

A special supplement to The Malone Telegram October 2022

Who Are You? **WHO'S WHO** IN **Business**



Rec park building in phase one

By **ALEXANDER VIOLO**

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MALONE—The exterior shell of a new building at Malone Memorial Recreation Park is going up this fall.

Park director Jennifer Hathaway said the building project will be completed in phases.

"Phase one, the exterior shell, roof, was expected to be completed this fall, however, supply delays have impacted completion of phase one," Hathaway said. "Some of this work may need to continue into spring. The weather will determine what work is completed this fall or early winter as well."

A second phase of the project will include the completion of a first aid room and other interior work and work on the building's siding, according to Hathaway.

"Once phase one is complete, the recreation commission will review our project fund balance, get bids and move on to phase two," she said.

Hathaway said the new building will have multiple uses once it is complete.

"The new building will house bathrooms, a first aid room, our offices, a community classroom space, an indoor rec space for pingpong and storage," she said.

Mayor Andrea M. Dumas said

completion of the project depends on materials getting delivered.

"We want it, obviously closed in, and somewhat sealed before the snow flies," Dumas said. "I know they have doors and windows coming, there's no real deadline yet."

Dumas said construction started about a month ago.

"The second day after we awarded the bid, we started to work on getting things mobilized and up and running," she said.

The bid was awarded to construction company AM Equipment LLC, Hogansburg, according to village clerk Rebahka Scaccia.

Scaccia said the total cost of the bid is \$247,740, with a \$250,000 State and Municipal

Facilities grant covering the construction costs.

Scaccia said the bid was opened at the village office on June 2, and the bid was awarded at a trustees' meeting on June 13.

Dumas said one reason for moving forward with construction of a new building was to upgrade the facility's bathrooms.

"We needed to upgrade the bathrooms, in a drastic way," Dumas said. "They'll have the office space, updated (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant bathrooms and eventually we will have a space where they can do art projects, get in out of the weather for all the events the rec park puts on."

The hope, she said, is to finish work as soon as possible.

"It's going to continue until we get this done," she said.



After construction started about a month ago, work on a new building at Malone Memorial Recreation Park is progressing.

Alexander Violo/Malone Telegram

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Local officials explore uses for gas plant site

By **TREVOR BUCHANAN**
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MALONE — The Franklin County Legislature heard from National Grid representatives as legislators mulled future opportunities at a cleanup site on Amsden Street in Malone during their regular meeting Thursday at the courthouse in Malone.

County Manager Donna Kissane said as National Grid works to complete remediation efforts at the former site of a manufacturing gas plant (MGP) in Malone, economic opportunities have become a focus for the county, which owns adjacent properties. National Grid owns the former MGP site.

"Looking forward, National Grid has approached us and said 'OK, we like to work with the community and see what we can do in partnership with the community once the cleanup is done,'" Kissane ex-

plained.

She said National Grid is tasked with completing a feasibility study for submission to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and will be required to include several potential uses for the site in that study.

"It's an economic development opportunity, in our opinion," Kissane said. "Really the next step is to bring entities together, and there's some community folks that have ideas as well."

National Grid representatives said the DEC is overseeing cleanup efforts at 25 Amsden St. and five other off-site properties, and has set tentative requirements for what can be built on the site, which stretches to the bank of the Salmon River, when the likely years-long remediation project is completed.

National Grid representa-

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Plant

From 3

tives say that the MGP, which was in operation from the 1880s into the 1940s, has left harmful byproducts in the soil and groundwater, as well as in river sediment, and the power company entered into an agreement with the DEC in 2002 to evaluate and remediate the impacts on the MGP site and adjacent properties.

"A manufactured gas plant was an industrial facility at which gas was produced from coal, oil and other feedstocks. The gas was stored, and then piped to the surrounding area, where it was used for lighting, cooking, and heating homes and businesses. The first MGPs in New York were constructed in the early 1800s, prior to the Civil War. Most were closed during the early-to-middle 1900s, and the last one ceased operations in 1972," an informational page on the DEC website reads.

Gas produced in these plants was used for heating and cooking in much the same way as natural gas today, but also for lighting prior to the introduction of electricity.

The DEC says that the plants created wastes, and those wastes still exist at many for-

mer MGP sites. Coal tar, for instance, would condense out of gas at various stages of the gas production. While most of the dense, oily liquid was collected for sale or reuse, that recovery was incomplete and the resulting tar and water emulsion was often discharged to nearby bodies of water. Furthermore, the DEC says substantial amounts of tar would leak from storage and processing facilities, contaminating surface soils, subsurface soils, and groundwater.

According to the DEC, at a number of sites, the emulsion continues to migrate into sewers, basements or bodies of water. While some would temporarily float on the surface of bodies of water, most would sink to the bottom, to contaminate sediments. In addition, purifier waste, another byproduct of the obsolete plants, was used to remove cyanide and sulfur from the manufactured gas, and was often discarded or used as fill material. This waste can contain complex cyanide compounds and contaminate groundwater. Purifier waste which was typically made up of either lime or wood chips, generates a strong and foul odor when exposed on ground surfaces.

The Amsden Street site is one of roughly 300 former MGP sites in the state. Most,

including Malone's, are currently under remediation or have remediation scheduled. The DEC said while health impacts are possible, the risk is not high. Environmental damage, however, remains a concern at former MGP sites.

