

The Evening Sun presents Progress Edition 2019. A look at the community's recent past and future.

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In Your Own Words

Melissa deCordova Colorscape Chenango

Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival beamed like a colorful prism upon Norwich's downtown parks last September, its sparkling facets of art, music, dance, poetry and culinary delights creating a sensory explosion for all.

If you were there, like the estimated 10,000 people who visited over the two-day weekend, I'm sure you felt it. Colorscape 2018 was marked by brisk but dry weather, 119 welcoming artists, a crowd-pleasing line up of country, folk, jazz and classical music, and interactive activities. Based on favorable reviews on our social media pages and from surveys taken at the show, we have it starred as one of our best festivals ever.

Yet, as if this magical spectacle weren't enough, as if the hundreds of volunteers and numerous corporate, business and foundation partners supporting our beloved Colorscape weren't enough. As if Adam Ezra and Vance Gilbert jamming offstage amongst the crowd, Poet Shannon Matesky voicing hope and inspiration, Ceramist Marsha VanVlack's Best Of Show win, nor Chenango Memorial Hospital's Seafood Newburg stew weren't enough.

Truth is, the thing, the real thing that solidly placed Colorscape in the history books this year was the very pinnacle that longtime Visual Arts Director Peggy Finnegan has been shooting for over all these years:

Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival was named #94 of the 100 Best Fine Art & Design Shows in the nation.

The recognition came from the publication most artists turn to when selecting their next venue: Sunshine Artist Magazine. Moreover, we were one of only four festivals in New York State to make the Best Fine Art & Design list. The other three were in Armonk, New York City and Syracuse. This is something quite extraordinary when you consider the rural, less affluent nature of our Central New York region.

Sunshine Artist Magazine ranks festivals each year based on sales feedback from artists. The inclusion of Colorscape among the best shows in the nation is evidence that participating artists are profiting at the festival. The fact that we are in this ranking means enough of our artists are happy and making money and want to come back because they're guaranteed that they're going to be making money - not just breaking even.

We always knew we were welcoming at Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival. We bring lunch to all of our artists both days, we reward them with more than \$7,500 in cash prizes, we feed them a complimentary breakfast on Sunday and even open our homes to house them for the weekend. We

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Globally renowned, Chobani stays true to its roots



In keeping in touch with the community in which it was founded, Chobani attends a number of annual community events to hand out free yogurt, including at the end of the Parade of Lights in Norwich every November. (Submitted photo)

BY GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun

SOUTH EDMESTON – After unveiling three new platforms and 32 new products

in just the last five weeks, Chobani has hit the ground running in 2019 in fulfilling its mission to provide better food for more people while expanding the modern yogurt

industry in the United States and beyond.

Chobani currently produces more than 760 million cups of yogurt annually just at its South Edmeston plant, along

with using 1.6 billion pounds of New York State milk every year.

With about \$1.5 billion in revenue and employing
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Canasawacta Country Club welcomes 1,000 new members



Canasawacta County Club Chef Sue Ryan and owner Tim Carson stand with the player's cup trophy. (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

BY TYLER MURPHY
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – The Canasawacta Country Club had a very good year in 2018 after successfully attracting vast new membership and developing a larger range of services.

The country club, restaurant and golf course is open to the public from mid-April to September.

Facing a changing business environment that has slowly chipped away at the country club's usual clientele base over the past decade, owner Tim Carson has diversified and altered his approach to attracting new members.

"We had about 200 regular members, but we did promotion in 2018, a huge success, which marked our major progress in 2018. It was probably the biggest marketing move we've made to attract new investors," said Carson.

Carson said the business's health was strongly linked to
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Canasawacta Country Club —



The Canasawacta Country Club added more than a 1,000 members in 2018, a dramatic increase. (Photo by Meagan Schulz)

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the health of the local economy and often relied upon those having depended jobs and stable incomes, primarily working for larger employers or with careers with high educational demands.

Some may associate this cliental with an automatic assumption of the business

being wealthy but it is not as simple as it seems, especially for a small-town, rural golf course and country club that employs 25 employees, most of them seasonally.

“It is a business of passion, if you are getting into the golf course business just for money, you’re in for a hard time,” warned Carson. “There is a lot of work, a lot of joy, but it is

a very demanding business, in a lot of ways we’re like a farm. You need things like a \$75,000 lawn mower. You hope there are enough people who love golf and want to play so I can afford to cut the grass.

