

# Chenango Reports

Leading Business, Leading Communities™



## April Newsletter 2011

### Message from the President & CEO



One of the most important roles the Chamber of Commerce can play in their community is advocacy, and to utilize their ability to influence public policy.

Commerce Chenango has set its annual legislative agenda and although the big policy and advocacy issues have remained fundamentally unchanged, we are taking a new approach to our efforts to influence positive change.

We are persistent in our communications to our legislators, and on March 3rd our Governmental Affairs team made a trip to Albany to present our agenda and to discuss Chenango businesses priorities for 2011.

During our meetings we discuss economic development opportunities in our area, a tax cap with cost cutting measures and mandate reform, our support of the Natural Gas Infrastructure Act, NYS Route 12 improvements and CHIPS funding. We asked our legislators to support tourism by encouraging the Division of Budget to release New York State Matching Funds Program dollars. (See p. 2 for in-depth information)

We will continue to work through our governmental affairs committee to identify and address legislative issues that burden our businesses. We will work closely with our partner organizations; the Business Council of New York State, Unshackle Upstate, and the New York State Economic Development Council on state issues, and the US Chamber of Commerce on federal issues.

In 2010, we increased our legislative visibility and our level of engagement. We are positioned to increase our legislative intensity even further in 2011. With our assistance, business leaders are coordinating their efforts to effect real change in Chenango County and the state of New York.

As always, information will be distributed to the Chamber membership through our newsletter, breakfast forums, weekly eblast and timely advocacy action eblasts. Frequent telephone calls, letter writing and visits to Albany will also keep our legislators informed of our position on issues.

Please feel free to contact me or one of the GAC members if you have concerns or questions.

Maureen Carpenter, EDP, IOM  
President & CEO

### Upcoming Meetings/Events

- GAC Mtg. ~ April 5th @ 8:00 AM
- Tourism Networking Mtg. ~ April 13th @ 9:00 AM
- CC Finance Mtg. ~ April 19th @ 7:30 AM
- IDA Mtg. ~ April 20th @ 8:00 AM
- CC Executive Mtg. ~ April 21st @ 7:30 AM
- Commerce Chenango Board Mtg. ~ April 27th @ 7:30 AM

Happy Easter!



### 529 COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN —

Commerce Chenango is currently partnering with Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC. They are offering members and their employees an opportunity to open a 529 through a Group Advisor Plan that has been established by the Chamber.

The primary benefit of this type of group plan is that there is NO front-end load as there is with individual accounts—which can save members from 5-7%.

This is not pre-tax money. In New York, individuals can claim up to a \$5,000 tax credit/couples up to a \$10,000 tax credit on their State taxes. Under the Pension Protection Act, the beneficiary of the Plan will never have to pay taxes on the monies drawn for education purposes.

Members will be working directly with our representative at Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC, Dominic Shea. For more information, call Jill Eddy at 334-1402.

**Member Benefit of the Month**

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## Chenango County Agriculture Development Council to Host "Ag Summit V"

The Chenango County Agriculture Development Council (CCADC) is pleased to announce it is hosting the fifth Chenango County Ag Summit on Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Canasawacta Country Club in Norwich.

The theme for this year's Ag Summit is "Making Farming Work in Chenango". The event will feature several area ag producers and farmers that have arrived at a formula for farming or agricultural processing that is profitable for them in Chenango County. Local experts will be on hand to discuss their secrets to success for raising livestock, producing berries, and dairy farming and processing, as well as maple syrup production.

The Ag Summit V luncheon will feature Keynote Speaker Patrick Hooker, Director of Agribusiness Development from Empire State Development. Patrick Hooker was previously the Commissioner of NYS Agriculture & Markets Department. A lunch buffet, featuring local and regional foods from area farmers and producers, will be served. The cost to register for the day is only \$7, thanks in part to the generous sponsorships of Agro-Farma, Inc., NBT Bank N.A., Farm Credit East ACA, Commerce Chenango, and Baker's Maple Products.

The afternoon will feature brainstorming sessions, where farmers and ag producers will have the opportunity to assist CCADC with strategic planning, and suggest projects for the future consideration by the CCADC.

For more information, or to register, please contact Rebecca Daubert at Cornell Cooperative Extension, at 607-334-5841, x 14, or [rad282@cornell.edu](mailto:rad282@cornell.edu).

## Governmental Affairs Trip to Albany--

On March 3rd, a sub-committee of the Governmental Affairs group journeyed to Albany to meet with our legislators. Our meetings included: Aaron Gladd, Legislative Coordinator/Senator Tom Libous, Senator James Seward, Assemblymen Cliff Crouch and Pete Lopez, and a representative from Assemblyman Gary Finch's office.

