

Winter 2016-17
Volume 5, Issue 4
A quarterly publication

MSF Gazette

MAIN STREET FIRST • LITTLE FALLS • NEW YORK



LEARNING TO 'LOCAL': RD'S IS "ALL IN" WITH FIVE BUSINESSES

Most entrepreneurs set a goal to create a business and turn it into a successful enterprise with sustained growth and profits as the benchmarks of their endeavor. Many aren't satisfied with just one venture and have the desire necessary to expand, placing multiple irons in the fire. Such is the case with Little Falls businessman Randy Dawley and his RD's conglomerate.

Nearly two decades ago, Randy started out by buying a local trucking business from Cy Young, formerly Johnny Gillen's Trucking. Today, with multiple trucks, RD's hauls garbage and recyclables as well as stone and gravel.

Once the trucking business was well-established, Randy purchased the Gorge View Lanes bowling alley. In the same year, he formed RD's Redemption Center, a local place for consumers to turn in their "return for deposit" bottles and cans. Going hand-in-hand with the center, he also opened a convenience store.

Being diversified has allowed RD's to weather ups and downs and continue to prosper, while providing jobs for 20 local people.

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"Small business isn't for the faint of heart. It's for the brave, the patient, and the persistent. It's for the overcomer."

- unknown



Curious? Have feedback or ideas for us? Want to help? PLEASE JOIN US!

Next scheduled meetings:

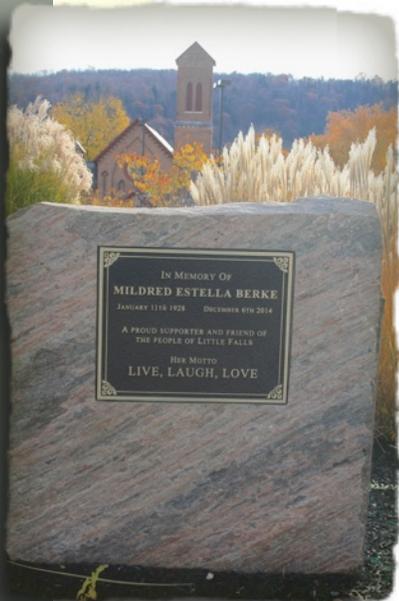
Monday, January 2
Monday, January 16
Monday, January 30
Monday, February 13
Monday, February 27
Monday, March 13
Monday, March 27

@ 6:30 pm
690 East Main Street,
Little Falls

(For more details about our group, please see the back cover/p. 8)

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: THE STORY BEHIND THE PLAQUE

Perhaps you have noticed the new stone memorial and dedication plaque on the south side of Main Street in front of CVS Pharmacy, and wondered who Mildred Berke was. She was a quiet force behind our new Price Chopper market.



Set the clock back to 2009 when the “quarry project” would have placed a Price Chopper-anchored commercial mall east of Little Falls. Many viewed this as a threat to our center-city commercial district.

In May 2010, Main Street First sponsored a “community envisioning” workshop. The owners of Shoppers Square, Jules and Mildred Berke, were invited; they were impressed, convinced that Little Falls was worthy of increased investment. A transformed Shoppers Square

and new Price Chopper followed.

As you read the plaque, remember Mildred as “a proud supporter and friend of the people of Little Falls.” We are grateful to her.

—Jeffrey Gressler

“It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things.”

--Leonardo da Vinci



PO Box 65
Little Falls, NY 13365

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MSF Gazette is published quarterly and distributed throughout the City of Little Falls, Herkimer County, New York. This issue, and an archive of back issues, is also available online at: mainstreetfirst.com.

Suggestions and contributions (articles and art) are always welcome; please contact someone on the staff or write to mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com.

“ CHRISTMAS IN LITTLE FALLS ”

Saturday, 12/10, annual citywide celebration. Holiday shopping and festive family fun at many locations downtown and at Canal Place. Santa visits, horse & carriage rides, scavenger hunt, Red Nose Reindeer 5K run, indoor farmer’s market, artisan fair, Soup Fest, Christmas cards for soldiers, and much more. Also, piano concert on Friday Dec. 9th and Yuletide farm-to-table brunch on Sunday Dec. 11th. Please visit christmasinlittlefalls.com for full details.

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: CHECK OUT OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

Belly dancing, anyone? Or how about “Pizza & Pokémon”? Or a quilting class? My grandmother would have loved to join the Knitting Club. There is a weekly Story Hour available for the preschool crowd. Whatever your interests, your age, or your energy level, the Little Falls Public Library has something for you.

