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Meetings

BNSME to host Criteria for Success event

The Buffalo Niagara Sales and Marketing Executives will present Charles Bernard of Criteria for Success at 5:15 p.m. Monday, Nov. 26 at the Marriott Hotel, 1340 Millersport Highway in Amherst. The event will provide information on how to create an effective 30-second commercial and then be brave enough to use it. The presentation is free to members, with admission costing \$20 for students and \$35 for non-members. For additional information, call 662-2279 or visit online at www.bnsme.org. Inquiries on the event can also be sent to the organization via e-mail at bnsme@bnsme.org.

Buffalo State sets lecture on global warming

Buffalo State College will host a lecture on climate change titled "Global and Local Effects of a Changing Climate" from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 29 at the Bulger Communication Center. The lecture is the last in an informational series of presentations by the meteorology/climatology faculty. The speaker is Gordon Fraser. The lecture is designed to help attendees better understand issues that relate to climate change.

Smart growth to be topic of interactive series

The fourth session of the fall "Smart Growth is Smart Business" interactive series will focus on "Making It Happen — Putting Smart Growth Policies and Practices to Work." The event will feature William Fulton of Ventura, Calif., who is a journalist, urban planner, City of Ventura council member and Solimar Research Group president. The session, at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 6, will be held at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1285 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo. Registration begins at 6:30 p.m. There is no charge for the forum.

Builder crafts walls with care

by **ANDREA KIMBRIEL**
Reporter

Clarence wants walls, said Neil Crocker. The owner of Complete Landscaping Service Inc. is helping to supply some of the demand.

His company, located at 12596 W. Main St., Alden, has created more than eight freestanding stone walls in Clarence since 1990. Crocker said he works almost exclusively in Clarence.

He built the stone wall in front of the Asa Ransom House about three years ago and is in the process of constructing another wall on the property of Kreher's Poultry Farm at the intersection of Main Street and Davison Road.

The materials for his current project include limestone from the disintegrated wall that was originally at the location, as well as from the Kreher fields and elsewhere.

The wall does not contain mortar. "What I'm fond of saying is gravity is the mortar," he said. "It's built similarly to how it was originally but considerably tighter. More attention was paid to longevity."

If possible, he tries to retain portions of the original wall or reuse material that is already on location.

"If it is significant to the community, restore it, not replace it. There is a critical difference," he said.

Crocker said he was a "a serious tourist," a bicyclist, who traveled more than 100,000 miles. He began making stone walls as a way to weight train for riding and make an income

at the same time.

The wall on the Kreher property contains some stones weighing more than 1000 pounds. Crocker and his employees use equipment such as levers to move the limestone, but he said about 95 percent is hand-placed.

His business also does landscaping, often in connection with the construction of a wall.

For the project on the Kreher property, he added a slope that allows mowing near the wall to prevent trees and shrubbery from taking over.

Overgrowth can contribute to a wall's deterioration, but the two biggest culprits are water and automobiles, he said.

He built the wall in such a way that water will drain away from it, but he said urbanization of farmland is destroying walls.

"What you want are essentially predatory practices controlled, so if the wall is history, you don't wipe it out," he said.

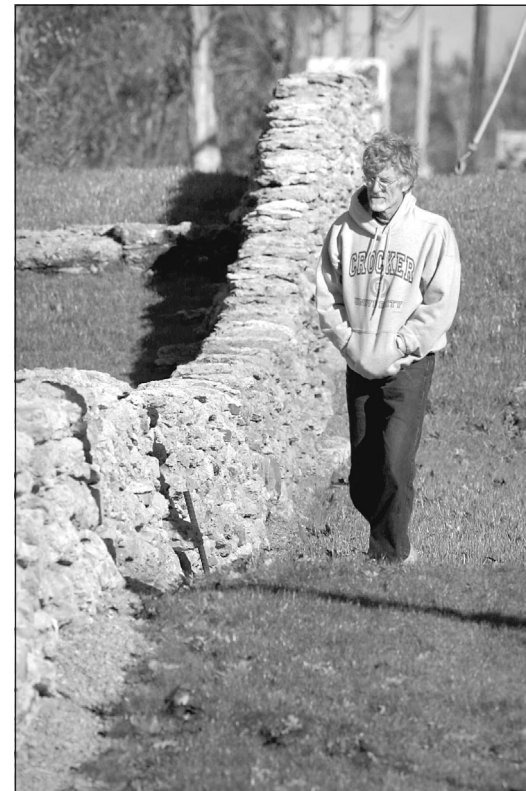
He said there are no longer many people who are trained to build a classic stone wall, but there has been a resurgence in demand.

