By Jessica Ford
Newsline Editor

"... And they’ll walk out to the bleachers, and sit in shirt-sleeves on a perfect afternoon. They’ll find they have reserved seats somewhere along one of the baselines, where they sat when they were children and cheered their heroes. And they’ll watch the game, and it’ll be as if they’d dipped themselves in magic waters. The memories will be so thick, they’ll have to brush them away from their faces."

It’s hard to forget that vivid dialogue from the movie “Field of Dreams,” where character Terrence Mann, played memorably by James Earl Jones, explains why people would come to visit an obscure baseball field in the middle of Iowa.

Fans of the Amsterdam Mohawks understand, as they too, have a special place to enjoy the sport of baseball and all that goes with it. On Thursday, May 30, the Mohawks, one of the region’s most successful elite wood bat summer-league teams, will open its 16th season at Shuttleworth Park, and mark the 33rd year since its founding in 1986 in Schenectady.

The Shuttleworth venue is in the confines of the city, but when you’re a fan, it seems like worlds away. Sitting in the bleachers or along the baseline, you are reminded of the past, yet all the while you are watching the talented young players that will carry the sport into the future.

The Mohawks, website, www.amsterdammohawks.com, details the team’s impressive record in recent years. They won 3 New York Collegiate Baseball League championships prior to 2004. They have won 6 championships since 2009, when current coach Keith Griffin took the helm.

More than 100 former Mohawks players have signed professional baseball contracts, including San Francisco Giants phenom Hunter Pence (Texas-Arlington) who played for the Mohawks in 2002 and helped the Giants to World Series victories in 2012 and 2014; Luke Maile (Kentucky) of the Toronto Blue Jays; Mark Adams (Tennessee) of the Toronto Blue Jays; and Mark Perfetti (Siena), who helped the Mohawks win their 2013 championship.

Amsterdam Mohawks fans look on as the 2013 team celebrates their championship win in 2013. Photo by Mark Perfetti

By The Numbers

50 — The number of games played each season by each team in the PGCBL
5 — The number of fireworks shows, on designated evenings, that top off games during each season
35 — The number of players on the Mohawks roster
4,899 — The approximate distance between Amsterdam, NY and University of Hawaii, the farthest distance a student has traveled to play for the Amsterdam Mohawks
6 — The number of championships won by head coach Keith Griffin to date
6 — The number of people who have served as the official Mojo mascot to date
12 — Number of families in and near Montgomery County who house Mohawks players during any given season
5 — Number of players hosted each season in the home of Bob Adamson, the Mohawks’ most long-standing host
2,500 — Maximum capacity of Mohawks Stadium and additional viewing areas
43,000 — The approximate total attendance logged for the 2018 Mohawks season
40 — The number of staff and interns onsite for each game

See Mohawks, on page 5
Letter from the President

We now have had enough rain and sunshine to bring about a sudden and intense green to our landscape. And with that comes the desire and need to “spruce up” properties – business and/or residential.

There have recently been a number of organized community clean-up efforts throughout the region, sponsored by local organizations including the Chamber. These efforts are good – and timely – because in just a few short weeks the official start of summer is upon us with Memorial Day weekend, and with that, travelers from outside the area coming to our region to spend their dollars at our local businesses.

The Chamber’s Tourism department does an excellent job of marketing our region, reaching out to prospective visitors from the Capital Region, Hudson Valley, Central New York, and the New York Metro area, as well as those living in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and beyond.

In doing this, we draw thousands of visitors who spend tens of millions of dollars annually in Fulton and Montgomery counties. These dollars are not only spent in restaurants, hotels, retailers and gas stations, but also in auto repair shops, grocery stores and many other types of businesses. The importance of traveler dollars to our region cannot be overstated.

Now to my point. As important as cleaning and upgrading the facades and landscapes of our businesses is, it is equally critical to review our customer-service policies. All too often, we overlook how our customers view us, and how that reflects not only on our own businesses, but on the entire region.

When a family from Westchester County comes here, they do so because they want an enjoyable and memorable time, and we want that memory to be positive, so that not only do they return, but they encourage others to visit the region. Now, don’t get me wrong, I find most people in our area to be friendly, and polite, and our regions employees most often are polished, professional and pleasant representatives of our region and for the businesses they work for.

But it never hurts to review with your employees the importance of maintaining a friendly and positive disposition, and to always focus on customer service.

Great service, a warm welcome and a cordial smile are the least expensive ways to promote your business and get that customer to return, while negative attitudes; along with “grumpy service” is the quickest route to ruination.

Remember, those who come in to patronize your business do so because they want to. Make them want to make that return visit, or many, and maybe bring some friends and family along.

Whether you operate a business or not, be courteous to everyone you meet. And above all, stay positive about our region. Who knows, maybe that traveler from Westchester County is considering a second home in Fulton or Montgomery County.
Ossenfort: Montgomery County is Moving Forward, Full of Promise

By Jessica Ford

Positive news about economic development, forward thinking and the power of collaboration dominated the presentation of the annual State of the County address by Montgomery County Executive Matthew L. Ossenfort. The event was hosted by the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Ossenfort, whose topic featured “Challenges and Opportunities,” said that he feels keeping a balance in priorities between business and quality of life can make a community grow. “Honestly, I think that the focus on business and quality of life are one in the same,” he said, citing the recent paving upgrade on the Erie Canalway bike trail; promising news regarding the re-use of the former Beech-Nut site in Canajoharie and the expansion and creation of civic space in the region. He said his goal, is to make the region thrive for “life, work and play.”

At age 37, Ossenfort is the youngest sitting county executive in the state. He was born and raised in Amsterdam, attended Amsterdam City Schools and is a lifelong resident of Montgomery County. He holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science and History from the University at Albany.

He said he is dedicated to working collaboratively at the local, state and national levels to bring the best possible results for the County. In 2017-2018 alone, the county was awarded an impressive $22 million in economic development grants.