The library, built in 1876, is a spectacular three-story brick house at 10 Waverly Place. It is conveniently located in the center of the city, just a stone’s throw from Benton Hall Academy. County Judge Rollin Smith (1838-1911) deeded his home to the city to use as the town library and provided an endowment for its conversion and care. In 1982, a new addition was built and dedicated, effectively doubling the floor space. The original part contains reading, reference, and storage rooms; part of the library’s charm is that this wing still feels like you are visiting a grand and comfortable house. The well-matched addition includes the main entrance, library, and community rooms. This past fall, the new handicapped entrance was installed by Little Falls Construction. In 2017, the library plans fundraising activities to aid with the cost of staffing in order to keep competitive with industry standards.

Besides books and periodicals, the library houses several decorative arts collections. Locals are proud of the beautiful and extensive Hurley Collection of Little Falls diamonds (quartz rock crystals unique to our county). There is also a butterfly collection donated by Edward Terry and a large collection of



Staffordshire figurines. Upstairs, there’s an impressive collection of export china and pottery (most of it was made in England between 1820-1880 for the American market). Some of it displays Erie Canal imagery. There is also a large-scale map of the city of Little Falls that was drawn in 1906. To access this room, just ask the librarians for permission. After you admire the china, linger to review the map and see if your house is on it—it’s fun to compare the map to what your block looks like today.

Little Falls Library is far bigger than the collections within its walls because it is one of 43 members of the Mid York Library System. This gives us access to the collections of the other member libraries. The system also provides automation of services such as processing book loans and coordinating the summer-reading program. This cornucopia of books, music, movies, and periodicals may be accessed online through the library’s website: lflibrary.org. Once you obtain your library card (free!), it is easy to sit at home in your slippers

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SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH SOMEONE
PLEASE RECYCLE , DON'T LITTER!



New Businesses Roundup!

Main Street First welcomes the following recently opened/recently relocated businesses:

John Healey Agency – Farmers Insurance
4 West Main St.
(315) 823-0000
jhealey@farmersagend.com
home, auto, specialty, business insurance

Li'l Munchkins
463 West Main St.
(315) 823-1810
next-to-new kids' clothes + children's
consignment shop
Fri. & Sat. 10 am to 5 pm, Sun. 10 am to 2 pm

Mike Evans Racing
482 Flint Ave. Extension
(352) 636-6620
mikey6speed@aol.com
all aspects of sports-car racing, fabrication and
performance

Tang Soo Do of Central New York
80 West Main St.
(315) 717-1380
tsdeny.com
karate, self-defense, Qi Gong, meditation, weapons,
BeiDa technique

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD: NEWS, UPDATES, AND LOCAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

WINTER APPEAL TO THE LITTLE FALLS COMMUNITY

The **Little Falls Food Pantry** at 45 Furnace St. urgently needs donations. Many of our neighbors and fellow residents struggle to feed themselves and their families this time of year. Supplies are needed for the Holiday season, but also beyond.

Donations of nonperishable food items or monetary donations may be dropped off at the YMCA on Jackson Street. *Thank you!*

The **Little Falls Micro Fund**: If you or someone you know needs one-time financial help in the form of an interest-free loan of \$2,000 or less, please contact:

P.O. Box 817, Little Falls, NY 13365

littlefallsmicrofund@gmail.com

littlefallsmicrofund.org

(315) 219-9396



Little Falls Micro Fund
Helping Our Community Grow

The **Greater Little Falls Community Chest** has launched its 2017 campaign to raise \$40,000 for organizations that directly serve local communities.

For more than 50 years, the Community Chest has raised money to distribute to agencies that serve Little Falls and Dolgeville.

“Odds are very good that at least one of the local causes that we support has touched the life of nearly everyone in the greater Little Falls and Dolgeville area,” said Campaign Chair David Van Meter. *“That’s because we support causes that improve our lives through sports and recreation activities for children, youth and seniors, by supporting local cultural treasures such as the Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts and by reaching out to protect and adopt animals.”*

Donations are tax deductible, and may be sent or hand-delivered to the Greater Little Falls Community Chest, Inc., 15 Jackson Street, Little Falls, NY 13365.

