



BNNY Business

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Daily updates: NNY360.com August 2025

■ Cheese Store owners
take over Chaumont
restaurant.

PAGE 3

■ United Way launches
new career program.

PAGE 5

■ Former GM Powertrain
site recognized as CSX
Select Site.

PAGE 8

■ Malone storefront be-
comes public art display.

PAGE 11

■ Coffee and bakehouse
opens in Lowville.

PAGE 14

*Learn more
inside*

NNY Field eyed for \$250 million dairy plant



A Texas company, Southern Dairy, is eyeing this 40-acre site on outer Massey Street in the town of Watertown to build a 300,000-square-foot dairy processing plant. Craig Fox/Watertown Daily Times

By **CRAIG FOX**
cfox@wdt.net

A proposed \$250 million dairy processing plant comes at a time when New York's growing dairy industry is on the brink of

adding a series of major projects across the state.

Locally, a Texas company, Southern Dairy, is eyeing a 40-acre site on outer Massey Street in the town of Watertown to build a 300,000-square-foot

dairy processing plant. The project was unveiled at a town Planning Board meeting.

The proposed dairy processing plant would add to the billions of dollars in investment and job creation already going on in

the state's dairy industry, including a 1.4-million-square-foot Chobani plant in Rome. The \$1.2 billion Chobani plant will create 1,000 jobs for Central New York

See **DAIRY PLANT T12**

Professional Connection Page 9



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Cheese Store owners to take over Chaumont restaurant

By **CRAIG FOX**
cfox@wdt.net

Joseph A. and Emily A. Filley began with backyard barbecues, then progressed with taking over The Cheese Store in Hounsfield two years ago and now they are buying a popular Chaumont restaurant.

The owners of The Cheese Store of Northern New York on Route 3 are opening a new restaurant in the location of The Blue Heron, part of the community for 20 years. July 11 was the last day The Blue Heron was open. The Filleys are working toward reopening the restaurant/bar on state Route 12E later this month. They are renaming it as The Waypoint Bar & Grille, while keeping the same atmosphere and offering a similar menu.

It was a dinner in January that piqued their interest in buying The Blue Heron, Emily Filley recalled. That started the couple thinking about the possibilities of running their own restaurant.

Ideas and concepts of what they could do started popping into their heads and ended up on an iPad.

"It looked very organic for us," she said. "It was all very natural."

Their announcement on Facebook came almost two years to the day of reopening The Cheese Store, a specialty grocery store that's known for its fresh meats, imported cheeses, home-made soups, salads, subs and freshly prepared items.

"We have two years of food experience," he said, saying that it's basically just adding sit-down dining.

To begin with, they will serve classic seafood dishes, burgers, sandwiches, steaks, chicken dinners and salads. The menu will change for the fall with comfort dishes. The full bar will continue.

But they stressed The Waypoint Bar & Grille also will con-



The future home of Waypoint Bar & Grille in Chaumont. Craig Fox/Watertown Daily Times



Joseph A. and Emily A. Filley plan to operate Waypoint Bar & Grille at the former site of The Blue Heron restaurant in Chaumont. Craig Fox/Watertown Daily Times

tinue with the same casual experience that customers came to know during the past 20 years when Cari Greene owned The Blue Heron, Joseph Filley said. Outdoor seating and live music also will go on.

They also want to attract football and baseball fans for big game days. The parents of five children say it's also important to become a family destination.

With a staff of about 15, they have offered positions to those who worked at The Blue Heron. Kristi Shawgraw will serve as

general manager and Andrew Kenney will be the kitchen manager.

When they bought The Cheese Store, he talked about how his love of barbecuing prompted his interest in that venture. Emily Filley worked at a restaurant when she was 15.

"It just left this mark with me," she said.

This summer, the restaurant will be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

Indoor golf business to open in Target plaza

By **CRAIG FOX**
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WATERTOWN — An indoor place where golfers can go to improve their game all year round will be opening in a longtime vacant storefront in Target plaza in early September.

Net Par, a restaurant/bar with an indoor simulated golf course, is set to open in a storefront in Watertown Towne Center on Route 3 in the town of Watertown, occupying 8,000 square feet of space next to the Verizon Wireless store.

Two brothers, Brian and Shane Knowles, who grew up in the north country but now live out of state, own the local venture. Their sister Dawn Atwood will be the manager.

"They're real close and wanted to do something together," said father Mark Knowles, who sought sign approval for the business from the town planning board last Monday.

Offering the latest in golf technology, Net Par will feature eight bays — basically golf tees — and an actual putting green, where foursomes can play against each

other or in leagues at the site or at Net Pars in other cities.

Net Par utilizes state-of-the-art technology Trackman simulators that allow players to practice and play on virtual replicas of some of the world's top golf courses.

The restaurant will serve bar food and have a full bar.

"The work is 80% done inside," Mark Knowles told the planning board on Monday.

