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FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2018

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A SUN SPECIAL REPORT

IN EVANS, A WATER DEAL GONE WRONG

Expensive infrastructure projects remain incomplete while town accumulates \$19 million in debt

BY LUKE HAMMILL / HAMBURG SUN STAFF REPORTER

A financial crisis has struck Evans. ¶ Water rates have about doubled in the past decade. Town taxes have risen by 8.6 percent, 11.8 percent and 3 percent, respectively, in the last three years. Meanwhile, the town, which has made significant spending cuts across virtually all of its operations, needed a bailout of nearly \$1 million from Erie County in December 2016 just so it could pay its bills. Evans' police union recently made sacrifices such as reduced vacation time and increased healthcare contributions in a new contract with the town. Other municipal employees' unions face similar concessions. ¶ Much of the problem can be traced to a water deal gone badly.

See **Water** on Page A6

"OUR TAXPAYERS HAVE BEEN ABUSED."

Supervisor Mary K. Hosler

Village cop set to work in schools

By Luke Hammill

HAMBURG SUN STAFF REPORTER

Hamburg Central School District officials on Tuesday introduced a new school resource officer who comes from the Village of Hamburg Police Department and has prior experience with campus security.

Sam Blaszczyk has been with the village police for two years and before that served for five years as a police officer in Eden and one year in Brant. He also spent two years running the security department on Erie Community College's North Campus.

Blasz (pronounced "blaze") will begin as Hamburg's school resource officer in April, said Assistant Superintendent Barbara S. Sporyz, who oversees the district's business office. He will be tasked with not only helping keep school buildings safe, but also developing relationships with students and serving as a positive role model.

"We're very, very excited about you being here," Sporyz told Blaszczyk, adding that the district "takes the safety of all of our students, staff and visitors very seriously."

Board of Education President Thomas F. Flynn III said the board was "proud of the work that went into getting to this day," crediting Superintendent Michael Cornell, who was not at the meeting because he was sick.

"This has been a priority for Mike pretty much since he started," Flynn said.

Cornell said at a November school board meeting, during which the board approved a contract with the village allowing one of the village's police officials to serve as a school resource officer, that the position is "aptly named."

See **Officer** on Page A5



Luke Hammill/The Hamburg Sun

New Hamburg school resource officer Sam Blaszczyk will start with the district in April.



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Tax exemptions for Cold War vets may become permanent soon in Hamburg

Meetings over next two weeks to cover crucial topics

By Michael Petro HAMBURG SUN EDITOR

The Hamburg Town Board is leaning toward making the Cold War Veterans' tax exemption permanent in the town but board members said last Monday they are not ready yet to make a final call.

During the March 5 work session, each said they would go along with making the tax exemption permanent to veterans of the military who served from Sept. 2, 1945 through Dec. 26, 1991.

When the state initially authorized tax exemptions for these veterans who were on active duty at some point during the Cold War period, it came with a timeline. The board passed the exemption in 2010 for 10 years, according to Town Attorney Steven Walters.

In 2017, the state Legislature decided it would let municipalities make the exemption permanent. However, a municipality can limit or continue to cap the exemption.

The town would have to amend its local code to make the tax exemption permanent. It would require a local law, which first makes a public hearing necessary.

Supervisor Jim Shaw said the Town Board would address it in the next month or two and won't wait until 2020 but said there's a process that needs to be followed. He added the town's legal department would look into it further.

The tax exemption benefits include a 10 to 15 percent reduction in assessed value and an additional reduction for veterans who incur "service-connected disabilities, equal to one-half of the service-connected disability rating Cold War period," according to the state's Department of Taxation and Finance.

"There are steps that have to be taken first but we'll look at it in April and May," Shaw said.

Councilman Michael Mosey said he attended the last Town Veteran Board meeting and its members were anxious to get this done.

"Veterans are veterans, and I'm willing to give deference to veterans, as well as police officers and fireman, because they're always

there (for us)," he said. During public expression at last Monday's regular meeting, Dennis Chapman, the commander of Hamburg American Legion Post 527, echoed that sentiment and wondered what the town would be doing with the tax exemption after talk about it from several months ago had dried up.

Chapman, whose service began before the Cold War period, urged the board to make the tax exemption permanent as soon as possible for the aging Korean War veterans, who, if they died, their wives might not know that they're eligible for the permanent tax break.

"There's no reason the board can't run that public hearing, get that sunset law put aside and make the tax exemption for the (Cold) War veterans forever like it did for us," he said. "They were the same uniform I did, they took the same oath of office I did, but because of circumstances of birth they were not eligible to serve during a war. They would have been there in a minute."

Before the board makes a final decision on this matter, it will mull a plethora of other topics in the coming weeks, including the purchase of the 18-acre Willow-bend Tennis and Social Club on Taylor Road at its next meeting Monday starting with a work session at 5:30 p.m. and regular meeting at 7 p.m.

There will be a special work session meeting the following Monday at 5:30 p.m. on March 26 in Conference Room 7B of the Hamburg Town Hall.

Topics to be covered include the future of the Hamburg Beach boat launch, coming up with an approach to accurately record work shifts for the town's departments, getting an accurate number for and the condition of the town fleet of automobiles, formation of a budget committee and creating its agenda and getting the multi-modal trail committee started.

Also to be discussed will be forming an agenda for meetings with the villages of Hamburg and Blasdell, analysis and identification of town properties, IT needs for the town with a RFP pending, forming a policy on how to handle news media inquiries, and the re-alignment of the engineering department and potential move of the town council to the ground floor of Hamburg Town Hall.

Students locally join in national walk out



Hamburg High School students stand in solidarity with other students across the nation for 17 minutes as part of Wednesday's nationwide school walkout in memory of the 17 victims of last month's shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida.

Keding honored for earning certification from state's Association of Towns

By Christopher Gordon HAMBURG SUN CORRESPONDENT

Several state and county officials were on hand to honor Boston Town Supervisor Jason Keding during the March 7 board meeting for accomplishing something that no other supervisor has done in New York State.

According to Councilman Zachary Mungler, Keding is the first supervisor in the State of New York to become certified by the New York State Association of Towns. This involved taking 30 hours worth of courses on 10 different subject areas.

Erie County Legislator John J. Mills kicked off the short ceremony by reading a proclamation from the county.

"I want to congratulate you," Mills said, adding that he believes he has another "diamond in the rough" in Keding.

Mills further stated that Keding has shown leadership during his transition into the role of supervisor. Before his election to supervisor in November, Keding served as a council member.

Mills, who served on the Orchard Park Town Board for 22 years prior to being elected to the Erie County Legislature in 2005, said he understands the importance of taking advantage of the

educational opportunities offered by the Association of Towns. Erie County Clerk Mickey Kearns said he and Keding have already discussed ways to partner with the Town of Boston.

"We're going to bring government to the people," Kearns said. "We're going to work together on initiatives."

He offered his congratulations to Keding and offered him advice moving forward. "Keep on having that optimistic, positive outlook," Kearns said.

Karl Simmeth, who was representing State Assemblyman David DiPietro's office, added, "We're very proud of you. Keep up the good work. Stay humble."

Mitch Martin, who attended on behalf of State Sen. Patrick Gallivan, said he had talked a couple years ago to Keding, who at that

time vowed he would complete these courses. Martin added Keding came through with his promise. "It's good to have someone keep their word," Martin said.

Keding offered his gratitude to those who came out to show their support. "I'm a humble person. Thank you for your continued efforts to make this happen. It does mean a lot," Keding said.

Advertisement for C.J.T.O.L. with text: 'We All Know Someone, NOW It's Time to Help'. Includes details about fundraisers: 'CHICKEN DINNER FUNDRAISER' on March 22nd and '2ND ANNUAL COLTON'S CAUSE MEMORIAL BENEFIT' on June 9th.

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Hamburg not immune to nationwide opioid issue

Dixon would like to strengthen current Social Host Law

By Luke Hammill HAMBURG SUN STAFF REPORTER

Town of Hamburg Chief of Police Gregory Wickett has been with his department for 30 years, and when he was a young patrolman, he said, "I wouldn't even know heroin if I saw it."

"That was an inner-city problem," Wickett said. Now, it's a different story. Hamburg has not been immune to the opioid epidemic that has gripped the nation. "It doesn't matter what your income level is, or what neighborhood you live in," Wickett said - opioid addiction doesn't discriminate. "It's a terrible thing to see," he added.

To help fight the problem, Erie County Legislator Lynne Dixon (H-Hamburg) on March 6 introduced an amended version of the "Social Host Law" that she sponsored and helped enact in 2014.