Over the years, many ideas have been presented for the site after remediation, including a river walk, housing and business, parking, or other uses, and county officials have teamed up with National Grid, DEC, and the village and town

in Malone to determine the best usage plan. Currently, officials believe housing is possible, but not on the ground floor of any future buildings at the site and adjacent properties. No single family housing

See PLANT 6

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County to help seniors heat homes

Human service workers looking for ways to assist with costs

By **TREVOR BUCHANAN**

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MALONE — With winter rapidly approaching and fuel costs up and rising, Franklin County human service workers are looking for ways to assist seniors who they fear will be unable to heat their homes over the next few months. Legislators agreed to \$60,000 in startup funds, along with a 12% administration fee, with another \$250,000 to come.

Michelle Breen, director of Franklin County Office for the Aging, addressed the Franklin County Legislature prior to its regular meeting Thursday at the courthouse and asked the board to approve a partnership with Catholic Charities that would aim to curb heating costs for older county residents by supplementing Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) dollars with monies from the county's American Rescue Plan funding. That money was earmarked to assist communities in the wake of the COVID pandemic, and county manager Donna Kissane said roughly

\$6.5 million remains in the fund.

"I know we've been here a couple times talking about designating some American rescue funds to help our older adults this coming heating season," Breen told the board. "So I'm coming today to talk a little more about that and to see if I can have a concrete number."

Breen went on to ask the board for permission to enter into a contract with Catholic Charities, after an attempt to formulate a plan that would deal directly with fuel providers was found to be prohibitively complex.

"As you can imagine, when we started looking at how many companies there are throughout the northern end and the southern end it was just getting very overwhelming," Breen explained.

She said her close connections to Catholic Charities inspired her to reach out to the agency to determine how many vendors they were connected with, and found that organization had relationships

with nearly every fuel vendor in the county.

Under the proposed partnership Breen explained that the Office for the Aging would do all evaluations of need and refer to HEAP when possible. She added that if seniors did not qualify for HEAP her office would reach out to Catholic Charities to help meet identified needs.

"(Catholic Charities) would then set up the vouchers and the payment and everything," Breen told legislators. "I think it would work fantastic."

Breen plans to target the program to seniors who fall just above HEAP income limits.

"I wish we could have clear-cut guidelines but I honestly will advocate for not that, because I think it's case-by-case," Breen said. "You have

See HEAT 6




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Heat

From 5

some that are saving up, maybe they have home repairs that they're setting aside for. I think we really have to look at it case-by-case."

She said other considerations, such as if seniors are living in spaces larger than their need, or living beyond their means, would also be important factors in setting parameters for the assistance.

"Then it's really working with them to see what kind of options they have," Breen explained.

County manager Donna Kissane said she believes the partnership would present significant opportunities to help seniors in need.

"I think this opens up a lot of opportunities to really do some good work with people," Kissane said.

Andrea M. Dumas, R-Malone, questioned how the word of heating assistance beyond HEAP would make it to seniors

who may not feel comfortable asking for help.

"We have a lot of very proud senior citizens that struggle day-to-day," Dumas said. "They're very cautious how they spend their money. They don't just want somebody just walking in the door offering to help them."

"They won't ask for help but we know that they're at that point where they're struggling to pay for food, their taxes, their medication."

Breen said she believes a strong partnership between the county legislature, the Office for the Aging, and Catholic Charities would help raise awareness of the help available to the sometimes stoic senior community.

"It's neighbors looking out for neighbors," Breen said. "I really think that's where we're going to do the best work that we possibly can."

Breen asked that the county approve \$60,000 dollars in start-up funding, with a 12% administration fee.

She added that she would collect monthly reports to identify how much the effort in helping,

and to tweak the program to better assist seniors who struggle to heat their homes.

"I would love to come back and keep you guys apprised," Breen said.

Legislative chair Donald Dabiew, D-Bombay, said helping residents in need is a core function of the county board.

"It seems like everyone really wants to do this," Dabiew said. "Anything we can do is better than letting people die because they're cold. I think it's a good use of American rescue funds."

Breen asked lawmakers what funding they would put forth immediately in addition to start-up costs, and said the one-time assistance would aim to help as



Franklin County Courthouse, 355 W. Main St., Malone. Malone Telegram

many people as possible.

"Is it reasonable to tell Michelle we would start with \$250,000 of American rescue funds?" Kissane asked lawmakers. "We have a little over \$6 million left."

Board members spoke out in favor of the assistance.

"We have to take care of our people," Greg Janisewski, D-Chateaugay, said.

Board members will revisit the plan based on reports from Breen and determine whether or not any changes need to be made to better help the seniors for whom it is designed.



Remediation efforts continue at 25 Amsden St., the former Kriff's warehouse. A manufacturing gas plant site behind the building is the focus of those efforts, and plans for future use are in early stages. Trevor Buchanan/Malone Telegram

Plant

From 4

would be possible without a full remediation of the site by National Grid, but talks continue.

National Grid said the next step is the "preparation of an alternatives analysis report

(AAR) to develop and evaluate alternative remedial alternatives to address MGP byproducts, pending future property use designation." They plan to submit the AAR to DEC over the next two to three months, and DEC will issue a proposed decision document in 2023. Final remediation of the site is expected to take place in 2026 or 2027.



