

VISIONS

MAGAZINE

Evolution and enterprise

Businesses evolve with time and enjoy
benefits of keen vision

Michael Brooks and James Sidford, Austin & Co. Inc.

Silver anniversary celebration

Women's Business Council
celebrates 25 years

WHEN WE LOSE A TRUE FRIEND,



IT SEEMS THAT TIME STANDS STILL.

We are proud to support the Albany-Colonie Chamber's tribute to Don Led Duke,
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to inspire us for many years to come.

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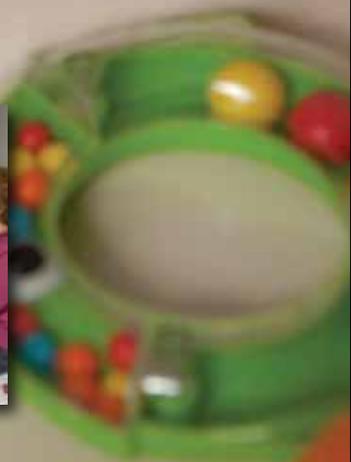
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the chamber

albany-colonie regional chamber of commerce
vision for business

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CHAMBER MISSION: Be a catalyst for growth and prosperity for our members and the Capital Region by providing leadership, advocacy and services.



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* Denotes Executive Committee member

Chamber strength lies in members' commitment



Any member organization is only as strong as its members, and that certainly holds true for the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber is comprised of nearly 2,400 businesses and organizations of all types and sizes and from throughout the Capital Region.

The Chamber is a catalyst organization to advance regional economic prosperity. We achieve this through focused goals and by leveraging the talents and resources of member businesses to create an environment for growth and success. The Chamber offers leadership, advocacy, programs and resources, all geared to build regional vitality.

Each month in *Visions*, we list the names of new Chamber member investors and welcome them to our organization. We also recognize Chamber members celebrating their anniversary month of Chamber membership, from five years to 50 years and beyond.

We appreciate their support of the Chamber, and we encourage you, in turn, to support these new and long-time members with your business.

In this month's issue of *Visions*, we highlight several long-time Chamber members and detail some of the ways in which they have evolved over the years.

Each business or organization has updated its approach as times have changed, and each one values its Chamber membership for the networking events, advocacy initiatives and business growth opportunities that Chamber membership provides. Learn more about how these Chamber members have thrived through hard work and keen vision.

With Governor Cuomo reaffirming his commitment to energy research and development in both his State of the State and his 2011-12 Executive Budget, the potential benefits, both economic and environmental, are significant.

Visions recently sat down with Senator George Maziarz, Chairman of the New York State Senate Energy Committee, for a one-on-one interview to discuss the energy-related initiatives that could impact New Yorkers. Read about the ways in which state leaders are seeking to grow New York's economy through expansion of the energy sector.

As always, thank you for reading *Visions* and for your continued support of the Chamber. •

Alan J. Krafchin
Center for Disability Services
Chairman of the Board

Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce

> MARCH

Tue
1

How to Save Costs by Adopting Energy-Efficient Practices

Presented by: Colonie Business Council
Corporate sponsor:



Your business can save money and be more efficient with green practices. Our panel of experts will share success stories and practices that have helped their businesses streamline their operations. Panelists include: Laura Poltynski, National Grid's head of energy efficiency for the eastern division; Vince Poirer, from Waste Management of NY.

**7:30 – 8am networking and breakfast;
8 – 9am program / Chamber Office / Cost: \$6**

Tue
8

Business Success Seminar: How to Prepare for Growth and Higher Profits in 2011

Presented by: Small Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



2011 promises to be a good year for business growth. Are you prepared to grab the opportunities when they come along? Are you proactively looking for ways to grow your business? Kate Baker, business advisor for Small Business Development Center, will share valuable information on doing more with less, avoiding pitfalls and setting priorities for the year.

**7:30 – 8am networking and breakfast;
8 – 9am program / Chamber office / Cost: \$10**

Thu
10

111th Annual Dinner



Sponsor:



The Chamber's Annual Dinner is the region's premiere business event, attended by nearly 1,000 Tech Valley business executives and civic leaders. This promises to be an evening you will not want to miss, featuring unmatched networking opportunities and an outstanding program. Walter Robb, Ph.D., retired General Electric executive, will be awarded the Envoy Salute for his vision, leadership and impact on the economic vitality of the region. Paula Stopera, president and CEO of CAP COM Federal Credit Union will receive the Arthur R. Kapner Spirit of the Chamber Award for her dedicated support of and service to the Chamber. In addition, a special tribute will honor the late Donald Led Duke, chairman of BBL Companies.

**5:30 – 8:30pm / Empire State Plaza Convention Center, Albany / Cost: Individual ticket: \$165
Table of ten: \$1,650**

Tue
15

Net "Work-it"! Speed Networking Workshop

Presented by: Women's Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



Join us for an entire program full of networking. We will have speed networking, WBC style! This workshop is a great way to meet the other members, share your expertise and promote your business, organization or yourself. Come with your business cards and 30-second infomercial ready. No wallflowers here! Try a fun, fast-paced way to foster business relationships. This timed event allows you to supersize your business contacts in just one morning!

**7:30 – 8am networking and breakfast;
8 – 9am program / The Century House,
997 New Loudon Road, Latham /Cost: \$15**

Wed
16

Solo Entrepreneurs Forum: Lessons in Leadership

Presented by: Small Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



Join other solo entrepreneurs for an open roundtable discussion. At this roundtable, Alan I. Stern from Stage Right Organizational Development will facilitate discussion on how effective business people – whether in solo practice or within organizations – can recognize the behaviors they need and learn how to use them to lead, manage and conduct business to achieve the results they want. You will also have the opportunity to raise questions and propose ideas you have as a solo entrepreneur.

**7:30 – 8am networking and breakfast;
8 – 9am program / Chamber office**

Thu
17

Complying with Foreign Trade Standards

Presented by: Tech Valley Global Business Network

Presenters Mark Lewis, from the U.S. Department of Commerce, and Jeff DePree, from Halcyon Development, will define the various foreign trade standards, raise awareness of compliance issues and provide follow-up resources for an in-depth look at individual company situations.

**7:30 – 8am check-in and networking;
8am program / Chamber office / Cost: \$20**

Thr
17

New IRS Regulations for Nonprofits: How Will Your Organization be Affected?

Presented by: Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



The government is going to be more focused than ever on new funding sources in 2011, and converting nonprofits to tax-paying entities is always going to be a target. Don't miss this panel discussion with experts in law, taxation and health care to update you on what you should know, when you should know it and how to remain in compliance. They will discuss such issues as: state registration and filing requirements, who needs to use 1099s, and compliance issues required under Health Care Reform.

**11:30am networking and lunch; noon program
Italian American Community Center, 257
Washington Avenue, Albany / Cost: \$20**

**Wed
23**

**China 2011
Informational Session**

China is the adventure of a lifetime, and based upon the overwhelming response to its three previous trips, the Chamber of Commerce is offering its fourth nine-day, all inclusive trip this October — including optional excursions to the Terra-Cotta Warriors and Elephant Trunk Hill. Join us for this informational session and learn more about the full itinerary and other detailed information regarding the trip.

5:30 – 7pm / Chamber office

**Tue
29**

**The Puck Drops Here —
Chamber Night With the
Albany Devils**

Join your peers from the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber and network with members from the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce, Guilderland Chamber of Commerce, Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Schenectady County and The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County. Then, stick around and watch the Albany Devils face off against the Adirondack Phantoms in an exciting matchup of AHL rivals.

To register, call John Patterson at 518.433.8457

4pm doors open / 4:30pm special speaker and light hors d'oeuvres / 7pm game / Times Union Center, 51 South Pearl Street

**Wed
30**

**Enhance Your Online
Presence With Your
Free Chamber Internet
Marketing Package**

Presented by: Sara Mannix, President of Mannix Marketing, Inc. and Albany.com

The Chamber recently announced a new benefit to our members in collaboration with Mannix Marketing to advertise your business with a free business listing on Albany.com. Learn how to promote your business events, coupons, specials, press releases and more — for free — through your new Albany.com account.

**11:30 check-in and lunch; noon - 1pm program
Chamber office / Cost: \$8**



**Wed
6**

Maximize Your Membership

Would you use a tool for your business before reading the instructions? You're part of the Chamber, a critical instrument in your business toolbox. The Maximize Your Membership program is your set of instructions for utilizing your Chamber membership to grow your business. Meet Chamber staff, connect with other members, ask your questions and learn how to make your Chamber membership work for your business. Learn the basics to promote your business with your Albany.com listing.

**7:45am check-in and networking;
8 - 9am program / Chamber office**

**Thu
14**

**Grants & Grant Writing:
Getting to the Heart of the
Matter**

Presented by: Tech Valley Nonprofit Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



Join this panel discussion of area experts to gain an overview of the grant funding process and discuss examples of successful grants and the three important factors in effectively obtaining funds. During this workshop, you will obtain tips and tools to build benchmarks, expected outcomes and performance targets.

**7:30am check-in & networking; 8am program
NYS Nurses Association, 11 Cornell Road, Latham
Cost: \$15**

> APRIL

**Tue
19**

**Internal Messaging
Mishaps:
How to Communicate
Positively Within and
Outside Your Organization**

Presented by: Women's Business Council
Corporate Sponsor:



How do you make sure everyone in your organization is getting the same message at the same time? What role does social media play in internal communications? When the message isn't a good message, how do you share it? How do you tame the rumor mill? Keep the message positive across your social media outlets...don't garble your company's message in a Facebook post. This program will help you to choose the proper tools for the proper message.

**11:30am networking and lunch, noon – 1pm
program / The Century House, 997 New Loudon
Road, Latham / Cost: \$20**



the chamber
albany-colonie regional chamber of commerce
vision for business

Please register and pay by credit card online at acchamber.org/events.aspx or make checks payable to the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce and mail to: Five Computer Drive South, Albany, NY 12205. Pre-payment is required. CANCELLATIONS MUST BE MADE 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE. Walk-ins will be charged an additional \$5 fee. All events are for Chamber members only unless otherwise specified. For more information on councils and committees, call 518.431.1400.

The Chamber office is located at Five Computer Drive South, Albany, NY 12205-1608
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The Spirit of the Chamber.

The heart of CAP COM.

Congratulations to our President/CEO, Paula A. Stopera, on receiving the 2011 Arthur R. Kapner Spirit of the Chamber Award for her dedication and service to the Chamber.

The Credit Union's purpose of benefitting every member, every time, every day goes beyond our four walls. We are committed to helping our Chamber and strengthening our community through the CAP COM Cares Foundation.

We extend congratulations to Chamber honoree Walter L. Robb and share in the tribute honoring Donald Led Duke.