The proposal would expand the law - which allows legal redress against parents, guardians and homeowners who allow those under 21 to drink alcohol on their property - to include drugs such as heroin, prescription opioids, cocaine and marijuana.

First-time offenders would be fined \$250, second-time offenders would be fined \$500 and third-time and subsequent offenders would be fined \$1,000 or receive up to a year of jail time under Dixon's proposal, according to a news release.



Earlier this month, Erie County Legislator Lynne Dixon was joined by Town of Hamburg Police Chief Gregory Wickett and Robin Mann of the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse to introduce an amended version of the Social Host Law.

"It's become such a huge issue and a huge problem in our community that it seemed to make sense to extend that law," Dixon said. Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz said in a Feb. 27 news release that there were 233 confirmed opioid overdose fatalities in the county in 2017, with another 35 cases suspected but still pending confirmation. There were 301 fatal overdoses in Erie County in 2016.

Dixon said the initial Social Host Law had bipartisan support in the Erie County Legislature and said she hoped the amended version would similarly win votes from both sides of the political aisle.

Dixon added she doesn't want to "punish parents who are trying to do the right thing" and ac-

knowledged that "teenagers will oftentimes try to hide something from a parent or an adult."

She said she hopes the law would act as a deterrent for parents who would otherwise "think it might be OK" to allow drug use on their property. Wickett called the proposal "a logical extension of the law," adding that it "sends a message" to the community that allowing minors to use drugs at home is discouraged. He agreed that the law is intended to work as a deterrent, but has yet to have to use it on the alcohol side to make arrests.

He sympathized with parents whose children struggle with addiction. "I can't imagine being a parent and having a child that has this problem," Wickett said.

Village candidates unopposed in Tuesday's election

By Michael Petro HAMBURG SUN EDITOR

It will be a relatively quiet village election season for local municipalities.

Races in the villages of Hamburg, Blasdell and Angola will be uncontested. The polls will be open Tuesday.

In the Village of Hamburg, the mayor, two trustees and justice are all up for election in 2018, but none have an opponent.

All but one member of the Village Board have been together on the board for more than a decade.

Hamburg incumbents include Mayor Thomas J. Moses Sr., Trustees Thomas P. Tallman and Mark DiPasquale and Justice

Andrew P. Fleming. Polls are open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in Village Hall, 100 Main St. Moses and Tallman, along with Laura Hackathorn and Paul Gaughan, whose terms are up in 2020, are all longtime Village Board members.

In Blasdell, incumbent Dennis Fox, who was appointed a trustee last year, will run unopposed for the final year left on the term from the prior board member serving in that seat.

Polls are open from noon to 9 p.m. at Blasdell Village Hall, 121 Miriam Ave.

In Angola, trustees John A. Glascott and John W. Omlor are the incumbents running unopposed.

Polls are open from noon to 9 p.m. at Village Hall, 41 Commercial St.

Advertisement for Springville Awning Sale. Features: '\$200 Off & A FREE Cover!', '#1 SunSetter AWNINGS', '\$310 Value!', and contact info for Springville Door & Window, Inc. (592-9803).

Ilio's to host annual awards dinner

The 23rd annual awards dinner and celebration of St. Joseph's Day will be held at 6 p.m. Monday at Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant and Banquet Facility, 3785 South Park Ave., Blasdell.

The Italian American Leadership Council will present the Anthony M. Castiglia Achievement Award to the Biloni brothers—Michael, Paul and Anthony—for their years of helping so many in the community. Paul is president and CEO of Colvin Cleaners, the longtime family-owned dry cleaners in Kenmore; Michael is the former vice president and general manager of the Buffalo

Bisons who now operates Biloni Associates, a communication and publishing company; and Anthony is the director of Tobacco-Free WNY at Roswell Park Cancer Institute and owner of AB Creativity Consulting.

For the past few years, The Italian American Leadership Council has donated more than \$10,000 of the event proceeds to the honoree's favorite charity. The honor is named after the late Anthony Castiglia, who envisioned recognizing ethnic pride and enjoying a St. Joseph's Day feast.

For more information about the event, call the restaurant at 825-3675.

THE SUN

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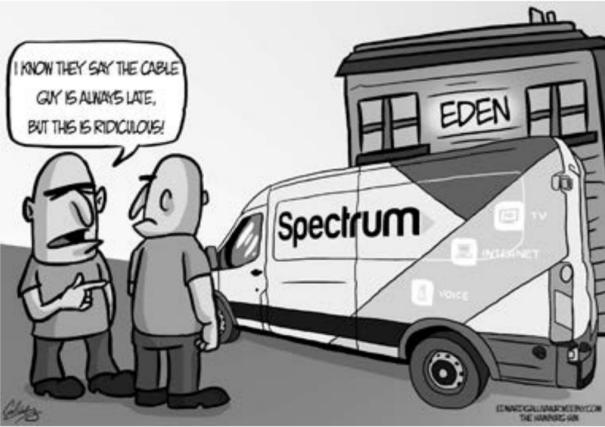
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The Sun (ISSN 2573-4881) is published weekly at a price of \$48.00 per year by The Buffalo News, Inc., One News Plaza, Buffalo, New York 14240.

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Editorial Cartoon / Edward Gallivan



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Resident 'disappointed' over town trapping

Dear editor
After reading The Sun article "Residents say animal traps set illegally" I felt really disappointed. I've lived in Hamburg for decades. It doesn't seem possible that trapping would be taking place on town property...

Catholic Daughters extends thanks for event success

Dear editor
Catholic Daughters of the Americas 1311 Our Mother of Good Counsel, Blasdell wishes to extend a sincere "thank you" to all the volunteers who worked so hard at our recent Spaghetti dinner and theme basket raffle.

Elizabeth Ann Breindel
Public relations for Catholic Daughters Court 1311

Windsong takes good care of patients

Dear editor
I wish to thank Windsong for the excellent service last Friday. It was 10:30 a.m., and they had the X-rays to my doctor before noon, enabling me to get prescriptions before the weekend.

Caroline Westcott
Hamburg

School safety measures, additional teachers proposed for Eden

Budget gap could stand in way of some additions sought by district

By John J. Hopkins
HAMBURG SUN CORRESPONDENT

Additional teachers, a school resource officer and other security measures are among more than a half-dozen objectives sought in the Eden school district for the 2018-19 school year. Standing in the way of these goals is a budget gap of more than \$460,000. Despite that financial challenge, "the goal is to maintain and enhance programming for pre-K through 12," said director of finance Laura Feldman...

school as part of additional safety measures. Superintendent Sandra Anzalone said she was approached last week by the town supervisor about a possible partnership between the town and school to make the resource officer a reality. Anzalone acknowledged there are challenges with this, noting for starters that the town and district's budgets start at different times in the calendar year.

Following the presentation, board members joined the public and other district employees at two tables for informal discussions, which the groups then presented to the board. Members at the first table suggested that the district should put forth a budget to voters that exceeds the tax cap by a negligible 0.2 percent. "We have not gone above two percent in several years and that has crushed us," reasoned one member of the group.

Southwestern Blvd. final phase to begin

By Luke Hammill
HAMBURG SUN STAFF REPORTER

Work will begin next month on the final phase of a \$1.6 million safety improvement project on Southwestern Boulevard, Assemblyman Sean Ryan recently announced. The stretch of Southwestern between Lakeview and Amsdell roads will be resurfaced, new signage will be installed and rumble strips will be placed on the side of the boulevard to prevent cars from going off the road, according to a news release from Ryan's office.

traffic counts over the next decade. "This project has been a long time in the making, but it is great to see that the final phase of this important project is moving forward," Ryan said in the news release. "I thank the residents of the Town of Hamburg for pushing for change, and I thank the Department of Transportation for listening to the public's concerns and following through on this important project."

project will ensure long-term safety solutions for drivers and residents in the Town of Hamburg and all who utilize this roadway," Ryan said in the release. A study found that the segment of Southwestern between Pleasant Avenue and Amsdell Road has a higher-than-expected accident rate compared to similar roadways across New York. One-hundred thirty-six crashes occurred in the study area over a three-year period, with 30 percent of crashes involving rear-end collisions.

Blasz looks to make positive interactions

OFFICER From Page A1

"They really are a community resource, a school resource for everybody," Cornell said in November of school resource officers. "At a time when the relationship between the police and the community has never been more important, having a school resource officer is certainly timely for us. This person's not going to be a hall monitor, a school disciplinarian. He's not there to arrest people."



New Hamburg school resource officer Sam Blaszk is pictured standing on the right with Hamburg Village Mayor Thomas Moses Sr., center, and Village Administrator Donald Witkowski.