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UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

DECEMBER 2016

- ❖ Saturdays, 12/10 and 12/24, 9 am to 1 pm. Little Falls Winter Farmers' Market, indoors at the Travelodge, 20 Albany St., "rain, shine, or snow." For more information, please visit and "friend" the Facebook page, [LFWinterFarmersMarket](#).
- ❖ Saturday, 12/10, annual citywide celebration. Holiday shopping and festive family fun at many locations downtown and at Canal Place. Santa visits, horse & carriage rides, scavenger hunt, Red Nose Reindeer 5K run, indoor farmer's market, artisan fair, Soup Fest, Christmas cards for soldiers, and much more. Also, piano concert on Friday Dec. 9th and Yuletide farm-to-table brunch on Sunday Dec. 11th. Please visit [christmasinlittlefalls.com](#) for full details.
- ❖ Saturday, 12/10, noon to 4 pm. MVCA Open House, Canal Place. Shopping in the Selective Eye, and free musical entertainment in the 401 Gallery. For more information: [mohawkvalleyarts.org](#) or call (315) 823-0808.
- ❖ Thursday, 12/15. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. "Last-Minute Stocking Stuffers." Please visit [shoplittlefallsny.com](#) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Thursday, 12/15. Annual Senior Citizen Breakfast at Little Falls High School. Breakfast in the High School Cafeteria at 9 am, followed by a concert in the Auditorium at 10 am. Snow date, 12/16. For more information, please call (315) 823-1167.
- ❖ Saturday, 12/17, noon to 4 pm. "Bedazzled," a special holiday sale event held by the MVCA in the 401 Gallery, Canal Place. Gently used jewelry, scarves, pocketbooks, and stocking stuffers for sale at very reasonable prices. Please join us for some fun holiday shopping and refreshments! For more information: [mohawkvalleyarts.org](#) or call (315) 823-0808.

JANUARY 2017

- ❖ Tuesday, 1/3 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Sunday, 1/8. All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast, sponsored by the Shu-maker Mountain Climbers. 8 to 11:30 am. 135 Creek Rd., Little Falls. Adults \$8, kids \$5. For more information: (315) 823-1830.
- ❖ Saturdays, 1/14 and 1/28, 9 am to 1 pm. Little Falls Winter Farmers' Market, indoors at the Travelodge, 20 Albany St., "rain, shine, or snow." For more information, please visit and "friend" the Facebook page, [LFWinterFarmersMarket](#).
- ❖ Thursday, 1/20. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. Please visit [shoplittlefallsny.com](#) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.

FEBRUARY 2017

- ❖ Tuesday, 2/7 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Saturdays, 2/11 and 1/25, 9 am to 1 pm. Little Falls Winter Farmers' Market, indoors at the Travelodge, 20 Albany St., "rain, shine, or snow." For more information, please visit and "friend" the Facebook page, [LFWinterFarmersMarket](#).
- ❖ Sunday, 2/12. All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast, sponsored by the Shu-maker Mountain Climbers. 8 to 11:30 am. 135 Creek Rd., Little Falls. Adults \$8, kids \$5. For more information: (315) 823-1830.
- ❖ Thursday, 2/17. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. Please visit [shoplittlefallsny.com](#) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Monday, 2/20 to Thursday, 2/23. MVCA Winter Art Camp (9:30am to noon, 7- to 9-year-olds and 1 to 3:30 pm, 10- to 12-year-olds), 401 Canal Place. Fee: \$40 for 4 days includes snack. Limited scholarships are available. For more information/to register: [mohawkvalleyarts.org](#) or call (315) 823-0808.

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LEARNING TO 'LOCAL': RD'S IS "ALL IN" WITH FIVE BUSINESSES *(continued from page 1)*

The bowling-center business has slowed over the years, but it remains open to serve our area residents, including open bowling hours, many leagues, the junior bowlers on Saturday mornings, and both the Little Falls and West Canada Valley high schools' bowling teams.

The returnable bottle and can recycling isn't what it once was either, with many competitors opening up and down the valley. While son Ryan runs the trucks, Randy is quick to credit his business manager, Shari Hysack, with keeping everything in order. Soon there will be a fifth RD's business; his son Devin will be opening a welding shop in the back of the truck garage.

One would think that running four businesses would consume all of Randy's time. As we were discussing this article, his phone was constantly ringing—always someone needing something. Every person calling received the same cheerful greeting and undivided attention. He also finds time to help with community fundraisers and charity events. When dropping off your cans and bottles at the redemption center, you may request that the money goes to one of our local non-profit organizations; Cub Scouts, Humane Society, HALO or Project Linus; RD's will handle it from there. When there is an emergency such as the recent flood, he is there to help, sending trucks and dumpsters immediately.

Randy Dawley is what "local" is all about.