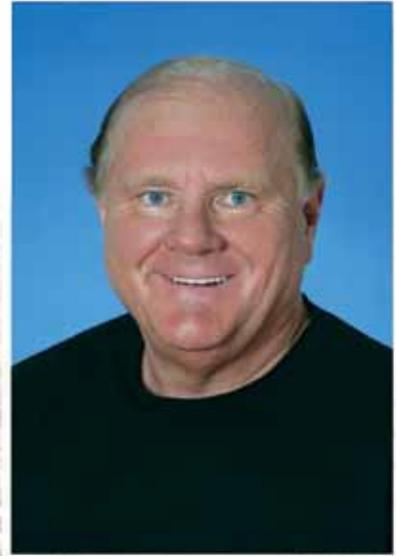
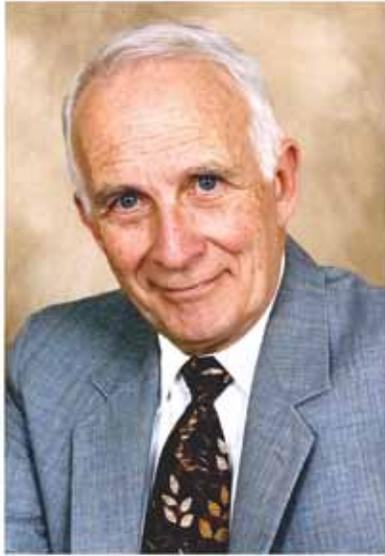
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Walter Robb, Paula Stopera and Don Led Duke to be honored

Awards to be presented March 10 at 111th Annual Dinner

The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce will bestow its highest honors at its 111th Annual Dinner on Thursday, March 10 at the **Empire State Plaza Convention Center** in Albany, when it recognizes Walter L. Robb, Ph.D., retired senior executive for **General Electric**, Paula A. Stopera, president and CEO of **CAP COM Federal Credit Union**, and the late Donald Led Duke, founder and chairman of **BBL Companies**.

“The Chamber is pleased to honor Walt Robb, Paula Stopera and Don Led Duke for their outstanding contributions to our region,” said Alan Krafchin, president and CEO of the **Center for Disability Services** and chair of the Chamber’s board of directors. “These individuals have exemplified unwavering commitment and unparalleled business and civic leadership.”

Robb will receive the Envoy Salute, which recognizes an individual whose vision, leadership and contributions have made a positive and significant impact on the economic vitality of the region.

“From the beginning of Tech Valley, I have thanked and applauded the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber for being

the inspiration behind this title, and for years I carried the Tech Valley logo on my personal business card,” Robb said. “To now be honored by this leading institution is an appreciated reward, and I am prepared to redouble my efforts to promote Tech Valley.”

“

The Chamber is pleased to honor **Walt Robb, Paula Stopera and Don Led Duke for their outstanding contributions to our region.**

”

Previous recipients of the Envoy Salute include: Alain E. Kaloyeros, Ph.D. (2010), The Golub Family (2009), William Kennedy (2008), Jack Aernecke (2007), Joseph L. Bruno (2006), Carl E. Touhey (2005), Richard C. Liebich (2004), Dr. Karen R. Hitchcock (2003), Wallace Altes (2002), Alan Goldberg (2001), Dr. Roland Schmitt (1999), John Egan (1998), Joseph Bulmer/Louis Vaccaro (1997), Fred Field (1996), Matt and Phoebe Bender (1995),

Thomas Whalen (1994) and Donald McKay (1993).

Stopera will receive the Arthur R. Kapner Spirit of the Chamber Award, which is presented to an individual whose dedicated service has enhanced the Chamber. The award is named in honor of Arthur R. Kapner, who passed away in 2004 after five decades of volunteer service to the organization, including serving as chairman of the Chamber’s board of directors.

“I am extremely grateful to be receiving the Arthur R. Kapner Spirit of the Chamber Award this year,” Stopera said. “When I heard the news, I was overwhelmed and very excited. I understand that Arthur Kapner was a leader in our community who had endless energy and a willingness to help anyone who was looking for guidance for their business or career. I understand his personality and energy were contagious. These are the same traits and philosophy that we look for from our Chamber in helping our businesses to grow and thrive.

continued on page 10

I am certainly humbled to be recognized in such a manner and follow the footsteps of such a great leader and those who have been honored before me.”

Previous recipients of the Spirit of the Chamber Award include: Nehme Frangie (2010), John Murray (2009), Robert Wakeman (2008), Jan Smith (2007), Linda Hill (2006), Karl Johnson (2005), Richard Kotlow (2004), James Howe (2003), Kevin McCoy (2001), Ken Colloton (1999), Dean Rueckert (1998), Pamela Sawchuk Brown (1997), William Clay (1996), Gary Smith (1995), Mike Hickey (1994), Larry Miller (1993) and Charlotte Buchanan (1992).

In addition, a special tribute will honor the late Donald Led Duke for his substantial contributions to the Capital Region.

“The kindness and warmth from the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber have been very meaningful to our family and we thank them for their support and recognition of Don’s lifelong efforts to make our region a better place to live,” said Mary Louise (Chick) Led Duke.

Each year, 1,000 members of the region’s business community participate in the Annual Dinner, a black tie affair that begins with a 5:30pm cocktail reception and is followed by a brief program and dinner at 7pm.

Online registration for the Chamber’s 111th Annual Dinner is open on the Chamber’s Web site, www.acchamber.org.

The Chamber thanks **NBT Bank**, the major sponsor of the Annual Dinner, and **Working Pictures Inc.**, the video sponsor. •



Members offer reduced rates on services leading up to Annual Dinner

The Chamber’s 111th Annual Dinner is almost here, and several Chamber members are offering discounts on a variety of services that attendees may need as they prepare for this year’s event on Thursday, March 10 at the **Empire State Plaza Convention Center**.

The following discounts are available to Chamber members:

> Tuxedo rental

Waldorf Tuxedo Company Inc. will offer \$15 off a tuxedo rental when you mention the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber’s Annual Dinner. Call 518.449.5011.

TUXEGO will offer \$59.95 on all classic collection tuxedos or \$25 off any other regular priced style when you mention the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber’s Annual Dinner. Call 518.783.0260

> Tuxedo pick-up and return

At Your Service will provide tuxedo pick-up one way for \$20 or pick-up and drop off for \$30. In addition, ladies’ gown pick-up and delivery at the dry cleaners or storage is available for \$30. Call 518.449.2420.

Prescription for success

Marra's Pharmacy receives 2011 Spirit of Cohoes Award

Barbara McDonald is a pharmacist by trade and a Cohoesier at heart. For her dedication to her profession and her commitment to the Spindle City, she and **Marra's Pharmacy, Inc.** have been selected as the recipients of the 2011 Spirit of Cohoes Award.

"It's thrilling to receive this award," McDonald said. "I try to be an ambassador for the City of Cohoes, and it's meant an awful lot to me to work at Marra's Pharmacy because it has been my life."

The Spirit of Cohoes Award is presented by the Chamber's Business Council of Cohoes to a Cohoes-based business that embodies the "community that cares" in support of its employees and its commitment to the Spindle City through its community involvement.

McDonald's father, James Marra, established Marra's Pharmacy in 1931, and was committed to one simple, sincere mission: to loyally serve the patient and the community.

McDonald attended the University of Connecticut to pursue a degree in pharmacy, but she was in the minority in terms of her education and career choice.

"When I went to study pharmacy, it was mainly an occupation for men," she said. "My pharmacy class was predominantly men. I went to college in a man's world and worked in a man's profession."

She began working at Marra's Pharmacy in 1958, but even then, the

idea of a female pharmacist was unusual for some customers.

"People would call, I'd answer, and they'd say, 'I'd like to speak to the pharmacist.' Or they'd ask to speak to a man or someone older," McDonald said. "But I found a job I really like, so I feel like I've never worked a day in my life."

Today, under the leadership of Barbara McDonald and her son, Cohoes Mayor John McDonald III — both registered pharmacists — the Marra family remains dedicated to James Marra's mission. They fill prescriptions, answer questions and provide customer service that's personal, accurate and efficient.

Adapt and expand

Marra's Pharmacy has seen its share of change over the years, and Barbara McDonald has been there to witness most of it.

"Every change has been a response to a need," she said. "Thirty years ago, we decided to get into the medical equipment business. Our customers needed crutches, canes and wheelchairs, but we

were referring them elsewhere. I knew that we had done the right thing by getting into this business to serve our customers' needs."

Marra's was destroyed by fire in 1988, but the pharmacy rebuilt and grew its business further. "That's when we expanded our gift shop," McDonald said. "There were other gift stores, but the whole environment had changed. We've

always had Hallmark cards, gifts, fragrances and cosmetics, but you have to respond to trends occurring in your environment and your business."

In terms of community involvement, Marra's supports numerous organizations, including the Cohoes Community Center by raising money for its day care program. The pharmacy also supports Cohoes Music Hall, and McDonald herself serves as president of the Cohoes High School Alumni Association, helping to raise funds and organize reunions for the school's graduates.

"I feel like I've been a professional cheerleader for the City of Cohoes, promoting Cohoes businesses when I'm out and about. I'm out there boasting about other businesses in the community," she said. •



James Marra, founder of Marra's Pharmacy



The current staff of Marra's Pharmacy

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We appreciate our members' support. Thank you to the following Chamber members celebrating anniversaries in March.

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- Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC
- Capital EAP
- Family & Children's Service of the Capital Region, Inc.
- Galesi Group
- Kemp's Sporting Goods, Inc.
- New York Life Insurance Company
- Ruch Distributors, Inc.
- The Jamison Group
- Campito Plumbing & Heating Inc.
- March of Dimes
- Aflac New York

20 years

- Robert J. Schreiner & Co., CPAs, PC

15 years

- The Community Preservation Corporation
- Richard R. Stephens, Consulting Engineer, PC

10 years

- Alfonso Consultants

5 years

- Williams Plastic Surgery Specialists
- 3t Architects
- At Your Service
- Hall And Associates
- Portside Distributors, Inc.
- 74 State
- Agrochem, Inc.
- Carrow Real Estate Services, LLC

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Silver anniversary celebration



Women's Business Council celebrates 25 years

It began in 1986 with six women sitting around a dining room table, discussing ways to increase networking opportunities and promote career development for their peers.

Twenty-five years later, the Women's Business Council (WBC) of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber remains committed to that founding mission, promoting the full participation and leadership of women at all levels in the workplace in Tech Valley's economic development, community and government.

"We have helped each other build personal and professional relationships," said Suzanne O'Connor, WBC chair and associate director of the **Siena College Career Center**. "Whenever I see former WBC chairs and tell them how many people attend our meetings today, they can't believe it. The WBC has grown and only gotten stronger."

The WBC will highlight its 25-year history during each of its monthly programs throughout 2011, culminating with an event this fall to celebrate its Silver

Anniversary. More details will follow in the coming months.

During its history, the WBC has developed programs that provide opportunities for women to network and share their expertise with each other and all Chamber members and to address the unique challenges and issues of women in business.

Mazie McMahon, immediate past WBC chair and marketing director for **The Bonadio Group**, credits its founding members with laying the groundwork for the council and its subsequent members, past and present, with making the WBC a vibrant, active group.

"You had these women sitting around a table trying to put something together, and look at where we are now," she said. "It's a tremendous effort by so many women over the years to get us where we are today."

From six people in 1986 to more than 500 members in 2011, the WBC has had a significant impact on women in business across Tech Valley, collectively and individually.

"For me, personally, the WBC has helped me in my career," McMahon said. "I started out on the program committee, and the WBC helped introduce me to a whole new group of professional

WBC 2010 Women of Excellence



Photo by Joan Heffler

women all over the Capital Region. Not only do I have great personal relationships, I have gotten business through my involvement. It has also raised my awareness of different nonprofit organizations throughout the community."

O'Connor, likewise, has experienced the benefits of WBC participation. "I see it as a tremendously valuable networking resource and have met some women who have not only helped me professionally, but also helped Siena College by hiring interns, providing networking connections and helping students learn about a certain career," she said.