Exit 29 Canajoharie Project

The challenge created with the loss of the former Beech-Nut plant in Canajoharie, was re-classified as an opportunity by Ossenfort, and re-named “The Exit 29 Redevelopment Site.” He said of course the community was reeling after the loss, but he wanted to be proactive. “Let’s turn this site into something special,” he said.

Ossenfort, who calls himself a “cup half-full” kind of guy, explained that he, along with Economic Development officials, the Environmental Protection Agency and County Attorney Meghan Manion, an alumna of Cornell University, worked against the odds to convince county officials “to purchase a 22-acre Brownfield,” so that it could qualify for government initiatives like the Restore New York grant, which focuses on revitalization.

Ossenfort explained that he bitterly complained to the county, saying that the maximum $500,000 Restore grant available to the county was unfairly limited by the size of the population in the region. As a result, special project designation was given to the project, and in March 2018, the county was awarded $6 million for the site. Ossenfort said he believes the amount is the largest infusion of cash ever to be promised to the county.

Using Manion’s connection to Cornell, officials are collaborating with an urban design class from the Ivy League university to elicit new ideas for the site, and explore revitalization for Canajoharie and the former plant. Groups will submit a proposal for the site at the end of the semester.

“If you work together, you can make things happen,” Ossenfort said.

Workforce Development Goals

When he started as Executive in 2014, Ossenfort said there was 9.2 percent yearly unemployment in the county, so the focus was on making sure that residents got jobs and that rate was decreased. In 2018, he said the rate had decreased to 5.4 percent, and the county was at “full employment,” so a shift in thinking began. He said that a big issue facing employers today is not a lack of workers, it is a lack of people with specific skills, or a “better workforce.” The county will use an $80,000 Department of State grant, to conduct a workforce development feasibility study, focused on the Exit 29 site.

City of Amsterdam Successes

In the City of Amsterdam, Ossenfort said, the opening of the Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook Bridge in 2016, and The Sentinel at Amsterdam assisted living facility on Market Street, in 2017, are testament to the fact that, in his opinion, “the city I love so dear is making a comeback.”

The Amsterdam Industrial Development Agency assisted the Sentinel’s Eliot Management Group, in scoring a $750,000 Community Development Block Grant for the project. In 2016, AIDA secured a $12 million tax exempt bond for the Eliot Group, and a sales tax abatement for materials to construct the facility. The facility opened in spring 2017, and was the site for the State of the County Address, attended by around 100 people.

Route 5S Corridor Expansion

The Route 5S corridor is an area Ossenfort said he likes to visit if he is feeling the weight of his work, as there are many inspiring developments that have happened there. He noted that despite the tax credits the Target Distribution Center facility has enjoyed since its exemption began in 2004, this year, $80 million in taxes will hit the rolls in the county.

The expansion of Vida-Blend from its location in Amsterdam to approximately 14,000 square feet, or about triple its size, is also a positive on Route 5S, he said, and he expressed pride that developer Adam D. Winstanley, a founder of Winstanley Enterprises, of Massachusetts, has proposed to develop a 1 million square-foot warehouse/distribution center in the Florida Business Park Extension, and called the site, “the best piece of real estate in this region.”

“So we have to keep our heads down, keep working, good things are happening, and more good will happen,” he said.

Stepping Back When Appropriate

Ossenfort said that he is aware of the delicate balance it takes to try to preserve rural character and beauty, while working toward continued economic development. He said his philosophy is to take it “project by project,” adding, “be thoughtful, consider facts, be open and if a change needs to be made, then make it.”

He compared the specifications of two solar projects in county, as examples of weighing character vs. development. He listed a $135 million, 900-acre solar farm project in the towns of Canajoharie and Minden, that will become the largest solar fields in the state. “I think it will work and work well.” He said the county worked with the project and several municipalities to see it through.

Regarding a 550 acre solar project proposed in the Town of Florida under the state’s Article 10 process, Ossenfort said there is not the same community support, and not the same potential impact. So, for that project, he’s said, “I think you have to be thoughtful, and preserve the community.”

He used the address venue to announce that he believes it is time for the County to step back from support of a proposed annexation of 260 acres of farmland in the town of Mohawk to the City of Johnstown. The land would have potentially housed a regional business park, and would have been connected to the city’s infrastructure. The municipalities in negotiations, including the City of Johnstown, Montgomery County, and Town of Mohawk, had difficulty agreeing on terms for the annexation and project. Meanwhile, in April, State Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, working with local environmental groups and the Town of Mohawk, said he would propose legislation for a year moratorium on the annexation of farmland for industrial use in New York State.

Ossenfort said, as the discussions moved forward, economic conditions changed, and the project did not seem to have community support. “I have not seen it,” he said, “Is there a willingness to move forward?” He said, “at this point, pushing that forward is not something I believe we need to do.”

Celebrate Partnerships

Ossenfort said that continually looking for ways to find efficiencies, share services, create upgrades and consolidate, is his goal. He gave examples of partnerships the County has made, with universities, think tanks, organizations and agencies that have resulted in so many positive things happening in the county. He said “it’s not about doing this alone, not going it at alone – it’s a team.”

He introduced Montgomery County Clerk Brittany Kolbe on her efforts to make the DMV and Clerk’s Office more efficient and customer-friendly, and welcomed newly-elected Sheriff Jeffery Smith, saying that he is heartened to see the cooperation and mutual support happening in the county with public safety officials, first responders, government and the community.

Chamber President Mark Kilmer closed out the event by thanking Ossenfort and his team for great work, and encouraged, “Don’t slow down, you’re making everything stronger in Montgomery County.”
Beech-Nut, Partners to Apprentice Electro-Mechanical Techs

Beech-Nut in Amsterdam, in conjunction with a consortium of government, higher education and local community resources, has launched the Capital Region’s first Electro-Mechanical Apprenticeship program.

The program, which will train an initial class of 13 apprentices, is a registered New York State Department of Labor apprenticeship effort. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Electro-Mechanical Technicians operate, test, and maintain unmanned, automated, robotic, or electromechanical equipment. They work in many industrial environments, including energy, plastics, computer and communications equipment manufacturing, and aerospace. The Beech-Nut program combines supervised on-the-job training at it’s Amsterdam facility, and related classroom instruction delivered through State University of New York.

