

PROGRESS CHENANGO

The Annual Comprehensive Picture Of Our Business World's New Ventures, Ideas & Growth In Chenango County.

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PHOTO BY FRANK SPEZIALE



Home field advantage

NORWICH CITY SCHOOLS

Focusing on academics as budget time rolls around

BY MELISSA STAGNARO
The Evening Sun

There is no doubt that 2008 was a trying one for the largest school system in Chenango County, and with an uncertain economy, 2009 will have its fair share of challenges as well.

The administration of the Norwich City School District, however, is proud of its accomplishments for the past year and optimistic as it moves forward into the future.

"Academically, we are making great progress," said Superintendent Gerard O'Sullivan. "We're going to be exploding with potential over the next few years."

Perhaps the year's greatest challenge was the district's \$35 million capital improvement project, now in the final stages of completion. Each of the school system's four buildings were overhauled as part of the extensive project, which also involved a new addition at the middle school and relocation of the district's administrative offices.

The improvements included not

only construction, but a reconfiguration of grade levels as well. Accommodations had to be made for moving the sixth grade classes to the middle school building, and grade 3 from Gibson Elementary to Perry Browne.

"That was our biggest success," said Deputy Superintendent Margaret Boice. Ensuring a seamless transition while scrambling to finish construction was no small task, but everyone pitched in to make it happen.

"We didn't miss a beat," said O'Sullivan. "It just went very, very smoothly."

Aiding the transition were open houses at each building, which allowed students and their parents to familiarize themselves with the changes before the first day of school.

"It carried everyone on a high (into the new year)," said School Board President Bob Patterson.

Another important part of the capital improvements was the installation of new technology, something of which O'Sullivan said the entire district can be proud. According to the superintendent, it is the implementation of that tech-

nology which really sets Norwich apart.

"What we are able to offer to our students and to the teachers is really head and shoulders above what other people are doing," he explained.

With interactive white boards, known as Smart Boards, now in every district classroom, ensuring that teachers and staff can implement the technology has become a priority. According to Boice, the number of staff development opportunities increased from 1,400 to 2,100 in the last year.

O'Sullivan said he had the opportunity to witness first a Smart Board in use in an elementary class and was "blown away" by the experience.

The district continues to make strides to improve the quality of Math and ELA (English Language Arts) education it provides to students.

"I'm very, very pleased with ... how we are improving instruction on the K-8 level," said O'Sullivan.

Three years ago, weak performance on standardized tests by certain identified segments of the student population landed the Norwich

Middle School on the School In Need of Improvement list.

Last year, the district learned they were no longer in accountability status in Math, but they are still waiting to hear if their 07-08 ELA test scores were high enough to finally get the school off the list for good.

"We just keep waiting patiently," O'Sullivan said.

The superintendent attributes much of the progress in these areas to the creation of two Teachers on Assignment positions, as part of the district's Contract for Excellence. Kisten Giglio, specializing in math, and Jen Pace, concentrating on ELA, are now in their second year in these roles.

Both were well respected classroom teachers before taking on the positions, which O'Sullivan said gave them a lot of credibility with other faculty members. Giglio and Pace have worked collaboratively with other teachers in the district to create benchmarking systems in their content areas.

Every ten weeks, students take the benchmarking tests, which help teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction and identify spe-

cific areas where students need extra help.

"It's immediate information as opposed to standardized tests," said Patterson. "Basically we're streamlining the system for continuous improvements."

Not only does the information gleaned from benchmarking help the district make informed decisions, but it also encourages the sharing of best practices and collaboration between teachers.

"There are some really good conversations going on," said O'Sullivan.

Success is something of a double edged sword however, as once the district graduates from the SINI list, state aid for the Contract for Excellence will likely disappear. The difficulty will then be maintaining these programs going forward, particularly with state formula aid expected to be slashed next year as well.

"We have to develop a priority list," said O'Sullivan, so the district can make informed decisions about cutting costs without jeopardizing the quality of education provided to

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Pharmaceuticals
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NORWICH SCHOOLS

Making leaps in academic excellence —

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students. "Going into 2009, educationally we are in very sound shape; infrastructure and facility wise, we are in very good shape; financially we are in good shape," said Boice. "Going forward with the economic conditions we have, I think the biggest challenge will be to meet the student's educational needs while keeping the taxpayers in mind."

The deputy superintendent and her staff have already begun building next year's budget, a long, arduous process in which the school board will be heavily involved. Patterson said he is actually looking forward to the challenge this year.

"It makes us dissect what we're doing and gives us an opportunity to take everything apart, and ask why, and then rebuild it," the board president explained. And despite past differences among its members, he said he feels the board is up to the task as well.

"Our greatest asset as a board going forward is our diversity," said Patterson. "I think they really focus on what we need to do for the students."

Tied closely with budgetary challenges for the coming year will be contract negotiations between the district and teacher's union.

2008 saw both the school's support staff and teachers working under expired collective bargaining agreements. After more than two years of negotiations, and 15 months without a new contract, the Norwich Education Support Staff Association reached an agreement with the district in September.

"We had a successful resolution with NESSA," said O'Sullivan.

Negotiations with the teacher's union, the Norwich Educators Organization, have not been as successful. Teachers represented by the union have been working under an expired contract for a year and a half. Having failed to reach an agreement in mediation, the two parties will now move forward into fact-finding. Resolving the impasse and reaching an agreement with the NEO is a priority for the superintendent.

"The district needs a contract with the teachers," O'Sullivan said.

Success Stories

Central Diagnostic Imaging

Central Diagnostic Imaging in Norwich has received accreditation for its CT (computed tomography) scanner by the American College of Radiology (ACR). Currently CDI is the only CT scanning service in the five county region that includes Madison, Chenango, Otsego, Broome and Delaware that is so accredited.

ACR's voluntary accreditation program entails an exhaustive review of the technical quality of the scanner based on its performance in scanning a phantom, a review of selected clinical images and of scanning protocols as well as the qualifications of the CT technologists and the interpreting radiologists.

Dr. Lawrence Rosenblum, President and Founder of Central Diagnostic Imaging, points out that CDI's technologists are CT certified or, in one instance, in the process of becoming certified by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists and that both he and Dr. Janet Martin, his partner, are board certified by the American College of Radiology in diagnostic radiology. According to Rosenblum, CDI's 16 slice High Speed high resolution CT scanner is fully capable of performing all modern imaging techniques including virtual colonoscopy, CT angiography (CTA), advanced 3-D volume imaging and dental scanning for temporal mandibular joint disorders and surgical planning.

