

# The Citizen

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## HISTORY

# ‘ASTONISHING’ ANNIVERSARY




KEVIN RIVOLI, THE CITIZEN

The Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural & Country Living Museum in Owasco is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025.

## Cayuga County agricultural museum turns 50

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In 1975, Ward O'Hara challenged the Cayuga County Legislature to give him a piece of little-used property. He had his eyes on a pavilion in Emerson Park in the town of Owasco. It was simply sitting there, aging. O'Hara said he'd put it to good use, and turn it into a museum that would house vintage farm equipment he had collected over the years. That idea was the seed for what is now

 **VIEW:** For more photos of the museum, point your smartphone camera at the QR code and tap the link. **NEWSVU**

the Ward W. O'Hara Agricultural & Country Living Museum, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. The museum's director, Tim Quill, has been there since 2007. He told The Citizen he jumped at the opportunity after 33 years of teaching. Since he did, the museum has raised nearly \$850,000, fixed its heating

system and added more wings and rooms, including the Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski Sr. Educational Center. There are many reasons for the museum's success, Quill said. Maybe the biggest is its connection to two of Cayuga County's biggest industries: agriculture and tourism. It also accommodates all ages, from school groups to seniors, and since it's funded by the county, it can offer free

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## EDUCATION

# Teacher comments on Charlie Kirk scrutinized

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Facebook posts by two Auburn teachers about the assassination of Charlie Kirk have raised concerns from some community members that the city school district said it is taking "very seriously." The posts were criticized Friday by former New York State Senate candidate Caleb Slater, who accused the teachers of celebrating the conservative influencer's Sept. 10 death. The Cayuga County Conservative Party called the posts "despicable" and additionally criticized one of the teachers for reportedly turning over a portrait of Donald Trump on a wall of presidents in their classroom.

The party called for "restoring decency in our adults and getting rid of those who publicly espouse that killing people you don't agree with is acceptable." Similar calls have been happening across the country since Kirk's assassination. Slater has also criticized a Syracuse University professor, and at least two New York public school employees have been placed on leave, according to The Democrat & Chronicle. In response, Auburn Enlarged City School District Superintendent Dr. Misty Slavic said Monday that when such concerns arise, the district follows established procedures to review the situation carefully and take the appropriate action. But personnel matters must be

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**Dr. Misty Slavic,**  
Superintendent

handled according to law, contractual obligations and district policy, she said, and therefore the district is not at liberty to discuss specifics. Slavic responded similarly to an earlier request for comment by The Citizen. According to the district's policy manual, it takes "no posi-

tion" on employees' use of social media during personal time but encourages them to "maintain the highest levels of professionalism." "Above all, our priority is maintaining a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment for every student in our schools," Slavic said. "By showing compassion and civility, we not only strengthen our community but also model the very values we hope to instill in our students. "Together, we will continue building schools that are safe, supportive, and welcoming for all." Executive Editor David Wilcox can be reached at (315) 282-2245 or david.wilcox@lee.net.

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