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DayBreak



File photo

This April 2019 file photo shows the Hinmansville bridge, with damage from a previous collision visible on the right tressels.

Hinmansville bridge re-opens to traffic

SCHROEPPPEL — A popular byway over the Oswego River has been re-opened to traffic after a month closed due to damage sustained when struck by a vehicle.

The Hinmansville bridge in Schroeppele had been closed since March 17 after an “oversized vehicle” collided with it. The 106-year-old span was also damaged in 2019 when a truck slammed into it.

Fulton man charged with unlawful activities with minors

FULTON — A 20-year-old Fulton man accused of supplying marijuana and engaging in sexual contact with two teenagers was charged with a series of misdemeanors this week.

Nathaniel A. Cook was arrested by Fulton police on Tuesday and charged with four counts of sexual misconduct and five counts of endangering the welfare of a child in connection with two separate incidents. The Fulton Police Department (FPD) said Cook had inappropriate dealings with multiple minors, including sexual contact with two separate teenagers on multiple occasions.

Authorities allege Cook supplied cannabis to two young victims, age 15 and 12, and then used the drugs with the minors. Fulton police said Cook then kissed the 15-year-old victim in the presence of other juveniles, before engaging in sexual intercourse with the victim later in the day.

Cook was charged with one count of sexual misconduct and four counts of endangering the welfare of a child in connection to the incident. Both charges are class A misdemeanors.

In a separate incident, Cook allegedly had sexual intercourse and other sexual contact with another 15-year-old female victim at least three times during a three-month span. Cook was charged with three counts each of sexual misconduct and endangering the welfare of a child in connection to the incidents.

Fulton police said Cook was arraigned in Fulton City Court and released on his own recognizance.

Authorities said prior to recent chances to the recreational marijuana laws, Cook would have been subject to second-degree criminal sale of marijuana, a class D felony, for providing cannabis to an individual younger than 18 years of age.

After months of planning, ‘late in the game’ regulations change OCSD re-opening schedule

By SETH WALLACE
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OSWEGO — Oswego City School District students, staff and families will have to wait longer until getting back to school for more days per week, and the unexpected delay caused by new state regulations is also frustrating education administrators and lawmakers.

Buccaneers in grades four through 12 were scheduled to return to a four day per week in-person class schedule on April 19, and Oswego City School District (OCSD) faculty were deep into preparation.

“We had the safety precautions figured out, all the furniture, putting staff in the right places, we changed our nutritional program, put extra time in the school day — all these things have taken a lot of work and it’s very frustrating and upsetting this late in the game for the state to give us this guidance,” said Superintendent Dr. Mathis Calvin III.

Last Friday, the New York State Department of Health released updated protocols for schools looking to re-open, including those districts looking to significantly increase their capacity for in-person learning, as Oswego was. Because OCSD falls into an indicator level established by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and

enforced by state authorities, the district’s planned model of return for middle and high school students no longer met the threshold to re-open under a four day per week schedule. In counties where infection rates are high, like Oswego which is deemed a “red zone” by the CDC, middle and high schools must aim for 6 feet of distancing unless they can maintain “cohorting,” where groups of students remain together through the day.

Put simply: the plan thought feasible by OCSD officials suddenly wasn’t.

“We’re left to react rather than being proactive,” Calvin said. “If we’d had this information before it went out (as public guidance) we could have put things in place, but we’re getting it at the same time as everybody else.”

The new guidance, contained in a 24-page report, was released the evening of Friday, April 9, and Calvin said it was “shocking” to discover.

“It changed everything we were doing,” he said.

Calvin wasn’t the only central New Yorker dismayed — State Sen. Pam Helming, R-Canandaigua, said the guidelines were released “under the cover of darkness.”

“Students, families and schools have been waiting more than a month for this guidance,” she said in a state-



File photo

In this Oct. 2, 2020 file photo, students walk to school on the east side of Oswego. After intending to re-open for expanded in-person learning on April 19, district officials say new regulations from state and federal officials came as a “shock” and will delay their former plans.

ment. “I am hopeful schools can now move forward in getting students back in the classroom full time.”

Helming’s sentiments were shared by Calvin, who said the district’s priority is to “get as many kids back as soon as we can” while abiding by

mandatory health and safety regulations.

“As quick as we can return more kids, we will,” he said. “If there’s a way to get more kids back, we will.”

