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Sweet Home trying to get students back in cafeterias

By BARBARA O'BRIEN
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Sweet Home elementary students spent two years eating lunch in their classrooms.

First it was due to Covid-19 restrictions, but now it's because of a space crunch.

And now parents of Sweet Home elementary students say it's time to get the kids out of the classroom and back to the lunch room.

Students in most other schools were eating in their cafeterias for months, after Covid-19 restrictions eased.

"We really just want to shout from the rooftops our kids need to be back eating in the school cafeterias," parent Jill Vaughan told the School Board.

He said parents understood why

the schools pivoted during the pandemic. But he said watching a movie in a classroom during lunch, or looking at their iPads, is not good for their social and emotional health.

"More than ever we should be getting our children off their screens, interacting with each other. This is the age where they learn how to navigate friendships, relationships, difficult times - that's a part of growing up. They're not going to learn that from a screen," he said.

But Sweet Home administrators say it's not that easy in the district's four elementary schools, and part of the reason is how the district handled Covid-19 schooling.

Elementary students in Sweet Home did not have to grapple with

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Pediatrician, 2 grown daughters are killed in North Buffalo blaze

By AARON BESECKER,
HAAJRAH GILANI
AND LEAH CLARK
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

A Buffalo pediatrician and two of his daughters died in an overnight fire in North Buffalo, according to the Buffalo Fire Department.

The mother was in serious condition after suffering smoke inhalation in the fire at 194 Huntington Ave. She was taken by ambulance to Erie County Medical Center.

Relatives confirmed the three who died were Dr. Jonathan D. Daniels, 53, who was one of only a handful of Black pediatricians practicing in the Buffalo area, and daughters Jordan A. Daniels, 27, and Jensen A. Daniels, 23.



A Huntington Avenue house in which a pediatrician and two grown daughters died.

The mother, Janessa Givens-Daniels, 53, a senior associate director of financial aid at University at Buffalo, was able to escape the fire on her own.

The two-alarm blaze erupted at the single-family home on Huntington, between Parker and Voorhees avenues, at about 3:36 a.m., Fire Commissioner William Renaldo said.

Firefighters carried out two people who were trapped in the attic. Firefighters got another person out a side window on the second floor, he said.

Firefighters and AMR ambulance crews performed CPR, but the father and the two daughters died at

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Camp Good Days provides fun, relief for families as they deal with cancer



Photos by Minh Connors/Buffalo News

Above, Victoria preps her impromptu puppet show during Camp Good Days' field trip to Explore & More Children's Museum on Thursday. Below left to right, five-year-old Kiernan checks the teeth of counselor Melissa Juhle while performing an MRI scan at the museum. Dominic, left, and Nathan spin the Archimedes' Screw. Averi treats her camp counselor, Samira, to a batch of pretend waffles.



Sessions resume after two-year break during Covid-19 pandemic

By THAD GREEN
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Lisa Booz started her day by calming down one of her campers.

Eight-year-old Fiona Donnelly, who is battling acute lymphocytic leukemia, was feeling tired and irritable. But Booz, the WNY regional director of Camp Good Days, settled her down. Moments like this are able to occur again as Camp Good Days returns to normal operations this year.

"Engaging with the kids is the most rewarding part," said Booz, who has been involved with the camp



Look:
CAMP GOOD DAYS AND SPECIAL TIMES IS BACK. SCAN THIS CODE ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE TO SEE MORE PHOTOS

for 17 years. "It's a relief to get back to business, to get back to the tradition of what we do."

Fiona is one of 42 children who took part in the 34th annual Junior Good Days camp last week, one of several ventures run by Camp Good Days. The day camp returns to a normal schedule for the first time since 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic caused the 2020 and 2021 events to be modified.

"I like camp a lot," said Fiona, who wants to be a YouTuber when she gets older. "The counselors are funny."

Camp Good Days provides service and support for families affected by cancer or sickle cell anemia. The program covers Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse and the Southern Tier.

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Neighbors sue Grand Island bar over noise

'Raucus' patrons also mentioned in lawsuit

By LEAH CLARK
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Two Grand Island residents have had enough of putting up with a bar overlooking the Niagara River near their homes, where they say the patrons are boisterous, raucous and loud and frequently use foul language and display lewd behavior.

David Thomas and Glenn Wallace have sued Turner's Port of Call, seeking compensatory and punitive damages plus a court order to curb the behaviors and activities at the establishment that "torments and disturbs" them, according to their recent State Supreme Court lawsuit.