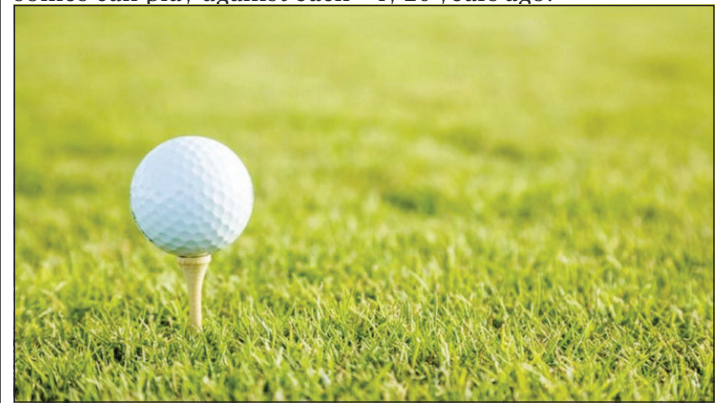
Contacted by phone, Brian Knowles said Net Par also will offer high school and college golf teams to play and practice during the week. It will be open seven days a week.

He enjoys the game but admitted he's not a scratch golfer.

"I play for fun," he said.

It will be the Net Par's first location in the north country, with its slogan "The Golf Season Just Got Longer." The Omaha, Nebraska, company operates five Net Pars in the Chicago area, Brian Knowles said.

The storefront has been empty since COR built the sprawling retail center nearly 20 years ago.



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St. Lawrence county chamber launches call for local artists to design exclusive visitor center merchandise

The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, the official Tourism Promotion Agent for St. Lawrence County, is issuing a Request for Quote (RFQ) and work samples from local artists for a unique merchandise collaboration. Selected artists will be commissioned to create original artwork to be featured on exclusive retail items sold through the St. Lawrence County Visitor Center in Canton, NY.

This initiative is designed to showcase the creativity of local artists while celebrating the natural beauty, culture, and identity of the region. Artists may submit proposals for one or more of three distinct project categories.

Projects include a Poster Series which will include three original designs representing the Seaway Region, River Valley, and Adirondack Foothills, a Postcard & Mer-

chandise Design project featuring a single 4" x 6" design inspired by a specific theme or location, to be determined by the Chamber, and a Destination Icon Set consisting of ten original icons depicting well-known landmarks or popular activities throughout the county.

To be considered, artists must submit a current CV, a detailed quote outlining the proposed scope of work, and portfolio samples or a link to an online portfolio showcasing relevant work.

"The Chamber is proud to create opportunities that both promote the arts and celebrate our region's identity," said Kathryn Puleo, Destination Manager for the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce. "We regularly hear from visitors looking for meaningful keepsakes or special gifts that reflect their experience here, something

that captures the essence of St. Lawrence County. This project is our way of answering that call while uplifting the incredible creative talent we have right here in our communities."

Artists selected for participation will collaborate with the Chamber under a formal Memorandum of Understanding outlining project timelines, deliverables, and compensation. Details for the Request for Quote, including full project descriptions and submission guidelines, are available at www.VisitSTLC.com/artist-RFQ-2025.

All submissions must be received by Monday, August 18, 2025, at 9 a.m. For more information, contact Kathryn Puleo at kathryn@slcchamber.org or (315) 386-4000.

St. Lawrence Leadership Institute accepting applications for 2025-26 program



The 2024-25 Graduates of the St. Lawrence Leadership Institute.

The St. Lawrence Leadership Institute is now accepting applications for the 2025-2026 program. Classes will be held in-person from 4:00 pm to 7:45 pm on the second Wednesday of the month from September until May. The 9-month course, including course materials and meals, is presented at a fee of \$750. Employers

often sponsor individuals and scholarships are available. Interested parties should visit www.visitstlc.com/slli for an application or more information. Questions can be directed to Laura Pearson at Laura@slcchamber.org or 315-386-4000, ext. 6.

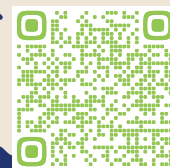
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United Way launches new career program

By **JONATHON WHEELER**

jwheeler@wdt.net

WATERTOWN — The United Way of Northern New York has launched a new program that will help empower individuals to strengthen their careers.

The program, titled Getting Ahead in the Workplace, begins on Aug. 6 and will be held on Wednesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. inside the Flower Memorial Library.

“This innovative workshop is a natural extension of United Way’s work with ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) families — hardworking individuals who are struggling to achieve financial stability. Getting Ahead in the Workplace provides ALICE workers and other under-resourced individuals with tools to build stability, grow in their jobs, and plan for long-term success,” United Way stated in a news release.

The program will have participants building resources at home, in the workplace, and in the community; work on communication, collaboration, and problem-solving

skills; navigate hidden rules and unspoken expectations in the workplace; budgeting, debt-to-income analysis, and strategies for increasing economic stability; applying tools for negotiation, mediation, and managing change at work; and participants will also write a personal “Future Story” to help with long-term goals.

In addition to working on those aspects, participants are also going to connect with local resources.

Each participant, called an investigator, will receive a workbook, weekly \$35 gift card incentive, a shared meal, and transportation assistance if needed.

Overall, there have been over 30 Getting Ahead cohorts that have served north country residents, but the first time it’s been held locally, United Way stated in the news release.

United Way says to learn more by visiting united-way-nny.org/getting-ahead/, calling 315-788-5631, or emailing info@united-way-nny.org.

Site plan submitted for Canton midtown project

By **TOM GRASER**

tgraser@wdt.net

CANTON — Canton Code Officer Tim Nolan received a site plan application Tuesday for the Midtown Plaza redevelopment project, offering village trustees a look the long-dilapidated property’s proposed reimagining.