“It’s a very capital-intensive business. It’s 180-acres we have to maintain, and that adds up to a lot of taxes,” he said.

“I think the main reason this place is so important to our community is it helps provided quality of life,” he said. “We built a quality reputation, you do that by putting in a lot of hard work, a lot of money.”

Looking at the recent year’s challenges in 2018 Carson started brainstorming ideas to help stabilize and grow the business.

People under fiscal stress may have a hard time finding the disposable income to become a member of a golf course. Some still do though, because they love the sport and the camaraderie.

“We have a country club to offer that full experience but we also needed new golfers,” said Carson. He said increased regulation from New York State continued to add costs, especially minimum wage increases.

“Regulations are making it tougher, like minimum wage increases. There is no way to recoup that as a business. Our business activity doesn’t just rise with it, and being a smaller operation in an area like ours you just can’t raise prices, the business has to absorb it. Simple as that,” said Carson.

Less profit leads to less business investment, less growth, less savings to over-

come an unforeseen setback.

“I look back to about 2008 and my labor costs hovered around 20 percent, my labor costs today are 40 to 45 percent. It makes it harder to buy the food and do the things people expect. But we need to do that to keep business coming in,” said Carson.

“We can’t raise prices, so the only way to make it up is with volume,” he said.

Recognizing a popular enjoyment of golf and the challenges some people face Carson decided to offer a new marketing program in 2018, offering a discounted membership that would still allow those who signed up to play golf almost as often as they liked during open play times. It was a tremendous success and more than tripled the club’s membership.

“The Anniversary Membership Program is a three-year membership at a special rate, at a very good value,” said Carson.

This may seem like a loss at first but Carson said the wider view was a very positive one.

New members are given the chance to play and practice alongside others who share a similar enthusiasm for the sport. That only

increases the value of the club and the chances that new members become long-term ones.

“And this new membership program obviously has some limits on how you use it as to when, but there is no limit to how many times,” said Carson.

“We sold a thousand, that’s a whole lot of people we might never have seen,” he said. “But, you know back in 2017 on a nice Saturday afternoon there were times when nobody was here, but in 2018 there were 50 to 100 people here,” said Carson.

New members are also exposed to the country club’s diversified services like the restaurant and bar, the pro-shop, the banquet hall, the outdoor pavilion and wedding venue. New members will be more likely to engage with these services or recommend them to others in the community.

Carson sister, Sue Ryan, is a professional chef, and works for the family-run business. From 2018 to 2019, the country club doubled gross revenues from food and beverage services. Carson said quality food was an investment and customer expectation.

“We still have full mem-
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“The DISH Guys In Sherburne”

Country Club —

Continued from page 52

bers and platinum memberships and the rights and privileges of those," said Carson. Those perks include wider access to tournaments, leagues, a complementary membership appreciation day and other availabilities, "but there seems to be fewer and fewer of those people around that have the time, energy and desire to get involved in all a country club has to offer," he said.

As the success of this new membership began to grow beyond expectations Carson invested in the country club even more, adding new services, equipment and food options so members would have the best experience possible.

"Step one with the new members is to get them in the doors, step two is to show them what they've been missing. It was probably a quarter million-dollar project over all in the investments, in marketing, upgrades to equipment, upgrades to facilities, and we needed a really good chef. That's what gets people in here. Quality and consistency," said Carson.

Another upgrade also included new driving range facilities.

"We put in a new addition to the driving range

because we had so many new members and it's probably tripled in use. We like to see people playing golf, trying to get better at golf. It means you'll play more golf, which is our goal," said Carson.

One of the largest events at the country club is the member-guest tournament, which celebrated its 60th year in 2018.

"There is a lot of history at this tournament," said Carson. "Guys come from all over the country to play, using their vacation time to be here. It serves as a reunion for some, seeing family and friends while it's like Christmas for adults for all." The end of each day of play, the country club has different events planned. Wednesday is reserved for the putting contest at the end of the practice rounds. In 2018 the event featured live music.

Throughout the three days of golf, various contests were held. Including a Hole-in-One, closest to the pin, closest to the line and the longest drive contests.

"Have 180 players over four days—that's a lot of players. It built a great reputation we've put a lot into it," said Carson.

The country club also holds an annual player cup for competitive members to

accumulate points throughout the entire year while participating in different events. At the end of the year a final competitive match is held between the top scoring participants for about a \$1,000 prize.