We called on them to:

**Support a State Spending Cap & Real Property Tax Cap** that will result in reduced spending coupled with mandate reform.

**Supports bills S.2811/A.4011, Part C** which clarifies that businesses remain eligible for Empire Zone Benefits after the 6/30/10 expiration date for eligible Empire Zone Certified Businesses.

**Support Assembly Bill A.5102:** Commerce Chenango supports this bill to establish the "Natural Gas Infrastructure Act" for the purpose of subsidizing up to fifty percent of the total cost of projects by the county IDA intended to extend natural gas supply facilities to rural areas for economic development purposes by the construction of natural gas facilities.

**Support the passage of S.2810/A.4010 part J**, to repeal the "state cost recovery" assessment on IDA's, introduced by Senator David Valesky and Bill Stachowski.

**Release:** The New York State Matching Funds allocation of \$35,207 for fiscal year 2011 to Chenango County from the Division of Budget. Many tourism properties and event holders are beginning their advertising season and these funds are critical to their programming.

**Encourage NYSDOT** to use the federally appropriated funds to make improvements to the Route 12 corridor as outlined in Phase I and Phase II reports, and specifically to insure completion of the Greene projected slated for 2011 & 2012 (including requested turning lanes.)

Medicaid redesign, education, CHIPS funding and local government consolidation were also discussed at varying levels.

To see our complete legislative agenda that was recently approved by the Board of Directors, go to our website at [www.chenangony.org/legislative](http://www.chenangony.org/legislative).

### GAC Committee:

**Jim Bays** ~ 627-6627

**Bob Carey** ~ 432-4000

**Jim Currie** ~ 336-4702

**Cynthia Gordineer** ~ 785-7207

**Steve Natoli** ~ 336-8200

**Steve Palmatier** ~ 336-1261



**MATTRESS CLOSEOUT!**

Take an Additional \$100 OFF Closeout Items!

We need to move out 2010 models to make room for the 2011 Sleepsets!

Come in **NOW** for **BIG SAVINGS** on our Closeout of **FAMOUS BRANDS!**

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# SAVE THE DATE...

**May 6, 2011**

## **Leadercast Conference “Voices of Change”**

Canasawacta Country Club, Norwich

*Sponsored by*  
**Agro-Farma**  
*and*

Visions Federal Credit Union

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Every leader has a unique voice. One offers direction, while another inspires. Some voices impact lives without uttering a single word. Do you know your leadership voice?

GiANT Impact is a global leadership company focused on awakening leaders through effective content, powerful brands and world-class events. GiANT Impact produces the Chick-fil-A Leadercast. The event was founded by John Maxwell with a mission to develop leaders of excellence and integrity.

Attend Chick-fil-A's one-day leadership event broadcast LIVE from Atlanta via satellite and you will learn:

- \* How to lead based on respect and relationship rather than rights and position.
- \* The difference between dynamic leadership and mediocre management.
- \* Ways to move past the brainstorming phase to actually implement ideas.
- \* Ways to incorporate innovation in your organization
- \* ...and more

*Cost to attend is \$100.00 per person.*

***Tickets must be pre-purchased, space is limited.***

***Continental breakfast, lunch and materials are included.***

Call Jill at (607) 334-1402



**April 20, 2011**

## **Business After Hours**

149 So. Chenango Street Ext., Greene

*Sponsored by*

## **Hilltop Construction**

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Enjoy raffles, light refreshments from Nathanael Greene's Publick House and learn how heating with a pellet stove can save you money!

Please RSVP to 334-1402 by April 18th.

**April 26, 2011**

## **Wood Resource Public Forum**

The Eaton Center Summit Room,  
24 Conkey Avenue, Norwich

2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Chenango County is over 67% forested and millions of dollars worth of wood products are harvested and manufactured each year. There are many threats to our wood product resource. Come learn about these threats, some of the opportunities they also provide, and join in the dialogue about potential possibilities for one of Chenango's most widely used renewable resources.

This program is *FREE* to the general public. Please RSVP to 607-334-1402 by April 21st.

**April 28, 2011**

## **Networking Luncheon**

Lewis' Restaurant

93 N. Main Street, Sherburne

*Sponsored by*

## **Frontier**

**The Sherburne News**

**MHAUS** (Malignant Hyperthermia Association of the U.S.)  
**New York Central Mutual Ins. Co.**

Registration: 11:30 a.m. / Lunch & Program: 12:00  
\$20.00 per Chamber member

Please RSVP by April 25th to 334-1402.

