þÿ Buffalo News - Feb 07, 2018 - All Editions - - C

Sharon Cantillon/Buffalo News

Melanie Clark, of East Amherst, and son Aaron, 4, crawl through ropes at playground in Amherst's Billy Wilson Park on Tuesday, when snowfall was reported as 2.5 inches.

Buffalo 4th in snowfall for season

SNOW • from C1

year. So far, this winter has been about 7 inches snowier than normal. The most snow at the Buffalo airport so far came Jan. 17, when 6.3 inches fell. There was a 5-inch snowfall Dec. 15.

"A lot of our snowfalls have been smaller events," Kelly said.

The slow and steady pattern to this season's snowfall has Buffalo listed fourth on the list of snowiest large cities in the nation, according to goldensnowglobe.com.

As of noon Tuesday, the weather service had recorded 72.1 inches of snowfall at the Buffalo airport for the season.

The cities ahead of Buffalo in snowfall this winter are all neighbors. Erie, Pa., leads with 146.1 inches. Syracuse has recorded 94.6 inches, and Rochester 72.9 inches.

'Ziti' said to have been code word for bribe payments allegedly made

PERCOCO • from C1

panies, or LLCs, associated with its development business that stretched at the time from Albany to Buffalo and that Cor chose five of them to give $25,000 apiece to Cuomo.

Howe said Cor was careful not to have any of the LLCs that gave to Cuomo contained the name Cor in their titles. By 2013, Cor was heavily involved in a state-funded development deal in Syracuse. The optics would not look good, Howe testified, saying that he "didn't want the press to look at contribution list (and later) and see Cor" in the list of donors giving $125,000 to Cuomo.

A year later, in 2014, Howe testified, it was Aiello who came up with the payment system allegedly used to bribe Percoco.

Howe's questioning by federal prosecutors enters a third day today. He also will be grilled by lawyers representing each of the four defendants – and they have already promised to prod Howe on his credibility and character.

Howe pleaded guilty in 2016 for his role in the Percoco alleged bribery scheme. This week, Howe detailed how he steered money from two entities – Cor and a former executive with an energy company. In all, Percoco is accused of taking more than $300,000.

For much of 2014, Percoco left Cuomo's government payroll to run his gubernatorial re-election campaign. Howe testified that Percoco approached him looking for consulting deals in 2014 because Percoco was having financial troubles. Howe said Percoco believed that he could be hooked up with several of Howe's clients, including Buffalo's LPCiminelli. But a deal with the Buffalo general contracting firm did not materialize, Howe said.

Three former LPCiminelli executives are due to go on trial in June – also before Caproni – in an alleged pay-to-play scandal involving the Buffalo Billion economic-development program and others upstate in which Howe will also be a witness for prosecutors.

In court, Tuesday was "ziti" day. Ziti, a type of pasta, is the term Percoco devised, Howe said, to describe alleged bribe payments Howe arranged for him. It was used Tuesday in various ways, such as emails that said the two had to "keep the ziti flowing" and an email from Howe saying that Percoco "need(s) 7,500 boxes of ziti;" that was a reference to $7,500 Percoco allegedly wanted, Howe said, as a monthly payment to Percoco's wife from the energy company. When the first of those payments came, Howe wrote to Percoco to tell him the "ziti gets cleared" in December 2012. "Merry Christmas," Howe wrote in an email to Percoco, he testified.

Another Howe email to Percoco worried about a halt in alleged bribe payments from the energy company executive; Howe called it time for "operation ziti replenishment."

Howe testified throughout the day of Percoco's work to help his clients, who later paid him the alleged bribes. After one bit of help from Percoco on an energy matter, Percoco wrote to Howe: "Now do your part," Howe said, reading from the email. Howe said that described Percoco's desire to get money flowing to him from the Syracuse developers – which allegedly would total $35,000 in 2014.

Howe described the influence Percoco had with Andrew Cuomo.

"Joe took care of many issues that affected the governor," Howe said. One way, he said, was "enforcing what the governor wanted" related to administration officials trying to leave Cuomo's office for jobs elsewhere. Percoco, Howe said, intervened and blocked several people who were trying to quit.

Relax ... your undelivered newspapers will be put to good use.