"It is the perfect position to be in to make good interactions with the community," Blaszk said. Village of Hamburg Mayor Thomas J. Moses Sr. and Village Administrator Donald Witkowski attended the school

board meeting. The district and village have a cost-sharing agreement under which the village will pay Blaszk for the days he works for the village and the district will pay him for the days he works at the schools, Witkowski said.

Witkowski also credited Cornell's enthusiasm for the school resource officer position and noted that the village would not have been able to afford to hire a replacement for Blaszk without the district's financial contribution. Noting "all the things that have happened in our nation recently" — an apparent reference to school shootings such as the Feb. 14 tragedy in Parkland, Fla. — Sporyz outlined safety measures the district has implemented, including an online "see something, say something" tip-line. She added the district has increased emergency training for school staff, added single-point entry with two sets of locked doors at all schools and implemented "stop the bleed" training for all staff.

Shrine Circus coming to fairgrounds



The Shrine Circus is coming to The Event Center on the Hamburg Fairgrounds, South Park Avenue, with eight shows over the next three days. The shows will run at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. today and 10 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information or to order tickets, call 674-8666.

Eden grad Schwab to discuss her experiences as playwright

Sarah T. Schwab, a graduate of Eden High School, will be returning to Western New York next week as a featured speaker in SUNY Fredonia's Writers at Work series. Schwab is a member of the Playwrights/Directors Unit at Actors Studio in New York City. The series features Fredonia alumni who have gone on to work in writing-based fields.



Eden graduate Sarah T. Schwab will be in Fredonia next week.

Schwab will be speaking on "Hunger Is the Best Sauce: Becoming a Professional Writer," a craft talk and discussion, at 4 p.m. on Thursday at the Kelly Family Auditorium in the SUNY Fredonia Science Center. She will discuss how her experiences helped inspire and launch her writing career. She will also talk about the realities of being a full-time playwright and screenwriter living in New York City, including the challenges and successes she has experienced in her pursuit of truthful storytelling.

film. It's the story of a young girl with early stage cancer who has a late-night adventure that culminates in the realization of her mortality. Paying homage to her Western New York roots, Schwab shot the film in Buffalo in December 2017. The project is a not-for-profit film, sponsored through the Independent Filmmaker Project. In addition to Thursday's events, Schwab will give a series of public talks, workshops and classroom visits at Fredonia. Her writing workshop, "Interrogate Your Darlings, Don't Kill Them," will be at 3 p.m. next Friday in 127 Fenton Hall. All events are free and open to the public. She will be joined at the events by her frequent collaborator, Brian Long, a film and theatre producer in New York.

ON THE AGENDA / Meetings for March 19 - 21

- MONDAY, MARCH 19
Hamburg Town Board, 5:30 p.m. (work session), 7 p.m. (regular meeting), Hamburg Town Hall, 6100 South Park Ave.
Hamburg Village Board, 5:30 p.m. (work session), 7 p.m. (regular meeting), Council Room, Village Hall, 100 Main St.
TUESDAY, MARCH 20
Frontier Board of Education, 7 p.m. (budget work session), at FCC, 5120 Orchard Ave. in the Board Room.
Lake Shore Board of Education, 7 p.m. (regular meeting), Senior High Library Media Center.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21
Hamburg Town Planning Board, 6:30 p.m., Room 7B in basement of

- Hamburg Town Hall.
Evans Town Board, 6 p.m. (agenda meeting), 7 p.m. (regular meeting), Evans Town Hall, 8787 Erie Road, Angola.
Boston Town Board, 7:30 p.m., Boston Town Hall, 6500 Boston State Road.
Eden Board of Education, 6:15 p.m. (budget forum), 7 p.m. regular meeting, Eden Junior/Senior High School, 3150 Schoolview Road.
WHAT WE COVER:
TOWNS: Hamburg, Eden, Evans, Boston
VILLAGES: Hamburg, Blasdell, Angola
SCHOOLS: Frontier, Hamburg, Lake Shore, Eden, St. Francis

Hamburg Sunrise Rotary welcomes new member

Michele A. Ciavarella was recently welcomed as a new member of the Hamburg Sunrise Rotary. After helping the Rotary at Burgerfest, Ciavarella decided to join the organization. She has been an active member helping with fundraising and other community events. Ciavarella is a commercial loan support administrator for Evans Bank. Pictured from left are Mark Walling, installing officer of the Hamburg Sunrise Rotary; Sue Harrington, past president and sponsoring member; Michele Ciavarella, new member; Cathy Rybczynski, current president.



Contributed photo

Save a lot food stores advertisement featuring Easter savings and various food items like ham, steaks, poultry, and produce with prices.

Four Season's Tree Service advertisement for tree removal, stump removal, and tree trimming, including contact info 649-9410.

Gem Mineral Fossil Show advertisement for a gold hunt event on March 24-25, 2018, with various activities and prizes.



The Evans Town Board held its first public meeting with a "downsized" board in 2008. Pictured at that meeting are, from left, Paul T. Cooper, councilman; Francis J. Pordum, supervisor; J. Grant Zajac, town attorney; and Keith E. Dash, councilman. Pordum and Dash, elected supervisor in 2011, led Evans during parts of the transition to the Erie County Water Authority.

Even after deal, town never got out of water business

WATER From Page A1

"Our taxpayers have been abused," Supervisor Mary K. Hosler, who defeated first-term incumbent Keith E. Dash for the town's top job in 2015, said in a phone interview last month.

The culprit, a Sun investigation found: an agreement Evans made with the Erie County Water Authority beginning in April 2007, when former Supervisor Robert R. Catalino II agreed to a deal that eventually turned over to the authority the operation of the town's water system and the collection of money from its residents.

Such partnerships have become increasingly common between the authority and towns around Erie County. The deal might have worked if Evans had truly gotten out of the water business. But supervisors — including two who eventually landed jobs at the Water Authority — failed to properly manage debt and make the tough cuts necessary to save money on operations once the authority took over. As a result, state watchdogs found, the town used debt proceeds and general fund revenue to fund water operations, and municipal finances spun out of control.

"It almost bankrupted us," Hosler said of the deal.

In interviews with The Hamburg Sun, neither Catalino nor his three successors accepted any fault for the mishandling of the water deal, under which Evans agreed to pay for expensive capital improvements. Much of that infrastructure work — including the construction of a water tower projected to cost \$5.2 million and a \$10 million project to improve 24 roads — remains undone, and town records show Evans is still \$15.7 million in debt on top of that because of the water fiasco.

Hosler has questioned whether the town should have made the deal in the first place.

"Why would you agree to improvements and then hand the system over?" Hosler said in another interview in January.

While taxpayers are left holding the bag, the four supervisors who have served since the water deal was set in motion — Catalino, Francis J. Pordum, Dash and Hosler — point fingers at each other.

Take Dash, for example, who in March 2013 signed an agreement that officially handed over Evans' water system to the authority, formalizing the obligations the town and authority had made to each other under Catalino. When Dash first took office, the state comptroller sounded alarm bells about the town's financial position, specifically flagging the water project. Right after Dash left, the comptroller issued another report concluding he had ignored the warnings.

But in an interview at his home in Derby, Dash — who held a full-time job in the Lake Shore Central

Two ex-supervisors landed authority jobs



Dash

Keith E. Dash left office at the end of 2015. In January of 2017, the Water Authority — frequently criticized by those who see it as a source of patronage jobs — hired him. He is a part-time employee and usually works 18 hours per week, said Sean Dwyer, an authority spokesman.

Jann, the Water Authority's executive director, said Secretary to the Authority Joseph T. Burns hired Dash. (Jann was on the authority's Board of Commissioners at the time. Dwyer confirmed that Dash's hiring didn't need to be approved by the board.) Burns, a former Republican operative who worked as an attorney in Albany, joined the authority in 2015.

Jann said Dash is qualified for the municipal liaison position, a job requiring the employee to serve as a go-between for the authority and local government officials.

"Any former supervisor would have lots of contacts with his former equivalents in the other towns, and the mayors, so Keith certainly is qualified for the position," Jann told The Hamburg Sun in a January phone interview.

But, according to Hosler, Dash has not set foot in Evans Town Hall since he started the Water Authority job.

Dash confirmed he doesn't have any contact with Evans in his new position. But he also said Hosler has "never called" about the water deal or anything else she needed advice on as supervisor.

"She's never reached out to me," he said.

Dash, a former middle-school social studies teacher, retired from the Lake Shore Central School District in June 2015, about five months before he lost his re-election bid for town supervisor.

"I've worked two jobs all my life," Dash said in response to a question about whether it was difficult to simultaneously teach and run the town. He went from the middle school to Town Hall every day at 3 p.m. and stayed until 9 p.m., he said, and also often worked Saturdays.

