

# 2025 PROGRESS CHENANGO

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Publication of The Evening Sun

## Raymond and Toyota unify for strength and production growth

BY KELLI MILLER

EVENING SUN

GREENE - The Raymond Corporation is a member of the Toyota Industries family of companies and a leading global provider of best-in-class electric forklifts and intelligent intralogistics solutions.

The Raymond Corporation has a history dating back to 1922 in Greene, New York, when George Raymond Sr. bought into an iron foundry business named Lyon Iron Works.

Raymond's innovative spirit was recognized early with the development of the first hydraulic hand pallet truck and double-faced wooden pallet, revolutionizing warehouse operations. Today, Raymond electric forklifts are engineered to achieve increased productivity and efficiency and are designed

to provide ecological and economic benefits.

For over 100 years, Raymond Corporation has been built on principles of innovation and continuous improvements.

Raymond's integrated automation, telematics, virtual reality and advanced energy solutions provide ways to optimize operations and bring warehouse and distribution centers to a new level of performance. Raymond provides solutions and support to companies in North America and globally.

As a cornerstone of Chenango County's manufacturing sector, The Raymond Corporation remains committed to driving advancements in material handling and supporting local and global economic growth as it enters its second century of excellence.

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A Raymond employee charges a lithium-ion battery. The Raymond Corporation finalized its deployment of a full-scale battery energy storage system, solar microgrid array and warehouse energy management system at its distribution warehouse in Greene with the additional unveiling of a new battery manufacturing facility in Kirkwood, New York, that will build lithium-ion batteries. (Submitted photo)

## The Chenango County Historical Society and Museum preserves the past while shaping the future

TYLER MURPHY

EVENING SUN

NORWICH - For more than 85 years, the Chenango County Historical Society and Museum (CCHS) has been dedicated to preserving the rich and diverse history of the region. Housed in Ward School No. 2 in the City of Norwich, the museum serves as a central location for exploring the cultural heritage of Chenango County. The institution prides itself on offering a welcoming environment for visitors of all ages, encouraging a sense of community through historical education and preservation.

With exhibits representing all twenty-one towns of Chenango County, the museum offers a comprehensive look at the area's development from pre-colonial times to modern-day traditions. CCHS has amassed an extensive collection of artifacts, documents, and artwork, including company



A reenactor engages visitors during Path Through History, an annual event featuring live demonstrations and interactive learning experiences. (Submitted photo)

archives from the Norwich Pharmacal Company, along with industrial relics from Borden Dairy Company, Chobani, Golden Artist Colors, Hayes Piano Forte Manufactory, Lyon Iron Works, the Raymond Corporation, and the

Maydole Hammer Factory. "Our collection is not only a reflection of our past but a way to connect people to the history that shaped this region," said Executive Director Jessica Moquin. "From manufacturing innovations to artistic contri-

butions, we take pride in preserving these stories for future generations." Original works from artists such as Alice Hudson, George Cook, Henry Grant Plumb, Tompkins H. Matteson, and David Wilson are also part of the muse-

um's collection, preserving the county's artistic heritage. Moquin emphasized the organization's commitment to education and accessibility, noting that admission to the museum is donation-based, with approximately 75 percent of its

programming offered free of charge. "History should be accessible to everyone," she said. "By offering free admission and keeping our programs open to the public, we ensure that anyone with an interest in learning can engage with our exhibits and events."

### Milestones and Developments

One of the most significant achievements of the past year was the completion of the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), an initiative conducted in collaboration with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Alliance of Museums. Participation in MAP required a substantial commitment from the museum's board, staff, and community stakeholders.

"Being part of MAP demonstrated our dedication to best practices in the museum field," Moquin said. "It was a major step forward in

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# Raymond and Toyota unify for strength and production growth -

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## Major Developments in 2024

Vice President of Marketing and Program Management Brian Howard said Raymond has been around over 100 years and is positioned for the next 100.

