

Campaign '19 Comes Early

Meet Ulster County Executive Candidates

Former Ulster County Executive Mike Hein's decision to take a job with the state has had an impact on the local political landscape and created a special election no one saw coming.

Hein's departure means there will be a special election on April 30 to decide who serves as Ulster County Executive for the remainder of 2019. Mike Hein's former Chief of Staff, Adele Reiter, has been serving as Interim Ulster County Executive, pending the outcome of the special election. The candidates, Democrat Pat Ryan and Jack Hayes, who is running on the Republican and Conservative lines, have been invited to the Chamber's next Breakfast from 7:30-9 a.m. April 17 at Diamond Mills Hotel & Tavern in Saugerties. The sponsor is Sawyer Savings.

Both candidates hail from Gardiner in southern Ulster County. Ryan, a tech entrepreneur, U.S. Army veteran and graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, finished runner-up in a seven-way Democratic primary for the 19th Congressional District seat eventually won by U.S. Rep. Antonio Delgado last year. Ryan has never held political office.

Hayes, who is retired from the state police and is currently the chairman of the Ulster County Conservative Party, served as town of Gardiner supervisor in 2002-03 and was an Ulster County legislator from 2010-11. He ran unsuccessfully for the state Assembly in 2016.

Ryan said his top priority as county executive would be partnering



Pat Ryan



Jack Hayes

with small businesses "to make sure we continue to move forward on the progress we've started to make, particularly in the last decade, but there's a lot more work to do. I see small business as really the engine driving that.

"A lot of the vision I have is how do we empower the business community to drive growth from the bottom up," Ryan said. "A big piece of that for me is leveling the playing field and what I mean by that is really working

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**April
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 April 17
 7:30-9:00 am
 Diamond Mills Hotel & Tavern
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DAILY FREEMAN

UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

April 4 | 9:00 - 10:30 am

New Member Meet & Greet Courtyard by Marriott

Conference Room | 500 Frank Sottile Blvd. | Kingston, NY
There is no cost for Members to attend.
Reservations are required.

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April 17 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

Chamber Breakfast Meeting Meet the Candidates for Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan and Jack Hayes DIAMOND MILLS HOTEL & TAVERN

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April 25 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer @ Pine Ridge Dude Ranch

30 Cherrytown Road | Kerhonkson, NY
There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.
Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Begnal Motors

May 21 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Membership Mixer @ The Ashokan Center

477 Beaverkill Road | Olivebridge, NY
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Register for all Events (845) 338-5100
www.UlsterChamber.org

Saddle Up!

Pine Ridge Dude Ranch Hosts April Mixer

In just a year's time, Mike Offner and his team have managed to turn the former Pinegrove Ranch and Family Resort into one of America's top destinations.

Late last year, the travel publication Family Vacation Critic ranked the all-inclusive Kerhonkson resort No. 7 in the nation, while Resorts and Lodges travel guide ranked it No. 9 of the top 10 family resorts in the United States and No. 5 on this list of the nation's best dude ranches.

Chamber members will get a chance to see what all the hoopla is about at the April 25 Mixer. Offner, the owner of the renamed Pine Ridge Dude Ranch at 30 Cherrytown Road, will be hosting the networking event from 5-7 p.m. and expects to dazzle the business community with all the upgrades.

In fact, the accolades keep coming as the 39-year-old Valhalla native and his fellow workers continue to set the bar higher.

Offner and two unnamed investors bought the ranch in early 2018 after it was shuttered the previous fall due to the sudden death of longtime owner David O'Halloran. The bank took possession, and all 34 of the horses were removed and transported to an auction house in Sullivan County.

Buoyed by his love for the herd, Offner rallied to raise more than \$10,000 to buy back 16 horses that were fixtures at the ranch, which is known for its extensive riding programs. Another half dozen went to a rescuer in Vermont, while the rest were settled at private homes.

Today, he boasts a herd of 55 and has introduced new horse programs, including the "Sunset Ride," "Own A Horse For A Day" and "Barn Buddies."

He and his partners have invested more than \$1 million to upgrade the grounds and facilities, including 107 guest rooms as well as the dining room, lobby, Bull Room Night Club and Silver Dollar Bar.

Offner welcomed back scores of families last April for the soft opening and an even bigger crowd at the grand reopening on Memorial Day weekend.

By summer, hundreds of vacationers, mainly from the metro area, had returned to enjoy the western-style tourist attraction that dates back decades ago to Schloss' Pine Grove Hotel.

