

Chenango Reports

Leading Business, Leading Communities™

March Newsletter 2011

Message from the President & CEO



School Board Service: What Community Members & Leaders Should Know

As schools across New York State face unprecedented budget challenges, it is more important than ever to have dedicated community members willing and able to step forward to take leadership roles on district school boards. While the job may be thankless at times, serving on a school board is one of the most important ways of supporting public education in our communities.

Equally important is ensuring prospective school board members have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities. The Chenango Foundation has a history of developing leaders in our community and has graduated over 250 individuals from the Leadership Chenango Program and now the Foundation is supporting a new initiative. Two forums will be held in March focused on providing basic information for those considering running for their district's school board. These forums are designed to be more of a "prep" course and will feature a panel discussion.

The panel will consist of Barry Entwistle, Director of Leadership Development, New York State School Boards Association; William Tammaro, Superintendent, DCMO BOCES; and Judie Wright, former school board member. The programs will be held on March 18th at the Greene High School from 6:00-8:00 p.m. and at DCMO BOCES Chenango Campus on March 19th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

The Foundation hopes that by offering this pre-training course on school board service, there will be increased interest in running for school board seats. The group also hopes to educate those running on an introductory level as to what their roles, rights, and responsibilities would be if they were successful at being elected.

If you have ever thought about running for a school board seat I encourage you to attend one of these sessions; they are free, and there is no commitment. Anyone with an interest in learning more about serving on a school board is invited to attend. For more information, or to register, contact us at 607-334-1400 by March 15th.

Co-Authored by Melissa Stagnaro and Maureen Carpenter, EDP, IOM
President & CEO

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- GAC Mtg. ~ March 2nd, trip to Albany
- CC Finance Mtg. ~ March 15th @ 7:30 AM
- IDA Mtg. ~ March 16th @ 8:00 AM
- CC Executive Mtg. ~ March 17th @ 7:30 AM
- Advisory Council Mtg. ~ March 22nd @ 7:30 AM

Happy St. Patrick's Day!



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

The Employee of the Month Program has been implemented to recognize outstanding employees of Chamber members, and to acknowledge their contributions to the organization in which they are employed and the greater Chenango area.

Winners will receive \$100 cash, made possible through the sponsorship of **Mang Insurance Agency**, a \$50.00 gas card from Mirabito Energy Group, a gift certificate from Nina's Pizzeria, FREE oil change from Chris Aponte @ Benedict's, and promotion for your organization. If you would like to nominate someone, call Jill at 334-1402.

Give your employees the recognition they deserve!

**Seeking
Nominations!**

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Spring is a Great Time to Plan

It is that time of year when we all really start itching for spring. You are probably starting to make your mental list of all of the projects you need to tackle—a fresh coat of paint, landscaping maintenance, new windows—but have you thought about your business plan? Now is the time to update your plans for marketing and advertising, growth in the coming years, and even giving thought to succession planning.

Though most business owners that I speak with—both start-ups and existing business—seem to loathe this process, I cannot stress the importance of business planning enough. More often than not, people are reluctant to focus on topics such as evaluating the competition, marketing and outreach (“word of mouth” does not equal a marketing strategy), setting goals, and projecting their true working capital needs.

Below are a few questions to get the ideas flowing:

- * What are you hoping to accomplish for the remainder of the year?
- * Where do you want your business to be this time next year? How about in five years?
- * Are your investments in advertising/marketing working for you? Have you gotten on the “social networking” train yet?
- * Are there any investments you’ve been putting off that make sense now?
- * Are your cash reserves adequate to meet your needs over the next six months to a year?
- * Evaluate your current debt structure. Are you matching sources & uses well? Does anything need to be restructured?
- * Is your 2010 tax return process going smoothly? If not, what should you change for next year? It is never too early to start planning for next year’s tax return!

When everything outside starts to look green and fresh, you will likely feel a bit more inspired to plan for the future than you did just a few months ago. If you need any assistance with evaluating the items above, or planning for the future, please contact our office to set up a business planning appointment.

Jennifer Tavares, EDFP
Economic Development Specialist
607-334-5532

www.chenangony.org

It's not just Chamber information!
Check out the Tourism & Economic
Development information too!

