

# YWCA after-school program finds new home

by **JESSICA L. FINCH**  
Associate Editor

When one door closes, another door opens.

Bev Thomas recently learned that the words in the well-known quote read true.

Thomas, the director of children's services for the YWCA of Western New York, found the organization's after-school program without a home after the Williamsville Central School District decided to use another organization for its after-school programming.

So she went in search of a new facility to house the YWCA program that has been serving the Williamsville community for 18 years.

What she found was a place she de-

scribes as perfect.

"Temple Beth Am is a great, large space that is like a dream to us," she said about using a wing of the building at 4660 Sheridan Drive. "I am so excited. The space is marvelous."

In her search for a new location, Thomas met with representatives from Temple Beth Am and upon touring the space she knew she had found the program's new home.

There is a library with a media center, classrooms for arts and crafts, snacks and educational programs, an outdoor playground and a general area. The building also has room for growth should the YWCA need additional space.

Leasing from Temple Beth Am, the YWCA will hold an after-school program coinciding with the public school calendar.

Busing from the Williamsville schools will be provided to the new location.

"Parents said they wanted us to stay in the area. There was hardly a hiccup," she said about adjusting to the news that the YWCA would no longer serve the Williamsville schools.

Programming will begin on the first day of school and is open to children ages 5-12. The site has room for 147 children.

An open house has been planned from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 1 at Temple Beth Am, 4660 Sheridan Drive.

Site Director Derek Wright has a background in education with a concentration

in science, which he plans to incorporate into activities.

**"I am so excited. The space is marvelous."**

— **Bev Thomas, director of children's services for the YWCA of Western New York**

Thomas said the YWCA's focus has also been on equality between religions, races and genders. The program will provide homework help and focus on reading and confidence building, as well as music, dance, sports activities and lessons in various subjects.

For information on YWCA's new after-school program, call 852-6120 or send an e-mail to dbassham@ywca-wny.org.

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## Valedictorian bound for Notre Dame in the fall



**Marrone**

Anne-Claire Marrone, valedictorian of the Holy Angels Academy's class of 2007, plans to study medicine at Notre Dame in the fall.

Daughter of Michael and Mary Marrone of Snyder, she was awarded several scholarships, including from the University at Buffalo, before choosing Notre Dame. She plans to pursue a career combining medicine and French.

Marrone was awarded a New York State Scholarship for Academic Excellence and was a National Merit Scholarship Commended Student, based on her PSAT score.

She also served as Student Council vice president, and member of the math, French, Team Impact and Big Sister/Little Sister clubs. She also volunteered at a local shelter.

Marrone was the recipient of an Air Force Math and Science Award, U.S. Marine Corps Award for Scholastic Excellence, University at Rochester Humanities Award, Frederick Douglas and Susan B. Anthony Award for Humanities and Social Sciences, Kodak Young Leaders Award and Outstanding Achievement in several subjects. She also received a certificate of excellence from Alliance Francaise du Buffalo.

## Sacred Heart Academy's Class of 2007 offered record scholarship totals

The 124th commencement of Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart graduated 122 women, of whom 86 percent were offered more than \$11.7 million dollars in scholarships and grants, the highest amount offered to a class in the school's 130-year history.

The entire class of 2007 received Regents diplomas, 38 percent were awarded advanced Regents designation, and 27 percent of the class was awarded diplomas with honors.

The class of 2007 valedictorian was Shin-Rong "Julia" Wu, daughter of Shiu-Ming Kuo and Xiao-Lun Wu of Amherst, and the class salutatorian

was Julie Paladino, daughter of Mark and Evelyn Paladino.

Wu achieved a final grade point average of 4.23 and will be attending Yale University, where she plans to study biochemistry. While at Sacred Heart Academy, she participated in the Mock Trial team and was a National Honor Society member, a peer tutor, a contributor to the school newspaper, and an indoor and outdoor track team member.

Paladino achieved a final grade point average of 4.20 and will be attending the Air Force Academy in the fall, where she plans to study biology. She is a resident of North Tonawanda.

## Buffalo-Niagara's AJC chapter closes

The Buffalo-Niagara Chapter of the American Jewish Committee closed officially on June 30. The committee's board had approved the decision with the agreement of the National Organization of the American Jewish Committee.

The chapter had been based in the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo's Benderson Family Building, 2640 N. Forest Road, Getzville.

"It is with great sadness and disappointment that I announce

the closing," Board President Hal P. Kingsley wrote in a letter to the board, AJC members and affiliations.

"Thank you to all the many religious and non-religious organizations around Western New York. Your collaboration efforts in our support over the past 60 plus years has been invaluable," he also wrote.

The decision to close was based on, the national organization's decision to focus on international issues as opposed to domestic,

national's decision to remove the office and executive director from the Buffalo chapter, and the new focus on areas of population growth of other Jewish communities.

"These decisions were not caused by our current or any of the past local boards," he stated. "Our organization has always been accomplished, healthy and vibrant; a great group of people, the best I have ever worked with."

Visit [www.ajc.org](http://www.ajc.org) for details.

## Grants to benefit arts groups

Three area arts organizations have been awarded Local Assistance Grants through the New York State Council on the Arts. The funds will help enable the organizations to continue their work, according to State Sen. Mary Lou Rath, R-Williamsville.

The groups that received the funding are the Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo, MusicalFare Theatre, and Road Less Traveled Productions.

"These funds will allow these essential Western New York organizations to continue to maintain the levels of excellence that have become their hallmark," she said.

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Buffalo has received two grants totaling more than \$6,000. The first grant is for the annual International Jewish Film Festival, which is in its 22nd season, and offers Jewish-themed films by independent filmmakers from around the world. The second grant will be used toward the Jewish Community Book Fair, a project that involves the collaboration and sponsorship of more than 30 local organizations.

MusicalFare Theatre and the Road Less Traveled Productions each received grants for their Mainstage Theatre seasons. These grants total more than \$17,000.

### Community News

**The Amherst Recreation Department** was the recipient of the Publication Award from the Niagara Frontier Recreation and Parks Society for its 2007 summer brochure. The awards were handed out on June 7 at the awards and recognition luncheon at the NOCO Pavilion Sheridan Park, Tonawanda.

**Keith Kristich** of Amherst has been named a 2007 recipient of a CSEA Judiciary Local 335 Scholarship. He is a 2007 graduate of Amherst High School and plans to attend Houghton College as an environmental science major. His mother Karen is a CSEA member and court reporter for Erie County.

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