"The pounding music and other excessive noise emanating from the bar often continues unabated during the day and into the evening, night, and early morning hours," even to 4 a.m., according to their lawsuit.

It keeps them from sleeping, working, studying, reading, relaxing and quietly enjoying their properties, the two said in the lawsuit.

Thomas lives at 1004 East River Road, across the road from the bar and grill, and Wallace runs the bed and breakfast Niagara River Inn at his nearby residential property at 917 North Colony Road.

The lawsuit also named Turner's Port of Call owners Donald Turner Sr. of Fort Myers, Fla.; Donald Turner Jr. of Grand Island; and Grand Isles Properties LLC.

Attorney Christopher Cardillo, who represents the Turners and the bar, said the allegations from Thomas and Wallace are false and show they are "hell-bent on leveling baseless allegations against a neighborhood institution and the owners of it."

Some patrons at Turner's Port of Call, located at 997 East River Road, use illegal drugs and others blow their car horns and toss away cans, bottles and other trash that end up on their properties, according to the lawsuit. Thomas and Wallace also said bright lights and neon signs, exhaust from patrons' cars and boats, and the open burning of trash near the river is "severely diminishing the value of their residences."

In August 2010, the Town of Grand Island granted a zoning variance to Turner Sr., and Thomas and Wallace were unsuccessful in annulling the decision. Attorney Steven Cohen, who represents the two, said the town's Zoning Board of Appeals "picks and chooses which laws it enforces based on politics and friendships."

"Turner's is a popular place, and its owners have a lot of friends in the town," Cohen said. "Our clients live in

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Colleagues mourn pediatrician's death

FIRE • from B1
he scene.
A dog also died in the fire.
Dr. Daniels, who grew up in Buffalo and was the first in his immediate family to graduate from college, said in a story in The Buffalo News published in 2019 that there were few African American students in medical school when he attended 25 years ago at University at Buffalo, and there were till very few. He encouraged New York State to invest more programs that create a pipeline to medical school for more young African-Americans, Latino and Latina students and others underrepresented in medicine.



Dr. Jonathan Daniels was associate director for admissions at UB's Jacobs School of Medicine.

good husband, good man, and good father."
Daniels' and his wife also have another daughter, Jillian, who was not present at the time of the fire.
In an interview with The News, Jillian Daniels said her father was a widely loved pediatrician in the community, who, if he was here would say something like, "we have to keep moving."
She said the three Daniels sisters were all best friends. When she had to make major life decisions, Jillian Daniels said she knew she could turn to both her older and younger sister.

"Our deepest sympathies and thoughts are with Janessa and we pray for her full recovery."
Jordan Daniels received her MBA degree from the University at Buffalo School of Management in May.
Dr. Daniels served as associate director of admissions in UB's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.
"Dr. Daniels was a treasure to our school community," said Dr. Allison Brashear, UB vice president for health sciences and dean of the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. "He was a tireless advocate for diversifying the physician workforce and has worked closely with the Associated Medical Schools of New York to expand the pool of scholars choosing careers in medicine and health care, by providing academic enrichment and support to students from educationally and/or economically underserved backgrounds."
While seeking his undergraduate degree, Dr. Daniels joined the United States Army Reserve 365th Evacuation Hospital during his sophomore year so that he could repay student loans. He served as a combat medic during Operation Desert Storm.
After returning to Buffalo and finishing his undergraduate degree, Daniels enrolled in and completed his residency at the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

lookers stopped to observe the scene. A woman left a bouquet of flowers.
Sirens from the fire trucks woke up neighbors, said Holly Cercone, another resident of the neighborhood.
"I just immediately started praying because I've never heard that many sirens before," she said.
In nearly 25 years of living in the neighborhood, Cercone said she'd never witnessed this level of devastation.
"If you come by here, and you look at this, what's left of this house, and your heart's not moved? I don't know," she added.
John Fantini, a neighbor who witnessed the fire from his home across the street, said the sirens also woke him up. When he looked outside his bedroom window, he could see the back of the house engulfed in flames.
Neighbors told fire investigators they saw flames in the rear of the home.
When firefighters arrived, there were flames coming from the attic window, the commissioner said.
Investigators believe the fire started on the second floor and spread to the attic. The cause was under investigation. It was not believed to be fireworks-related.
Five firefighters were injured and taken to ECMC, where they were treated and released. Several suffered minor burns to their ears and neck. One suffered an ankle and knee injury.
The fire department estimated damage to the home at about \$230,000.
A neighboring home at 200 Huntington sustained about \$55,000 in exposure damage.

