

AMSTERDAM

St. Mary's Church to host community festival on Sunday

The St. Mary's Festival is Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Mary's Church in Amsterdam.

Event organizers will close off a portion of East Main Street in front of the church for the block party. This community event is a fundraiser for St. Mary's Institute, the area's only Catholic school.

Festivalgoers will be treated to a wide array of foods compliments

of A&S Spice, Cafe Teo, Jammin Juice Bar, Megabites Events & Catering, Michelle's Lemonade, Mr. Ding-A-Ling, Squires Kettle Korn, Twisted Taco and the SMI Concession. There will be something to for every taste. Plus there will be a spirits tent featuring beer, wine and malted beverages.

Young and old alike will enjoy playing any of 10 old-fashioned carnival games, while kids can have

fun on the giant slide, animal kingdom bounce and inflatable basketball challenge. There will be the chance to dunk some of local celebrities, students and teachers in the chilly dunk tank.

Additional family entertainment includes a circus show at 1 p.m. by Scotty Nut Nut, balloon twisting, face painting and tattoos for kids, and a fun and educational experience with

Reptile Adventure from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Tiffany's Canvas Creations will offer the chance to make an acrylic pour painting for a nominal charge.

Guests can feel like a star with the 360 Video booth from DL events — just like the one featured at celebrity awards shows.

Live music will be enjoyed all day in the entertainment tent. Music for Life featuring Dominick

Megna and Peter Jorgensen will perform from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Yacht Masters Trio will take the stage from 1 to 3 p.m. and J. Marco Johnson & Co. will close the day from 3 to 5 p.m.

The festival will feature a basket raffle with 40 themed baskets, a cash raffle and a raffle for a Blackstone Griddle complete with a full propane tank and grill utensils donated by ACE Hardware Riverfront

— a \$475 value. Tickets will be available at the event and winners will be announced at 5 p.m.

Admission to the event is free and parking will be available in the lots west of the church and in the Riverfront Center parking behind ACE Hardware. Parking attendants will direct guests and two large golf carts will shuttle attendees from Riverfront parking to the church.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Hill & Markes, a janitorial, sanitation and food service distributor in upstate New York, recently announced its annual "Backpack Giveback" aimed at empowering 850 elementary school students with essential backpacks and school supplies for the upcoming academic year.

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Hill & Markes launches campaign to provide 850 students with backpacks and essentials

Hill & Markes, a janitorial, sanitation and food service distributor in upstate New York, recently announced its annual "Backpack Giveback," aimed at empowering 850 elementary school students with essential backpacks and school supplies for the upcoming academic year.

This effort is dedicated to making education accessible to more students and fostering a brighter future for the youth. It is in partnership with New York State Industries for the Disabled (NYSID), Morcon, Aluf Plastics, Boxit, Bunzl, Clorox, Durable, Enterprise Box, Fineline, Libco, PCA

Packaging, Primetac Corp, Sterno, World Centric, Sabert & Kent Precision Foods.

With the new school year on the horizon, many students and families face the financial burden of purchasing school supplies.

Recognizing this challenge, Hill & Markes took it upon itself to lend a helping hand to the community.

Through the "Backpack Giveback" initiative, the company seeks to bridge the gap and ensure that each student is equipped with the tools they need to succeed.

Collectively, the company has donated more than

2,500 backpacks since 2021.

"We are excited to help provide backpacks filled with supplies for the upcoming academic year," said Bill Miller, vice president of purchasing and marketing, CEO at Hill & Markes in a news release.

"The Backpack Giveback is a way for the Hill & Markes team and our valued manufacturer partners to help make a positive impact in the future of many children attending school — giving them the confidence and supplies necessary to learn and grow."

"The backpack donation program reinforces the Hill & Markes and NYSID

collaboration to improve communities. Putting needed supplies into the hands of students throughout the greater Capital Region is a pleasure to support each year," said Maureen O'Brien, president and CEO at NYSID in the release.

Hill & Markes, a Brady-IFS company is a 117-year-old wholesale distributor servicing the state of New York with janitorial, sanitation, food service disposables, ice cream products, packing and shipping, and office supplies. Hill & Markes believes in providing cutting edge solutions for customers and in being a good corporate citizen.

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Liberty ARC receives CQL's person-centered excellence accreditation

Liberty ARC recently announced that the agency and its subsidiary in Delaware, Choices for Community Living (CCL), was awarded the four-year Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation from the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL), an organization that provides human service agencies and systems a proven framework for quality monitoring and enhancement. The award confirms that Liberty ARC and CCL shares CQL's vision for person-centered solutions to improve the quality of life for people receiving supports and

services.

Liberty has previously received CQL accreditation; four-year awards in 2018, 2014, and 2009, and two-year awards in 2007 and 2005. CCL received the four-year accreditation in 2018, 2014, and 2009 as well.

"We are honored to have been awarded this accreditation from CQL and to continue our long and valuable relationship with the Council on Quality and Leadership," said Liberty ARC CEO Jennifer Saunders in a news release. "Our success year after year shows we have an outstanding team at Liberty ARC, who

work hard on a daily basis to ensure that every aspect of Liberty ARC's services are built around the hopes, dreams, and preferences of the people we support. Thank you to CQL for this recognition."