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Veterans retreat center gets boost

CARING COMMUNITY: Vet Fest, LaVigne family donate to project development

By **ALEXANDER VIOLO**

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MALONE — A veterans retreat center, located in the Lake Titus area, received a helping hand from community members on Wednesday morning, with donations coming from Vet Fest and the LaVigne family.

The Sgt. Carlton A. Clark Veterans Center is currently being developed off Route 30, at a 105-acre site near Lake Titus.

"It will be a site worthy of the sacrifices veterans have made," said Mark Moeller, chair of Homeward Bound Adirondacks' board of directors. "It will be a site that will outlast us all."

According to Moeller, the check from Vet Fest, totaling \$8,800, will go to help with the mortgage payments on the property.

"We will finally own the property, and we can do retreats here year-round in a facility directly suited to our purpose," Moeller said. "We are getting donations from hundreds of VFWs, American Legions and Amvets. Folks are helping out here."

Adirondack Vet Fest, an annual summer event to raise public awareness about mental health issues and challenges facing veterans, organized a fundraiser to benefit the veterans retreat center.

"We look forward to next year's event, getting the word out on veterans issues, and recognizing veterans is so important, we have a lot of them in our community," Moeller said. "We are here to assist them, we tell that to our American Legions, if there's a veteran, widow, or a spouse who needs help, get them over to us, we can make things happen. We want to take care of our veterans. It starts in our hometowns."

The LaVigne family donated the flagpole at the retreat center in honor of the 17



Suzanne Stevens, front left, founder and president of Vet Fest, Valerie Ainsworth, center, executive director of Homeward Bound Adirondacks, and Sharon Whitney, the vice president of Vet Fest, are joined by community members as they hold a check, totaling \$8,800, to be donated to Homeward Bound Adirondacks. Alexander Violo/Malone Telegram

members of their family who have served in the nation's armed forces, with a memorial garden to be added to the area around the flagpole, according to Moeller.

"The money here will help with the garden portion of it," Moeller said, adding Kirk LaVigne donated an additional \$5,000 on Wednesday to go toward a memorial garden. "We were very thrilled they put up the flagpole, and we are equally thrilled today to accept this to help with the memorial garden, which is part of the entrance to this facility."

The garden will also feature a memorial wall made up of bricks that can be purchased with the names of loved ones displayed on them, according to Moeller.

VETERAN RETREATS

Moeller described the weekend retreats offered at the site as having a positive impact on veterans and their families.

"The positive nature that these veterans end up with,

even after just a short weekend, that's what we want to build upon and have the ability to offer up here," Moeller said.

Moeller said the new retreat center is being built in phases in an effort to make the costs manageable.

"Our engineer's estimate is it's going to be about \$1.3 million," Moeller said. "That's going to build a 2,400-square-foot lodge, but first of all, in back of that, the first building is going to be a utility building. It's going to house three components, a bathhouse for men and women, and it's going to get the water from the well we dug this year. It has to be purified through the mechanical room in the utility building. The third part of the building is going to be a maintenance area."

After the utility building is completed, the next effort will be building four cabins, according to Moeller.

"They're going to be insulated and heated. They will have three bedrooms, two

beds each," Moeller said. "We did all these things to be as efficient as we could with the dollars that we have to make this an Adirondack setting. This whole aspect of being in nature is great. That will happen in phases over the course of a couple years."

Moeller said the organization will put out a request for bids for the utility building in January.

"I want it to be known that we are so appreciative of the Malone community. They have really come out to support us in what we are doing, financially, and the veterans organizations have been a big help," Moeller said. "We appreciate all that, and Vet Fest's contributions are great. The Malone community has really embraced us."

According to Moeller, the late Frank Dorchak, a U.S. Navy veteran who lived in Malone, was a Homeward Bound board member who helped to find the location of the new retreat center.

"We looked at this one and thought, 'Wow, it fits all of

our needs," Moeller said.

According to Assemblyman D. Billy Jones, D-Chateaugay Lake, work is being done to finalize a State and Municipal facilities program grant totaling \$250,000 to go toward work at the site.

"We couldn't do this without the help of New York state," Moeller said. "This all goes toward fighting veteran suicide, to help veterans who are dealing with PTSD, and our retreats here are for that."

Moeller thanked Franklin County and the Malone town board for working to bring the retreat center to the community.

"We are thrilled to be here in this beautiful setting," Moeller said. "We are close to Titus Mountain, we have miles of cross country ski trails on our own site right here, we definitely have four seasons of recreation."

Donald Dabiew, D-Bombay, chair of the county Legislature, said he was thankful for the work of all the volunteer groups at the day's ceremony.

"We really do appreciate it," Dabiew said. "This is going to be a great site."

Based in Saranac Lake, Homeward Bound Adirondacks offers healing retreats for veterans and their families at no cost. The organization has been serving veterans for 12 years, also offering transportation to medical and mental health appointments, crisis outreach and referral services.

"This is going to be a nice, tranquil spot, and from here we can go all around the Adirondacks to go paddling, hiking, and fishing," Moeller said. "The work really is veteran to veteran. The veterans leading this will talk about their own experiences with PTSD and depression, how they are coping with them, to try and give some ideas to the other vets."

County agencies adopt budgets

By **TREVOR BUCHANAN**

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MALONE — The Franklin County Industrial Development Agency, Economic Development Corp. and Civic Development Corp. adopted their 2023 budgets Tuesday.

