

Winter 2019-20
Volume 8, Issue 4
A quarterly publication

MSF Gazette

MAIN STREET FIRST • LITTLE FALLS • NEW YORK



CHRISTMAS IN LITTLE FALLS: A CHARMING TRADITION

Saturday, December 14, 2019, marks the 12th annual Christmas in Little Falls holiday celebration. With a variety of free and fun events for the whole family, it is that time of year when our quaint community is aglow, festooned with ribbons and bows and around every corner that good old-fashioned holiday spirit.

Since its debut in 2008, thousands of visitors from the Mohawk Valley and beyond have joined with community friends and families to celebrate the true meaning of the holidays: spreading love, laughter, and joy. The festival is sponsored by community businesses and not-for-profits. And what better way to make the yuletide merry than through the gift of music.

Much of the music will take place at the Elks Lodge, beginning with the high school band and choir musicians from 9:30 – 10:30 am, and a pot potpourri of additional musical groups from 1 – 10 pm with *Holiday City* playing from 7 - 10 pm.

The Delaney Brothers band returns to Little Falls for a concert at the Masonic Temple from 1 - 3 pm. If you missed them at the Bluegrass, Brews and BBQ festival, you won't want to miss this opportunity. Tickets at <https://mylittlefalls.com/event/bluegrass-christmas-concert/>.

Ed Przydatek will play acoustic 60's folk music at the Little Falls Historical Society Museum from noon to 1:30 pm. The Museum's holiday tree is decorated with handmade ornaments, compliments of Benton Hall 4th graders. Free refreshments.

The ABC Piano Trio will perform at St. Paul's Church at 2pm. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

Check out the Travelodge for the winter Farmer's Market and Craft Fair from 9 am to 3 pm for that special gift. Other craft fair events are at the Emmanuel Episcopal Church and the Fitness Farmacy with everything from knitwear and jewelry to gourmet foods and wines and much more.

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Curious? Have feedback or ideas for us? Want to help? PLEASE JOIN US!

Next scheduled meetings:

Monday, January 13
Monday, January 27
Monday, February 10
Monday, February 24
Monday, March 9
@ 6:30 pm
Community Room,
Little Falls Library

(For more details about our group, please see the back cover/p. 8)

The place to be this winter is... *Canal Place!*



The City of Little Falls is uniquely charming, given its quaint streets lined with local shops and quality eateries, historical richness, and unusual geology. Come check out our newly renovated **Cafe at Stone Mill**, where you can grab a coffee, sandwich and an ice cream in a relaxing atmosphere overlooking the Mohawk River. Conveniently sharing the space with a full-service UPS store. Stay and relax in one of our fine rooms, at the **Inn at Stone Mill** or the **Canal Side Inn**, featuring modern amenities and a touch of cozy charm. The views are simply breathtaking, and the staff & accommodations are first class. When you are ready for dinner check out a more refined dining experience at the **Canal Side Inn**, offering a seasonal menu and a hip bar atmosphere. After dining, be sure to browse the many shops, boutiques and galleries.

EVENTS

- Oscar Stivala Trio, December 26th, 2019
- New Year's Eve Dinner
- Canal Side Inn Winter Season kick off, January 23rd, 2020
- Valentine's Day "Canal Side Inn First Anniversary", February 14th, 2020

Rock City Development, LLC is a local real estate development company committed to advancing the community both culturally and economically through commercial real estate development.



ROCK CITY DEVELOPMENT, LLC



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Suggestions and contributions (articles and art) are always welcome; please contact someone on the staff or write to editor@mainstreetfirst.org

We Are Fortunate! New Program Films Interviews with Veterans

Many people may not be old enough to remember that Vietnam veterans were given a “less-than-friendly” or even hostile reception upon returning home from that war in the late-1960’s or early-1970’s. To the best of my knowledge, this never occurred in our fair city.

Recent and current activities in Little Falls have reinforced the perception that we are fortunate to be living, or to have been raised, in this wonderful community. Although the harsh attitude towards the Vietnam War has softened somewhat over the decades, the vets themselves will never forget the sting of rejection. Little Falls has done a lot recently to diminish this sentiment.

In late 2017, the Little Falls Historical Society initiated its main exhibit project for 2018 to honor Little Falls veterans of the Vietnam War. A database was created for the 135 Little Falls Vietnam veterans, an astonishing number for a city of about 9000 at that time.

The Historical Society’s Vietnam War exhibit contains a wonderful collection of soldiers’ pictures, letters, mementos and other artifacts. Little Falls lost two native sons in the Vietnam War: Donald Coffin of the 101st Airborne, who was killed in action in January 1968, and Marine Joseph Stanley “Stash” Zawtock, Jr., who died in a POW camp on Christmas Eve 1969.