He had worked for the district for 30 years. A database of New York State teacher salaries published by the Long Island newspaper Newsday shows that Dash grossed nearly \$92,500 in 2014-15, an amount that may include payouts for unused vacation and sick time and other benefits.

Dash is entitled to a pension worth about \$76,000 annually, according to a New York State Teachers' Retirement System representative.

Dash isn't the only former Evans supervisor who found a job at the Water Authority. Catalino landed at the Water Authority in 2014 as a meter service worker.

In a phone interview, Catalino said he worked at the authority for about two years.

"It wasn't my cup of tea, going in people's basements," he said.

The Water Authority hired Catalino provisionally in August 2014 until a civil service test was given, Dwyer said.

"He did not score high enough and was terminated," Dwyer said. His last day at the authority was July 29, 2016.

Catalino's pay began at \$21.84 an hour in 2014 and reached \$22.64 in 2016, Dwyer said.

could be responsible for squandering funds that arrived after he left the supervisor's office. He called the transition of the town's system to the Water Authority "a no-brainer" at the time because officials projected that the money saved when the town handed the system over to the authority and eliminated its own water department could be used to pay down the debt for the water tower and the other promised improvements.

The authority likes deals like the Evans agreement because it gets more customers. Water Authority Executive Director Earl L. Jann Jr. said those customers should benefit from increased buying power for things like hydrants and meters.

"And it's advantageous to the municipality because they get out of the water business," Jann said.

The town at the time was looking to finance the improvements with debt from the New York Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, according to the 2007 document signed by Catalino.

Pordum said he invited the public and press to a presentation on the water troubles.

"We believed in being transparent," he said.

Pordum added he has "nothing to hide" and is "proud of my effort in my four years I worked" at the town.

Pordum's own water bill, he said, has doubled; he now pays almost \$100 a quarter.

WATER From Page A6

required of the Water Authority under the agreement. One of the worst aspects of the deal, Hosler said, is that the authority has refused to maintain water lines on unimproved roads — and Evans, a rural town, has many.

In essence, the town gave up its water revenue but kept many of its expenses, and at the same time promised major capital improvements.

"I'm frustrated that it wasn't done in the right way," Catalino said of the water transition and its associated projects.

Pordum remembers it differently. He said in a phone interview that he inherited a bad situation and that the water project was already up and running when he took office. He said three members of the then-five member Town Board already supported the project, which was being primarily overseen, Pordum said, by others in the town government. For the Town Board's committee assignments, Dash handled the water department, Pordum said.

"I really didn't like the project, because what it did, actually, it took town taxpayer assets and actually gave it to the Water Authority. ... I didn't particularly see all the savings," Pordum said. "But that's neither here nor there, because that's something I had to deal with."

Pordum said that shortly before he left office, when bonds that financed the water projects came due, "we found out that there was a shortfall" and "we were stunned by the size of the shortfall." He blamed it on Catalino's administration.

State watchdogs later found that money used to finance infrastructure was instead used for day-to-day operations of the water department between January 2007 and March 2012, a period including Pordum's term.

Pordum said he invited the public and press to a presentation on the water troubles.

"We believed in being transparent," he said.

Pordum added he has "nothing to hide" and is "proud of my effort in my four years I worked" at the town.

Pordum's own water bill, he said, has doubled; he now pays almost \$100 a quarter.



Much of the infrastructure work Evans agreed to do as part of the deal with the Water Authority — including a \$10 million project to improve 24 roads — remains undone, while the town's debt stands at around \$16 million. Delevan Avenue, pictured here, was only half-paved as part of the deal, according to Hosler.



Francis Pordum served as Evans supervisor for four years starting in 2008, before Keith Dash took over in 2012.



Robert Catalino signed a memorandum of understanding with the Erie County Water Authority as supervisor in 2007.



Mary Hosler became supervisor in 2016. Later that year, she had to seek a loan of nearly \$1 million from the county.

TIMELINE OF THE WATER DEAL

Evans residents have been paying for infrastructure improvements associated with the town's deal with the Erie County Water Authority for nearly a decade. Four supervisors have overseen the town since the project began — Robert R. Catalino II, Francis J. Pordum, Keith E. Dash and Mary K. Hosler. Major infrastructure improvements remain incomplete, including the construction of a water tower. This timeline helps tell the story of the deal.

April 2007: Catalino signs a memorandum of understanding with the Water Authority in which the town makes an initial pledge to begin improving its water infrastructure to meet the authority's "minimum standards," with the goal of the authority eventually taking over Evans' water system.	the Town Board. They go on to never raise taxes during Pordum's four-year term.	million in proceeds from \$12.3 million of indebtedness issued to finance a water capital project was used instead for water operations, the report finds. The comptroller recommends the Evans Town Board develop a written plan addressing the operating losses in the water fund.	comptroller issues another scathing report about Evans' finances between Jan. 1, 2012 and Sept. 29, 2015. Auditors find that though the town under Dash hired an accounting firm to help write a corrective action plan in response to the 2012 audit, the board never ensured the plan was implemented.	cial collapse, with a \$980,000 short-term loan just so Evans can pay its bills.
November 2011: Dash wins the supervisor's job.	November 2012: The state comptroller issues a report covering the period between January 2007 and March 2012) with dire warnings about the town's financial position. The comptroller found:	November 2015: Hosler wins the supervisor's job, beating Dash by 16 votes.	December 2016: Erie County rescues the town, which is on the brink of financial collapse, with a \$980,000 short-term loan just so Evans can pay its bills.	November 2017: Evans holds a budget hearing on its 2018 spending plan. Officials make cuts across town departments to keep the 2018 tax hike under 3 percent. The town had raised taxes 8.6 percent and 11.8 percent in 2016 and 2017, respectively, after seven straight years of no tax increases.

written plan to address the operating losses and the unrecorded inter-fund advances" in the water fund.

But Dash ended up ignoring state watchdogs' recommendations.

In April 2016, the state comptroller issued another scathing report about Evans' finances between Jan. 1, 2012, and Sept. 29, 2015 — the period covering most of Dash's term.

"We found that the Board did not provide proper oversight to ensure appropriate corrective action was implemented to address significant issues identified by auditors," the report reads. "As a result, the town's financial records remain inaccurate, incomplete and unreliable."

The comptroller's office found that though the town hired an accounting firm to help write a corrective action plan in response to the 2012 audit, the board never ensured the plan was implemented.

"As of Dec. 31, 2014, the water

fund owed the general fund \$3.3 million, but town officials did not know if or when the interfund advance would be repaid," the report reads.

The comptroller concluded that the Town Board was "not in a position to properly monitor the town's financial condition."

Compounding the financial mismanagement was a failure to raise revenue. Pordum never raised taxes as supervisor, and Dash didn't increase taxes until his last budget — the town raised taxes 8.6 percent in 2016. (Catalino said he raised taxes in six of the 12 years he served as supervisor.)

"We didn't think we had to raise taxes," Pordum said. "I'm actually sort of a fiscal conservative. ... We ended up living in the budget that we had passed. We didn't overspend."

Dash said he couldn't envision raising taxes, either, during most of

his term, and said, "people aren't happy" now with the tax increases that have gone into effect since he left office.

When asked why he signed the 2013 deal with the Water Authority, Dash said the project was already in motion and the town was "in a corner." He pointed to a surcharge the authority began collecting upon taking over in 2013 that is forwarded to the town to help pay down water debt.

If he didn't sign the agreement, Dash said, the town would have had "no revenue to pay for the work that had already been done" and he would have had to staff a full water department.

Dash said Hosler is playing the "blame game" by suggesting he caused the town's fiscal problems.

"If you want to keep blaming after the first six months...you're not doing your job," he said. Dash added that he had a plan if

School District while he was supervisor — deflected blame. He said he didn't have much of a choice but to continue with the water deal, adding that he doesn't think the Town Board under Catalino "realized the investment the town would have to make to have the Water Authority take over."

Now, Hosler receives urgent letters from the Water Authority. One from last May pressed her to "secure funding for capital improvement projects to your water system."

That May letter was signed by none other than Dash, who now works for the authority as a municipal liaison, making \$34.52 per hour.

Origins of the deal

Like many small towns around New York, Evans has a shrinking population and is dealing with the rising costs of healthcare and pensions for municipal employees. The median household income in Evans was about \$54,500 in 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated — compared to nearly \$82,500 in neighboring Hamburg.

"There's no tax base here. ... You don't have a lot of commercial property," Dash said.

Catalino, a Democrat, said in a recent phone interview that the water deal looked in 2007 like it would



The Evans Town Hall at 8787 Erie Road.

John Normile/Special to The Sun

save taxpayers money.