Paul Ellis, chief financial officer for the IDA, said that while the budget has changed little from previous years, the board is pleased with its stewardship of funds.

"It's pretty standard stuff, not much has changed from last year," Ellis said.

The IDA's revenue increased from \$137,950 to \$386,050, while total expenditures will total \$501,573, up from \$411,500 the previous year. The over expenditure will fall by \$158,027 from \$273,550 the previous year to \$115,523 in 2023. For the EDC, revenue is \$1,805,861, down from \$2,704,850, while expenditures are down by \$916,983, leaving over expenditures at \$76,406, down from \$94,400 the previous year. The CDC budget will see total expenditures of \$1,500, down from \$2,950 in 2022. Over expenditure for 2023 stands at \$1,495, down from \$2,945 the previous year.

Ellis explained that the IDA is a completely independent body from the county, and the budget is an internal document that helps the agency "stay on track."

"We have Franklin County in our name, but we're an entirely separate entity," he said.

The legal requirement for the IDA is now to submit the budget to the Authorities Budget Office in Albany, Ellis told the

Telegram. The ABO oversees all industrial development agencies statewide.

"There's benchmarks in which we have to do reporting with the Authorities Budget Office, and one of those requirements is we have to provide the APO with our budget," he said, adding that the push to complete the budget now is to allow operations manager Maria Bourgeois time to upload the agency budget to the ABO. The spending plan is due 60 days before the start of the fiscal year.

The IDA is the owner of business properties and through pilot programs helps bring down costs for local businesses over a 10- to 15-year time frame, after which those businesses return fully to the tax roll, Ellis said.

"One of the reasons I like being part of this organization is because when you're doing things that are great for the county and great for people, it's just the right thing to do," Ellis said. He is a relatively new addition to the board after serving as interim CEO prior to the hiring of Jeremy S. Evans, the IDA's current leader. He said his chief goal, and one that he has focused on professionally before taking on his current role, is to help bring business to the North Country and to help them thrive, thereby creating jobs and bringing prosperity to communities he believes in.

"It's always a good feeling when I can do something for the residents of the county," Ellis said. "This is going to be very rewarding to me, being here."

He explained that the EDC, which along with the CDC falls

under the umbrella of the IDA, is the funding source that allows his agency to assist businesses in the county directly.

"A lot of the opportunities are grants that we can help obtain for these different businesses, whether it's the Main Street program, (Restore) New York, or the Downtown Revitalization (Initiative)," Ellis said. "We have to recognize the revenue, but we also have to recognize the expense when we're administering the grants."

He said in addition to the

grants, the EDC has funds to lend to area businesses.

"The issue that I had before when I was here was that we were sitting on all this money and we weren't actively getting it out the door," Ellis said. "What I've seen, with (Evans) at the helm, is we now have a million dollars more out there. The fact is now we have a million dollars, and instead of it sitting in a bank, it is now out in businesses, generating some income."

"I look at it as we're generat-

ing money for the county," he added. "I know people would love to see a large employer come here and hire 100 people. That's not the way it's going to get done. It gets done by helping this employer, helping that person, and growing it maybe two or three jobs or 10 jobs. The only way you grow jobs is you've got to help support businesses to grow."

All three budgets were adopted unanimously without further discussion in back-to-back board meetings.

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Alum accepts St. Regis Falls post

School board selects White, Potsdam counselor, for superintendent job

By **ALEXANDER VIOLO**

aviolo@mtelegram.com

ST. REGIS FALLS — A Dickinson Center woman who currently works in the Potsdam Central School District has tentatively accepted the top post in the St. Regis Falls Central School District.

Tisha White, who already lives within the St. Regis Falls district, said Monday that she would accept the superintendent position pending contract negotiations, according to a news release from the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton Board of Cooperative Educational Services on behalf of the St. Regis Falls school board.

White was one of three finalists who interviewed with three groups of community stakeholders in St. Regis Falls Thursday night.

"We are really looking for a strong leader who can provide stability to our district," school board president Matt Goodrow said in the release. "The board



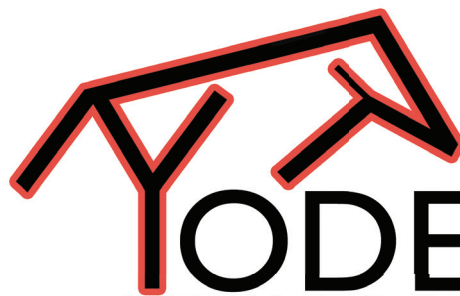
White

and committees agreed that Ms. White has the strengths needed to unify our community and ensure our students get the kind of quality education they need."

The other two finalists were Kathleen Cruikshank of Hannawa Falls and Nicole Eschler of Brooktondale.

All three finalists met with different committees comprised of the district's school

See POST 11



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Post

From 10

board members, administrators, teachers and other district staff, in addition to families, community members and students.

After Thursday's interviews with each finalist, there was enough consensus for the board of education to feel ready to offer the position to White, the release said.

White graduated from St. Regis Falls Central School District and moved back to Dickinson Center nine years ago.

"I'm so excited to get back to working in a small, one-building district where I can watch students progress all the way from pre-K through their high school graduation," White said in the release. "When a school like that is run well, it's like a family. I hope to cultivate that sort of atmosphere at St. Regis Falls Central School District by creating a strong foundation of trust and communication."

