



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan Honors Talking Leaves As February ‘Small Business Of The Month’

SEAN M. RYAN February 28, 2024

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Nomination Window for March Award Open Until March 17

BUFFALO – Today, February 28, 2024, New York State Senator Sean Ryan announced that Talking Leaves Books has been selected as the 61st Senate District Small Business of the Month for February. Senator Ryan will present the store with a New York State Senate Empire Award in recognition of more than 50 years of service to the Buffalo community.

Talking Leaves was founded in 1971 as Everyman's Bookstore and was so popular that, upon the original operator's decision to move to New York City in 1975, customers rallied to purchase the store and keep it in business as a cooperative store. In 1979, the two remaining co-op founders, Martha Russell and Jonathon Welch, became co-owners of the newly named Talking Leaves.

Though the store is no longer a co-op, its community-focused spirit remains. Membership options are still available to customers, and the store offers partnerships with local self-published authors to stock their books under consignment agreements. Talking Leaves also gives back to the community by hosting book fairs that raise funds for local schools and by regularly donating to local causes, with a focus on issues of literacy, education, the first amendment, press freedoms, and social and economic justice.

Senator Ryan will continue to highlight businesses that deserve special recognition for their contributions to the Western New York community throughout 2024. To nominate a business for the March award, individuals should fill out the nomination form [here](#) or at ryan.nysenate.gov by Sunday, March 17.

Businesses that will receive special consideration during the selection process include:

- Companies that have created a culture of philanthropy and/or demonstrated exceptional leadership in the community
- Leaders in their industry and/or innovators in their field
- Promoters of economic growth in Western New York
- Family-owned businesses that have successfully passed from one generation to another
- Companies that conduct virtuous ethical practices and/or utilize green practices

To be eligible for the award, a business must be located in the 61st Senate District, which includes parts of the City of Buffalo, as well as the entireties of the City of Tonawanda, the Towns of Amherst, Grand Island, and Tonawanda, and the Villages of Kenmore and Williamsville. To confirm whether a business is located in the 61st District, individuals can visit www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator and enter its address.