

Olean Times Herald WEEKEND EDITION

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File

The Greater Olean Area Chamber of Commerce's Santa Claus Lane Parade is set for the evening of Nov. 29. The chamber is seeking participants for the annual parade.

The Santa Claus Lane Parade is coming to town

OLEAN — As the weather starts to cool down, the Greater Olean Area Chamber of Commerce is preparing for one of Olean's most loved traditions: The Santa Claus Lane Parade.

Like always, the parade will begin in the evening on Black Friday. This year's parade will be on Nov. 29, starting at 6:30 p.m.

The procession will begin on the corner of Delaware Avenue and North Union Street and proceed south into the heart of downtown Olean. Floats, units and theatrical groups will

stagger and use both sides of the street, so make sure you get a good spot.

Seven Mountains Media will be emceeing the entire procession, from the first float to Santa's arrival.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will have their traditional magical count-down to the illumination of the lights at the intersection of State and Union. Come dressed in your holiday sweaters and scarves (and jackets) and get ready to enter the magical holiday season.

Parade ... page A-5

Olean churches prep to send out hundreds of Thanksgiving meals

By JIM ECKSTROM
jeckstrom@oleantimesherald.com

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." — Colossians 3:15

OLEAN — The Rev. Kim Rossi says these continue to be challenging times for many families in the area, so dozens of volunteers are called once again and prepare and deliver more than 900 Thanksgiving Day meals this coming holiday.

Members of St. Stephen's Episcopal and Bethany Lutheran churches and the Greater Olean Association of Churches will work together — in what has become something of a precision unit — in spreading some cheer for families and individuals who otherwise might not enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving meal on Nov. 28.

"It's really become a great team effort involving the members from the two churches," said Rossi, who serves as pastor of both due to alignment between the Episcopal and Lutheran churches.

She said the timing of her adding the duties as pastor at Bethany a few years ago was fortunate for the annual Thanksgiving dinner effort because it brought in new volunteers. She related that St.



Provided

Volunteers at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church are busy preparing meals for delivery on Thanksgiving Day 2023.

Stephen's members were always game to make the dinner happen, but an influx of Bethany members and others means most of the volunteers can work in shifts leading up to and during Thanksgiving Day.

There are about 40 volunteers

who help prepare the meals — an effort that begins days in advance of Thanksgiving — while there are more than 30 drivers who will make deliveries. Rossi noted that there is still a need for volunteer

Meals... page A-5

Olean native Martin bringing the Cole All-Star Circus to hometown Sunday

By KELLEN M. QUIGLEY
kquigley@oleantimesherald.com

OLEAN — An Olean native and near-five-decade veteran of the circus is bringing his troupe of jugglers, trapeze artists, balancers and other specialty acts to his hometown crowd this weekend.

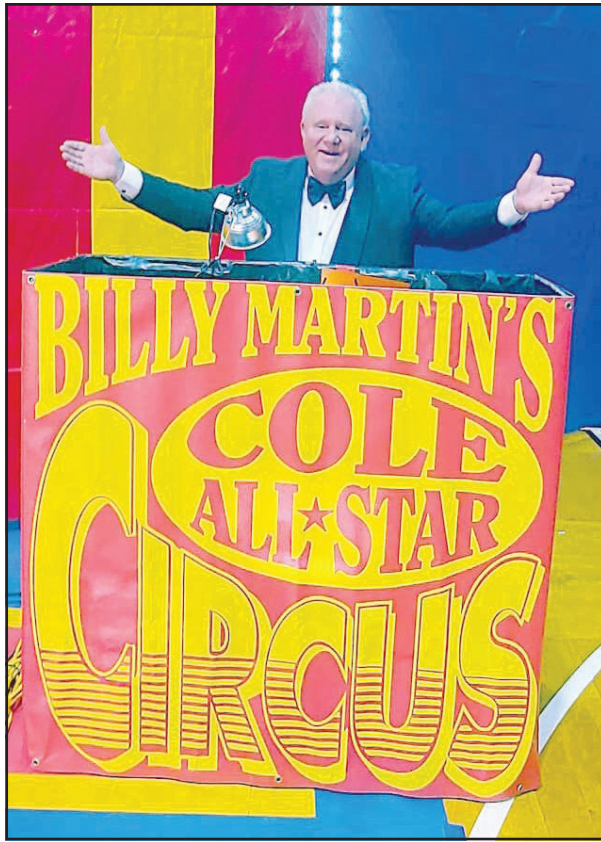
Billy Martin will present the Cole All-Star Circus at 3 p.m. Sunday in the Olean Intermediate Middle School gymnasium. This is the final show of the 2024 tour, and it's the first time the circus will play Martin's alma mater in many years — and the first time without Cole there.