Milestone event

Kara Conway Love, principal of **Kara Conway Love, Esq.**, was WBC chair when the council celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2006, and she believes the 25th anniversary is cause for further celebration.

"A lot of our members have relied on each other as sources of ideas and

WBC 2010 Symposium Excellence

Photo by Joan Heffler, Creative Expressions Photography, www.joanheffler.com





WBC 2009 Women of Excellence
Photo by Joan Heffler

support,” she said. “I’ve developed friendships and see members socially and businesswise outside of the WBC. We’ve seen a lot of professional growth and business success, and there’s also been a lot of mentoring and bringing along potential new leaders of the WBC.”

The WBC keeps its programming focused on business and provides insight on ways for women in business to support each other. “We’re an all-encompassing council, with women from for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations and all walks of life,” Conway Love said. “We try to develop programming that everyone will grow from and appreciate.”

Since 1992, the WBC has presented more than 250 Women of Excellence Awards to women who have achieved success in their professional careers and dedicated themselves to community service, including more than 100 Awards in 2000 alone during the Chamber’s 100th anniversary year.

“The Women of Excellence Awards luncheon has been a successful event, and it’s a prestigious award to receive,” Conway Love said. “It’s a great tribute to the various

women who have received it, and it’s a great honor just to be nominated. Plus, the WBC has benefited because award recipients have become involved in the council, if they weren’t already.”

In 2002, the WBC launched its Adopted Nonprofit program as a means to educate and increase awareness of local nonprofit agencies, and to provide volunteer opportunities for WBC members. Its adopted nonprofit for 2011 is the **Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless**; as is its tradition, the WBC seeks members to donate raffle items for each program, raising funds for the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless, in the process.

“Our Adopted Nonprofit program has been very successful, because we’ve increased volunteer opportunities our members can engage in and raised awareness of the nonprofit itself,” McMahon said. “Our members are now very involved in these nonprofit organizations through their work. We typically raise several thousand dollars for each nonprofit, which is quite a bit, especially for smaller nonprofits, in this economy.”

The Symposium on Excellence is yet another program that provides networking and educational opportunities for members. Last October, Christopher Flett, a reformed Alpha Male women’s leadership expert and professional business coach, and Ainslie Waldron, one of the world’s smartest women and a renowned business consultant, were the event’s two internationally recognized speakers.

“Symposium started as more of an opportunity to spend more in-depth time on education and career enhancing workshops,” Conway Love said. “It’s a great opportunity to enhance

and learn more about various topics, and people see a lot of reward from the time they invest.”

Beyond the monthly programs and major events, such as the Women of Excellence Awards and the Symposium on Excellence, the WBC serves as a valuable resource for women to share valuable advice that will help them in their careers, according to Maureen O’Brien-Thornton, former WBC chair and executive director for **The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society-Upstate New York Chapter**.

“We are a group of women that mentors other women, especially younger women,” she said. “Things have changed quite drastically in the workplace over the years, but there are still a lot of things that remain the same. The glass ceiling, unequal pay and sexism still exist. There are issues women have to deal with and work around to accomplish their goals, and the WBC gives them a comfortable arena in which to do that.

“The growth of the WBC is a testament to the women who have really become engaged in the council’s work. There are a lot of advantages for women to meet other women who will be business contacts throughout their careers, no matter where they are, in this region or beyond.” •

WBC 2010 Women of Excellence “Unplugged”
Photo by Joan Heffler





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ExportNY Program begins March 25

ExportNY, a six-month program of classroom education and training focused on helping manufacturers develop their businesses globally, is accepting applicants for its upcoming course.

The program enables participants to work ON their business in a structured fashion, as opposed to working IN their business. ExportNY is being promoted by the Tech Valley Global Business Network and coordinated by the **Center for Economic Growth (CEG)**.

The program content is presented by Jerry Shaye, director of International Trade Development with Empire State Development. In addition, industry specific experts are woven into each month's content as guest speakers.

Session topics include:

- Session 1:** Why export? What does our international sales system need to look like?
- Session 2:** Market definition and trade partner qualification
- Session 3:** How to collect on foreign sales
- Session 4:** Foreign shipping and standards compliance
- Session 5:** Legal issues related to global business
- Session 6:** Alternative market entry strategies

"There are almost limitless opportunities for growth for businesses in the international marketplace," said Mark Eagan, president and CEO of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce. "The ExportNY Program is a valuable resource to provide businesses with the information they need to grow and prosper on the global stage."

"Even if you already export, this is a great framework in which to deepen your bench strength in international business

knowledge, and to develop a game plan for entering or expanding into new markets, countries or hemispheres," said F. Michael Tucker, president and CEO of CEG.

The investment is just \$600 per person, which covers course materials and refreshments. Classes begin on March 25 and conclude on August 12 and are held from 8am to 2pm each month. Applications are due by March 18, and all participants must attend all six sessions.

To register for the 2011 ExportNY program, please complete the online application at <http://tinyurl.com/2011ExportNY>. For more

information, please contact Louise Aitcheson, CEG's program director for Business Development, at louisea@ceg.org or at 518.465.8975, ext. 229.

ExportNY has been available to manufacturers throughout upstate New York since the late 1990s, thanks to the work of the Regional Technology Development Centers, such as CEG, coupled with the support of **National Grid** and Empire State Development.

The Tech Valley Global Business Network is a partnership aligning economic development organizations in the area around the single issue of helping educate and provide networking opportunities for area companies interested in global trade.

TVGBN partners include: the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber, CEG, the Chamber of Schenectady County, the Rensselaer County Chamber of Commerce, the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce and the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce. •



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EVOLUTION AND ENTERPRISE

Businesses evolve with time and enjoy benefits of keen vision



James Sidford and Michael Brooks, Austin & Co. Inc.

Adaptability is essential to longevity in business, and several long-time members of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber have demonstrated their flexibility over the years by anticipating change and implementing a new approach to the way they do business.

Here are profiles of four such long-time Chamber members, and the ways in which each has evolved — and thrived — with the times.

Ensuring its place in history

Austin & Co., Inc. has been in business for 158 years and grown to become one of the largest insurance agencies in the Capital Region.

What began as a small property and casualty agency in downtown Albany with many local clients has evolved into a company with multiple offices and a client base that covers New York State, according to James Sidford, RHU, president of Austin & Co., Inc.

“Our clients benefit from a full range of insurance services, including employee benefits, property and casualty, risk management and human resource consulting,” he said. “Our client list includes education institutions, social service agencies, physicians’ groups and law firms.”

Led by Charles Liddle during the 1970s, Austin & Co., Inc. was one of the first employee-owned companies in the region, and the success of the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) has been mutually beneficial to both clients and employees.

“We’re an employee-owned company, so everybody in the company is a stockholder, which certainly helps with customer service and attention to detail,” Sidford said. “The ESOP has been around for more than 30 years, and we saw that shift coming. We wanted to retain employees, and sharing in ownership of the agency was paramount to doing that.”

The ESOP has made it easier for Austin & Co., Inc. to retain high-quality talent at a time when such qualified insurance experts are dwindling in number, according to Michael Brooks, executive vice president.

“Insurance is a very technical business. One dynamic that has changed is that there used to be oceans of people locally with the right credentials to work in a firm like this,” he said. “Large insurance carriers, whether in property and casualty, or employee benefits, used to employ hundreds of people locally. The most important capital

for us now is our human resources and the skilled people that we have. You come to really treasure someone who has the right skill set, and the ESOP is designed to reward longevity. That’s a dynamic shift from 50 or 75 years ago.”

The employee-owned structure is designed to encourage internal perpetuation instead of a sale, Brooks pointed out, as several firms similar to Austin & Co., Inc. have disappeared because they sold to much larger conglomerates and often lost their local presence in doing so.

“Our model rewards longevity and those employees who remain for the long term,” he said. “It also makes internal perpetuation more appealing as opposed to an outside sale.”

Another way in which the agency has adapted over the years is by shifting its focus as its niches have changed.

“Over the years, Austin’s leadership has successfully adapted to change and remained ahead of the competition,” Sidford said. “To maintain growth opportunities, the company focused on expanding niches and parallel market space, including the addition of our human resource consulting department more than four years ago and, most recently, a health insurance consortium. This model provides our clients with access to industry-specific programs and services that offer unique coverage options and cost savings, as well as a dedicated and expert service team.

“We have a terrific program for independent schools, and nonprofits and physicians’ groups are client niches, as well. These are all things we have developed and moved into to make sure that we remain competitive and provide to those niches.”

Brooks added, “We were proactive and developed niches. We find the generalist model to be less successful, and having

areas of influence and expertise are ways to have a sustainable competitive advantage.”

Technology has transformed the way businesses operate, and the agency uses it to respond to clients’ needs, Sidford noted. “We’ve see automation in our employee benefits program,” he said. “A lot of our clients want their employees to have access to their benefits information 24/7, and we’ve certainly been able to respond to that. Technology has been important, and we’re right on the edge of that.”

You’re promoted

Safeguard has reinvented itself during its 60 years in business, evolving from checks and paper products to a full line of promotional products and corporate apparel.

“I joined my father in July 1971, and my sister and my brother joined in the years since,” said Bill Martin, president. “But we’re not a family business. Safeguard is a major company. We are owned by a company called Deluxe that does more than \$1 billion in business annually.

“We started out by selling one-write check systems, with the carbon line behind the check. Over the years, as computers became popular, that product line evolved into computer forms and laser checks. Now, we do all sorts of laser forms and any banking supplies you would need — deposit slips, endorsement stamps, tamper evident bags and nighttime deposit bags.”

The company is also a major force in general printing, including statements, letterhead, envelopes and an entire four-color print line.

Eventually, Safeguard began capitalizing on opportunities to expand beyond its traditional product line. The company branched out into promotional products 10 to 15 years ago, due to increasing customer demand.

“Customers asked if we sold hats or pens, and the answer was always no. Distributors across the county were leaving business on the table,” Martin said. “Eventually, Safeguard started selling promotional products and corporate clothing, and is now one of Advertising Specialty Institute’s (ASI) top companies. We sell products that are unique and useful. I like to find products that are different, with applications that often work with a campaign to show a return on investment.

“Today, Safeguard does millions of dollars a year in promotional products. It is probably our fastest-growing product line. Safeguard sells \$70 million to \$80 million annually in its check business and about \$150 million a year in total business.”

Checks are still a huge revenue stream for Safeguard, although the source of that business has changed somewhat.

“Much of our business used to come from business professionals,” Martin



Bill Martin, Safeguard

said. “Now, a lot comes directly from banks. When they get a new customer, the bank or customer will call for checks. We have strong, loyal, mutually beneficial relationships with banks.”

Safeguard has more than 800,000 customers across the country. In addition to promotional products and corporate apparel, business checks and other banking products, as well as the commercial printing product line, Safeguard furnishes numerous medical and dental offices and hospitals with patient filing systems.

Among the local companies Safeguard has worked with are **Albany Medical Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Saratoga Performing Arts**

Center, The Desmond Hotel and Conference Center, Teal Becker & Chiaramonte CPA’s, Glen Sanders Mansion, 677 Prime, Latham Ford and KeyBank.

Technology has impacted Safeguard’s business very positively, but ordering checks and paper products is different than ordering promotional products. “Customers want to see them, feel them and see how they hold up in the wash,” Martin said.