White currently works as a school counselor at Potsdam Central, and she spent nearly two decades working at Long Lake Central School, in various positions, including several leadership roles.

"I've always been proud of St. Regis Falls. I got a really good education here," White

said in the release. "I want our students to feel the same way. I want them to feel confident going out into the world to do anything they want, wherever they want, but that they can also feel proud to stay in the community they were raised in and make a contribution here."

White said she wants to start her time as superintendent by doing a lot of listening, building relationships with staff, families and students she doesn't know yet, and strengthening ties with those she does.

The district started advertising to hire a new superintendent in August, with a total of 11 applicants applying for the position. BOCES District Superintendent Dale Breault Jr. helped manage the hiring process.

Randy Richards, a retired school administrator, is currently serving as interim superintendent and said during a September interview that he will remain with the district through December.

Richards, who retired from his position as superintendent of the Waverly Central School District in 2017, was appointed interim head of St. Regis Falls in January, replacing Breault, who worked as acting superintendent after former Superintendent Anne Young and the central school district entered into a separation agreement in December 2021.

Young left less than five

months after she was named the new superintendent following Timothy Seymour's

resignation. Seymour left the district to take a job as superintendent of Lake Placid.

Young was one of two finalists and nine candidates for the district's top job in 2021.

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Roads in housing project get names

From staff reports

AKWESASNE — The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe is continuing efforts to strengthen Kanien'keha (Mohawk language) and provide homes for Mohawk families.

The Tribal Council signed Tribal Council Resolution No. 2022-44 during its bi-weekly work session Monday that formally designated Kahrhaká:ion Road and Wáhta Street as the first two names for roadways located at the Tribal Housing Development Project.

The Tribal Housing Development is being constructed on lands reacquired in Seskehkó:wa/September 2018 and located within the boundaries of the 1796 Treaty, commonly known as the "Hogansburg Triangle." The reacquisition was consistent with community member's desire, as indicated in a 2009 Compre-

hensive Community Development Plan, to reacquire lands for family housing, according to a news release on this week's resolution.

Kahrhaká:ion, which means "Old Forest," is the housing project's main entryway located at the intersection of State Route 37 and Cook Road (across from No. 9 Truck Stop). Currently a gravel road, Kahrhaká:ion extends to the location of the first street that will include a cul-de-sac, which has been named Wáhta (meaning maple).

The proposed road names and an update on the Tribal Housing Development Project were shared at the Monthly Tribal Meeting held on Saturday, Kenténha/Oct. 1. A video recording of the tribal meeting and the presentation

See **ROADS 13**



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Roads

From 12

provided by SRMT Home Improvement Division Director Jamie Bay and Assistant Executive Director Starr Thomas is available for membership to view on the Tribal Members Portal.

Work on the two roads began in the fall of 2021 and included clearing and grading of the two roadways. In the process, community members were able to access stockpiles of materials at no cost; such as trees, wood chips, fill and rocks. As work continues on constructing family homes and other development project, more roadways will be added and additional opportunities will be provided for community members to access more bulk materials.

The cul-de-sac road,

named Wáhta Street, will see six homes constructed, with two home shells completed by fall of 2023 as part of the Tribal Housing Development. Information on the housing initiative was shared at the Ohiaihkó:wa/July 2021 Monthly Tribal Meeting. A video recording of the meeting and presentation are available to view on the Tribal Members Portal.

In the coming months, bids will be received to extend the tribe's water line and sewer line alongside the new roadways. The anticipated completion date for these infrastructure projects, including road paving, is during the summer of 2023. Extending electrical lines will follow.

The Tribal Members Portal can be accessed from the tribe's website, www.srmt-nsn.gov. For assistance, contact the tribe's communications department at 518-358-2272.

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County on par with 2021 sales tax figures

TREASURER'S QUARTERLY REPORT:

Increase in occupancy tax registrants related to Airbnb rental properties

By **ALEXANDER VIOLO**

aviolo@mtelegram.com

MALONE — Franklin County legislators received an update on quarterly occupancy tax revenue and quarterly sales tax revenue during a meeting on Thursday morning.

County treasurer Fran Perry reviewed approximately three quarters of data from both revenue streams during the meeting.

With nearly three quarters completed, the county has received \$749,731.61 of occupancy tax revenue, according to county documents.

In 2021 the county received \$969,236.54 of revenue for all four quarters of the year, with the same time period for 2020 resulting in \$626,315.69, according to county documents.

According to Perry, there

See TAX 15

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Tax

From 14

were two quarters, the third quarter of 2021 and the first quarter of this year, when compliance efforts led to an increase in revenue.

"Due to compliance efforts made by my office a few taxpayers were brought current. They had been delinquent, so there was an influx of tax collection. That is not normal, it's not going to be the average," Perry said. "First quarter of 2022 was significantly higher than the same quarter in 2021 and that is part of the reason."

County Manager Donna J. Kissane described the effort as reconciling back payments.

Perry said an increase in the number of occupancy tax registrants is related to Airbnb locations.

"We aren't going to see a significant increase in tax collection because we are already collecting it but they are now filing with us so we can get ourselves closer to figuring out who Airbnb is paying for," Perry said. "Airbnb will not release that, New York state is currently trying to get them to disclose the owners of the properties."