Leslie Dopkeen, Operations Manager at Central Diagnostic Imaging, commented about the decision to pursue this accreditation. "Quite simply, seeking this voluntary accreditation directly supports CDI's mission to provide

our patients and their doctors/practitioners with high quality, state-of-the-art medical imaging. The process opens our Center to rigorous, anonymous, expert review. Accreditation by the ACR serves as an additional layer of quality assurance, so we can further solidify our patient's trust in the medical services we offer. It is a way of demonstrating to the public that not only do we treat people well at CDI but that we do well by them in the imaging services we provide."

In addition to its CT accreditation, CDI has been ACR accredited for many years in MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) and, of course, mammography where a patient can discuss with the radiologist the results of her study at the time of her visit. For more information about ACR accreditation and to search for accredited facilities in the region visit the American College of Radiology's web site at www.acr.org

CDI also offers: the region's only 4-D ultrasound capable of performing musculoskeletal studies; x-ray and fluoroscopy; vascular diagnosis; and, bone densitometry with additional special applications for orthopedic and pediatric studies and analysis of whole body fat composition.

According to Rosenblum, CDI continues to fulfill its promise to provide the latest state-of-the-art medical imaging and to be a leader in offering high quality medical imaging services and making them accessible for urgent and emergent cases at all times.

Mead Westvaco

The Sidney MWV (MeadWestvaco) Consumer & Office Products' facility has been operating in Delaware County for over 60 years, and is one of the county's largest employers. The company relocated to downtown Sidney in 1946 and moved to its present location in 1970. Once known as Keith Clark and then AT-A-GLANCE, the company was acquired by the Mead Corporation in 1999 and received its current name in January 2002 when Mead and Westvaco merged. In 2008, the company changed its name to MWV.

The Sidney Office Products Group is housed in a 750,000 square foot facility that extends more than one-half mile from end-to-end. It produces and distributes in excess of 100 million calendars and related products annually — including established brands such as AT-A-GLANCE®, Standard Diary®, Day Minder® and Day Runner® — which are sold through independent office supply stores and national chains such as Office Max, Office Depot and Staples. Approximately 1,000 employees in the facility work in departments that include sales

and marketing, prepress, customer service and many different manufacturing and shipping operations, including printing, bindery, finishing and distribution.

The Sidney facility is a generous supporter of area arts groups, scout troops, schools and other non-profit organizations. For example, the facility has provided a significant portion of the development and ongoing support for the National Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta and the Keith Clark Park in Sidney.

"Our employees are committed to safety and working hard to deliver 'world-class' products and services to our customers," said David Williamson, executive vice president and general manager. "We are viewed by customers, consumers and employees alike as an indispensable, premier supplier of quality brand-name products for planning, organizing, record-keeping and communicating. We're proud to be known for our innovation, service excellence and 'added value' in every aspect of our business."

Success Stories

AFLAC New York

Now in his 6th year as an independent agent with Aflac New York, Jim Reynolds has been promoted to a CIT (coordinator-in-training) position. Jim resides in Norwich with his wife of 15 years, Rosemarie and children Megan and Shane. He credits a lot of his success to his former boss Tom Brauer, while working at S&S TV and Appliances as a salesman. It was here where Jim honed his sales skills and learned the value of treating people with respect. The other man instrumental in Jim's career was his late father who taught him to never quit and dream big.

The management training program calls for Jim to attend monthly workshops at the state headquarters in Rochester covering topics like goal setting, time management, interviewing, and recruiting. Jim will be responsible for continuing to attain his sales goals but now takes on a new role of helping recruits start their own careers with Aflac as an independent sales associate. Reynolds says the market penetration for Aflac is well below 5% in central New York so the opportunity for an ambitious individual to manage their own time and schedule with unlimited earning potential is available for the right person.

One of the most valuable tools to help sales associates succeed is Aflac's brand visibility. Since the inception of the Aflac duck commercials in 2001, Aflac has become a household name with brand recognition hovering around 94%. Jim says the clever advertising

campaign adds to associates' credibility and lays the groundwork for enhancing customer confidence. He enjoys owning his own business while working under the umbrella of a fortune 500 company, and helping families live fully, with maximum security and confidence.

New this year to Aflac New York, is their vision insurance program with a product so unique, it has a patent pending. Reynolds says they leave their competitors far behind in the supplemental insurance market with offerings such as cancer indemnity, accident, sickness, hospital confinement, and short-term disability. They also have dental and life insurance. The majority of Aflac's business is conducted through payroll deduction and made available through a company's benefit package. Aflac's plans are guaranteed renewable and amazingly their core products have not had a price increase during their 50 plus years of business.

Jim says he is excited about this next chapter of his career with Aflac. He enjoys helping people and that was one of his deciding factors in joining this dynamic, market-changing company. If someone would like to look into a career with one of the world's largest and most respected companies or simply get more information contact Jim Reynolds at (607) 316-5731 or j1_reynolds@us.aflac.com

Golden Age Apartments

Golden Age is a subsidized, 2 story complex with elevators catering to those over the age of 62, handicapped or disabled. Conveniently situated on the edge of Downtown Norwich at 33 Mechanic Street, the Golden Age Apartments provides modern comfortable living along with an activities program geared to the interests and needs of the residents.

Golden Age Apartments is an equal opportunity housing where all people who qualify under the regulations of the HUD program are welcome. At Golden Age Apartments, there are 99 one bedroom apartments which include a large living room with a dining area, fully equipped kitchen, bedroom, bath and generous closets and storage closet. Golden Age includes many extras that mean comfortable living. There is wall-to-wall carpeting, ample closet space, an emergency call system, air conditioning, smoke detec-

tors, security intercom system for visitors and each apartment has its own thermostat.

Golden Age offers a community room for the tenants to utilize and is located in front of our A building and is available for group functions or your own enjoyment.

There are laundry rooms on each floor of both buildings with operating directions hanging above the machines with easy access. We also offer a full time maintenance crew to help with the needs of our apartment complex.

The city of Norwich provides a transportation system around the surrounding area. Golden Age is considered a "bus stop" so transportation to area stores or other locations is easily accessible from Golden Age.

Office hours for Golden Age are Monday through Friday from 9 to 5 and our phone number is 336-7004 so stop by and we would be happy to show you around!

