



Chenango County Farm Bureau earns awards.

Progress Chenango

08

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Nightlife Roundup: Local bars liven things up with music, drinks, and food



By CAMERON TURNER
Sun Sports Editor

The Stadium

Oxford's premier sports bar

A crowd gathers in Oxford every Thursday afternoon – this crowd is forming to celebrate the near end of the work-week and to grab some wings right at the center of Oxford, at The Stadium.

This special menu on Thursday evenings at The Stadium from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. where their famous wings are only \$7 per dozen in house, is simply one of many popular attractions the establishment has implemented over the years.

The Stadium, owned and operated by Dave Shull for the past 11 years, and located right at the heart of small downtown Oxford at 1 Main Street, has emerged into the local community as much more than it once was.

“Starting out just as a sports bar that didn’t serve food, we’ve evolved into a family friendly restaurant that offers a full menu,” said Rebecca Walling, General Manager at The Stadium. “The Stadium is what Dave stands for. He is one of the most hardworking and selfless people I know. Always willing to lend a helping hand anyway he can. We have an absolutely amazing staff including Roger (Bennett) who has been with us since the doors opened, Nick (Cole), our kitchen manager, and myself, the General Manager. Our staff, including the servers, busers, and cooks are the best around, and help The Stadium uphold our

Submitted Photo

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Above is the interior of The Stadium in Oxford.

Chenango County Farm Bureau represents America

By MICHAELA WATTS
Sun Staff Writer

The year of 2016 has proven that the Chenango County Farm Bureau (CCFB) – a grassroots organization – continues to serve the community, to provide farmers with legislative support, in turn promoting educational programs, and assisting with other services that help strengthen the agricultural industry.

Despite the economical hardship of the milk industry and other growth and revenue of agricultural products, the CCFB has had a successful year with receiving

all seven Silver Keys – the AFBF County Activity of Excellence Award – from the American Farm Bureau Federation and the Presidential Leadership Award. Each year the New York farm Bureau recognizes various county farm bureaus for attending outstanding achievements by involving leaders and members in said programs that serve agriculture.

“The Farm Bureau is a part of many things that not a lot of people know about” said CCFB President Bradd Vickers. “We’re a grassroots organization that

implements policies, education, and agriculture, but the Bureau is also involved with animal disaster rescue and relief, recycling, outdoor wood boilers, solar issues, oil and gas leasing; pipeline, watershed, fencing laws, veterans and farmers alliance, “rural road safety” and more, along with finding renewable resources such as oil seed crops.”

While the CCFB office’s continue to meet with government legislators to discuss what efforts can be made to improve the wildlife, dairy, the Bee industry. Education remains another main

focus among the leaders of the bureau.

“A lot of what we do is education”, said Vickers. “I think it is important not only do students know about agriculture from the many programs provided in schools but also for adults to know about the many products grown and distributed locally. The country’s feed supply is cutting into our pockets and how customers do not have the ability to buy american made products.”

When CCFB is not teaching students the importance of agriculture or implementing policies

to legislators, Vickers is actively involved within the community. In 2016, the CCFB participated in Ag Literacy Day where new CCFB books were read and distributed to children in several grades including head-start. The Ag day celebration was held at the North East Classic Car Museum – as the group also attended dairy days, Ag awareness day at the fair, and participated with other agencies for the ‘farm to fork’ event held at the Chenango County Fair.

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County nightlife –

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name.”

Walling insisted that the location of The Stadium, as well as the service provided and special events is what truly allows their customers a place they enjoy coming back to on a regular basis.

“Because we are located in the heart of Oxford on 1 Main Street, we are able to target several different demographics. We cater to our local customers, as well as customers from the Broome County region that are passing through on Route 12,” said Walling. “Our food quality, and dedication to our customers to make sure they are completely happy with their visit is what helps us stand out. Our customer service is one of the best and can’t go unnoticed.”

The Stadium currently employs approximately 15 individuals – as these familiar faces work tirelessly during business hours and beyond to accommodate their customers. The Stadium is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. until at least 11 p.m., and Sunday 12 p.m. until at least 11 p.m. – as it was made known that the staff is willing to keep the doors open longer to accommodate for any sports games or special events that might be happening on any given night.

