

Someone You Should Know

Joseph McGreevy takes on role of town historian

by **KATIE SKOOG**
Reporter

This past January, Clarence native and Clarence Central High School history teacher Joseph McGreevy took the position as the town's new historian. Through his studies, experience as an archaeologist and involvement in the Clarence Historical Society, McGreevy hopes to inspire students and the wider community to learn more about local history.

McGreevy wants to get the community more involved in local history by digitizing town records, giving talks to schools around town, writing grants and more.

"I think it's easier for kids to connect to history by knowing what has happened around them," he said. "It's a unique key to unlock in children and in adults to give them a sense of their surroundings and a sense of being human, because without our history and knowing what's around you, you're kind of lost."

McGreevy has had a passion for history since he was a child. He lived in an old doctor's office growing up and would dig for artifacts in the backyard as his mom gardened, finding old artifacts like bottles and dishes.



McGreevy

He soon took an interest in archaeology and started volunteering locally at the University at Buffalo's Archaeological Survey, which is a nonprofit "research, contracting and applied archaeology institution." McGreevy went to University at Albany where he received a bachelor's degree in anthropology with a concentration in archaeology and a minor in geography.

After working at UB for six years doing contract archaeology, which includes conducting surveys and excavations, he took a trip to China to teach English. When McGreevy returned, he attended Canisius College and got a master's degree in education.

"One of my mentors is Doug Perrelli and he is a professor of archaeology at the University at Buffalo," he said. "For the last 25 years, we've worked together and it was a lifelong goal to inspire the younger generation to bridge prehistory and history of Western New York."

This lifelong goal is what informs McGreevy in his new role as town historian. There has been a shift in research and accessibility to information by everything being online, he said. He wants to make town records readily available through the internet for residents to "learn their own way at their own pace."

McGreevy started a local history class at CCHS around two years ago to further connect students with the story of Clarence and WNY. He stresses the importance of WNY's history playing a significant role in American history.

One aspect of the past McGreevy frequently talks about with his students is the Onondaga Escarpment, which Indigenous people used for thousands of years as a pathway across New York.

On the pathway is the five nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which is now Main Street and the land CCHS stands on, he said.

As town historian, McGreevy will continue to fulfill his lifelong goal of driving home the importance of the history that surrounds residents day-to-day.

"I'm very excited to try to use this position to inspire young kids and inspire adults to learn more about local history and realize the importance of this region in our country's history and our nation's history," he said.

Local law firm specializes in senior services

by **KATIE SKOOG**
Reporter

Hurwitz Fine P.C., a multidisciplinary law firm based in Buffalo and established in 1977, offers a variety of senior services for the local elderly population to help them prepare for their future.



Pezzino

The firm has a division that specializes in estate planning, which includes health care planning, long term care planning, creating trusts and wills, tax planning, powers of attorney and more. They have been working on estate planning and senior law matters for more than 30 years.

Over the years, Hurwitz Fine P.C.'s headquarters have remained in Buffalo with an office branching out to Amherst, located at 5500 Main St. They started out with four lawyers and have now grown to 60 across New York State and Connecticut.

Melissa Pezzino, who recently joined the firm as special counsel in their estate department, has been doing estate planning for 19 years.

"One of the things that we like to do is make sure that the individual themselves is protected," she said. "We want to balance their own interest and their own financial needs with their desire to pass on a legacy to their children."

The firm's health care planning involves creating living wills and health care proxies. These allow someone to make their own decisions for medical treatment and to designate someone to make these decisions for them if needed.

Pezzino said having a health care proxy and power of attorney are very important

in the case of being "incapacitated." If these aren't set in place beforehand, a guardianship proceeding will have to be brought to court for someone to act on behalf of the individual.

These proceedings can be expensive and complex, she said.

The financial aspect of estate planning is preparing wills and trusts to determine who will inherit property, money and more.

"Estate planning and just being able to guide people and help them make informed decisions and prepare for their future – I think that's really important and people tend to feel a sense of security once that's done," Pezzino said.

Pezzino encourages clients to keep their documents in order, which includes having a clear and updated will, keeping a list of assets and liabilities and having beneficiaries designated on accounts, such as insurance policies and retirement plans. She recommends reviewing these documents every five years or if a major life event occurs.

Hurwitz Fine attorneys are aware that everyone's situation is different and works to accommodate this. When clients come in, Pezzino makes sure their documents are prepared in order to have a quick turn-around time of one to two weeks.

Aside from helping people plan for their lives and end of life, Hurwitz Fine P.C. helps with the probate process, which distributes estate assets after someone dies.

"That's [the probate process] when they've lost someone," Pezzino said. "If we handle that correctly and we make that process go smoothly for them, it can definitely bring a sense of closure for them. I think it's really rewarding to be able to help someone who is going through the grieving process."

For more information or services, visit hurwitzfine.com or call their Buffalo office at 716-849-8900.

Clarence Town Board Agenda
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28
Town Hall auditorium, 1 Town Place
Available to watch live at:
www.youtube.com/@ClarenceNY

The town reserves the right to continue the in-person meeting without the livestream should any technical issues arise.

Some agenda items include:

- Declare highway equipment as surplus.
- Approve contract amendment No. 1 for highway department facility project, improvements to highway department building six project and pocket park project.
- Approve purchases and approve and authorize entering into lease agreements for town vehicle fleet.
- 8490 Wolcott Road – Regan Landscape requests consideration of a temporary conditional permit for outside storage to operate a landscaping business in the agricultural-floodzone.
- 7171 Transit Road – Drydock Marine requests approval of a commercial detached accessory structure for cold storage of new inventory and equipment in the restricted

business zone.

- 4280 Research Parkway – Stephen Development requests approval to temporarily stockpile rock from the Dimar construction project to be placed to the north of the existing Research Parkway stub.
- 8255 Goodrich Road – Joseph Beaser requests consideration of a temporary conditional permit to conduct business storage and staging out of existing accessory structures on the southeast corner of Goodrich Road and Brauer Road in the agricultural floodzone.

To view the full meeting agenda, visit www.clarence.ny.us and click on the "Agendas & Minutes" section. Physical copies can be picked up from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays (excluding holidays) at the town clerk's office, 1 Town Place. Town board meeting agendas become available by the end of the day on the Friday before the meeting.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TOWN OF CLARENCE

SEASON OPENER
for the museum is
1-3PM • Sunday, March 10th!

Open 1-3PM the 2nd & 4th Sundays of every month
(Seasonally & except holidays)

716.759.8575
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News Brief

Hospice and Palliative Care Buffalo's annual spring bouquet sale will run from March 4 through 8 at several public sites and participating florist shops in Erie County – visit HospiceSpringBouquetSale.com for locations.

Standard bouquets cost \$14. Large tribute bouquets cost \$35 and contain 30 stems of premium flowers, and for every tribute purchased, a standard bouquet will be delivered to a current Hospice patient.

Proceeds go toward Hospice and Palliative Care Buffalo's mission to help expand access to services and enrich program offering to enhance quality of life for patients and to provide support for their loved ones.

For more information, visit the website or call the Hospice Foundation at 716-989-2010.