Success Stories

Chenango County SPCA

When you think of a puppy or a kitten, it makes you feel warm and fuzzy. While at the Chenango County SPCA we do have the opportunity to feel warm and fuzzy at times, that's not always the case in our day to day work. While there are many moments of happiness, such as a lost pet reunited with its owner or seeing a pet finds its "forever home," there can also be sad moments as well; moments when an animal needs rescuing.

Media attention in 2007 and 2008 on animal abuse and neglect, puppy mills, and dog fighting raised public awareness of these issues across the nation including Chenango County. People in our community are more empowered and educated to advocate and be a voice for those who have none. You can make a difference in the life of an animal! And last year, you have...

During 2008, Chenango County SPCA rescued more than 150 animals from cruelty and neglect. While the SPCA provided the care for the animals, you came forward with blankets, wish list items, donations, interest in adopting, and most important, great compas-

sion. We are grateful to you.

As we look back at 2008 and its challenges, we take in the rewards as well. Numerous families grew because of a new pet while our community grew in its compassion for animals and others.

The bonds between people and pets can be strong. The mission of the SPCA is to create and strengthen those bonds. Adopting your next pet from a shelter can be the beginning of a wonderful relationship that has warm and fuzzy rewards.

Founded in 1907, Chenango County SPCA is a nationally recognized, open-admission animal shelter that provides, care, compassion and respect for over 1,500 lost, stray, surrendered and abandoned animals annually.

Visit The SPCA Today ~ A Friend Is Waiting For You!

Chenango County SPCA is located on 6160 County Road 32, Norwich, NY 13815. Hours are Tuesday-Friday 12 to 4:30 pm, Saturday 11 am to 3 pm, closed Sunday and Monday. (607) 334-9724, www.chenangospca.org.

Planned Parenthood

Think Planned Parenthood is just for teenagers? Think again! Since 1971, Planned Parenthood of South Central New York, Inc. (PPSCNY) has helped women and men of all ages in Chenango County by offering affordable, confidential family planning services, cancer screening, and the Prenatal Care Assistance Program (PCAP). The clinic is located at Suite 208 of the Eaton Center in downtown Norwich.

PPSCNY's services are all provided on a sliding fee scale. No one is ever turned away due to inability to pay. Patients who are income eligible can sign up for the Family Planning Benefit Program which offers free exams, birth control and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. PPSCNY also accepts most forms of insurance including Medicaid and Family Health Plus. This is a great program for women and men who are uninsured or cannot afford their insurance's high co-pays.

The expert team of caring professionals includes doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and nurses. PPSCNY's services include birth control, annual physical exams, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy testing and counseling, screening for breast, cervical, testicular and colorectal cancers, and emergency contraception (also known as the "morning after" pill). PPSCNY also offers confidential rapid HIV

testing. Patients can choose a blood or saliva test, preceded and followed by non-judgmental, compassionate counseling, and know their HIV status in only 20 minutes. Marybeth Clark, LPN, the Director of Clinic Operations, said patients find the rapid test less stressful because they get their results quickly.

Planned Parenthood is also the only Prenatal Care Assistance Program (PCAP) provider in Chenango County. If you are pregnant and meet the income eligibility requirements, even if you have health insurance, Planned Parenthood can help. Women eligible for PCAP receive free prenatal care through Chenango Memorial Hospital and help with applying for WIC and other services. For more information or to make an appointment, please call 607-336-8269.

Planned Parenthood also provides sexuality and health care education, working with parents and teens to encourage family communication and decrease risky behaviors. Our trained educator, Shelley Bartow, gladly helps teens, adults, couples, families, parents, and youth groups at schools, churches and other organizations.

Physician Assistant Meg Nowak, RPA is the full time clinician in Norwich. She sees patients full time, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Thursdays 11:30 a.m. - 7:30p.m.

Success Stories

Hospice & Palliative Care

Hospice and Palliative Care of Chenango County moves into the new year sporting a brand new agency logo and slogan. "We wanted to update our image to more closely tie it to our region of the country," says Executive Director Patricia Outhouse. "So, we decided to embrace what so many Chenango County residents love about upstate New York, the change of seasons. We recognized too that as human beings we're all moving through the seasons of our lives, growing and aging with each passing year. That theme tied in nicely with the Hospice philosophy that we care for individuals in all age groups, from infancy to old age. While it's a fact that the majority of our patients are over age 65, many members of their families, to whom we offer emotional and educational support, are much younger. Daughters and sons are often the primary caregiver to an aging parent, and their children, the grandchildren of the patient, are certainly affected by changing family dynamics during stressful times. Hospice is on the scene to help these little ones as well. We also decided on an appropriate slogan to accompany the new logo: "All of life's seasons are very important, some just require extra attention."

Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County is also proud of the partnerships they've developed with area nursing homes including Chenango Memorial Hospital's Residential Health Care Facility, Valley View Nursing Home, and the Gilmour Health Care Facility. "We are pleased," says Outhouse, "that we can continue to follow our patients as they transition from their homes into a skilled nursing facility. Although nursing homes have competent professionals on staff, we believe that Hospice still has an important professional management role to play in our patient's life and the lives of their relatives. Families are especially grateful that our nurses, social workers, and volunteers continue to visit and provide clinical expertise in the end-of-life care of their loved ones." Outhouse, a licensed Nursing Home Administrator herself, is looking forward to forging new relationships with caring professionals in other Chenango County nursing homes in 2009.

The following is a brief snapshot of a year in the life of Hospice of Chenango County. From September 2007 to September 2008, Hospice cared for 184 patients (this does not include family members); the median length of stay for patients was 23.5 days. Sixty one percent came into the program with cancer, while 39% had other illnesses including congestive heart failure, emphysema, or general debility. One hundred and thirty seven patients lived in their own homes, while 47 resided in nursing homes, hospitals, or other residences. The majority of patients, 83%, took advantage of volunteer services. There are currently 4,160 Hospices in the U.S. and nearly one third of all deaths in the country were under the care of Hospice.

One out of every three people who died in the U.S. were under Hospice Care. That's an enormous number of people who benefited from state of the art pain and symptom management. These patients typically avoided lengthy hospital stays, or stressful repeated trips to the emergency room. They died surrounded by family in circumstances of their choosing. Furthermore, they died knowing that Hospice staff would be checking on their family for at least thirteen months after their passing.

Life can be difficult during many seasons of our lives. Isn't it wonderful that Chenango County has a Hospice that is ready to provide that extra attention when it's needed most? If you would like more information about Hospice or are interested in becoming a volunteer. To begin the conversation call the Hospice office at 334-3556.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHENANGO

Finding more ways to fight the war on poverty

By TYLER MURPHY
The Evening Sun

Stepping up to battle the economic woes affecting the community, a non-profit organization has been forced to get better at what it does in order to meet a growing need.