“At The Stadium, our surrounding communities and the people in them, are important to us. We greatly appreciate our dedicated customers and enjoy bringing in new ones as well, and we like

to give back and support in any way we can. From donating a portion of our sales, to sponsoring sports teams and school drama clubs, we truly understand the bond of small communities,” said Walling. “Our target crowd has also evolved along with us throughout the years. Because we are now more of a family friendly restaurant, we enjoy hosting a dinner crowd. We like to keep our doors open until 11 p.m. every night of the week to allow for people with busy schedules to enjoy a nice meal, even late. We also like to host special events. We’ve celebrated first birthdays, baby showers, bridal showers, retirement parties, anniversary get-togethers and many more. We certainly enjoy making someone’s special day, very special.”

Some other popular special events that The Stadium has hosted or regularly holds for their customers is the ever-popular Trivia Night which is every Monday night from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m., with many drinks specials and prizes every week to go along. The Stadium also hosts occasional Give Back Night’s which Walling noted is one of her favorite events offered. A Give Back Night is essentially an event where The Stadium holds true to their allegiance to the community, giving back 20 percent of the sales to a particular organization, club, or just someone in the local community in need.

“What makes The Stadium stand out from the rest is our customer service from our

staff. Making sure each and every customer is satisfied leaving our restaurant. It is very important to us that we try to remember each and every customer in hopes of them returning for another great experience and hopefully it is comforting for them to see a familiar face with our low turn over. Our staff stays very stable and we have become a very tight knit family,” said Walling before adding some outlook into 2017, ““Because we were the original sports bar in the area offering the very best in food and all sporting entertainment, we are excited to uphold those expectations each year that follows. 2016 was a great year for us and we are looking forward to 2017. We are looking into doing some remodeling in the future with some new looks, new food ideas and new events.”

Broad Street Tavern

Consistency is key for the Broad Street Tavern

Nestled into the many buildings along North Broad Street in the City of Norwich – The Broad Street Tavern prides themselves on bringing back their familiar crowd while always holding an inviting atmosphere for newcomers.

“The Tavern’ as it is better known, located at 29 North Broad Street, is owned and operated by Dan Palmer who bought the establishment some 12 years ago. Since the local bar was purchased by Palmer in 2004, the establish-



Submitted Photo

Above is the interior of The Broad Street Tavern.

ment has been remodeled and the offers a unique atmosphere for their steadfast customers.

The Tavern employs approximately four to five employees on any given week – depending on the week and the business of said week – these employees not only sling cold beverages regularly, but offer up their services in the kitchen. The Tavern, which is open from 12 p.m. until 1 a.m. during the week, and from 12 p.m. until 3 a.m. on the weekends – offers their customers much more than just a place to drink. The Tavern boasts their around-the-clock, small bar menu including the option of wings.

“We have bar food open to close. I don’t know any other bars or restaurants that are open past 10 or 11 at night. You can eat wings at 1 a.m. if you want,” said co-owner, Erin McNeil. “My favorite

thing is it has a neighborhood feel, everybody knows everybody, and everybody is welcome.”

Every week – along with their around-the-clock bar food menu – The Tavern offers all their customers a discount on Wednesday night’s where all cans are \$1.50; as well as a Thursday evening wing night special where a dozen wings costs only \$6 with well drinks priced at \$2.

The Tavern building itself boasts some history, as the building has been a bar for more than six decades according to McNeil, and with that age in 2017 the Tavern has improved their offerings to their crowd over the years. With weekends and the summertime months being the admittedly busiest times of the year due to music in the park events – McNeil has said that there is a con-

stant flow of business due to their ever-ready to be used pool, indoor corn hole, darts, and ping pong set up inside – with a DJ every Friday night.

“We get out-of-towners’ all the time from the hotel, and sometimes they’re here for months on end. These people, they end up staying and getting to know us, and sometimes even coming to Thanksgiving,” said McNeil. “It’s just a place where we have our regulars, but you can come in a stranger and leave as a friend.”

McNeil said that The Tavern is always open to hosting fundraiser events, saying they have hosted such events in the past, and implores people to reach out to The Tavern if interested in having an event held at the location in the future.

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The Ontario Hotel, Rita's –



Grady Thompson Photo

Above is the exterior of The Ontario Hotel.