Mark Kilmer, President of the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, said the project was the result of Beech-Nut’s initiative, as well as several meetings over time, to discuss the need in the region for employees skilled in the operation and maintenance of machinery utilized in the many technical businesses housed in the Mohawk Valley region. The meetings involved discussions of ways to create a “lab” of sorts, where multiple companies could benefit from the training of the apprentices.

“I think it’s a great thing,” Kilmer said. “A downed machine can cost millions per day in production if it is not working properly. He commended Beech-Nut for its commitment to offering this “special, technical education” to the apprentices in the program.

Beech-Nut Nutrition’s Apprenticeship Program is funded in part through grants from SUNY, The American Apprenticeship Initiative Grant, and the Workforce Development Institute.

Chris Darling, Beech-Nut Director of Engineering, explained, “The development of Beech-Nut Nutrition’s apprenticeship program has been a collaborative effort between government, education, and industry partners. We would like to thank the New York State Department of Labor, State University of New York Chancellor’s Office, Mohawk Valley Community College, Fulton Montgomery Community College, the Manufacturer’s Association of Central New York, the Center of Economic Growth and the Workforce Development Institute.”

Darling said, “The Registered Apprentice program will facilitate the transfer of knowledge from mentor to apprentice. This program will use a proven method of career-training built on a strong partnership between businesses, technical colleges, and the government. It is truly a win-win for both the apprentice and the employer."

As part its initial offerings, the group got to spend class time with The Commissioner of The New York State Department of Labor Roberta Reardon, right. Apprentices include: Steve String, Joe Kalinowski, Dan Bernier, Joel Chrisman, Chad Meyers, Brain Crossman, Matt Clark, Dave Snay, Chancey Phillips, Melissa Welch, Nick Culora and Mike Ganey.

At the April kickoff of the Beech-Nut Electro-Mechanical Apprenticeship Program, speakers included, (L-R): Mohawk Valley Community College President, Randall VanWagoner; Senior Vice President of SUNY Community Colleges, Johanna Duncan-Poitei; Department of Labor Commissioner, Roberta Reardon; Manufacturers Association of Central New York President & CEO, Randy Woken; and Beech-Nut President & CEO, Mark Rodriguez.

Franca Armstrong, Vice President of Workforce Development for Mohawk Valley Community College said, “MVCC is pleased to be part of the solution for Beech-Nut Nutrition to fill the skills gap that so many companies are experiencing in this economy. We are always working toward building the skills of incumbent workers and providing them with a skill set that will increase their ability to earn more. That’s exactly what this Apprenticeship program with Beech-Nut will do.”

Beech-Nut Nutrition Company has been producing baby food since 1931. The company is the built on a history of innovation and dedicated to producing healthy, wholesome infant nutrition. Headquartered in Amsterdam, Beech-Nut is a leading baby food brand in the United States and is committed to offering parents “Real Ingredients, Simply Prepared” for their babies. In 2015 it was awarded Product of the Year in the baby food category by the Consumer Survey of Product Innovation USA. Beech-Nut Nutrition is owned by the Hero Group, a private consumer goods company based in Lenzburg, Switzerland.

Beech Nut Apprentices spend class time with The Commissioner of The New York State Department of Labor Reardon, right. Apprentices include: Steve String, Joe Kalinowski, Dan Bernier, Joel Chrisman, Chad Meyers, Brain Crossman, Matt Clark, Dave Snay, Chancey Phillips, Melissa Welch, Nick Culora and Mike Ganey.

Mohawks, continued from page 1

Leiter Jr (NJIT) of the Phillies; Cord Phelps (Stanford) of the Baltimore Orioles; Brendan Harris (William and Mary) of the Dodgers; and Logan Darnell (Kentucky) of the Twins, among others.

The Mohawks history explains, “In 2011, after more than 30 years in the NYCBL, the Mohawks joined the newly formed Perfect Game Collegiate Baseball League which combined some of the better summer baseball franchises in the nation and partnered them with Perfect Game USA, the world’s utmost leader in scouting and reporting services.”

The PGCBL is a 13-team summer league played throughout upstate New York. In addition to Amsterdam, the PGCBL consists of teams located in Little Falls, Glens Falls, Albany, Newark, Jamestown, Geneva, Oneonta, Boonville, Utica, Saugerties, Watertown, and Elmina.

Brian Spagnola, Mohawks President & General Manager, is a lifelong resident of Amsterdam, and has been involved with baseball as a coach at various levels, including a 3-year stint as a coach of the Mohawks, since the early 1990s.

He said the team is grateful for the support it receives from the community. One of the keys to the success of the operation, he said, is that there is no other venue like Shuttleworth Park in the area. “Here, we just feel that we’re the community team,” he said. “Historically, Amsterdam has always embraced its baseball teams.” Spagnola says the organization acknowledges and appreciates that loyalty.

The Mohawks also draw a large percentage of its fans from outside Montgomery County, Spagnola said, and it’s a popular location for small and large events and gatherings, including birthday parties, student field trips, little league, summer picnics and corporate outings. On a typical evening, you can hear the game announcer welcoming groups and VIP’s to the stadium, where they can enjoy various locations including the skybox, and even a special party deck alongside the first-base line.

The players, who come from colleges and universities all across the country, are housed with local families for the summer. The families get special seating at the stadium, and the players own families often come from out of town to watch their kids play. Spagnola said local hotels, restaurants, stores and other attractions are often beneficiaries of the Mohawks’ positive financial impact on the community.

The Mohawks organization represents the opportunity to learn about business, promotions, sports management and life for many of the young people who are involved with the team each season. Spagnola recruits at least 10 interns to serve as staff for college credits. They work closely with paid employees in operations, broadcast, media relations and marketing for the team. Spagnola said the students get a great education at the Mohawks. One student, for example, worked with the broadcast team as an intern, and two years later, was employed as a broadcaster for the New York Yankees.

