

BRIEFLY

Randolph ZBA To Meet Tuesday

The town of Randolph Zoning Board of Appeals will meet in the Randolph Municipal building Tuesday at 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend, as the board will hear a variance request for the Grace Episcopal Church, 21 N. Washington St., requesting 10 feet of relief from the yard set back, based on a NYS DOT map.

Library To Show Monthly Movie

Myers Memorial Library will be showing its monthly family movie Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. All movies are sponsored by a friend of the library. For more information, call the library at 569-5515. The library is located at the corner of Ivory St. and Falconer St. in Frewsburg.

Ash Wednesday Service Planned

WESTFIELD — The First Presbyterian Church, 49 S. Portage St., Westfield, will hold a Celtic Ash Wednesday service, with Communion and ashes, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday. Readings will be from the ancient book of Celtic prayer, the Carmina Gadelica and a recitation of the Lord's Prayer in Gaelic. Special music will be provided by Wesley Bossman, bagpiper and the Westfield Presbyterian Church choir. For more information, call the church at 326-2643 or visit steeplesinthepark.com.

Antique Auto Club To Meet

The Chautauqua Lake Region Antique Automobile Club will meet in the Fluvanna War Vets on Wednesday at 7 p.m. Guests are welcome to attend. The club is open to anyone interested in antique and classic automobiles. For more information, call Al Oag at 483-6287.

Fidelis Rep In City Wednesday

To mark National Children's Dental Health Month, a Fidelis Care representative will be available at Peppy Dental, 1237 N. Main St., Jamestown, from 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday to answer questions about free or low-cost health insurance coverage and assist with enrollment for children and adults. Current Fidelis Care members may also receive assistance completing their annual recertification. Those unable to attend should contact Fidelis Care at 888-343-3547 to make an appointment to meet with a Fidelis Care representative.

Quilters To Meet Thursday

WESTFIELD — The next meeting of the Westfield Quilters' Guild will be Thursday at 7 p.m. in the First United Methodist Church, 101 E. Main St., Westfield. For the program members are asked to show items that are not traditional quilted projects, such as church banners, unique church vestments and robes; memorial and group quilts; library book quilts, a guild project a few years ago; and your first quilting project. Guest are always welcome to attend the meetings.

Auditions For Musicals Planned

Auditions for the Cattaraugus County Living Arts' three summer musicals will be held Wednesday from 6-9 p.m. at Cutco Theater in Olean; Thursday from 6-9 p.m. at Ray Evans Theater in Salamanca; Friday from 7-9 p.m. at MOVE Studio, 314 Cherry St., Jamestown; and Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at Ray Evans Seneca Theater in Salamanca. This summer's musicals include "Last 5 Years," "Ave. Q" and "Into The Woods." If not in the area for auditions, call Todd Wagner at 814-366-1575.



Sue Cusimano poses with her pictures at the Falconer Public Library.

Submitted photo

Lens Wide Open

Cusimano Photo Exhibit On Display At Falconer Library

BY MALLORY DIEFENBACH
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FALCONER — Sue Cusimano always had a flair for photography. However, it wasn't until the Falconer Public Library displayed her photographs this month that her talent was able to reach a larger audience.

Cusimano first started taking photos when her children were born. It started with baby pictures and pictures of her family, and lately she has been able to further her passion.

"I had always taken pictures in my head and lately got the time to be able to just really delve into it," she said.

Cusimano said she tried to capture what she

sees on her film in the best possible way she can, with her favorite subject being nature.

"I've always spent a great deal of time outside," she said. "You would be surprised the things you run into — things that you never imagined — especially in the snow."

All the photos hanging in the library Cusimano framed herself. She said the framing process doesn't take long, adding that if someone has an eye they can depict how it should be framed. Her favorite photo is that of her husband tying a blue-winged, olive No. 22 trout fly fishing lure in the Catskills.

Cusimano wants to thank her friend Carol Wilson, of Ohio, for getting her into photography.

"Without her, I don't think I would be as interested in photography because she is a wonderful resource," she said. "Whenever I had a question, I could ask her, and she just kind of got me through all the beginnings. It was so easy because when you have a personal resource, how can you not learn?"

The Falconer Public Library will be holding two other photo displays in March and April. Located at 101 W. Main St. in Falconer, winter library hours are Monday and Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call 665-3504 or visit falconerpubliclibrary.weebly.com.

Superintendent: Salamanca Schools Headed In The Right Direction

BY KATRINA FULLER
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SALAMANCA — Salamanca schools are improving in discipline, graduation rates and attendance rates as the 2015 school year marches on.

The improvements are due to decisions that were made with students in mind, said Robert Breidenstein, superintendent, at a recent board of education meeting.