### **Commerce Chenango Staff**

Maureen Carpenter, <i>President &amp; CEO</i>	334.1404
Jill Eddy, <i>Membership/Programs</i>	334.1402
Kate Jones, <i>Finance/Administration</i>	334.1423
Audrey Robinson, <i>Tourism/Communications</i>	334.1429
Francene Strong, <i>Information</i>	334.1400
Jennifer Tavares, <i>Economic Development</i>	334.5532

## Eight ways to manage negativity on Facebook Pages—

**Social networks facilitate a two-way conversation between brands and consumers, but what if that conversation turns negative or nasty? What steps should you take in the face of such negative feedback?**

by Helen Leggatt (BizReport)

Not everything posted on your social media sites will be helpful or, indeed, welcome. However, when you invite others to engage in dialog, negativity is hard to avoid.

Some members of your Facebook page may have a genuine beef with your product or service, but some may just want to rant or cause trouble (trolling and spam). How you handle the situation will be very public, and reflect on your business and brand.

It's therefore essential that you know what to do when faced with complaints, criticism, or even blind rage, on your Facebook Page. Here are eight tips to help you handle the situation.

1. First and foremost, create a policy clearly outlining the 'rules' around commenting on your Page, and ensure users know about it. Be clear how use of bad language or posts containing inappropriate content will be dealt with.
2. Keep your cool. Don't lash out at negative posts. Step back from the situation before posting a cool and collected response.
3. Reply publicly. Show you are in control of the situation by publicly responding. As well as being open, your reply may address questions that others have, but are not comfortable asking.
4. Keep replies concise. Get your point across without creating paragraphs of unwieldy text, which many won't bother to read. Stick to the facts and keep emotions and personal views off limits.
5. Reply promptly. Often silence is taken as avoidance. Even if you can not provide a complete answer to their comment at the time it was made, reassure them you are listening and finding them an answer.
6. Reply privately. Some commenters are there to make trouble, and some don't know when to stop. These participants are sometimes best dealt with in private, particularly if an existing public attempt to quell their anger has not been successful and is distracting other users.
7. Monitor the developing thread and keep in touch with the customer until they are satisfied with the outcome.
8. Ditch the trolls.. or not. It's not hard to spot a spammer or a troll, but do you delete them or humor them? ClickZ has a great article on how to deal with various types of troll.



Like us on Facebook!

## Welcome to our New Members

### Holiday Inn—Oneonta

Alison Crotts, Director of Sales  
(607) 433-2250

5206 State Highway 23, Oneonta, 13820

Holiday Inn-Oneonta is a full-service, year-round hospitality leader in the area, providing travelers with comfortable rooms at reasonable rates, banquet facilities, restaurant and lounge on-site.

[www.hioneonta.com](http://www.hioneonta.com)

**Accommodation/Restaurant/Banquet Facility**

### Northwestern Mutual Financial Network

#### The Greater NY Group-Southern Tier

Stephen P. Feehan, Managing Director  
(607) 231-7235

99 Hawley St., Suite 200, Binghamton, 13901

Stephen Feehan and his team serve a variety of clients in the greater Binghamton area, with particular emphasis on helping individuals and businesses manage wealth and enact strategies for protection of their interests.

[www.stephenfeehan.com](http://www.stephenfeehan.com)

**Financial Services/Insurance**

## It's Baaaack!

**Commerce Chenango is pleased to announce that ad sales for the **Relocation and Community Guide to Chenango** will begin on May 16, 2011.**

**The Guide is available as a business resource, a local hospitality guide, and as a significant reference for Chenango County. The editorial section includes up-to-date guides for visiting, living and working in Chenango County. As an added feature, you will also have access to the full guide on our website at [www.chenangony.org](http://www.chenangony.org).**

**We are asking you to do the following:**

- \* **Please make sure you verify the information sent to you by mail and return it to the Chamber, so you are ensured correct information in the Chamber directory.**
- \* **If you are interested in advertising, enclose your request form when returning the verification form.**
- \* **Pick one category from the enclosed listing and add that to your form under business classification.**

**If we do not receive a form, it will be assumed that all information is correct. All forms must be returned no later than APRIL 22, 2011.**

## March Employee of the Month



Pictured L to R: Maureen Carpenter, Commerce Chenango President & CEO; Dr. Marsha Cornelius, Dean, Morrisville College; Norwich; Jeri, and Dan Grady, Mang Insurance Agency

**Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, Coordinator of Academic Support and Disability Services, Morrisville State College Norwich Campus, was selected as the recipient of Commerce Chenango's March Employee of the Month Award.**



Corning native Jeri O'Bryan-Losee has been with Morrisville State College for 14 years. The majority of her job responsibilities revolve around service to students. In addition to carrying a caseload of approximately 75 students with disabilities, she also provides the structure and programming for the academic support center.