"It's been quite a long time since I actually brought the circus to Olean," Martin told the Times Herald on Thursday. "We play Portville every year very successfully, and Bolivar and Shinglehouse and Salamanca, but it's our first time back in Olean and I'm very excited."

After two years off in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, Martin said the circus tour is on the upswing as more schools have been reaching out and requesting they come to town.

"It's a lot of fun. I'm very happy and very encouraged," he said. "Plenty of new schools and plenty of new venues."

This year's round



Provided

Olean native Billy Martin has been the owner and ringmaster of the Cole All-Star Circus for nearly 40 years. The 2024 tour wraps Sunday at the Olean Intermediate Middle School, Martin's alma mater.

of stops — about 150 schools during 2024 — included 90-95% of the circus's usual traditional venues, Martin said, but they're always filling in dates with new schools.

"A superintendent will go to a new school, or a principal become a superintendent at a new district, and they'll bring the circus with them," he said. "On this particular tour, we've had eight new schools."

The All-Star Circus was founded in 1938 by legendary showman James M. Cole, a Penn Yan native who joined the Walter L. Main Railroad Circus in 1924. Throughout his amazing tenure in show business, he managed many major touring circuses, owned and operated his own big top show, toured the nation with his famous performing elephants and became a circus leg-

end. "He had it all — worked for the biggest shows and managers and owned his own shows," Martin said. "And then when the new centralized schools were coming up in the '30s, he thought this would be a good thing to keep busy in the wintertime."

The Cole All-Star Circus began as a school workshop project — Cole provided the acts, and the schools provided the rest. The art classes designed and crafted the posters, the high school band provided the music for the show and the gym classes served as stagehands. The show became a popular tradition throughout New York state and Pennsylvania. Cole retired in 1987, completing his 50th tour of the show.

"He was the best — a true gentleman," Martin said.

IT SEEMED Martin was always destined for a life in the circus. While attending old School No. 4 on the corner of Seneca Avenue and King Street, his second-grade class did a week-long course on the circus and he was hooked.

"There were only four books about the circus in the school library, and I would take them out and I don't even know how

Circus ... page A-5



New York DMV image

This sample image from the New York Department of Motor Vehicles show what a federally-compliant REAL ID state driver's license looks like.

REAL ID deadline is looming, DMV says

The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles is encouraging New Yorkers to get a REAL ID or Enhanced ID before the federal deadline on May 7.

Starting then, everyone flying in the United States will need a REAL ID, Enhanced ID, U.S. passport or another form of federally compliant identification to fly domestically and enter certain federal facilities.

"Time is running out to get a REAL ID or Enhanced ID and you do not want to get stuck at airport security if you are not prepared," said DMV Commissioner Mark J.F. Schroeder. "Take the time now to get this taken care of so you are not scrambling at the last minute."

New Yorkers are encouraged to visit a DMV office as soon as possible to get a REAL ID even if their license, permit, or non-driver ID is

State & Union ... page A-5

Index

Classifieds.....	B-6	Lifetime.....	A-7
Comics.....	A-8	Police reports.....	A-3
Comment.....	A-6	Sports.....	B-1
Entertainment.....	A-9	Weather.....	A-12

Local Deaths

Barbara J. Bryant	Emma J. Lauver
Victoria M. Eddy	Amy Torres Rivera
Barbara F. Heimel	Ruby E. Truax
Robert T. Heslin	... page A-4

Community



TREE OF LIFE CEREMONY CELEBRATED IN NEW LOCATION

The annual HomeCare & Hospice Tree of Life ceremony Thursday evening celebrated the lives and memories of those who passed away during the past year. ... Page A-2

National

NY JUDGE REJECTS STATE EFFORTS TO SHUTTER BITCOIN MINE OVER CLIMATE CONCERNS

A cryptocurrency plant in central New York can continue operating after a court rejected the state's effort to shutter the facility. ... Page A-11

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Andrew Baker

OF-THE-DAY



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CIRCUS

From Page A-1

many times I read them," he said. "There was just something so intriguing about it — the wonder of it all."

When they later moved to the new East View Elementary in 1971, the march over to the new school was framed as a circus parade, and Martin was the ringmaster leading the school.

"I later accepted the keys to the new school on behalf of the student body," he recalled.