The stadium and surrounding park has a special feel, of both professionalism in its operations, and small-town safety and comfort in its environment. The Mohawks mascot, “Mojo,” along with on-field entertainer Barry Rouse, also play a large part in setting the festive and fan-inclusive mood of each game. Additional staff members include Vice President David Dittmann; Bob Malicki, PA announcer; Adam Agresta, Broadcaster; Pat Beck, Director of Corporate Relations; Jon Sargalis, PR / Graphics; Miguel Gonzalez, Director of Stadium & Grounds; Lisa Walendziak, Group Coordinator & Game Ops; Bob Scott, Director of Veterans Relations; Paula Hawkins, Host Family Coordinator; Carla Pasquarelli, Head Athletic Trainer; and Andrew Spagnola, Stadium Sound.

Spagnola and his team are well aware that the making the experience memorable for the guests who purchase the 43,000 tickets sold each year, is one of the most important gifts they can give. “Kids — they’ve grown up in this park,” he said. “This is so rewarding, we love giving back to the community.”

For information on the Mohawks including schedules, results, rosters, statistics, history, tickets and the like, visit www.amsterdam-mohawks.com.

Mojo, the mascot of the Amsterdam Mohawks, makes sure to make the crowd feel welcome at Mohawks Stadium.

Photo by Mark Perfetti
Chamber Young Professional of the Year Award:

Amy McCray,
Crystal Geyser Roxane, LLC, Johnstown

Editor’s Note: Each month the Newsline will highlight one of the eight businesses and individuals who received recognition at the Chamber’s Annual Celebration in early 2019. Congratulations.

Amy McCray is Northeast Regional Human Resources and Safety Manager for Crystal Geyser Roxane, LLC, located in Johnstown. She earned her MBA from University of Phoenix, and is SPHR, SHRM-SCP certified. She was Human Resources Manager at DHL Supply Chain from 2014 to 2018. She is a lifelong area resident, and was a recipient of the NYS PTA lifetime achievement award and the Target Best in Community Award. She serves on the board of directors for the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce and the FMS Counties Workforce Development Board.

Amy is a business partner with Ag PTECH, and raises funds for charities including the American Cancer Society, Alzheimer’s Association and Northeast Epilepsy Foundation.

Together, they have visited many states to root on their beloved Chicago Bears. Their daughter, Veronica, attends New England Culinary Institute in Vermont. Her advice to other young professionals: “Work diligently. Set goals, and course correct as needed. Embrace feedback. Stay true to your beliefs and be involved in your community.”

Welcome New Members.

Thank you for making an investment in your business, and in our region, with Chamber membership.

Southside Square:
DomAdi’s Deli, Southside Beverage, Bourbon St. Liquor & Wine, Pleasant Cleaners
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State of the art shopping plaza on the south-side of Amsterdam and home of DomAdi’s Deli, Southside Beverage, Bourbon St. Wine & Liquor, and Pleasant Cleaners. Other commercial stalls available for rent.

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Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce

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Are You In Compliance With the New Law? October is Just Around the Corner.

Last year, New York State enacted legislation, as part of the 2018-2019 New York State Budget, expanding protections against sexual harassment in the workplace. This new law applies to all employers regardless of number of employees and establishes a number of new requirements that employers must implement and meet. These requirements include:

1) Employers must have adopted and distributed a Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy by October 9, 2018 that meets certain required standards;
2) Employers must make a Combat Harassment Complaint Form available, as part of their Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy, to their employees for employees to use to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment;
3) Employers must provide all employees with annual training in sexual harassment prevention by October 9, 2019;
4) Employers must train newly-hired employees in Sexual Harassment Prevention as soon as practicable after they hire them;
5) Strongly encourages employers to provide a policy and training in the language spoken by the employee;
6) Sets forth specific guidelines regarding the use of “non-disclosure agreements” related to sexual abuse allegations; and
7) Bars employers from including any requirement in any contract entered into on or after July 11, 2018 that requires mandatory arbitration to resolve an allegation or claim of an unlawful discriminatory practice of sexual harassment.

Further information regarding these new requirements can be found on the New York State Combating Sexual Harassment In The Workplace website. To obtain further information, visit: https://www.ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace

To view a list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the new requirements of this law, visit the New York State’s Combating Sexual Harassment FAQ webpage by visiting: https://www.ny.gov/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace/combating-sexual-harassment-frequently-asked-questions#for-employers.

Human Resources News

Brought to you by:

bouchey & clarke BENEFITS, INC.

Sexual Harassment Compliance Training for Businesses & Employees

The Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, through Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc., will host classes to help businesses and their employees comply with the New York State’s new Sexual Harassment legislation.

Businesses must complete training for their employees by October 9, 2019. Classes will be live and interactive training sessions, and will allow you to be fully compliant with the law.

SESSION DATE:

Training will be held at the Chamber’s Gloversville office, 2 N. Main St., Gloversville, NY, on Tuesday, June 4, from 8-9:30 a.m.

COST:

Cost for the class is $40 per attendee for Chamber members; and $50 per attendee for non-members.

LIMITED SEATING:

Seating for the June 4 session will be limited to 30 people. Additional training sessions will be scheduled. Sign up now to ensure that your business is compliant by the October deadline.

RSVP:

For more information, contact the Chamber, at (518) 725-0641.
**Saturday, May 11, 2019**

Zippy’s Ice Cream, 2513 State Highway 30, Mayfield, will host a fundraiser to support local Walk MS Team Amara’s Army, from 2-6 p.m. Bring your empty cans and bottles for donation. Raffle tickets will be available for purchase to be entered into a drawing to win prizes. All proceeds will be gifted to the Walk MS & National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Zippy’s owners said, “Help create a world free of MS – Together We Are Stronger.”