Norwich Campus Dean, Dr. Marsha L. Cornelius, says, "Jeri has always taken pride in the growth and accomplishments of the students she works with. Every aspect of her success as a professional is based in her strength of character. The students she works with are fortunate that she not only stays current with what is best practice and current trends, but also takes what she learns and directly applies that knowledge to provide a quality service to each and every student that she works with."

The *Employee of the Month Program* was implemented to recognize outstanding employees. Jeri has spearheaded numerous events at the Norwich Campus such as, food drives, a dress for success drive for disadvantaged women and leads an event to send troop care packages to soldiers overseas. She's reached out in her community too, participating in the Norwich Relay for Life and Bowl for Kids Sake. She supports Veteran's Services, Literacy Volunteers of America, the United Way, Hospice and advocates for people with disabilities. Most recently Jeri raised over \$1700 shedding her shoulder-length hair to benefit the St. Baldrick's fundraiser.

Jeri received \$100 cash, made possible through the sponsorship of **Mang Insurance Agency**, a \$50.00 gas card from Mirabito Energy Group, a free oil change from Chris Aponte at the Benedict Corporation, and a gift certificate from Nina's Pizzeria.

You say goodbye and we say hello  
Hello, hello  
We don't know why you say goodbye  
We say hello

This Beatles song topped the charts in 1967. Fast forward to April 2011. Commerce Chenango is sad to say "goodbye" to Kate Jones, our Director of Finance and HR, but excited to say "hello" to Jim Seifert, our new Director of Finance and HR.

Kate has been with the Chamber for 3 years in her current position. She said, "It's with mixed feelings that I retire from the Chamber." Kate has held many positions in her accounting career and was employed at Penn-Can Asphalt Materials before accepting the position at the Chamber. Originally from Vernon, New York, Kate has three sons and seven grandchildren. Her retirement will lead her to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she will be living with her son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. Kate is looking forward to the move, but says, "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Commerce Chenango staff and will miss them." Her retirement takes effect on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board and Staff of Commerce Chenango wish Kate well in her new venture to warmer climates!

We welcome Jim Seifert, who has lived in Norwich for the past 20 years, to the Commerce Chenango staff. Jim was hired for the position due to his experience in accounting and computer technology. Jim is a SUNY Morrisville graduate in the Business Administration field. He has held several jobs which afforded him the opportunity to use his technology and financial skills. He most recently co-owned and operated the national franchise "Frontier Adjusters," a network of independent, multi-line claims adjusters that has been serving the property and casualty insurance industry since 1957. Jim is engaged to local Kathy Wagner, and enjoys the company of her two daughters and three grandchildren. He says, "I'm really happy to be here (the Chamber) and look forward to working with the staff, Board, and members of the Chamber." His first official day with Commerce Chenango is April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Good luck to Jim in his new position with the Chamber!

### — Member Happening —

**April 30th**  
**Chenango River Theatre Spring Raffle**  
Chenango River Theatre  
27 West Main Street, Norwich  
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Call 607.336.2787 or visit [www.chenangorivetheatre.org](http://www.chenangorivetheatre.org)

## Commerce Chenango is proud to announce...

...that the membership level of participation in events has increased by **11%** in our 2010-2011 year. This is a great accomplishment and we feel that our members are recognizing that *active membership participation increases success*. A gym membership won't do you any good if you don't actively use it, so why would you expect anything different from your Chamber membership?

Some of the key points that may have contributed to our increase in participation are outlined below:

- \* Members perceive the benefits of an event as valuable.
- \* Members feel that their participation in an event has an influence.
- \* Members' needs are being met.
- \* The events are well organized, making them more enjoyable to attend.

Commerce Chenango strives not only for active participation, but also *meaningful* participation. Member feedback is always appreciated and encouraged. Feel free to contact Jill at 334-1402 or e-mail at [jeddy@chenangony.org](mailto:jeddy@chenangony.org) if you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation.

*Jill Eddy*

Membership & Programs Coordinator

Rapid

## Worker Classifications are Under the Microscope

Earlier this year, the IRS announced a plan to audit 6,000 businesses over the next three years in regards to misclassification of independent contractors, which the federal government claims costs the government billions of dollars in revenue each year.

There are a number of benefits to hiring independent contractors instead of employees and some employers are intentionally misclassifying employees to enjoy these benefits, but many others are unaware of the distinctions between the two and are simply making an error.