A year later at age 12, Martin met Cole when the indoor circus performed in Hinsdale. His fascination with the circus evolved into a wonderful friendship with Cole, and at 14, Martin began booking many schools for the circus throughout Western New York.

"I used to go around town and take down the (circus) posters, and my bedroom wall was just

covered in them," he said. "I had my eye set on my goal, and I took it. I couldn't wait to get out."

After graduating high school in 1977 as a junior — Martin had all the credits he needed and was an honor student — it was only logical he joined the Cole Circus. The day after graduation in Bradner Stadium, he was on the road and never looked back.

"He said I reminded him of himself because that's how he started too. He could see that my interest was there," Martin said of Cole. "Back in 1974, he sent me a check for \$50 for each town I booked. I still have that first one. Never cashed it."

During the next 10 years, Martin performed a juggling/balancing act, served as ringmaster and became Cole's right-hand man. When Cole retired at the age of 80, Martin purchased the show and remains at its helm today.

"I've been on the show for 47 years now.

Unbelievable how time has gone by," he said. "But I've never worked a day in my life. It's just a lifestyle, and it's been very good to me."

OVER THE ensuing five decades, the circus has evolved to stay with the times. Martin said the acts have changed as people's tastes have changed, but every type of circus act you can think of has been performed with the Cole All-Stars at one point.

"A lot of acts that have been on America's Got Talent have worked for me. The dog act that won (in 2012) was with us that year," he said, referring to the Olate Dogs featuring father-and-son trainers

Richard and Nicholas Olate. "America's Got Talent would fly them overnight, they'd do their segment at like 3 in the morning in L.A. and then fly them back so they'd never miss a show with us and then they won the million dollars."

One of the most consistent improvements and advancements is the technology, Martin said. The lights and soundboard programs are always evolving, he said, and that modernization always adds to the performance.

While the bigger circuses like Barnum & Bailey and Ringling Bros. eventually dropped their animal acts featuring lions, tigers and elephants, Martin

said they weren't affected because they could never bring elephants or jungle cats into schools anyway.

"Now they don't even allow dog acts in a lot of schools. And you don't sell peanuts anymore because of peanut allergies, and no balloons because there are latex allergies," he said. "Things like that have changed, but with the circus, when the lights go down and the show begins, the audience is transported for that hour-and-a-half, it's just a feeling like no other."

Quickly approaching his own 50th year with the circus, Martin said he's honored to continue Cole's legacy at all these

schools. He said they always play Cole's own alma mater in Penn Yan, so it was only fitting for him to do the same for his.

"It's going to be a different challenge because it's a new gym for us to play, but I'm looking forward to seeing friends and family in the area and bringing the circus home," he said. "I've got the best job in the show. Not only am I a part of it, but I get to watch it every day."

Tickets for Sunday's show are \$20 each. Proceeds benefit the Olean Music Boosters. Major credit cards are accepted at the door. For more information, visit billymartincircus.com.

Cutco's Pearson promoted to maintenance supervisor

OLEAN — Jacob Pearson has been promoted to maintenance supervisor/process technician on second shift at Cutco Cutlery Corp.

Pearson first joined

Cutco on Aug. 10, 2020, as a departmental generalist. He was also a master mechanic, before being promoted to process technician on Oct. 1, 2023. He lives in Smethport, Pa.

PARADE

From Page A-1

The GOACC is still taking float applications. All area organizations and businesses are encouraged to participate in the parade. Applications can be found online at www.OleanNY.com/ParadeApp or stop in the store for a print-out version. The deadline to submit applications is Friday, Nov. 22.

The GOACC is also still looking for various levels of sponsors for the

Santa Claus Lane Parade, as well as the upcoming Jingle Bell Jubilee on Dec. 13. If you are interested, check out the complete list of sponsorships available on www.OleanNY.com/Sponsorships or call (716) 372-4433.

Eight awards will be given out to select floats, chosen by judges Paula Synder, Jason Crisafulli and Mayor Bill Aiello, located in front of Blue Bird Square.

"The Elves Award" will be presented to a float or unit that best showcas-

es holiday joy through the eyes of a child; the "Angelic Spirit Award" will be given to the most spiritual/religious float or unit; "The Blitzen Award" goes to the most photogenic; "Jingle Bells Award" will be given to the best theatrical (music/dance) float or unit; "The Sleigh Award" to the most decorated larger truck; "The Season's Greeting Award" to the best newcomer to the parade that exemplifies a welcoming theme; "The Snowflake Award" will go to the

float or unit with the most participants; and last but certainly not least, "The Rudolph Award" will be presented to the float or unit with the most or best use of lighting.