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The Ontario Hotel

Treating staff and customers like family

Norwich's Ontario Hotel remains steadfast in their approach to business – a business that has existed and thrived in the community for well over 100 years.

Cynthia Thompson remains the head of the establishment as owner of the Ontario Hotel for nearly 20 years – while notably being an employee at the establishment for 13 years prior to her ownership. Currently, The Ontario Hotel and Thompson employ approximately 13 individuals on their staff – which according to Thompson are an integral part of the day-to-day process.

“The employees are such an important part of this place. Most of them have been here long-term, one has been here 32 years,” said Thompson. “I think that is a good thing to note, they are all like family and most places don't have such long-term employees, I am very proud of that. I have to give my people some recognition, they're the ones who make it for me.”

Thompson and her unfaltering group of employees cater to the many needs of those they serve in the Norwich community during their weekly restaurant business hours of 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., and 4 p.m. until 8:30

p.m. The bar scene at The Ontario offers up hours of service from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. weekly.

“The people, and the customers are my favorite, they become like family to you,” said Thompson. “We are sticking with what is working. It's an old local place, and it's a place where people don't seem to want a lot of change. We offer different foods and menu's, but basically we stay with what is working.”

The Ontario's famous chicken is a front-runner on their ever-inviting menu in the restaurant – as this chicken is often featured as a mainstay in many school banquets and functions. Thompson explained that their full restaurant menu – including the Ontario Burgers, and Wings – offer a true home-cooked feel.

“Good ole' home-cooked food. You get to know their likes and dislike, and their families,” said Thompson of her customers. “We do a lot of catering, and I save my dining room on Sunday for private parties.”

The Ontario Hotel is known for their catering, as well as above mentioned school banquets, along with the occasional benefit dinners for various groups throughout the year.

Although the staff stays busy year-round with the various aspects that the down-to-earth establishment offers, Thompson admittedly explained that Friday remains

the busiest day of the week; while the summer and autumn seasons typically bring in a busier load of work on both the bar and restaurant.

“The weather is nicer and we're moving right into Thanksgiving. I had a lot of Thanksgiving dinners going out, people loved our turkey this year,” said Thompson before adding. “I appreciate all my customers, people seem to come back and remember me. People have a lot of memories here and they come back and tell us, people come from all over even out of town like Greene, Oxford and Sherburne, they seem to come back.”

The Ontario Hotel is quietly located at 22 West Midland Drive in the City of Norwich, a place they intend to stay for many years to come – upholding their hometown feel while offering their home-cooked meals.

Rita's

Norwich's nightlife capital

The nightlife hotspot – Rita's – located in the City of Norwich at 15 Lackawanna Ave – offers their many customers a place to go whether it be day or night, as there will always be something happening at the establishment.

Rita's has been co-owned by Mike Hayes and Adam Bosworth for four years this coming spring of 2017. However, Bosworth

explained that the history of Rita's dates back much further than 2013, as Rita's has been a bar in Norwich, and at the same location, since at least 1,888.

“We are probably one of the longest continuously running businesses in Norwich,” said Bosworth. “We have pictures from 1,888 and it had been a bar for a while back then even.”

Despite the rich and long history of Rita's, the team of Hayes and Bosworth has undoubtedly extended the history into now the year 2017. The nightlife capital of downtown Norwich, Rita's treats its many customers to some of the areas top-notch entertainment each and every weekend.

“We are pretty much busy every Friday and Saturday no matter what. We are pretty much full every Friday and Saturday night,” said Bosworth. “But Thanksgiving weekend is the busiest bar weekend of the year.”

Despite the constant flow of people in the community looking to enjoy some weekend fun, Bosworth explained that the day crowd at Rita's is another staple to the establishment.

“I would say we are the busiest bar during the day in the county,” said Bosworth.

Rita's and the staff of approximately a dozen employees open the doors to the public every morning at 11 a.m. throughout the week

– including Sunday's. This accessibility to the public on any given day, gives the public a chance to go out no matter what the occasion. During the week the bar admittedly shuts down slightly earlier than the weekends – closing at 1 a.m. – while staying open until 3 a.m. on the weekends.

