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Still, still open, Part II

New Lewiston businesses SPRING FORWARD

In part two of this series, we look at a notable trend in Lewiston: the rise, relocation and expansion of new businesses over the past 13 months, even as the pandemic brought major challenges. Also included is an update on two local construction projects.



Aaron Stephens, above, recently opened The Vintage Barber. New developments at 442-444 Center St., top right, and the corner of Center and North Fourth streets, are expected to open this spring and summer.



The Vintage Barber

BY JOSHUA MALONI

Though master barber Aaron Stephens figured it might take a decade or so of experience before an opportunity to own his shop occurred, he was ready to roll when opportunity knocked after year three.

The 28-year-old Stella Niagara and Lewiston-Porter graduate learned at the feet (or the clipper) of former Mayor Terry Collesano at the Olde Time Barber Shop.

When the coronavirus pandem-

ic hit last year, Stephens was restricted on how, when and where he could continue his craft. On a whim, he bumped into Will Cruz, who was operating the barbershop at 744 Center St.

"He came down here – just for a haircut – and Will was working. And Will said, 'Why don't you come over here? You can do walk-ins. So, he came down here to work,'" said Stephens' mother, Lynn.

"Me and Will actually became good friends. He was a good bar-

ber," Aaron said.

"He was having a hard time coming up here, because he has three kids. With COVID, the schooling, each kid had to do a different tablet thing. So, he was never able to get here.

"But when he saw that I was able to make it here – because I live five minutes away. ... He realized that I have already built a clientele. I had been working for three years at Olde Time Barber Shop. So, once I came here, it was just

an easy transition for my guys to come right up the street here. ...

"Will saw the potential in me. He wanted me to do this – he wanted this building to remain a barbershop. So, we kind of became friends, and it wasn't working out for him, so we bought him out. That was that."

The Vintage Barber was born – "And I have already made at least 100 new walk-ins since then," Stephens said.

SEE NEW, continued on Page 4

Town of Niagara

Asphalt plant permit could be rescinded, as proposal heads to county

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO
Tribune Editor

As public furor grows surrounding a planned asphalt facility in the Town of Niagara, the proposal will now have to go through the Niagara County Planning Board and a permit could be rescinded.

The move comes as officials throughout the county have criticized the town for not following procedures to notify the county and neighboring municipalities about the proposal.

In a phone call Wednesday, Niagara County Public Information Officer Kevin Schuler confirmed County Attorney Claude Joerg will send a letter to the Town of Niagara explaining that, since the municipality did not notify or involve the county before issuing the permit – something that would have been deemed necessary given the project's proximity to Lewiston and the City of Niagara Falls – the permit should be rescinded and the town should bring the proposal before the Niagara County Planning Board.

Supervisor Lee Wallace said the town is waiting to receive the letter and will review options with its legal counsel, but confirmed "for sure" the proposal would be submitted back through the Niagara County Planning Board.

"Our attorney is giving me some basic ideas of the fact that, because we didn't do this the way we (now) believe we should have done this, it might change the whole concept of what we did prior. But we won't know that; we won't get into those details until we get the letter," Wallace said. "Obviously, if we've done anything in error we want to correct it, so when we get the letter we will

SEE ASPHALT, on Page 15

Aaron Stephens

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