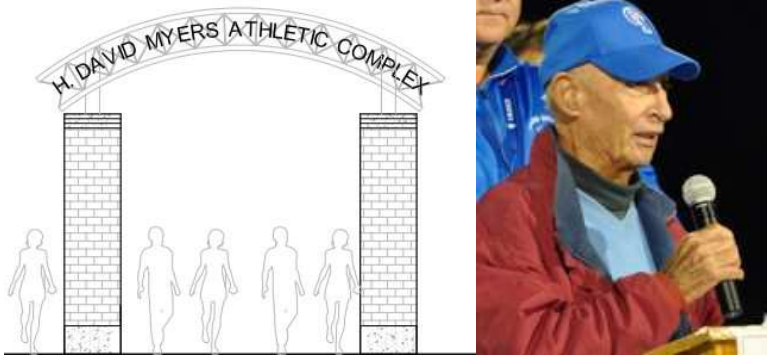
Pony rides.



Historical Society

Beautiful day for the Taste of Grand Island on Saturday, September 24th. As far as some vendors.....best one ever!

H. David Myers Athletic Complex Dedication - September 2016



A dedication took place at the Friday night, September 30th, Homecoming game at Gene Masters Field against Will East. The finishing touches were made on the new entrance to the sports fields, named the H. David Myers Athletic Complex. H. David is 97 years young this year was at the game. Known as the "Father of Viking Athletics", he was employed in the school district from 1948-1983. He named the GI athletic teams the "Vikings", designed the athletic fields and indoor facilities, was the first male faculty member and Phys. Ed. teacher, first athletic director and PE coordinator and was the first GI Town Recreation Director.

Madisyn Pezzino Sets State Goal-Scoring Record - October 2016

GIHS senior Madisyn Pezzino set the New York State goal record on Tuesday, October 11th at Gene Masters Field, scoring three goals to reach 237. The Lady Vikings went on to win the Section 6 Class A Championship over Amherst (4-1) on November 1st. They played Spencerport in the Far West Regionals on November 5th, earning a share of the regional title. But the final outcome was a loss in penalty kicks 5-3.

Santorio Named Buffalo Bills Coach of the Week - October 2016



The Buffalo Bills are once again proudly partnering with ADPRO Sports in 2016, to recognize some of the best high school football coaches Western New York has to offer through the High School Coach of the Week program. The Buffalo Region Coach of the Week for Week 3 is Dean Santorio, head coach of the Grand Island Vikings. Playing the North Tonawanda Lumberjacks on the road on Friday, September 23, Grand Island put together a 38-35 comeback win. Down 21-0 early in the second quarter, the Vikings rallied behind quarterback Conner Buzby, who put up 357 yards passing and four touchdowns, to come away with the victory.

Golden Age Center Holiday Happenings - October 2016



This year's Holiday Happenings at the Grand Island Senior Center was a big success. Fifteen crafters provided an array of handmade items. The event included 163 baskets and gift cards that were raffled. Not only did Grand Island merchants, and individuals donate but several others in western New York supported this year's event. A big thank you goes out to all those who donated items and helped in any way to make the center's Holiday Happenings one of the best.

New Grand Island Welcome Center Planned - October 2016

Albany, NY...October 18, 2016...Governor Andrew M. Cuomo hosted the New York State Tourism and Craft Beverage Summit, where leaders in the tourism and craft beverage industries met with state officials to explore new industry opportunities. At the summit, the state's largest investment in tourism to date was unveiled - an unprecedented \$55 million dedicated to promoting New York's world-class attractions, drawing more visitors, creating jobs and further growing the industry throughout the Empire State.

Initiatives announced at the event include new welcome centers in every region of the state that will feature Taste NY markets and offer locally-grown produce, and an additional \$2 million in funding to promote special events specifically related to agritourism and the craft beverage industry. These announcements build on the administration's historic investments in tourism and highlight the successful series of Tourism and Wine, Beer and Spirits summits held in Albany since 2013.

WELCOME CENTERS: The new welcome centers will feature a Taste NY Market offering locally-made and produced food and beverages and three interactive I LOVE NEW YORK kiosks for visitors to learn about the region's history and destinations. Travelers can create an itinerary based around regional attractions and receive a copy by e-mail. New and improved welcome centers will be opened in all regions throughout the state:

Western New York - I-190 on Grand Island

James P. Kennedy, Jr. Named Acting United States Attorney - November 2016



BUFFALO, N.Y. - James P. Kennedy, Jr. has been named Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of New York following the departure of William J. Hochul, Jr. "I am honored to be named Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of New York," said Kennedy. "As a native of Western New York, I look forward to working with our outstanding law enforcement partners at the local, state and federal levels and serving the people of the community in which I was born and raised."