Opportunities for Chenango is a community action agency, which is a social service organization designed to help families suffering from poverty and financial impairments gain self-sufficiency.

Currently the organization employs just over 140 people and provides services to thousands of local residents.

"Everything we do is about economic development. Our job is to improve peoples lives through economics in a number of different ways," said OFC Executive Director Craig J. Cashman.

The director said the agency has seen an increase in the demand for its programs while the funding for them has become increasing difficult to get.

"You have to do more with less. Funds go down as needs go up," said OFC Chief Executive Officer Wayne H. Viera.

OFC has a number of programs that cover a range of human services including family development, housing, skills training, education, literacy, health, community,



Home energy assistance and rejuvenation programs are just one way OFC helps families in need in Chenango County.

employment and economic development.

Viera works closely with one of those services, OFC's Quaranta Housing Service Center. QHS administers more than 17 grants and offers over 21 programs to local residents.

"Those are just estimates; it could be easily double that," said Viera.

The center includes a conglomerate of programs including Weatherization Assistance, Home Energy Assistance, rental assistance called Housing Choice Voucher, HUD-certification, Housing Counseling, First-Time Home Buyers, West End Mobile Home Sales and Services Company, Rehabilitation and Repair, and more.

Each program is eligible to receive certain government grants that help struggling families and essentially aid in maintaining the aging residential infrastructure of

Chenango County.

"Quaranta is on the edge of what you'd term human service and has a direct impact on people's lives. In a time where the economy is very poor, it really sticks out with a powerful impact on the community," said Cashman.

"A family facing challenging economic times usually has to put everything into purchasing a new home, for example, but what does that new couple do when suddenly the roof falls in? They're stretched to the limit and would be unable to pay for the damages. That's when Quaranta steps in and helps the new home owners," said Cashman.

"We improve not just the house but we improve the safety and quality of life for the family, and we've also improved the community in which the home resides," added Viera.

More and more middle

income families are coming in looking for assistance from QHS.

"At least, right now, heat aid services has double from last year with roughly 700 people," said Cashman.

Another 780 people are currently waiting for conservation services such as weatherization in order to maintain their homes which often suffer from damages that exceed the realistic cost of repair for most families living in them explained Viera. Demand for the service increased in 2008.

"There's not a lot of building new houses anymore in Chenango County and we have to protect our housing structures or eventually face a housing crisis in the next generation," he said.

"Every day, people should understand that what they do has an enormous economic impact on the community," said Cashman.

In the past year QHS helped weatherize over 100 homes, provided heating assistance to over 1,000 households and aiding about 20 first timers purchase their first home.

Since 1998, QHS has accumulated over \$28 million dollars in investment spent on the community.

"More than three-fourths of that has been generated in just the last five years. We've gotten better at what we do and have gotten better at seeking funds for the community," said Cashman.

2008 Progress News



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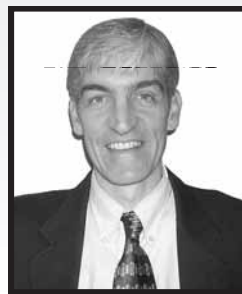
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Jim Reynolds
CIT (Coordinator in Training) 10 Grove Ave., Norwich, New York 13815
An Independent Agent 607.316.5731 office 607.336.1311 home
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An Independent Agent 607.316.5731 office 607.336.1311 home
Representing Aflac New York j1_reynolds@us.aflac.com aflacny.com

NORWICH PHARMACEUTICALS

A prescription for growth

By MELISSA STAGNARO
The Evening Sun

Norwich Pharmaceuticals Inc., a descendant of the original Norwich Pharmacal company known for introducing Unguentine and Pepto-Bismol to the world, had a stellar year in 2008.

The company, which has more than 120 years of history with Chenango County and the pharmaceutical industry, has set its sights even higher for 2009. According to its president, the company intends to double sales within the next five years.

"I would absolutely say that this was a great year for NPI," said Norwich Pharmaceuticals President Chris Calhoun. "There is no doubt we met our business expectations in 2008." The executive gives credit for much of this success to the company's employees.

An outsourcing manufacturer, Norwich Pharmaceuticals manufactures pharmaceutical products for its customers. It also provides packaging and distribution services, conducts clinical trials and helps clients navigate the regulatory process.

In 2007, the company and its 375,000 square foot facility in North Norwich were purchased by AFI Partners, a New York City-based private equity firm. Since that time, they have made significant investments in growing not only the volume of the business, but also diversifying product capabilities and serv-

ices.

Their growth plan for the past year included adding a new packaging line, equipment and close to 60 jobs. These investments "were directly linked to a major initiative we began executing for a new customer in 2008," said Calhoun.

An additional \$1 million has been invested in pilot scale equipment currently being installed. "Acquisition of this equipment is an important step toward delivering more of the services that NPI's customers require," the president explained.

Between now and 2012, a range of new services will be added, Calhoun reported. They include "product, process and packaging development; analytical method development; regulatory services; and continuous improvement via application of lean manufacturing techniques."

Future growth will be tied closely to Norwich Pharmaceuticals' new sister company, Alvogen, which develops and markets specialty generic drugs. The two companies are now aligned under one parent organization, known as the Alvogen Group.

Douglas Drysdale was named chief executive officer of the group in 2008. Calhoun credits positive developments at Norwich to Drysdale's leadership.

"He's driving the strategic vision for the broader group," said Calhoun of the new CEO. "Having Doug there really expands our customer and geographical reach, which will be important to

our future success."

Continued growth translates into new jobs at the North Norwich facility. According to Human Resources Director Ric Festarini, Norwich Pharmaceuticals employed roughly 390 people at the end of 2007. By the end of 2008, that number had increased to 450.

Between attrition and trying to fill new positions, Festarini and his staff have had a busy year. They hired a total of 86 salaried and roughly 35 hourly positions during the course of 2008. And their work isn't done yet.

"Recruiting of technical talent will be a priority for the NPI business," Calhoun explained. The company is still searching for scientists, accountants, engineers and other professionals for more than 30 salaried positions currently available. Once filled, these new hires will boost Norwich Pharmaceuticals' employment numbers even further.

Because of the specific skills needed, there is sometimes a need to look outside the area and even, on occasion, outside the country to fill positions. But Festarini reported that the company looks first to hire from the local as much as possible.