"It's big deal for people who love golf and want to compete, and come down to the end of the year those last couple tournaments - it really heightens the excitement," said Carson.

Carson said he often hears compliments from members who have been members of clubs in other areas.

"Some people might say, 'It's not a great area,' but for my core players, they hesitate to leave the area because a facility like this, where it is—it is hard to find elsewhere.

"People may take it for granted but in a bigger city, they don't have this the same way. Number one: It'll be way more expensive. Number two: It will be less accessible. I've had players leave and come back and say, 'Wow, I didn't realize how good we had it,'" said Carson.

He said he looks forward to being in the area for a long time to come.

"This is a beautiful spot, when you're here you can relax and be happy."

SUCCESS STORY

AFLAC — Jim Reynolds

Jim Reynolds is beginning his 16th year as an independent agent with Aflac. He and his wife Rosemarie live in Norwich and have two children. Megan is a graduate of Union College and working for Goldman Sachs Financial and Shane is a recent graduate from Ithaca College with a degree in film & photography. Jim enjoys being involved with the community. He serves as a Trustee with the local Knights of Columbus, Council 211, participates in the annual Relay for Life, and is past Vice President of Membership of the Preferred Toastmasters Club.

Aflac was founded in 1955 by 3 brothers in Columbus, Georgia. Today the same family is still heading the company and Aflac insures more than 50 million people worldwide. It differs from major medical in that they do not pay the doctors or the hospitals, but rather the claim is paid directly to the policyholders. Reynolds says this gives the individuals the freedom to use the cash as they see fit. So whether it's to make up for lost wages, help with everyday family expenses, or help pay for leftover medical bills, it provides security and peace of mind.


For over 6 decades, Aflac's signature product has been their cancer plan. Reynolds, who saw his father pass away from the disease shortly before joining the Fortune 500 Company, says cancer insurance can help ease the financial burden that comes with a cancer diagnosis by helping to address the gaps in major medical insurance. Other plans offered by Aflac include accident, hospital, short-term disability, life insurance, dental and vision.

Reynolds is really excited about value added programs that Aflac is offering to companies to make themselves stand out from

their competitors. The mix offers solutions ranging from telemedicine to HR and payroll programs, to energy supply outlets that can save employers money on the supply portion of their bill. Also through a partnership with Trans America, employees can get guarantee issue life insurance with a long term care rider. This gives those with pre-existing conditions the opportunity to get life insurance, and an option for affordable long term care.



Jim says Aflac had never approved local advertising in their 63 year history, but last year the regional Aflac office in Syracuse teamed up with Syracuse University for an exclusive marketing campaign. It features ads with head football coach Dino Babers, and other Syracuse sports personalities along with members of the Aflac field force advocating for the financial protection and peace of mind that Aflac insurance policies provide. Also Aflac has some new national TV advertising coming out that Reynolds says will help to better explain what Aflac really is and how it can help individuals and families with their out-of-pocket expenses.

The majority of Aflac's business is done through worksites where employees can enroll in Aflac on a voluntary basis. Some plans can be purchased on a direct basis too. Reynolds says that with their new enrollment platform called Everwell, they will be able to enroll people in other providers programs, not just Aflac and even assist with major medical to make it easier for companies to do business with them. Jim credits his parents with teaching him a good work ethic and a "never quit" attitude. To see how Aflac can help you and your family contact Jim Reynolds, the Aflac guy, at 607-316-5731 or j1_reynolds@us.aflac.com



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On the bench with Judge Frank Revoir, Jr.

By TYLER MURPHY
The Evening Sun

CHENANGO – Chenango County Judge Frank Revoir, Jr. was sworn in as judge at the start of 2013.

He was sworn in as an attorney in February of 1992 after completing his law degree at Albany Law School, passing the bar on his first attempt.

“Mainly because you’re in Albany and all of the professors that taught there, they’re the experts. The textbooks that I used, that I still use, were written by the professors that we had at Albany Law,” said Revoir.

“We took whole courses on how to do legal research. So if you found a case that was on point, there were no computers or software programs then. You had to make sure it was still good law; you had hundreds of volumes and you had to go through them, and they called it ‘shepherdizing’ the case, to see if it was ever overturned in the 25 years since that case. It took hours, and you did it all by hand and through books,” recalled Revoir.