Evans' water system at the time was about \$500,000 in debt, Catalino said. In the memorandum of understanding Catalino signed with the authority, the town made an initial pledge to improve its water infrastructure immediately so the system could eventually be handed over to the authority.

The memorandum stipulated that in order to meet "the minimum standards of the authority," Evans had to first replace meters and hydrants; eliminate duplicate water-mains; upgrade water-mains less than six inches in diameter; address water lines on private roads or unimproved right-of-ways; and build a water tower.

The subsequent 2013 agreement between the town and the authority, signed by Dash, also obligated the town to continue to operate and

maintain water lines on private and unimproved roads; build a water tower; and improve roads, among other stipulations.

Hosler said that before the 2007 deal with the authority, Catalino had been running a deficit in the town water fund because he didn't want to raise water rates and the town wasn't charging residents what it was paying for water.

Later in 2007, Dash won a seat on the Town Board and Pordum, a former Democratic state assemblyman, won the supervisor's position. (Catalino did not run for re-election.) Pordum had previously served in the Erie County Legislature from 1980 to 1996.

Catalino said he "was never there for one penny of the money" that came in to finance the water infrastructure, questioning how he

'The deficit kept growing and growing'

Pordum, Dash and others on the Town Board are the ones who mis-managed the money, Catalino said.

"The deficit kept growing and growing. ... They only did very few, minor upgrades to the system," Catalino said, adding that Dash was "on the board for all eight years after I left" and questioned whether Dash "buried his head."

Water employees remained on Evans' municipal payroll even after the town transitioned the system to the authority in 2013 upon Dash's signing of the formal agreement, Catalino and Hosler said. Dash said water employees were moved to a new Department of Public Works following the deal. He said they were offered a retirement incentive to try and save money.

Hosler said the town should have negotiated a deal at the time that cut water employees' full-time jobs but allowed them to work part-time on a contract basis in case the town needed to do repairs that weren't

See **Water** on Page A7

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OBITUARIES



BARBARA HAYDEN, RETIRED ELEMENTARY TEACHER WITH FRONTIER CENTRAL SCHOOLS

May 4, 1937 - March 6, 2018
Barbara Hayden of Hamburg, a retired teacher from Frontier Elementary School, died on March 6. She was 80. Born in Buffalo to the late Robert J. and Genevieve (Grise) Blain, she attended Buffalo State College and majored in elementary education. Mrs. Hayden became an elementary school teacher in the Frontier School District and retired after a career that spanned more than two decades. She was the wife of the late Ray L. Hayden.

Her daughter Susan said her mother enjoyed knitting, playing bridge and gardening. In addition to Susan (Paul) Fisher, survivors include daughter Barbara L. Hayden and son James (Jayne) Hayden; grandchildren Aimee, Elspeth and Alyssa; and great-grandchildren Peyton and Kori. Services will be held at the convenience of the family. Arrangements were made by Lakeside Memorial Funeral Home.



HILDA M. STEFF, DOG LOVER WHO WORKED IN CANNING AND BASKET FACTORIES

Nov. 14, 1923 - March 3, 2018
Hilda M. Steff of Hamburg died suddenly on March 3, 2018. She was 94. Born in Hamburg to the late Laura (Schintzius) and Fredrick W. Steff, she attended SS. Peter & Paul School. She started working at a young age to help support the family, working at a canning factory and a basket factory both in Hamburg. Susan Banas, a close friend of Ms. Steff for many years, said she loved her chocolate and "one beer a day."

Ms. Steff enjoyed working with plastic canvas and made many decorations through the years. She was a dog lover and always had a rescue dog until her later years. She was predeceased by both of her sisters, Esther and Lelia Steff. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated March 6 at SS. Peter & Paul RC Church.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Today

Middle school dance: The Village of Hamburg Parks and Recreation Department is hosting a middle school dance for Hamburg students in grades 6-8 from 7:30 to 10 p.m. at the Hamburg Youth Center, 200 Prospect Ave. Admission is \$5.

Writers group: The Hamburg Writers Group meets every Friday at 6:30 p.m. at the Comfort Zone Cafe in the Village of Hamburg. The group is looking for people who want to write and share their work in an encouraging setting. For more information, call Jim at 364-1662.

Book Club: The Director's Book Club will discuss "Gentlemen & Players" by Joanne Harris at 11 a.m. at the Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St. The book focuses on a young teacher who harbors dark ties to St. Oswald's past and has arrived with one terrible goal: to destroy the school. A veteran teacher faces a formidable opponent, who has a secret game planned with deadly consequences. Copies of the book are available at the desk.

Cookbook Club: The Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St., will host the Cookbook Club at 6:30 p.m. The theme will be Pioneer Woman Cooks: Dinnertime. Choose a recipe at the front desk and join the group for dinner. Call 649-4415 to register.

Shook Up Story time: The Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St., will host Story time Shook Up with Miss Laurie for children ages 2-5 at 10 a.m. Registration is required. Call 649-4415 to register.

Saturday

St. Patrick's parade: The 72nd annual Lackawanna Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade starts with Mass at 12:10 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory Basilica, then the parade will head to Lackawanna City Hall. Corn beef and cabbage and corn beef sandwiches will be served at VFW Post 898 and Father Baker Knights of Columbus throughout the day.

St. Patrick's story time: Luck o' The Irish Storytime will begin at 2 p.m. at the Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St. All wee lads and lassies ages 3-and-up are invited to join us for crafts and stories. Registration is required. Call 649-4415 to register.

Lapsit story time: The Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St., will host lapsit story time with Miss Ashley at 10 a.m. Call 649-4415 to register.

Sunday

Worship/Sunday School: Sunday morning worship at Faith United Church of Christ, 8651 Boston State Road, Boston will take place from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. All are welcome. Sunday School classes are available for Pre-K through high school from 9 to 10 a.m. The church is handicapped accessible. For more information, call 941-3529 or visit online at www.faithunitchurchucc.com.

Monday

Pre-licensing course: Orchard Park Community Education is holding a five-hour motor vehicle pre-licensing course, required for NYS road tests, in two sessions from 6:30 to 9 p.m. today and Wednesday in Room 129 at Orchard Park High School, 4040 Baker Rd. Applicants must be 16-plus

and have a valid NYS Learner's Permit. Registration is \$30. Students must attend both sessions. To register, call 209-6295.

Moving Mondays: The Hamburg Library, 102 Buffalo St., will host Moving Mondays for ages 2-5 with Miss Laurie at 10:30 a.m. Registration is required. Call 649-4415 to register.

Tuesday

Teachers' Center workshop: Southtown Teachers' Center will be offering pop-up workshop, Buffalo, the Built Environment & You: Bringing Local History & Architectural Principals into Your Curriculum, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Big Tree Elementary in the Library Media Center. The three-hour workshop will provide CTLE credit. The workshop is free to teachers, parents and community members interested. Registration is required to attend. For more information and to register, visit www.stcweb.org/course-catalog.

Food dangers: The possible dangers of some foods on supermarket shelves will be discussed at Lifetree Cafe at 7:30 p.m. at 3766 Abbott Road, Orchard Park. The program, "Dangerous Food: Is Your Supermarket Killing You?" features a filmed interview with author Joel Salatin, who will discuss "America's lack of concern regarding the source of food causing issues with health and well-being."

Online fundraiser: The Cazenovia Neighborhood Library, located at 155 Cazenovia St., South Buffalo, will host a "Spring It On 2018" fundraising event today and tomorrow at 6 p.m. This 24-hour online event will help raise awareness and funds for not-for-profit organizations within the Western New York community. Donations are being accepted at http://www.springitonline.org/organizations/cazenovia-neighborhood-library-inc.

Wednesday

Teachers' Center workshop: Southtown Teachers' Center will be offering pop-up workshop, Communication Tools for Teachers, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Hamburg High School, Room 244. The three-hour workshop will provide CTLE credit. The workshop is free to teachers, parents and community members interested. Registration is required to attend.

Drop-in babysitting:

The Village of Hamburg Parks & Recreation Department is hosting a "Color Crazy" themed supervised babysitting with activities for children in grades K-6 from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. at the Hamburg Youth Center, 200 Prospect Ave. \$30 for the first child, \$5 per additional sibling. Register at the youth center.

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attend. For more information and to register, visit www.stcweb.org/course-catalog.

Well-being event: Brandie Kohl, co-creative energy practitioner and founder of The Body Oracle, will present Presence, Patience, & Persistence from 7 to 9 p.m. at Be Healthy Institute, 40 Main St. Hamburg. Kohl will discuss her journey of transforming one's health and becoming more present and patient to achieve balance, clarity, and overall well-being in life. Tickets are \$25 and are available for purchase at the Be Healthy Institute and online at www.BeHealthyInstitute.com. For more information, visit www.BrandieKohl.net and www.EmpoweredPublicity.com.

