

Village of Lewiston election 2022: Welch reelected mayor

Tina Coppins top vote-getter among trustee candidates; Eydt second

BY JOSHUA MALONI
GM/Managing Editor

Anne Welch was reelected mayor Tuesday in the Village of Lewiston. She topped outgoing Trustee Claudia Marasco by a 52-vote margin (367-315 votes).

Tina Coppins (362 votes) was elected to her first term in office, and will serve as a trustee alongside Vic Eydt, who was reelected for a fourth term (353 votes).

Savana Bevacqua finished third with 330 votes. Jim Fittante was fourth, earning 310 votes.

Each elected office carries a four-year term.

Following the results announcement, Welch said, "I'm looking forward to (another term). Getting a lot finished that we already had in the works. We've got a lot of projects waiting. I'm glad to be able to finish those up in the next four years."

"I'm very happy to be in for another four years with Vic - he's been my right hand. I'm very glad to still have him by my side."

A total of 633 people voted in the Red Brick Municipal Building gymnasium. Fifty-four absentee ballots were submitted.

Welch was first elected mayor in 2018 - defeating former Deputy Mayor Bruce Sutherland by four votes (three after votes were certified). Prior to that, she worked 31 years as clerk, retiring in 2014. She returned to serve the village as vice chairwoman of the Planning Commission the next year, and was with that board three years.

In her first full year in office as mayor, Welch secured a private buyer for the Frontier House. She recently spearheaded the movement to build an inclusive playground at Marilyn Toohey Park. That play area recently opened to the public. Other projects in the works include enhancements to Academy Park and the waterfront, plus a new bike trail.

"We have a lot going on; I'm



Pictured, from left, are Election Day winners Vic Eydt, Anne Welch and Tina Coppins.

glad to be able to finish that," Welch said.

"We ran on our merit of four years, with good results," she noted. "We have a good record."

Welch added, "You know what I'm going to do tomorrow? I'm going to work! Just like I do every day."

Marasco has served on the Village Board since 2018, and is a former deputy mayor. She was an educator before becoming a community advocate. In 2017, Marasco partnered with fellow village resident Arlene Sliz on the "Invest in the Vest" fundraiser, which netted \$30,000 for 24 anti-assault weapon vests for the Lewiston Police Department. The former "Citizen of the Year" awardee also has raised funds for Community Missions, Ransomville Care-N-Share and Heart, Love & Soul food pantries via collection nights outside of Artpark.

"Tina got in. I'm happy for her; she'll be a good replacement for me," Marasco said.

"I always hope good things for the village, moving forward. Tonight's outcome means, I guess,

that half of the village voters - it was pretty close; and 52 votes different - that there definitely is work to be done in the village. I stand on the record of ethical government, open communication and accessibility, and that people really want to be - and hopefully can be - more involved in our community. It's wonderful place to live.

"We're not perfect. But we did our best. Our team was very focused. It's very difficult to beat people that have been, basically, in a position of governance for 68 years. So, when I look at it, I look at it as a victory, in a sense, that, from this, we will learn. And whoever leads needs to be more attentive to the people and what they would like."

Coppins is a long-time River Region resident who, for the past 22 years, has worked as a property manager overseeing a 425,000-square-foot commercial building that houses between 25 and 35 tenants at any given time. She has volunteered her time to assist the Lewiston Kiwanis, Lions and Garden clubs, as well

as the Village of Lewiston Recreation Department. Her husband, Peter, is a member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

"I'm very happy to win a position on the Village Board as a new trustee," Coppins said. "I would thank all the residents that came out and voted and supported me. It was a great experience walking the village and talking to everyone with Claudia Marasco and Savana Bevacqua and listening to your concerns. I really thought we had a great team, but I am looking forward to working with Mayor Welch, Village Board, and all of the village employees."

Eydt is a three-term trustee and current deputy mayor. He has worked extensively on the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The Village of Lewiston's LWRP-designated area was recently expanded to include all of Center Street - including Academy Park - which will enable the municipality to qualify for additional grant opportunities. He has worked in village government since 1993, first as a member of the Planning Commission, and later as chairman of that board for 12 years.