Now the work is done by computers and takes a fraction of the time.

“Justice delayed is justice denied. There’s reasons why the justice system does work slowly, but back in the day it worked even slower,” said Revoir. “I can get almost instantaneous answers today. If somebody says, ‘Is this still the law?’ Click, click, click, look it up, ‘Yes, it is.’”

He served as an assistant county attorney, representing the people of Chenango County in prosecuting juvenile offenders who were under the age of 16.

“I was a criminal defense attorney, but I was also a family court attorney. I couldn’t even guess how many hundreds of people I represented in family court. And I did matrimonial work, divorces, mainly uncontested, but many of them ended up contested. And I did a ton of real estate. I was a general practitioner,” said Revoir.

“I was a solo practitioner; I was a general practice attorney, which is today unique in and of itself. Meaning I did everything,” he said.

Asked how those experiences prepared him for being a judge, Revoir responded, “Nobody’s fully prepared, trust me. There’s still a huge learning curve when you become a judge, I don’t care what your background was.”

“I think all the experience is relevant. And it wouldn’t matter whether it was me sitting here or somebody else, everything in essence somehow contributes to your understanding and ability to preside. I can’t say mine was better than somebody else’s,” he said.

Judge of all trades

Chenango County is one of the few nearby counties with a sole county judge handling several responsibilities. Cortland, Delaware and Broome have more.

“I was the jack of all trades as an attorney and I’m the jack



Chenango County Court Judge Frank Revoir Jr., (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

of all trades as a judge,” said Revoir.

Revoir was elected as a multi-hat judge of Chenango County, meaning he covers lower-level appeals and civil suits, all felony level crime, all family court cases, and all surrogate court duties, among others.

There are only about 30 other counties in New York State that have multi-hat judges.

“Because we’re a small county, as you know, I handle basically all of the felonies, from murder all the way down to felony DWI. If you commit traffic tickets or misdemeanors I don’t see you, you go to local court,” said Revoir.

“I’m the family court judge. So everybody’s custody visita-

tion disputes, abuse, neglect, termination of parental rights, all of the adoptions in the county, all the guardianships; they all come to me.”

“I’m the surrogate, that’s the actual title, which means I handle all of the estate proceedings. So every time people die and their wills are probated and all that, I’m the surrogate.”

“I’m the guy that issues all the pistol permits to everybody in the county. I turned over the reigns of drug treatment court ... That freed me up to devote more time to criminal court.”

“In other words, being in a private practice where I dealt with all of everything, now I’m a judge dealing with everything. And I’m an acting Supreme Court judge too,” he said.

Judge Revoir handled approximately 700 court appearances in 2018. He had 132 criminal cases filed with the court and presided over three criminal jury trials.

The total number of dockets handled by family court was 3,200. Those included 1,363 custody and visitation dockets or juvenile dockets, 1,173 support petitions, 195 family court order of protection requests, and 126 neglect dockets. Many of these cases involved young children and disputing families.

The judge’s next possible availability in family court is in late March or early April of 2019. All of his family court time until then is booked in 20 minute intervals.

Revoir spends more hours in family court than in any other court.

“Family court affects more lives than I think any other

court, because you’re dealing with children and families,” said Revoir.

Since he is the main judicial authority on multiple local fronts, Revoir tries to never miss a court date.

“That was the one piece that was surprising to me when I became judge,” said Revoir. “God forbid I get sick next Wednesday. To miss a Wednesday in family court could be 18 cases, each with three to four lawyers, half a dozen parties, a massive amount of rescheduling, with some of those people already waiting two or three months for that 20 minute appearance to see me.”

How to decide

While some duties allow Revoir to make his decision in written form after careful research, criminal and family court often demands a judge to make a decision on the spot.

Asked if there was ever a time he didn’t like being a judge, Revoir said, “I enjoy it, it is a monumental task often times, and I take it very seriously. There’s not a single day in these first six years that I didn’t want to come to work. I’m hopefully making a positive difference in people’s lives.”

The judge posed questions he must often resolve. “Should this guy get a pistol permit or not? Should this child go live with this parent or not? Should that child’s parents’ rights be terminated or not, and then the child freed for adoption?” said Revoir. “You also have to make rulings during a criminal trial when somebody makes an argument or an objection.”

These sorts of decisions can make a difference in real-time. Revoir is skeptical of personal experience being the sole factor in making decisions.