College financial aid: A college information and financial aid night for parents of Hamburg High School juniors will take place 6 p.m. at Hamburg High School auditorium. All parents of Hamburg juniors are welcome.

Thursday

Passport outreach: The Passports on the Move outreach event will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the AAA Travel and Insurance Center, 3475 Amelia Drive, Orchard Park. Applicants will be able to apply for a passport card, passport book or both. Payment must be in the form of check or money order. Fees for passport applications increase in April. Reservations are required and can be made by contacting the County Clerk's Office at 888-8866. Passport applications, a list of all required documents and a schedule of fees is available by visiting www.erie.gov/passports.

Spaghetti dinner: A spaghetti dinner and Chinese auction to benefit the Hamburg High School baseball program will take place 4 to 7 p.m. at the Hamburg High School cafeteria, 4111 Legion Drive. The cost is \$10 at the door and \$8 pre-sale. Children under 5 are free. For more information or tickets, email coach Derek Hill at dhill@hamburgschools.org.

Next Friday

Drop-in babysitting: The Village of Hamburg Parks & Recreation Department is hosting a "Color Crazy" themed supervised babysitting with activities for children in grades K-6 from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. at the Hamburg Youth Center, 200 Prospect Ave. \$30 for the first child, \$5 per additional sibling. Register at the youth center.

Dinner fundraiser:

Fundraiser for the youth center.

negan's Farewell interactive dinner and themed basket raffle will be held from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Michael's Catering & Banquets. The Lancaster Regional Players will perform this authentic Irish-American wake, complete with traditional Irish drinking songs, dinner and dessert and lively step-dancing. There will be a theme basket raffle, special raffles and cash bar which will benefit sasi, which assists individuals with developmental disabilities. Tickets are \$43 per person, \$325 for a table of eight and \$400 for a table of 10. For more information, or to reserve tickets, call 805-1555.

Next Saturday

Horse show: WNY Equestrian Fest 2018 will begin today from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and continue tomorrow 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Showplex on the Hamburg Fairgrounds. The event is a free, family-friendly event featuring a variety of equestrian and presenters. More than 140 vendors will offer horse products ranging from the newest line of riding and show apparel, English and Western saddles, tractors, trucks and trailers, hand-crafted horse pottery, purses and hand-made jewelry. Visit www.wnyequifest.com for an event schedule.

Posh Paws fundraiser: Heart Animal Rescue is sponsoring the inaugural Posh Paws event from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Lake Erie Italian Club, 3200 South Park Avenue, Lackawanna. Appetizers, dinner and dessert are included in the ticket price. There will also be a basket auction, wine pick and 50/50 split. Tickets for the event can be purchased through Eventbrite or at Heart Animal Rescue, 48 Buffalo Street, Hamburg. For more information, call 821-1915 or visit http://www.heartforanimals.org.

Gen-Mineral-Fossil Show: The Buffalo Geological Society's 50th annual Gen-Mineral-Fossil Show will be held at the Erie County Fairgrounds from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. today and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. tomorrow in the Grange, Market Place and NYS Police Buildings. This year's theme is gold, with several exhib-

its displaying a variety of gold specimens from several different facilities. There will be activities for children and a lecture to learn about the geological sciences, rocks, minerals, fossils, jewelry and what geologists do. One-day admission is \$5 and for two days it is \$7. For more information, email jcbastedo@gmail.com.

Fundraiser for injured man: A fundraiser to support Derek Aul and his family after Derek was injured in a snowmobile accident will take place from 4 to 9 p.m. at the East Concord Fire Hall, 9413 Genesee Road. The money raised will go toward helping cover Aul's medical and household expenses. The cost to attend is \$25 and children 14-and-under are free. There will be food, beer, raffles, auctions, door prizes and music. For more information, call Andrew Aul at 480-0181.

Next Sunday

Breakfast with bunny: The Rotary Club of Hamburg will present the 15th Annual Breakfast with the Bunny from 9 to 10:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. at the Oakwood Manor, 2965 Lakeview Road, Lake View. The Easter Bunny will be available for photos with children. YES members will be conducting face painting and there will be basket raffles and a pancake breakfast. Raffle drawings will be held at the end of the second seating. Tickets are \$5 for children ages 2-10, \$9 for ages 11-and-up, and under-2 are free. Reservations can be made by calling 867-8388 or email BreakfastWithTheBunny@gmail.com.

Fur Ball: The 17th annual Fur Ball, which will benefit Ten Lives Club Cat Rescue headquartered in Bladell, will take place from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Lake Erie Italian Club, 3200 South Park Ave., Lackawanna. There will be theme baskets, vendors and crafters, 50/50 and special raffles, food and drink for purchase, cats for adoption and free admission. For more information, email Dianamarie531@yahoo.com. For those interested in being a vendor, email brend-abushleytic@yahoo.com.

Bottle/can drive: A bottle and can drive will be held by the Ten Lives Club cat adoption group from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Lake Erie Italian Club, 3200 South Park Ave., Lackawanna. Drop off your recyclable empties. Evans police arrived at the scene around 8 p.m. and chased Reyes on foot, physically subduing him and arresting him, according to the release. Reyes had a silver-and-black BB gun and a box containing money, officials said.

The victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was taken to Lake Shore Health Care Center for treatment, according to police. Evans police believe Reyes and the victim are familiar with each other and that the attack was an isolated incident, officials said.

drivers about safe driving. For more information, call the chamber at 662-3366.

Deep space event: Penn Dixie in Bladell will host a last look event at The Winter Triangle, Perseus, Taurus, The Pleiades, and many other deep space objects at 7:30 p.m. Mercury and Venus will make an appearance, though it might be quite chilly by the time Jupiter rises. Astronomy experts in attendance will help guide participants, who may bring their own telescopes or use the ones provided for the evening. Admission is \$4 and Penn Dixie members attend for free. Email holly@pennidixie.org for more information.

Crash on Lakeview leads to charge of aggravated DWI

A rollover accident early Monday on Lakeview Road led to charges of DWI with a previous conviction, aggravated DWI and operating a motor vehicle while using a portable electronic device.

Hamburg police were called to the scene Monday at 5:14 a.m., where they found a car with extensive damage facing the wrong direction. The driver, Guy W. Brown Jr., 33, of Eden, had only minor injuries. A breathalyzer test measured Brown's blood-alcohol content at 0.22 percent, more than twice the legal limit.

He told police he was on his way home and had been drinking at the Pyramid. Brown also told police he thought he was reading a text message when the crash occurred and was willing to undergo a roadside sobriety test. He also told police that he had a prior conviction for DWI within the last 10 years, which was confirmed by law enforcement officials.

Brown was placed under arrest and released to a sober party with a March 15 court appearance scheduled.

Buffalo man charged with robbery, assault in home invasion

A Buffalo man is facing charges of robbery and assault after allegedly breaking into a Lake Shore Road home Sunday evening and attacking a resident with a gun, Evans police said in a news release.

Police said Angel Reyes, 49, was wearing a ski mask when he broke into the home on the 9000 block of Lake Shore Road. A female resident of the home called police and reported that a man was attacking her husband, authorities said.

Evans police arrived at the scene around 8 p.m. and chased Reyes on foot, physically subduing him and arresting him, according to the release. Reyes had a silver-and-black BB gun and a box containing money, officials said.

The victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was taken to Lake Shore Health Care Center for treatment, according to police. Evans police believe Reyes and the victim are familiar with each other and that the attack was an isolated incident, officials said.

POLICE BLOTTER

Couple's alcohol-fueled fight leads to arrests in Hamburg

An alcohol-fueled argument led to the arrest of a Hamburg couple early Sunday morning, according to Town of Hamburg police.

Hamburg police said officers were called to an apartment complex on Southwestern Boulevard after neighbors complained about yelling and the sound of banging and broken glass at about 3:40 a.m. March 11. There, David E. Tiftickjian was arrested for fourth-degree criminal mischief for kicking an auto-locking door at the complex, shattering the glass, while Katelyn R. Springer, 29, was charged with second-degree harassment, disorderly conduct, government obstruction, resisting arrest and unlawful possession of marijuana.

Upon arrival, police saw multiple abrasions and scratches on Springer's body while she was talking on the phone in the building's entryway. Springer refused to answer questions from police, but said she and her boyfriend, Tiftickjian, had an argument while in Buffalo.

Police requested identification from Springer, at which point, officers said, she became combative and attempted to raise her hands toward one of them. Police attempted to speak to her without success, and at one point,

according to the report, Springer leaned over an outside railing to yell at an officer, while another officer behind her pulled her back as it seemed she might fall over in her intoxication.