“2024 was an outstanding year,” said Howard. “We continued to earn our customers’ business on a daily basis and made sure we’re positioned for the next 100 years.”

He said over \$50 million in investments were made in their factories within the Greene facilities, as well as the Muscatine, Iowa, facility.

Howard noted the investments are across the board and include the welding area, some of the specific lines, machining and training associates.

“Also continuing efforts were focused on optimization and the manufacturing process as well as welcoming and training a significant number of new associates,” he added.

The Raymond Corporation also finalized its deployment of a full-scale battery energy storage system, solar microgrid array and warehouse energy management system at its distribution warehouse in Greene with the additional unveiling of a new battery manufacturing facility in Kirkwood, New York, that will build lithium-ion batter-

ies, as well as thin plate pure lead battery technology.

“It’s been about continued investments, continued growth, and I’m so proud of the organization for the accomplishments,” said Howard.

In addition to that, Howard explained they support local areas and local schools and continued to recruit, nurture and build talent.

“We continue to give to the communities year after year and have over 150 non-profits and educational organizations,” he said. “And the days of holiday giving and the commitment to giving back to the community are so strong, we will continue to move forward with our support in 2025.”

“We also had our 10th annual national manufacturing day event which was a large focus on the Southern Tier schools and at our Greene headquarters, we had over 140 students from 14 local schools show up,” Howard said.

During 2024, Raymond also implemented its Energy Storage and Solar Energy Generating System at the Distribution Warehouse located on Route 12.

The finalization came with the deployment of a full-scale battery energy storage system, solar microgrid array and warehouse energy management system. The goal demonstrated continuous sys-



Raymond employee Liz Mirabito reviews the forklift check list. Raymond’s innovative spirit was recognized early with the development of the first hydraulic hand pallet truck and double-faced wooden pallet, revolutionizing warehouse operations. (Submitted photo)

tem benefits of lower energy costs, peak demand management and resiliency for warehouses.

At the beginning of 2025, Raymond Corporation announced their unification with Toyota Material Handling, allowing the two North American leaders in material handling products and solutions to be under one name, Toyota Material

Handling North America, which will best support customer’s needs.

According to the Raymond Corporation, products will continue to go to market under the Raymond brand and will continue to provide market-leading products and solutions, their high-quality customer experience, and employment opportunities within the communities they are based.

As one organization, they will be able to increase the investment in their people, in which they have already invested millions, ensuring they have enhanced benefits.

The organization is only as strong as their people, and they remain committed to providing high-quality competitive compensation and benefits as well as training and career development opportunities to ensure their top tier team is taken care and remains strong.

Further planned investments and expansions on their manufacturing floor will support growth opportunities, optimize the manufacturing facilities and increase

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Stephanie Palmer prepares to operate an electric forklift, engineered to achieve increased productivity and efficiency. (Submitted photo)

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the capacity for production of their products and solutions.

Planned investments for 2025 include manufacturing upgrades, automated systems support, and process enhancements, driving a projected productivity increase of up to 10%.

Howard said they are so humbled by the continuing recognition they receive from their industry innovations and supply chain leadership.

"In 2024 we received nine major awards from industry publications and global organizations," he said.

Raymond continues to achieve record levels of production which is important not only for the area but for our customers. A few of the capital investments they made to support growth in our facility include: the introduction of Raymond forklifts with lithium-ion battery power for increased productivity; introduction of an AI vision system to support the excellent quality of our products; and the introduction of paint and welding virtual reality (VR) simulators to support associate education.

"It's the fourth year in a row our organization has been named one of FORBES America's mid-size employers and out of 400 organizations, we ranked number five in engineering and manufacturing factor," said Howard.

Howard explained the culture they have in their DNA gave proof when their

employees reached a goal of fulfilling over 150,000 Kaizens.

"The Greene location did over 100,000 Kaizens, which is astounding," he said. "Kaizen is the idea that small changes over time, cumulatively add up to significant benefits and improvement and engagement."

"It's so powerful to see this within the culture in our organization," he added.