GAC Legislative Agenda 2011

Promote Policies for Economic Recovery and a Competitive Business Climate

- * Restore IDA “Civic Authority”
- * Extend “Power for Jobs”
- * Oppose Paid Family Leave Mandate

Support:

- * Small business access to capital
- * Streamline regulations and reduce mandates
- * Lower energy costs
- * Small business tax relief
- * Support measures to improve the agri-business climate

Reduce Chenango County Government Spending and Taxes

- * Government Consolidation/Shared Services
- * Local Government Budget Efficiency

Reduce State and Local Government Spending and Reduce Taxes

- * State Spending Cap (with significant reform)
- * Pension reform
- * Health Insurance Plan/Contribution reform
- * Property Tax Cap (with local mandate relief)
- * Support efforts for a Constitutional Convention

Health Insurance Mandates and Medicaid Spending

- * Impose moratorium on any new coverage mandates
- * Creation of the Mandate Commission to examine costs of mandates
- * Critical reviews of Medicaid menu of services
- * Encourage Legislation to add Medicaid Coverage Term Limits

Infrastructure

- * Continue Advocacy for NYS Route 12 Improvements
- * Support Environmentally Safe Natural Gas Exploration
- * Support Efforts to Continue Local CHIPS Funding

Federal

- * Card Check—(a method for American employees to organize into a labor union in which a majority of employees in a bargaining unit sign “cards” stating they wish to be represented by a union.)
- * Wicks Law—(Wicks Law requires state and local governments to issue multiple construction contracts for most public works projects for which the cost exceeds \$50,000. The government must award separate prime contracts for at least 3 major components of the work)

An update on the Governmental Affairs Committee's trip to Albany will be in next month's Chenango Reports Newsletter.

Congratulations to our First Chamber Bowling Tournament Winners!



Highest Scoring Team – City of Norwich
(Joe Maiurano, Dales Smith, Bob Root, Jim Mucha)

Lowest Scoring Team – Manpower
(Lori Olsen, Miles Nichols, Amber & Jeremy Zorno)

High Game – 258/Jenn Wightman (NBT)

Low Game – 53/Geri Eaton (NBT)

Strike It Rich – 20/Nate Miller (Tops)

Spare Change – 15/Liz Caezza (NYCM)

Team Spirit – Celebration Creations Pink Ladies
(Kerri Green, Stephanie Taylor, Sheri Youngs, and Tracy Simmons)

Wii Bowling – 190/Paul Schmidt (Giltner's)
181/Miles Nichols (Manpower)

50/50 – Larry Lash (Tops)

SAVE THE DATE...

April

- * Annual Dinner—April 6th *sponsored by* NBT Bank @ The Silo in Greene
- * Business After Hours—April 20th @ Hilltop Construction in Greene
- * Networking Luncheon—April 28th @ Lewis' Restaurant in Sherburne

May

- * Membership Luncheon—Date/Location TBD
- * Business After Hours *with* Leigh Baldwin
- * Leadercast Conference (see details) →

Member Program

March 25, 2011

**“How to become a Powerful Presenter:
So audiences will listen, remember and act”**

Commerce Chenango, Norwich

9:00 am - Noon

Presented by Fred Ashforth, President

Ashforth Associates

Over 14,000 people have attended this highly-interactive workshop to turbo-charge their speaking and presentation skills.

Commerce Chenango members reduced rate is \$59 per person, or \$49 for two or more people from the same company/organization. Seating is limited. Call today! 315-269-4412 or fred@fredashforth.com.

Chamber Programs

March 16, 2011

“Good Morning Chenango”

Fred's Inn

5149 State Hwy 12, Norwich

Sponsored by

Sidney Federal Credit Union

Registration: 7:30 a.m. / Breakfast & Program: 8:00 a.m.

Theme: Business Progress

Speakers:

Jim Doig, Sidney Federal Credit Union; **Chris Hayes**, Hayes Office Products; **Keven Bucklin**, Agro-Farma; **Jim Henderson**, Golden Artist Colors, Inc.

These business leaders will share information about how they grew their companies, even in a bad economy. Cost to attend is just \$20.00.

Please RSVP to 334-1402 by March 11th.