"I would like to see more walls restored, and those walls that are newly built, I would like to see done with care," he said.

The wall around the Asa Ransom House replaced a white picket fence that had been there previously. He said more than 300 people stopped to chat with him while he was working on it.

"Stone walls tend to make good neighbors," he said.

Crocker said those who pass by while he



Neil Crocker inspects the completed portion of the wall he is building at the intersection of Main Street and Davison Road in Clarence.

Photo by John Rusac

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works are welcome to ask questions and perhaps even add a few stones to the wall themselves.

e-mail: akimbriel@beenews.com

Chamber names new board member

Judy Sirianni, general manager of Eastern Hills Mall, has been named the newest board member of the Clarence Chamber of Commerce.

"Judy has a successful record of working with the communities she works and lives in," according to Chamber representatives. "Judy has a strong background in leasing, marketing, promotions and mall operations. Eastern Hills Mall continues to thrive under her management and experience, while building a strong relationship with the community."



Sirianni

They have three daughters and two granddaughters.

Chamber representatives said Sirianni is looking forward to working with the Clarence Chamber of Commerce and helping build its membership and programs.

"Eastern Hills Mall is one of the premier shopping centers in Western New York, once again working in the community to bring awareness of all the great and wonderful things in the area," according to the Chamber.

Business brief

Through Thursday, Nov. 15 **Northern Reflections**, located in Eastern Hills Mall, will hold a fundraiser selling fleece tops and teddy bears in their stores and online to benefit the Children's Miracle Network. Five dollars from the sale of each fleece top and two dollars from the sale of each bear will be donated to the Children's Miracle Network. For more information or to purchase a fleece top or bear, go to www.northernreflections.com or visit Eastern Hills Mall, 4545 Transit Road.

Pottery studio offers classes

by **KATHERINE WUTZ**
Intern

Clay Hands Pottery, a new paint-your-own pottery studio in the Clarence area, is offering several classes and painting events for the upcoming holiday season.

A project-based technique class on Nov. 20 will feature a "Christmas Booty" plate, decorated with a Christmas stocking and festive stripes.

Those interested in the class can sign up with a group or individually, but previous registration is required. Class will take place from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. The project costs \$30 and includes all project materials and instruction.

The studio will also be holding a holiday painting party from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 6.

Guests can make festive ornaments, magnets and pins to give as gifts or keep for themselves. According to Kelly Mayer, daughter of owner Marie Sperrazza, this event is a holiday-themed day designed to get people thinking about making their holiday gifts.

The holiday party in-store specials include a sitting fee waiver for all holiday-themed objects. Usually Clay Hands charges a sitting fee in addition to the price of the object. The sitting fee includes the use of all paints and tools the customer will need. However, customers painting holiday items on Dec. 6 will only pay the price of the object.

All of Clay Hands' pre-made objects are hand-poured bisque (fired but unglazed or decorated ceramic) made by Sperrazza herself. This, Mayer says, makes the studio unique, as many paint-your-own studios buy their bisque from a supplier.

Sperrazza uses molds she's collected since the 1970s to create a wide variety of objects. She also cleans and fires each piece herself, removing seams and turning liquid clay, or slip, into the ready-to-paint ceramic objects that line the walls of the studio.

Most of these items range from \$10-\$15, plus the sitting fee. More popular items include decorative plates, piggy banks and small ceramic dogs, which are especially popular with children. After each piece is completed, the piece is glazed and fired by Sperrazza, and can be picked up after eight days.

The studio is located at 10086 Main St. between Goodrich and Strickler roads. Regular hours are 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 12 p.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

The studio is also open on Mondays during school breaks or holidays, and is available for parties and events. Call 759-1208 for more information.