“All that stuff that happened to me in my lifetime is up in my head. I can’t simply make decisions on how much time a mom or dad should get, based on something like that. You can’t just go, ‘Oh when I went through this, what worked for me was great and worked well, so therefore I will impose it on you.’”

“You have to separate that out and listen to the scenario. Not everything that worked in my life, or didn’t work, is necessarily what applies to the person in front of me,” said the judge. “We all have a tendency to do that in our lives.”

“I get so frustrated when I

hear, ‘I don’t believe in shared custody because kids should have one home base and that’s it, otherwise it’s not stable.’ You’d be surprised at the number of people who make those statements,” he said.

“Most of the people making those statements don’t have a blended family and have never experienced it. There are positives and negatives; for some people it works, some people it works phenomenally well. Other people, it is disastrous.”

“Judges are supposed to have an open mind, but at the end of the day they need to make a decision, popular or not,” said the judge.

The role of a judge

Revoir posed a question, “If people could work it all out, you wouldn’t need me. I’m the guy when all else fails, I make the decision, right?”

“When people violate the laws, they look to the prosecutors who are really the protectors of the community. A defense counsel’s job is to protect the accused. And my job as a judge is, one: make sure both of the people get their fair day in court, and two: the defendant’s rights are protected from the state.”

“That person standing there could be me, could be you, our kids, somebody, and we truly value those rights that are afforded to us under state and federal constitutions. They are a big deal,” said Revoir.

Revoir said he also recognizes the inherent advantages that prosecutors can have with the full resources of the state behind them.

“That is why we have things like the Bill of Rights and all the protections that we have, because the state is far more powerful, and has far more resources at its disposal on the prosecution side than what the typical defendant would have,” he said.

“So again, part of the judge role, a significant part, is to protect the accused from the state. To make sure the state doesn’t usurp their power and overstep the bounds,” he said. “I am the enforcer of the constitutional rights and protections. Constitutional rights aren’t there to protect the prosecutor or the state, they protect you and me, the people.”

Drugs, reform and punishment

“At the end of the day, if we’re going to prosecute

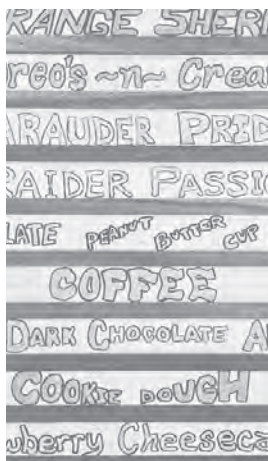
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Judge Frank Revoir, Jr. —

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people for possessing drugs and selling drugs, what is the purpose?"

Revoir continued, "One: Our legislature has determined these drugs shouldn't be on the street, that they ruin lives. OK. You can lock people up who violate those rules, that's a traditional way to deal with crime. At the end of the day I think the goal is bigger than that."

"The goal of the justice system is to protect the community, and reduce recidivism. If one of your kids commits a burglary, breaks into somebody's house or garage because he's looking to feed a drug habit, had he not been a druggie he may not in his wildest dreams thought of actually breaking into somebody's house."

When the court sends a defendant to treatment court or probation, it is in hopes of treating or changing their behavior, he said.

"I'm using drug cases as an example, but it is just about true with everything. We hope, ultimately, the combination of being locked up, having your freedom taken away, but also being on probation or split sentences, we're hoping the incentive is there."

The judge also admitted though, "We're not trying to save everybody; the goal is less crime."

Revoir said the loss of mental health funding had put additional stress on the justice system and community.

"We are finding that significant numbers of people committing crimes have underlying mental health issues, unaddressed or not appropriately addressed issues. Often the drug addiction is secondary."

"What led to the drug addiction? Do you know how many reports I've read with serious drug addicts who say, 'I just started smoking pot everyday because it took the edge off.' I've heard that exact phrase many times. 'It took the edge off,'" repeated the judge.

The judge cautioned that line of thinking could indicate the defendant is coping with other issues through drugs, making them more unstable in the long run.

"We are not the answer to the opioid problem, the drug epidemic. Everybody thinks when they read a sentence I imposed, they think that's not strict enough. 'No wonder we have a drug problem, that judge

should be locking them up.'"

"We have to remember, crime is one of the symptoms of drug addiction, not the cause. By the time people end up seeing me, they've been addicts for years and years and eventually their addiction led to crime and they ended up in front of me. For every guy I see there are probably 500 other addicts out there that just haven't been caught or committed a crime," said Revoir.