"We would very much prefer to fill a role locally," said Festarini. There are a lot of factors which make local hiring beneficial, not the least of which are relocation costs. Of the personnel hired last year, he estimated 80 percent were from Central New York.

"It's a positive story, it really is," said Calhoun, who recognizes the importance of

these jobs, especially in the current economic climate. "We know the growth here is very important to the community."

Norwich Pharmaceuticals contributes more than \$18 million per year to the local economy by way of employee compensation and another \$275,000 in property taxes on its 400-acre campus in North Norwich.

"We have a long blood line here in the community and we take that very seriously," said Calhoun. "It's a special connection." Something he said is evidenced by the number of "multi-generational employees" who work at Norwich Pharmaceuticals.

So far, Norwich Pharmaceuticals has been able to maintain its growth despite the adverse economy, which has led to layoffs and closures in other industries. While he doesn't feel the pharmaceutical industry is immune to these economic factors, Calhoun commented, he does think they are somewhat resistant.

"Thankfully, our customer base has been pretty stable through this economic downturn," said the company president. "This is important because our business relies on the success of our customers' projects and products."

What is Calhoun's forecast for the coming year?

"While the state of the economy in general is a concern, and could affect us, NPI expects to both grow its revenues and workforce by the end of 2009," he said.

Success Stories

Progressive Dental

On October 1, 1991, Dr. Sonny Spera began what was to be Progressive Dental. The first office was located at 1080 Conklin Road, Conklin, NY. This had been the office of Dr. Milton Lawney until his retirement. Dr. Spera and a half a dozen dedicated assistants, hygienists and office personnel staffed the small office for two and a half years. In that time, Dr. Spera added more office hours, additional staff and upgraded much of the equipment.

On April 4, 1994, the current Conklin Office at 703 Conklin Road, Conklin, NY was opened. This office was built to accommodate the larger staff and provide state of the art dental design. In 1996, after an office naming contest, our patients input gave us "Progressive Dental" and thus Progressive Dental, PLLC was born.

In 1998, Dr. Loveland retired and joined the practice in Conklin and September 1997 we merged with Dr. Bernie Collins at 333 Hooper Road. We built our new office at 565 Hooper Road, Endwell, NY which opened on Feb. 1, 1999.

In April 2004, Dr. DeRensis retired and Progressive Dental of Norwich, PLLC was born. The practice continued to work out of the office at 89 N. Broad Street until October 2006, our office was built and opened 101 S. Broad Street, Norwich.

Foster's Cabinet Shop

"Woodworking is in my blood," says Dan Foster, owner of Foster's Cabinet Shop, State Highway 23, Norwich, NY. Since junior high school he has enjoyed working in this medium.

After high school graduation Dan went to college for air conditioning and refrigeration. This turned out to be something he didn't like to do. After quitting that endeavor, Dan went to work for The Knotty Pine Shop in New Berlin, NY, discovering once again he liked working in wood.

A restoration shop in Norwich hired Dan to restore antique furniture, teaching him a great deal about furniture construction, especially period pieces.

Always producing fine furniture for over 35 years in a wide variety of reproductions and custom built, Dan continues to enjoy his craft. Branching out to build custom design kitchens, libraries and baths keeps him busy. His favorite woods to use are cherry, figured maple, mahogany and walnut.

Dan has run a successful business for almost 30 years doing something he loves. Being very particular as to the quality of his work - is a passion for him in whatever he is working on, from the most simple piece to the most complex.

Over the years he has had very few disappointed customers. Dan says, "I always listen to the customer as to what they want. After all, it is their project!"

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DOWNTOWN OXFORD

Music, art and a bit of community renewal

By MELISSA STAGNARO
The Evening Sun

The heart of any small town is its history, and nowhere is that more true than in the Village of Oxford. The grand historic homes, business storefronts and public buildings that line the streets of the picturesque village are a testament to the rich heritage of the two hundred year old community.

Oxford has begun a revitalization of late, with residents inspired to restore not only the old buildings, but also the community itself, to its former glory. Although the process has been going on slowly for the last two decades, the efforts were invigorated in 2008 as the village celebrated its Bicentennial.

While many individuals and organizations were involved in planning the historic event, the efforts of Village Mayor Terry Stark stood out for many. Since he first took office in 2002, Stark has worked personally and cooperatively with other local organizations to better and beautify the historic community.

Local businesses, residents, service organizations, non-profits and community leaders came together to plan the week-long celebration in honor of the village's 200th birthday.

"The Lions Club did a great job coordinating the parade last year," said Stark, recognizing one of those many groups.

The collaboration of all

these groups made the event so successful that people are clamoring for more, said Stark. "It's been suggested we continue it with an annual event." One of the ideas proposed, he continued, has been to center an annual celebration around alumni weekend at the end of July.

While it was originally intended to serve as part of the Bicentennial, the Oxford Rotary's contribution remains in place. In honor of the event, members of the service organization placed pedestals with historical information in front of more than 40 local homes. These markers have remained in place to afford residents the opportunity to take a self-guided walking tour of the village's historic houses.

"People love to walk around the town to see them," said Stark, who said the program inspired homeowners to take more pride in the care and maintenance of their homes as well as learn about the structure's past.

The mayor said he hopes the program will also help inspire other property owners to take more of an interest in maintaining and restoring their own homes.

"If they can do it by preserving it in an historical manner, all the better," Stark explained. The mayor has made it one of his priorities to improve the community's curb appeal. He has done everything from plant flowers around Lafayette Park, to replacing the village's welcome sign. He also supports the Village Tree Committee.

One of Stark's goals for 2009 is to rid downtown



Nate Gross provides both private and group lessons in acoustic, electric and bass guitar from his North Canal Street location. Pictured above are three of his young students: 12 year-old Matthew Moore, 12 year-old Katie Lord and 13-year old Caleb Cutting

Oxford of its biggest eye sore and threat to public safety: the condemned building at 2-8 Canal Street. Chenango County is the "reluctant owner" of the property, because of unpaid taxes. The mayor has gone back and forth with the county about taking ownership of the structure, which will need to be demolished.

"Debris removal seems to be the fly in the ointment," he explained, as the building is believed to contain asbestos. According to the mayor, the village has already received an offer for the property from Ken Ryan, owner of Canal Street Hardware. Ryan has proposed to buy the land and then swap it for the village parking lot, which sits adjacent to his business.

"He needs that property to expand," said Stark. "It seems like a good scenario." Stark is already working up plans for the property, which sits next to the 1894 Bank Building where the town and village offices are located.