Zippy’s is minutes away from Sacandaga Lake, and serves soft ice cream flavors as well as Gifford’s Hard Ice Cream. Freak Shakes, Ice Cream Flights, Family Size Sundaeas, Homemade Ice Cream Cookies and Ice Cream Cakes are featured on the menu. Zippy’s also has a selection of food items such as hot dogs with the fixins, Sausage sandwiches, Nachos, Hot Boiled Peanuts and more. Zippy’s invites you and your family to stop by to enjoy your ice cream on their patio and relax by the fire. Hours are 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

**Saturday, May 18, 2019**

The Lustre Kings will perform live at St. Francis of Assisi Church Hall in Northville on May 18 at 6 p.m., presented by the Sacandaga Valley Arts Network.

The Lustre Kings, the Albany Based roots rock combo, is celebrating its 20th anniversary of sharing its “infectious rockabilly sound” with its new album, “Go Green.” An optional ham dinner will proceed the event at 5 p.m., and will include salad, potato, vegetable, roll, and desert. Admission is $12 ($10 for SVAN members), plus an additional $10 for the dinner. Reservations are recommended. Call or text (518) 863-8047 to RSVP.

**Sunday, June 9, 2019**

The Elizabeth Cady Stanton Hometown Association will present “Opera at the Orchard,” a fundraising event to benefit its Sunflower Shoppe, on Sunday June 9. The event is set from 3-5 p.m. at Rogers Family Orchards, 260 County Road 131 in Johnstown. Artists from Seagle Music Colony, the oldest summer vocal training program in the U.S., will sing a program of opera and musical theater favorites. Rogers Cideryard will be open, selling their signature hard cider, along with wine and beer selections. Tickets to the performance are $30 each. There will be a cash bar. This event is rain or shine. Organizers said, “All are invited to join this family-friendly, casual afternoon of beautiful music and great food in a gorgeous setting.”

Tickets will be available soon. Check www.ecstantonhometown.org for information or contact Kate Ehle at cakeandalestudio@gmail.com.
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WWW.MANGINOBUICKGMC.COM
Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home announced their Employee of the Year at the Goodwill Committee’s annual celebration. The winner, Barbara Garrigan was awarded the top honor. 

Garrigan works in Nathan Littauer’s Diagnostic Imaging Department as a Staff Nurse. She celebrated her 31st year at Littauer in April. Her coworkers explain, “Barb is calming and compassionate nurse. She is always willing to help her peers while also looking for better ways to care for our patients.”

Laurence E. Kelly, President and CEO made the announcement at a hospital gathering comprised of employees and the award recipients’ family members. He explained, “Barb is a shining example of exceptional patient care.” When her name was announced the audience rose to their feet in a show of support. 

Upon receiving the award Barb graciously said, “I would like to thank everyone who is here and even those who are not. This is a super honor. But mostly, I would like to thank my coworkers that support me every day.”

Patients have gone out of their way to compliment Barb’s clinically-astute, empathic care. “This is my first experience with Nation Littauer and Barb represented NLH in the most professional and caring way that an employee could. If Barb is a representation of how all our employees care for patients, then NLH has a very good thing going.”

As Employee of the Year she will receive: Tickets the hospital’s EVENT, cake for her department, flowers, a plaque, a coveted parking spot and a monetary award.

Barb is a native of Mayfield, NY. She and her husband Jay have two children: Jay Jr., and Emily.

The celebration also honored two Littauer team members who were recognized as “Runner-Up” for Employee of the Year.

Teresa Sullivan is an LPN at Nathan Littauer’s Family Practice in Gloversville. Teresa was recognized for her outstanding communication skills and excellent nursing skills.

Shannon Berhaupt is a Medical Receptionist at Nathan Littauer’s Perth Primary Care Center. Shannon was recognized for her empathy and kindness and in doing so earning the trust of patients, coworkers and providers.
Liberty ARC, the Montgomery County Chapter of The Arc New York, donated a check for $1,150 to New York Oncology Hematology (NYOH) to support people undergoing cancer treatments.

The money was raised in October of 2018 during Liberty ARC’s Fifth Annual Pink Out Day. Staff and individuals, supported by Liberty ARC, participated in t-shirt sales, a bake sale and a gift basket raffle to raise funds.

Liberty ARC, a chapter of The Arc New York, provides Montgomery County with supports and services and has grown to include employment/vocational, recreational, residential, day, family support and health-related services to nearly 580 individuals with physical, developmental and other disabilities.

Chamber Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce scholarship program are now available. Each of four winning applicants will receive a $1,000 academic scholarship.

Eligible applicants must be seniors graduating from a Fulton or Montgomery county high school in June 2019, or be previous graduates of high schools from either county, and must be entering or attending a two- or four-year accredited college or university as of September 2019.

Academic winners will be chosen by the Chamber’s Scholarship Committee, whose members will review applicants’ qualifications in scholastic achievement, community involvement, school activities, and economic need. Applicants are asked to submit a 500-word essay explaining their career goals and why the scholarship is important to them.

For a scholarship application, please call the Chamber at (518) 725-0641, stop by the Chamber offices at 2 North Main Street, Gloversville, or 1166 Riverfront Center in Amsterdam, e-mail info@fultonmontgomeryny.org or visit the Chamber’s website for an application. Applications also are available in high school guidance offices. Deadline for receipt by the Chamber of completed applications and accompanying materials is Friday, May 17, 2019 at 5 p.m.

Since its inception 29 years ago, the Chamber’s scholarship program has provided over $100,000 in scholarships to deserving regional school students.
Research and artwork done by local students highlighting the Glove Industry in the region will be entered into a juried competition and display beginning in May at the Rotunda Gallery at the Fulton Montgomery Chamber of Commerce in Gloversville.

Invitations were sent in April 2018 to middle and high school art and social studies teachers regarding plans for the exhibition in 2019. Teachers were invited to involve their students in research into an industry that is fast being forgotten, and to then produce a piece of art or an essay on some aspect that interested them.