Don't just stop delivery of your newspapers while you're away on vacation — donate them to Newspapers in Education. Every dollar you donate equals five newspapers for the kids.

Call for details or to donate:

842-1111

(1-800-777-8640 outside Erie County)

THE BUFFALO NEWS

'Not an issue with the restaurant' as officials cite 'stellar scores'

HEPATITIS • from C1

from either a hepatitis A vaccine or immune globulin injection would have eaten at the restaurant between Jan. 27 and 30, county officials said. Those who patronized Al-E-Oops between Jan. 16 and 26 may have been exposed to the disease but would not benefit from an injection. Those who patronized the restaurant after Jan. 30 are at no risk, officials said.

Hepatitis A is marked by fatigue, poor appetite, abdominal pain, nausea, jaundice and dark urine, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The disease typically runs its course within a few weeks to a couple of months. Symptoms often occur about four weeks after exposure, according to the CDC. Most children under the age of 6 are symptom-free. Antibodies produced in response to the hepatitis A infection last for life.

Poloncarz and Burstein said that the restaurant passed a routine health inspection in December and that there is no continuing risk of contracting hepatitis now that the ill food-prep worker is not currently employed there. Burstein said Al-E-Oops received "stellar scores" and showed excellent sanitary conditions during the county's last restaurant health inspection.

"This is not an issue with the restaurant," Poloncarz said. "I don't want people to think the restaurant didn't pass any health inspections. They did."

He also said, "A person who was there on their lunch hour today – they have nothing to worry about."

Hepatitis A is not an airborne virus, so if a person did not eat at the restaurant or nursing facility, they are at no risk, Poloncarz added.

In response to the news, the restaurant released the following statement: "The owners of Al-E-Oops are first concerned for our co-worker and our patrons. We hope and expect that he will recover quickly and fully, and no one else who worked at or visited our restaurant will contract this disease.

"As our county leaders said, there is only a very small chance that people can catch the illness due to this potential exposure. We have and will continue to cooperate with all health officials. And, as always, we will operate our restaurant to the highest health and safety standards, as we have – without any similar prior incident – since we opened in 1984."

In regard to Brookdale Williamsville Senior Living Facility, 35 staff members and residents at the nursing home may have been exposed to hepatitis A between Jan. 16 and 22. Those residents and staffers who would benefit from vaccination or immune globulin will be inoculated on-site. The state Health Department is following up with the nursing home.

"Both the infected individual and the management of the two facilities have been extremely cooperative and very helpful in our investigation of this case," Burstein said. "I also want to emphasize, as the county executive did, that there is absolutely no continuing risk of hepatitis A transmission by eating at either of these facilities. The risk has been removed."

A hepatitis A public health scare last occurred in March 2015 when a food handler at Casa-Di-Pizza in Buffalo was diagnosed with the disease. The county subsequently vaccinated hundreds of people at an ad hoc health clinic in the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

How is hepatitis A different from other types of hepatitis?

Hepatitis is a viral infection that leads to liver inflammation. Here are the differences in common types:

Hepatitis A – Virus transmitted through feces, even at microscopic levels via close person-to-person contact, contaminated food and water. Can lead to acute but not chronic infection. Resolves on its own. Vaccine is available.

Hepatitis B – Virus transmitted through infected bodily fluids, including blood and semen. Symptoms can range from mild illness to long-term chronic condition, most often in infants. Vaccine is available.

Hepatitis C – A more common form of hepatitis. Virus transmitted by contact with infected blood, such as through contaminated needles. Symptoms can range from mild illness to long-term chronic condition. Chronic hepatitis is more likely to result in type C than in type B. No vaccine is available.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Reporters' Notebook / *Bits and pieces of news ...*

OLAF FUB SEZ: According to British novelist **Charles Dickens**, born on this date in 1812, "If there were no bad people, there would be no good lawyers."

• • •

NO FEE – Accounting students at Daemen College will prepare tax returns for free beginning today for people with annual incomes below $54,000.

Offered through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, appointments are available from 3 to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays through April 11, except March 14 during the college's spring break.

Assistance will be offered in Room 205 of Daemen's Business Building.