During the partnership with CQL to pursue accreditation, Liberty ARC and CCL undertook a rigorous process to review services and supports. Their efforts were focused on empowering the people who receive support from their organization to make choices in how they live their lives, including where they work, where they live, and how

they create a community. As part of the recent review, Liberty ARC and CCL have demonstrated an organizational commitment to continued enhancement of systems directly related to person-centered services.

"This is a great achievement and we're honored to partner with Liberty ARC and CCL on their accreditation!" says Mary Kay Rizzolo, president and CEO of CQL in the release. "They're showing people supported, families, employees, and others, that they're committed to quality services that help people's dreams come true."

AMSTERDAM

Friends of North Chuctanunda plan events

The Friends of North Chuctanunda, Incorporated has a few upcoming events planned.

The first will be on Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m. Historian Jerry Snyder will lead a free walk on the North Chuctanunda Trail, starting from the new stairs at Veterans Park going to the Walter Elwood Museum on Church Street.

The walk will include: the Mohawk Carpet Powerhouse, former industrial revolution factories, waterfalls and dams.

Transportation back to the Veteran's Park start will need to be arranged. For more information call (518) 843-3043.

The Sanford Stud Barn is the site of the next community forum hosted by the Friends of the North Chuctanunda, Inc., on Thursday, Aug. 24, at 6 p.m.

Holding the meeting at the Sanford Stud Barn gives everyone an opportunity to see refurbished stalls and hear about plans for that site, as well as the most recent news about the Chuctanun-

da trail. The Sanford Barn is located on the corner of Route 30 and Tessiero Drive, across from Walgreens.

The meeting will inform the community of events and plans, as well as solicit ideas for trail improvements from interested citizens. If you have an idea for an improvement or a project, bring it to the assemblage.

FONCI will offer guided trail walks throughout the coming year. The group would like input as to when it should hold these planned walks. Of course, those interested may walk the trail anytime, but FONCI would like to determine the best time to hold them for both maximum participation and utmost enjoyment.

FONCI received its status as a charitable non-profit this past winter. The organization has progressed from a handful of locals who saw the potential and beauty of the Chuctanunda and a continuous pathway along its banks, to an organization providing a platform to address local concerns.

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Short play festival slated for Aug. 25-27

Foothills Arts Council, Inc. is presenting its third annual Short Play Festival. The festival will take place at the Amsterdam United Methodist Church, Aug. 25-26 at 6:30 p.m. and Aug. 27 at 2 p.m.

The church is located at 47 Golf Course Road. Admission for seven plays is \$15 per person. Limited seating available.

Tickets will be sold at facfair.info or at the door. The staff includes local and national playwrights, plus directors, actors and crew from

the greater Capital Region. The plays and playwrights are as follows:

- ◆ "La Notte Di San Lorenzo" by Catherine Rogers
- ◆ "What's Next?" By Anthony R. Pezzola
- ◆ "Nothing But the Tooth" by Paula Churco-Hoffay
- ◆ "Six Grandfathers" by Jesse Waldinger
- ◆ "Voices" by Nadia Tell
- ◆ "I Don't Like Theatre" by Steven G. Martin
- ◆ "Bovine Existential" by Brian C. Petti

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Knights of Columbus Feast of the Assumption Festival

The Amsterdam Knights of Columbus Council 209 recently announced that its annual Feast of the Assumption festival will return on Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. at 193 W. Main St.

The festival will kick off with a procession of the Virgin Mary at noon, and the festivities will begin at 12:30 p.m.

The event, now in its eighth year, will offer a fun, safe, outdoor event. In addition to the main attractions of live music and the Classic Car Show, the festival will feature free Stewart's ice cream, popcorn, cotton candy, bounce houses and kids games and prizes. The "Music for Life" twosome of Dominic Megna and Pete Jorgenson will kick off the musical lineup from 12:30-2:30 p.m., Batman will meet and greet fans from 2:30-3 p.m. followed by area favorites Jenna Sue and Steven Cowles from 2:30-6 p.m.

The Feast of the Assumption commemorates the day some Christian denominations believe the Virgin Mary was taken up into heaven body and soul. The festival kicks off each year with a procession of a statue of the Virgin Mary through the streets — held aloft by

an honor guard. In the eastern European tradition, the celebrant will then offer a "blessing of the flowers."

Finally, the faithful will be invited forward to pin a donation to Mary's shawl, a traditional act of piety in Italy. This year, donations pinned to the shawl will benefit the AMEN soup kitchen, which serves over 700 local families weekly.

"The AMEN soup kitchen's example reminds us of all that we are called as Christians to be charitable and kind, like the Blessed Mother" said Grand Knight Jeff Stark in a news release. "It reminds us of what this day is all about."

This year's sponsors are Saint Mary's Hospital, Highmark Blue Shield, Santos Construction Company, the Greater Capital Region Building and Construction Trades Council, DC9 Painters' Union, Century 21 Purcell Realty, Senator Neil Breslin, Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, IBEW Local #236, Laborers #157, Mangino's Chevrolet, Ironworkers Local 12, Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 7, Carpenters Local #291, The Cranesville Block Company and U.S. Rep. Paul Tonko.