For sales tax revenue, through nearly three quarters the county has received

\$20,193,736.14 this year, according to county documents.

"We are on target to collect similar figures to what we collected last year," Perry said.

Last year the county received a total of \$30,084,534.71 for the whole year, and in 2020 this figure was \$26,330,810.80.

Perry said the state comptroller's office has advised counties to be cautious with their expectations.

"They told us to be very conservative in our projections just because the stimulus money that was coming through the economy is gone," Perry said. "He (state Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli) is requesting that counties be very hesitant in following the trend, the trend will decrease."

Perry said her office has taken this advice into account as they plan the county's tentative budget.

"We have not increased our sales tax as high as we have been collecting but we have gone up due to the internet collections we were receiving," Perry said. "We increased sales tax slightly but we haven't gone near where it was last year. At this point there is no way to really project where sales tax is going to be because the last few years has been all over the place."

Legislator Don Dabiew, D-Bombay, chair of the county legislature, said he anticipates a

decrease in revenue as families are forced to put funds toward high heating bills during the

winter months.

"It's going to be really hurtful with people paying fuel bills

over the winter too," Dabiew said. "They aren't going to be buying the extra stuff."

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Titus Mountain hosts 41st Oktoberfest

By **TREVOR BUCHANAN**
tbuchanan@mttelegram.com

MALONE — Titus Mountain Family Ski Center held its 41st annual Oktoberfest Saturday, welcoming visitors to the mountain with a wide variety of activities, vendors, food and drinks. A fireworks show

at dusk lit up the sky over the resort and surrounding area, and musical acts performed throughout the day in what organizers said was another successful event for the growing mountain.

The event takes its inspira

See **TITUS 19**

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/Hospice of the North Country

Local author has wild time with book series

Manske wins award for 'Adventures with Stoney,' based on his life with animals

By **ANDY GARDNER**
agardner@wdt.net

DICKINSON — A Dickinson Center author has been awarded a Moonbeam Children's Book Award for his serial novels based on real-life experiences with wild animals.

Mark A. Manske is being lauded for his "Adventures with Stoney" series. It has four installments currently out. He's penned a fifth that's due to be published this fall, and is writing its sixth book.

Manske said he named his lead character Stoney as a reference to the Potsdam Sandstoners.

"Stoney is basically my alter ego, tall guy who lives in Dickinson Center and he lives with his dog Reggie and ... live hawks and owls," said Mr. Manske, who also runs Adirondack Raptors where he exhibits birds of prey. He actually keeps six owls, two falcons and a hawk at his Dickinson Center home.

"I'll see people stop because the building with the birds is right next to the road," he said. "I get a lot of rubbernecks."

His Moonbeam Award is a bronze medal in their category of best chapter books. He's hoping he can use that as a stepping stone to getting his works, aimed at readers of

middle school ages, out to a larger audience.

"The whole reason I entered the whole Moonbeam contest was I'm looking for a literary agent to get my books published so I can get into like Scholastic Books, so I can get into the schools. Unfortunately, Scholastic Publishing, they kind of have a monopoly on schools. They don't look at unsolicited work. You have to have a literary agent," Mr. Manske said. "I was told if you have an award winning series, you're more likely to have someone interested in your work ... I'm hoping, number one, this will generate interest where people will want to publish the book, or two, I'll find a literary agent."

Mr. Manske's fifth "Adventures with Stoney" book, titled "Gabboons Aloft," tells a story of the characters tracking hawk migrations in a hot air balloon.

"I call my apprentices 'gabboons,'" he said, adding that all of his stories are based on things he's experienced in real life.

In one part of the book, the characters end up rescuing a migrating loon that got confused and ends up on a parking lot. He said that can happen to them.

"They see the shimmer of a parking lot and they get confused and think it's a body of water. Once a loon is on the ground, they can't take off

from the ground" because of where their feet are positioned on their bodies, Mr. Manske said. "Everything's built to be on water."

He said hawk migrations aren't usually traced with hot air balloons, but it's within the realm of possibility and

See **AUTHOR 19**



Holding Kit, a juvenile kestrel, Mark A. Manske of Adirondack Raptors on Monday displays his book series featuring Stoney, a great snowy owl, which has won a Moonbeam Children's Book Award. Christopher Lenney/Watertown Daily Times



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Annual Pumpkin Festival puts students in fall spirit



The pumpkin display at Davis Elementary School. Provided photo



Davis Elementary School kicked off its Pumpkin Festival on Monday. From left, RaeLynn Laflesh, BrookLynn LaFlesh and Jimmy Norcross arrived early for the festivities. A full display was visible later in the day. The annual event takes place at all three elementary schools in the Malone Central School District. Provided photos

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Titus

From 16

tion from a yearly event in Munich, Germany, that started in 1810 in celebration of the marriage of the crown prince of Bavaria, who later became King Louis I, to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen, according to britannica.com.

The event saw a significant crowd by mid-afternoon with more arriving steadily to enjoy the music, food and setting. Organizers said more than 80 vendors participated — the most Titus Mountain has seen for its Oktoberfest — selling wares that ranged from regional wines to crafts to maple cotton candy.

Bruce “Cracker” Monette, the mountain’s brand ambassador, said organizers were pleased with the turnout and spirit on Saturday.