Offner, the former barn manager, got his first job there as a teenager and fell in love with the property and horses.

"I've learned that if you're passionate and hard-working, anything in this lifetime is possible. I just keep trying to do the next right thing, and the harder I work, the better my luck gets," he said.

"For me, it's been very gratifying having those families come

back to thank me and tell me their stories about how many people this place has touched. It's given me a lot of gas to put in the tank when the tank was nearly empty. I want to keep people excited and looking forward to coming back."

He is doing that by dreaming up creative ways to engage visitors. Offner has further plans to renovate the indoor adventure room that would include a rock wall, BB-gun range, half-court basketball and space for laser tag.

He also would like to launch a zip line running from the barn to the lake later this summer and expects to bring in a mechanical bull for future fun.

Additionally, the Pine Ridge team has come up with clever promotions like an Adults Weekend held in late March that included a retro "Dating Game," DJ dance party and cowboy-cowgirl auction to raise money for Little Brook Horse Rescue.

They also have a slew of activities and themed weekends planned such as a colossal Easter egg hunt later this month and the Catskill Country Western Festival in May. Offner also wants to entice local residents to experience the ranch and believes the upcoming Chamber Mixer will do that.

"I think that our passion for really delivering a taste of the Old West in the East really shines through, and guests notice that," he said. "We have a staff that wants everybody to have a good time. All guests get the VIP treatment. This place promotes an old-fashioned family vacation that I feel is lost today with everyone glued to their phones. Here, you can romance with nature and spend valuable time with family and friends."



Chamber Mixers are a great way to network and promote your business. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards. This free networking event is open to Chamber members and prospective members. Reservations are a must and can be made by calling the Chamber office at (845) 338-5100 or by registering online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

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to create the dynamic where small and medium businesses can actually compete against the mega corporations that are increasingly dominating our economy in every sector from retail to finance to even banking.”

Ryan plans to work closely with state and federal leaders on workforce development and skills training and local colleges and BOCES “to ramp up skills training in high-growth areas like clean energy and clean tech, software technology and advanced manufacturing.”

Undergirding his entire platform, Ryan said, is to run

county government from a position of financial strength and responsibility” and that includes continuing Hein’s record of reducing property taxes.

“This is very important to business owners, both from their business perspective and their personal perspective,” he said. “That’s something that’s going to be a key focus, that as we grow, we continue to maintain that record of keeping taxes as low as possible to allow for growth and investment to happen.”

Ryan also plans to address climate change from a local level and “create jobs around protecting the environment.”

“Our unique environment is one of our greatest draws, not just in tourism, but in overall talent and energy and new folks to the community,” he said.

Ryan said he also plans to come to the breakfast to listen to businessowners.

“I think that’s extremely important and something politicians don’t do nearly enough of so I’m hoping we can have a discussion and a back-and-forth,” he said.

Hayes, echoing political consultant James Carville’s 1992 campaign phrase, said, “It’s Still the Economy, Stupid.”

“It is still the economy and jobs and infrastructure,” Hayes said. “The American Economy train has left the station and Ulster County is not on board.

“Small business is struggling and medium to large business won’t even consider coming to Ulster County.”

Hayes said he sees road signs along the Thruway reading, “New York Is Open for Business,” but he is not so sure. Remaining one of the highest-taxed states in the country will only continue the exodus.

“Ulster needs to send an accurate and honest message to those looking to invest in our community,” he said. “If we are ‘Open

for Business,’ we had better back up the words with action and infrastructure.”

Hayes said the city of Kingston is particularly in need of infrastructure improvements.

“It is probably going to take the cooperation of the whole county to make this happen,” he said. “The inter-jurisdictional rivalries and turf wars need to give way to communication and dialogue which promotes the public good.”

Hayes, a member of the county’s Resource Recovery Agency (RRA) board, said the county is also facing a solid-waste dilemma.

“We are running out of time and space to remove solid waste. The management of solid waste needs to be considered an essential service. Our federal and state representatives need to do more than regulate. They need to facilitate solutions and partner with regional county authorities to ensure the environmental health of our beautiful country.

“As we examine avenues of growth and prosperity for our communities, we must strive to end bitter divisions and recruit all stakeholders toward an action plan. Let’s consider a comprehensive philosophy that promotes communication, collaboration and consensus. It has been said that the power of positive thinking is greater than the sum of all parts.”

Regardless of who wins the April 30 special election, the office will again be on the ballot in November for a four-year term.