The project will feature 55 one- and two-bedroom residential units, a 10,000-square-foot SUNY Canton Entrepreneurial Center, and approximately 2,500 square feet of retail space on the grounds of the Jubilee

grocery store, which has been abandoned for more than 20 years.

The submitted site plan features the proposed building at 19 Miner St., facing Main Street and situated on the south side of the property.

“It has a strong orientation to Main Street,” the developer Vecino Group’s Vice President for Planning and Acquisitions Robert J. Holzman, said. “The Entrepreneurial Center is going to be placed in the building to have a direct visual connection to Main Street.”

O’Reilly opens in West Carthage



O’Reilly Auto Parts has opened at 1 N. Board St., West Carthage, with hours seven days a week. Elaine M. Avallone/Johnson Newspapers

The 1 N. Broad St. building is the second in Jefferson County to be transformed from a former Rite Aid store to an auto parts store. The former Rite Aid store on Arsenal Street, Watertown, opened in the fall of 2022 as an

O’Reilly Auto Parts store. The Watertown Rite Aid closed the store in June 2018, months after Walgreens purchased 1,932 Rite Aid stores for \$4 billion. After the mass purchase, the Broad Street building operated as a Wal-

greens until last year. Another O’Reilly Auto Parts is also under construction in Ogdensburg’s Seaway Plaza. It is expected to be open in late August or September.

Pediatric Expansion

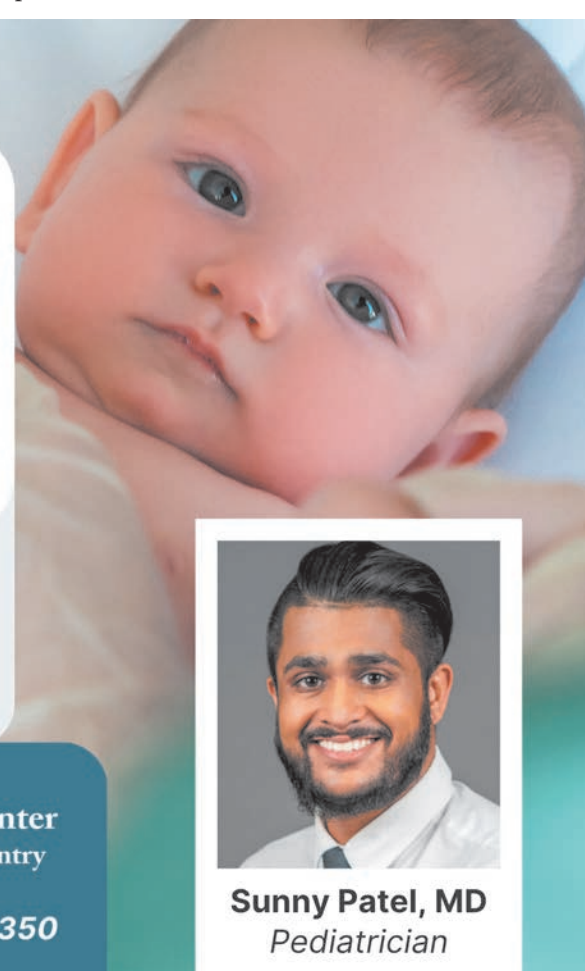
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Planners OK expansion plans for Watertown Stewart's Shops

By **CRAIG FOX**

cfox@wdt.net

WATERTOWN — The new Stewart's Shops that will replace an existing store on North Massey Street cleared a major hurdle recently.

The city's Planning Commission approved the site plan, special use permit and subdivision final plat for the new 4,500-square-foot convenience store at North Massey and Coffeen streets.

The Ballston Spa-based chain will demolish the existing store and replace it with a bigger and better shop.

The project still needs a pair of minor area variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals, which meets on Wednesday to vote on them.

The company plans to start construction in September with work on the

new store proceeding while the existing shop remains open.

"We're going to do this one a little different than Washington Street," said Chuck Marshall, real estate representative for the chain of convenience stores.

Two years ago, Stewart's Shops opened a new \$1.5 million store on Washington Street that replaced a smaller store down the street. It was met by grueling opposition from residents who expressed traffic concerns in their neighborhood. However, the company hasn't received any complaints since then, Marshall said.

The new Stewart's Shops will be finished this year and work would pick back up in the spring to construct a four-pump fuel island, Marshall said.



Stewart's has big plans for its shop at the corner of North Massey and Coffeen streets in Watertown. Jonathon Wheeler/Watertown Daily Times

A grand opening will be held next year, Marshall said.

Planning Commission members asked a few minor

questions about the project before unanimously giving their green light.

The new store replaces one that has been at that lo-

cation for decades.

The new store will be able to sell more to-go items and grocery selections, Marshall said. The store will have a Coffeen Street address and face that busy city road.

The company is demolishing a house behind the existing store at 319 Coffeen St. and an adjacent house at 327 Coffeen St. A small strip of land owned by the nearby Hop Spots restaurant will be purchased for the nearly acre site.

In recent years, Stewart's Shops has replaced its stores with larger stores or expanded into new markets in the north country.

The company owns three other Stewart's Shops in Watertown, with several others in surrounding north country communities.