“It’s been a great turnout,” he said. “People are rolling

through and the ski patrol’s been busy with their food so that’s been great.”

Monette added that organizers believe the excitement level for the event is up this year, after rainy weather dampened last year’s Oktoberfest, and the COVID-19 pandemic the year before. He said this year represents a return to form for the mountain.

“This is really the first time we’ve had nice weather for a big event,” Monette said. “The energy out there — you can really feel it.”

Kaylee and Derek Huru made the trip from Plattsburgh with 2-year-old twins Parker and Reagan, and said this is their first trip to Titus Mountain for the Bavarian-themed festival.

“We usually go to Whiteface for Oktoberfest but this one’s way more kid friendly,” Kaylee said.

“We try to include everybody,” Monette said.

Entertainment came from



Hundreds of people attended Saturday’s Oktoberfest at Titus Mountain in Malone to enjoy the food, drinks, music and fun. By mid-afternoon a long line of cars had formed for the popular event.

TREVOR BUCHANAN/MALONE TELEGRAM

Slip Junction, which played from 1 to 4 p.m., followed by Bella Voca. Traditional German fare such as bratwursts

and sauerkraut were served alongside burgers, hot dogs and poutine, a staple in the North Country and Canada.

The chairlift and hay rides were open to visitors throughout the day, and the event wrapped up with fireworks.

Author

From 17

also makes for a better story, he said.

“They do it with like hang gliders and parasailers. I thought about having them do a parasail or that type of thing,” he said.

Anyone who’s interested in Mr. Manske’s books can buy them online.

“My books at this point are not at Barnes and Noble. The best way to get them is to order right from my website,” he said, which is adventure-swifthoney.com. The site also has a list of area bookshops that sell his novels.

The Moonbeam awards will be given out Veterans Day weekend at a ceremony in Traverse City, Michigan. Mr. Manske said he doesn’t plan to attend, but will be mailed a plaque and medal for his accomplishment.

“The Moonbeam Children’s Book Awards bring increased recognition to exemplary children’s books and their creators, and are dedicated to supporting childhood literacy and life-long reading,” according to its website. “The contest is open to authors, illustrators, and publishers worldwide of children’s books written in English or Spanish, that are published with a 2021 or 2022 copyright.

Stewart’s Shops donates \$10K for American Legion baseball field

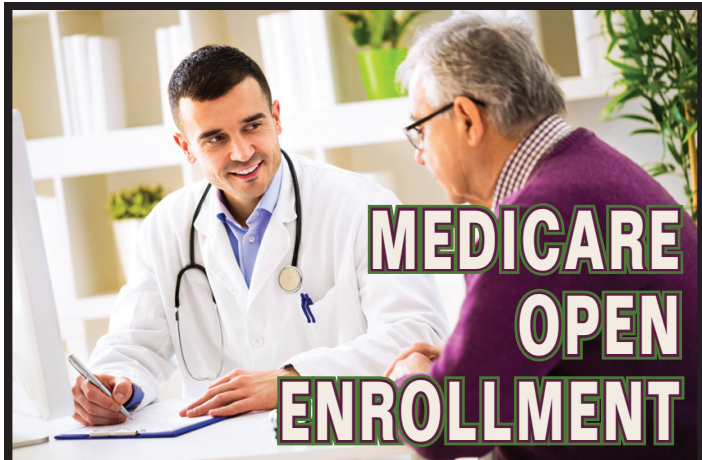


From left, Paeg Kent, a Stewart’s Shops employee, Abby Willet, a supervisor at Stewart’s, Village Trustee Matt Boyea, Kate LaBelle, the store manager, Dana Langdon, a baseball committee member at the American Legion, and Pam Gary, Stewart’s district manager, pose with a check for funds that will go toward the American Legion’s baseball field campaign. Boyea said the Dake family, who owns Stewart’s Shops, donated \$10,000 to the campaign. “We would like to acknowledge it and say thank you very much,” Boyea said. Provided photo



County employees recognized for service

Donald Dabiew, D-Bombay, chair of the Franklin County Legislature, presents Janelle Reome, director of financial assistance at the Department of Social Services, with a resolution honoring her 30 years of service to the county Thursday during the board's regular meeting at the courthouse. Also recognized for their longevity were Brent Poquette from emergency services with 25 years; Brandon John Varin from the board of elections with 20 years; and Tammy Fisher from transportation and Sara Sauve from probation with 10 years each. Sarah Brue, from the Office for the Aging, Angela Bush from DSS, Julie Bushey from DSS and Robbie Demarse were each honored for five years of service.



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Golf course reflects on successful summer

By **ALEXANDER VIOLO**

avio@ntelegram.com

MALONE — Busy weekends and returning Canadian golfers added up to a pretty successful summer at Malone's 36-hole course.

The season has been a success, according to Scott Delair, golf director at the Malone Golf Club. He said the course will remain open into October.

Delair said the goal each year is to remain open until Oct. 31, and said the course was able to do so last year, while noting weather obviously plays a role in how long the courses can remain open to golfers.

"Our benchmark is always Halloween but we will go a little bit later if the weather allows," he said. "If the snow starts flying before then, we will probably start wrapping things up."

Delair said the course saw the economic impact of loosened border restrictions after the border with Canada reopened in November 2021, after 19 months of COVID-19 restrictions on such travel, too late for last season but in plenty of time for the current one.

