

■ WHO: Editor Matt Winterhalter
 ■ MAIL: 473 Third St.,
 Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14301
 ■ PHONE: 282-2311, ext. 2259
 ■ FAX: 286-3895
 ■ EMAIL: matt.winterhalter@lockportjournal.com



THURSDAY'S PICKS
 • MIDDAY: NUMBERS, 6-6-5; WIN 4, 2-0-6-2.
 • EVENING: NUMBERS, 0-5-3; WIN 4, 9-1-9-1.
 • TAKE 5: 02-05-08-12-18.
 • PICK 10: 01-09-12-14-22-34-36-39-41-43-48-52-54-55-56-60-68-70-72-76.
 • CASH4LIFE: 09-16-42-54-58, Cash Ball 2.

Foti announces candidacy for 14th Legislative District seat

NIAGARA COUNTY:
Lifelong Newfane resident endorsed by Republican, Conservative committees.

BY BENJAMIN JOE
 ben.joe@lockportjournal.com



Shawn Foti

Republican and Conservative committees.

Foti's name first surfaced about the same time as Syracuse announced his campaign for Newfane town supervisor.

Incumbent supervisor Tim Horanburg is vacating that post at the end of this year.

"John Syracuse has been a leader we can all admire and I hope to follow his footsteps," Foti said on Friday. "My wife and I are rais-

ing our family here and we are fully invested in our community."

Foti, a lifelong Newfane resident, is a project manager with Clark Rigging and Rental. In that post, he said, he has gained experience in budgeting and resource management, skills that could be put to good use in the legislature.

Also in his job, Foti said, he has worked on renewable energy projects in other parts of New York state, and observes that some communities want solar energy installations. His issue with them is, state agencies are empowered to make siting

decisions and affected communities should have the chance to weigh in.

"There is a lot of towns that want it, that it works in," he said. "We're not trying to say yes or no on our end, not me personally, but the town should have some decision making, all of the town, and not just a state siting board that says, 'You have open land, let's fill it with solar panels,' and you have to do it."

Foti said his own preference would be for solar panels on homes and businesses to use the energy at its source, rather than send the energy downstate.

As he begins campaigning for the 14th district legislative seat, Foti said he ideas to bring new people and opportunities into the district, through agri-tourism, farm stands, the waterfront — and skilled trades education in local schools.

"Make sure kids know that there's good paying jobs, lifelong skills in the trades (and) I believe we can make not only the 14th district, but Niagara County, an asset with skilled trade workers," he said.

By building up a base of skilled workers, Foti said, the county can make itself more desirable to start-up and

expanding companies.

Foti is a 14-year active member of Miller Hose Fire Company, for which he has served as an interior firefighter, equipment operator and head trustee.

A nine-year member and past president of Newfane Lions Club, he also is active in the Wilson Conservation Club and is a current member of the Newfane town planning board.

He and his wife, Kim, have a son, 3-year-old Andrew.

The 14th Legislative District includes Newfane, Somerset and a portion of the town of Lockport.



PHOTO BY JAMES NEISS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wouldn't it be nice to gift the Niagara region as a wedding present?

Gifting Niagara

There are many good reasons I'm so happy to be back at my job as a writer for this newspaper. For one, I can resume my summertime hobby of chasing tourists.

In the past dozen or so years, when I didn't have pressing stories to write, I'd go on a walk-about. Usually, I'd come upon groups of tourists taking photos and I'd typically ask if they'd like me to take a group photo. Most have been happy to have me do so. We'd start talking and I'd ask where they're from and why they're here. I particularly loved to inquire whether they were having a good time in our part of the world. They'd most always respond with an emphatic "Yes!"

I get energized by people who enjoy visiting here. I especially like wedding parties.

One summer, I saw a bride running joyfully through the Niagara Falls State Park, holding her dress up just enough to reveal sparkly white sneakers, with her wedding party racing to catch up. It looked like the opening scene of a delight-



MICHELE DELUCA

COMMENTARY

fully romantic movie.

Those who live here sometimes forget that the brides and grooms who come to visit and tourists, in general, are almost always very happy to be here. They are mostly interested in finding fun things to do, having great meals, and making beautiful memories. They are often in a celebratory state of mind which is contagious to witness.

It's exactly that state of mind that I'm after.

I want to "gift Niagara" to several very dear, soon-to-be-married couples, in hopes of luring them to come to visit me for a few days from their out-of-town homes.

The idea came to me while I was vacuuming

one day and contemplating the three weddings. What gifts could I give to these young people, that would be memorable and fun, something beyond money or a fancy ice bucket?

I considered putting a little package together for each couple, with a night's stay in a local hotel or even a bed and breakfast. I could add a gift certificate to one of my many favorite restaurants.

Then I could add some smaller gifts, like a certificate for chocolate from Niagara's Honeymoon Sweets or from any of the area's bakeries or coffee shops.

Depending on how much money I have left, perhaps a gift certificate for Maid of the Mist or a ride up the Erie Canal with Lockport Locks & Erie Canal Cruises.

I could also consider a gift certificate to the Aquarium of Niagara or the amazing little Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center.

If I didn't spend too much on those I've already mentioned, maybe I could afford a gift certificate or two for a wine tasting at one of the many great vineyards on the Niagara Wine Trail?

Such gifts are going to take a lot of thought and leg work to assemble. I couldn't help but wish some local merchants and businesses could team up to offer such packages of varying prices, so people like me didn't have to go chasing around the region to create a spectacular present.

I know I would love to receive a gift like that. I can imagine how lovely it would be to have a vacation someone has already paid for, where I would have fun and fascinating things to do and delicious foods and wines to try?

I'm thinking the young people to whom I'm "gifting Niagara" couldn't help but have fun on the vacation I've planned for them in this interesting and often beautiful part of the world?

It's a win-win situation. The best win is I'll get to see my dear people from out-of-town. The other win is they'll bring their happiness and fresh eyes to the region.

That, dear readers, is a little gift to us all.

Michele DeLuca is a columnist and reporter for the Niagara Gazette and the Lockport Union-Sun & Journal.



JAMES NEISS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Winston the dog keeps a keen eye on things as Luanne Barbalate paints their West Lake Road picket fence in Wilson.

RIDGE VIEW
solar energy center

YOU ARE INVITED

to a Virtual Meeting with
 Community Members on Zoom

THURSDAY, 4/29/2021, 7:00 P.M.–8:00 P.M.
 AND
FRIDAY, 4/30/2021, 12:00 P.M.–1:00 P.M.

Join the EDF Renewables (EDFR) team for a virtual "Meeting with Community Members" where we will provide information on the Ridge View Solar Energy Center, located in the Town of Hartland, Niagara County. The proposed project will provide economic benefits to the region and generate up to 350 MW of renewable energy, which is enough to power more than 75,000 New York households.

EDFR experts will provide updates on project development, studies conducted, land acquisition, our conversations with state and local officials and other consultations. We will be taking questions during a Q&A that will follow the presentation. Submit questions in advance to NewYork.Solar@edf-re.com.

To Register visit: RidgeViewSolar.com or call 833-333-7369

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 WWW.LOCKPORTJOURNAL.COM

716-439-9222 OFFICE: 135 Main St., Lockport, New York 14094

MANAGEMENT STAFF:
 John Celestino, Publisher ext. 2280
 john.celestino@lockportjournal.com

Cheryl Phillips, Director of Operations ext. 2238
 cheryl.phillips@lockportjournal.com

Matt Winterhalter, Managing Editor ext. 2259
 matt.winterhalter@lockportjournal.com

Joe Genco, Regional News Editor ext. 2250
 joe.genco@lockportjournal.com

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