Springer then swung her elbow at the officer, at which point she was taken to the ground and arrested. According to the police report, Springer continued to kick and thrash at police, and attempted to get to the counter in her apartment, where a small baggie of marijuana was discovered.

Police requested an ambulance to transport Springer to the hospital due to her intoxication, and she continued to fight with paramedics and nurses, taking a swing at them after she was uncuffed at the hospital. Police said that while they were completing paperwork, Springer broke out of her restraints and attempted to run from the hospital. She was taken back into custody, and police said she continued to kick at hospital staff and officers.

Tiftickjian was held for arraignment with a return to Hamburg Town Court on March 27. Springer is scheduled to return to court March 15.

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A Buffalo man is facing charges of robbery and assault after allegedly breaking into a Lake Shore Road home Sunday evening and attacking a resident with a gun, Evans police said in a news release.

Police said Angel Reyes, 49, was wearing a ski mask when he broke into the home on the 9000 block of Lake Shore Road. A female resident of the home called police and reported that a man was attacking her husband, authorities said.

Evans police arrived at the scene around 8 p.m. and chased Reyes on foot, physically subduing him and arresting him, according to the release. Reyes had a silver-and-black BB gun and a box containing money, officials said.

The victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was taken to Lake Shore Health Care Center for treatment, according to police. Evans police believe Reyes and the victim are familiar with each other and that the attack was an isolated incident, officials said.

Sheriff's Office trains therapy K9

The Erie County Sheriff's Office is adding a Therapy K9 to the agency's unit. Loki is a 16-month-old Chocolate Lab owned by Deputy Gordon. The department's team attended last month's Law Enforcement and Multidiscipline Crime Against Children Investigative Therapy Dog Course in Cocoa, Fla.

Reyes appeared in front of Evans Town Justice Molra Cooper and was remanded to the Erie County Holding Center without bail, according to the release.

Brant driver who hit utility pole in Evans charged with DWI

A Brant man who allegedly crashed into a utility pole, breaking it in half, faces a charge of driving while intoxicated in the Town of Evans, according to police.

Police said they found Frank D. Petrus, 45, standing about 10 feet away from his vehicle, which was resting at the base of the broken utility pole, March 8 on Lake Shore Road. The vehicle had sustained heavy front-end damage, according to a police report.

Petrus told police he was driving the car, according to the report, and had been coming home from Castaway's after drinking two beers. He told officers he was not injured, police said.

Police said Petrus had glassy eyes, slurred speech and poor motor skills, as well as the odor of alcohol on his breath, according to the report. He failed a series of field sobriety tests and allegedly refused to submit to breath tests. He was arrested, and his car was towed and impounded, police said.

Man found sleeping in van at fire hall faces multiple charges

A man found asleep in a Dirt Buster van Feb. 17 outside the Village of Hamburg Fire Hall on 301 Union St. was discovered to have an outstanding warrant and was arrested for felony driving while intoxicated and driving with a revoked license, according to Village of Hamburg police.

Richard M. Lehnis, 32, of the Village of Hamburg, was also charged with circumventing a court-ordered interlock device in his car. He was found behind the wheel of a company van he was given permission to drive but police say his employer did not know Lehnis' license was suspended.

Village of Hamburg police responded that night at about 11:30 p.m. to a call about a man sleeping in the van for nearly two hours. Police say Lehnis was found slumped over the steering wheel. According to police, he had

to be physically shaken to be woken up. Police said Lehnis told them he was coming from the West End Bar & Grill and was waiting in the van on Union Street for a girl. When asked for his license, police say Lehnis told them that he did not have a license due to it being suspended for a previous DWI conviction.

According to police, Lehnis said he had a couple of sobriety tests and a roadside breath test measured his blood-alcohol content at 0.16, twice the legal limit.

A background check found that Lehnis' license was revoked for a DWI conviction and that he had an interlock restriction and a warrant from Cheektowaga police.

Lehnis was arrested and taken back to the station, where he vomited. He was turned over to the Cheektowaga Police Department to deal with the existing warrant.

the driver, Printup, who gave them an identification card and said his drivers license was suspended. Police say they detected the odor of alcohol, and Printup said he had consumed two mixed drinks. Printup refused roadside sobriety and chemical tests and he was arrested for DWI. Printup was released on bail with a court date of March 13.

Hamburg man, 20, arrested on pot charge in 7-Eleven lot

A Town of Hamburg man was arrested early Wednesday on a charge of marijuana possession when police were called to a 7-Eleven parking lot over complaints of two teens "getting high," according to Town of Hamburg police.

Hamburg police were sent to the convenience store on Southwestern Boulevard on March 7 at 2:24 a.m., where they saw two males in a car and detected the smell of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle.

Mario A. Quattrucci Jr., 20, told police he had about an ounce of marijuana in his possession, and showed them a leafy green substance crushed in his hand. A plastic bag containing about 30 grams of marijuana was found in his pocket.

Quattrucci was arrested for fifth-degree criminal possession of marijuana with a weight of more than 25 grams. He was processed and released on an appearance ticket for March 29.

According to police, Lehnis said he had had a couple of drinks. He failed a number of sobriety tests and a roadside breath test measured his blood-alcohol content at 0.16, twice the legal limit.

A background check found that Lehnis' license was revoked for a DWI conviction and that he had an interlock restriction and a warrant from Cheektowaga police.

Lehnis was arrested and taken back to the station, where he vomited. He was turned over to the Cheektowaga Police Department to deal with the existing warrant.

Crack cocaine found on Bladell man during stop in Buffalo

A Bladell man was one of two passengers found with crack cocaine inside a vehicle March 10 in Buffalo, according to the Erie County Sheriff's Office.

Kenneth Michels, 28, of Bladell, and Dylan Croom, 25, of Buffalo, were arrested and each charged with one count of criminal possession of a controlled substance.

Deputies stopped a vehicle at Stetson and Howard streets for a vehicle and traffic violation. During their investigation, they found that the two passengers had crack cocaine.

Both men were taken to the Erie County Holding Center pending their arraignment. The driver was issued traffic tickets and released.

Erratic driving leads to Lewiston man's arrest for DWI

Hamburg police arrested a Lewiston man for DWI and multiple other charges early Friday after his vehicle was observed swerving and straddling the center line on Big Tree Road near St. Francis Drive.

Joel L. Printup, 58, was charged with aggravated unlicensed operation after a previous revocation and suspension, failure to keep right and driving while intoxicated.

Police said they pulled over a Dodge Dakota and asked for identification from

Tiffany F. Covert, 31, was charged with petit larceny, fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property, and third-degree identity theft.

A Hamburg woman reported to police that her credit card was stolen, and a statement showed a \$55.08 purchase made at Walmart without her permission or knowledge.

After an investigation, police say Covert was responsible for the charge. Covert was contacted by police and she signed a voluntary statement as to her use of the victim's credit card.

She was issued an appearance ticket for Hamburg Town Court on March 16.

Driving on lawns to show off for friends leads to DWI arrest

A man who drove over a number of lawns to get to a South Buffalo Street bar on Feb. 1 was arrested for driving while intoxicated and cited for a number of other traffic violations, according to Village of Hamburg police.

Kenneth W. Matteson, 25, was also charged with drinking alcohol in a motor vehicle, having three or more open suspensions on three or more dates, moving from lanes unsafely and driving a vehicle on or across a sidewalk.

Matteson was found in the bathroom of the Pour House, where police say they followed him following a report of reckless operation as he allegedly drove over the lawn of a home at Center Street and Long Avenue and several other lawns before stopping in the bar's parking lot.

Matteson was given field sobriety tests, most of which he passed, but was found to have a blood-alcohol content of 0.11 percent. He was arrested and transported to the police station.

According to police, Matteson told them he had five or six beers and volunteered to drive his friends to the bar so they could get chicken wings. Police say Matteson told them he wanted to show off by driving recklessly on people's lawns.

He was released and his court date was Feb. 14.

Lockport man arrested for driving under the influence

A Lockport man is facing charges in Evans of driving while ability impaired due to drugs and driving to the

left of pavement markings after being arrested March 7, police said.

Edward G. Bartlett Jr., 57, had allegedly crossed over the double-yellow line on Southwestern Boulevard right in front of police, according to a report from the Town of Evans Police Department.

After police turned around and activated emergency lights, Bartlett allegedly crossed the double-yellow line again and while being pulled over, attempted to turn into the "park-off," causing his trailer to go into a ditch, according to the report.

Bartlett had driven from Lockport, police said. He failed a series of field sobriety tests and was arrested.

Bartlett was taken to Erie County Medical Center in Buffalo and consented to blood and urine tests, according to police.

He is due for a court appearance on March 27.

