

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2018

Success Story

Chenango Blues Fest Celebrates Silver

In 2017 the Chenango Blues Association celebrated its twenty-fifth year in style. Over the years the group has grown from an afternoon event with four bands and two hundred attendees to a presenting organization that does a dozen concerts, workshops and the Chenango Blues Festival.

Last year close to 15,000 people enjoyed great musical performances by artists from a wide range of genres, and almost all the concerts are free to all. Whether it was the North Mississippi All-Stars with John Medeski at the fairgrounds, or Terrance Simien in the East Side Park- there was something for everyone.

The all-volunteer group is always grateful to the many businesses, individuals, and foundations that make the work they do possible. If it weren't for generous supporters like NBT Bank, The Greater Norwich Foundation and the R.C. Smith Foundation there couldn't be Free Thursdays in the Park concerts. The Chenango Blues Festival relies on over 75 contributors including Preferred Mutual, Kerry Inc., Rentals To Go, Nelson and Flanagan, Loral Management and the Pennysaver and Evening Sun. All these donors and many others make a huge contribution to our local culture and quality of life. They are what makes Chenango County a great place to live and work.

2018 is shaping up to be another banner year with artists already being booked, and a special Free Thursday concert set to be announced soon.

Information on all the group's activities can be found at www.chenangobluesfest.org. Make your plans now to hear some of the best national touring musicians perform right in downtown Norwich!



South New Berlin Lab expands with hiring boost

By GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun



Scientists hard at work at PharmAssist Analytical Laboratory, Inc. in South New Berlin.

SOUTH NEW BERLIN – After mostly flying under the radar in the area for nearly 30 years, PharmAssist Analytical Laboratory, Inc. in South New Berlin had itself a lively 2017 that included increasing its employee base by 57 percent.

Founded in 1989 by its Chief Scientific Officer Richard Hartwick, Ph.D., and President Kathleen Stith, PharmAssist named Jeffrey Evans, Ph.D., as its Chief Executive Officer in 2016, and it has since begun “putting the pedal to the floor.”

“We more than doubled our employee base in the last, little over a year, and we’re continuing to grow,” said Evans, adding that roughly three quarters of PharmAssist’s employees are based in Chenango

Continued on Page 16

Bartle's Pharmacy looks ahead as schools change insurance

By GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun

OXFORD – After enduring what was a rough year for virtually all local pharmacies in 2017, Bartle's Pharmacy Inc. in Oxford is looking ahead in 2018 to doing all it can to continue to provide its patients with convenient and expanded care services.

“I think the biggest major development for community pharmacies [in 2017] was the local school districts going mandatory mail-order [prescriptions] and the negative impact that has had on the community,” said co-owner of Bartle's Pharmacy, Heather Bartle.

Referring to local school districts and municipalities that

receive health insurance coverage through NY44 Health Trust, Bartle said as of July 1, 2017, employees at DCMO BOCES, Oxford Academy and Central Schools, Norwich City Schools, Bainbridge-Guilford Central School, Gilbertsville-Mount Upton Central School, and Otselec Valley Central School and their dependents have been forced to mail-order

their long term maintenance medications, or their insurance does not cover it.

“They can come to us for antibiotics and urgent needs, but they can no longer use our pharmacy for maintenance medications,” said Bartle. “At Oxford [Academy and Central Schools] alone, about 650

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(L-R) Bartle's Pharmacy employees Dan Woodford, Mike Doscher, owner Brian Bartle, Danielle Ostrander, Lauren Clemens, and David Borchardt. (Grady Thompson photo)

PharmAssist Analytical -

Continued from Page 1

County. "And we're having a ball growing into this building."

After moving into what was formerly the old South New Berlin school building located at 3392 NY Route 8 in South New Berlin in 2003, PharmAssist has since been in the process of renovating the building to fit the company's needs as a knowledge producing organization.

"We develop science around how to determine the safety of drugs," said Evans. "Our customers really rely on us. We don't need to do a lot of marketing—we negotiate with our existing customers to do more work."

PharmAssist is a net-wealth generating company, meaning more than 95 percent of its revenues come from outside the area, according to Evans, and over 50 percent of its revenues come from outside of the United States.

"In this age we can be located here in Upstate New York, deliver solid science, and impact the whole world," said Evans.

