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## How about a 'stay-cation' in northern Niagara?

**BY TERRY DUFFY**  
Editor-in-Chief

With Western New York now officially in phase four of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's "NY Forward" reopening plan, and the July 4 weekend at hand, many are opting to remain at home in "stay-cation" mode, as far as any travel plans are concerned.

A report by the American Hotel and Lodging Association revealed only 44% of Americans were planning an overnight vacation or leisure travel in 2020, with 81% opting for day trips instead.

With that in mind, many locals may now be wondering just what is going on and worth partaking in the northern Niagara area over this weekend and into the summer.

Good question!  
According to local tourism officials, there's actually a good amount of en-

joyable "stay-cation" fare going on, both this weekend and well into the summer that's worth looking into.

Old Fort Niagara is reopening this weekend, the state park pools are scheduled to do likewise, and county parks splash pads at Oppenheim and Krull parks are now back in operation - as are playgrounds there and at West Canal Park in Lockport. Lake swimming at Krull County Park beach in Olcott, however, remains closed for the season due to unsafe lake and beach conditions.

"With the assistance of our Department of Public Health and the efforts of our Public Works Department, we have been working as fast as possible to have everything in place to meet COVID-19 guidelines," said Becky Wydysh, chairwoman of the Niagara County Legislature.

Wydysh Niagara County Health



Ransomville Speedway hopes to be up and running in less than three weeks. (Photo: Tom Stevens Photography/provided by venue)

Department Director Daniel Stapleton said families can get out and enjoy, but should play it safe and follow the COVID-19 precautions.

"We want to encourage parents and their children to be active and get outside, but the fact is use of playgrounds, splash pads and pools can increase the risk of contracting COVID-19," said Stapleton, who noted pool and playground openings throughout the county will be decided by each locality. "That doesn't mean you need to stay home, but rather be smart and take the necessary preventive measures if you do go to these places."

Beyond swimming and parks, there are certainly options for families to think about when considering "what to do" in northern Niagara this weekend and into the summer.

"Just a quick note to say hello and advise you that the North Shore of Western New York is OPEN FOR BUSINESS!" proclaimed North Shore WNY on its Facebook post. "Our lake is gorgeous, our drinks are refreshing and our Patios are far less crowded than yours. Come on up this weekend, Buffalo!"

So what's there to do on the north shore?

- How about a visit to the more than dozen wineries and microbreweries now open along the Niagara Wine Trail? For details on participating wineries along the trail, events and more, visit [www.niagarawinetrail.org](http://www.niagarawinetrail.org).

- The Saturday Night Car and Bike Cruise Nights in Olcott resume July 11 on the hamlet's Main Street. The Olcott Beach Community Association stated, "Join us on Main Street from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. every Saturday night from July 11 to Aug. 29." For more information, including sponsorship, visit its Facebook page or call 628-4007.

- The Newfane Methodist Farmers Market on Main Street in Newfane opened July 1 for the season and will be open from 4:30-7 p.m. every

Wednesday through September.

According to Newfane and Olcott Beach, NY Tourism, market organizers from the Newfane United Methodist Church are prepared with a host of precautions and social distancing protocols in place.

"Your well-being and peace of mind are our top priorities in times like this. Things will look different when you visit the market this year as we'll be practicing social distancing and requiring facemasks. Hand sanitizer will also be available," the group reported.

Organizers noted a one-way foot traffic pattern would be in place to allow for social distancing. Dinners served at the food booth will takeout only to abide by New York state farmers market guidelines.

- Speaking of tasty Niagara County produce, Kappus Farms Inc. in Burt is now doing a soft opening for its U-pick sweet cherries in select varieties.

"Kappus Farms will be following CDC guidelines and all customers must engage in social distancing and wear masks at all times," farm officials reported. "For the soft opening, we will have limited hours of 8 a.m.-6 p.m. daily. We hope to see you soon!"

Kappus Farms is located at 6275 Jockey Road. For more information, call 778-8396 or visit [www.kappusfarms.com](http://www.kappusfarms.com).

- Shopping along the shore at Lakeview Village Shoppes in Olcott. Located literally lakeside in the hamlet, visitors will find more than a dozen different shops, including the Gift Box at the Beach, Just Looking at the Lake, Abby Joe's, Emma's Tiques and Treasures, Cameron's Lakeside Ice Cream, KM Treats, Kaveman Treasures, Cheneze's Popcorn and more to check out.

"Our small towns are home to some of our best hidden gems and attractions," wrote Lea Monroe of [onlyinyourstate.com](http://onlyinyourstate.com). "If you've been

itching to get out of the house and are ready to do some shopping, then it's time to see what's been waiting for you along the lakefront at this adorable little shopping village."

- A return to summer racing at Ransomville. Dave Buchanan of Ransomville Speedway reports signs are pointing to a return of racing at the Big R as soon as July 21.

"Ransomville will have a better understanding once guidelines are provided by New York for events after July 21," he said. "We will make every attempt to run our five weekly divisions for any remaining events this season. Practice dates for both the stock car program and the Stirling Lubricants presents Champion Racing Oil Weekly Karting Series are in the works for late July as well."

He said the 36th annual Summer Nationals for the Super DIRTcar Series Big Block Modifieds and Sportsman has been rescheduled to Monday, Aug. 24.

"While previously slated for Tuesday, July 7, officials from Ransomville and the Super DIRTcar Series worked together to find a new date for the Summer Nationals after the executive order was issued. Management is also working with the Ransomville firehall on the annual chicken barbecue," Buchanan said. "We have been in contact with officials from the World of Outlaws and World Racing Group about rescheduling the Big R Outlaw Shootout for later in the year. Racing on Friday, July 31, will now be a regular show featuring the Crown Undercoating 358 Modifieds, Investor's Service Sportsman, Ki-Po Chevrolet Street Stocks, Sunflowers of Sanborn Mini Stocks and the Stevenson's Hardware Novice Sportsman. Drivers and fans should continue to monitor the Ransomville Speedway website and social media channels for the latest updates."

"While this is a very fluid situation, we are very hopeful about getting back on track in late July. The staff and management of Ransomville Speedway would like to thank everyone for their continued patience," he said.

Yes, summer is meant to be enjoyed outdoors, and there is indeed plenty to partake in and enjoy in northern Niagara.

For more on Ransomville Speedway's pending summer schedule, visit [www.ransomvillespeedway.com](http://www.ransomvillespeedway.com). And for more updates on the summertime happenings along the lakeshore communities, visit the North Shore WNY and Newfane and Olcott, NY Tourism pages on Facebook.



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