### Looking back

Howard said it's been almost 25 years they've been part of Toyota Industries and it has been an amazing journey.

"Over that time and with the recent announcement with Toyota and Raymond converging, this highlights the next chapter of that relationship and if I was going back a year, I'd give myself advice as to how to continue to take that relationship forward," he said. "It's really a tremendous benefit to not only the local organization, but also our dealers as well as our customers."

"Obviously, I would have taken my advice looking back a year ago, given the recent announcements," he continued. "What a tremendous ongoing opportunity for our associates, and customers across the board."

Howard said the year 2025 will be a continuance of investing in their associates and in the facility in Greene, as well as all of their facilities.



**Vice President of Marketing and Program Management Brian Howard said Raymond has been around over 100 years and is positioned for the next 100. As a cornerstone of Chenango County's manufacturing sector, The Raymond Corporation remains committed to driving advancements in material handling and supporting local and global economic growth as it enters its second century of excellence. (Submitted photo)**

He said the commitment to the customers and associates, the spirit of their DNA, along with efforts in place to their dealers will move forward with the Raymond brand and foster deep connections with many customers over generations to come.

"Opportunities in the back office to have access to more tools and greater

efficiency will allow us to continue to focus on providing services and solutions that benefit our associates as well as our customers," said Howard. "I see that as a piece of 2025 and continue to build on the strong foundation we have to provide greater value."

In terms of challenges, Howard stated one of the most significant challenges

is for their employees to find affordable child care in the area.

"That's one of our challenges," he said, "Yet I don't think it's unique to our area, not exclusively, but we are talking with several groups and looking for resources and options for our associates."

He said Governor Hochul is releasing millions of dollars for child care and the Raymond Human Resource (HR) teams will head out to the learning events in the Southern Tier to see what is available and how they can navigate through the programs offered.

"We certainly want to make it less challenging for all," said Howard.

Howard also mentioned the challenge in finding staff but continue to have strong relations with local universities and schools to develop the workforce and find professionals ready for their career in the future of manufacturing.

"We have a tremendous HR organization that helps us find and staff talent," he added.

"We're so incredibly fortunate to have talented and dedicated employees, in many cases, across generations," said Howard. "Overall we've been fortunate to be able to attract and retain employees that continue to fuel our growth."

"We've been so fortunate to have so much interest in Raymond and be able to staff across the board in engineer-

ing, marketing, and sales positions," he said.

At the most recent career day, they had over 100 visitors which resulted in over 30 employment offers given, along with continuing conversations for other potential candidates.

"We also have open interviews every weekday, Monday through Friday, 9 to 11 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m., for folks that are thinking they'd like to join the overall team," he added.

"Retention is always an area for every organization to focus and again, we've been very blessed over time not only with the interest within the organization but the commitment of all of the associates we have within the organization," said Howard.

"We need to continue to make sure, as always, we strive to be the employer of choice and continue to have the right culture to put those things in place," he said.

Raymond headquarters is located at 22 South Canal Street, Greene, NY, and has a total of 2,800 employees in the Greene and Syracuse, New York, locations. To search for jobs and apply online for all Raymond's open positions, go to careers.raymondcorp.com.



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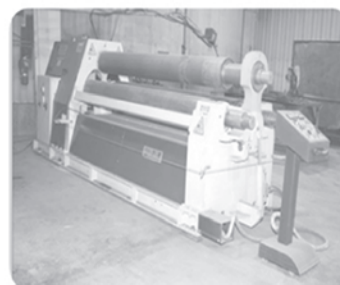
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# The Chenango County Historical Society and Museum preserves the past while shaping the future -

Continued from page 37 ▶

making sure our organization is sustainable, well-managed, and prepared for long-term success.”

In addition to those improvements, the museum significantly expanded its programming and staffing in 2024.

A growing number of educational initiatives and internships allowed CCHS to introduce their services to a new generation of students.