Considering itself a generally flat organization comprised of scientists, Evans said the first thing they do when a program comes in is developing an analytical methodology of the given product.

"Usually there's no known methods when the material comes in: it's a white powder in a bottle, the customer will say, 'We know this works,' and they'll tell us what it is," said Evans.

"Once we figure that out, we start working with a customer, and the FDA requires for patients that we have a really good knowledge of the drug's stability," said Evans.

After that, Evans said a drug performance group will take the product to dissolution testing, where they determine where a drug should dissolve in a patient's body, and how that will impact a patient.

The final thing those at PharmAssist do is release testing, where they are the authority that determines whether a drug should be sent to the market for pharmacies to administer to patients or not.

"It's a very powerful and important role," said Evans.

"In this age we can be located here in Upstate New York, deliver solid science, and impact the whole world,"
said Evans.



Founder and Chief Scientific Officer of PharmAssist Dr. Richard Hawkins gives a guest presentation at SUNY Oswego. (Submitted photo)

"I remind my guys everyday, 'If you have a bad day, you're going to give somebody a much worse day. Any errors you make could directly impact the next guy's life.'"

To ensure that that doesn't happen, Evans said PharmAssist mandates extensive checks throughout the entire process.

"We'll have an analyst run the assays, we'll have a peer review and recalculate everything that they did, and

then we'll pass that onto our quality assurance group, who will check it all again," said Evans. "Everything gets triple-checked, we take it really seriously."

Asked if it's a challenge to find qualified staff in the area, Evans said it's not a challenge at all, citing a number of prestigious universities that produce scientists within a 100-mile radius of South New Berlin.

"I think our challenge as a company, up until recent-

ly, has been that not many people know about us," said Evans. "So for the last year we've really focused on getting to the kids."

Evans said PharmAssist's employees range from those with Ph.D.s to those with high school diplomas and a passion for science.

"We have taken high school diplomas and invested in those individuals' educations and pushed them forward to Bachelor's degrees,"

said Evans. "We invest very heavily in our employees."

As a means of reaching aspiring scientists, Evans said he and Hartwick have taken to presenting at universities and giving guest lectures.

"Some cool messages that we deliver are the diseases we impact are huge," said Evans. "When a kid comes in and interviews with me, I want to hear from them what problem in the world they want to solve. And if their answer aligns



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with my path, they have a job.”

Evans said one disease the scientists at PharmAssist have impacted is Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

“It’s a death sentence,” said Evans. “It kills three boys a day. 1,000 people get it a year, and they’re all dead by the time they’re 18. I got a group of guys here that are pushing a drug forward that’s halting the progress of that disease. Not curing it, but, they come into work and they’re all pumped up and these guys are working on adrenaline.”

“How do we help this customer get this drug to patients as quickly as possible? It is

kind of a scary thing, you can’t waste time with that. Every day we lose, we lose three kids.”

Locally, PharmAssist is involved in the Pathway program at Oxford Academy and Central Schools by helping them develop laboratory experiments, with the help of Cornell University and Blueox Energy.

Evans said Oxford educator and scientist Mark Muller has taken on an important role of inspiring his students with science through the Pathway program, and that Superintendent Shawn Bissetta continues to support the school’s efforts.

“What they’ve been

doing at Oxford Academy is awesome, but more importantly what they’re doing is designed to flow into all other school districts,” said Evans. “They’re leaders there and they’re really open to sharing.”

Another way PharmAssist has been able to reach aspiring scientists is through the use of internships.

“I view our organization, our company, as a knowledge producing company,” said Evans. “We produce knowledge about the physical characteristics and the physical performance of drug substances and products.”

“We’re based in this school, the chalkboards are

going back up—we’re a knowledge center. Obviously the internship programs are about producing scientists, guys that are going to create knowledge.”

Evans recalled one intern from SUNY Oswego who interned at PharmAssist for the 2017 spring semester. After the intern excelled in the company, the intern was offered a job, but subsequently declined because he had trouble finding affordable housing in the area.

Consequently, PharmAssist has purchased a property in the City of Norwich at 61-63 South Broad Street called PharmAssist House, thus providing it a means of

temporarily housing employees as they assimilate into the area.

“We are a business that’s growing,” said Evans. “That house is going to be, not a landing spot, but a temporary holding spot to assimilate people into the Norwich community.”