Inspired by the Historical Society’s project and exhibit, Little Falls resident Ralph Renzulli was motivated to do something for Little Falls’ Vietnam War veterans as well. Renzulli and David Warner of mylittlefalls.tv initiated a project to conduct video interviews of Little Falls Vietnam veterans in April 2019. Renzulli had viewed a number of veteran interviews on YouTube and Warner provided the platform and technological expertise to do the same for Little Falls Vietnam vets.

Thus far, over a dozen Vietnam vets have been interviewed and episodes are released and posted

on the second Monday of each month on mylittlefalls.tv, Roku and Fire TV Stick. Renzulli is pleased with the thousands of viewers for the first six episodes that have aired, but “his real validation is from the positive responses from both veterans and other viewers.” He stated that he does it “for all the guys who served” while also being grateful to the Little Falls Public Library for the use of its facilities. Any Little Falls Vietnam War vets wishing to be interviewed can contact Renzulli at (315) 335-1083.

On March 6, 2019, the Little Falls Rotary Club hosted John Zygmunt, Rotary District 7150 Coordinator of Veterans’ Affairs. His presentation described an initiative by the Vietnam Commemoration Office, a sub-division of the Department of Defense, where organizations from across the country can apply to become official Commemorative Partners to honor Vietnam era veterans. Rotary members were enthusiastic about this opportunity and on May 3rd the club received notice that its application had been approved.

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“This is the story of our Vietnam service- members --- the story that needs to be told. This is what this 50th anniversary is all about. It’s another opportunity to say to our Vietnam veterans what we should have been saying from the beginning: You did your job. You served with honor. You made us proud. You came home and you helped build the America that we love and that we cherish.

—President Barack Obama, Memorial Day 2012 - official opening of the Vietnam War Commemoration 50th anniversary

WE ARE FORTUNATE!

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The Little Falls Rotary Club feted local Vietnam era veterans on November 6 at the local Elks Lodge, presenting them with commemorative lapel pins and presidential citations. The event was attended by 68 veterans and 184 guests, including both Rotary and local dignitaries. The Rotary Club did an outstanding job of honoring our veterans.

Let's hope that the spirit of community exhibited by these individuals and organizations continues in our city. It helps make Little Falls the great city that it is!

—John Frazier, a member of the Little Falls Historical Society and a Vietnam veteran, having served with the 101st Airborne Division.

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: LET IT SNOW-LET IT SNOW-LET IT SNOW

Growing up in Little Falls 50-60 years ago was an adventure when Old Man Winter came knocking. Going to bed with the snow coming down made it hard to sleep, wondering how deep it would be come morning. The most exciting words of winter were “snow day,” allowing the school kids stay home for outdoor play instead of going to school.

Although the adults found it to be more of an inconvenience, crowds could still be found at the city's two ice skating rinks (Monroe St. Field and further up the West Monroe Street hill in what was then known as Huddletown). Parents were often found riding with their youngsters on sleighs or toboggans coming down the hills in many of the parks throughout the city.

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New Businesses Roundup!

Main Street First welcomes the following recently opened businesses:

ART DOOR GALLERY, 407 Canal Place , (518) 779-2863, artdoorgallery@gmail.com

Art gallery dedicated to contemporary artists

FUNTECH PROVIDERS, 604 E. Main St., (315) 360-7643, funtechproviders@gmail.com

Technology repairs, security camera installation

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION LAB OF TEXAS 560 East Mill St. (3rd floor), (281) 767-2166, info@tiltx.com

AWS, VoIP and Cloud Migration Technology Services

Recently relocated businesses:

FELDMEIER AND FELDMEIER, 525 Albany St., (315) 823-1031, feldmeierlaw@gmail.com

Social Security disability law by appointment

H& H ACCOUNTING, 525 Albany St., (315) 823-0008, chuckheron.hhaccounting@yahoo.com

Accounting, taxes, business services

JUST DANCE STUDIO, 590 East Main St., (315) 556-1009, justdance.org

The liberating wonders of dance for children

LITTLE FALLS CONSTRUCTION CO., 586 Main St., (315) 823-4291, littlefallsconstruction.com

Residential and commercial construction

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PLEASE RECYCLE, DON'T LITTER!



ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: LET IT SNOW *(continued from page 4)*

These days Little Falls doesn't receive the large snowfalls or biting cold as often as in the past. This doesn't mean we can't enjoy the winter season. We have an outdoor ice-skating rink in Ward Square. The parks still have hills with snow on them, so grab your sled and have a fun filled afternoon.

A leisurely walk with snow gently falling is a very relaxing way to spend an evening. As the snow gets deeper, you can strap on a pair of snowshoes and kick up the exercise level a notch. Cross country skiing is enjoyed by young and old and every age in between. A great place to enjoy either of these activities is on the bicycle trail or at the municipal golf course. On windy days, don't forget about Moreland Park or the Adirondack foothills, where the trees provide shelter. If you don't have your own equipment, you can rent or buy snowshoes or cross country skis from Dick's Wheel Shop in Herkimer. The YMCA also has snowshoes and cross country skis to loan to Little Falls residents.