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Aria of expertise: Oswego Opera back on stage Saturday

By GREG CASTER
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OSWEGO — The Oswego Opera Theater will raise the virtual curtain this weekend on a performance of the classic 1733 opera ‘La Serva Padrona.’

Written by 18th-century Italian composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, the intermezzo — a short performance meant to be played during intermissions of larger musical works — was composed as part of Pergolesi’s larger work, “Il Prigionier Superbo.”

“I am delighted to be able to do something live with performers,” Oswego Opera Theater (OOT) Artistic Director Juan Francisco La Manna said. “One of the main purposes of the opera is to have young artists further their careers. One way to do that is to feature students in major roles — this small opera is perfect for younger voices.”

The former impresario of the Missouri State Ballet, Miami City Ballet, and Kansas City Symphony, La Manna said the Oswego Opera Theater had difficulty this year finding venues due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUNY Oswego’s Charlotte Waterman Theater will host Saturday’s performance, which will feature an all-student cast. “La Serva Padrona”



Greg Caster photo

The Oswego Opera Theater on Saturday, April 17, will be performing the classic 1733 “La Serva Padrona” by 18th-century artist Giovanni Battista Pergolesi for free to registered viewers. According to Conductor Juan Francisco La Manna, seen above on April 9 practicing during a joint vocalist and musician rehearsal, this performance is the first all-college ensemble and only the second performance to be done virtually.

will be the troupe’s first in-person performance of 2021, after the success of last November’s “A Night at the Opera.”

“It has been a challenging year for the performing arts and the live performing arts. It’s been especially hard because we haven’t been able to do much of anything and feed off the public’s emotion. So to be able to do this in person, with talented students

is a treat,” La Manna said.

“La Serva Padrona” — which roughly translates to “The Maid Turned Mistress” — follows elderly bachelor Dr. Pandolfo and Serpina, his maid, who is tasked with finding Pandolfo a wife. It’s the first time the work has been performed at SUNY Oswego.

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IJC: Dry start to year makes flooding unlikely

STAFF REPORTS
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OSWEGO — More than three years of high Lake Ontario water levels are starting to subside, and international regulators are pulling back on outflows as dry conditions and reduced inflows make it unlikely the Great Lake will see a rise to flood levels.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) — the binational body that oversees shared U.S.-Canadian waterways — announced lower than average precipitation and winter snow-pack runoff resulted in decreased inflows into Lake Ontario. The International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board (LOSLRB), the regional arm of the IJC, decided to reduce outflows through the Moses-Saunders Dam near Massena, N.Y. due to the lower inflows starting last weekend.

Forecasting models suggest Lake Ontario water levels are likely to remain below the long-term average levels through the summer, with a peak around 245.5 feet — or more than three feet below the record setting highs of recent years — in early summer.

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Swap the crop? New York hemp farmers eager to grow marijuana

By MICHAEL HILL
Associated Press

ALBANY — Legal marijuana is coming to New York and hemp farmer Samir Mahadin sees it as a potential lifeline.

Farmers dealing with depressed prices for plants that produce CBD are eager to take part in a statewide marijuana market expected to generate billions of dollars a year once retail sales start.

They already know how to grow and process cannabis plants, since hemp is essentially the same plant with lower levels of THC, marijuana’s active ingredient.

Now they’re waiting on rules that will allow them to switch seeds.

“I would love to get a license to grow cannabis. My wife and I love working with this plant, I believe in its ability and power as a medicine,” said Mahadin.

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Buffalo sports fans will need vaccine to attend games

BUFFALO (AP) — Buffalo Bills and Sabres fans will have to show proof they’ve been vaccinated against COVID-19 if they want to attend games, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz announced Tuesday.

“Our goal is to have a 100 percent full house for the Bills and the Sabres starting in the fall,” Poloncarz said during a daily briefing.

“Our plan is that unless you are vaccinated you will not have entry to the stadium. It is easy. It is safe,” he

said.

Ticket-holders entering Highmark Stadium for NFL games or the KeyBank Center for NHL games will be asked to show digital proof they are fully vaccinated using New York state’s Excelsior Pass cellphone app. Both venues are owned by Erie County. There will be no religious or other exemptions.

“There’s no God-given right to attend a football game,” Poloncarz said.

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