

'Home'
special section
/ 9 - 12



Rivals challenged / 3
Bees workshop / 4
New Higley lodge / 8

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NORTH COUNTRY THIS WEEK

Vol. 27, No. 25

Canton-Potsdam, NY

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February 23 - March 1, 2011

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PPL is community resource center

By MAUREEN PICHÉ

POTSDAM – No longer simply a repository for books, the Potsdam Public Library has evolved into a community resource center that provides space, technology and education for everyone from the bookworm to the person who's never sent e-mail.

Library Director Patricia Musante said the library's focus is on its patrons' needs, and since the 2006 referendum made it a school district library, it has expanded its services to reflect a diverse community—particularly those who might not ordinarily use it. As a result, library attendance has nearly tripled from 46,000 in 1999 to 130,600 in 2010.

"We think you have to be community-based—open for them when they need you and have a place for them to meet," Musante said. "We're much more service-oriented."

"This is not your grandparents'—or your parents'—library," said Chip Morris, library trustee. "There's nothing wrong with just coming in and taking a book out, but you can do so much more."

Using Federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding, the library recently opened the Public Computer Center and brought on director René Austin and trainer Robert Watkin to offer technological assistance, employment information, job coaching and more. The Cleveland Community Center in the library's lower level has several rooms of various sizes available for public meeting places, and was renovated using a donation from the F.W. Cleveland Foundation.

"We're trying to close the digital divide," Musante said. "Not everyone has access to



René Austin, Potsdam Community Center Director at the library, gives some pointers to Donnie McPherson, Potsdam, who is learning emailing skills on a laptop provided in the center's multipurpose room. North Country This Week photo by Maureen Piché.

computers."

"We help people become computer literate," Watkin said. "There are people who come to us with no computer experience."

He gave as an example a 45-year-old who suddenly finds himself forced to use a computer at work for the first time in his career.

"I helped an 85-year-old man set up a Facebook account," Austin added.

The library also used stimulus funds to provide the Universal Class, an online school accessible from any North Country Library System library web page. The over 500 go-at-your-own pace, non-credit courses range from business to computers to the arts. Patrons are welcome to use one of the 20 laptop computers at the center to take the classes and receive initial assistance from Watkin or Austin.

Continued on page five

Cuomo taps Ritchie for task force

State Senator Patty Ritchie has been appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo to serve on a task force to look at how to increase opportunities for local businesses run by women and minorities.

Ritchie is one of just three Upstate lawmakers named to the 29-member Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise Team that also includes her North Country colleague, Sen. Betty Little of Queensbury, Ritchie's office says.

The governor created the bipartisan public/private panel to find ways to help qualified businesses gain better access to state and local government procurement contracts.

"Right now, many local businesses are losing out by current rules for participating in state contracts," the 48th District senator said.

"At a time when so many of our neighbors and friends are unemployed, it is critical that we carefully scrutinize well-intentioned state programs to make sure they are not having unintended consequences for state agencies, local governments and the private sector," Ritchie said.

Higley Park in x-country mag

COLTON -- Higley Flow State Park was featured in a recent issue of "Cross Country Skier" magazine as a "hidden gem."

Colton resident, devoted cross-country skier and Higley trails volunteer Judith Fuhr wrote up the article for the December issue of the magazine.

Fuhr discussed the attractions of the park's cross-country trails, such as the "scenic beauty and ideal terrain" and how the trails are set and groomed by volunteers from local towns and from the colleges.

She also talked about the Higley Hustle Ski Festival on the last Sunday in January with races for all ages and ability levels, the Hospice Ski and Snowshoe Challenge held by Colton-Pierrepont Central School in February, and other events year-round.

And Fuhr briefly discussed the capital campaign that was recently kicked off

Continued on page five

Norwood Library Fundraisers Sat. & Sun.

NORWOOD – Forced to cut hours and staff over the past few months, the Norwood Public Library will be holding two fundraising events Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 26 and 27 in an effort to keep the facility operating.

Library trustees had to sell library stock to keep it afloat late last year, according to a letter they submitted to *North Country This Week* in late November.

With an empty checking account and bills coming in, they contemplated closing the facility until the 2011 general election, when it is hoped the library will be an item on the ballot.

Trustees opted, instead, to keep the library open with hours on Monday, Thursday and Saturday, and one employee, the director. Two other staff members were laid off.

"These changes do not guarantee that the library will stay open until the voters in our library district decide whether or not they choose to support us with their tax dollars, but we

Continued on page five



Whose kidding who?