May 6, 2011

Leadercast Conference

“Voices of Change”

Canasawacta Country Club, Norwich

Sponsored by

Agro-Farma

Visions Federal Credit Union

One-day leadership event featuring renowned authors, CEO's, & leaders, broadcast LIVE from Atlanta via satellite.

*Cost to attend is \$100.00 per person.
Watch for more details!*

Six things to tell every customer who walks through your door

It's easy to understand that customers who feel ignored or dismissed when they walk into a store won't stick around for long. But knowing just what to say to get them engaged isn't as simple.

1. "How's the weather treating you?"

This is an example of a neutral topic that can effectively start a casual conversation. "If I start conversations with customers about a neutral event, they will let their guard down and start chatting. Then I will be able to find out what they are really looking for that day," says Liana C. Ling, president of Tiger Quest, a sales consulting firm in Toronto.

2. "Let me introduce you to our team."

Quiana Green, president of Chicago-based entertainment promotion company No Vacancy ENT, ensures that every potential client meets at least four of her 12 staff members. "It shows clients, 'a lot of people can take time out of their busy schedules to meet me because I'm special,'" she says.

3. "Have you visited our store before?"

Sherri Comstock, owner of retail boutiques The Cheshire Cat and The Spotted Crocodile in Grayslake, Ill., began encouraging her staff to ask this question after reading a study that showed it could increase sales by 16 percent. "If the reply is 'no,' it gives my staff an opening to give a brief elevator speech as to what brands and products we offer," she says. "It also allows us to track how they heard of us."

4. "Try us out for free."

James Davenport, owner of James Davenport All American Martial Arts in Oklahoma City, offers two free lessons to first-time visitors. "It gets them to try our program before making a decision," he says. The key is offering two lessons rather than one. "Most schools only offer one free lesson, so this sets us above others," he adds.

5. "Would you like some coffee?"

It's important to make every customer feel at home, especially for Des Moines, Iowa-based Kitchen Collage, which sells dishes, cookware, knives and kitchen gadgets. "The coffee offering grew out of practicality," says owner Teresa Adams-Tomko. "Initially, there wasn't a coffee shop nearby and we were selling high-speed coffee machines that we needed to test and learn to use." Today, the coffee is just part of the store's customer service—it helps customers feel relaxed and comfortable.

6. "I want you to be happy."

Emily Fry, president of Chicago matchmaking service In Good Company Inc., tells all potential clients, "I want you to be happy with the service because if you're happy, you're going to tell your friends, and they're going to tell their friends, and we will continue to grow." "This simple statement says a lot," she says. "I can't remember any business owner ever saying that to me."

Welcome to our New Members

GetJackedWithJanet

Janet Thomas
(607) 373-9753

PO Box 974, Sherburne

Personal fitness trainer and consultant. One on one, small group, online, corporate, group fitness, boot camps. Janet is offering a member-to-member discount of 10% off all services.
www.getjackedwithjanet.com

Personal Fitness Trainer

Ashforth Associates

Fred Ashforth
(315) 269-4412

125 E. Bacon Street, Waterville

Fred works with professionals to improve their communication skills so they become more effective leaders, gain a competitive advantage and consistently win more business.

www.fredashforth.com

Consulting

Let's Celebrate!

March is Music in our Schools Month

March 2nd — Dr. Seuss's Birthday
March 5th — Start of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race
March 13th — Daylight Savings Time Begins
March 14th — Albert Einstein's Birthday
March 17th — Happy St. Patrick's Day
March 20th — First Day of Spring
March 24th — Harry Houdini's Birthday

Chenango SPCA's 7th Annual Valentine Fur Ball A Success

The Chenango SPCA held its 7th Annual Valentine Fur Ball Saturday, February 12th at the Canasawacta Country Club in Norwich, NY. The event was a great success, with over 330 guests in attendance. Delicious food and desserts were provided by the Canasawacta Country Club and live music by SPLASH kept the crowd dancing all night long. Commemorative photographs were available by Gerry Raymonda Photography, allowing guests to have something to remember the night by.