Chamber breakfast programs are a great way to network with other local business leaders and stay on top of current events. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register, call the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

Sawyer Savings Bank - April's Breakfast Sponsor

Continued from page 1

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Rendering and project scope are in proposal stage and are subject to change

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Catskill Art & Office Supply Begins New Chapter

New Location, New Services at Kingston Plaza

Catskill Art & Office Supply not only has a new location as of April 1, but the longtime Uptown business is also unveiling a fresh business plan as it begins life in the Kingston Plaza.

“With this move, we’re introducing a new website, a new point-of-sale system, and most importantly, a new e-commerce site so all of our customers can place orders online by texting, faxing and emailing,” says owner Paul Solis-Cohen. “We can then have their orders ready for them to pick up or to be delivered.”

Customers can connect with Catskill Art at www.catskillart.com. Meanwhile orders can be placed via email at orders@catskillart.com or by texting (845) 750-9838. The phone number at the new location will remain (845) 331-7780.

“We’re really excited about what’s happening,” Solis-Cohen said. “It’s our first new business model in 40 years.”

Another change is that Catskill Art closed its Poughkeepsie location last month but is now offering free next-day delivery in Dutchess County, a service that will be extended to Ulster County later.

“I don’t know any art supply store in the country that is running a delivery component to their business,” Solis-Cohen said. “It’s sort of revolutionary. We’re sort of going to be the model for this. A lot of other art store owners want to see how we do.”

“Since we still have the retail presence in Ulster County, we don’t feel so compelled to start the delivery business here yet,

but we anticipate it’s going to be popular.”

Catskill Art, which Solis-Cohen started 40 years ago in the art colony of Woodstock, has been a mainstay of the Uptown business community for 36 years.

“We are a definitive art supply store,” Solis-Cohen said. “Anything that an artist might need to use in terms of supplies, we provide. We’re talking about painting, drawing, pastel, sculpture, print-making ... and everything in between.”

Catskill Art has been voted best frame shop, copy shop, and greeting card shop over the years by various organizations.

“We’ve been recognized for the value we provide,” Solis-Cohen said. “We’re adding services and products at the new store. We’re enhancing both the scope and depth of the art supply end.”

The new location will feature self-serve copy machines and offer wide-format ink-jet and Oce printing among its new services. A full-time graphic designer has also been brought on board to create banners, greeting cards, business cards, menus and more on a walk-in basis.

“It will be cheaper than hiring a graphic designer,” Solis-Cohen said. “People will also be able to park quickly and get a quick 10-cent copy.”



When you walk into a retail space, are people excited that a customer comes in? Are they excited to interact with a customer? I’m not talking about selling stuff. My staff is not instructed to sell. My staff is encouraged to make sure people will have a good time. It’s a cultural difference. We want to help people feel positive and to encourage.”

Solis-Cohen said starting an art supply store in Woodstock was kind of a “no-brainer,” but it’s “been a delightful surprise to see the Kingston area blossom as an art colony.” He also is encouraged by the proposed Kingstonian project, which he called a “blessing.”

“It’s going to allow for a more active population here,” he said. “Uptown definitely has a renewed enthusiasm. There’s a positive flow of energy with the new restaurants and merchants, but the old problem of parking is still a ball and chain around every business Uptown. Over the years, I’ve had a lot of customers

come into my store and they can’t relax because they’re worried about the meter.

“That was a big part of my consideration. I did not want to leave Uptown. As one of the longest-surviving businesses, 36 years, I’m totally committed to Uptown. I’m seeing this move as a way to stay and, at the same time, provide ample free parking.”

Solis-Cohen is also a staunch supporter of the Chamber’s efforts.

“The Chamber has been huge for us,” he said. “They’ve supported us as far as getting our message out and creating a more viable business community all around, both for the public and the individual members.”

Catskill Art & Office Supply, now located in the Kingston Plaza, can be reached at (845) 331-7780 or www.catskillart.com. The Woodstock location is at 35 Mill Hill Road and can be reached at (845) 679-2251.

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Solis-Cohen said what has always made Catskill Art unique is its “customer-centric service” and “positive vibrations.”

“We stay on the positive here,” he said. “It’s an attitude.”