The extra space would allow for a new entry way on the south side of the historic building and make it possible to renovate the structure's third floor. The goal would be to move both the town and village courts to that space as one consolidated court, he explained.

The rest of the lot could be used for further development within the village limits, or remain a parking lot. This last would benefit one of the downtown's newest businesses, the Oxford Food Mart, which currently has very limited parking.

"We've had several new businesses come in the last year," said Stark. One of those new businesses is the guitar studio of Nate Gross. The 26 year old Oxford native, who began playing guitar himself at the age of five, offers group and individual lessons in acoustic, electric and base guitar out of the small studio on North Canal Street.

"I knew that there were a lot of people in the area that

wanted to learn how to play guitar and make music a part of their lives with out driving to Greene, Norwich or even Binghamton," said Gross. His downtown location is convenient for many of his students, he added, because it is in walking distance for village residents.

While Gross offers both group and individual lessons, he encourages his younger students to take group lessons.

"The kids love taking lessons with their friends and learning how to play together," he said, "That's what music is all about: Playing and sharing the music as one." He also prides himself on exposing his students to something different and exciting.

The guitarist said he believes his studio benefits other downtown businesses as well, as many of his students and their families patronize these establishments while they are in town.

"Many parents will get dinner with their kids after les-

sons at Roma's, Hoppies or have a drink at The Stadium while they wait for the kids," he explained.

Gross has close ties with two other downtown businesses in particular: The Stadium and 6 On The Square. He and Panhandle, the roots rock band for which he is lead guitar and vocalist, have played often at each of these music venues.

Some of Gross' teenage students have also performed at 6 on the Square, during their monthly Open Mic night. The events, which are free and open to the public, give local artists a chance to demonstrate their musical and poetic talents.

According to Nancy Morey, who sits on 6 On The Square's board of directors, getting more young people involved is one of the non-profit venue's goals moving forward.

"Several of the teenagers who perform at our Open Mic Nights asked for something for teens, so we hosted a Teen Battle of the Bands in November, and will make that an annual event," she explained. "We also offer deeply discounted tickets for teens to any performance."

Being responsive to feedback from the community has always been a mission of the organization, said Morey.

"We're always open to trying new ideas," she explained, citing the Local Talent Nights as an example. The events give local performers, who have often performed first at Open Mics, the chance to showcase their skills on stage.

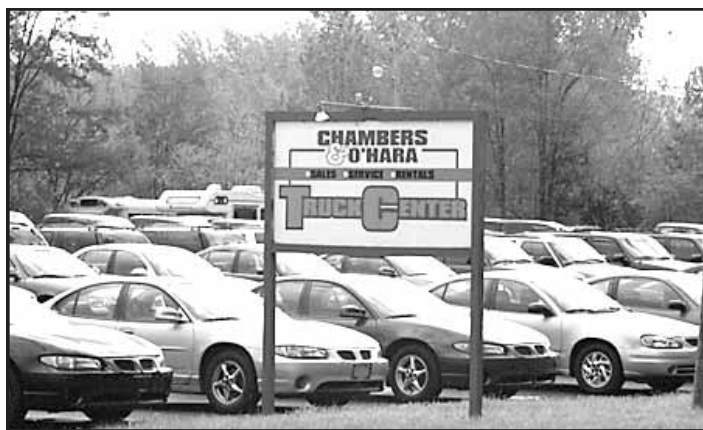
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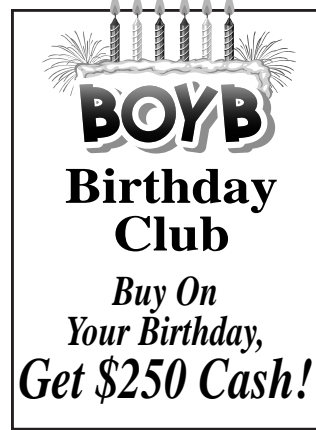
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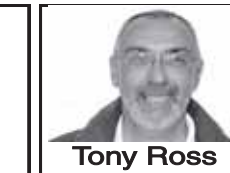
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CWS

Covering all aspects of the marketplace

BY JESSICA LEWIS
The Evening Sun

Anything that you see on a Wal-Mart shelf could have been produced at CWS. According to Vice President of Sales and Marketing Timothy Notter, CWS covers almost anything on the market, and that must be working, because in a difficult year, the company saw an increase over the past year's sales of 20 percent.

CWS is a contract packaging company that employs 150. Of those 150, 120 have some type of physical or mental disability. In addition to their paid work program, CWS offers several other programs, including supervised residential facilities and Dayhab. "We provide vocation training, work for pay, residential 24/7 supervised homes, assisted living apartments and Dayhab programs," said Chapter President John McHale.

A number of consumers take part in each of CWS' programs. In addition to the 120 people who work full-time at CWS, 20 more work in the part-time program, 85 attend the Dayhab program and 40 people take part in the residential program, however there is some overlap between the numerous facets of the agency.

"2008 was a tremendous year for us," said McHale. I'm very proud of what we achieved and how our team worked in all areas with our objectives and missions in mind. The team worked

cohesively for the betterment of all of the people who are here everyday."

CWS is a heavily regulated company. They have obtained ISO Certification, they are FDA Registered, Kosher Certified and Organic Certified. In addition, the company undergoes numerous audits every year. According to Vice President of Rehabilitation Michael Cerra, the company is heavily regulated because it is overseen by the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

Last year, CWS was audited in order to become re-certified by ISO. "Thanks to our Q&A Staff, it was a seamless re-certification process. We passed with flying colors," said Account Executive Jason Lasicki.

CWS' success in 2008 resulted partially in the addition of 25 new accounts that were added in 2008. "We had 20 percent growth in 2008 over 2007," Lasicki said. In addition, CWS was able to grow by 30 percent from 2006 to 2007. This year's success was attributed partially to the over 200 new items that ran this year, which included three highly successful product launches that were put onto the market in '08.

CWS' work program encompasses five different plants in Norwich. Each plant contains a force of employees who work to assemble or package different products. "Our work program helps the jobless by providing gainful employment," Notter said. The work program contains three different divisions;



Employees at CWS work to package and assemble many different types of products. With a large product line, the employees could be working on anything from salt and pepper shakers to medical supplies. CWS reported growth of 20 percent in 2008.

pharmaceutical and cosmetic, retail packaging and assembly. "Our products range all over the place. People are always surprised when they see the range of our products in the front case." Notter said. "The products continue to change, and we continue to search for more opportunities for our employees."