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Potsdam Laundry and Dry Cleaners Joins Potsdam Chamber of Commerce



Valerie and Mark Stone with Potsdam Chamber member Helen Sullivan.



POTSDAM, NY – The Potsdam Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome Potsdam

Laundry and Dry Cleaners as one of its newest members. Located at 7 Beal Street,

Potsdam Laundry and Dry Cleaners provides high-quality laundry and dry-cleaning services for both residential and commercial clients in Potsdam and surrounding communities. Owned and operated by Valerie and Mark Stone, the business prides itself on de-

pendable service and attention to detail, helping customers look their best every day.

“We’re excited to be a part of the Potsdam Chamber community,” said Stone. “We look forward to connecting with other local businesses and provide convenient, professional service to our customers.”

Services include wash-and-fold laundry, dry cleaning, and commercial accounts for businesses in need of regular linen or uniform care.

To learn more or schedule a service, visit <https://potsdamdrycleaners.my.canva.site>, email potsdamdrycleaners@gmail.com.

Register for Business After Hours

The St. Lawrence Chamber of Commerce invites you, your team, and partners to a Business After Hours networking event at JJ'S ON THE RIVER (Hosmer's Marina) in Ogdensburg (formerly Smugglers Cove) on Wednesday, August 20th, from 5:00pm - 7:00pm. Special Guest of Honor: Fonda Chronis, Ogdensburg City Manager who will give an overview of his first year.

Enjoy a casual evening networking with businesses from across the North Country with light appetizers and a cash bar. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, benefit from new connections, and grow with the county-wide business network.

We will also have info tables with some of our business resource partners. If you would like to have a display table -- please contact Laura Pearson.

This event is open to Chamber members, partners, and non-members who are associated with a business and interested in learning more about the Chamber.

REGISTRATION - Please Register to help us with event planning and decision-making

To register for the event, please visit stlc.com/events/details/stlc-business-after-hours-at-jjs-on-the-river-in-ogdensburg-20334 -- Registration is requested.

STLC Members who register by Thursday, August 14th, attend for FREE!

\$15 Registration for Non-members (STLC Members registered after August 14th pay \$10)

Please note: We will need to give our hosts an accurate count for food by Friday, August 15th so we will need to invoice for any last-minute (non-emergency) registration cancellations.

Pay at the door with cash or check.

A cash bar will be available for alcoholic purchases.

Please contact Laura Pearson for more information or to sign-up as a business resource partner – Laura@slcchamber.org or call 315-386-4000 ext. 6.

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Former GM Powertrain site recognized as CSX Select Site



Patricia Spitzley was among the RACER Trust officials on hand to receive a plaque from CSX, recognizing the former GM Powertrain site as a CSX Select Site. Bob Beckstead/Watertown Daily Times

By **BOB BECKSTEAD**

bbeckstead@wdt.net

MASSENA — What was once the GM Powertrain site in Massena has a new designation, CSX Select Site, and that designation was celebrated Wednesday morning.

Standing on the about 200-acre parcel near the Seaway International Bridge, CSX officials presented RACER Trust officials with a plaque recognizing the new designation.

RACER (Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response) Trust is the site owner, responsible for its cleanup and marketing.

“We’ve been here since 2011 and we’ve worked very hard. If you look behind, we hardly recognize what it was when we first got here. I was just telling them it looked kind of scary,” said Patricia Spitzley, RACER Trust director of government relations.

Now, they have the CSX Select Site designation at the Bronze Level, the first property in New York state to earn that distinction. It signifies the site is ready for redevelopment, and Spitzley and other officials said that should make the site more marketable to potential buyers.

“Working with CSX, we are

pleased to be designated as a CSX Select Site, the only site in the state of New York to be designated as so, and it’s a great partnership. We hope that what it does is it elevates this Massena site a little bit higher and working with them to find the right economic opportunity for this site and for the north country,” she said.

Arthur Feygelson, CSX industrial development manager for New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Quebec, said Wednesday was “a great day for New York state and Empire State Development.”

“This is the first Select Site in the state of New York. I want to thank the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency and the town of Massena for all their efforts in promoting this property and opportunities with CSX,” he said. “Congratulations to RACER on achieving Select Site designation.”

RACER Redevelopment Manager Bruce Rasher thanked those in attendance, “and most importantly, your support of RACER Trust’s mission to revitalize this property.”

“This designation is very important to RACER because it is highly



CSX presented RACER Trust with a plaque to recognize the former GM Powertrain site as a CSX Select Site. RACER Trust assumed ownership of the property in 2011. Pictured are CSX Industrial Development Analyst Sarah Brown, CSX Industrial Development Manager Arthur Feygelson, and RACER Trust Redevelopment Manager Bruce Rasher. Bob Beckstead/Watertown Daily Times

respected due to the reputation of CSX as a premiere rail and intermodal service provider throughout the United States,” he said.

Rasher said they reached out to CSX late last year to seek the designation and went through the application process to receive it. He said it was a “rigorous vetting process to be admitted to this program.”

“Site selectors will take notice of this. When we have prospective buyers looking into this site, they’ll find that it has rail access. It’s a large site. It’s an industrial zone. It has access to utilities, access to the workforce and, of course, access to the international border crossing with Canada,” he said. “The support that you’re showing us means everything to us, and we look forward to working cooperatively with you as a team to secure a significant

economic development opportunity for the north country that will attract new investment, generate a new tax base and create new jobs.”