Growth through gas

The change in focus for **Noble Gas Solutions**, from welding supplies to gas distribution, grew out of necessity, according to J. David Mahoney, president and CEO.

“Change came about because of changes in the industry,” he said. “In 1976, GE employed 28,000 people locally, and they were doing a lot of fabricating and welding. As manufacturing moved down south and then offshore, we were forced to reinvent who we are. We realized that if we wanted to grow, we had to diversify.”

One of those changes came in the form of the company’s new name; Noble Gas Solutions was formerly AWESCO, which stood for Albany Welding

Supply Company. “We hired a marketing company to take a look at who we are and where we’re going,” Mahoney said. “We’re in the gas business and that’s where the opportunities are.”

Noble Gas Solutions works with such clients as GlobalFoundries, the **University at Albany, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**, the New York State Department of Health and **AMRI**, and is looking to expand its business even further.

“We still have this industrial piece, but we also have this specialty piece. We’re not a big player in the medical area, but we want to be,” Mahoney said. “We’re looking at whether or not it makes sense to do it. Since November 12, when we unveiled our



J. David Mahoney, Noble Gas Solutions

new name, the response we've received has been great. We have the ability to grow outside the region, and with a name like Noble Gas Solutions, companies know why we're here."

In addition to a new product line and a new name, Noble Gas Solutions has embraced total cylinder inventory bar-code tracking

"Our industry started to look at bar-coding in the mid 1990s," he said. "We made a decision that we would use all means available to us to differentiate who we are, and bar coding was one of those. We embraced it in 1996. We have more than 30,000 cylinders, and whether they're here or out to a vendor being filled, or out of service waiting to be retested, there's a cost associated with tracking them.

"Whether they're in Saratoga or downstate, we know where all of our cylinders are because of bar-code tracking. That way, we can bill for it, get it off the books, then give credit. Contractors will inadvertently swap cylinders, and most people understand and appreciate what we're doing."

Noble Gas Solutions also uses GPS systems in its vehicles to monitor the whereabouts of its drivers and the estimated time of delivery for its products.

"We installed GPS systems in our trucks about a year-and-a-half ago," Mahoney said. "We know where all of our trucks are at any given time, we know how many stops our drivers have made, and we're able to manage our routes and our people's time more effectively. We had a dentist call one day who had a patient in his chair and asked how long it would be before his gas shipment arrived. Thanks to GPS, we told him, 'In about 10 minutes. They're right down the street.'"

Spreading science

Growth and expansion have been the prescription for success at the **Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences**, whose campus and curriculum have evolved under the leadership of Dr. James Gozzo, president.

"I've been here since 1998, but the college was founded in 1881," he said. "For many years, we were a single, major institution, and pharmacy was our sole academic offering. When I joined the college, one of our efforts was to expand and diversify — expand enrollments, increase the number of students and introduce a number of health-related academic programs. We've made progress, but we still have a ways to go."

When Gozzo came to Albany, the school had one building on New Scotland Avenue; it had been its only campus since 1930. Thanks to the generosity of Albany Law School alumnus Marty Silverman, Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences was able to move into the former Christian Brothers Academy campus and expand its campus.

Enrollment has grown from 500 to more than 1,600 students, and there are now three campuses: Albany, where 90 percent of its students are based; a satellite campus in Colchester, VT, which offers a professional program for students with baccalaureate degrees in the sciences; and the Pharmaceutical Research Institute (PRI) in Rensselaer.

The school offers a six-year, entry level program, in which the first two years are pre-pharmacy, followed by four years of a professional pharmacy program. There are also three baccalaureate programs, in pharmaceutical sciences, health and human sciences, and biomedical technology.

"We're beginning to attract great students in those areas," Gozzo said.

"We have graduate programs in the pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacy and administration, and we're becoming more of a diverse institution. We modified our name from Albany College of Pharmacy to Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, because of the

strong health sciences component. We see continued growth in all of these areas, and we seek to increase our population by another 200-300 students."

The school will continue to support and expand research at its Pharmaceutical Research Institute; its budget is currently \$10 million, and Gozzo hopes that number will double within three years.

"We're always looking for new programs and initiatives to be creative and forward looking," he said. "We try to determine what medicine and health care will be like five to ten years from now and try and implement programs that address those needs."

Pharmacy continues to evolve as a profession, moving into a setting where each approach will be customized for the individual patient. "Drugs and drug therapies will be designed and developed individually based upon the patient's genomic status and health status," Gozzo said. "Dr. Shaker Mousa, executive vice president and chairman of the Pharmaceutical Research Institute, is at the leading edge in that regard, developing therapies to enable clinicians to target therapies to specific parts of the body. They're also looking to relate one's genomic position to adequate drug therapy delivery designing drugs."

Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences also is looking to become a more global institution, Gozzo pointed out. "We're seeing a great deal of interest in expanding, and our near-term objective is for every student to have the opportunity to have at least one global experience," he said. "We want to enrich their overall educational experience, continue to grow and make a positive impact on our community." •

The Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences' student center



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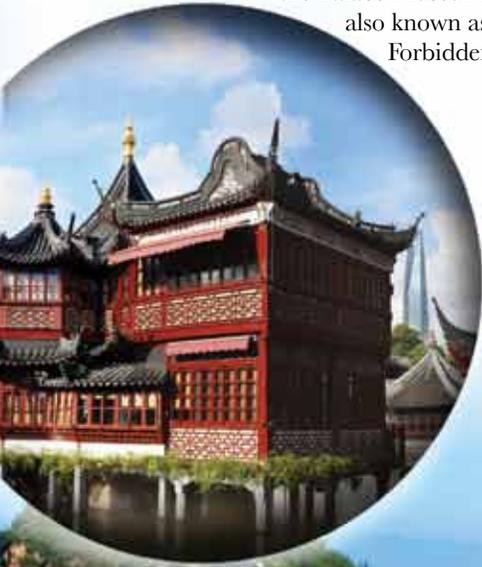
From the Great Wall of China to the “Wall Street of the East,” create lifelong memories of Chinese culture and customs with the Chamber’s fourth annual trip to China.

NEW: We’ve added a second excursion! See below for more details.

China is the adventure of a lifetime, and based upon the overwhelming response to its three previous trips, the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce is offering its fourth nine-day, all inclusive trip on October 4, 2011 — including optional excursions to the Terra-Cotta Warriors and Elephant Trunk Hill.

Highlights of the trip include a visit to the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, Tian An Men Square and the Yu Garden.

Among the highlights of the base trip, Tian An Men square is the largest square in the world, and the Temple of Heaven, built in 1420 AD, is where the emperors prayed for a good harvest. Sightseeing includes the Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City.



The Great Wall is 4,000 miles long, 2,000 years old and is said to be the only manmade structure visible to the naked eye from the moon. There are 13 Ming Emperors’ Tombs, one of which is fully excavated and open for exploration.

From Shanghai, visitors will take a tour bus trip to Suzhou, with sightseeing to the centuries-old Lingering Garden, Tiger Hill and Hanshan Temple.

Sightseeing in Shanghai includes the Yu Garden, a maze of marvelous pavilions, ponds, rocky works and overarching trees.

Optional side trips being offered with this trip are:

- A trip to the Terra-Cotta Warriors and Horses, the most significant archeological excavations of the 20th century. Discovered in 1974 by local farmers, “Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses” is a collection of terra cotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the First Emperor of China. On your return, visit the Huaqing Hot Spring Park and Banpo Museum, a preserved pre-historical cavemen site. The additional fee is \$525 per person.
- A visit to Elephant Trunk Hill, the symbol of Guilin, gives visitors a glimpse of Mother Nature at her most creative. Located along the Li River, the shape of the hill resembles a huge elephant drinking water from the river

with its trunk, and has special meaning to people of the region. Nearby, visit Solitary Beauty Peak, located within JinJang Castle, home of the enthroned princes of the Ming Dynasty. The additional fee is \$625 per person.

The base price of \$2,199 includes bus transportation to and from Albany to JFK International Airport, round-trip international airfare, four- and five-star hotel accommodations, all in-country transportation, three meals each day and fluent English-speaking tour guides.

An informational session will be held on Wednesday, March 23 from 5:30 – 7pm at the Chamber office. The full itinerary and detailed information about the trip can be found by visiting the Chamber website at www.acchamber.org and clicking on China 2011. Space is limited; reservations can be made by calling 518.431.1436.

The Chamber is sponsoring this trip in cooperation with **Citslinc International, Inc.**, a company with nearly 30 years of experience in the China tour business. •



Chamber's Energy AllianceSM program reliably saves members money

Take advantage of numerous benefits available through group energy buying program

By Gordon Boyd, President, EnergyNext, Inc.

In these economic times, businesses are looking everywhere for ways to cut overhead costs and increase profits.

After all, over the past couple of years, your profits have pretty much turned out to be the overhead you didn't spend.

That's why so many Chamber members are joining the Energy AllianceSM program, the Chamber's group buying program for energy that offers the best prices for electricity and natural gas supplies, renewable energy credits, and access to incentives for a wide range of energy efficiency programs.

In 2010, Chamber members participating in the Energy AllianceSM program saved an average of more than \$1,100 each on electricity supply alone. More savings accrued for members using the natural gas supply portion of the program. These savings bring significant value to their Chamber investment for the members who participate.

Telemarketers are persistently calling business owners to get them to switch, but Chamber members can be sure of

one thing: nobody beats the Chamber program pricing. **EnergyNext** provides a competitive procurement platform that assures low prices for program participants.

Whether a business is seeking variable or fixed pricing, or other products or services, the Energy AllianceSM is the best place to start your shopping.

As managers of programs like this for more than 20 chambers across upstate New York, we are able to leverage the buying power of thousands of businesses to get the best prices and customer service.

Members can request an offer by simply contacting Jennifer Sims, the Chamber's senior membership relations associate, at jennifers@acchamber.org or 518.431.1418 and asking for the Energy AllianceSM enrollment form. Once the enrollment is received back by the Chamber, an offer usually arrives within a couple of weeks.

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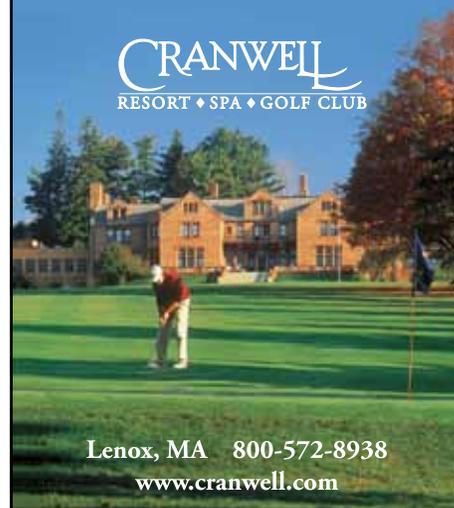
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Albany Country Club expects to return to 2008 levels of 280 golfing memberships by June.

Banquets, weddings — and golf — are par for the course

Golf courses seek to increase business, through memberships and more

Golfers across the region are getting ready to tee it up again after a long winter, and golf course owners and managers anticipate steady business on the greens and in their banquet facilities in 2011.

Built in an existing apple orchard, **Orchard Creek Golf Club** in Altamont offers a scenic view of the Helderberg Mountains. The 18-hole course opened 12 years ago, was designed by PGA golfer Davis Love III's architect and is co-owned by brothers Dan, John, Jim and Joe Abbruzzese.