The show’s grand opening will be hosted in early May by Chamber CEO Mark Kilmer and Fulton County Historian Samantha Hall-Saladino, at 2 N. Main St., Gloversville. The public is invited to attend Student Awards Night on June 7 at 5:30 p.m. at the Chamber to meet competition winners and to congratulate them on their achievements. The exhibit will be available to visitors from May 3 – June 12, 2019, Monday – Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The arrival of an intriguing email from Perth, Scotland in 2017 inspired a chain of events which have culminated in the declaration of 2019 as Fulton County Year of the Glove. Perth Academy, Scotland, students involved in an interdisciplinary project had researched the history of the city as a tanning and glove making center.

In the process, links to the area now known as Fulton County were discovered which dated back to the mid-18th Century. After further communication and investigation locally, it was realized that there was little to document the assertion.

However, many local sources including M.S. Northrup, founder of Northrup Glove Manufacturing Company in Johnstown and W.G. Loveday, Jr. historian concluded that Sir William Johnson, as part of his effort to settle and secure his vast land claims, brought Perth farmer tanners and their families to work his land, tan his hides and make a mitten type glove to sell in his Johnstown store. The Perth farmer tanners would have been the first New World immigrants to bring knowledge of European tanning methods. Johnson would have been aware of their skills as the Incorporation of Glovers of Perth had been well known as far back as the 12th Century as a closed shop guild in which trade secrets were passed from father to son.

The Scottish students were very excited about the Fulton County connection and we were offered a loan of their work for exhibition purposes. After viewing some of the work, researching the claim to the degree possible and a great deal of discussion it was decided to accept the offer. It was felt that it could be used to foster an examination of Fulton County’s leather past. The Fulton County Historian and the Fulton County Historical Society and Museum agreed to lead the effort and declared that 2019 would be Year of the Glove Fulton County.

Many organizations including schools were approached with the suggestion that they might like to plan events or displays relating to the leather and glove industry. The inaugural event at Fulton County Museum showcased the Scottish student art, artifacts from Museum archives and loans. Fulton County native, now New York State Archivist, Tom Ruller spoke to a standing room only audience about the complex history of the County’s leather industry.

For more information on Year Of The Glove events, visit Year of the Glove on Facebook.
Let Students Help Tackle Your Business Challenges

By Rosalie Faber
Business Development Manager, Flooring Authority, Inc.
Fulton Montgomery Chamber Education Committee Chairman

Getting local PTech students involved in solving the real-world problems of your business is not only a great way to share business knowledge with young people, it’s an excellent way to foster good public relations exposure for your company.

Each school year, PTech teachers in the Fulton and Montgomery counties region look for new, real-life examples to use in their project-based classrooms. These “Business Challenges” are facilitated each summer through the Chamber, when the Workforce Development staff reach out to local businesses requesting challenges the students can use to facilitate learning.

This program is a real opportunity for local businesses, as the students are a great resource. Students enjoy working on actual projects and getting feedback from the companies involved.

Submitting A Challenge

PTech teachers go through the submitted challenges and select ones to use throughout the year. As a business owner or manager, you will be involved by providing basic information about your company and the problem you are looking for help with. You will interact with students who can ask questions and then work in groups to come up with solutions. At the end of the project, students present those solutions.

In coming up with a Business Challenge, you might consider a project that is something the company would like to work on, but that you just don’t have the time to dedicate, or the time to find basic information. As the submission may, or may not, be selected and/or used right away (projects may be addressed any time during the school year), any Challenge submitted should not be time-sensitive.

You should expect that the solutions presented will be basic, and you should expect to dig in further to see what will work for your business. Be sure to give an accurate scope of what you are looking for, so the students may focus accurately, and you receive the best results.

One Company’s Example

To illustrate how the Business Challenge program works, I will use my own company’s experience as an example. The Freshman class took on our challenge of finding an inventory system to use in our business. They were given a Request for Proposal (RFP) with specific information about the type of system we were looking for, requirements that needed to be met; and extras that would be nice, if available.

The students had an opportunity to tour our facility and get detailed information on how we work, hear about the challenges currently face, and after reviewing the RFP, they had an opportunity to ask specific questions. Then they worked in groups to come up with a solution.

The students presented their solutions during a Business Expo with the Sophomore class. We reviewed 12 groups and only 2 software solutions were duplicated. The students solutions ran a gamut from a free service with extra options for a monthly fee; to solutions with a small monthly fee; solutions with more options for a slightly higher monthly fee; and solutions for a one-time purchase price.

Next Steps

Once the Challenge presentations were completed, it was our turn to review all the options and decide what would work best for us. The benefit of the students’ research was that we are able to spend our time focusing on choosing specific software, and on making a selection, rather than spending the time to look at all the options that are out there.

We identified what software to work with, and discussed how we would implement it, and we came up with a schedule for implementation. We also defined a summer internship position to help us with the implementation. Finally, we planned to post the summer internship position and select a candidate to fill the post. We felt that summer is a perfect time to bring on extra help with interns, and to allow a focused staff member to work on setting up the structure needed.

Great Relationships

Not only was my company’s experience a positive one with the PTech students, we have been thrilled to know that the students enjoyed themselves as well. In fact, we now have 48 “walking & talking billboards” for the business and it is free. To me, that is the best advertisement available.

For more information on getting involved with the students and programs at PTech, contact Nicole Walrath, Director of Workforce Development, at the Fulton County Chamber of Commerce, (518) 725-0641.
Chamber Member News

Land Bank Offers Awards for Logo Design

The Greater Mohawk Valley Land Bank (GMVLB) is running a competition for the concept design for its new logo. Tolga Morawski, GMVLB Executive Director, announced the competition will award a $1000 first prize, a $500 second prize, and two $250 honorable-mention prizes.

“While the contest is open to amateur and professional designers and artists, GMVLB will make every effort, depending on the quality of the submissions, to include the submission of a student as a prize winner,” said Morawski.

Complete details, including all contest rules and the required entry form, can be found at the land bank’s web site, www.gmvlb.org.

Also find key documents outlining the vision, mission, values, and general operations of the land bank on the site. GMVLB’s Strategic Plan is posted there. Participants are urged to review the plan and the web site to help inform the creative process.

The deadline for submissions is May 17, 2019. Email info@gmvlb.org with questions.

