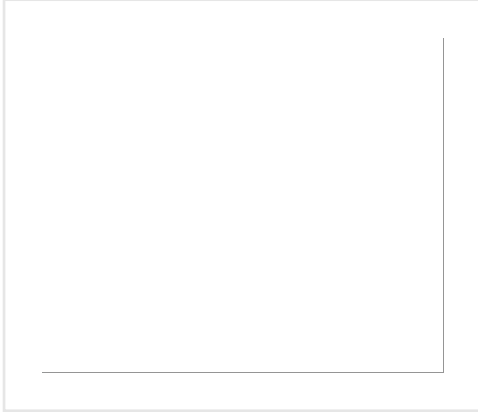


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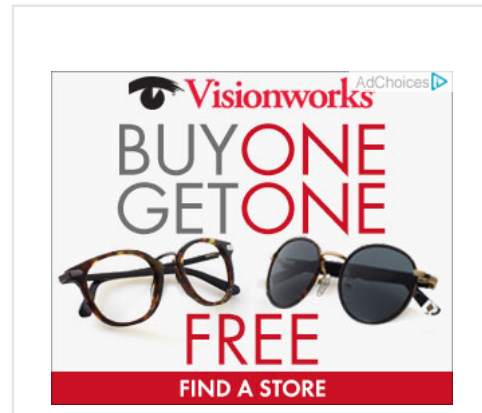
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## Cheektowaga Police blast Build-A-Bear for not warning them of promotion

Cheektowaga Police plan to meet with the store and Galleria officials to talk about what happened and how to prevent it from happening in the future.

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. — Cheektowaga Police say Build-A-Bear and the Walden Galleria should have known there would be large crowds for a "pay your age" promotion Thursday, and they're upset they weren't notified in advance so they could better prepare for the rush.

Long lines went from one end of the Galleria to the other and wrapped around. At one point, multiple lines formed which confused people and angered some others when they saw people skip ahead of them.



Mall security called police just before 10 a.m., but Assistant Chief Jim Speyer said there wasn't much time to prepare.

Cheektowaga Police called New York State Police, NFTA officers, and the Erie County Sheriff's Office, with the Lancaster, Depew, and West Seneca police departments to help with crowd control and to be on hand in case things got out of control.

Asst. Chief Speyer said had his department known about the promotion ahead of time, he could have assigned more officers to help in advance. He said the mall security couldn't handle the crowds and the store only had a few employees working during such a busy time, adding to the mess.

Cheektowaga Police had officers at the mall until 9:30 p.m. Thursday.

The department plans to meet with store and mall officials to discuss what happened and how they can better prepare for large crowds in the future.

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