Although our own Schumaker Mountain has been closed for years, there are some downhill ski areas within an hour's drive from Little Falls. Royal Mountain near



Caroga Lake, Oak Mountain in Speculator, and Woods Valley, just north of Rome, offer something for all skill levels. If you are a true beginner, try Val Bialas on the Parkway in Utica. All these facilities offer ski equipment rentals.

New York leads the east in snowmobiling with groomed trails throughout the state, including around Little Falls. The days of noisy, smelly, unreliable machines harassing the other winter enthusiasts are gone. All manufacturers now produce sleds that are comfortable for the riders and that respect our environment. The snowmobile clubs and the DEC have made this sport respectable. Even the cross-country skiers now enjoy the trails, groomed by the snowmobile clubs.

Ice fishing is also a very popular winter activity.

With modern-day winter clothing available and affordable, there is no excuse. Bottom line — stop whining about the weather. Get out and enjoy it. Go for a walk or a ride. Attack that hill. There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes. Have fun!

—Mike Evans



"If you choose not to find joy in snow, you will have less joy in your life but still the same amount of snow."

—Unknown

Christmas in LF: A Charming Tradition

(continued from page 1)

Now it is time to sit back and breathe in the air of an earlier era with a free horse and carriage tour through historic downtown Little Falls. The 11 am – 1 pm free tours begin in the parking lot behind the Historical Society museum.

The Utica Zoo Mobile will be at Ace Hardware from 11am-1pm.

The man of the hour himself, Santa Claus, will make an appearance at the Fire Department from 9:15-10:30 am. Santa will also be available at The Italian Feast from 11am-1pm for free photos by a professional photographer.

The historic WCA (1827) at 534 Garden St. is decorated with holiday cheer, so stop by for holiday refreshments and a visit with Santa Claus from noon-2 pm.

Runners can sign up for the 5K Reindeer Run. Santa will start the race at 9 am at the YMCA. The 4th annual Bartender Race begins at 11 am at Ruggiero's Trattoria. Bartenders raise money for their favorite charities.

Taste buds rejoice, for the Soup Fest along Main Street returns for a 6th year, from 11 am-2 pm. Sponsored by the Little Falls YMCA & Think Local, \$10 tickets are available both on festival day and ahead of time. Enjoy ten great soups and help local charities at the same time. Best soups are chosen by assigned judges. Gloves off, spoons up, and may the best soups win!

Earlier in the day, enjoy breakfast at the American Legion, 9 - 11 am, where kids can also meet some of their favorite characters.

Adults can visit Ed and Bud's for one of Moose's famous Tom and Jerrys.



Stop by the Community Center for kids activities — craft-making, games, coloring and cookie decorating from 9-10:30 am. The cultural children's event The Guild of Thespian Puppets in "A Christmas Carol" will start at 11 am, 11:30 am, 12 noon, and 12:30 pm.

The Valley Cinema will offer Frozen 2 at 11am for only \$3.

Christmas in Little Falls event guides are available at local businesses or online at christmasinlittlefalls.com. Choose all your favorite events and activities -- if Santa can get around the world at Christmastime, surely you can cover all the Christmas ground in Little Falls on December 14!

May all of your holiday wishes come true this year! Joyeux Noel, Frohe Weihnachten, Feliz Navidad, Buon Natale and all of the other ways that we can possibly say Merry Christmas.

—*Carly Proulx*

*"You better watch out
You better not cry
You better not pout
I'm telling you why
Santa Claus is coming to town"
Lyrics by J. Fred Coots and
Haven Gillespie, 1934*

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

DECEMBER 2019

- ❖ December 6 – January 4, 2020. MVCA Winter Faculty & Student Art Show. 401 Canal Place, (315) 823-0808
- ❖ Saturday, 12/14, from 10 am to 5 pm, “Christmas in Little Falls” annual citywide celebration. Holiday shopping and festive family fun at many locations downtown and at Canal Place. Santa visits, horse & carriage rides, Red Nose Reindeer 5K run, indoor farmer’s market, craft fair, Soup Fest, and much more. Please visit christmasinlittlefalls.com for full details.
- ❖ Saturday, 12/14, 11 am to 4 pm. MVCA Open House in the Selective Eye shop and Winter Bedazzled Sale—just in time for last-minute stocking stuffers. 401/403 Canal Place. For more information call (315) 823-0808.
- ❖ Saturday, 12/14, 2:00 pm. Concert: ABC Piano Trio - Mark Bunce, piano; Andrew Caswell, violin; Craig Mehler, cello. Tickets \$ 5.00. Proceeds are for restoration of the church organ. SAME DAY- Free winter clothing Giveaway. 9 – 11am, St. Paul’s Universalist Church, 565 Albany St. (315) 823-2284
- ❖ Monday, 12/16, 7 pm Little Falls Community Outreach , 16 Jackson St. Rainbow Club for students grades 8-12. Will not meet if school is closed or after school activities are cancelled.
- ❖ Tuesday - 12/17, 6:30 pm, Grief Support Group. This group is a closed group. Please Contact Outreach office-315-823-1409 before joining. Little Falls Community Outreach, 16 Jackson St.
- ❖ Tuesday, 12/18, 12 noon. Little Falls Historical Society annual holiday luncheon. Travelodge: Call Jeff Gressler at (315) 823-2799 for tickets (\$13.25)
- ❖ Thursday, 12/19. “Third Thursday” Last Minute Stocking Stuffers and Open Houses at participating area businesses. Please visit mylittlefalls.com/ThinkLocal or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.