Currently, CWS packages or assembles products including medical supplies, lip balm, salt and pepper grinders, gun stocks and many products in between.

Director of Operations Eric Moore explained that a minimum turnover is the key to the success of the business.

CWS was first chartered in 1964. "We opened our first workshop in Oxford in 1969," said Vice President of Rehabilitation Michael Cerra. One of the employees who began working at that first workshop in 1969 is still working at CWS.

"In the past, we've always had a few snafus," said

McHale. "There are usually one to two weeks, when it is very difficult to find work for all of our consumers. In 2008, we did not have one day when we had to send our workers home. That's a major accomplishment."

Cerra said he believes one of the reasons the company was successful this year is because they are not confined to Chenango County.

"We have customers from all over the U.S. and Canada. We're a national company with major customers all over the northeast, and we extend all the way to Arizona and California. In today's world, we are able to be competitive," Notter said.

Not all of the consumers at CWS have the same capabilities, and while some are able to work full time, the part-time program or one of the two Dayhab programs is a better match for others. Kelly Jones is the organizer of the Dayhab program located on Midland Drive in Norwich.

The program is split into two sessions: the morning session and the afternoon session. Groups of no more than 10 consumers and five staff members come in for 3 to 4 hours at a time and do crafts and volunteer work. The group is currently working to make fleece caps for chemotherapy patients as part of a care package given out at the hospital. The group has also put together care packets for area people in need. Recently they put together a packet for a man who had lost his home and his job.

"They're always looking for volunteer work or a way to help out," Jones said of the people in her program. One of the things the group is proud of is their continual work at the local Pizza Hut. The group goes to the restaurant one to two times a week before they open to help stock the napkins, fill salt and pepper shakers and stock the sugar caddies.

The second Dayhab facility

is located on Country Club Road in Norwich. Consumers who attend Dayhab at this facility are generally more involved in terms of their disability than those at the five plants in the heart of Norwich. Lori Dushko, the director of the program, explained that the Dayhab facility serves consumers age 21 and up. "Our oldest is 87," Dushko said. The day to day activities at the center vary and can include cooking groups, bowling, swimming, trips to the library, playing games, arts and crafts, working on goals and money skills.

"A lot of what they do here may look like just activities, but everything has to have a purpose toward a goal," Cerra said. "The state looks at those types of things when they come in for the audit."

Dushko explained that the group goes on a lot of outings in the warmer months. "We take a lot of trips and learn about appropriate behavior in the community. We go out to lunch and learn manners and how to order off a menu," Dushko said. "A lot goes on day to day."

In addition to the skills that the Dayhab program teaches, Dushko said, the consumers also have the chance to participate in some fun activities. "We have a chime choir that performs a couple times a year," Dushko said. The choir travels to nursing homes and the Veterans' Home to entertain the residents there. In addition, they have an annual prom in September.



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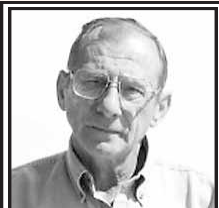
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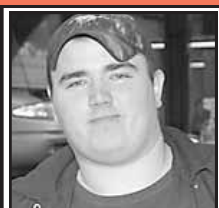
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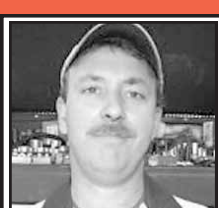
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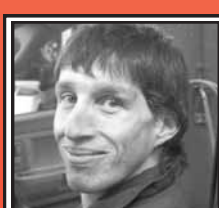
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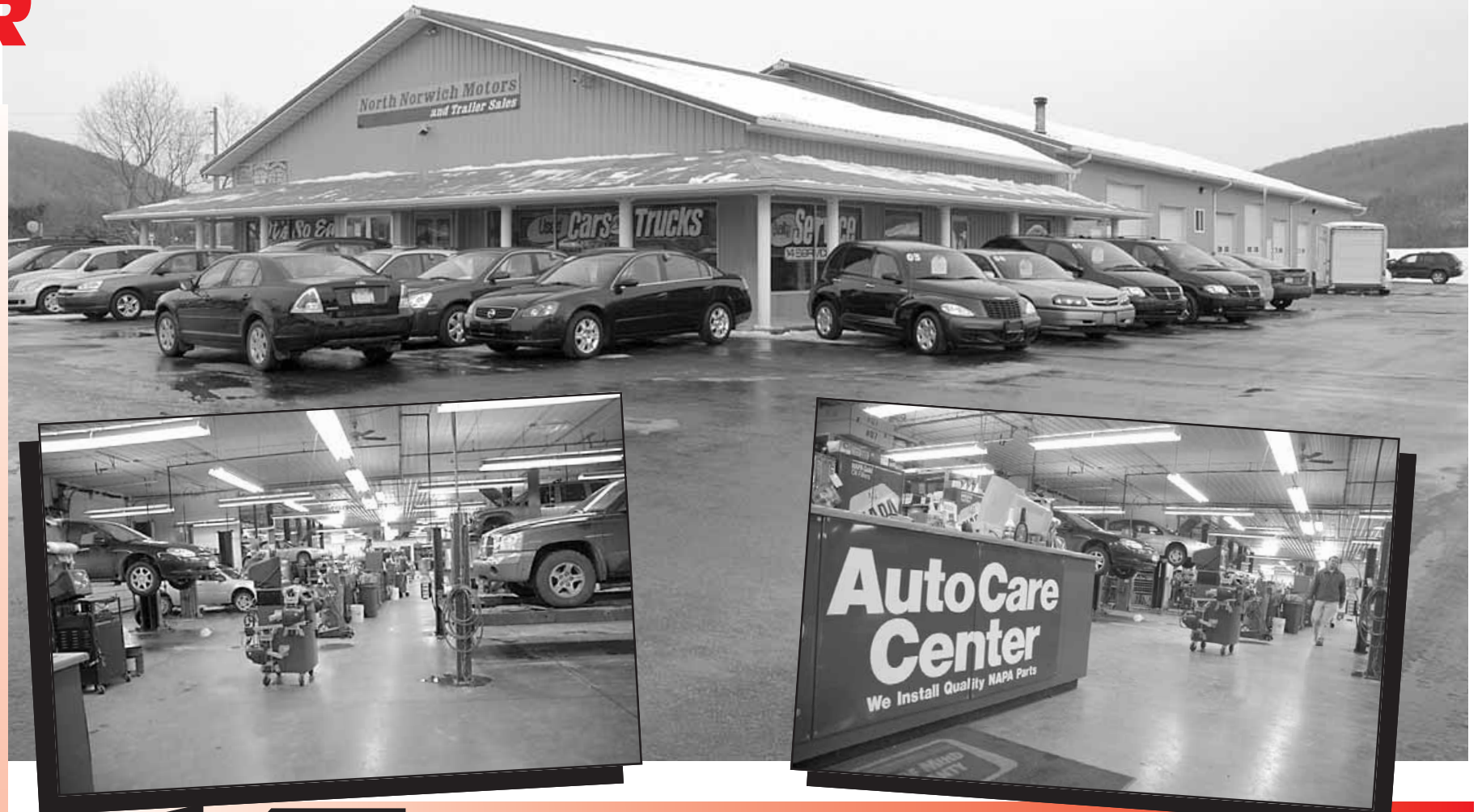
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NBT BANK