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Wendy Rothkopf - President/Owner

Category: Travel Agencies

Description: *Regent Tours creates custom itineraries for individuals, families and small groups, with a focus on adventurous and exotic locations and experiences, including wellness retreats, cruises, cultural and active travel. Virtuoso luxury amenities are added to your bookings whenever possible. Your world, your way!*

SMOOTHIE KING

1615 Ulster Ave.
Lake Katrine, NY 12449
(845) 443-4823

Erik Geehern - District Leader

Categories: Restaurants; Retail

Description: *Our Vision: To be an integral part of every health and fitness journey. We make Smoothies with a purpose. Power a workout, lose weight or make food choices you feel good about with the right nutritious smoothies for your goals and healthy rewards tailored just for you.*

UNIFIRST CORPORATION

33 Jeanne Drive
Newburgh, NY 12550
www.unifirst.com
(845) 564-0344

Carrie Nealy - Sales Manager

Category: Uniforms/Uniform Supply Service; Rental Service

Description: *Uniforms and mat rentals.*

These Members Have Renewed

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| American Cancer Society | Hudson Landing |
| AMPM Homecare & Companion | Hudson Valley Startup Fund |
| Aquarius Styling Center | Jackson Lewis P.C. |
| Bank of America/Merrill Lynch | Kelder's Farm |
| Begnal Motors | Kingston Kiwanis Club |
| Boitson's Restaurant | L.A. KINGSTON INC |
| Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC | Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays, LLC |
| Boys and Girls Clubs of Ulster County | Mobile Life Support Services, Inc |
| Brainstorm Computers and Technology | Murphy Realty Group |
| Builders First Source | Naccarato Insurance |
| Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange & Sullivan | National Business Technologies, LLC |
| Catskill Mountain Printing Services | Old Republic Title |
| Center for Creative Education | Opus 40 |
| Copeland Funeral Home | Paper House Productions |
| Courtney Strong, Incorporated | Prism Solar Technologies, Inc. |
| Dorothy Pismopulos Real Estate | Saunderskill Farms |
| Dwyer Contracting | Shadowland Stages |
| Ellenville Regional Hospital exit nineteen | Shawangunk Wine Trail |
| Farmers Insurance - New York Life Insurance | Staples |
| Glasco Abstract, Inc. | SunCommon |
| Heidecker Land Surveying, PLLC | The Wonderly Company |
| Hello Dolly Real Estate | Ulster Federal Credit Union |
| Howard Johnson Inn | USALLIANCE Financial |
| | Usheco, Inc. |
| | Van DeWater & Van DeWater LLP |
| | Villa Veritas Foundation, Inc. |
| | Waste Management |
| | Willow Manor, Inc. |
| | Woodstock Film Festival |

Anniversaries:

50 Years

Ametek Rotron

45 Years

YMCA of Kingston and Ulster County

40 Years

Kingston Plaza

30 Years

Jackson Lewis, P.C.

25 Years

Waste Management

20 Years

Kingston Kiwanis Club

15 Years

Begnal Motors
Hudson Landing

10 Years

Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange & Sullivan
Courtney Strong, Incorporated
Murphy Realty Group

5 Years

Heidecker Land Surveying, PLLC
Opus 40
Shadowland Stages
Angela P. Schapiro, Photography

1 Year

Copeland Funeral Home
Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays, LLC

Ribbon Cuttings

SunCommon COMMUNITY SOLAR ARRAY



243 Hurley Avenue, Kingston, NY
www.SunCommon.com

SAFESHOOT, LLC



10 Kieffer Lane, Kingston (Town of Ulster), NY
www.safeshootny.com

SMOOTHIE KING



1615 Ulster Ave., Kingston (Town of Ulster), NY
Find us on Facebook

Our Members Tell Us...

"If someone says in passing, 'Hey, do you know a decent dry cleaner in the area?' they're going to refer them to us. It's valuable to be a part of the Chamber."

- Casey Scanlon, Scanlon Cleaners

Mixer

March 7, 2019

Adams Fairacre Farms

1560 Ulster Avenue
Kingston, NY

*March Mixer
Sponsor*



Our Mixer Host Adams Fairacre Farms, including Manager Mike Paesano (center).



Our Mixer Sponsor Adams Fairacre Farms with Steve Adams, Mike Paesano and Pat Adams.



Alyssa Bergenson, PHR (Arnoff Moving & Storage) with John Kelder and Jackie Kelder (both with Kelder's Farms).



Jillian Mulee, Robert Miraldi and Gina Carbonari (all with Ulster County SPCA).



Lee Johnson (TD Bank), Greg Howard and Lori Petramale-Ozores (both with Ulster County Community Action Committee).



Nancy Plumer (Nancy Plumer/New Visions) with Megan Donahue and Gale Jaeck-Quick (both with Rondout Savings Bank).