"So even if the State of New York or Judge Revoir were to announce, 'Effective tomorrow every guy who gets arrested for a drug offense, I'm going to lock him up for the maximum of time,' it would have no effect. We only see less than 5 percent of the addiction population."

"The criminal justice system cannot solve the crisis. All we can do is take the people who committed crimes and hopefully reform them by the time they go back in the community, so it's one less person that's addicted and will commit another crime. That is it."

"So when people look to the courts as being a solver of the drug epidemic, it's not."

Revoir said the nation needs to embrace a sustained awareness campaign to battle the rising drug problem.

"They should do a blistering national campaign on television, on billboards; bring police officers and doctors into the schools talking about it, explaining it, showing them the horrific movies of people dying."

Revoir estimates that at least half of all defendants who plead guilty to felonies in county court were motivated by a drug addiction.

"There are thieves out there, people who walk into a grocery store and shove things into pockets, or people who realized the neighbors are away who then bust into the neighbor's garage and they steal stuff and sell it for scrap metal. Those guys are out there, but they're few and far between."

"The only people popping doors of unlocked cars in parking lots are those looking for loose change to support their drug habit," he said. "The people who are moving drug dealers into their homes are most of the time supporting their own habit. They aren't getting rich or paying their bills."

A cycle of heroine and methamphetamine

Asked if the drug problem was getting worse locally, Revoir said it was "cycling."

"In the very beginning when I first became judge, there was still a high percentage of DWI people in treatment court for alcohol. We still get a few, given time, two or three."

"In 2013, heroin sky-rocketed. Heroin and prescription opioids—heroin is opioid based. It's just more powerful and far cheaper."

Revoir recalled some authorities at the time saying that at least the county didn't also have the same methamphetamine problem as other counties around us do.

"Every case then was heroin, heroin, heroin," said Revoir. "Now heroin has taken a back seat. Now most of the cases are the manufacturing of methamphetamine."

He said the drug was easy to make, and often involved a group of people working together to collect the materials and a few others to make the drug. Unlike heroin though, making meth causes pollution, toxic chemical byproducts that can be lethal, and explosive materials under heat and pressure.

"If someone was making meth in an apartment and they discovered it, the landlord has to hire an abatement company to the tune of \$20,000 or \$30,000 in hazmat suits to clean it up. That's how lethal this is. And people making it, they just dump everything into their backyards. It's also explosive."

The judge said he couldn't talk about any specific case but gave some general background based on real life events.

"So if I sign a warrant and the cops kick in a door of a suspected meth maker, they find themselves going into a kid's bedroom and finding explosives in the kid's hamper, because that seemed like a good place to hide it."

"Once you have a place exposed to the meth process, it needs a hazmat team."

"If someone has their door kicked in for selling heroin, the cops go in and arrest everyone, take them to jail and the landlord comes over and puts everything in the street and rents the apartment to somebody else."

"So we've seen it cycle now to methamphetamine. The heroin arrests have slowed down," said Revoir.

SUCCESS STORY

Savurn Memorials

Savurn Memorials is owned and operated by Mark, Shari and Zachary Williams. We are local residents who have lived in the Norwich area for more than 50 years.

Mark retired after working 30 years at the local public works department. Mark will be instrumental in setting, cleaning and engraving headstones in the cemeteries.

Shari is responsible for the business operations of Savurn Memorials. Shari recently retired from a local meetings and conventions management company. She has many years of experience in the customer service arena.

Zachary has been employed with a local energy products company for the past nine years. He will interact with customers to provide options to help in determining the perfect headstone for your loved one. He will also assist with the setting, cleaning and engraving the headstones.

On December 20, 2016, our daughter/sister Savannah Williams was preparing to leave her college campus to travel home for the holidays. She never made it. She was in a fatal car accident. As you can imagine it was a complete

shock to our family.

Never having to deal with something this tragic before, we catapulted into having to make major decisions in a very quick time period (such as cremation vs. open/closed casket, what type of urn, what day to have the service, etc.). It all was such a blur. After a couple of months, we were faced with selecting the perfect headstone to memorialize our daughter/sister.

As you can imagine, it was and still is, very difficult to learn to move on. However, we realized we are in a perfect position to give back to you, someone in a similar situation of losing a loved one. It was decided we would provide a safe, comfortable and compassionate environment in which you can work through the process of selecting the perfect way to memorialize your loved one without pressure.