Man, 22, with warrant in Amherst nabbed after running red light

COMMUNITY NEWS

COLLEGE HONORS

Marissa Kordal of Eden was named to the Dean's list at SUNY Cortland for the fall 2017 semester.

Nicholas English of Hamburg was named to the Dean's list at SUNY Cortland for the fall 2017 semester.

Jacob Wittmeyer of Hamburg was named to the Dean's list at the University of Indianapolis.

Trocaire College recently announced students who made the Dean's List for the fall 2017 semester.

Rebecca Friend of Angola, nursing; McKenzie Kathryn Maloy of Boston, radiologic technology; Breanna L. Semon of Boston, nursing; Quintessa Eve Smith of Boston, radiologic technology; Ashlee Abraham of Boston, general studies; Paige Olivia Torres of Derby, radiologic technology; Courtney Conway of Eden, nursing; Demetra Jacobs of Eden, radiologic technology; Maddison Paige Paszek of Eden, surgical technology; Jennifer Erin Cole of Lake View, nursing; Richard Anthony Cordero of Lake View, nursing; Julie A. English of Lake View, general studies; Lakkhana Cohen of Blasdell, nursing; Anastasia K. Greco of Blasdell, medical assistant; Kevin Lange of Blasdell, nursing; Marissa Anne Martin of Blasdell, nursing; Scott Michael Mundaniohl of Blasdell, radiologic technology; Nicole Brianna Sorrentino of Blasdell, nursing - BS; and Beverly Stiefel of Blasdell, nursing - BS.

Students honored from Hamburg include: Alexandria Rose Admy, echocardiography - certificate; Emeriza D. Arce, nursing; Olivia Catherine Battista, nursing; Erin Kara Bermingham, nursing; Nikole V. Button, nursing; Madalyn J. Concialdi, surgical technology; Rachel Marie Crawford, radiologic technology; Mallory Downey, radiologic technology; Sarah K. Ehlers, radiologic technology; Peter J. Ernst, nursing; Michele L. Gawronski, human resource management; Stephanie Nicole Hauser, healthcare informatics (AAS); Brianna M. Hayes, surgical technology; Kristin Diane Johnson, nursing; Caitlin J. Keane, nursing (BS); Lindsay Rae Kirst, radiologic technology; Jonathan Alan LaFollette, general studies; Allison Brooke Masullo, radiologic technology; J. Gabriel McNichol, healthcare informatics (BS); Jessica Michalczak, radiologic technology; Serena Marie Pierce, nursing; Jennifer L. Porterfield - nursing (BS); Keith Ramona Ramos, general studies; Alicia Ronayne, radiologic technology; Ashley Marie Schneck, nursing; Allyson Megan Trolley, nursing; Kelly E. Vital, radiologic technology; Jewel Weekley, nursing; Rachel Wickett, nursing (BS); and Chelsea Zhang, health information technology.

Local residents earn degree from WGU Western Governors University held its 64th commencement ceremony Feb. 10 at the Disney Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando.

Paul Azzopardi of Hamburg received his master's degree in business administration.

Graduates who were not able to attend the ceremony were able to watch the event via live video stream on WGU's website.

Scholarships being offered

Zonta Club

The Zonta Club of Hamburg-Orchard Park offers scholarships to local high school seniors pursuing further education.

Applications for all awards are available at the local high schools and by emailing carmooney@aol.com.

Additional scholarships offered by Zonta International District 4 include the Young Women in Public Affairs Scholarship, worth \$1,000.

The Taste has been granted \$1,000 to be used to create a scholarship for the advancement of women in Culinary Arts and a \$2,500 scholarship to be awarded to a college-bound student in Western New York.

Those eligible must have completed at least two years of college.

Applications for these District 4 scholarships must be submitted to Zonta International for consideration.

Taste of Buffalo culinary scholarships

The Taste of Buffalo, presented by Tops, is now accepting applications for its annual scholarship program to support Western New York-area high school seniors in pursuit of higher education in the foodservice and hospitality industries.

Each year, the Taste offers up to five scholarships in support of Culinary Arts education. This year, two additional one-time scholarships have been made possible.

The Taste has been granted \$1,000 to be used to create a scholarship for the advancement of women in Culinary Arts and a \$2,500 scholarship to be awarded to a college-bound student in Western New York who is pursuing a degree in foodservice, culinary arts or hospitality.

For additional scholarship criteria and to download an application, visit www.tasteofbuffalo.com.

Application deadline is March 27.

Erie County Agricultural Society

The Erie County Agricultural Society will present up to \$20,000 in scholarship opportunities to students who participate in the Erie County Fair and those involved in agricultural related activities.

Students must have participated in the Erie County Fair in some capacity in order to be eligible. Participation includes, but is not limited to, employment, exhibition, volunteering, marching band or other performances.

The Erie County Agricultural Society Scholarship is limited to students who are pursuing an agriculture related career. Students must be enrolled or enrolling in a college or university and must be able to describe how their field of study will help them in their agricultural endeavors.

The 2018 scholarship applications are available online or at area high schools and colleges. The application postmark deadline is April 1. Questions should be directed to the Erie County Agricultural Society's Maria Lucero at 649-3900 ext. 6413.



Pictured from left is the Daemen College senior design team of Daniel Rosina, Randy Ovasogie, Shelby Janczyk, Joseph Pietromicca, Jessica Mjoen, Danielle Romaneo, Anna Simpson, Jason Murawski and Noah Herman.

Daemen students win advertising awards

Shelby Janczyk of Hamburg was among the Daemen College senior graphic design majors to earn honors for their advertising campaign.

The advertising campaign was awarded with both the Student Best of Show and a Gold Award at the 2018 Western New York American Advertising Awards (ADDYs) ceremony.

The group project, "Daemen All High: See and Be Seen" campaign, was produced for the college's 49th annual All High Exhibition.

More than 500 professional and student entries in this year's ADDYs were judged by advertising industry professionals from Baltimore, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.

IN BRIEF

Autumn View's Howard honored for years of service



Sarah Howard

The McGuire Group's Autumn View Health Care Facility in Hamburg celebrated Sarah Howard's five-year employment anniversary with the company.

As a physical therapist, Howard works with patients to enhance their range of motion, restore function, manage pain, prevent complications and regain their independence.

She holds a bachelor of science degree in psychology from the University at Buffalo and a doctor of physical therapy from D'Youville College.

Political training for pro-choice women to be offered

WomenElect will hold a four-month political training course from April 9 to June 23. The program gives pro-choice women the tools to run for public office.

The classes offer an in-depth training process that focuses on teaching the skills required of candidates for elected office, including training in fundraising, public speaking, image development, press/media relations and leadership development.

A limited number of applicants will be chosen to participate in the program. Those interested can apply online at womenelect.org.

towne WNY's SUV Destination

Advertisement for Towne WNY's SUV Destination featuring various SUV models like the 2018 Jeep Cherokee, 2018 Ford Escape, and 2018 Toyota RAV4, each with a price and lease offer.

Advertisement for Window Factory Outlet featuring 'Double Hung Window' for \$209 installed and '20% OFF Energy Star Windows'.

Advertisement for 'SHOP & DINE' with the slogan 'Locally & Support Your Merchants!'.

Advertisement for 'RED TOP' restaurant featuring 'Charcoal Broiled Hot Dogs' and 'Steaks • Milkshakes • Hamburgers • French Fries'.

Advertisement for 'Broadway in the Square' featuring '8th Annual Easter' event with chocolate, hot dogs, and games.

Advertisement for 'Master's Barbecue Company' featuring 'Fish Fry' and 'Beer-Battered Cod' available every Friday through Lent.

Advertisement for 'Niagara Candy' featuring 'We're Back! Same Girls' and 'Open Now!' at Hamburg Town Hall Plaza.

COMMUNITY IN PHOTOS

Grandin's CD release dedicated to cause



Jackie Baulk and Robin Grandin perform at Spot Coffee March 10.



Robin Grandin performs Saturday at Spot Coffee in Hamburg promoting the release of her CD, Memories Of The Heart, which is dedicated to her Mother Dorothy Greene and others who have been touched by Alzheimers or Dementia.

Photos by John Normile/Special to the Sun



Paula D'Amico and Robin Grandin performs in front of an audience March 10. They are known as Sisters on a Mission,



Roselie Delio and Jane Nogowski watch as Sisters on a Mission perform at Spot Coffee in Hamburg March 10.



The front of Spot Coffee on 12 Main St. in the Village of Hamburg, where the CD release took place Saturday.



Scott Martindale, left, and Dave Grandin, Robin's husband, watch as Robin Grandin performs.



Robin Grandin performs at Spot Coffee in Hamburg.

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