

Meetings

Buffalo Niagara Partnership ends three-part series

The third and final part of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Diversity Supplier Program 2008 series on how to do business will run from 8 to 10 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9, in the Barton Room on the sixth floor of the Larkin Building, 726 Exchange St., Buffalo. The free event is an opportunity for minority and women-owned businesses to meet purchasing professionals. Focusing on Kaleida Health, the third information session provides an overview of the company's purchasing needs and covers technical aspects of proposal submission and order fulfillment requirements. To register for the session or for information, contact Charlene Janiga at 852-7100, ext. 470 or e-mail cjaniga@thepartnership.org.

Panhellenic group to discuss plans for fundraiser

The Greater Buffalo Alumnae Panhellenic Association, a community-based organization that seeks to enhance the sorority system through scholarships, various projects, community participation and civic leadership, is holding its first meeting of the 2008-09 school year at noon Wednesday, Sept. 10, at the Family Tree Restaurant, 4346 Bailey Ave., Amherst. Participants will discuss the initial plans for the association's upcoming fundraiser, its high school awards program, the college scholarship fund and the upcoming fall tea. For more information, contact Terry Carrig at 982-1470.

Traders series continues with first of two dates

The World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara is continuing its Traders Series with a presentation on adapting to change in China. The event will take place from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 11, at Harry's Harbour Place Grille, 2192 Niagara St, Buffalo. Reservations can be made for the conference no later than Friday, Sept. 5. For reservations or information on the event, contact Chris Johnston at cjohnston@wtcbrn.com.

Sake Cafe features Asian fusion

by KELLY JACKSON
 Reporter

For Sake Cafe owner Steve Loi, customer service means more to him than serving people with a smile.

"No matter how you feel during the day, even if you're miserable, I want you to leave here satisfied and happy," Loi, 28, said.

For him, customer service means hospitality. At Sake Cafe, customers receive that and more.

Not only will visitors be greeted upon entrance to the Asian fusion restaurant, but also when they leave, Sake Cafe's staff will express gratitude and say good-night.

Loi first opened Sake Cafe, 8222 Transit Road in the Lowe's Plaza, in November. The restaurant replaced Shepherd's Pub.

Originally from Malaysia, Loi majored in computer programming at the University at Buffalo but retired that career path quickly.

"When I didn't want to deal with computers anymore, I directed my passion for food into a business," said Loi, whose parents owned a Malaysian restaurant in New York City until moving back to Malaysia.

Sake Cafe, unlike many sushi restaurants, features a lengthy menu of dishes influenced by Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan and Malaysia. It also offers cooked sushi, an item one won't find anywhere else in Buffalo, Loi said.

Loi recruited almost all of the chefs from New York City.

"I needed experienced chefs because this type of cooking requires expertise," Loi said.



Steve Loi, owner of Sake Cafe, and Peter Huang, one of the cafe's sushi chefs, show off some of the restaurant's specialty dishes. The Asian fusion

restaurant serves a variety of Malaysian, Japanese, Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese-influenced dishes.

Photo by Jim Smerecak
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The stunning dish displays in addition to the deliciousness of the plates exemplify their expertise and creativity.

"This restaurant does a great job capturing culture and background behind every dish," Loi said.

From a Chicago Japanese restaurant, Loi adopted an idea that adds even more to his idea of hospitality, called *omakase*. Translated from Japanese to English, this means, "Chef, I am in your hands."

Practicing *omakase*, the chefs will prepare a request regardless of whether or not it's featured on

the menu.

"This happens about two to three times a day," Loi said.

Loi planned for the restaurant to originally serve only sushi, but when considering the vast amount of sushi restaurants, Loi wanted something different.

"We're trying to excel and stand out against competition, which we can through our variety of dishes," said Loi.

The menu has something for everyone, with an assortment of seafood, steak, chicken and soups.

Average lunches range between \$5 and 8 while dinners average

\$12 to 18.

"Our prices are highly competitive, especially considering the freshness of every meal," Loi said.

The appearance inside exemplifies Japanese culture, featuring Japanese art, low lighting and modern Asian music with a comforting yet romantic ambiance.

Customers may sit at the liquor bar, sushi bar, dining room or in large, Asian-styled wooden booths.

Sake Cafe's hours are 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday; and noon-10 p.m. Sunday.

Visit www.sakecafeus.com.

Business News

A free "Planning Ahead" seminar will be offered by the Dengler & Roberts Funeral Home and Perna-Pellegrino Funeral Home from 6 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9 and 9 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 13 at the Dengler & Roberts Funeral Home, 8630 Transit Road, Amherst. For more information, call 636-1111.

The first **ProPower** networking event in the Buffalo area will be designed as a speed networking happy hour. The session will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9 at the the Irishman Pub & Eatery, 5601 Main St., Williamsville. Register online at www.propowernetworking.com.

Floss Agency Inc. of East Amherst, a member of the EMS Group, has joined the Trusted Choice brand movement, a national consumer firm that educates consumers about the benefits of using independent insurance agencies and brokerage firms for their insurance and financial services needs. Joe Floss, president, said Trusted Choice agencies offer consumers a broad selection of insurance policies and financial services products, customized insurance coverages

as well as advocacy support. Visit Floss Agency Inc. online at www.EMSInsurance.com or call 688-5115.

New schedules for **Metro Bus and Rail service** went into effect Aug. 31. Route 34, Niagara Falls Boulevard, now has three Sunday trips extended to the Audubon community, intended to serve retail and residential areas north of Maple Road. Route 48, Williamsville, has added eight Saturday and four Sunday trips intended to serve employees of health care facilities along Main Street. For more information, visit www.nfta.com/metro.

Independent Health will begin offering \$0 co-payments for preventive services beginning Jan. 1, 2009. From mammograms, cholesterol screenings and colonoscopies, to annual physicals, Independent Health members will be covered in full as long as they receive these services from an in-network provider. Benefits vary by plan. Visit www.independenthealth.com for details.

Allstate Insurance Co. has opened a new office at 2357

Millersport Highway, Getzville. It is independently owned and operated by agent Sam Mezzio. He can be reached by calling 639-1450.

Tim Creenan, owner and founder of Amherst Alarm, has been chosen as the National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association chapter president of the year. Amherst Alarm employs 50 full-time staff in their facility on Lawrence Bell Drive in Amherst. For more information, visit

amherstalarm.com or call 632-4600.

Riverside Federal Credit Union has named **Ramon Morales** business development manager of its new branch at 315 Stahl Road in Getzville. The branch is slated to open on Sept. 22, with a public grand opening celebration scheduled for Oct. 18, 2008. Morales is a Marine Corps veteran of Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

Chamber plans networking event

The Amherst Chamber of Commerce will hold its Business After Hours event from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 16 at the Bonefish Grill restaurant, located at the Boulevard Mall on Niagara Falls Boulevard in Amherst.

Business After Hours is a monthly, casual networking event sponsored by an Amherst Chamber member.

This event is free for Amherst Chamber members. Non-Members are also invited to attend, however there is a \$25 fee.

Reservations are required for both members and non-members. Members who do not register by Noon on Tuesday, Sept. 16 will be charged a \$5 entry fee as a walk-in.

To register, visit the event calendar on the Amherst Chamber web site, www.amherst.org, or call the Chamber at 632-6905.