Partnerships with institutions such as Colgate University’s Upstate Institute, SUNY Oneonta’s Cooperstown Graduate Program, and SUNY Potsdam brought student interns and summer fellows into key roles within the museum.

“The support we receive from local colleges and community organizations has been invaluable,” Moquin said. “By mentoring interns and young professionals, we’re not only contributing to their education but ensuring the future of museum work in our region.”

The museum introduced a variety of new programs throughout the year to better serve the community. Events such as “Routes & Roadblocks,” an in-depth discussion on Black history and mobility in Chenango County, and “The Archeology of Music,” a hands-on exper-



Community members share personal stories during Routes & Roadblocks, a program exploring the Black motoring experience in Chenango County. (Submitted photo)

ience exploring indigenous percussion instruments, brought new perspectives to local history. Other highlights included a behind-the-scenes tour of The Sherburne Inn’s restoration project, a two-part book discussion on Oneida culture, and the America250 Summer Series, which explored revolutionary-era history through interactive programming.

### A Focus on Outreach and Public Programs

Heading into 2025, CCHS is preparing for one of its most ambitious years yet. One of the most exciting developments is the museum’s selection for a pilot pro-

gram through the Community Foundation of South Central New York. This initiative, designed to strengthen non-profit organizations, will provide funding, training, and capacity-building resources to help CCHS sustain long-term growth and financial stability.

“This opportunity is a game-changer for us,” Moquin said. “We’ll gain access to tools and training that will help us expand our fundraising efforts and create a more sustainable future for our museum.”

CCHS will also launch a new digital guide through Bloomberg Connects, a free app that highlights cultur-

al institutions from around the world. The platform will allow audiences to explore the museum’s collections and exhibits remotely, broadening its reach beyond Chenango County.

“By embracing technology, we’re making history more accessible than ever,” Moquin said. “This app will allow people to connect with our exhibits no matter where they are, providing an entirely new way to experience Chenango County’s history.”

Educational programming remains a top priority for the museum, with expanded school field trip experiences tailored to the needs of local educators. New lesson plans focusing on civics education and America250 themes will be introduced, ensuring that students gain a deeper understanding of both national and local history.

The museum’s calendar for 2025 is packed with community-centered events, including the opening of “Creativity in Bloom: The Storied Illustrations of Suzanne Bloom,” a career retrospective on the award-winning children’s author and illustrator from McDonough. Other highlights include the annual Path Through History events in June and October, a Worldwide Day of Play dedicated to interactive learning, and National Author’s Day, a collaborative program with the SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus celebrating local historians and writers. The season will close with the beloved Holiday Open House in December, featuring family activities, seasonal exhibits, and the annual “Parade of Trees.”

### Adapting to Change through Community Connections

Over the years, CCHS has developed from a traditional museum into an educational resource and community partner. By prioritizing visitor engagement and collaboration with local organizations, the museum has expanded its local role.

An ongoing strategic planning process, initiated in 2022 with support from the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services of New York and the New York Council of Nonprofits, continues to guide the institution’s development.

Moquin noted that Chenango County, like many areas within Appalachia, faces economic and demographic shifts, but she remains optimistic about the museum’s future. “Despite the challenges, there’s an incredible sense of community here,” she said. “We see it in the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors, and the enthusiasm of visitors who come through our doors.”

Through its strategic planning initiative, CCHS identified four core priorities: collections care and management, revenue generation and fundraising, program development and community engagement, and operational sustainability. By addressing these key areas, the museum aims to strengthen its financial position, expand

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## 2023 Recipient of the Small Business of the Year