A Phi Beta Kappa and magna cum laude graduate of Hamilton College, Mr. Kennedy attended the Buffalo Law School where he graduated cum laude in 1988, having served as editor of the Buffalo Law Review.

Grand Island Boys and Girls Soccer Teams Have Stellar Seasons – November 2016

The Boys Soccer team made it to the NYS finals, losing at the end of the second overtime to Somers (Westchester County). Stats for 2016 include:

22 game win streak in 2016

2016 Broke the All Time Section 6 scoring record with 131 goals, previously held by Akron in 2007 (127)

2016 Broke the All Time Section 6 goal differential record with +122, previously held by East Aurora in 2007 (+107)

2016 Made it to 4th place All Time Section 6 consecutive wins with 22

2016 Made it to number 6 for the All Time New York State Team Record Consecutive Shutout list with 11 in a row

2016 Made it to number 9 for the All Time New York State Team Record Total Shutout one season with 17

2016 Sent 7 players to the 1st Team All NFL: Garrett Robinson; John Griffin; Lou Fabiano; Anthony Emmi; Nemanja Simic; Jake Gleave; Steven Pufpaff

2016 Sent 2 players to the 2nd Team All NFL: Sean Pufpaff; Justin Kozlowski

2016 Sent 1 player to the 3rd Team All NFL: Joe Boyko

2016 NFL Coach of the Year: Frank Butcher

2016 Sent 5 players to the All WNY teams: Garrett Robinson; Jake Gleave; John Griffin; Steven Pufpaff; Nemanja Simic

Garrett Robinson 2016 All State

Garrett Robinson 2016 NFL Player of the Year

Frank Butcher 2016 WNY Coach of the Year

The Lady Vikings made it to the Far West Regionals against Spencerport, losing after a scoreless game to penalty kicks, 5-3. They did earn a share of the regional title. The Girls Soccer All-Western New York team, chosen by WNY coaches named Grand Island's Madisyn Pezzino and Marissa Birzon (Williamsville East), as Co-Players of the Year. Also named from Grand Island: First Team: Alexa Chiarenza (D), Marcy Barberic (M), Madisyn Pezzino (F). Honorable Mention: Grace Stranahan. Their season record is 19-2.

Madisyn Pezzino stats: New York State record for career goals (251) and season goals (73), which she accomplished this fall. Maddie is third in the nation in career goals. She is a NSCAA All American, 1st Team All State, 1st Team WNY, Section 6 All WNY Co-Player of the Year 2016, Niagara Gazette Player of the Year, Super 7 Athlete of the Week, Buffalo News Prep Athlete of the Week.

GIHS Athletes Receive Scholarships in 2016

Fall 2016:

Madisyn Pezzino - Florida State – Soccer

Alyssa Maxwell - Roberts Wesleyan - Lacrosse

Hayley Latvala - Gannon – Lacrosse

Lindsay Proctor - W. Virginia University - Volleyball

Spring 2016

Zach Breeden - Mercyhurst - Wrestling

Troy Brady - Canisius - Soccer

Tiffany Melendez - Roberts Wesleyan - Lacrosse and Soccer

Grand Island Blvd. Business Damaged - November 2016



Story and photo by Ray Pauley, Public Information Officer.

Shortly before 1:00 p.m. on Friday, November 4th, Grand Island Fire company rescue personnel responded to a car into building incident at 1740 Grand Island Blvd. Fire Chief Matt Osinski reported that 71 year-old Susan Doane of Grand Island was attempting to park her vehicle when she accidentally drove over the curb and into the front window of the Aura Salon & Spa. Doane was evaluated by GIFC medics but claimed no injuries and declined hospitalization. The structure sustained cosmetic damage only.

Three Historic Homes Designated - November 2016

The Grand Island Historic Preservation Advisory Board began their historic building plaque project with the designation of three homes all built in the mid 1800's. They are:

2489 Whitehaven Road, built circa 1870 by the Alt family, owned by Alt descendent Nicole Gerber and Dave Reilly.

2020 Fix Road at Baseline, built circa 1865 by Asa Ransom, owned by the Bryce Shipman family.

2488 Whitehaven Road, built circa 1865 by the Alt family, owned by Susie Myers.

Centenarians Celebrate - December 2016



Jean Wholahan – 102 years young.



Ann Billica – 100 years young.

Jean Wholahan celebrated her 102nd birthday on December 2, 2016.

Ann Billica celebrated her 100th birthday on December 7, 2016.