St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency CEO Patrick Kelly said the Select Site designation will improve the site’s value to potential buyers.

“Anything that raises our profile and provides to the outside world recognition of the infrastructure or the opportunity with our sites, with our communities, that helps us. It makes it easier for us to tell our story, and the story with this site in particular is an attractive one,” Kelly said. “You’ve got great rail infrastructure. It’s a large site. There’s power infrastructure nearby. We have a strong workforce. So, this site is really a great opportunity for development, and having the Select

Site designation hopefully brings that attention to wider audiences.”

According to the CSX website, “CSX Select Sites are the first, premium certified rail-served sites for industrial development and expansion. Select Site certification criteria include size, access to rail services, proximity to highways, workforce availability, natural gas, electricity, water, and wastewater, environmental and geo-technical standards.”

CSX worked with more than 29 communities to gather information and identify top candidates for the Select Site program, which connects expanding companies with highly desirable rail-served properties. The Massena site was one of 18 properties in 12 states to receive the designation under the industrial development program.

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Potsdam Agway recently celebrated its 25th anniversary of serving the Potsdam community



Since the year 2000, Agway has been a cornerstone for our local farmers, gardeners, and pet owners, consistently providing top-notch products and

exceptional, knowledgeable service.

As they celebrate this significant milestone, the entire Potsdam Agway team is enthu-

siastic about continuing their commitment to supporting local agriculture and the diverse needs of our community for many years to come.

Stone and Steel Gym is Potsdam's Business on the Rise



Tim Vollmer.

The Potsdam Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce that Tim Vollmer, owner of Stone and Steel Gym, received the Business on the Rise Award in recognition of his remarkable contributions to the local fitness community. The award was presented during the Chamber's Member Mixer at St. Lawrence Nurseries on Thursday, June 19.

Stone and Steel Gym has quickly established itself as a leader in member-focused fitness, offering 24/7 access, custom-built equipment, and a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere. Tim's dedica-

tion to growth, innovation, and community engagement—including regular member surveys, fitness competitions, and sponsorships—has created a gym experience that goes beyond exercise.

“Stone and Steel has become more than a gym—it's a community hub built on innovation, accessibility, and connection,” said Melanie Flack, Executive Director of the Potsdam Chamber. “We're proud to recognize his work with this well-deserved award.”

Canton signs franchise agreement with SLIC

By **TOM GRASER**
tgraser@wdt.net

CANTON — At a special meeting on July 1, the Canton Town Board approved a final version of a franchise agreement with SLIC Network Solutions, Inc.

The agreement with SLIC had been held up mostly over liability issues, Town Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley said.

The special meeting was the result of an executive session that St. Lawrence County District 3 Legislator Joseph Lightfoot sought to attend, unsuccessfully on June 10.

The need for a new franchise agreement arose when the town learned that money from the American Rescue Plan Act, allocated to expand broadband service in St. Lawrence County, would be used for three projects in Canton.

A 2023 county resolution indicated that three projects worth more than \$600,000 are planned for the town of Canton.

Town Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley said the town was unaware of the projects until Town Highway Superinten-

dent Steven Smith received a notice allowing work by SLIC on the town's right-of-way in September 2024.

This led to the discovery of an expired franchise agreement with SLIC.

The agreement, signed on July 1, between the town of Canton and SLIC Network Solutions, grants SLIC a non-exclusive right to install and operate underground fiber optic cables and related telecommunications equipment within the town's public rights-of-way.



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Public art display a group effort

By **ALEXANDER VIOLIO**

aviolo@mtelegram.com

MALONE — The village has a new piece of interactive public art on East Main Street thanks to the efforts of local students and a local artist.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was July 6 at the art installation located in the village of Malone.

The final result started as an after-school initiative with six students from Malone Middle School working with an artist Liza Paige, from St. Lawrence County, to transform the Main Street storefront into a 2D-inspired time travel installation that spans from dinosaurs to the future.

The project was made possible with support from the Franklin County Youth Bureau, Adirondack for Kids, JCEO, North County Community College, and the Malone Central School District, according to Jennifer Bilow, of the Downtown Artist Cellar.

“This was a huge collaboration, the transportation department at Malone Central helped us, the students got out of school early and we worked over at North Country in a real studio space,” Bilow told the Telegram.

Bilow said kids can pose with helmets and other props at the installation and send the photos along with information of where they time traveled to, on the Downtown Artist Cellar’s social media pages, for free ice cream at Bokie’s this summer.

According to Paige, she started working with 2D art as an educational tool to teach perspective, adding she teaches at St. Lawrence University and SUNY Potsdam.

Paige said her favorite part of the work on Main Street is that it’s interactive.

“They can take their picture in it and really become a part of the artwork rather than just look at the artwork,” she explained.

Paige said she previously worked on a 2D ski shop installation at the East Main Street storefront that now dis-



Community members met up on East Main Street Monday morning to celebrate the opening of a 2D art installation in Malone. Alexander Violo/Malone Telegram

plays the time travel artwork, and with the help of the students, this installation came together quickly.