Tax clients should bring their Social Security card, photo ID and, if applicable, their W-2, 1099, 1098T and 1095 forms.

Also needed will be last year's tax returns, information on deductions and credits, any tax ID number and, if appropriate, the total paid to a day care provider.

For more info and to schedule an appointment, call 839-7646 or email vita@daemen.edu.

• • •

WINNERS WANTED – A wide assortment of baskets and gift cards will be offered in the Errick Road Elementary School's annual basket auction from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday in the school at 6839 Errick Road, North Tonawanda. Drawings begin at 7:30 p.m.

• • •

PASS THE PACZKI – The French observe Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) as the last day before the fasting season of Lent begins. In Poland, it's Fat Thursday, sometimes known as Paczki Day, since the celebration involves the traditional filled doughnuts.

The United Cultural Society will mark the day with a Polish Happy Hour from 5 to 11 p.m. Thursday in the Valley of Buffalo, 2379 Union Road, Cheektowaga. Admission and Polish food are free.

There will be performances by the Harmony Polish folk Ensemble Dancers and music by Grammy nominee **John Gora**. Raffles will benefit the Monsignor Adamski Polish Saturday School.

• • •

NIGHT OUT – The Lancaster Elks Lodge, 33 Legion Parkway, will sponsor an '80s dance from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, featuring music by Nerds Gone Wild. Doors open at 6:30. Tickets are $20, which includes beer, wine and pop. Prizes will be given for the best '80s costumes.

• • •

SWEETEST SOUNDS – Surprise that someone special this year with a Singing Valentine from the Friends of Harmony.

For $50, a barbershop quartet will visit your loved one's home or place of business, sing two love songs, present them with a personalized card and flower and pose for a photo. For more info and orders, call 868-9447 or visit friendsofharmony.com.

• • •

HAPPY BIRTHDAY – Mark Skipper, Gene Warner, Louis Byron Morrow, Shirley Edmonds, Allie Bogold, Chloe McCabe, Marilyn Antos, Elaine Tierney, John Pennella, Alan Bell, Jill Neri, Carole Rotando, Kevin Rockwood, Jeffrey Bosworth, Kayla Rose Bosworth, Jane Taylor, Josie Michaels, Olive Donaghy and Tammy Haley.

To submit birthdays and other items of interest to Reporters' Notebook, please email olaffub@buffnews.com or send a letter to Reporters' Notebook, Buffalo News, Box 100, Buffalo, NY 14240.

Lottery Picks /

Winning numbers for Tuesday

N.Y. Evening Number:	992
Lucky Sum:	20
N.Y. Midday Number:	464
Lucky Sum:	14
Win Four Evening:	8894
Lucky Sum:	29
Win Four Midday:	7578
Lucky Sum:	27

Take Five not available

Pick 10:

2 9 11 18 24 27 30 33 35 36

43 48 52 53 56 60 64 66 68 77

Mega Millions not available

Pick 3 Evening:	003
Pick 3 Day:	927
Pick 4 Evening:	0383
Pick 4 Day:	2769

Late numbers for Monday

Take Five 13 16 20 34 36

These numbers are unofficial. For official New York Lottery results go to buffalo.com/lottery or your lottery retailer.

Public Notice - Fact Sheet

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has received a Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) application and Draft Remedial Investigation/Interim Remedial Measures Work Plan from 1585 Hertel LLC for a site known as 1585 Hertel Avenue, site ID #C915328. This site is located in the City of Buffalo, within the County of Erie, and is located at 1585 Hertel Avenue. Comments regarding this application must be submitted no later than March 24, 2018. A copy of the application, Draft Remedial Investigation/Interim Remedial Measures Work Plan and other relevant documents are available at the document repository located at the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library – North Park Branch, 975 Hertel Avenue, Buffalo, 14216. Information regarding the site and how to submit comments can be found at http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/60058.html or send comments to Damianos Skaros, Project Manager, NYSDEC, 270 Michigan Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14203; damianos.skaros@dec.ny.gov; or call 716-851-7220.

To have information such as this notice sent right to your email, sign up with county email listservs available at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html.

BUL-1302732

The Buffalo News Online

Find all The News websites at the bottom of the homepage of **www.BuffaloNews.com.**