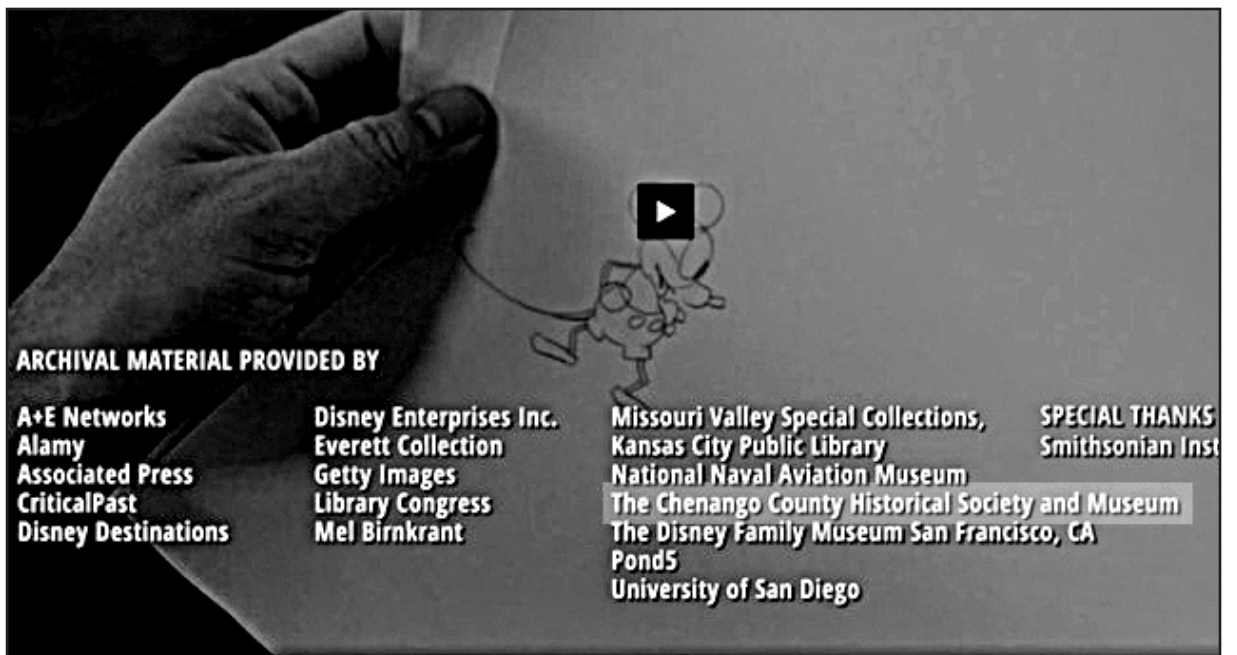


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The Chenango County Historical Society’s digital collection was featured in the History Channel mini-series How Disney Built America, marking a milestone for the museum. (Submitted photo)

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# The Chenango County Historical Society and Museum preserves the past while shaping the future -



CCHS staff and board members participate in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), a national initiative aimed at strengthening museum best practices. (Submitted photo)

Continued from page 40 ► its offerings, and ensure the long-term preservation of Chenango County's history. "We have a vision for the future, and we're actively

working to make it a reality," Moquin said. "This isn't just about preserving history—it's about making sure future generations have a strong connection to where they come from."

As the museum embarks on another year of innovation and expansion, its dedication to historical preservation remains unwavering. By embracing new technologies, reinforcing community

partnerships, and maintaining a steadfast commitment to education, Moquin said CCHS will ensure being an important part of the past, the present, and the future.



High school students explore career opportunities in the arts during the Creative Careers in Chenango County program, featuring insights from local professionals. (Submitted photo)

## Chenango Story

## Home Beautification Contest recognizes and aids homeowners' efforts to improve local properties

BEFORE



BY SARAH GENTER  
EVENING SUN

NORWICH — The Evening Sun and the Norwich Building Tomorrow Foundation announced the winners of 2024 Home Beautification Contest in December.

The contest aims to revitalize the City of Norwich by identifying, encouraging, and rewarding property owners for making improvements on their homes. Judges look for exterior improvements to homes, such as siding and painting, windows, doors, landscaping, fencing, shutters, walkways, roofing, and more. They also consider how significant the renovations were, and how much the renovations positively impact the neighborhood.

This year's contest included 12 entries for the single-family, owner-occupied category and three entries for the multi-family category.