“With all their help this one came together way quicker than any others,” she said, “We worked on this for about a month, we met for three hours every Monday, as an after school program, it worked out great.”

Kylee McGillicuddy, an art teacher at Malone Middle School, said she worked with the school’s other art teacher to pick the six students who worked on the project, adding two sixth graders, two seventh graders and two eighth graders worked on the project.

“I was there on the very first day when they started doing everything. We got to see the brainstorming session, they were so excited,” she said, “It was so cool seeing them, they were just so excited. It was cool to see it start as an idea and then see a culmination in real life like this.”

Conducted through The Thrive Project the artwork was created by Malone students, Lila Brown, Owen Childs, Gracie Smith, Charlee Hutchins, Liam Reyes, and Perrin Shaw, who worked with Paige.

Local officials including Brian Taylor, a town councilman, Lee Rivers, a village trustee, and Mayor Andrea M. Dumas were on hand for Monday’s ribbon-cutting event.

“Watching these guys do this was amazing,” Dumas said.



Liza Paige, center, and students from Malone Middle School get some help Monday during the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the 2D art installation on East Main Street in the village of Malone. Alexander Violo/Malone Telegram

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Dairy Plant

From T1

alone.

As for the local project, Southern Dairy, which has developed six similar facilities in New Zealand, is looking at land owned by Ron Robbins, who owns the Robbins Family Farm outside Sackets Harbor.

If built, the plant will create 80 high-paying jobs and hundreds of construction workers during its two-year construction.

The proposed Watertown plant would use raw milk, skim milk and whey sourced from north country dairy farms to produce milk powders, whey protein concentrate and other dry dairy products such as infant formula.

Using north country farmers' milk, the Southern Dairy plant would be a major boost for the north country's dairy industry and have an economic development impact for decades to come, said Jay Matteson, Jefferson County agricultural coordinator.

"Anytime you bring in a dairy processing plant, it's going to have an impact on a region," he said, adding that he doesn't have any specific information about how much milk would come from north country dairies.

With 65,000 agriculture jobs, the dairy industry has a \$1.2 billion economic impact in Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis counties.

In addition to those 80 high-tech positions at the Southern Dairy plant, the region's workforce would add other jobs. According to a University of Wisconsin study, every farming job creates 1.87 jobs in the community. The Wisconsin study also found that 1.64 positions are added from having a dairy processing plant in the community.

Besides Chobani, Matteson named seven other major processing plant projects now occurring or that have been completed across the state in recent years. Calling it "a lifetime event," he equates what's going on with

New York's dairy industry to Micron's \$100 billion project outside of Syracuse and the booming semiconductor industry.

"There's never been this kind of investment than what's going on right now in the dairy industry," he said.

And the growth will boost the economy in rural communities, he said.

The Chobani plant will be built in the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, the site of a former Air Force base. The facility is expected to produce one billion pounds of dairy products annually and process 12 million pounds of milk daily, according to the company. With 28 product lines, the plant is slated to be operational next year.

"That's going to have some impact on us," Matteson said. "It's going to be very beneficial to the north country."

In 2024, Great Lakes Cheese, which has a facility in Adams, began operations at a \$700 million Mozzarella cheese plant in Franklinville, Cattaraugus County, replacing a nearby facility. The plant employs 500 workers.

With the Adams and Franklinville plants, the company projected to make use of about 14.4% of the state's milk production when the state announced the project back in 2022.

Near Auburn, Cayuga Milk Ingredients—in collaboration with Tetra Pak, a global food processing and packaging company—is in the process of a \$168 million expansion project.

To be completed in phases, the 235,000-square-foot facility aims to increase production of milk powders, protein powders and fluid milk products and create 150 new jobs. Using 1.5 million pounds of milk from 22 area farmers, it started operating last month.

HP Hood, with plants in central New York, plans a \$26 million expansion that would increase production in a vacant building at a business park in Batavia.

Matteson also mentioned that Belgioioso Cheese completed a \$25 million project in Glenville, Schenectady County, which

NNY Business



According to a University of Wisconsin study, every farming job creates 1.87 jobs in the community. The Wisconsin study also found that 1.64 positions are added from having a dairy processing plant in the community. The project includes repairing this historic cemetery. Craig Fox/Watertown Daily Times

manufactures Mozzarella cheese and other Italian varieties at the 96,000-square-foot plant where 46 employees work.

Byrne Dairy, the Syracuse dairy company, also is planning an expansion, he said.

As the result of the industry's growth, the demand for milk will increase by seven billion pounds of milk in the state over the next two or three years, Matteson said.

Marshall Weir, CEO of Jefferson County Economic Development, is confident that local dairy farms will be able to provide milk to the proposed dairy processing plant in the town of Watertown.

New York milk Co-ops would work with farmers to figure out how they can provide milk to Southern Dairy for the plant, Matteson said.

In July, the town's Planning Board heard a presentation about the project, beginning the formal approval process, which is expected to take several months. The developers plan to be back in front of the planning board for a work session on Sept. 4 to further discuss the project.

Developer Michael E. Lundy, who's a consultant working on the project, is handling the approval process, while The Lawman Group of Companies, of Sackets Harbor, is the design builder and general contractor for the project.

The company is also considering about five other sites, in Vermont, Pennsylvania, Nebraska and other states, for the project.