Bosworth explained that Rita's offers a DJ service every Friday night for people to enjoy, as well a band every Saturday night – allowing the customers to know a set schedule of what to expect for the specific nights festivities.

“Most of our bands are central New York based bands. We have had a couple national acts during the Blues Fest and whatnot. And this year (2017) we will try to get two of the main-stage acts for that Friday and Saturday nights (Blues Fest Weekend),” said Bosworth. “We have a top-notch sound system, and our light system is far above anybody else in town. The patio area out back, that is probably the number one thing that sets us apart. The ability to take your drinks out back and go have a smoke. Most of the times during the summer the outback is busier than inside the bar.”

Using the outback lounge-type area during the summer months, Rita's has recently implemented a summer corn-hole tournament. While every Sunday, a pool tournament is held – starting at 6 p.m. roughly.

“We try and do as much as

we can to keep people entertained, besides just alcohol,” said Bosworth.

Bosworth noted that Rita's looks to openly give back and help the community that enjoys and helps them – as this past year in November of 2016, the staff of Rita's held a benefit for Veterans. Money was raised from the event and a care package was sent to the troops stationed in Afghanistan.

“We are pretty lucky to have the staff that we do. Everyone has a great heart, our staff is pretty top-notch,” said Bosworth.

Along with providing the people of Norwich a steady place to enjoy their weekends, Bosworth explained that himself, Hayes, and the staff of Rita's are looking forward to their coming Earth Day Celebration in the near future – as their next big event that is planned.

Bosworth explained that this benefit is part of what Rita's is all about, and that specifically the Earth Day benefit will go toward helping the local Youth Bureau. Bosworth and Hayes are looking forward to May 27, 2017 when they invite all who wish to stop into Rita's to enjoy the benefit to help support local youth sporting events – all proceeds will go to help fund the Youth Bureau.

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Cameron Turner Photo

The exterior of Rita's.



Grady Thompson Photo

Above is the original liquor license still hanging on the wall of the Ontario.



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Check section nine of Progress Chenango for the full story on the Business Improvement District.

Chenango County Farm Bureau earns awards –



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Bradd and wife Rainy Collins-Vickers being awarded the AFBF County Activities of Excellence (CAE) Awards.

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Other local events that the CCFB was involved with was the annual summer 'Bike Night' at Gilligan's where the CCFB promoted a venison donation program, and held several meetings on solar energy, a number of other energy saving programs.

The CCFB will continue

its efforts in serving the community in 2017, promoting educational programs, and strengthening the agricultural industry. As the CCFB progresses on through the coming year, they hope to address industry improvements, while adding that action must be taken in many other areas of need.

"New efforts to protect and

educate the public regarding wildlife and forestry is a concerning issue that should be addressed. The CCFB doesn't just represent farmers but America as a whole," said Vickers.

Success Story Dr. Graber

William A. Graber, MD, PC is a weight loss surgery practice with over 14 years experience serving the healthcare needs of thousands throughout Central and Upstate New York. This past year the practice realized many achievements that have grown to be a great source of pride for all staff and the community. One such shining moment was the initiation of Dr. January A. Hill as a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. In October 2016, Dr. Hill joined 1,823 Initiates from around the world who became Fellows during the Convocation ceremony at the American College of Surgeons (ACS) 2016 annual Clinical Congress in Washington, DC. This year's class of Initiates was among one of the largest ever admitted into the College. This Fellowship recognizes Dr. Hill's advance surgical technique and experience, as well as ethical fitness and professional proficiency. The ACS is a scientific and educational organization of surgeons founded in 1913 to raise the standards of surgical practice and to improve the quality of care for the surgical patient.

Another moment to highlight is the achievement of helping 1000 people suffering from the disease of obesity take a great step toward better health this year, and overall William A. Graber, MD, PC has performed over 7,000 life changing weight loss and metabolic procedures since 2002. These procedures include the gastric bypass, gastric sleeve, and revisional bariatric surgeries. They remain one of the most experienced bariatric surgery practices in all of New York State, with an impressive and dedicated team of caregivers- bariatric surgeons, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, certified bariatric nurses and many more talented staff devoted to the task of caring for the weight loss/metabolic surgery patient.