Want some hot cocoa and treats to enjoy with the parade? Sweet Ride will be parked in the mall parking lot, specializing in yummy treats; and Believer's Chapel will have their "Love Thy Neighbor" RV parked by the city building, with hot cocoa waiting.



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Christmas Day



MEALS

From Page A-1

drivers — call (716) 597-5406 to help.

And the need is great, Rossi said.

"We find ourselves serving a lot more food," she said. "I think we prepared 868 meals in 2023. This year we'll easily deliver more than that. I think we could be getting close to 1,000 meals."

As has been the case since the COVID pandemic, the churches are

continuing with delivering the meals — there is no sit-down dining on Thanksgiving Day.

Rossi explained that there are still vulnerable and concerned residents in the community who are leery of large gatherings in a dining setting — a legacy of the pandemic. But the team of volunteers also found that the delivery format serves everyone better — it's more efficient, requires less cleanup at St. Stephen's and the effort serves many families and groups that are getting together in their own spaces on the holiday.

The meal consists of turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, vegetables, cranberry sauce, a roll and dessert.

Rossi said there is a need for donated desserts, such as cookies, brownies, muffins, sweet breads

and fruit pies. Custard and pumpkin pies are not permitted due to health regulations and refrigeration needs. Also, refrain from using nuts in desserts as many people have allergies.

Desserts can be dropped off at the St. Stephen's parish hall on Tuesday, Nov. 26, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Wednesday, Nov. 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Use the Genesis House side of the church for all dessert drop offs.

Anyone needing to drop off desserts at a different time may call the church office at (716) 372-5628 to make arrangements.

Anyone who would like to order a meal for delivery or takeout should call St. Stephen's at the same number. Meals for deliveries will be taken until Monday,

Nov. 25 — but Rossi allowed that there always is some leeway, however. Anyone wishing to pick up a meal at the church for takeout may call up until the day before Thanksgiving.

Rossi said support in providing for the meals in the community is great, with Cutco Cutlery Corporation, St. Elizabeth Motherhouse and funds set up through the Cattaraugus Community Foundation among the largest contributors.

To donate to the effort, checks may be sent to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Thanksgiving Meal, P.O. Box 446, Olean, NY 14760.

"We thank all the congregations and the community for their continued support of this program throughout the years," Rossi said.

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STATE & UNION

From Page A-1

not yet due for renewal. There is no additional cost beyond the renewal fee to get a REAL ID.

Passed by Congress in 2005, the federal REAL ID Act establishes minimum security standards for state-issued driver licenses, permits and ID cards. It also requires customers to bring certain documents to the DMV to prove who they are and to have a new photograph taken before their REAL ID can be issued.

Many DMV offic-

es strongly encourage customers to make a reservation, which can be done online. To assist New Yorkers, the DMV has implemented several online tools such as a document guide and an online application pre-screening process-to help them prepare.

DMV has also issued guidance to help customers avoid the top five most common mistakes people make when seeking to get a REAL ID. One of the important reminders is to provide documentation if your name has changed.

In addition to the

REAL ID, the DMV offers an Enhanced ID which meets federal REAL ID standards. An Enhanced ID costs \$30 extra and can be used as identification when returning to the U.S. by land or sea from Canada, Mexico and some countries in the Caribbean.

A passport is also acceptable as a REAL ID-compliant document.

For more information about REAL ID and Enhanced Driver Licenses, visit Enhanced or REAL ID-and watch DMV's REAL ID instructional video on YouTube.

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Billy Martin's Cole All-Star Circus performs in Olean



Jerry Trass/Olean Times Herald

Acrobats perform Sunday afternoon as Olean native Billy Martin presented the Cole All-Star Circus in the Olean Intermediate Middle School gymnasium. The show was the final date on the circus' 2024 tour, and Sunday was the first time it performed in Olean in many years.



Joe Kelly/Olean Times Herald

A line of volunteers serves up turkey and the fixings during the annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by the Olean City School District on Saturday at Washington West Elementary School. The dinner, organized by school district staff and students, headed by Cindi Rhoades, family engagement counselor, was free and required no reservations.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner continues to play important role in Olean and beyond

By KELLEN M. QUIGLEY
kquigley@oleantimesherald.com

OLEAN — Saturday's Community Thanksgiving Dinner played out as it had the previous 30 times it was held — with a broad spectrum of Olean residents coming out to enjoy a warm meal just before the holiday season approaches.