Elijah Johnson (4 years old) of South Colton feeds one of his uncle Josh's baby goats. These quadruplets were born February 10. They're being bottle-fed and are doing fine. Photo submitted by Elijah's grandmother, Jackie Johnson.

265-PAWS (7297)
Bark Avenue
DOGGY DAY SPA
"The place to pamper your pet"
22 Depot St., Market Square Mall, Potsdam

Cinema 10

Night Catches Us

(2010, USA, d. Tanya Hamilton)

Rosy Theatre
Monday, February 28 • 7:15 p.m.
General \$4.50; Students & Senior Citizens \$3.50

"demonstrates that social relevance and emotional connection can be compelling fellow travelers."
(Kenneth Turan, Los Angeles Times)

Classroom 10 is made possible with public funds from the North Country Community Foundation, Inc. (NCCF).
NCCF is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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90 mins.

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LETTERS

"Letters to the Editor" should be 400 words or fewer and are subject to editing. They can be e-mailed to Letters@NorthCountryNow.com, faxed to 315-268-8701, mailed to P.O. Box 975, Potsdam, NY 13676 or dropped off at our office, 19 Depot St., Potsdam.

Potsdam chamber's fundraiser successful

To the Editor:

The Potsdam Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Clarkson University for their generosity in allowing the chamber to sell tickets to the recent Clarkson/Brown College game. The chamber sold over 230 tickets, making this event a very successful fundraiser.

We also would like to thank Blevins Motors for sponsoring the "Make the Shot" Contest where three chamber ticket holders were given the chance to shoot a hockey puck to win a Jeep Wrangler. Even though two of the shots had potential, no one drove away with the vehicle.

The chamber thanks our three contests for participating: Michelle

Finnegan of Waddington, Chris Dumont of Hannawa Falls, and Brian Pelkey of North Lawrence.

The chamber also wishes to thank the many member businesses that donated items for our other giveaways that evening.

MaryLee Ballou

Potsdam Chamber of Commerce

Speak up about animal abuse

To the Editor:

While others talked and turned their backs, two women saw the suffering, weighed the risks and took decent, intelligent and heroic action (to save the goose stranded in the St. Regis River) I say "intelligent" because they avoided falling through the ice, and saved the animal, as they felt they had to, by smart moves and not just barging in.

Every dilemma is different, with its own unique risks and rewards, but since none of the critics and nay-sayers were there, they have no right to condemn these two heroes, especially after their safe success. The women have no regrets.

Now, about the innocent, suffering dog left in the bag to die (Sound Off, "Despicable Behavior" Feb. 16-22). The problem is that such cruelty can only continue in the dark, like a burglary, official corruption, child abuse, etc. Crime happens when nobody's looking. There are subhumans, and that is the right word, who view putting an already-suffering pet in a bag, or a burn barrel is perfectly okay because nobody's looking. As yourself, would anyone do this at high noon on Market Street?

To the writer of "Despicable Behavior," what you wish for the subhuman person is very clear—go to eternal hell...later. But now, in the current life, that subhuman is not in hell—you are. Your pain and shame are ours, and that other person is laughing at it. That person will never understand, and can never be taught, that kindness is not weakness, it is the opposite, and if abused, can turn quickly to outrage of the effective kind.

So what is effective, and might reduce, inhibit, and even end local cruelties? We have cell phone cam-

eras now, and all of us have, and are, neighbors. If we witness abuse of any creature and refuse to stop it, we are the real victims. After the animal screams/vanishes/dies, we live a long time with the grief, regret and guilt. There is hardly ever any need to fear revenge, because such people are usually well-known to law enforcement, and police depend on public involvement. Really, no one is truly alone, and a little courage makes a lot of friends.

Hurt an animal, hurt a child.

Carl Mogeran, Norwood

Norwood F.D. Auxiliary raffle basket winner

To the Editor:

Congratulations to Harold Loomis Jr., winner of the Valentine's Day Raffle Basket of Goodies sponsored by the Norwood Fire Department Auxiliary.

We would like to thank all who purchased tickets. Also, thanks to Vicky Newvine and Barb Morpaw for donating items. Special thanks to the Hometown Diner and Beth Sevey

Message Therapist for donating gift certificates.

Sue Bancroft, President
Norwood Fire Dept. Auxiliary

Hopkinton Food Pantry needs public's help

To the Editor:

Hopkinton Food Pantry is helping supplement more and more people in need. We are happy to be able to. Since we are an unsponsored pantry, we rely on donations to be successful. We are asking the public for help. The food pantry accepts food and non-food items (such as shampoo, toilet paper, etc.) We also accept monetary donations.

In the past, some organizations have held fundraisers for us.