Chamber Member Anniversaries

The following businesses have found value in their Chamber investment and have renewed their membership in the months of April/May of this year. Please note these member businesses and the year they joined. Thank you to all our renewing Chamber members.

Less than 5 Years
Blinds by Elmdendorf ......................... 2017
Stump City Brewing, LLC .................. 2017
Argersinger Office Complex ............... 2016
New York State Restaurant Association  2016
Benson’s Pet Center ......................... 2015
Alzheimer’s Association ..................... 2015

5 to 9 Years
Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara ... 2014
Insight Payroll Solutions, Inc .......... 2014
The Wesson Group, LLC ................. 2014
Revolution Vapor LLC ...................... 2014
Joanna Olson, CMK and Associates Real Estate ... 2014
Rolling Hills Country Club .............. 2014
Miller’s Ready Mix Concrete and Block ... 2014
Hales Mills Country Club ................ 2013
Lamont Engineers ............................ 2011
Amsterdam Printing ....................... 2011
Lamar Advertising ........................... 2011
Prudential Blake Commercial .......... 2011
H & M Equipment Co., Inc .............. 2011
L & M TV & Appliances, L.L.C .......... 2011
Fulton County Farm Bureau ............. 2010
SW The Spa .................................... 2010
Pickett Memorial Co. ...................... 2010

10 to 19 Years
Adirondack Septic Tank, Inc ............ 2009
Distinct Home Designs, Inc ............. 2009
Amsterdam Mohawks ...................... 2009
R & A Waite, Inc ......................... 2008
Delaney Crushed Stone Products, Inc . 2008
River Ridge Living Center, L.L.C. ..... 2008
MacVean, Allan, CFP ...................... 2007
Spinaker Management & Realty Sales  ... 2007
Pavlus Orchards ............................. 2006
School House Treasures ................. 2006
Hear For You ................................. 2005
Schwartz Law Firm .................... 2005
Advantage Builders ..................... 2005
Geesler’s ................................... 2005
Carpe Canem Inc ......................... 2001

10 to 19 Years continued

20 to 29 Years
Harold’s Restaurant and Lounge ........ 1999
Judith Ann Realty, Inc .................... 1998
Salmon Law Firm, PLLC; The ......... 1998
Daily Gazette ................................ 1998
City of Amsterdam ....................... 1998
Town of Glen ............................... 1998
Judge Polly A. Hoye ..................... 1997
Electro-Metrics ............................ 1996
Henri Woodcraft ......................... 1991
Holland Meadows Golf Course .......... 1990
Coldwell Banker ......................... 1989
Arlene M. Sitterly, Inc ................. 1989
Kucel Contractors, Inc ................. 1989

30 to 39 Years
Brilliant Design & Print ................. 1985
Wells Fargo Advisors, L.L.C ............ 1985
William Bresonis; D.D.S., P.C. ....... 1980

40 to 49 Years
Frontier ................................... 1974
Visitors Center
Extended Hours
Begin

The Fulton County Visitor Center, located at the corner of State Routes 29 and 30 in Vail Mills, will begin extended hours on Friday, May 3. The Visitor Center will be open Friday-Monday weekly until summer hours take effect the week of May 19. The Center will remain open daily through Columbus Day. Our wonderful Visitor Center staff members Bill VanVoast and Eunie Davis will continue as Ambassadors to Fulton County. Updated tourism brochures are always welcome at the Center and can be dropped off during the business hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Regional Film Day
Conference Set

On Wednesday, May 22, Film Albany and the Capital-Saratoga Film Commission, will host the inaugural regional film initiative entitled “Set the Scene in Upstate New York Regional Film Industry Day,” from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the New York State Qualified Production Facility Times Union Center.

During the event, attendees can earn from top industry professionals in the film and production business. Panels will include:
– Ask The Film Commish featuring Buffalo, Rochester and Westchester Film Commissions
– Diversity in Filmmaking, In Front of and Behind the Camera featuring Morgan Roche, Punisher Location Manager; Micah Kahn, Capital Region Filmmaker, and Lacey Swartz Delgado, Documentary Filmmaker
– Our Future is GenNext featuring our own Youth FX
– Perfection in Producing featuring Emmy and PGA nominated Igor Srubshchik, Noelle Gentile, creative director and producer on the new immersive documentary website Piece of The Dream; and Lori Kelly-Bailey of Garrow (a film about Robert Garrow).
– Working With Your Community Partners featuring Lt. Paul Kirwan, Albany PD Special Event Liaison; Harry Strole, City Clerk of the City of Albany; Sgt. Steve Hopsicker of the NYS Police; and a representative from the New York State Department of Transportation
– Budgeting for Film & Television featuring Brian David Cange: Brian has been Line Producer on several features/television shows and most recently was co-producer of Shoplifters of The World, produced by Laura Rister and Joe Manganiello; Sam Margolius, Executive Producer of Branch FX.

Also on tap for the day is the presentation of the first-ever Film Albany Spirit Award. The award will be presented to retired Sgt. Jay Cook of the NYS Police. Sgt. Cook was instrumental in working with the film crew on the Escape at Dannemora mini-series. Sgt. Cook also apprehended inmate David Sweat.

Several counties and film commissions are spearheading this day, including Albany, City of Troy, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties. Other sponsoring organizations include Carey Institute for Global Good, Upstate Independent Filmmakers Network and Times Union Center.

Coffee breaks and lunch are included in the registration fee. Tours of the Times Union Center will be available during lunch and throughout the day. Register early, as this event is expected to sell out.

“Set the Scene in Upstate New York: Regional Film Industry Day” registration can be found on eventbrite.com. Cost is $16 plus applicable fees. For more information, please contact Debby Goedeke at Film Albany (518)434-1217 x100 or dgoedeke@albany.org.

Tourism News

Gina DaBiere-Gibbs
Director of Tourism
tourism@fultonmontgomeryny.org

Join the growing trend to improve employee health and your bottom line:

Protect employees & visitors from secondhand smoke
Reduce tobacco litter • Save money • Earn points towards LEED Certification

We are grant funded by NYS to help worksites successfully adopt and implement tobacco-free policies. FREE resources are available including custom signage, technical assistance, model policy language, implementation toolkit and cessation resources.