Over seventy items were donated by local businesses and individuals for the silent auction, raising just over \$4,000. Also featured in the auction were paintings done by some of the animals at the shelter. In total, the Valentine Fur Ball raised over \$10,000 for the shelter which will support the daily care of the animals during these cold winter weeks.

February Employee of the Month



Pictured L to R: Susan McCoy, Mang Insurance Agency; Ramon Casipit, DDS, Enlightened Dentistry; Christine; Maureen Carpenter, Commerce Chenango

Christine Bates, Administrative Assistant, Enlightened Dentistry, was selected as the recipient of Commerce Chenango's February Employee of the Month Award.

Sponsored by



Christine has worked for Enlightened Dentistry for six years. Ramon Casipit, DDS, recommended Christine for this prestigious honor because of her "dedication and commitment to not just the dental office, but also to her second job at Byrne Dairy. She enjoys working and helping others, and does it every day with a smile."

The Employee of the Month Program was implemented to recognize outstanding employees. Christine's co-workers say that all of their patrons enjoy her easy-going disposition and positive attitude. She never takes a sick day or vacation, but rather covers for those who do.

Christine has worked and lived in the Chenango County area for her entire life. She is the oldest of 8 brothers and sisters and has worked in establishments such as W.T. Grant and Fred's Inn. Her customer service skills are unsurpassed and she does not look for any recognition. She said, "I'm really surprised to receive this award." When she has free time she enjoys painting with water-colors.

Enlightened Dentistry provides general dentistry for all ages. Their services are enhanced with laser dentistry, safest x-rays, gentle gum care, TMJ and orthodontics.

Christine 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. If you are a Chamber member and would like to nominate someone, call Jill at 334-1402.

— Member Happenings —

March 11th

The John Henry's

Chenango County Council of the Arts

27 West Main Street, Norwich

Time: 7:00 p.m.

The John Henrys have a sound that is un-definable. They draw from a potpourri of influences and styles and blend them into something that is part alt-country, part Americana, part jam band and part rock n' roll.

Call 607.336.2787 or visit www.chenangoarts.org

March 13th

"Maple Day" at the Historical Museum

Chenango County Historical Society Museum

45 Rexford St., Norwich

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

This event kicks off the NYS Maple Association's Maple Weekend. Come enjoy displays and exhibits on the history of maple sugaring from slow boiling the sugar over wood to the technology used today. Maple oriented refreshments.

This event is free and open to the public.

Contact: Alan Estus at 607.334.9227

March 20th

Kristina Reiko Cooper Trio

Chenango County Council of the Arts

27 West Main Street, Norwich

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Stunning cello virtuoso Kristina Reiko Cooper has won world acclaim for her musical diversity, artistry and charismatic stage presence.

Call 607.336.2827 or visit www.chenangoarts.org

March 19th-20th and 26th-27th

Baker's Maple Products Open House

One Freiot Ave, Bainbridge

Time: 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Come see what else Baker's Maple has to offer! Learn about the maple syrup process. Enjoy samples, displays, demonstrations and activities.

Call 607.967.7229 or visit www.bakersmaple.com

March 26th

Big Brother Big Sister Bowl for Kid's Sake

Plaza Lanes, 5640 State Hwy 12, Norwich

Time: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Call 607.334.3878

Chenango County Tourism Report is available on our website at: www.chenangony.org/tourism/tourism-publications

**Congratulations to Adam Bosworth,
February Ambassador of the Month!**



Ambassadors

Chris Aponte ~ Benedict Corporation

****Adam Bosworth ~ Hayworth Holding Co., LLC**

Dan Grady ~ Mang Insurance Agency

Kerri Green ~ WCDO/Celebration Creations

Brendan Hannan ~ NBT Bank

Greg LaMonica ~ NBT Bank

Bryant LaTourette ~ Rapid Reproductions

Terri Slater ~ M&T Bank

Melissa Stagnaro ~ The Evening Sun

Stephanie Taylor ~ Humana

Hilary Wilcox ~ GHS

*** Indicates current Ambassador of the Month*

Rapid

Why you should advertise even in a bad economy

In a recession, the first dollars that a company usually cuts come from the advertising budget. Advertising in a recession is actually a smart business move to grow your business now and for the future.

