

2 GoFundMe accounts created to assist families

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"There were some tough spots in the attic that opened up," he said.

Robertson explained fire responders from the Ransomville Volunteer Fire Co., Lewiston Fire Co. No. 1 and the Niagara Falls Air Base teams assisted the Youngstown crews at the blaze and remained on the scene until after 1 a.m. Fire responders had to return later on Wednesday morning as portions of the complex reignited in spots and needed to be extinguished.

Four families – three with children – were forced to flee the blaze and became displaced, Robertson said. There were no injuries. Red Cross responders were assisting the families.

The fire remains under investigation.

"Niagara County Origin and Cause is investigating," Robertson said.

Meanwhile, family members are assisting those affected in the fire.

"Those pink curtains is my granddaughter's bedroom," resident Amy Peters commented on Facebook. "It literally makes me sick to see it. Luckily everybody got out."

Chris Salada, former chief of police for the Youngstown and Lewiston police departments,

said members of his family are among those displaced.

"That fire last night was my son, daughter-in-law and three grandkids," he said. "They lost everything, including a few pets. All are living with us now."

Salada said his daughter, Mari, opened a GoFundMe account, "Help the Nablo Family recover from a tragic fire."

"Hello, my brother Kyle and his family lost his home and all belongings on 03/02/21 to a tragic fire," Mari wrote on the GoFundMe post. "Luckily everyone had exited the home safely but everything from food, to new housing and clothing was lost and will be needed. To help get them back up on their feet please help to donate. Any help is greatly appreciated in this time of need!"

Established Wednesday morning with a goal of raising \$10,000, more than half of that amount had already been raised by Thursday morning, thanks to 123 donors.

Another GoFundMe account was created to assist the Salvatore family, who lost their home and belongings to the fire.

"On March 2nd the apartment next to the Salvatore's apartment caught fire which spread and they lost everything. Let's do what we can to help them out!" organizer Kelli Morridian wrote.

Established with a \$5,000 goal,

as of Thursday the Salvatore GoFundMe was up to \$4,610 from 73 donors.

"This is another family who lost everything in the tragic fire last night in Youngstown," Youngstown Trustee Nicole Khouri Quarantillo wrote on her "Lewiston, NY and neighbors" Facebook page. "If you can donate or somehow help. Please do."

To assist either family, visit www.gofundme.com.

Still more assistance is being availed to the families by the Lewiston-Porter School District.

"Several families have lost everything. L-P is doing all it can for each," Board of Education President Jodee Riordan said. "Our social workers are assisting with support – they will help in any/all ways needed. They are truly the best."

"Faculty and staff are donating gift cards for food, household items (Tops, Walmart, Wegmans, Target, etc.), social workers are leading the effort."

Those interested in assisting the Lewiston-Porter effort may contact Lew-Port social workers Danielle Kudula (middle school, 754-8281, ext. 5118/or high school, 286-7257; email, DKudula@Lew-Port.com) or Erin Myers (Lew-Port Primary Education Center, 286-7220, ext. 6407; email, emyers@lew-port.com).

Tylec (cont.)

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During his speech, Tylec championed his record for demanding better city-resident engagement and criticized the Republican leadership for financial mismanagement in the wake of a blistering state audit last year. If elected, Tylec said he would fight for better fiscal stability and more transparency of government.

"As alderman, I addressed a lack of transparency and open government by informing the public every way I could through technology, utilizing Facebook and always being available," Tylec said. "We also saw poor financial planning and a scathing audit from New York state, which I addressed by saying we should have initiatives like a fiscal stability committee, changing our city auditor and working with our state (representatives, including) Assemblyman Conrad. We obviously saw an impact from the coronavirus on our families and small businesses. Luckily, North Tonawanda came together and has been supporting our local businesses and local organizations to make sure that they get through."

"Unfortunately, a lot of my positive ideas have fallen on deaf ears and now is the time that we have to step up and run for mayor, because it's the only way we're going to see the pro-

gressive change that we need in North Tonawanda to really stimulate some growth we're currently seeing.

"As mayor, I will continue to be an independent voice, it will just be through a different capacity that allows me to move our city forward. We are obviously facing unique challenges that need to be addressed with new perspectives and a proactive approach. As mayor, I will ensure we have greater fiscal oversight that looks for long-term solutions, and balance the budget while continuing to provide services for our community. I will ensure we find innovative ways to engage the public, open up government and allow residents to have a voice. Of course, we need to continue to support small businesses as our economy recovers from COVID-19 and provide these businesses with the necessary tools and connect them to appropriate grants and funding sources.

"We're going to work with the state, keep taxes low, bring new ideas and we're going to treat this position with integrity."

Tylec is now the second candidate to officially declare a mayoral run after current Mayor Arthur G. Pappas announced he would not seek reelection in the upcoming election cycle. Common Council President Robert Pecoraro announced his candidacy for mayor on Feb. 17.

Taste of Buffalo announces 2021 in-person festival

The Taste of Buffalo presented by Tops on Monday announced planning is underway for an in-person festival for July 10-11, occupying a portion of its longtime home on Delaware Avenue and Niagara Square in downtown Buffalo.

The event's all-volunteer board of directors said it is mindful there may still be COVID-19 health restrictions in place throughout the spring and summer: "The Taste of Buffalo remains committed, as always, to creating a safe and festive environment for guests to sample some of the best food that our Western New York restaurants have to offer. The Taste is planning a one-year only, ticketed event with multiple sessions to be held over the weekend of July 10 and 11."

2021 Chair Amber Hartman said, "The Taste of Buffalo has always existed to support our locally owned restaurants. After so many of them have endured unthinkable hardships during the pandemic, our mission is more important now than ever. We are working with our state and county officials to follow all safety guidelines that may be in place come

this July. We hope this announcement gives our community something to look forward to this summer and sends a message to our local restaurants that better days are ahead."

Details on how and where to purchase session tickets will be forthcoming as the event date approaches.

The Taste of Buffalo presented by Tops is the nation's largest two-day food festival. The Taste is a not-for-profit organization with more than 1,000 volunteers helping to put on the annual event. Approximately \$541,000 has been raised at the festival for local charities, including three \$1,000 scholarships awarded last

year to local high school seniors pursuing a culinary or hospitality-related degree. For more information, visit tasteofbuffalo.com, or @tasteofbuffalo on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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