But Southern Dairy CEO Owen Mansill prefers the town of Watertown site, Lundy said.

The project would be privately funded, Lundy said.

Corry Lawler, CEO of the Lawman Group, said he spent 11 days in New Zealand learning about the company's facilities there. They utilized robotics with about eight workers handling the automatics.

The process would include turning fluid milk into powder products. Trucks would enter the plant and deliver milk at one of the end of the plant, where it would go through equipment to dry it, he said.

A large warehouse would un-

dergo construction first, he said. With so many workers on the construction of the plant, they would be based on to the site for safety reasons, he said.

A small cemetery in disrepair would be completely restored with landscaping and stones, Lundy said. It would be next to the plant entrance, so they "want it to look nice," he said.

The plant's proximity to a CSX rail line is critical for the project in order to ship product out quickly, and is more cost effective when compared to trucking, he said.

The site also has 115kV transmission lines that would give the plant the power it needs, Lawler said. The company is working with National Grid.

Lundy and Lawler have been working on the project since October 2023. Lundy and Matteson declined to reveal more specific information about the project or the company, saying that they were not at liberty to discuss it.

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JCC Provides lactation rooms

In its continued commitment to providing a supportive and inclusive campus environment, Jefferson Community College (JCC) now offers two dedicated lactation rooms, one for faculty and staff and another for students. The lactation rooms reflect Jefferson's mission to serve the diverse needs of its students and employees by fostering a



Lactation Room for JCC Students, McVean Student Center, Building 4

supportive, inclusive, and student-focused environment.

"At Jefferson, we are deeply committed to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed," said Daniel J. Dupee, II, President. "The addition of dedicated lactation spaces is a mean-

See JCC T15

JCC Names Carey L. Goyette as Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

Jefferson Community College (JCC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Carey L. Goyette as Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Goyette succeeds Jerilyn E. Fairman, who retired at the end of June after 36 years of distinguished service to the College.

As Provost, Goyette will provide leadership and oversight for a broad range of academic and student affairs functions, including student activities, residence life, athletics, access and opportunity programs, accommodative services, and student conduct. Her responsibilities also include overseeing enrollment services including admissions, student records, financial aid, concurrent enrollment, Fort Drum, workforce development, and prison education programs.

Goyette, formerly of Plattsburgh, joins Jefferson after serving at Clinton Community College (CCC) as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer since 2022. In this role, she also acted on behalf of the president and served as the institution's liaison to both the SUNY Provost and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Her portfolio included workforce develop-



Carey Goyette.

ment, concurrent enrollment, honors programming, prison education, grant writing, and college-wide committee leadership in areas such as enrollment management, resource allocation, and personnel actions.

She previously served as a tenured English faculty member at CCC for 11 years, during which time she chaired both the English and History and Political Science departments. She also coordinated the Lake Champlain Summer Arts Institute and student learning outcomes. Earlier in her career, she was a faculty member at SUNY Plattsburgh.

In recognition of her contributions to education and service, Goyette received the 2024 New York State Assembly Women of Distinc-

tion Award in Education and the 2016 SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service.

Goyette holds a bachelor's degree from Russell Sage College and a master's degree from SUNY Plattsburgh.

"We are thrilled to welcome Carey Goyette to Jefferson," said Daniel J. Dupee II, College President. "Her extensive experience in both academic leadership and student success initiatives, along with her deep understanding of SUNY and the community college system, make her an exceptional fit for this role. I'm confident her leadership will continue to advance Jefferson's mission of providing accessible, high-quality education to our students."

Goyette's appointment as Provost took effect on June 1, 2025.

Jefferson Community College Featured Honors Program Student

Terin Rosenbarker, Hammond, is the featured Jefferson Community College (JCC) Honors Program student for the month of July 2025. Rosenbarker is a sports management major at Jefferson. For one of his Honors Program options, he conducted a professional interview with a manager in the sports industry and produced a report on his insights and findings.



Terin Rosenbarker

The Jefferson Community College Honors Program offers students with exceptional academic skills the opportunity to receive enriched instruction within their current program of study. For the Honors Program, students select three courses within their curriculum, and enhance them as Honors Options. The option is based on a project agreed to by the student and a faculty member willing to work closely with the student to provide a unique and rewarding experience. Students also take the Honors Seminar, a unique interdisciplinary course open only to program participants. The seminar examines a single theme each semester and features guest speakers from a variety of disciplines and often includes some sort of field experience.

Successful program participants earn a prestigious Honors Graduate designation on their academic

transcript for each Honors Option course. Students demonstrating excellent academic achievement in high school or who have completed 12 credit hours of college coursework are invited to apply for admission to the Honors Program.

Rosenbarker says, "Although I wasn't in the program for a long time as I joined late, everyone in the Honors Program has been extremely helpful. I had to do all three [Honors Program] projects in the span of two weeks, and they were supportive through the entire process."

For more information, visit www.sunyjefferson.edu or contact Honors Program coordinator, Dr. Joshua Canale, at jqcanale@sunyjefferson.edu.