Three years ago, Orchard Creek built a 350-person banquet facility as a way to increase revenue, and the decision has paid off nicely.

"We had two or three weddings in 2010, with 12 weddings booked for 2011 and five weddings booked already for 2012," Dan Abbruzzese said. "Our revenue is up 29 percent for food and beverage in the restaurant alone. It was definitely the right move to build our pavilion because we've gotten more outings."

Although Orchard Creek is primarily a public course, memberships are available,

Orchard Creek Golf Club built a 350-person banquet facility as a way to increase revenue, and the decision has paid off nicely.



with steady membership numbers for 2011, Abbruzzese pointed out.

"Our memberships have leveled out. We have anywhere from 45-50 members," he said. "Members receive preferred tee times, with no minimums for bar bills and no extra add-ons. We haven't seen membership declines like some clubs have. I'm actually getting other club members who are joining our club."

Orchard Creek conducts a membership drive soon after Labor Day, and anyone who wants to join for the next year can pay early and play for the remainder of the current fall season for free.

The club has lost a few leagues but is gradually seeing more golfers register for leagues, which helps business all around. "We have about 500 league players," Abbruzzese said. "A league can have as few as four players, because a tee time sold is a tee time sold. Our leagues play golf on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We still have spots open, and we take memberships right until we open up in the spring. Leagues are a great thing for the restaurant and definitely help our revenue."

As another golf season approaches, Orchard Creek hopes to grow its business by appealing to a wide variety of golfers, both on and off the course. "It's pretty hard to increase your rounds," Abbruzzese said. "By adding our banquet facility and building a meeting room for corporate gatherings, it improves the overall look of the facility."

Making the turn

Albany Country Club's membership levels declined by 10 percent between

2007-08, but it has gradually regained its numbers and expects to return to 2008 levels of 280 golfing memberships by June, according to William Aperance, CCM, general manager. There are currently 360 members with 260 golfing memberships.

"Albany Country Club has fared very well during this economic downturn," he said. "The Board of Governors and management reacted quickly, reduced budgets and concentrated on member services and outside banquets. Since our club was financially sound and the course is maintained by one of the most qualified golf course superintendents in the area, we were able to meet our needs and continue to have an excellent facility. In fact, we were selected to host the 2010 New York State Men's Amateur Championships, and our course was in splendid shape."

In addition to its challenging golf course, Albany Country Club's banquet facility does brisk business and offers breathtaking views of Albany from the terrace and ballroom. "We have a record number of weddings booked in 2011, with all of our Mondays secured with golf outings," Aperance said. "We earn approximately \$1.75 million in food and beverage sales each year, and 75 percent of that is member and non-member banquets. Weddings comprise approximately 50 percent of our total revenue, even though we only allow only one wedding per day."

Berkshire business

The **Cranwell Resort, Spa & Golf Club** in Lenox, MA consists of magnificent views, tree-lined fairways and naturally contoured greens that have been carefully preserved since 1926, when the picturesque, 18-hole Berkshire course was

built, according to Norma Probst, director of marketing.

Membership growth is a constant concern for golf courses in an uncertain economy, and Cranwell is no different. "The economy has changed everything for everyone," Probst said. "All of us at Cranwell recognize that to stand out in our industry, we need to be consistently excellent. That is the reason we are on track to grow again in 2011."

Cranwell has approximately 230 members, and options include midweek, junior, twilight and full memberships. "We have planned for an increase in memberships and daily fee business for the 2011 golf season," Probst said. "Attracting new members is always challenging, but we have a wonderful resort with unique facilities and a beautiful 18-hole golf



Cranwell Resort, Spa & Golf Club is on track to grow again in 2011.

course, all in the heart of the area's premier music, arts and theater venues. If you live in the area or are planning to spend your summer in the Berkshires, it's hard not to choose Cranwell."

In addition to golf, Cranwell hosts 75 to 100 events each spring, summer and fall for wedding groups, corporate meeting groups, social groups and a wide range of golf groups. "We could not host events without our banquet facilities," Probst said.

Fairways and finances

Bill Sarver, general manager of **Shaker Ridge Country Club**, considers the club's membership levels decent from a budget perspective.

"We understand the economic factors and realize people have a choice, so we strive to give the members what they are looking for," he said. "We are proud of what we offer and are always working on

ways to improve our services and amenities. Our members are our biggest asset when it comes to attracting new members. Keeping membership levels has been of the utmost importance. The Albany area has many fine private clubs, semi-private and public facilities. It's a competitive market.

"We work hard to keep our current membership satisfied. We listen to their concerns and ideas through surveys, meetings and being accessible to them. Retention of our current membership is a big focus on what we do; we are member friendly. If we are able to keep our members satisfied and happy, they will promote Shaker Ridge to their friends, colleagues and business associates."

The economy has forced all businesses to examine how they spend money, and golf courses such as Shaker Ridge are no exception.

"Membership levels are good from a budget perspective, about six to eight percent lower than our highest point in 2006, but still above our yearly budgeted number," Sarver said.

Shaker Ridge also counts on the revenue generated by its banquet facility to ensure the success of the golf club, Sarver pointed out.

"Banquet revenue is very important. We outsource the food and beverage operation to 2SHEA Catering. It's important for them to have a successful banquet business in order for us to have a successful country club," he said. "2SHEA Catering can also book parties, weddings and meetings to non-members, as well."

Island in the sun

Van Schaick Island Country Club (VSICC) is centrally located high above the banks of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers conveniently off Interstate 787 on Van Schaick Island in Cohoes. A private country club, VSICC aims to keep its membership levels high and its expenses low as another golf season begins, according to Frank Hart, president.

"VSICC presently has 140 members and, along with most area clubs, has felt the effect of the economic slump," he said. "We feel we have fared better than most clubs in this difficult economic time, but we rigorously pursue expense reductions and new revenue sources. We are close to our



Van Schaick Island Country Club aims to keep its membership levels high and its expenses low as golf season begins.

sister clubs and can categorically state that collectively we are finding it to be a very challenging environment, with one of the biggest challenges attracting the young business professional to join a country club.

The club has a banquet facility and clubhouse with a full service restaurant that complement the membership dues and raise the company's bottom line, Hart noted.

"We have found it convenient and economical to contract an outside caterer to manage our banquet facility, which enjoyed a record year in 2010," he said. "This is managed by Cliff Tironi, and the restaurant operates under the name of KC's Pub. This facility is open to the public. The banquet facility will generally handle more than 100 events in the course of a year. Members and their guests especially enjoy the spacious deck that overlooks our 18th green."

VSICC intends to actively promote itself this spring and summer to recruit new members present a diverse offering of membership packages. •



Retention of its current membership is a big focus for Shaker Ridge Country Club.

Why have you remained a long-time member of the Chamber?

Keith Pickett

*Executive Director
Family and
Children's Service
of the Capital
Region (FCSCR)*



**Gregory
Champion**

*Albany Office
Managing Partner
Bond, Schoeneck &
King, PLLC*



Jim Yando

*Senior Manager/
New York
Administration
Customer Service
Organization
Aflac New York*



Throughout its almost 200-year history, FCSCR has sought to serve the needs of the people and communities of the Capital Region. Over the decades, the way we met that mandate changed — new services replaced older ones, new approaches enhanced our capacities. But one thing that never changed was our desire to be not just a part of the region, but a partner in its progress, growth and development. We view our membership in the Chamber as central to that mission. There is no better venue for us to work and interact with the area's leaders. We look forward to being a member for many years to come.

Bond, Schoeneck & King has been part of the Capital Region business community since 1971 and, throughout that time, has shared the Chamber's vision of participating in and, whenever possible, enhancing the growth, prosperity and opportunities of the region. Supported by more than 200 attorneys throughout the firm, our 28 Albany attorneys assist clients as they capitalize on new opportunities, expand operations, solve problems, navigate laws, interact with government agencies, and, when necessary, defend themselves. We live, we work and we represent the best in Tech Valley.

Aflac New York is proud to celebrate 25 years with the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce. Like most teams celebrating a Silver Anniversary, we know that the secret to success is in communicating common goals. As the number one provider of voluntary supplemental health insurance in the nation, Aflac values the relationships we have developed with so many employers who help make the Capital Region a better place to live and grow a business. As we prepare for the future, we know that the ever-changing landscape makes our partnership more relevant today than ever before. We look forward to working with the Chamber well into the future.

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Focus on energy

Learn about New York's energy-related initiatives from Senate Energy Committee Chair George Maziarz

Recently, *Visions* sat down with Senator George Maziarz, Chairman of the New York State Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, for a one-on-one interview to discuss the energy-related initiatives that could impact New Yorkers.

Maziarz represents the 62nd District in the New York State Senate, which encompasses all of Niagara County outside the City of Niagara Falls, all of Orleans County, and the western portion of Monroe County.

With Governor Andrew Cuomo reaffirming his commitment to energy research and development in both his State of the State and his 2011-12 Executive Budget, the potential benefits, both economic and environmental, are significant.

Q: Tell us about the Governor's proposal to replace the current low-cost electricity Power for Jobs program.

A: Governor Cuomo has proposed an initiative that would replace the current Power for Jobs program that provides low-cost electricity to about 500 businesses statewide with a new program that would be twice the size.

The Recharge New York program is similar to the expanded Power for Jobs proposal that was backed last year by then-Gov. David A. Paterson and the State Senate but failed to gain approval from the Assembly. It calls for diverting power from a residential program to businesses.

While Power for Jobs was established and has been extended on a year-to-year basis since the late 1990s, sometimes with brief lapses, Recharge New York would be permanent, with participating companies receiving seven-year commitments for their allocations of low-cost power.

Similar to the bill passed in the Senate last year, Recharge New York would double the size of the economic-development program to 910 megawatts by combining the 455 megawatts now used by Power for Jobs with another 455 megawatts that now is used to cut residential electric bills across upstate by \$2 to \$4 a month.

To ease the sting on those residential customers, the New York Power Authority would provide residential users with an annual discount amounting to \$100 million — the same they received in 2010 — through 2013.

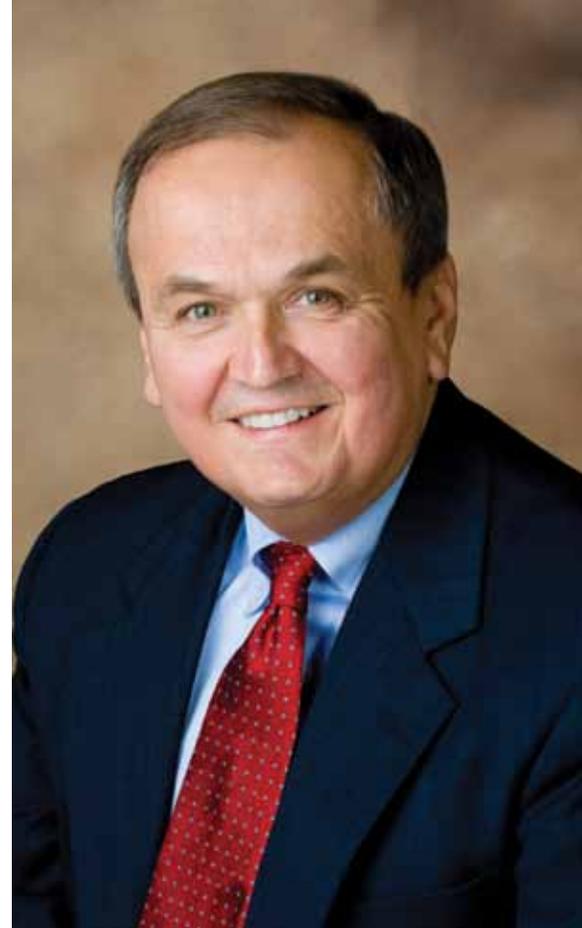
The discount would drop to \$70 million in 2014, \$50 million in 2015 and \$30 million in 2016 and beyond, but the phase-out would be offset by the savings from the scheduled elimination in 2014 of the 18A assessments, a temporary surcharge on electric bills.