Mike and Dana Gross took first place in the single-family category with the extensive improvements made to their home at 38 Gold Street. Dana Gross said they put new espresso brown siding and cream-colored trim on their house, put on a new porch and patio, replaced the windows, and added in flowerbeds and landscaping.

"You should have seen this house when we bought it 12 years ago compared to where it is now. It's amazing," she said. "We're quite proud and pleased with how

it came out."

The couple hired contractors for some of the work, but also completed some of it themselves. Gross said Mike built flower boxes, which she stained and installed before filling with flowers.

Gross said in total the work took six to eight months to complete, and they decided to enter the contest after seeing an ad in the Pennysaver. She said they didn't expect to win, and were surprised but thrilled to get the call that they had won first place.

"What's funny is the day before we got the phone call, my husband said, 'well, I guess we didn't win anything in the contest. We haven't heard anything.' And I was like, 'well I'm sure they'll publish it in the paper or something and we'll find out who wins that way,'" she said. "Then we got the phone call and we were both very shocked and excited."

A Victorian-era house at 26 Elm Street took first place in the multi-family category, after siding repairs, new paint, landscaping, replaced gutters, and the demolition and rebuilding of the porch. The result is a unique and stunning home in a traditional Victorian-era purple that also highlights Purple Tornado pride.

"When I picked the color it was very important for me to not have it look like every other house. Something a little unique, but something that was also traditional, and believe it or not, that's actually a traditional color for Victorian-era houses," the

homeowner explained. "The color is neat because in different lighting it looks different. When it's darker that purple comes out a little bit more, and when it's sunnier out that sort of pink comes out. I love the color."

He said he had been planning the restoration to his home since early 2023, but he kept the contest in mind as work began in May of 2024.

"The work needed to be done regardless, and my intention was to do it no matter what. Then I saw the opportunity and I said, well, let's align my goals with sort of the goal of the prize," he said. "I sort of always kept that in the back of my brain as I was designing and making decisions."

He said the work done to the property was a combination of his efforts and that of local contractors.

Both first-place winners said they recommend other homeowners in the City of Norwich take advantage of the Home Beautification Contest.

"It's a great program for the City of Norwich," said Gross. "Don't be scared to submit your photos, because you never know."

"I believe it to be a wonderful opportunity for the area, and it's a good opportunity to show pride in the city and your property," said the owner of 26 Elm Street. "There's no reason not to [enter]."

The Home Beautification Contest is modeled after the original contest promoted by

Smith Ford Norwich in the 80s and 90s, and began in 2019. The contest has become an annual tradition supported by community sponsors working in partnership with The Norwich Building Tomorrow Foundation and The Evening Sun.

To date, the Home Beautification Contest has awarded cash prizes to 38 homeowners totaling \$102,600.

The Norwich Building Tomorrow Foundation is a local not-for-profit with a mission to improve the quality of life in the City of Norwich, primarily through seeking opportunities to improve and preserve housing and other property development opportunities.

2024 Home Beautification Contest Winners:

### Single-Family

- First place: Mike and Dana Gross, 38 Gold Street, \$5,000
- Second place: Scott and Jamie Brown, \$3,000
- Third place: Ryan Kelly, \$2,000
- Fourth place: Kim Thompson, \$1,000
- Fifth place: Timothy Ryan, \$1,000
- Sixth place: Cynthia Izard, \$1,000
- Seventh place: Kim Coombs, \$1,000

### Multi-Family

- First place: 26 Elm Street, \$5,000
- Second place: Don Kelly, \$4,000
- Third place: Deanna and David Parsons, \$2,000

AFTER



38 Gold Street won first place in the single-family category of the 2024 Home Beautification Contest. Over several months, the property received new siding, a new porch and patio, new windows, and new flowerbeds and landscaping.

BEFORE



AFTER



26 Elm Street won first place in the multi-family category of the 2024 Home Beautification Contest with siding repairs, new paint, landscaping, replaced gutters, and the demolition and rebuilding of the porch. (Submitted photos)

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