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Coffee and bakehouse opens in Lowville

OLD LONG-VACANT LEWIS COUNTY JAIL BUILDING RESTORED IN \$1.35 MILLION PROJECT



An employee stands behind the counter at the new Saint Drogo's Coffee & Bakehouse. Photo provided by Empire State Development

By **JONATHON WHEELER**
jwheeler@wdt.net

New York's Empire State Development announced the

opening of Saint Drogo's Coffee and Bakehouse in Lowville.

While calling it "an exciting new chapter for Tug Hill Arti-

san Roasters," a news release states that the project cost \$1.35 million. It includes restoration of a long vacant and blighted Lewis County Jail and Sheriff's Residence to create a mixed use commercial and residential space that will include a home for the Tug Hill Artisan Roasters and short-term apartments.

"We're thrilled to open our doors in Lowville and share this space with our community," Tug Hill Artisan Roasters Owner Scott Gilbert said in a news release.

"This project has been a true labor of love, and we're incredibly grateful for the funding support and many local partners who helped bring it to life," Gilbert said.

Saint Drogo's Coffee & Bakehouse will specialize in European-style laminated pastries.

"This expansion reflects the company's broader mission to elevate the region's food and beverage scene through craft, quality, and community," the news release states.

ESD contributed \$900,000 in Restore NY Communities initiatives funding while they received \$188,000 from the New York Main Street Program administered by the state's Homes and Community Renewal.

"The revitalization of the Old Lewis County Jail and Sheriff's Residence contributes to commercial development and activity in Lowville by taking a vacant space and turning it into a destination for both residents and visitors," Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Hope Knight said in the news release. "Restore New York is a pillar of Governor Ho-



Saint Drogo's Coffee & Bakehouse will specialize in European-style laminated pastries. Empire State Development photo

chul's community revitalization efforts and projects like this restore blighted buildings while promoting new housing, vibrant neighborhoods and economic opportunity."

The village's 2022 Joint Comprehensive Plan details its goal to prioritize the redevelopment of existing sites over new construction.

Owners Vanessa and Scott Gilbert started their coffee roastery business at their home in 2017 at their home and had worked for years growing their business.

In 2021, the Tug Hill Artisan Roasters purchased the vacant Lewis County Jail building with plans to restore the site as it's first brick-and-mortar store.

A couple of years later in Jan. 2023, the village applied for funding to help bridge a gap in the jail restoration project and \$900,000 was subsequently awarded that June.

The Restore NY funding was



An employee puts bread into an oven at the new Saint Drogo's Coffee and Bakehouse in Lowville. Photo provided by Empire State Development

utilized to renovate the parking area and driveway; complete landscaping and create an outdoor patio for dining capabilities; reconstruct the original wraparound porch; and complete the final building renovations to support the Tug Hill Artisan Roasters storefront.

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JCC

From T13

ingful way we live out that commitment—by recognizing the real-life responsibilities our students, faculty, and staff carry, and by upholding our core values of inclusion, dignity, and care.”

Furthermore, proffering lactation rooms aligns with New York State guidance and the State University of New York’s (SUNY) focus on accessible, family-friendly facilities across campuses.

The faculty and staff lactation room is located on the first floor of Jules Center, Building 6. It proffers a private space that includes comfortable seating, reading literature, electrical outlets for pumps, a locking door to ensure priva-

cy, and nearby refrigerator to store breast milk.

The student lactation room is situated in the McVean Student Center, Building 4. It goes a step further in creating a calm and rejuvenating environment with inclusion of a massage chair, soft lighting, and vanity with mirror. It too includes a small refrigerator to store breast milk.

“We want to ensure that every member of our campus community feels supported whether they’re just starting their college journey or balancing parenting with a professional role,” said Gabrielle Thompson, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs at JCC. “These lactation rooms help create a more equitable, inclusive, and compassionate campus.”

Leadership

From T4

The St. Lawrence Leadership Institute was designed to foster the development of emerging and existing leaders for the advancement of St. Lawrence County, its businesses, and its communities. This leadership development is achieved through three program elements: leadership skills development, issues awareness, and networking.

Leadership Skills and Development— Each month, skills necessary for effective leadership are discussed and practiced. Such skills include Communication; Emotional Intelligence (awareness of self and others) and Mental Models; Strengths-Based Leadership; Reframing Leadership, Authentic Leadership in Self; Building and Leading Effective Teams; Conflict Resolution and Negotiations; Leading Organizational Change; and Ethical Leadership.

Civic Awareness and Engagement— Divergent views on several issues vital to St. Lawrence County are presented in a variety of formats to help participants appreciate

the past, understand the present, and prepare for the future. Topics include Agriculture; Government; Justice; Business; Social Issues; Healthcare; Education; Arts; and Environment.

Networking—With over 200 alumni since 1993, this program provides participants with critical opportunities to build a professional network within the county and remain engaged as active leaders equipped to effect change in their professions and communities.

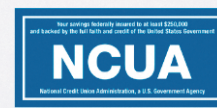
“The St. Lawrence Leadership Institute is a tremendous program. Through SLLI, hundreds of citizens have gained leadership skills, issues knowledge, and networks they need to make a difference in our county. SLLI continues to provide inspiring expert speakers, an empowering curriculum, and a robust network. I encourage anyone that wants to develop their leadership and help enhance the strength and quality of life of our county to enroll in the program,” said Ben Dixon, President of the SLLI Board, SLLI alumnus, and Executive Director of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce.

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