Up to \$8 million of the residential discount would be reserved for farmers paying residential rates.

The Cuomo proposal also sets aside slightly more than a third of the electricity — at least 350 of the 910 megawatts available through Recharge New York — for upstate businesses served by National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas and Rochester Gas & Electric. That's 30 megawatts more than under Paterson's proposal.

The customers of those three utilities, under the current law, are the exclusive beneficiaries of the 455 megawatts of rural and domestic power that would be reallocated under the new plan to the larger statewide pool of less expensive electricity reserved for economic development.

The idea of reserving a block of the power for upstate utilities was added to last year's plan after upstate interests



raised concerns that the bigger pool would repurpose upstate-generated low-cost power to downstate businesses.

The proposed program also would set aside at least 200 megawatts for attracting and expanding businesses and an additional 100 megawatts for not-for-profit entities such as hospitals.

The Power for Jobs program would be extended through June 2012 and require companies to reapply for Recharge New York incentives. Current Power for Jobs recipients that are not selected for the new program would receive a discount equal to 66 percent of their 2010 savings for two years and 33 percent during the third and fourth years.

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Q: What is the likelihood that we will see a permanent solution this year?

A: I've been Chairman of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee under both the Republicans and Democrats. If ever the stars were aligned for Power for Jobs, I think this is the time. The Governor is clearly on board with the language the Senate passed last year under a Democratic majority in the Senate. The bill itself we passed I thought was very good. However, Governor Cuomo took the bill and made it better. He reserves more power for upstate service territories, such as National Grid, New York State Gas & Electric and Rochester Gas & Electric, which makes it better. I've had two private conversations with the governor regarding Power for Jobs. We're going to pass it in the Senate.

The bill is a good one. Nearly 500 businesses currently receive this low-cost electricity. It helps the right companies, small- and medium-size businesses across the state. It's helped them stay here, and with a seven-year certainty, I think it's going to help them grow here.

There's a small village I represent in Western New York, with 1,500 people and a small, local supermarket. A big supermarket chain came in and said they could put a store in there, but the cost of energy-efficient equipment was still too expensive. They said that if they received low-cost power, they'd put it into that little supermarket. We got them 500 kilowatts, which isn't a lot, but they extrapolated that over a seven-year period and they paid for all of their refrigeration equipment. Now, that village is booming, it's a success story. The store now employs 75 people and has changed the outlook of the community. I realize how much this power means to these small- and mid-sized companies.

Q: The Senate has continuously supported a permanent Power for Jobs program; however, the Assembly has typically been reluctant. How do you think they will react to the Governor's proposal?

A: That's going to be the governor's challenge to get them on board with the language. In the past they've had concerns that it unfairly targeted upstate residential ratepayers. The governor's bill, however, has allocated more power to that area, and when you look at the money that's going to preserve upstate farms and upstate residential customers, the block of power reserved for them is not going to change their rates.

In fact, as that reserve goes down, the 18A assessment sunsets in 2014, and residential ratepayers in upstate New York will virtually see a wash in the bill. It will provide a lot of jobs for people who live in upstate New York.

Q: How do you define "upstate?" Do you consider Albany upstate?

A: Albany is considered upstate, it's the National Grid service area.

Q: What's the future of renewable energy in New York?

A: Solar energy is an area where we really need to catch up. New Jersey is way ahead of us in the development of solar energy, but in New York we have to make it profitable for those developers. That's exactly what New Jersey did, through tax credits and power purchase agreements. They can produce all kinds of power with solar and wind, but if nobody's buying it, then what's the point? This is where the Power Authority is really going to have to step in and provide that initial entrée to buy those renewables.

Q: What else is on the Energy Committee's agenda?

A: One of the goals of our committee this year is to get a decent power plant siting law that's technology neutral and provides a level playing field for all forms of generation. It's been kicked around for years. Pressure builds slowly but continuously. It's very difficult to site windmills in New York today. Generally, everybody wants renewable sources until they want to build a windmill in your backyard.

Q: We've rebranded this region Tech Valley. Talk about the importance of energy research and development in Tech Valley.

A: The opportunities are limitless when it comes to energy research and technology going forward. Take nanotechnology. We

get criticized for the incentives we have to offer companies to come here. It's \$100,000 for every job. To me, the long-term synergy that it creates brings in high-tech jobs. It ties into agriculture and soybean production, soybeans can be used for fuel. The whole area of producing energy and biomass is booming. You have to get that first company. Yahoo located a facility in Lockport because of the allocation of hydropower they received. Six to eight months later, Verizon proposed to build a data center, a \$5 billion investment. I can't believe Google is far behind. When it comes to energy production, in New York, if we opened up the ways to produce power, and it's clean and cheap, we could really become an energy mecca. Albany's geographic location between New York City, Boston and Montreal, it's the hub of the wheel. Albany has more opportunities because of its geographic location.

Q: Based upon what you've heard from Governor Cuomo in his State of the State and his 2011-12 Executive Budget, how confident are you that these energy initiatives will move forward?

A: Obviously, he has a deficit to deal with first. Having some stability in the executive branch is good for the business community. He'll be able to concentrate and get some goals and objectives going to make New York better for business. Right now, we've got to concentrate on making sure business people get a return on their investment in the energy field, and there are a lot of opportunities out there. Solar is "sexy" green, it's acceptable, but if we could do nuclear, we'd get people investing in New York, you'd get people investing in New York dramatically. I'm 100 percent in favor of hydro-fracking. Pennsylvania did it too quickly, we can learn from their mistakes. It's not only private investment, but the revenue can stay. •

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CSSC celebrates 30 years of serving seniors

In 1981, recognizing that a growing town would have many demands on its financial resources, several members of the community got together to create a new nonprofit model, **Colonie Senior Service Centers (CSSC)**, to provide services for seniors in the Town of Colonie.

Thirty years ago, seniors accounted for 11 percent of the population of the Town of Colonie; today, that number has doubled. The wisdom of the model was the recognition that, by developing a collaborative approach, this new nonprofit could meet the demand and financial costs by working with the entire community. This has worked exceptionally well.

With seniors living longer and baby boomers joining the ranks, the model designed 30 years ago is all the more relevant today. According to AARP, 90 percent of seniors want to stay in their homes. CSSC helps to make this possible by providing services such as transportation, senior dining, health and recreation, Bright Horizons, Sheehy Manor, Beltrone Living Center, Umbrella of Colonie and a host of other programs, all designed to help seniors age successfully and gracefully in our community. CSSC is proud to celebrate 30 years of serving seniors this year.

Seniors provide a tremendous source of economic and social capital, making a vital contribution to our region. This is recognized by all of CSSC's partners, who understand the value of supporting seniors through CSSC. Colonie Senior Service Centers could not provide all of these services without the generous support of the business community, the continuing support of the Town of Colonie and Albany County Office of Aging, more than 350 volunteers from the community, and even the seniors who make voluntary contributions to the programs they utilize. CSSC is always grateful to the community, especially for its sustained efforts to celebrate aging with them.

For more information about Colonie Senior Service Centers, call 518.459.2857 or visit www.colonieseniors.org.



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On the move

Albany Medical Center:

W. Michael Reickert and Todd Tidgewell, board of directors; Dr. Mary Ann McKee, department of neurology.

AMRI:

Takeshi Yura, assistant director, medical chemistry.

BCI Construction Services, Inc.:

Gary Bohl, project superintendent.

The Bonadio Group:

Michael Smith, partner; Melissa Bezio, principal.

Capital District Women's Employment & Resource Center:

Melissa Clement, Hope DeRocha, Heather LaVine and Deirdre Sweeney, board members.

Carter Conboy:

Adam Cooper and Mackenzie Monaco, directors.

CB Richard Ellis:

Richard Sleasman, SIOR, president and managing director; Jeffrey Sperry, SIOR, chairman; Eileen Lindburg, SIOR, senior vice president.

CBS6:

Corey Ausfeld, general sales manager.

Computer Professionals International:

Jeffrey Cohen, client business manager.

Couch White, LLP:

Garrett Bissell, partner, energy practice group.

CSArch Architecture | Engineering | Construction Management:

Zachary Malison, intern mechanical engineer; Nicholas Mahan, intern electrical engineer; Mark Surra, senior construction site representative for the firm's Salmon River Central School District additions and alterations project; Tina Mesiti-Céas, senior associate; Robert Timber and Kelly Spizowski, associate.

C.T. Male Associates, P.C.:

John Hohman, network administrator.

Deily, Mooney & Glastetter, LLP:

Linda Fossi, Leigh Hoffman and Richard Maider, partners.

The Doane Stuart School:

Susan Miller, assistant head for advancement.

Eric Mower and Associates:

Doug Bean, chief operating officer.

Excelsior College:

Joan Mikalson, director of faculty development and support in the Office of the Provost; Emilsen Holguin, director of academic operations; Michael Leszczinski, public relations manager.

Gramercy Communications:

Eric Wohlheber, vice president.

Hiscock & Barclay:

Christopher Hanifin, Albany office counsel.

Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort:

Kevin Alexander, conference sales manager.

Living Resources:

Steven Ennis, corporate affairs officer; Colleen Neun, QMRP (Qualified Mental Retardation Professional) at the Living Resources/College of Saint Rose College Experience Program; Cynthia Ballard, Tamekia Brown, Kurt Fiato, Gertina Hackett, Melissa Krissel, Michaela Mahon, Saint Polhemus, Bryony Rodham, Colette Smith and Jessica White, team leaders; Meredith Attanasio, regional manager and QMRP in the residential program; Alicia Anderson, Gina LaRose, Margaret Gladwin and Kari Miele, residential habilitation managers; Erin Caywood and Laura Krenn, habilitation specialists; Virginia Gopadze, lead instructors.

Maria College:

Shannon Older, board of directors.

Mazzone Management Group:

Susan Baker, vice president of sales and marketing.

McNamee, Lochner, Titus & Williams, PC:

Glen Doherty, president of the Albany County Bar Association.

Mortgage Bankers of Northeast New York:

Gisela Garver, board of directors.

nrastructure:

Bill Morrissey, senior managing director of business development.

Noble Gas Solutions:

Eli Battistoni and Ryan Scanlon, territory sales managers.

Schenectady Museum & Suits-Bueche Planetarium:

Karen Cavanagh, Esq., Joseph Dragone, Ph.D., Tony Farah, Brian Hannafin, Trudy Lehner, Matt Mazzone and John Wagner, board of trustees.

The Scott Varley Group:

Maria Barr and Brenda Warchol, licensed real estate associates.

Senior Whole Health of NY:

Linda Austin, director of client services.

TD Bank:

Paul Bilodeau, vice president - commercial portfolio loan officer in commercial banking.