—Mike Evans

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: CHECK OUT OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY *(continued from page 3)*



enjoying the latest edition of *The Economist* or *The Atlantic Monthly*—to name just a couple of current magazines—on your computer, tablet, or mobile device. Books on tape are also available if you are planning a long trip or wish to enliven your daily commute.

Please visit the library today, and find out what captures your imagination.

—Adrienne Neff

*"Without libraries what have we?
We have no past and no future."
-Ray Bradbury*

MSF PROJECT: RECENT FACEBOOK BUSINESS WORKSHOP MAKES CONNECTIONS IN LITTLE FALLS

The Little Falls high school computer lab once again played host to a digital marketing workshop on October 25. Feedback from our recent Get Your Business Online with Google workshop asked for a Facebook-specific workshop. In response, Main Street First's Think Local Little Falls Committee teamed up with the Mohawk Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Little Falls Central School District to coordinate and present a hands-on workshop specifically covering Facebook for Small Business—all at no cost to participants! Promotional efforts by Think Local Little Falls and the Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce resulted in a packed house with 33 attendees.



Presenter Kandi Humpf of Quadsumia led participants through topics including (but certainly not limited to!):

- setting up a business page on Facebook;
- how to manage your account and interact as your business page;
- how to set up an editorial calendar and what to post when;
- boosting posts and creating ads; and
- understanding the powerful analytics available through Facebook Insights.

The dynamic content was praised by attendees as being “personalized,” “real-world solutions to advertising issues,” and “very applicable and meaningful.” One attendee commented that “The presenter could translate the tech-speak into real speak incredibly well.”

That special “Little Falls flavor” was added to the mix with attendees specifically wanting to know not only how to promote their own businesses, but also how to work together to spread the word about one another’s events and boost consumer and tourism traffic for Little Falls in general. The workshop led to discussions about how organizations like Main Street First, Think Local Little Falls, Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts, Historical Society, City Tourism Committee and others can work together to develop a collaborative Facebook marketing strategy. The goal would be to strengthen our collective efforts and continue to grow local involvement and outside interest in the exciting activities and small business offerings available in Little Falls.

With crowd-pleasing events like the annual Canal Celebration, OctoberFest, the annual Pizza Challenge, Mohawk Valley Garlic & Herb Festival, Little Falls Cheese Festival, Christmas in Little Falls, and the new annual Art Walk—combined with workshops like these to promote social-media skills and collaboration among Little Falls’ nonprofits, small businesses, and the City—Little Falls is making all the right connections! As Ole Sal’s Chris Connelly said after the workshop, “You guys really seem to have a grasp of what’s going on—I love how you have the finger on the pulse of this!”

—Judy Wolf

“The first rule of social media is that everything changes all the time. What won’t change is the community’s desire to network.” - Kami Huyse



PO Box 65
Little Falls, NY 13365

Main Street First, Inc. is an organization of Little Falls residents as well as other stakeholders in the cultural and commercial life of our city.

Main Street First, Inc. does not act on the behalf of individual businesses in Little Falls, but is dedicated to the interests of our residents in preserving and revitalizing the Little Falls City Center.

PURPOSES: The purposes for which the Corporation is formed are to combat community deterioration in the city by organizing the community to create sustainable initiatives to revitalize the city, by supporting city revitalization through smart growth principles, the creation of a comprehensive master plan, the participation of all interested parties in directing the city's future, citywide residential revitalization, the development of green and sustainable technologies throughout the city, to provide financial assistance and volunteers for the improvement and maintenance of the city's buildings and homes, and to increase recreational facilities. To do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in the advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors, or officers.

MSF'S SHORT-TERM GOALS

- ❖ Continue to work with local businesses to promote monthly "Third Thursday" events.
- ❖ Expand and develop our network of volunteers.

MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- ❖ Continue to expand and improve the "Think Local Little Falls" venture.
- ❖ Position MSF as a strong partner with Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful (KMVB).
- ❖ Pursue grant opportunities for projects aligned with MSF's mission and principles.

These are the sorts of things we discuss and plan at our meetings. Join us! Bring your ideas, skills, and energy and help us reach these and other good goals for our community.

To receive a copy of this quarterly newsletter electronically, please send your request to: mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com.



HOW TO JOIN MSF

If you would like to get involved, have questions or ideas, or are thinking of joining, we invite you to come to our meetings — everyone is welcome!

Email us at:

mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com

Visit our new website at:

mainstreetfirst.com

Facebook:

"like" the Main Street First page
"like" the Think Local Little Falls page

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH SOMEONE

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