

# Lew-Port board pays tribute to Anne Orr

BY JODEE RIORDAN

Board of Education President

It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of Board of Education member Anne Orr. Anne was an excellent board member, an amazing person and a wonderful friend. She was a woman of great wit, intellect, diplomacy and charm.

Anne was a Lew-Port alumna (Class of 1975), graduate of both Smith College and UC Berkley, and semi-retired after 40 years in communication and change management. After many years on the West Coast, Anne had returned to her hometown of Youngstown, moving to her grandmother's home on Church Street, which she beautifully restored.

Anne ran for the Board of Education in 2019, winning a three-year term. When asked, "Why do you want to be/become a member of the Board of Education?" Anne said, "The surest path to a strong



Anne Orr

future for our community is by educating Lewiston-Porter students, while ensuring those teaching them are supported as well. We do this while balancing the real challenges of need and taxpayer capacity. This isn't easy work, but it is important work, and I look forward to the opportunity of collaborating with the current Board of Education for a bright future.

"As graduate of Lewiston-Porter

in 1975, I received an outstanding education. I went on to considerable professional success with careers in advertising and marketing, then in corporate consulting on mergers and acquisitions, and now in interior architecture and design. The foundation for it all was the education I received at the Youngstown Red Brick School and then at the Lewiston-Porter Junior and Senior High Schools. I feel strongly about giving back to the school district that has given so much to me and to generations of my family. ... Once a Lancer, always a Lancer!"

Anne dove into her work on the board immediately, joking at her second meeting that she was only ¾ of the way through the 1,000-plus-page school law book. She voraciously read that law book, the policy manual, and everything she could get her hands on. She joined both the facilities and policy review committees,

two of the most involved and critical board committees. When Col. Lance Dickinson left the board last June, Anne stepped up to lead the policy committee.

Chairing this committee, especially after Lance's tenure and during a global pandemic, would have been daunting for anyone else, but her analytical and strategic planning experience gave a calm, methodical approach to this vital work, for which the district benefited immensely.

Her service to the community extended beyond the Board of Education, to numerous charitable and political organizations. When there was work to be done, a cause to champion, or a need in the community, Anne was there. During the past year of the pandemic, she worked tirelessly delivering meals to those in need and made thousands of cloth masks, which she distributed freely throughout the district and across the country.

The day before her death, she delivered over a hundred children's masks that she had made for an upcoming event on her way home from her work at Meals on Wheels.

Everything Anne did, she did with great attention to detail. Everything she did, she did with great care. She was one of the most thoughtful people I have ever known: Present in every moment. Always thinking of the greater good. Bringing a simple joy and meaning to every aspect of life. She elevated every conversation, every occasion, every day.

On behalf of the Board of Education, we send our deepest condolences to her family and friends, of whom there are so many – here in the Lew-Port community, and far and wide – and share deeply the shock and grief of her loss. We were privileged to have worked with her and honored to be counted as her friends. We are all better to have known her.

## Obituary: Thomas Leonard Beachy

Thomas Leonard Beachy of Youngstown passed away on April 17, 2021. He was born in Niagara Falls on June 12, 1934, to Walter and Regina (Virginia) Beachy.



A graduate from LaSalle High School, Tom served in the Army National guard from 1958-64, and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Buffalo State in industrial arts. He also earned baseball MVP honors in 1957 at Buffalo State with a .357 batting average.

Tom spent his career as a driver education teacher, industrial arts

teacher and a work experience coordinator at Lewiston-Porter High School for 34 years. He coached football and baseball at Lew-Port for eight years. Tom was also an avid boater and board member of the Tuscarora Yacht Club and a fan of Notre Dame football and the New York Yankees.

He was dedicated to his community in many ways. Upon his retirement from teaching, Tom served as Town of Porter councilman and supervisor for five years. He worked for the Niagara County Sheriff's Office as traffic safety educator and was an instructor for summer school driver education, as well as for driver education certification, driver improvement,

defensive driving courses, and classes for DWI offenses at Buffalo State, Niagara University and Niagara County Community College.

Tom is past chairman of the New York State Driver Safety Education Association of Western New York. He served as Region 8 vice president of the New York State Association of the Traffic Safety Boards for 14 years.