During the two hours of fellowship of good food, some familiar comments could be overheard: "What a blessing for our community," "Thank you for a great meal" and "We look forward to this event each year."

For some, the dinner is a chance to volunteer or socialize with friends both

old and new, while for others it may have been the only Thanksgiving-esque meal they'll have this November.

Hosted by the Olean City School District at Washington West Elementary, organizers estimate about 200 people received meals, similar to the number of diners who attended the revived event last year.

"The event went great with no problems," said lead organizer Cindi Rhoades, family engagement school counselor at the school district. "We had so much community support and so many volunteers that from

Dinner ... page A-5

WNY ER physician named chief medical officer of Olean General, BRMC

By Olean Times Herald staff

OLEAN — Dr. Jennifer Rogers has been named the new chief medical officer of Olean General Hospital and Bradford (Pa.) Regional Medical Center and will start in the new role in January.

A board-certified emergency medicine physician, Rogers currently serves as the emergency department medical director at both Lockport Memorial Hospital and Mount St. Mary's Hospital in Lewiston.

Her previous experience as an emergency department physician includes serving as a physician at Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, a Kaleida Health facility, and as an emergency medicine senior physician for the UBMD (University at Buffalo) Emergency Medicine Community



Dr. Jennifer Rogers

Division. She is also a member of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

She graduated from SUNY Stony Brook School of Medicine and completed her emergency medicine residency at Georgetown University/Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C.

In her role with Olean

General and BRMC, Rogers will oversee the medical affairs of the two Kaleida Health facilities and its ambulatory clinical centers. She will also be instrumental in developing and implementing a rural health care strategy across Western New York and Northern Pennsylvania.

"We're thrilled to have Dr. Rogers join our team at BRMC and OGH," said Dr. Michael Mineo, chief medical officer of Kaleida. "Her experience as an emergency medicine physician and the leadership roles she held will serve her well in managing clinical operations at our southern tier facilities."

"Adding a physician of her caliber to the leadership team will enhance the overall quality of care to the region that BRMC and OGH serve," he added.

Rogers has served in several leadership roles, both professionally and in the community. She serves as a member of the Medical Executive Committee and Associate Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Catholic Health System in Buffalo. She is also a mentor for the UB Emergency Medicine Residency Program and has served on the UBMD Emergency Medicine Board of Directors since 2021.

She also serves on the Orchard Park Central School District Board of Trustees.

A longtime Bradford physician, Dr. Luis Gonzalez, is filling the role as interim CMO. Dr. Henri Lamothe had served first as interim CMO from June 2022 to October of that year, when he was named officially to the role.



Turning back the clock on Olean

From pianos and furs for Christmas and Olean freezing over to a fun if not crazy circus, from no lights for Santa Claus Lane to a new school merger, here's a look back on the week that was 125, 100, 75, 50 and 25 years ago in this edition of Turning Back the Clock.

1899

Nov. 21 — "Thinking of a piano for Christmas?" asks an ad for the Charles Willard Everything Musical store at 229 N. Union St. The firm is selling a new Cable & Son piano for \$275 and two new Harvard pianos for \$300 and \$350. Pianos weren't for those with empty pockets, however — adjusted for inflation, the prices are between \$10,000 and \$13,000. A chinchilla overcoat will be far cheaper, the S. Deiches store at 170 N. Union St. reports in its six-day Thanksgiving sale "to show a thankful spirit because of the generous share of trade which we have already received in our new Olean store." A men's chinchilla overcoat is \$3 (\$110 today), while a black beaver overcoat is \$4 (about \$150 today). Today, the overcoat is closer to the 1899 piano prices, while an electric piano or keyboard can be had for the



State & Union ... page A-5



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Index

Classifieds.....	B-6	Lifetime.....	B-8
Comics.....	B-5	Police reports.....	A-3
Comment.....	A-6	Sports.....	B-1
Entertainment.....	A-7	Weather.....	B-8

Local Deaths

Bruce C. Caldwell
Rev. Francis "Frank" Plummer Hill
Sharon Lynne Orcutt
Ruby E. Truax
... page A-4

Community



WELLSVILLE THEATER STUDENTS TO PRESENT 'WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION'

The play will have a split run starting at 7 p.m. Thursday and then 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in the high school auditorium. ... Page A-7

National

NY IMMIGRANT ADVOCATES FEAR EFFECTS OF TRUMP DEPORTATIONS

Many fear the impacts of uprooting people from the communities they've called home for years or decades.

... Page B-8

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