Devastating blow to Black community

The loss of Dr. Daniels is one that the Rev. George Nicholas, leader of the African American Health Equities Task Force, describes as another devastating blow to the Black community.
"I took my sons to Dr. Daniels — all four of them. He was a terrific doctor. He would talk to them about being a Black man and sexuality. It was just that kind of care," Nicholas said. "He was a good physician,

As she attempts to honor her dad's words and keep moving, Jillian Daniels said she is grateful for her mother's survival and support from her friends.
UB President Satish K. Tripathi issued a statement calling the fire a devastating tragedy.
"As a university community, our collective hearts are broken with the devastating tragedy that claimed the life of a beloved faculty member, Dr. Daniels, and his two cherished daughters, one of whom is an alumna," said Tripathi.

Sirens woke neighbors

The smell of smoke lingered in the air on Huntington Avenue on Monday morning, as

District is strapped for space after cutting class size in pandemic

CAFETERIAS • from B1

hybrid learning, which meant going to school for part of the week while learning from home for the rest of the week.
Instead, the district had students in the elementary buildings full-time in the fall of 2020. When the pandemic hit, the district decreased class sizes in the elementary schools to allow for social distancing. That meant adding sections and utilizing every available space in the buildings.
Music and art rooms and special education spaces were turned into classrooms, and those special subjects moved to cafeterias.
"It created spacing issues throughout the district," Superintendent Michael V. Ginestre said.
The other factor is a space crunch in most of the elementary schools. Space is so tight at Mapleme Elementary there are two mobile classrooms at the school.
The district has added 16 elementary classrooms since 2010, and it gained 69 additional elementary students over the same period, he said.
And since students still have additional needs because of the pandemic, the district does not want to increase class sizes. It also is in the process of moving universal prekindergarten classes into the schools.
"It's not an easy fix," Board President Marianne Jansen said.
Parents pleaded with the

School Board last month to get the children out of the classrooms for lunch.
Vaughan urged the board to be creative, suggesting large tents be erected outside the schools where children could eat lunch in the fall and the spring.
And teacher Margaret McDonald agreed with him that students need to get to the cafeteria.
"They need to start moving, they need to start communicating, they need to start playing with their peers," McDonald said, adding that she dealt with tears, shouts and rattles on a daily basis.
Administrators had recommended the children stay in their rooms for lunch for the next school year, but board members asked them to look into how to get them into the cafeterias.
Each school will convene committees to explore what an ideal lunch experience for all students is and where alternative and/or rotating spots lunches could take place. They also will look at teacher concerns about having lunches in classrooms.
"I would say by Aug. 23 board meeting we're going to have some ideas of what we're going to do," Ginestre said.
The long-term plan involves creating a district-wide building use committee that will look at census and birth statistics to determine future enrollment trends. The committee would report back to the School Board in January or February with suggestions on building utilization.

Camp allows kids with cancer to just be kids

CAMP • from B1

Founder Gary Mervis, 78, started Camp Good Days in 1979 after his 9-year-old daughter, Elizabeth "Teddi" Mervis, was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor that year. Teddi died in 1982 at age 12.
Mervis said that the most painful thing for his daughter was not the cancer or the treatments. It was the loneliness of being the only person in her school or neighborhood with cancer.
"I remember grabbing a stack of towels for Teddi because she was crying but not having any friends come over," Mervis said. "Daughters usually think their dad can do anything, and she was looking at me to find the answers."
Because Mervis traveled for work, he decided to put his career on hold and become Teddi's primary caregiver. One day, he read about a doctor in Michigan who started an outdoor camp for children being treated for cancer. Mervis got in touch with the program, and he soon founded Camp Good Days, the fourth organization of its type in the country.
The organization includes the Junior Good Days program, a week-long camp for children 4 to 7 years old. This year, 8-year-olds were allowed to participate because they were not able to have the full camp experience early in the pandemic.
Parents typically drop their children off for the day. However, in the early part

