

Meetings

Insurance agents to hold annual holiday party

The Independent Insurance Agents Association of Western New York will hold its annual holiday party at noon Friday, Dec. 8 at the Park Country Club, 4949 Sheridan Drive. The group will once again be collecting for the Western New York Food Bank. Cash or check contributions are appreciated. The reservation deadline is Nov. 27. The cost to attend the event is \$35 per member or guest. Call Barbara Duke at 634-1212, ext. 217 for reservations. The e-mail address is iaawny@chioneonemail.com.

Workshop to help businesses with procurement

Congress has established the Defense Economic Transition Assistance program to help business develop opportunities in the government procurement field. The Buffalo State Small Business Development Center is one of five regional centers in the state with educated advisers to help people profit from the program. That includes free advice on market research, financing and management. There are also workshops and training sessions to enhance the skills and knowledge of existing business owners. There is a workshop at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29 at the Pearl Street Grill and Brewery, 76 Pearl St., Buffalo to learn how to collaborate with major corporations to win contracts and opportunities for small business growth. For more information or to confirm attendance, call 878-4030.

SCORE to assist business startups, management

SCORE of Buffalo/ Niagara will host a workshop for people interested in starting and managing their own businesses. The event is set for 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14 at the Buffalo and Erie County Central Library, located at 1 Lafayette Square in Buffalo. The workshop aims to help new business startups by teaching participants all the elements of business management required for success.

Rosie's Cards & Gifts feature wide variety of 50-cent cards

by **JESSICA L. FINCH**
Associate Editor

It has happened to just about everyone — you have a party to attend, no ideas for a present and time is running out.

If so, visit Rosie's Cards and Gifts at 5957 Main St., for a thoughtful gift, wrap and card.

Joe and Joyce Pontrello took over ownership of the shop in July and besides some basic renovations, they kept the same village charm as when the business was Suzie's Le Boutique.

"We want Williamsville to become a destination point where people will visit shops in the village and walk around," Joe said. "We are off the beaten path, but it's fun and something unique."

At Rosie's, all gift cards are 50 cents, considerably cheaper than stores that sell the same card for more than \$4. Joe said there is an eclectic mix of cards with many selections in each category.

When asked if the shop has unusual cards, he mentioned a card for a new pet and also encouraging and thoughtful cards for men and women entering the service.

Before owning the store, Joyce was a longtime patron. She had shopped at Suzie's for years, in addition to the other shops across from Williamsville South High School. During one of her stops she learned the business



Joe and Joyce Pontrello, owners of Rosie's Cards and Gifts at 5957 Main St., display their selection of 50-cent cards. The shop also has gifts and wrapping supplies.

Photo by John Rusac

was going to be for sale, so she and her husband decided to buy it.

"We have everything you need to be able to put a specialty, custom gift together," Joyce said, adding that she once had a customer stop on her way to a party pick out a gift and card, the shop wrapped it, and she was off.

She said the shop sells gifts that would be great for a teacher, co-worker or any of those "extra

people" on one's holiday shopping list.

"We offer low-dollar, good-quality, brand-name items," Joyce said, citing folk art decor, candles and kitchen and hospitality gifts.

The Pontrellos want to promote Williamsville, as well as their business. Members of the Williamsville Business Association, the couple is working to make Williamsville a destination

spot such as Niagara on the Lake, Joe said.

To visit and discover that "great find," as Joyce describes the gifts, stop by Rosie's Cards and Gifts from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday; and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 632-0145.

e-mail: jfinch@beenews.com

Bonefish Grill opens at Boulevard Mall

Bonefish Grill has "a great fish story to tell" now that its doors have opened for business at 1247 Niagara Falls Blvd., at the main entrance to the Boulevard Mall.

Co-founder Tim Curci describes Bonefish Grill as a casual seafood restaurant appealing to those who crave high quality seafood in a comfortable, lively atmosphere at a good value.

Founded in St. Petersburg, Fla. in January 2000 by veteran restaurateurs Curci and Chris Parker, their creation of the Bonefish Grill dining experience originated upon the premise of simplicity and consistency, and a commitment to excellence at every level within the restaurant — food, service, decor and value.



Bonefish Grill specializes in market fresh fish grilled over an oak-burning grill, which gives the fish a savory, even cook. An array of sauces and original toppings, ranging from

fresh and light to rich and flavorful, are offered to enhance the flavor of fish.

Recognized as the "people who know fresh fish," the restaurant offers a variety of eight species from which to choose on any given day. The fish is flown in fresh, inspected for quality and hand-cut daily.

"The key component to our culture is in how the fish is handled," said Curci. "Our passion for its provenance and preparation is behind our commitment to providing our guests with seafood that is as fresh as fresh can be. We like to say that we

take the mystery out of fish — we tell our guests where it came from, how best to eat it and how to have fun with sauces."

The 5,085 square-foot restaurant features a spacious dining room with an open kitchen and a large bar area that includes three community tables.

"We are very excited about our opening here in Buffalo," said Fasanella. "We are committed to providing our guests with an enjoyable dining experience that excels in offering consistently good food within a comfortable and stylish setting, and impeccable service — all at an affordable price."

Dinner is served seven days a week from 4 to 10 p.m. on Sunday; 4 to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; and 4 to 11:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. While reservations are not required, they are available by calling 833-6106.

Business News

BNI Business Makers will conduct its weekly meeting from 7 to 8:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 30 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst, 6320 Main St. in Williamsville. Harry King, a director with BNI — Team WNY will speak. Visitors are welcome. Call Chapter President Charlie Totoro, at 688-5700 for more information.

The Independent Insurance Agents Association of Western New York will hold its annual holiday party and collect donations for the Western New York Food Bank at 11:45 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 8 at the Park Country Club, 4949 Sheridan Drive Williamsville. Lunch begins at noon. Reservations are due Nov. 27. Cost is \$35. Call Barbara Duke

at 634-1212 ext. 217 for reservations or e-mail iaawny@chioneonemail.com.

Volkswagen of America, Inc.'s certified pre-owned program has been named for the third consecutive year, by IntelliChoice as "Best Non-luxury Certified Pre-Owned Program." Williamsville dealerships, Northtown Volkswagen and Schmitt's

Garage Inc., are a participating dealers in the CPO program.

Susan Shaw was recently hired as a birth parent counselor by Adoption STAR, a non-profit child placement agency. She has more than nine years experience in social services, focused on the field of adoption. She is a member of the Coalition of Adoption and Foster Family Agencies.