This year, William A. Graber, MD, PC's programs at both St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center in Syracuse, NY and Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica, NY continue as accredited centers by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP). The MBSAQIP standards ensure that weight loss and metabolic surgery patients receive a multidisciplinary program, not just a surgical procedure, which improves patient outcomes and long-term success.

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Four years ago in the Hamilton location, S&S TV and Appliances added 4000 square foot addition. Included in this area is a brand new high efficient laundromat. All machines are new and made by Electolux. There are plenty of 60lbs and 45lbs washers to handle any laundry needs. With a larger show room and a full line up of parts and major appliances, S&S TV and Appliances continues to increase their presence as both a leading appliance dealer and service provider in Madison and Chenango Counties.

Having added field experts and a wide selection behind their parts counter—they also have a working team of 13. Between sales, service, and office administrators

Reminder: S&S TV and Appliances also boasts the area's only full service television sales and repair center, with over 40 years of technical experience. At the start of 2017, the coming year looks to be as busy as 2016. S&S is proud to be a leading partner with Energy Star, and offers the most energy efficient refrigerators, front and top loading washing machines, dishwashers, and televisions available. As more details about the rebate emerge, the knowledgeable staff at S&S TV and Appliances will be happy to answer an question about the program and ensure that their customers make the smartest choice when purchasing their next energy appliance or TV.

S&S TV and Appliances would like to thank the community and their loyal customers for the continued support and patronage. Looking toward the future, they are proud to be making Progress in Chenango County, and are confident that their success will carry on for years to come. Thank You! Tom & Joan Brauer.



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Nightlife –

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The Blarney Stone Pub

Where everybody knows your name

Better known to the customers as 'The Pub', the Blarney Stone Pub located at 26 South Broad Street in the City of Norwich offers a comfortable place for all to go and enjoy.

"It's a little hometown bar with a 'Cheers' feel. We have a pub family," said owner Sarah Woods.

The Pub was bought by Woods in 2007 and since then has been a staple in the Norwich community nightlife. Shortly after buying the bar, Woods and her staff were honored with an excellence in business award from the SBA (small business association), something Woods has tried to hold close as the business strives – and does – meet such standards.

"It's pretty great to know that you're doing something right. We couldn't do it without our amazing staff, they're really the ones that make it all possible," said Woods of her three employees on staff.

4 p.m. is the magical hour that The Pub opens their doors to the public each and every day, excluding Sunday's. Depending on the day, what is offered to the customers can vary quite a bit.

"Norwich is such a great community, and we love being a part of the events that are put on. We've worked closely with The Chenango blues festival each year, kind of hosting the after hours party. The Pumpkin Festival started a pub crawl a few years ago, and it's been fun



Submitted Photo

The interior of The Blarney Stone Pub.

being a part of that. One really cool thing is that the SPCA's annual fundraiser, Woodstock, has always taken place at the Blarney Stone. It's a great day of fun, food, and music for a great cause. The bands all donate their time, and everyone comes together to raise some money for our four-legged friends," said Woods.

Although the Pub is involved in a great deal of community events, what truly is their attraction night after night is their selection of live bands – which they present on a small stage for the whole bar to see. The Pub offers a weekend schedule of live bands ranging from local artists to statewide bands – while also holding an open mic night every other Thursday evening – true hits when it comes to the Norwich crowd which lines the establishment to see said bands.

"Our stage has seen a lot of talented music from bands all across the region, but we really like when the locals get up there and play," said Woods.

The Pub also likes to twist some things up when one would think of a traditional

Irish Pub, as they hold a weekly – Tuesday night – Trivia night, while also having implemented a Taco Night every Wednesday, from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m.

"Every Tuesday is Trivia Night, teams come in to try and 'out smart' each other, and have some laughs," said Woods. "And Wednesday's our Irish pub turns a little Mexican. Whoever would have thought, but it's a hit. People love coming in for Margaritas and some spicy food."

Open from 4 p.m. until 1 a.m. during the week, and from 4 p.m. until 2 a.m. on the weekends, Woods and her staff look forward to many more successful nights – providing for a community they truly enjoy being a part of. Looking forward into 2017, Woods has shared that The Pub has been wanting to expand their kitchen for a while – to offer more than just Taco Night.

"We'd like to offer a full menu, and to be open for lunch," said Woods. "Maybe 2017 will be our year, we'll keep you posted."

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