of the pandemic, the structure changed to have the kids attend camp with their parents in socially distanced pods.
Other precautions such as masking, private bathrooms provided by Colton RV and removal of food and drink were part of that experience. Booz is glad to see kid-only camps return this year.
"The point of Camp Good Days is to make sure that kids are allowed to be kids," Booz said. "Even though they're young, they need to have a little bit of autonomy on their own. That's how they grow, that's how they meet new friends."
This year, the children start their days at St. Philip the Apostle in Cheektowaga, where they participate in activities like carnival games, crafts and face painting before heading out on field trips.
Junior Good Days takes trips to Get Air, Billy Beez, Dave & Buster's, Darien Lake, the Harbor Center and the Explore & More Children's Museum.
At Explore & More on Thursday, the children interacted with a variety of exhibits. Five-year-old Kiernan, who is Fiona's brother, says he loves playing with the water at the Canal Works station. KJ, age 6, practiced his basketball moves in the ball pit. Adriana, 7, and Ben, 4, fixed a car at the makeshift service station.
Camp Good Days is not just for children with serious illnesses. After Teddi died, Mervis said that his other two children were having a hard time dealing with it. He decided to expand the camp

to include children who have siblings or parents with cancer or who lost a parent or sibling to cancer.
Some three dozen volunteers serve as counselors each day at camp. Many of them are previous campers, such as Leah Underwood, 25. Underwood attended Junior Good Days at age five with her 7-year-old sister, Kayla Cassidy, who had leukemia but is now 20 years in remission.
"Camp Good Days has been such a fun place," Underwood said. "Now that I am through college, I wanted to give back because they gave so much to us when we were little."
Mervis is most proud of services able to offer Camp Good Days services free of charge for its entire existence.
"I didn't want parents to have anxiety about paying for camp on top of everything else they were dealing with," Mervis said. "It's been a constant challenge to get the resources to keep that promise, but I'm proud that we've been able to keep it."
Mervis continues to carry on with Camp Good Days with the help of Wendy Mervis, his wife of 27 years. Decades later, they continue to help children and families who are going through similar struggles as their daughter.
"It's become my memorial to my daughter," Gary Mervis said. "The good Lord showed me that when Teddi got sick, this is what I was called to do."

Lottery Picks /

Winning numbers
on Monday
4.5 Evening Number not available
4.5 Midday Number: 826
Win Four Evening not available
Win Four Midday: 6868
Take Five not available
Cash 4 Life not available
Pick 10 not available
Pick 3 Evening not available
Pick 3 Day: 812
Pick 4 Evening not available
Pick 4 Day: 8001
ate numbers for Sunday
Take Five 3 11 13 17 36
These numbers are unofficial.
for official New York Lottery results go to buffalo.com/lottery or our lottery retailer.

Other neighbors are not bothered

BAR • from B1

the shadow of Turner's. Safety issues that Erie County has identified as serious are routinely ignored by the town's enforcement personnel."
Court documents from the two neighbors' 2015 lawsuit against the establishment indicate the Turner family has owned the bar since the 1960s.
"Turner's Port of Call has been a neighborhood staple for decades, prior to either Mr. Thomas or Mr. Wallace moving into their residence, enjoyed by friends and boaters alike," Cardillo said. "Now, unhappy with the neighborhood into which they chose to move, they have brought multiple, baseless complaints alleging a neighborhood nuisance."
Other residents have taken notice of Turner's Port of Call. Antonella DiGiulio, a resident in the area for seven years, agrees with Thomas and Wallace that the bar and its patrons can be loud.



Turner's Port of Call at 997 East River Road in Grand Island is being sued by neighbors.

DiGiulio, however, sees Turner's Port of Call as more of a bother rather than a nuisance in the quiet neighborhood.
"It's really just kind of out of context. It would make more sense if it was down by the yacht club," DiGiulio said, referring to the Buffalo Launch Club at 503 East River Road. "People could eat at the restaurant and the bar."
Another resident, Ray Milstrey, said he did not notice Turner's Port of Call was a bar when he first moved into the area two years ago. Since then, he has heard music from the bar on weekends, but that hasn't bothered him.

WTVY 43.1 NEWS 10 BUSINESS
751 Articles of Incorporation
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NOTICE OF FORMAL OPPOSITION TO A DOMESTIC PROFESSIONAL LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
STUDIO 120, LLC, a domestic LLC filed 04/15/22
The NY Sec of State has been designated as agent upon whom process may be served and may mail a copy of any process to the LLC at 155 Klein Rd., Westhampton, NY 11986