Therefore, we decided to open Savurn Memorials, LLC as a tribute to Savannah. Located in Norwich, we will serve the residents in the surrounding communities.

Our family looks forward to serving you in your time of need.

In Your Own Words

Melissa deCordova Colorscape

Continued from page 51

post our artists' success stories and contact information on our Facebook and Website pages and we create numerous promotional signs for them in the parks. Indeed, the comments we receive every year say we are one of the friendliest shows in New York State. But this year's pinnacle isn't about that. This particular shining accolade is not a personality contest. It is about our vending artists making a profit at Colorscape.

"With this recognition, we anticipate jurying even more, high-quality artists for this year's festival," Executive Director Celeste Friend said recently. "Better art means more buyers. More buyers mean better artists. In the long run, the recognition should mean a long and healthy future for Colorscape Chenango."

What better way to shine on in this

coming year as Colorscape kicks off its 25th Silver Anniversary! Plans have been underway since early last year when a large group of our supporters embarked upon a Strategic Development Plan intended to carry us all the way through to 2020, couching this important 25th year. We have arts activities galore in store for Saturday, Sept. 7th and Sunday, Sept. 8th, not the least of which include a well-known folk star, one of the top five spoken word poets ever, family-favorite puppeteers and jugglers, and exciting arts educational competitions. There will be parties honoring our long-standing volunteers and partners and receptions honoring our artists. And we hope to add more social media tools to attract younger, technology savvy audiences. Safe to say, 2019 should be memorable as well. Don't miss it.



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Chobani —



Chobani employees at the Norwich Gus Macker in July 2018. Employees handed out free yogurt during the weekend event. (Submitted photo)

Continued from page 51

approximately 1,000 employees in Norwich and South Edmeston alone, Chobani has been heavily involved in Chenango County since its founding here in 2007.

The average salary at Chobani is 42 percent higher than Chenango County's median income and 118 percent greater than the average household income, and along with creating more than 10,000 jobs in New York State, the company contributed to nearly a 50 percent regional reduction in unemployment in a five year period.

All of this is evidence of Chobani's success in becoming the number one yogurt brand and second largest yogurt manufacturer in the country.

"I think it's also interesting that a product that was made in South Edmeston is being enjoyed in Mexico," said Chobani Chief Marketing and Commercial Officer Peter McGuinness, noting that Chobani products are exported to Mexico, Bermuda, the Caribbean, and Central America to name a few regions, as well as Australia, where Chobani has a plant and is also the number one yogurt brand.

How does a yogurt company founded in South Edmeston expand across the globe to Australia? McGuinness said, "The brand stands for a lot of good stuff. Yes, we make great products, but we [also] do good deeds and that resonates around the world. And I think in many ways — whether it be our hiring practices or how we make our food — Chobani in many ways represents what's best about America."

McGuinness said despite growing to the point where Chobani yogurt can be found across the globe, South Edmeston remains the

company's first home.

"[Hamdi Ulukaya] feels very deeply connected to the community and he's very passionate about keeping that connection alive and well," said McGuinness. "And therefore he's made it very clear that this is our first home and we're going to continue to invest. And those investments will look different and be different every year, but there will be investments every year."

One of the three new platforms created by Chobani to end 2018 was its Less Sugar Greek Yogurt, which McGuinness said is "proudly and solely made in South Edmeston."

"A lot of consumers were really searching for

a low-sugar option that's naturally made, and so we have monterey strawberry, alphonso mango, and gili cherry, and these are beautiful new Less Sugar Greek Yogurts that use varietal fruit, and they're very potent fruit and we can actually use less of it," said McGuinness. "So you still get a beautiful flavor but you're getting even less sugar ... This is doing really well right out of the gates, so we're very pleased with that performance and it's been great for Upstate [New York]."

Because of the success of the Less Sugar Greek Yogurt, McGuinness said the company is producing it in high volumes, using more dairy to create more

product—it takes three cups of milk to create one cup of yogurt. He said their plan is to expand the less sugar platform, which is among the three new lines of yogurt along with Chobani Gimmies for kids and Non-Dairy Chobani.

Chobani Gimmies are produced mainly at the company's Twin Falls, Idaho plant, and the company said it's a more nutrient-dense option compared to other typical kids' snack choices. It's the first Chobani product for kids, a market which McGuinness said will be a positive factor in promoting nourishment in children and helping to fight childhood diabetes and obesity.