Hometown values help avoid national pitfalls

BY MELISSA DECORDOVA
The Evening Sun

Exotic financing is a far cry from what is ever offered at NBT Bancorp, the financial services holding company that Chenango County is proud to call its own.

Credit default swaps, sub-prime lending and other quasi financing tools that fueled the nation's current economic crises simply aren't part of the vernacular at the bank.

While the company's stock price bounced around back in the fall - when the nation's banking industry was most volatile - nine months of solid performance so far into the 2008 fiscal year have led management to conservatively predict a record year.

"We can't say emphatically that NBT had a record year in 2008, because there are three months left in the bank's fiscal calendar. However, there are no indications that the current nine-month record will change," said Bank President and Chief Executive Officer Martin Dietrich.

NBT Bancorp is the holding company for two full-service community bank divisions and three financial services companies. NBT Bank has 84 offices in upstate New York, and Pennstar Bank has 38 offices in northeastern Pennsylvania. EPIC Advisors, based in Rochester, is a full-service 401(k) plan record keeping firm. The Mang Insurance Agency, based in Binghamton, and the Hathaway Insurance Agency, based in Gloversville, are full-service insurance agen-

cies.

NBT stock is up 27 percent for the year. It hovered in the lower to mid \$20s until September when it rose over \$30 a share. It is now trading at about \$25 a share and experiencing unusually high trading volumes. The stock price rose 5 percent alone on Dec. 2 with a volume of 229,384.

The company's market cap (the stock price multiplied by the number of shares) through the first nine months of 2008 was \$973 million. Total assets were \$5.3 billion as of September 30, up from \$5.2 in 2007.

NBT Bancorp's solid performance and conservative management philosophy led management to rejecting \$75 million from the United States Treasury's TARP program, the largest part (so far) of the so-called \$700 billion bailout plan.

Dietrich said the community bank received notification that the funds would be available, but after considering the proposal, chose not to take them. "Our company is currently well capitalized and meeting the lending needs of our customers. Given this and the requirements the program would impose on our business, we believe that our participation in the program would not be in the best interests of our shareholders," he said in a press release to the media.

Dietrich believes that the stock market is going to continue to bounce around until the credit markets stabilize and housing situation recovers, but said "nobody knows" how long or deep the recession is going to be.



NBT Bancorp executive management team members (clockwise from top left): Jeffrey Levy, Martin Dietrich, Catherine Scarlett, Michael Chewens, Joseph Stagliano and David Raven.

The executive told business and community leaders gathering for the company's annual holiday Business After Hours event in December that businesses must always "adjust your sails" to ride out the turbulent times.

Management's mission is to aggressively maintain a conservative banking strategy and to invest in the future each year. The company continues to grow by emphasizing customer service, high quality offerings and a commitment to remaining independent.

"Growth is always a risk, but we have a fiduciary responsibility to our stockholders to stay strong," he said. "Typically, it's the weak banks that are taken over. We always have things coming

on line that we did two to three years ago. We earn the right to stay independent through our strong performance."

This year, the bank opened two branches in Glens Falls and hired 18 employees. Plans are for a third branch there.

The bank also began renovating office space across from headquarters in the former Hamilton House, further expanding its investment in downtown Norwich. The offices will be occupied by the bank's Managed Assets Department, which represents about 25 employees.

"We were growing at a pace where we were running out of space," Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer Joseph

Stagliano said about the bank's two office buildings on either side of Broad Street. The executive said the move would "open up opportunities" for the bank's continued growth.

Most recently, NBT opened at a new location on Hawley Street in downtown Binghamton.

Fulfilling a long-term objective to be less dependent on margin income, the bank acquired Mang Insurance Agency LLC last year. With many of the insurance broker's offices located in cities where NBT already had a presence, Chief Executive Officer Rick Mirabito said the transition has been "natural."

"We are so pleased and proud to be a part of the NBT team. The transition has gone

very smoothly for both our executive team and employees. The team at NBT has been very welcoming.

"We are happy to be able to contribute to the non-interest income of the bank through our insurance operations," said Mirabito.

Though he wouldn't say specifically where it would invest in 2009, Dietrich said the bank would continue to "lay pipe for the future."

Dietrich, who became chief executive officer in 2004, puts a lot of miles on his car, spending about half of his time outside of the county's seat. He is an active member of the New York Bankers Association, recognized as the most powerful bank trading group in the country, and the New York State Independent Banking Association.

As for the future of Chenango County, Dietrich said it is important for elected officials to invest in economic development that will stimulate the tax base. While he said the county's leaders have "done a great job" managing and budgeting with what they have, the strategy should be beyond sustaining.

"As far as the bank's role in the community, we are trying to lead by example. We've been very successful by taking an offensive mindset and investing in the future.

"It's very important that Norwich be viewed as a great place to have a career. We need to attract and retain quality talent who want to move here to live and work at the bank," he said.

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- People who care about providing quality service.

Our Area of Service...

Reese-Marshall Co. Inc.'s office and storage facility is located on County Road 32, in Norwich. Our service area extends to Norwich and the following areas:

- Oxford - McDonough - Guilford - Preston
- Mt. Upton - Gilbertsville - Morris
- South New Berlin - New Berlin - Edmeston
- South Edmeston - West Edmeston - Pittsfield
- Sherburne - North Norwich - Earlville - Columbus - Smyrna
- Otselec - South Otselec - Pitcher - Plymouth

REESE-MARSHALL OIL COMPANY

We make warm friends, Est. 1942



6254 County Road 32, Norwich, N.Y. 13815

PHONE: (607) 334-3633

Nights, Sundays & Holidays (607) 334-7970

www.reesemarshall.com • email: reesemarshal@roadrunner.com

heatny.com