(518) 762-8313 | tobaccofreehfm.org

Ready to make your worksite grounds Tobacco Free?
We Can Help.
Freshmen at Foothills PTECH, Academy of Health & Medical Sciences presented Public Service Announcements to a panel of judges. Students were eager to learn about their ability to make a positive impact in their own communities and, in doing so, researched six local non-profit organizations. Participating organizations included Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, Elizabeth Cady Stanton Hometown Association (Sunflower Shoppe), Gloversville Senior Center, Literacy New York- Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties, Park Terrace Elementary School’s Backpack Program and the Regional Animal Shelter.

After much deliberation, the panel selected the Sunflower Shoppe’s PSA announcement which included students Natalie Palmer and Alanis Roman. A special thanks to Glove Cities Rotary Club for donating $100 to the winning organization.

Business Education Partnership News

Nicole Walrath
Director of Workforce Development
NicoleW@fultonmontgomeryny.org

OESJ PTECH
Cheryl Simpson and Colleen Torres from AAA Northway Travel in Amsterdam, joined freshmen enrolled at OESJ PTECH to talk about all things travel-related. They shared personal experiences from trips they’ve taken and discussed the nature of their work in the travel industry. Some topics covered included passports; applying for an international driver’s license; currency/exchange rates; cultural norms; farm-to-table foods; modes of transportation; and lodging. They stressed the importance of doing research before traveling, and mentioned how they collaborate with other travel agents in their daily work. Students have been learning about different cultures for their upcoming cultural fair, where they will prepare food related to each culture.

Ag PTECH
Sophomores at Ag PTECH participated in their last Mentor Monday of this school year with a discussion of “digital presence.” In small groups, business partners talked with students about email etiquette; spelling and grammar; LinkedIn; social media; and private vs. public profiles. Thank you to our mentors Tanya Moyer of Mulligan Creek Acres, Matt Brower of The Brower Family Farm, and Rob and Shirley Hudyncia of Hu-Hill Farm Store.

HFM PTECH
Above and below left: Last month, freshmen and sophomores at HFM PTECH were tasked with two workplace challenges from local businesses in Amsterdam. Sophomores were tasked with coming up with a solution for Mohawk Fabric, who had an abundance of polypropylene, or plastic tubes left over monthly and wanted a solution to repurpose them. Freshmen were also tasked with coming up with a solution for Flooring Authority, who needed a more efficient inventory system. Students were able to share their findings during a showcase in the gymnasium on April 17. Blaine Harvey, Plant Manager at Mohawk Fabric and Rosalie Faber, Business Development Manager at Flooring Authority said they were intrigued by the solutions the students presented.

Nicole Walrath
Director of Workforce Development
NicoleW@fultonmontgomeryny.org

Are you interested in working with students who will embrace the essential business skills and who will be trained educated employees for the future?

Well, PTECH is the new future! PTECH is a technologically based early college high school that allows students to gain real-world, project based experiences through partnering businesses in your community.

We are currently looking for mentors who will be willing to communicate online with students weekly. Interested in becoming a partnering business?
Contact Nicole Walrath at (518) 725-0641 or nicoleW@fultonmontgomeryny.org for more information.

Foothills PTECH, Academy of Health and Medical Sciences
Freshmen at Foothills PTECH, Academy of Health & Medical Sciences presented Public Service Announcements to a panel of judges. Students were eager to learn about their ability to make a positive impact in their own communities and, in doing so, researched six local non-profit organizations. Participating organizations included Catholic Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, Elizabeth Cady Stanton Hometown Association (Sunflower Shoppe), Gloversville Senior Center, Literacy New York- Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties, Park Terrace Elementary School’s Backpack Program and the Regional Animal Shelter.

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Business Education Partnership News

Foothills PTECH, Academy of Computer Science and Game Arts

ABOVE and LEFT: Freshmen at Foothills PTECH, Academy of Computer Science and Game Arts showed off their coding abilities by allowing guests to play their Zombie Apocalypse and Minecraft games. Thanks to all of the businesses who came out for the Day of Play at JHS.

Amsterdam College and Career PTECH & Pathways

ABOVE and BELOW LEFT: Freshmen enrolled in the Greater Amsterdam School District Career & College PTECH Pathways program, kicked off April’s project by listening to Randy Gardiner of the City of Amsterdam’s Water Treatment Plant, discuss the importance of water. Students went on a workplace tour of the water treatment plant to gather information and photos. Throughout the project, students were tasked to find solutions to increase the amount of potable water in Amsterdam, while also working together as a community to save Amsterdam’s water. The group selected as having the best presentation highlighted ten water conservation tips that could be applied locally, while incorporating beautiful original artwork.

Chamber Checks make great gifts for loved ones, good bonuses for employees, and support small businesses in this region! Purchase these gift checks at either Chamber office, any Kinderhook Bank branch or Ruby & Quiri in Johnstown.

Chamber Checks sponsored by:
General Contractors

Enjoy our most recent list, featuring a segment of industry, “General Contractors,” with focus on the members that are included in the category.

Look for additional group features in coming issues.

Research by James Hannahs, Chamber Membership Director

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<th>Company</th>
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<td>Fort Plain</td>
<td>(518) 568-5444</td>
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<td>Stephen Miller General Contractors, Inc.</td>
<td>Mayfield</td>
<td>(518) 661-5601</td>
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<td>Gloversville</td>
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<td>Caroga Lake</td>
<td>(518) 725-8889</td>
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<td>Bollock Aluminum</td>
<td>Broadalbin</td>
<td>(518) 883-3188</td>
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<td>Tim Derwin Builders</td>
<td>Johnstown</td>
<td>(518) 762-3518</td>
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<td>Accu-Contracting, Inc.</td>
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<td>(518) 842-4511</td>
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<td>Advantage Builders</td>
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<td>Geesler’s</td>
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