Continued on page 57



Chobani employs roughly 1,000 people at its Norwich and South Edmeston plants. On average Chobani employees earn a salary of 42 percent higher than Chenango County's median salary. (Submitted photo)



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- You are trained to use the extinguisher and know you can operate it effectively.

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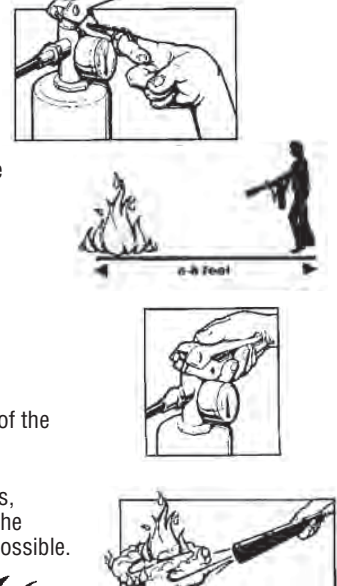
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Chobani —



Sherburne-Earlville Central School District Superintendent Eric Schnabl, Jason Rahlan and Jenna Scilacci of The Chobani Foundation, and S-E Agriculture Club students cutting the ribbon to the district's new greenhouse made possible by a \$25,000 donation by The Chobani Foundation in June. (Grady Thompson photo)

Continued from page 56

In January 2019 Chobani launched Non-Dairy Chobani, giving its first options to lactose intolerant and vegan individuals. McGuinness said the non-dairy yogurt market has been underserved to this point, and existing options weren't tasty or natural.

"We developed a coconut-based non-dairy that's all natural using organic coconuts," said McGuinness. "It tastes delicious. And for those people that are either lactose intolerant or vegan, we wanted to give them an option that had less sugar

than other options and was all natural and tasty."

Despite all the new products at the tail-end of 2018, McGuinness said last year for Chobani was mainly a year of preparation for 2019. He said this year is going to be a big year in terms of innovation and growth for Chobani with a slew of new products planned for release in mid-year.

The Chobani Foundation also had itself a bustling 2018 with the creation of a Community Impact Fund which will result in \$1 million being invested in Central New York over the next 10

years. It also sponsored the creation of a new student-run greenhouse with fresh produce at Sherburne-Earlville Central School District in June.

The company said, "Since the earliest days, we've proudly supported our hometowns in Central New York and Idaho through impactful charitable projects and programs."

The Community Impact Fund was announced in May 2018, which is a \$100,000 annual fund to support grant making promoting economic opportunity and entrepreneurship for residents

of Chenango, Delaware, Madison, and Otsego counties.

In December Chobani announced the inaugural recipients of the funds, including the maximum awarded grant of \$30,000 for Oxford Academy and Central Schools. Funding for Oxford schools will be used to pay the wages and payroll costs of 25 students participating in a 10-month work experience.

"The creation of the new Community Impact Fund connects to our mission from day one - Chobani has continually invested a portion of its profits to charitable causes through our philanthropic arm and a key pillar of the Foundation's work is Community Wellness, which focuses on contributing to Central New York and the Magic Valley in Idaho, where our two yogurt processing plants are located," said the company.

The Chobani Foundation donated \$25,000 to help create a student-run greenhouse at Sherburne-Earlville, and the Chobani yogurt truck was at the

unveiling in June to hand out free yogurt to celebrate the event. Sherburne-Earlville Agriculture Club advisor Scott Bugbee said the greenhouse would not have been possible without the Chobani Foundation's efforts.

McGuinness said, "We've been very clear about we have to give to our communities because they've given so much to us. And that is not lip service, we do this 52 weeks out of the year and we have people dedicated to making this happen, particularly upstate, a whole group dedicated to this. So it's something we

take very seriously."

But Chobani is not settling just yet. Looking ahead in 2019, the company said, "Along our journey, we constantly innovate our offerings to evolve with customer tastes and preferences, leading with values, and putting our people first. As we look to the future, Chobani is reinvigorating its founding mission with a vision to make universal wellness happen sooner using food as a force of good. This evolution supports Chobani's ambition to become a food-focused wellness company and providing better food to all people."



Less Sugar Chobani Greek Yogurt is produced solely at the company's South Edmeston plant. (Submitted photo)

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