"There was definitely a difference, we had a lot of rounds we probably did 4 to 5,000 rounds more than we usually do, just because of the hotel packages we do," he said. "Economically, it's a huge impact, I mean it certainly makes for busier weekends, especially with events, which is good, it's a good problem to have. We have 36 holes so we are still able to get a lot of people out there without sacrificing too much."

Delair said with restrictions still in place during last summer, the course was unable to do any golf and hotel packages.

"It was a massive difference," he said. "Now we have about 35 to 40 members from Canada."

Delair said the club has three events scheduled for October, including the impossible pin tournament on Saturday, a members-only event on Oct. 5 and the final tournament of the year on Oct. 9.

The weather cooperated for most of the summer, according to Delair.

"It was good, a really good year, busy for sure, we had a lot of tournaments, a lot of daily play, lot of golf packages, it was good to be back at full force," he said. "The course was in excellent shape all year long, we didn't get too much rain throughout the summer, these past two weeks was when we got the bulk of the rain."

When both of the club's courses do shut down for the year, Delair said efforts will shift to prepping for the winter months.

"There's definitely some maintenance that goes on to get the course ready for the winter," he said. "A little bit of aeration, a little bit of top dressing, not putting as much stress on the grass with all of the mowing practices, we give it a nice long break."

According to Delair, this past spring the golf club was able to open its doors to the public on April 15.

"That's pretty standard compared to past years, the earliest we have ever opened is March

22," he said.

The golf club consists of two

courses, a par-72 east course, and a par-71 west course.



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Empire League's Malone team named

By ALEXANDER VIOLO

aviolo@mtelegram.com

MALONE — An Empire League team coming to the American Legion Field off Route 11 has been named.

The Malone Border Hounds will represent Malone in a league featuring squads from Plattsburgh, Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake, according to Eddie Gonzales, director of the Empire Professional Baseball League.

Gonzales said that after working with community members, Border Hounds was chosen as the favorite from a list of more than 50 name suggestions at the start of the process.

"We were looking for relatable names and being so close to the border, it actually came from some of the

locals, not suggested by one person particularly but it was kind of thrown on the table and some of the guys from the town really liked it and it was just one of the names in the mix that was thrown in," Gonzales said. "We kind of narrowed it down. Everybody selected their top 20 names or so and it just kind of came down to where we went around the table and found out which names everybody liked the most."

Gonzales said it took a couple of months to nail down the team name.

"It was all a group effort, between folks from the American Legion, kids from the local teams, the town, we all together decided those are cool colors and that is a cool

See **EMPIRE 23**



Malone Town Councilor Jody Johnston measures the American Legion baseball field near the Malone-Dufort Airport in July with other volunteers working on improving the diamond. Alexander

Violo/Malone Telegram

Getting creative with fiber at Downtown Artist Cellar



The Downtown Artist Cellar hosted a silk painting class Friday morning. Jennifer Bilow, co-founder of the gallery off Main Street, said the class allowed artists to paint scarves. The class was free and made possible by the Senior Thrive Project, supported by the Community Friendship Volunteer Program of the North Country. Lynne Taylor, a longtime workshop instructor, led the group as they worked on using fiber-reactive dye on silk to produce a finished piece of art.

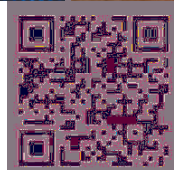
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From 22

name and everybody liked it and said let's go with it. And that is how after a couple months of throwing names into a hat, we got here," Gonzales said. "We took ideas from everybody — kids, families, local community members and athletes."

Gonzales said the league also looked to the community for input when selecting names for the other teams playing in the North Country.

"It was somewhat similar but everyone has got their unique story, this one was a little different, more of all the guys participating and we made it a fun little community event," Gonzales said.

The team colors will be powder blue, sunshine gold and white.

"We just kind of looked at various colors that are in the league. We didn't want to have the typical colors, there are already a couple teams with black and red, black and gold, royal blue. So we were looking for something different and went with more of a powder blue and gold, kind of like in football, what the Chargers have," Gonzales said. "We wanted it to be a little different, so it stands out, so we went with a different look. Everybody liked that and we voted on it as well."

He said the team's logo has not yet been revealed but will be soon.

"We don't have our logo as of yet, but when you think of the idea of a border hound you think of an athletic hound dog that protects the border, our community, and our team," Gonzales said. "The logo is going to have that type of character to it. We'll see, we are getting some drawings put together but it is a long process."

Gonzales said work to upgrade the field by Malone-Dufort Airport is making good progress.

"The field is coming along very well. The guys on the (American Legion baseball)

committee have done an excellent job," Gonzales said. "Before we get into deep snow and winter we would

like to make sure that fencing is put up. Little by little, step by step we have a building that is going to be put up

for bathrooms, we have some improvements that are hopefully going to be taken care of before it gets too bad with the

weather. As soon as it dries up in the spring, we will probably have a month to work on the finishing touches."

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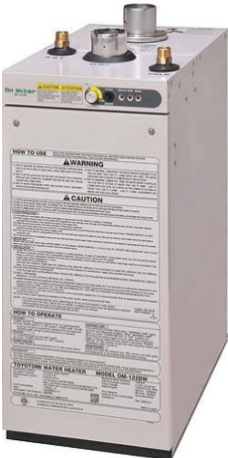


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