"We've tried to make some smart but hard decisions," Breidenstein said, adding that administrative staff members had been moved, priorities had been set and new programs had been introduced. "Rather than run away from our issues, we have tackled them head on."

Breidenstein informed the board that while rates of disciplinary issues had been cut in half as of last month, graduation rates have risen 10 percentage points since last year. He also said that the attendance rate had increased significantly. Breidenstein shared that there had been a 36 percent reduction in absences and lateness, which Breidenstein said correlated to the introduction of the school's free meal program.

"We pursued the community education program, which helps us to provide free breakfast and lunches to students," Breidenstein said. "Now, attendance at our breakfasts and lunch programs is literally through the roof. Our numbers have increased 46 percent."

He added that the programs took away the stigma of poverty because all students were provided with free meals.

"When kids have food in their bellies, they learn better," Breidenstein said, adding that students can come to school and be certain they are going to eat breakfast and lunch. "This might be the only time these students eat breakfast and lunch. If kids are in school and fed, they are doing better in school."

Overall, the district is focusing on improving the school system for the betterment of the students, Breidenstein said.

"We've adopted the approach that we are going to make our issues center stage — we're going to talk about them and not shy away from them," he said. "Every student matters, and we are going to target these issues individually to find out what the students need."

Alzheimer's Assn. WNY To Host City Information Session Feb. 23

BY GAVIN PATERNITI
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Area residents who may be struggling with the symptoms and effects of Alzheimer's or other dementia-related illnesses may benefit from an information session to be held in Jamestown this month.

The Alzheimer's Association Western New York Chapter will host a one-hour program offering verbal and nonverbal strategies for caregivers to more effectively understand and communicate with their loved ones. The class, entitled "Communication in Dementia Care," will be held Monday, Feb. 23, at Comfort Today, 17 Gifford Ave., beginning at 5 p.m.

According to Meghan Fadel, director of education and training, the Alzheimer's Association Western New York Chapter focuses on providing residents in eight counties a number of resources to better care for those who are suffering from a mental illness.

"We host these sessions regularly in our service area, and this upcoming session in Jamestown is part of a series that discusses the basics of dementia and the risk factors associated with it," Fadel said. "Communication is something that is impacted by the disease, so this program is designed for caregivers to teach them strategic ways to communicate with their loved one and make those interactions meaningful even though they may be experiencing challenges at that time."

By the end of the program, Fadel said, attendees will be able to: explain the communication changes that take place throughout the course of the disease;

decode the verbal and behavioral messages delivered by someone with dementia and respond in ways that are helpful to the person; and identify strategies to connect and communicate at each stage of the disease.

It is estimated by the Alzheimer's Association Western New York Chapter that nearly 5,000 Chautauqua County residents have been diagnosed with some form of dementia, and are being cared for by approximately 15,000 residents. It also estimates nearly 55,000 Western New Yorkers have been diagnosed with a form of the disease.

One such former caregiver is Kathy Moore, a Jamestown resident who cared for her husband until he passed away recently. Moore said her duties as a caregiver gradually increased as her husband's illness progressed, leaving her to take control over the family finances, driving responsibilities, and eventually included taking care of her husband's bathroom and hygienic needs.

"As more deficits show up, you take on more responsibility," Moore said. "Looking back, I think it was just that he had forgotten how to do those things. He didn't remember what a toothbrush was, or why he was holding a fork in his hand; it was just things that we take for granted and do automatically that he stopped doing on his own."

Moore said it's important for people to recognize early signs of dementia in themselves or their loved ones; things such as unexplained changes in personality and emotional components within a strong and long-lasting personal relationship. For this reason,

she said informational sessions such as "Communication in Dementia Care" are crucial in helping caregivers overcome the obstacles they face in connecting with their loved ones.

"The educational sessions are very helpful because they tell you how to communicate with a person who has dementia and how to see the symptoms; it's something that's very much needed," she said.

Moore, who also worked as a registered nurse, suggested to first-time caregivers or those who are early in the caregiving process that they read up on the disease as much as possible and make use of that information — along with Alzheimer's Association services. She also encouraged those who notice subtle behavior and personality changes in themselves or others to make their physicians aware of the changes to see if further evaluation is needed.

The Alzheimer's Association Western New York Chapter is located in Williamsville, and offers a variety of services and programming in all eight Western New York counties. Some of the organization's offerings include: advocacy and public policy; care consultation; early-stage programming; education; referral information; a lending library; research; respite and safety services; support groups; and professional training.

It is recommended that those interested in attending the Monday, Feb. 23, session in Jamestown reserve their spots in advance by calling 1-800-272-3900. For more information on Alzheimer's Association Western New York Chapter, visit www.alz.org/wny.