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The Citizen

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CAWS FOR CELEBRATION



KATY MCCUMBER, THE CITIZEN

From left, Fran Rothel, Edie Barrette, Peggy Symonds and Patty Gylfus represent Witchy Women of the Finger Lakes, a dance performance group led by Rothel that supports domestic violence survivors, at Auburn's Crow Cawcus Convention Feb. 21.

Auburn holds first Crow Cawcus Convention

KATY MCCUMBER
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AUBURN — The streets of downtown were aflutter with activity Saturday for the inaugural Crow Cawcus Convention, a new event commemorating the black birds that notoriously fill the city's roofs, trees and skies during wintertime. "Crows are one of my favorite

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

animals." Moss Velnias, who visited town with friends from Syracuse, told The Citizen. She and many

others dressed the part in gothic attire.

Cafe Roast & Toast offered a Crow's Oath smoothie and crow-shaped cookies made by Auburn bakery Hann's Homemade while playing "The Birds," Alfred Hitchcock's iconic 1963 horror film.

Please see **CAWCUS**, Page A2

AURORA

Sale of Wells campus opposed

Cayuga Nation, losing bidder seek to intervene

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Ahead of a Cayuga County Court hearing on March 11, two parties — the Cayuga Nation and a losing bidder — are seeking to intervene in the proposed sale of the Wells College campus in Aurora.

The Cayuga Nation wants the court to reject the \$12.5 million offer submitted by the Hiawatha Institute for Indigenous Knowledge. In its court filings, the Nation raises concerns that the Hiawatha Institute intends to use 20% of the campus as an Indigenous college, while the rest would be for commercial development.

Among other questions from the Nation is whether the Hiawatha Institute has the financing to buy the campus.

The Hiawatha Institute has said it received a loan from the Native American Bank to fund its purchase of the Wells College campus.

The Cayuga Nation notes the campus is located on its ancestral lands, but has "no involvement in, consultation regarding or endorsement of the proposed educational program" submitted by the Hiawatha Institute.

Wells College announced the Hiawatha Institute as the winning bidder in January. The college began accepting bids in early 2025, and it received multiple offers for the 127-acre campus.

One of the losing bidders is also seeking to intervene in the matter.

Harriet Higgins, who offered to buy the campus and transform it into the Minerva Institute of Aurora, is protesting the sale to the Hiawatha Institute because she believes the process was flawed.

Please see **WELLS**, Page A2

HOUSING

Vacant Auburn buildings eyed for affordable condos

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AUBURN — A Syracuse developer is planning to convert two vacant buildings on Auburn's west end into 40 affordable condos.

Redev CNY is seeking to renovate the former commercial buildings at 28 Aurelius Ave., according to a project description released by the Auburn Industrial Development Authority. The buildings require "substantial rehabilitation and remediation of hazardous building materials."

The condos would target individuals and families with household incomes between \$60,000 and \$100,000. There would be one-, two- and three-bedroom units available.



KEVIN RIVOLI, THE CITIZEN

Please see **CONDOS**, Page A2 28 Aurelius Ave. in Auburn

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