

AUTUMN FILMS

A LOOK AT THE UPCOMING FALL MOVIE SEASON **INSIDE**



TAPPING INTO TEXAS

UB'S GILL FINDING NEW RECRUITS IN HIS HOME STATE **SPORTS/1B**



NIAGARA GAZETTE

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IT'S A SWEEP

Democrats make it official — and unanimous, Barack Obama's their man. **NATION, 5A**

3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW TODAY

1 The Seneca Indian Nation says it's halting construction of its planned \$333 million casino-hotel complex in Buffalo because of the poor economy. **LOCAL, 9A**

2 While some districts are raising the prices of student lunches, Niagara Falls is keeping its lunches at \$1.50 — at the cost of some cafeteria workers' benefits. **LOCAL, 3A**

3 With the Molson Canal Concert Series bringing thousands of people to Lockport, the potential for chaos could have been high, but officials say the crowds were well-behaved. **LOCAL, 3A**

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Do you have a problem in your neighborhood that needs to be addressed?

Contact Gazette Managing Editor Dick Lucinski at 282-2311, ext. 2241, e-mail him at lucinskid@gnewspring.com

Or write to: Niagara Gazette, 310 Niagara St., Niagara Falls, NY 14302. Attn: What's Your Problem?

WHERE TO TURN

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AREA OBITUARIES
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WEATHER
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City has new place to play

School district lending land to city for playground behind South Junior

BY RICK FORGIONE
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The search for a new playground in the city's east side appears to be over.

City and school district officials are finalizing an agreement that would turn greenspace next to the former South Junior School into a recreation site for youths. Details will be announced during a press conference scheduled by the Niagara

Organizing Alliance for Hope (NOAH) at 2 p.m. today at the corner of Ferry Avenue and Portage Road.

Members of NOAH and east side residents have been lobbying for a new playground to replace the removal of the 13th Street gym and 10th Street Park, which were sold by the city to Niagara Falls Redevelopment.

The attempts formally began last fall when NOAH leaders brought nearly 90 youths to a City Council

meeting to protest the loss of the play areas and get a verbal commitment from city officials that finding a new spot would be a priority. They returned in March for an update and have since met privately with Mayor Paul Dyster.

Dyster said the old South Junior School property was among the sites suggested by NOAH. The city approached school district officials about the possibility and an

SEE PLAY ON PAGE 5A



NIAGARA'S RAPID RESPONSE

Red Cross volunteers heading south as hurricane nears



DAN CAPPELLAZZO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

HURRICANE RELIEF: Red Cross of Niagara volunteers Dorothy Carter and Joseph Highway go over a checklist at the Sawyer Drive headquarters Wednesday night as they prepare to drive to Mississippi to help with potential hurricane relief.

BY RICK PFEIFFER
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WHEATFIELD — They are an unlikely duo to be riding to the possible rescue for those threatened by Hurricane Gustav. A strapping pizza delivery guy

INSIDE

■ Louisiana eyes Gustav, activates National Guard troops. **NATION, 7A**

and a petite grandmother, Joseph Highway and Dorothy Carter are leaving today for Hattiesburg,

Miss., to prepare for Gustav's arrival on the Gulf Coast. Forecasters say Gustav could grow into a dangerous Category 3 storm, with winds of between 111 and 130 mph.

It is expected to make landfall somewhere between the Florida Panhandle and the Texas Gulf

SEE HELP ON PAGE 7A

NIAGARA FALLS

Cuomo joins sign probe

CONCERN: Racist DPW sign has arrived at state attorney general's office.

BY RICK FORGIONE
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Attorney General Andrew Cuomo's office will help investigate a racist sign put up last week inside a Niagara Falls Department of Public Works building.

The sign, which was placed above a new drinking fountain and had the words "Whites Only Water Fountain" printed on it with blue pen ink, was sent to Cuomo's office last week and has been received, spokesman John Milgrim confirmed.

"There is no place for such symbols of hatred and prejudice and the attorney general's office is working with local officials in handling this matter," Milgrim said. "Under New York state law, everyone is entitled to work in an environment free of discrimination."

SEE SIGN ON PAGE 5A



Andrew Cuomo Helping probe

Supporters pack Sparks court hearing

COURTS: Grand Island businessman pleads not guilty to animal cruelty charges.

BY RICK PFEIFFER
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GRAND ISLAND — Peter Sparks walked out of Grand Island Town Court on Wednesday night to the cheers and applause from a

large crowd of supporters. Minutes before, the group had packed the courtroom of Town Justice Mark Frenzel as Sparks was arraigned on 17 counts of animal cruelty. He entered a plea of not guilty.

"I'd like to thank all of you for coming out tonight," he said. "But I still need your support. We got a pretty good defense lined up, but it ain't over yet."

SEE SPARKS ON PAGE 5A



DAN CAPPELLAZZO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

IN COURT: A visibly thin horse stands in a pen at Sparks Trading Post on Bedell Road on Grand Island Aug. 12 as SPCA Animal Rescue Squad members check out the conditions of the animals. Peter Sparks had a strong show of support at Wednesday's court hearing.