

Buffalo area first Chick-fil-A opens in Cheektowaga

By **Jim Herr** - November 29, 2018



A Chick-fil-A team member welcomes the public into the new restaurant on November 26th. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)

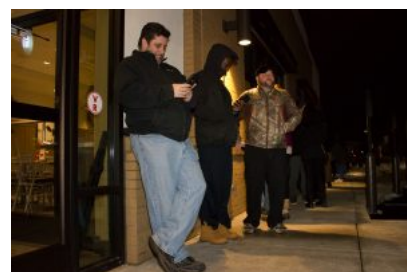
CHEEKTOWAGA – Western New York’s first Chick-fil-A restaurant opened in Cheektowaga Thursday morning, and more than 100 people from the region lined up to sample the fare.

One of the 30 people to line-up overnight was Mike Carriero of Hamburg. He was first in line at 4:30 am and is no stranger to fast food restaurant.

“I’ve been waiting for Chick-fil-A to open up here for years,” said Mr. Carriero who added Chick-fil-A chicken is worth freezing your butt off for. “I’m still freezing, but its a little bit better than what we had yesterday and Chick-fil-A is worth it.”

He was one of many WNYers to make the chicken pilgrimage to Erie, Pennsylvania for their product.

“I like their ownership, I like their employees who are always polite and friendly, and their



food is just always top notch," added. Ms. Carriero. "I was going to come here yesterday for the chance to win chicken for a year but the weather was not really conducive, so I thought I would just be the first in line for the grand opening."

Mike Carriero of Hamburg was first in line for the Chick-fil-A grand opening on November 29th. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)

The "First 100" promotion that Chick-fil-A had announced was set to give the first 100 customers who lined up within 24 hours of Thursday morning's opening a one-year supply of free Chick-fil-A meals.

Poor weather prompted the restaurant to cut the promotion short early Wednesday evening around 6 pm. The customers who formed a makeshift tent city in the parking lot to shield themselves from the weather were awarded the meals anyways.

The 30 or so people in line for the 6:30 am opening filed into the restaurant in an orderly fashion. Around 20 cars lined up along Anderson Road to use the drive-thru. Customers using the drive-thru should drive to Peppy Place (look for the inflatable cow), turn onto Dale Road, and then turn left onto Anderson. The Cheektowaga Police Department is directing traffic down Anderson and into the restaurant.

The department is dedicating at least five officers to the traffic detail across most shifts through Saturday night the Cheektowaga Chronicle is told. Traffic Lieutenant Steven Berecz says the department is always monitoring the situation and will reevaluate the need of officers early next week.

Captain Scott Pilat says that the traffic detail complements the department's regular road patrol and that Chick-fil-A is paying for the extra officers.

"Here at Chick-fil-A we are thankful to have added 104 jobs to our local community," said Cassandra Sheedy during the restaurant's ribbon cutting. "As for our vision here, we are focused on great people and great food for the greater purpose. I hope you see that we are looking to serve our whole community."

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, she spoke of how the business is partnering with the Blue Bridges Initiative by holding a book drive for them.



Cheektowaga leaders and business stakeholders from the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce joined Ms. Sheedy as she cut the ribbon and toasted the occasion with a bite from a chicken sandwich.



Chick-fil-A employees help the first paying customers during the restaurant's grand opening on November 29th. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)

Site plans to build a second Western New York Chick-fil-A restaurant were recently approved by the Cheektowaga town council. It will be built on an outparcel at Transit and Losson Road in front of the Wegmans store.



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