Unfortunately, the IRS isn't forgiving of "honest mistakes." Understanding labor laws is the duty of all employers, but getting the information and staying in compliance is not always an easy task.

Generally speaking, there are three areas the IRS looks at: behavioral control, financial control, and certain relationship factors. The worker may have employee status if the following is true:

### **Behavioral control:**

Instructions are given to the worker, such as:

- \* When and where to do the work
- \* The order and sequence of the work

### **Financial control:**

- \* The individual is financially dependent on the business.
- \* The individual is paid on an hourly, weekly or guaranteed basis.

### **Relationship factors:**

- \* If individuals are hired for an indefinite period of time and in fact, work for the same employer for years at a time.
- \* If the individual qualifies for paid vacation, sick days, health insurance, and other forms of benefits.

The Business Council of New York State, Inc. is offering the New York HR Library, which includes two publications covering the entire employment law cycle from pre-hire to post termination. Publications include the New York Human Resources Manual and Model Policies and Forms for New York Employers.

Both manuals are available for \$192 to BCNYS members and \$240 for non-members, when you provide the code NYNEWS11M. To place an order or for more information, visit [www.accr.biz/newyork](http://www.accr.biz/newyork) or call toll free 866.439.2227.



## Golden Artist Colors Growing International Reach with Hire of European Sales Manager

Peter France recently joined Golden Artist Colors as European Sales Manager. In this newly created position, France will serve as the leading advocate for the GOLDEN and Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors brands in Europe.

Based in Belgium, France will act as the primary contact point with all territory distributors, sales staff and key retail accounts. Centrally located in the market territory, France will be critical in connecting the current customer base with the opening of the company's new European warehouse, which is designed to increase speed to market and customer access to a wide range of products and services.

As marketing liaison, he will be supporting the company's connection to the arts community and growing the educational resources, which have become a hallmark of Golden Artist Colors' marketing efforts.

Bill Hartman, Sales Director of Golden Artist Colors, shared, "We are very excited to welcome Peter to the Sales Team at GOLDEN. Peter will spearhead our plan to grow our art materials business and expand our customer base in this important market region. We have been diligent in our search for the right individual to fulfill this key position, and we believe that he is the ideal person to help us accomplish our strategic goals."

Prior to joining GOLDEN, France held a Sales Representative position for close to 20 years with a longtime GOLDEN customer, developing long-term relationships with customers in the Benelux. Fluent in four languages, France holds a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing from St. Eligius Institute, Antwerp, Belgium.

***Do you have member news or updates to share?  
Call Audrey Robinson at 334-1429***



### NEW ADA RULES NOW IN EFFECT

DOJ's amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act is here. Businesses and municipalities must be fully accessible.

Architect Steve Mason, AIA specializes in this work nationally, and is a local resource for your questions.

**skm@realmsarchitectural.com**  
**www.realmsarchitectural.com**  
**(607) 821-2138**

## Commerce Chenango

**Mission:** To serve our members and the Greater Chenango area through partnership with business and all levels of government; to leverage resources for sustainable economic growth.

**Vision:** Commerce Chenango will leverage all available resources to support its members, stimulate growth, enhance services, attract new business, improve infrastructure and grow tourism, with a priority on the retention and creation of jobs throughout the Greater Chenango area.

### Commerce Chenango

#### Board of Directors

**Sewain Conklin**, Development Chenango  
**James Currie**, (Chair) Frontier  
**Richard Decker**, Chair, Board of Supervisors  
**Patrick Dowdall**, The Mid-York Press  
**Bruce Erath**, The Voss Group  
**Daryl Forsythe**, NBT Bank  
**Tim Handy**, NBT Bank  
**Hugh Kearney**, Chenango Co. IDA  
**Pete Komendarek**, The Raymond Corporation  
**Drake Lamén M.D.**, Chenango Memorial Hospital  
**Stan McLean**, Genegantslet Golf Club  
**Carrie Mygatt**, Norwich Pharmaceuticals  
**Chris Taft**, Preferred Mutual Insurance Company  
**Kevin Walsh**, Peggy Parker Real Estate

#### Executive Committee

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**Bruce Erath**, The Voss Group  
**Pete Komendarek**, The Raymond Corporation  
**Drake Lamén**, Chenango Memorial Hospital  
**Kevin Walsh**, Peggy Parker Real Estate

### Commerce Chenango

#### Advisory Committee

**Mitchell Anderson**, L.A Najarian  
**Betsey Baio**, New York Pizzeria  
**James Doig**, Sidney Federal Credit Union  
**Mike Hayes**, Hayes Office Products  
**John Kwasnik**, Service Pharmacy  
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