"I'm glad that I won, and hopefully we'll get past all the negativity from the election," Eydt said. "I'm looking forward to the fourth term, picking up all the stuff that I've got in the fire: the water lines

and Academy Park and all that." He added, "It's just a matter of getting everybody to work on the same page."

Bevacqua recently won a spot on the Lewiston-Porter Board of Education. She has served as a member of the Planning Board since 2019. A U.S. Navy veteran, Bevacqua is currently attending graduate school at the University at Buffalo for a master of urban planning degree. Her focus is on historic preservation.

Fittante is president of Fittante Architecture - and well-known for his architectural work on several prominent Lewiston sites, including the Frontier House and the Brickyard Brewing Company. He is a member of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce executive board.

Election results are unofficial until certified by the Niagara County Board of Elections.

Welch, Eydt and Fittante appeared on the Republican and Conservative party lines. Marasco, Coppins and Bevacqua were the endorsed Democrat party candidates.

A total of 721 votes were cast in the 2018 mayoral race, while about 600 people voted in the 2014 election.

A reorganizational meeting and swearing-in ceremony will take place at 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 5.

Playground (cont.)

"I think it would be money well spent," Eydt said.

Welch said she spoke with Dave Rulli Electric about adding additional illumination underneath the pavilion "just to kind of light that up at night, so it's not dark -

so kids can't sit there in the dark. I think that's a good security measure, also."

Trustee Dan Gibson said the existing playground fencing, which isn't connected on all sides, "defeats the purpose."

Continued from Page 2

behind the Red Brick Municipal Building.

"Also the bathroom, because we've been having a lot of issues with vandalism in our bathroom," Longwell said.

WEBR AM 1440
The Sound of the City

The Songs You Know,
The Music You Love.

Featuring:
Frank Sinatra
Dionne Warwick
Michael Buble
Linda Ronstadt
Tony Bennett
The Carpenters

Streaming Live at
WEBRRadio.com

Fichte Endl & Elmer EYECARE LASIK OPEN HOUSE
Thurs., July 7th 6pm

- Doors open at 5:30pm
- Hosted by the Surgeons
- Informative Presentation
- See a LASIK procedure
- Meet the patient
- Tour our facility
- Refreshments by My Tomato Pie

FREE LASIK EVALUATION
Just for attending, we will waive the usual \$150 LASIK evaluation fee.

THIS EVENT IS HELD AT OUR AMHERST LOCATION
2825 Niagara Falls Blvd.
Suite 130
Amherst, NY 14228

Reserve seats at www.fichte.com or call 1-800-309-2020

COME JOIN US FOR THESE EXCITING EVENTS AT

2022 EVENT CALENDAR

6.25.22 - Celtic Games & Live Music from the vineyard: Celtic Cross also Ax Throwing from Grand Island Throw House	7.23.22 - Go with the Flow Festival (GWTF) Yoga and Outdoor Market
7.09.22 - Workouts & Wine (In the vineyard) w/All In Personal Training	7.31.22 - Live music from the vineyard: 90 WEST Band and BBQ
7.16.22 & 7.17.22 - Lewiston Bazaar (Dog Days of Summer)	8.20.22 - Car Show & Live Music from the vineyard: Soul Committee
7.17.22 - Live Music from the vineyard: REFLECTOR	9.17.22 & 9.18.22 - Lewiston Grand Bazaar (Fall Fest Market)
7.21.22 - 5K Vineyard Trail Run	9.11.22 - Live music from the vineyard: Hit n Run

1243 Ridge Rd. Lewiston, NY 14092 • (716) 405-7355 • www.Bellarosewinery.com

THE BOAR IS COMING

Niagara County's largest variety of Boar's Head Meats and Cheeses will be available soon at

DiMino's TOPS Friendly Markets

906 Center St., Lewiston
716-215-1350