Teal, Becker & Chiamonte,

CPAs, P.C.: Stephanie Bartkowiak, partner.

Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.:

Timothy Duffey, board president; Greg Stapleton, vice president; Dave Blessing, treasurer; Chris Betts, secretary; John Bishop, Samuel Caldwell, Beth Carey, Selig Corman, John DeCelle, Jaqueline Geraci, Anthony Hazapis, Dr. Lani Jones, Linda Mallory-Mitchell, Benjamin Oevering, Mark Shuket, Lynn Siebert, Kenneth Skinner and Wanda Wilson, board members.

Tully Rinckey PLLC:

Bruce Lennard, partner.

United Way of the Greater Capital Region:

Tamae Memole, community mobilization director.

University at Albany:

James Dias, vice president for research.

Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP:

Douglas Kemp and Elizabeth Grogan, Albany County Bar Association's board of directors; Thomas Witz, WMHT's community advisory board.

kudos

3t architects:

Received the American Institute of Architects of Eastern New York's (AIAENY) Honor Award at the organization's award presentation on January 25.

Active Family Chiropractic, PC:

Collected 15 gifts for the Toys for Teens program sponsored by the Victory Christian Church in December.

AJ Management:

Received State Certification today as a Woman-Owned Business Enterprise.

The Albany Academies:

Alydaar Rangwala, a member of the Class of 2011, has been selected as a semifinalist for the 2010-2011 Coca-Cola Scholars Program. If selected as a Coca-Cola Scholar, he will attend the Coca-Cola Scholars Weekend from April 14-17, 2011 during which time he will interview for one of 50 National Scholar awards of \$20,000. Rangwala also recently received two Congressional Medals through the Congressional Award for his community outreach efforts.

Albany Institute of History & Art:

Christine Miles, who has served as the Institute's executive director since 1986, announced that she is leaving her position.

Albany Law School:

Patricia McGowan Wald, Chief Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit from 1986 to 1991, will deliver the keynote speech at the 17th Annual Kate Stoneman Day on March 10 at Albany Law School. She will also receive a Kate Stoneman Award.

Albany Medical Center:

Rob Saba, senior development officer for leadership gifts at the Foundation, Inc., has been named Albany Medical Center's 2010 Employee of the Year.

Albany Realty Group LLC:

Marie Bettini, broker/owner, was inducted into the REALTORS® Honor Society by the New York State Association of REALTORS®.

Albany Symphony Orchestra:

Unveiled "Compose Yourself," an exciting new education program that invites adult, student and college-age music lovers to explore the world of composition with George Tsontakis, an international leader in contemporary music and the orchestra's Composer-in-Residence over the next two seasons through Meet the Composer's Music Alive program.

American Marketing Association – New York Capital Region Chapter:

Hosted "Marketing ROI: Investment Versus Added Expense" with Dr. John Huppertz of Union Graduate College on February 10.

American Red Cross:

Hosted a blood drive, along with Dunkin' Donuts, to kick off the fourth annual "Give a Pint, Get a Pound" campaign. During the month of January, all presenting blood donors in the greater Capital Region received a coupon from Dunkin' Donuts for a free pound of coffee.

BST:

Made a \$4,000 contribution to The St. Anne Foundation in Albany through the BST Foundation.

Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG):

The Veggie Mobile, CDCG's mobile produce market, received an unexpected boost from the KeyBank Foundation's Capital Region office in the form of a \$5,000 contribution as part of "Key's Gifts to the Community."

Capital District Habitat for Humanity:

Dedicated its 49th Habitat Home and presented keys to the new homeowner at 25 O'Dell St., Albany.

Capital Financial Planning:

Presented the following awards: Capital Financial Planning 30/30 Club inductees: Rachel Sloan, Bruce Gaynor, Lisa Roberts, Peter Cowen, Carlos Farelo, Amy Casey, Adam Neary, Frank Chioldi, Michael McCamy, James Zegers and Michael DePerto; 2010 President's Award for All-Around Excellence, James Zegers; 2010 David J. Ross Sr. Award for Service above Self, Clare Mertz.

Capitol Hill Management Services:

Has announced the United New York Ambulance Network (UNYAN) and the New York Alliance Against Insurance Fraud (NYAAIF) as Center for Non-Profit Development clients.

Careers In Transition LLC:

Dr. Tom Denham, Career Counselor, was interviewed by Elisa Streeter on WTEN twice in January on the subjects of Career New Year's Resolutions as well as Resume DOs and DONTs. In addition to his weekly career column on TimesUnion.com, he is writing a second weekly blog on Albany.com entitled, "Ask Dr. Tom."

Carter Conboy:

Celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2010, and announced that five employees reached milestone anniversaries: Anne Lyman, 35 years; Kathy Nassrelgrawi and Wendy Jordan, 25 years; James Resila, 20 years; and Valerie Brady, 15 years. Also, Mackenzie Monaco, director, was elected to the Capital District Trial Lawyers Association board of directors.

CB Richard Ellis Albany:

A. Gordon Furlani, associate broker, has been named the 2010 TOBY awards recipient of the Capital Region Building Owners Managers Association's Member of the Year; Brenda Garretson, CCIM, associate broker, has been named the 2011 Upstate NY CCIM Chapter president.

Center for Disability Services:

After the seven-hour all live, all local broadcast of the 51st Center for Disability Services Telethon on January 30, the final tote was \$1,967,035. Highlights included appearances by Seth Meyers, the comedian, actor and writer known for his work on "Saturday Night Live;" David Robertson of the New York Yankees; and Adam Koets of the New York Giants.

Center for Economic Growth:

Will publish the 2011 Technology Almanac in partnership with The Business Review on April 15.

Christian Brothers Academy:

Students volunteered for Make-A-Wish at Crossgates Mall.

College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of the University at Albany:

Received nearly \$5 million in federal funding awards to support innovative research and education in a host of critical areas, including nanotechnology-enabled clean energy technologies, nanomedicine, nanoelectronics, and nanoscale education and workforce training.

Community Based Business Incubator Center:

Mel Ross, chief financial officer.

Community Resource Federal Credit Union:

Employees volunteered their time during the busy holiday season to serve a meal for clients of Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless's Sheridan Hollow Drop-In Center.

Consulting Alliance:

Robin Weintraub, president of Robin Weintraub Consulting in Athens, was accepted for membership.

Cotton Hill Studios:

In conjunction with October Eve Music Group, recorded two unique episodes of Rick's Picks. Susie Essman, co-star of the critically acclaimed HBO hit comedy series "Curb Your Enthusiasm" was a recent in-studio guest on the show. Rick's Picks are available on iTunes or www.rickspickspodcast, as well as www.rickbedrosian.com.

Cranwell Resort, Spa and Golf Club:

Launched its own app for iPhone, iPad Touch and Android phones.

Creative Expressions Photography — Pictures with Personality!

Joan Heffler photographed Paula Stopera, CEO of CAP COM Federal Credit Union, for the front cover of the January issue of "Latino NY" Magazine.

CSArch Architecture | Engineering | Construction Management:

Was featured in the December issue of the Library Journal's "The Year in Architecture 2010" for its work on the John A. Howe Branch of the Albany Public Library.

Dale Miller:

Has changed its name to Taste.

Deily, Mooney & Glastetter, LLP:

Joann Sternheimer, partner, was recently appointed to a panel of attorneys responsible for the investigation and prosecution of attorney disciplinary complaints for the United States District Court in the Northern District of New York.

FingerPaint Marketing, Inc.:

Has unveiled its new website at fingerpaintmarketing.com.

Friendly Ice Cream Corporation:

Held its 30th annual "Cones for Kids" campaign. The Valentine's Day fundraiser benefits 30 Easter Seals Camp Friendly's program locations including Camp Colonie located in Cohoes.

Forensic Weather Consultants, LLC:

Has launched a newly designed and informative website, <http://weatherconsultants.com>. The new site has updated information about the company, a section on local weather forecasts for any town, and a detailed blog that will be updated regularly.

Healthy Cafe Catering Co.:

Recently moved to 23 Vatrano Road in Albany and remains strictly a catering company, servicing the entire Capital Region.

Hiscock & Barclay, LLP:

Melissa Zambri was a featured panelist at the Health LawSection Annual Meeting hosted by the New York State Bar Association.

Hudson-Mohawk Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development:

Hosted "Even HR Plays a Role in Production: An introduction to Lean, Toyota Production and Root Cause Analysis." Michael Harrington of New Directions Consulting was the speaker.

Marvin and Company, PC:

Hosted a free "Personal and Corporate Tax Update" Webinar.

Millennium Business Communications:

Announced the design and launch of the new website for The Crossing shopping center in Clifton Park.

Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society:

Brad Shear, executive director, successfully passed a rigorous test, developed to meet competency standards set by peer professionals and was awarded the designation Certified Animal Welfare Administrator (CAWA)

Mosaic Associates:

Is working with the Mechanicville District Public Library to design proposed renovations and a 3,000-square-foot expansion to its facility on Main Street.

Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany:

Was recently honored for its efforts to increase employment retention, growth, and upward mobility for people who are blind in 2010. The award was presented to the organization by National Industries for the Blind (NIB) in recognition of NABA success and commitment to increasing employment and economic opportunities for people who are blind.

Northeastern Fine Jewelry:

Customers who spent \$250 received free with purchase dinner for two at Angelo's 677 Prime in Albany or Prime

at Saratoga National on the grounds of Saratoga National Golf Club.

Northeast Kidney Foundation:

Lyn Taylor, president of the Association Management Division of Capitol Hill Management Services, Inc. will receive the Edwin Sperber Legacy Award at the Foundation's Gift of Life celebration on May 26 at the Desmond Hotel & Conference Center.

Peaceful Acres Horses:

Held a special day of blessing to say "Thank You" to the rescued horses.

Phillips Lytle LLP:

Has launched a new website, www.phillipslytle.com, featuring innovative, user-friendly search tools. Phillips Lytle spent nearly a year creating a completely new site that showcases the talents of its staff and the depth of its capabilities.

Profitable Speech:

Owner Dale Klein was the featured speaker at the February 2 Capital Region Women's Council of Realtors fundraiser fashion show. All proceeds went to Dress for Success, Albany, where Klein had donated her time coaching a recent graduate as she prepared to deliver her first speech.

Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany:

Hired Eric Mower and Associates to develop and deliver a marketing communications strategy and comprehensive branding campaign for Catholic school education in the diocese.

Ronald McDonald House Charities:

Held its 10th annual radiothon and the first Child Health and Well-Being Expo, Autograph Alley and Character Alley, and presented the Spirit of the House Award to Kathy Schoolcraft, and the Voice of the House Award to Southwest Airlines.

St. Anne Institute:

Has received a grant from The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region's Standish Family Fund for the amount of \$10,000 for the Living Independently for Future Employment program.

Schenectady County Community College:

Will receive a \$1 million grant over five years from CampusEAI Consortium and will partner with Green View Energy Management Systems of New Hartford to be a pilot site for a Real-Time Metering project under funding by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and conducted by NorthWrite, Inc.

Schenectady Museum & Suits-Bueche Planetarium:

Has been presented with a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Space Place Certificate of Appreciation for its valuable contributions to its community in the areas of science, technology education, and inspiration.

SEFCU:

President and CEO Michael Castellana will presented a \$300,000 check to Unity House CEO Chris Burke in support of Unity House's job training programs at its Street Ministry in Troy. The gift will allow Unity House to create an employment and training center to meet the need for additional on-the-job training opportunities for the unemployed in the region.

