

# Local woman leads cheerleaders to national victory

by **JILL SCHMELZER**  
Reporter

A 1998 graduate of Williamsville South High School led the cheerleaders at North Tonawanda High School to victory at a national competition in Ocean City, Md., on Feb. 24.

Amanda Frese of Williamsville took over as coach of the varsity cheerleading squad this past summer and taught the girls the skills required to win first place in the small-varsity category at the competition.

This was North Tonawanda's first title win at a national cheerleading competition in the past 10 years, Frese said.

The girls learned stunts with a high level of difficulty, including double-twist dismounts from two-person-high pyramids, basket tosses and stunts that included heel stretches and scorpions, where the flyer pulls her leg behind her head while being lifted

by two base people.

The team consisted of 15 girls — four seniors, six juniors and five sophomores. One sophomore was brought up from the junior varsity squad at the beginning of football season, and the remaining four were asked to join the varsity team at the end of the season after a series of injuries and misfortunes, Frese said.

To win the national competition, the girls performed a one-minute cheer and 90-second dance, which included stunting throughout the entire two-and-a-half-minute routine. The squad beat five other teams for the title.

In preparation for the open national competition, the high school students competed in several contests this past year, including the University at Buffalo Cheer Competition where they won first place and the Jamestown Community College and Fredonia State College com-

petitions, both of which earned them third-place trophies.

Frese said she decided the girls were ready for the big competition — where more than 200 squads from across the nation competed — after watching them grow together. She said they learned the stunts and routines quickly throughout the season.

"They never fight or argue," Frese said of her squad. "There is great camaraderie among them."

Prior to departing for Maryland, Frese told the girls "to go and have fun but still work for first place."

They did just that, with a flawless routine.

Frese was a cheerleader all four years at South High School and was a Buffalo Jill for three years. She is entering her second year as a Buffalo Bandette.



**Senior Captain**, Jenna Sammarco, left, holds the first place trophy she and her teammates took home after the National Cheerleading Competition. She is pictured with her coach, Amanda Frese.

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## First Blues'n March slated for March 9

by **ELIZABETH TAUFA**  
Reporter

The Blues Society of Western New York will present the first national blues festival ever held in Buffalo on Friday and Saturday, March 9 and 10 at the Creekside Banquet Facility, 2669 Union Rd., Cheektowaga.

"This is the first time we'll have multiple numbers of national blues acts in Buffalo for a two day festival," said blues society president, Dave Walker. "We have everything from the old (blues) to the new and everything in between."

The event will feature national blues stars Kelly Hunt and Band, who will be performing from 10 to 11:45 p.m. on Friday, and Jim Thackery and the Drivers, who will be performing from 8 to 9:15 p.m. on Friday as well.

Opening for Hunt and Thackery will be local blues artists The Patti Parks Band, who were winners of the 2006 Memphis Bound Competition.

In February, the Patti Parks Band headed to Memphis to compete with over 150 bands from 32 states and eight countries in 10 different venues.

"We took second place in our venue," said Parks, who

is also the chairman of promotion for the Blues'n March event.

"Patti represented us very well in Memphis," Walker said.

Acts that will be featured on Saturday will include Zydeco Dance Lessons with Esther Brill from the Rochester Swing Dance Network; Mississippi Delta native Eden Brent; Joe Filisko and Eric Noden; Sharrie Williams and the Wise Guys; Cephas & Wiggins; T Broussard and the Zydeco Steppers; Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, a band who Walker noted plays the "old blues," staying true to artists like Muddy Waters; and Roomful of Blues.

Music performances begin at 6:30 p.m. on Friday and at 1:30 p.m. on two different stages on Saturday. The event is being indoors and food and drink will be available.

Parks noted that Toyota, one of the event's sponsors, will have its new line of Tundra Trucks on display on both days of the festival.

The WNY Blues Society boasts over 900 dues-paying members. Walker noted that he hopes the event will provide funds for the society's educational goals.

"This is a way of raising money so the education component is given more emphasis," he said. "One of our

mottos is Keeping the Blues Alive. The blues go all the way back to slavery and is in all forms of music. We're trying to keep it alive by going into schools and do workshops. Hopefully this (event) will give us money for that."

Tickets for the event are now on sale, but are limited due to the event being held indoors. They are \$25 for non-blues society members for Friday's performance, and \$20 for members, and \$35 for Saturday's performances for non-members and \$30 for members. Two-day ticket packages are \$50 for non-members and \$40 for members.

They can be purchased at U-Crest Music Center, 1268 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga; Hoylers Jewelry Shop, 125 Ellicott Square Bldg. (Main Street Entrance), Buffalo; Creekside Banquet Facility; American Harley-Davidson, 1149 Erie Ave., North Tonawanda; or at the Basil, Culligan, Northtown, West Herr or Fucillo Toyota dealerships.

For more information on the Blues'n March, visit the event Web site, [www.bluesnsmarch.com](http://www.bluesnsmarch.com) or the Blues Society of Western New York's Web site at [www.wnyblues.org](http://www.wnyblues.org).

### On the Campus

**Gretchen K. Sullivan** of Kenmore has been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at The University of Scranton.

**Erica Peterson** of Williamsville will participate in the study abroad program at St. Lawrence University. She will travel to England.

**John Allen** of Amherst, **Marc Comaratta** and **Marc Glover** of East Amherst and **Jennifer Porter** of Williamsville have been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at St. Lawrence University.

**Marc Comaratta** of East

Amherst will participate in the study abroad program at St. Lawrence University. He will travel to Denmark.

**Kelly Barbera**, **Olivia Dryjski**, **Jacob Epp** and **Athul Seshadri** of East Amherst and **Sara Bronnenkant** and **Erin Gallivan** of Amherst have been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Boston University.

**Daniel Longo** and **Lindsay Truesdell** of Williamsville and **Sarah Rois** of Amherst have been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Syracuse University.

**Caila Hilbert** of Williamsville has been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Le Moyne College. She is the daughter of Maureen Swain and Eric Hilbert,

both of Williamsville.

**Grant Gillian** of Williamsville has been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Buffalo State College.

**Katie Cline** of Williamsville has been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Bethel College.

**Ria Swanekamp** of Kenmore has been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Grove City College.

The following students have been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Geneseo College:

**Jenna Tabor-Godwin** of Amherst.

**Stephen Contino**, **Christina Gephardt**, **David Gurbaki**, **Joseph Kausch**, **Melinda Long**, **Melissa Mason**, **Sarah Pinchoff** and **Gina Sobotka** of East Amherst.

The following students have been named to the 2006 fall semester dean's list at Syracuse University:

**Nicholas Meyer**, **Rebecca Elkin** of Williamsville.

**Kimberly Davis**, **Philip Abram**, **Lauren Munschauer** of Amherst.

**Neel Chary** of East Amherst.

**Katie Kulkwicki** of East Amherst, **Ryan Shussett** of Snyder and **Eric Rizzo** of Williamsville have recently graduated from Fredonia State College.

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