A good idea would be for people to have garage sales and donate the proceeds to our pantry. Or if an organization has a function, bring canned goods to donate.

You may call Georgia 328-4168 or Mary 328-4681 for more information.

Georgia Macy
Hopkinton

FROM PAGE ONE

Library...

"Here's an opportunity, with a free library card, anybody can take free courses," Morris said. "Businesses can set up free customer service training for their staff. There are so many possibilities."

Counselors from the One Stop Career Center in Canton are available for personal job counseling every Tuesday and Thursday, and are offering job preparation classes each week.

Free Microsoft certification classes are offered once a week at the computer center with an instructor from the ATTAIN Lab in Ogdensburg.

In the near future, Musante said video conferencing will be available to businesses, service groups, or anyone who wants to avoid travel.

The library is also evolving in the way patrons can access reading material.

Tumble Talking Books, provided by the Friends of the Potsdam Public Library, is an online collection of full-length audio books with unlimited remote access that people can listen to from any computer with an internet connection. The children's equivalent, TumbleBook e-books, provides talking picture books online. Both can be accessed from the library's

website.

And soon, through the North Country Library System, patrons will be able to download e-books and audio books and read/listen to them on portable devices.

"The library has to change, it has to evolve and reflect the world," Morris said. "If it was the same library as it was 17 years ago, there would be no reason for young people today to use it."

The point of all this growth, said Musante, is to be a hub for the community—a place where people come to "get in the loop" and make connections. For instance, people who apply for help at the neighborhood center, also in the library's lower level, or who take English as a Second Language classes are referred to the library if one of the programs would help them.

"This is a crossroads where everybody meets," Musante said. "We're in a position to make all the connections—to cut down on duplication and expose resources."

Higley...

to raise funds to build a multi-purpose building with space for meetings, classes, activities, and, in the winter months, a warming building

for trail users. The campaign goal is \$125,000.

While Higley Flow State Park is a popular destination for walkers, hikers, cyclists, in-line skaters, boaters and fisherman in the fall and spring, winter is the busiest season, Fuhr said, as over 12 miles of trails are groomed and trackset for cross-country skiing, with another three miles that are popular with back country skiers and snowshoers.

To see Fuhr's article, visit <http://www.crosscountryskier.com/>.

Norwood...

will do the best job we know how," the letter states.

Now, they also plan to attach a referendum to the Norwood-Norfolk Central School budget vote, which comes six months earlier than the general election.

The trustees and Friends of the Norwood Library have been planning a series of fundraisers to keep the doors open and lights on.

A trivia night will be held Feb. 26 at the Norwood American Legion, with registration at 6 p.m. and the contest starting at 7 p.m.

The event will be hosted by Mike Viskovich and John and Nancy Bogosian.

The cost is \$20 per person for a four-person team. There will be a 50/50 drawing and a silent auction. Pre-register by calling Mike Viskovich at 769-9929 or Rose Orologio

at 353-7351.

A Zumbathon will be held at the Norwood Municipal Building, Sunday, Feb. 27 from 2 to 3 p.m. Donations will be accepted.

ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

St. Lawrence University invites community members to join these free and open events planned for the conclusion of Momentum St. Lawrence:

Friday, February 25

2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., every 30 minutes

Student-led campus tours depart from the Welcome Center at 62 Park

3:30 p.m.

Tour of Johnson Hall of Science, departing from Johnson Hall Lobby

4 to 5:30 p.m.

Reception with student leaders, Sykes Common Room

Saturday, February 26

Seminar Series

8:30 to 9:45 a.m.

Involving Students in Faculty Research Programs: Examples from the Geology Department
Brown Hall 143/144

The Arts at St. Lawrence: Moving Forward

Griffiths Arts Center Lobby, in front of Peterson-Kernari Performance Hall

The New York City Semester

Room 10, Carnegie Center for International Studies

10 to 11:15 a.m.

Curricular Change and Innovation: Keeping a St. Lawrence Education Connected
Room 9, Carnegie Center for International Studies

From the United World Colleges to St. Lawrence:

Students Raise Awareness of Global Issues
Room 207, Carnegie Center for International Studies

Greening the Campus

Room 10, Carnegie Center for International Studies

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Campus Community Picnic
Sullivan Student Center

For more information or questions: 315-229-5582



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| | SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK 9P- OFF | Fresh Nature's 12-grain bread | Fresh Bread Delivery | Order your Thursday Night Take-Out* | Fresh Bread Delivery from Carriage House Bakery Pick up | *To receive the Thursday Night Take-Out Menu, visit our website & sign up for our daily lunch menu. **Kathy Houitt, RD, CCN will | |
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