He was involved with the Niagara County Veterans Court as a mentor and a founding member of the committee to establish this program in Niagara County. Tom volunteered at the VA hospital in Buffalo with the US TOO prostate support group. He also served on the board of the Niagara Commu-

nity Action Program and was a past chairman.

Tom was a 50-year member of the Kiwanis Club of Lewiston, where he served as distinguished past president and distinguished past lieutenant governor. He helped develop the charter for the new Niagara-Wheatfield Kiwanis Club.

He was the recipient of various awards, including the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee – Chairman's Award 2005; Lewiston Kiwanis – Kaiser Fellowship Award 2011; and New York State Driver and Safety Education Association Hall of Fame 2013.

Tom is survived by his wife of nearly 62 years, Carol (Wark)

Beachy; he is the father of Lynette, Renee, Darryl (Penny) and Sean (Sarah); and grandfather of Daniel, Thomas, Connor and Madison. He is predeceased by brothers Bob and Richard.

Tom will be remembered as a caring teacher, true friend, loving father and grandfather.

Family and friends may call from 1-5 p.m. Saturday, April 24, at Hardison Funeral Homes Inc., 3648 Ransomville Road, Ransomville. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Youngstown Volunteer Fire Co. ambulance fund, P.O. Box 387, Youngstown, NY 14172.

Visit [www.hardisonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.hardisonfuneralhomes.com) for online condolences.

## Faso sees many positives in City of Niagara Falls

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its community is what made the gesture of kneeling one of solidarity rather than a simple de-escalation technique.

"I've been in this job going on 27 years. A lot of people out in the community I've dealt with, you build relationships," Faso said. "I believe we have an excellent community relations unit. And getting out there and actually being involved in the community, not just policing, but community policing. I'm a huge proponent of community policing, and that that's how relationships get built. The relationships don't get built by sitting behind a desk and talking to reporters, you know what I mean? It's getting out there and listening to the people.

"A lot of times what I've learned over the years is people just want to be heard. Maybe I don't have a solution to their problem, but I listen and don't dismiss them. Realize, if somebody's bringing it up to

your attention, it's their problem – it's a real problem – and a lot of people just want to be heard; and we, together, come up with solutions and just listen.

"Over the years, we've had some really good people coming through that unit that really take it to heart and try to do a good job and get out there in the public and interact with people and that's the key. Again, we're lucky in Niagara Falls because it's a smaller city and we could do that and make a bigger impact."

Faso said the NFPD has tentative plans for a number of outreach events this summer. However, "nothing is written in stone yet," due to the pandemic. The NFPD Facebook page, @NFPoliceDepartment, which also features a

monthly newsletter of department updates, is a good way to keep up to date on NFPD news and events. Additionally, residents can contact the Falls Police community relations division and the office of professional standards at 286-4532.

In terms of community discourse, Faso said he has also been meeting regularly with Men Standing Strong Together, a NOAH (Niagara Organizing Alliance for Hope) member organization. He encouraged residents to take part in those conversations. For more information, join the organization's Facebook group at [www.facebook.com/groups/993264364519351/?ref=share](http://www.facebook.com/groups/993264364519351/?ref=share), or call NOAH at 285-3590.

With one of the worst years on record in the rearview, Faso dis-

cussed some of the positive things he sees in his job that have kept him coming back since 1995. He also noted a few things the police department is looking forward to.

"I see all of the positives in this city," Faso said, smiling. "I mean, every city has its problems, (but) the people of this city are great people. Just walk down the street. We know the complainers and the negative people are the ones that are heard the most but, if you get out there in the city and talk to people one-on-one, you see a different aspect of the city.

"I'm looking forward to getting my patrol men and women out there doing more community relations events. One of the things I'm going to institute is – we've already started on a limited basis,

it's all weather driven – but back when I was on patrol, we had something called structure patrol, and that's when a police officer basically parks their car and gets out and walks. We still do it, but I'm going to change it up a little. This summer, these guys are going to do that, but they're going to get out into the neighborhoods. The tourist areas and the business areas are going to get their attention, but I want my guys and girls to get out there in the neighborhoods and do their foot patrols in the neighborhoods and interact with the people of the city and let them see them us there. That's basically what I'm looking forward to the most."

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