JANUARY 2020

- ❖ Sunday, 1/5 at 11:30 am. First Presbyterian Church, Little Falls. Monthly Potluck Luncheon. Members of the community are invited to share a meal and conversation. Please bring a soup, casserole, or salad to share.
- ❖ Mondays, 1/6, 1/13 & 1/27: 7pm Little Falls Community Outreach 16 Jackson St. Rainbow Club for students grades 8-12. Will not meet if school is closed or after school activities are cancelled.
- ❖ Tuesday, 1/7 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall, second floor chambers.
- ❖ Tuesday, 1/7 & 1/21, 6:30 pm, Grief Support Group. This group is a closed group. Please Contact Outreach office-315-823-1409 before joining. Little Falls Community Outreach, 16 Jackson St.
- ❖ NEW FOR JANUARY: Think Local will feature a calendar of activities at Health & Wellness businesses, available throughout the month. Please visit mylittlefalls.com/ThinkLocal or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.

FEBRUARY 2020

- ❖ Sunday, 2/2 at 11:30am. First Presbyterian Church, Little Falls. Monthly Potluck Luncheon. Members of the community are invited to share a meal and conversation. Please bring a soup, casserole, or salad to share.
- ❖ Mondays, 2/ 3, 2/10 & 2/24, 7pm Little Falls Community Outreach, 16 Jackson St., Rainbow Club for students grades 8-12. Will not meet if school is closed or after school activities are cancelled.
- ❖ Tuesday, 2/4 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall, second floor chambers.
- ❖ Tuesday, 2/4 & 2/18, 6:30 pm, Grief Support Group. This group is a closed group. Please Contact Outreach office-315-823-1409 before joining. Little Falls Community Outreach, 16 Jackson St.
- ❖ NEW FOR FEBRUARY: Think Local will feature a calendar of activities at Beauty businesses, available throughout the month. Please visit mylittlefalls.com/ThinkLocal or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.

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PO Box 65
Little Falls NY 13365

Main Street First, Inc. is an organization of Little Falls residents as well as other stakeholders in the cultural and commercial life of our city.

Main Street First, Inc. does not act on the behalf of individual businesses in Little Falls, but is dedicated to the interests of our residents in preserving and revitalizing the Little Falls City Center.

PURPOSES: The purposes for which the Corporation is formed are to combat community deterioration in the city by organizing the community to create sustainable initiatives to revitalize the city, by supporting city revitalization through smart growth principles, the creation of a comprehensive master plan, the participation of all interested parties in directing the city's future, citywide residential revitalization, the development of green and sustainable technologies throughout the city, to provide financial assistance and volunteers for the improvement and maintenance of the city's buildings and homes, and to increase recreational facilities. To do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in the advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors, or officers.

MSF'S SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Work with the Greater Mohawk Valley Land Bank and City of Little Falls to fight blight in our neighborhoods.
- Partner with private developers, the City, and other key stakeholders to develop initiatives to help revitalize Little Falls.
- Work with the Little Falls NFP Coalition to develop a Little Falls community website highlighting local resources.
- Work with John Zogby Strategies to analyze a study of key trends impacting Little Falls.

These are the sorts of things we discuss and plan at our meetings. Join us! Bring your ideas, skills, and energy and help us reach these and other good goals for our community.



MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- Continue to encourage and grow public engagement in Think Local Little Falls events and activities.
- Expand and engage our membership and volunteer base.
- Find and pursue grant opportunities for projects aligned with MSF's purposes.
- Hold educational community sessions on topics of interest that are aligned with MSF's purposes.

HOW TO JOIN MSF

If you would like to get involved, have questions or ideas, or are thinking of joining, we invite you to come to our meetings — everyone is welcome!

Email us at:
contact@mainstreetfirst.org
Visit our website at:
mainstreetfirst.org

Facebook:
“like” the Main Street First page
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