Here are some reasons why you need to advertise your business in a bad economy:

Your Competition Won't

Most small businesses have a limited advertising budget. During a recession, it's easy to make up some of those dollars by holding back on advertising. All that really does is open up the marketplace for that company's competitors who are willing to advertise.

You Can Create a Long-Term Position for Your Business

Standing out in the marketplace is hard enough when you and your competition are battling it out in the ad world. While your competition is cutting back, you have the chance to be the company consumers spend with now while gaining their future business as you continue to advertise in good times and bad.

Get Better Deals on Advertising

Now is a good time to get deals on your ad space. You can get more exposure through more ad placement and even freebies added into the mix.

In a bad economy, there are many opportunities to expose your business to new customers that aren't always possible in a good economy. Commerce Chenango offers many low-cost options to their members, whether through our website, newsletter, e-blasts or monthly mailings. Please call Jill at 334-1402 or e-mail at jeddy@chenangony.org for more information about our advertising specials.

Jill Eddy

Membership & Programs Coordinator

**NEW ADA RULES
TAKE EFFECT MARCH 15th**

DOJ's amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act is here.

Businesses and municipalities must be fully accessible.

Will you be in compliance?

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

Chenango ARC celebrates Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM)

Chenango ARC would like to remind everyone that March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. People with disabilities are valuable, productive, contributing members of our community who have much to offer and a desire to participate. "Together" is the theme for this year's DDAM. The theme is meant to encourage people to understand that everyone wins when people with disabilities are welcomed into local neighborhoods, workplaces and schools.

Chenango ARC has many programs and services available to individuals to assist them in leading richer, more fulfilling lives. Our participants not only learn job skills, but daily living skills as well, along with being active community members. Chenango ARC has volunteer programs in place with the SPCA and Pizza Hut, while their Day Habilitation program supplies Holiday Chime and Chorus concerts at area nursing homes and hospitals.

As New York State's funds to support these programs are tenuous, you can help by contacting state legislators and ask them to support citizens with disabilities, or if you wish to offer your personal assistance please contact Chenango ARC at 607.334.5366.

Parks Project Update...

By *Pegi S. LoPresti, Executive Director*
Norwich BID

Friends of the Parks and the Norwich Business Improvement District have long had the goal of a historic renovation of East and West Parks. After years of planning, meeting with stakeholders, and revising and improving the scope of the work, we have crafted a plan that best reflects the interests of our community.

I wanted to share with you the results for the portion of the Parks Project that was recently put out to bid; (essentially the construction of the new stage and the relocation/rebuild of the gazebo; both of which require the payment of prevailing wages). A total of (6) bid packets were distributed and there were (3) bids received for the opening.

We will now await Delaware Engineering to review the bids and issue the Notice of Award, then the Notice to Proceed. Construction completion is slated for June 30, 2011 and Gary Brightman, Friends of the Parks Committee, is hopeful that the completion date will be for the entire project ... not just the stage and gazebo.

It has been a long, hard-fought battle and we are anxiously awaiting the start of construction. Through all the input and changes, the goal remains to enhance the charm, function and character of the parks and to provide a place for current and future public events that will contribute to the economic and social vitality of Norwich and the surrounding communities. Thank you to each and every one of you who has worked so hard to make this project a reality ... it really appears that we are getting close!

For more information on the Parks Project contact Eric Larsen at 607.334.5653, x1 or Pegi LoPresti at 607.336.1811.

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

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Chamber/Tourism/Economic Development
19 Eaton Avenue, Norwich, NY 13815

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**or visit us at
www.chenangony.org**

Address or Email Correction:

Please call (607) 334-1429 or email arobinson@chenangony.org.

Low-Cost Financing For Your Business Expansion Needs



Through the Development Chenango Corporation

- Job creation and/or other significant economic benefit must be demonstrated
- Minimum 10% cash/equity contribution
- Interest rates between 4-5%
- Terms varying from 3-7 years
- Uses include property acquisition, fixed asset purchases, inventory, and working capital
- Up-to-date business plan, financial projections credit report, and historical financials required

**For More Information
or Business Planning
Assistance Contact:**

Jennifer Tavares, EDFP
607-334-5532
jtavares@chenangony.org
www.chenangony.org