Siena College:

In an effort to replenish post-holiday food supplies at the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, Siena Athletics hosted its annual food collection drive during the Siena men's basketball game against Iona on January 3.

Tully Rinckey, PLLC:

In an effort to help the Capital Region's homeless veterans in need, the law firm purchased winter coats for all 28 residents of the Albany Housing Coalition Inc.'s Veterans Housing and Services.

University at Albany:

University at Albany: President George Philip unveiled the University at Albany's Strategic Plan, a framework for action to propel the University forward over the next decade. The plan was developed by faculty, staff, and students of the Strategic Planning Committee with input from more than 300 UAlbany faculty, staff students, alumni, and members of the greater Capital Region.

Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood:

More than 50 residents of Albany, Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer Counties, including leaders, staff and volunteers, were part of an expected 400 who will rally at the state Capitol to urge support for family planning funding in the state's 2011-12 budget.

YWCA of the Greater Capital Region:

Six women graduated from Ready for Work, a twelve-week work readiness program.

Datebook**Academy of the Holy Names:**

Will hold its Spring Soiree on Friday, March 25 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, beginning at 6:30 pm. Tickets are \$75 per person, with hors d'oeuvres, dinner, open bar, live and silent auctions to benefit the school's academic and financial aid programs. To purchase tickets, call 518.438.7895 or visit ahns.org.

The Albany Academies:

Will host the Third Annual Albany Children's Book Festival on Saturday, April 9, from 10am to 4pm in the Silipigno Athletic Facility on the AAG campus, located at 140 Academy Road in Albany. More than 50 children's and young adult authors and illustrators have been confirmed, including Eric Luper, Jennifer Berne, Amanda Marrone, Karen Bell, L.D. Campbell, Dale Christopher and many more. For more information visit www.albanyacademies.org.

Albany Center Gallery:

Presents the 2011 Mohawk Hudson Regional Invitational Exhibition, featuring the work of Amy Cheng, Katie DeGroot and Douglas Durning. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5pm. The gallery is located at 39 Columbia Street, Albany.

Albany Institute of History & Art:

The exhibition "HAJO: AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY" will be open through Jul 31. Hans-Joachim Richard Christoph (1903-1992), known familiarly as Hajo, lived through most of the 20th century and witnessed firsthand its high points and low moments. The exhibition tells the story of an immigrant artist, his journey from Europe to the Hudson Valley, and his artistic explorations. Sketchbooks, drawings, paintings, graphic designs, and photographs span the breadth of Hajo's world and the art he created to capture it.

Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center:

Will hold The (Almost!) Vernal Equinox Hike on Saturday, March 19 from 10:30am - noon. What better way to welcome the first day of spring, than to get outside for a walk in the woods? Participants will walk approximately 1.5 miles and stop to look for signs of the season. To register, call 518.456.0655 or visit www.albanypinebush.org and click on "Calendar Events."

Center for Economic Growth:

The 11th Annual SmartStart & UNYTECH Venture Forum is seeking venture-ready companies and early-stage university start-ups to present to potential investors at an event held May 17-18 in Albany. Presenting companies will have the opportunity to pitch their business plans to a diverse cross-section of the investment community, spanning venture capital funds, seed investment funds, angel groups and other public and private investors. Application materials are available at www.smartstartvf.com, and the deadline to apply is March 1.

Integrated Management & Sales Consulting:

Denise Horan, principal, will hold a series of "Lunch and Learns" dedicated to training individuals on various important aspects of business all while relaxing and enjoying lunch. Each lunch session is scheduled to begin at 11:30am in the Garden Room at Reel Seafood located on Wolf Road in Albany. For more information and to register for the workshops, visit www.imsconsulting.net.

Northeast Health:

The Eddy Visiting Nurse Association (Eddy VNA), will hold Cuisine Magic 2011, its 18th annual culinary grand tasting, on Sunday, March 6, from 6pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, State & Lodge Streets, Albany. The evening will feature scrumptious dishes prepared by top chefs from across the greater Capital Region. For reservations, please contact the Northeast Health Foundation at 518.271.5032.

Schenectady County Community College:

Will hold a free, artist-in-residence concert with Vince DiMartino, trumpeter, on Wednesday, March 23 at 7:30 pm at the Taylor Auditorium. DiMartino has been the lead and solo trumpet in the Lionel Hampton Band, the Chuck Mangione Band, the Clark Terry Band and the Eastman Arrangers Holiday Orchestra. For more information, call 518.381.1250.

To get your information into Member Happenings, email Paul Quirini at membernews@acchamber.org

Apply today

for Leadership Tech Valley Class of 2012

The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce and The Chamber of Schenectady County are now accepting applications for their Leadership Tech Valley Class of 2012.

Leadership Tech Valley offers a unique opportunity for individuals to step inside the circle of decision making and problem solving that is shaping the region's future. Through a series of thought-provoking sessions, Leadership Tech Valley develops the leadership potential of participants and builds a solid foundation of informed, action-oriented and productive employees.

Leadership Tech Valley addresses development of leadership skills in group dynamics, decision-making and team building. It provides opportunities

for individuals from diverse fields and backgrounds to address regional challenges, enhance their leadership network, foster creative problem solving and shape a progressive future for Tech Valley.

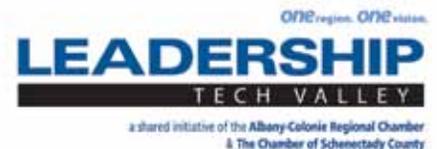
The program commences with a two-day orientation retreat September 22-23, followed by nine monthly full-day sessions that focus on such topics as: economic development, community service, diversity differences, media, education, health care, government and quality of life.

Those selected to participate in Leadership Tech Valley are expected to display a high level of leadership in their respective careers and a deep commitment to the community.

M&T Bank is the sponsor of Leadership Tech Valley.

Applications are due by 3pm on May 13 and may be downloaded at www.leadershiptechvalley.org. Information sessions will take place on April 7 and April 29, with times and locations to be determined.

For more information, or to attend one of the information sessions, please contact Karen Fox at 518. 431.1435 or karenf@acchamber.org.



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1.



1. Colonie Town Supervisor Paula Mahan delivered her fourth state of the town address exclusively for Chamber members. She discussed how the town is handling community services, taxes and business retention/attraction, among other issues. The Colonie Business Council presented this event; HMS Agency and CB Richard Ellis were the sponsors.

2.



2. During "Don't Kiss On the Lips and Other Networking Tips," Anne Saile, president of The Saile Group, LLC, enlightened attendees by drawing on 25 years' experience in developing and implementing successful professional connections by bringing people together. The Women's Business Council presented this event; Tully Rinckey, PLLC was the event sponsor.

3. The Business Council of Cohoes presented the 2011 Spirit of Cohoes Award to Marra's Pharmacy. Pictured l-r: Mel Quinlan, Business Council of Cohoes chair; Mark Eagan, Chamber president & CEO; and Barbara McDonald, owner of Marra's Pharmacy.

4. Keith Pickett, executive director of Family & Children's Services of the Capital Region, shared opportunities and resources to engage business' corporate social responsibility plan and tools to successfully implement their plan.

5. For the first time, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos addressed Chamber members. One of the three most powerful leaders in New York state government, Skelos shared his insight on balancing the state budget, closing the deficit, easing the burden on taxpayers, and what pro-business steps the Senate is taking to strengthen our economy and create private sector jobs. Time Warner Cable and The Desmond Hotel & Conference Center were the sponsors.

3.



4.



5.



Chamber's benefits are numerous and significant

It's hard for me to believe this fact, but I have been indirectly and directly involved with the Chamber for over 30 years.

From almost my first day of work, after graduating from the University of Massachusetts in June 1972, not being involved in an organization like the Chamber was never an option. UHY's Albany founders, Sidney Urbach, Howard Kahn and Eli Werlin, along with partners Michael Urbach and Marilyn Pendergast, collectively stressed to a young impressionable accountant the need for community service as much as balancing debits and credits.

With some mentorship, I soon became a Rotarian and accompanied Sidney Urbach to the Albany Rotary Club's weekly meetings and his son, Michael, helped get me appointed to various nonprofit boards, which initiated my community service.

But it wasn't until I set foot into my first Chamber dinner in the 1970s, before the merger of the Albany and Colonic Chambers, that I saw firsthand what the Chamber was all about.

In those early years, I began to see the benefits of not only Chamber membership, but active involvement. Sure, there are those attracted to being in a business club or taking advantage of insurance programs with larger risk pools, but there was something more. While it would take me years before I would fully witness all the benefits, I was well on my way.

Wally Altes, past president, was one of the first Chamber "mentors" to me. His Midwest sensibilities, combined with a quick study of how to "connect the dots," drew me to our shared interest of Chamber activities. I soon found myself volunteering on more committees and supported by my fellow partner, Howard Foote, who was already on the board.

When Howard's term ended, I joined the board and got to know Wally very well as we worked together on Chamber

business. I moved through various board committee assignments and eventually served as chairman. When Wally retired, I continued my involvement with Lyn Taylor at the helm as we continued to build on the vision of Tech Valley.

While chair of the Chamber, I had the honor of presenting Wally with the Envoy Salute Award, as well as launching the Tech Valley Chamber Coalition along with my peers from the Schenectady and Rensselaer county chambers. This launch was the official beginning of the initiative started by my predecessor, Jim Howe, and carried on by my successor, Pamela Sawchuck Brown.

“

There are many companies, including my own, that owe a significant part of their success to Chamber programs and relationships.

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While I thought that my board involvement had run its course and rotated off the Chamber board several years ago, a funny thing happened — I deeply missed my active involvement and found myself reaching out to Lyn to again serve.

From the advantage of hindsight, I can see the benefits that drew me to the Chamber and that I seek to pass on:

Image: What better way is there to demonstrate that your company values the community? Become an active member, attend events and support the various initiatives. Your prospective customers will see you.

Connections: Having a place to network and meet others is important to any business. The many Chamber events provide opportunities to foster new business relationships — not only customers, but also service providers and others who can help you become successful.



Richard Kotlow,
Chief Executive Officer
UHY Advisors NY, Inc.

Advocacy: It is no coincidence that we have GlobalFoundries' significant investment in our own back yard. Along with many other organizations, the Chamber has worked hard in turning the Capital Region into Tech Valley and realizing a dream we all had a decade ago to put us on the world stage.

All these benefits add up to improving our region's overall quality of life. Without a financially strong business community, hospitals, health care, cultural institutions, government and just about everything else in the public sector suffers. In addition, there are many companies, including my own, that owe a significant part of their success to Chamber programs and relationships. More than a few successful companies also have received Chamber loans or awards at a critical time in their development.

I can only think of those who came before me as an inspiration. Not the least of whom is the great Artie Kapner and namesake of one of the Chamber's highest awards, The Arthur R. Kapner Spirit of the Chamber Award. A past Chamber chairman, Artie was well into his 80s when he would show up at the Chamber and make phone calls on its behalf to drum up membership.

Today, I find myself talking up the Chamber more than ever. We have another great president in Mark Eagan who continues to take us to new heights. I am confident that the Chamber's best years — and our entire region — are just ahead of us.

My only hope is that I pass along my enthusiasm for the Chamber to today's young professionals. •



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* Stats from January 2011

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Hundreds of small business customers have received more than \$3.6 million in energy efficiency incentives.



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