“It’s going to be very attractive to the city over time, and it helps us too because we love our location here in South New Berlin, and to have a community like Norwich as an option for our employees is awesome.”

Asked if there’s anything local government can do to help support the growth of PharmAssist, Evans said that

a lack of cell phone service in the area – as well as relatively slow internet speeds – has hindered the company in the past.

Evans said PharmAssist uses both Frontier and Spectrum services to ensure their internet is never fully down, but that even still, the speed and reliability of local internet shows room for improvement.

Looking ahead to 2018, Evans said it’s safe to say PharmAssist will continue growing at a steady pace.

“My goal is not to be ultimately the biggest company in Chenango County, but to be viewed as the best company to work for.”

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More information on *The Great Race* is available on our website www.classiccarmuseum.org or at www.greatrace.com.
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Bartle's Pharmacy -

Continued from Page 15

patients between active employees and their dependents can no longer use a local pharmacy for long term medications."

Asked if it negatively affected the revenue generated by Bartle's Pharmacy in 2017, Bartle said, "Absolutely."

Bartle said it's likely schools have contracted with NY44 Health Trust because they have been promised savings.

"So [insurance companies] are securing business

for themselves in essence under the pretense that it's cost-saving, but they don't provide you numbers that they can actually validate cost-savings," said Bartle.

Consequently, Bartle said several Oxford school employees have rallied around the pharmacy to change the school district's health insurance coverage.

"We're very fortunate and blessed to be in the Oxford community," said Bartle. "We've had the community rally around us. We've actually picked up some new patients because

they're concerned—if you don't use your [locally owned business], you lose it."

Bartle said Oxford Academy & Central Schools Superintendent Shawn Bissetta has since provided 12 months notice to the insurance company that it would not be extending its contract with NY44 Health Trust.

"Oxford's Superintendent Shawn Bissetta has worked to hopefully get things back so that the mandatory mail-order restriction is lifted," said Bartle. "They're locked in until July



Bartle's Pharmacy located at 10 Lafayette Park in Oxford. (Grady Thompson photo)

2018, but we're hopeful that then we'll be able to welcome back all those patients that we've lost."

Since it was founded in 1963 by Heather's parents, Brian and Linda, Bartle's Pharmacy has been a staple in the heart of Oxford at its 10 Lafayette Park location.

55 years later, despite dealing with dilemmas like the mandatory mail-order maintenance medications, Bartle said they are constantly thinking of ways to be innovative with their services by offering new services, like its medication-synchronization program, and by participating in a CPENS network with two other independently owned pharmacies in New York.

"We have a very large medication-synchronization program where we coordinate people's medications and they only come once [a month] to pick up everything."

"We're trying to be very progressive in our thinking," said Bartle. "We have a very large medication-synchronization program where we coordinate people's medications and they only come once [a month] to pick up everything."

"It's a great program for everybody, both the patient and us, because it allows us to shift our workflow. It helps patients with convenience, not so many trips to the pharmacy, it helps them with compliance, helps us close the loop with their

ordering provider."

Bartle said the medication-synchronization program was newly implemented in 2017 at the pharmacy and it has already proven to be a big success, allowing the pharmacy to plan ahead when people pick-up their prescriptions, so that they aren't inundated with patients the day before a winter storm or a holiday.

As for its role in a CPENS network, Bartle said in 2018, Bartle's Pharmacy's is participating in a network of independently owned community pharmacists that offer expanded care services that you wouldn't find in a typical pharmacy.

As a result of its participation, Bartle's Pharmacy will have more frequent insurance referrals in 2018 because of its amped standards of care.

"Insurance companies obviously realize that pharmacy is a huge expense to them, and so if we can justify the cost by keeping patients from being re-admitted to a hospital or emergency room, we have earned our own keep per-say," said Bartle.

Bartle said that for every dollar spent on pharmaceutical care, three dollars are saved down the line.

"We're looking to be able to save the overall system, but bottom line provide our patients with better care," said Bartle.

Employing 16 individ-

uals between part-time and full-time staff, Bartle said the pharmacy employs people of all education levels, and all of their employees are from the greater-Oxford area.

"We have a couple high school students and a few students who have gone on to pharmacy school," said Bartle. "We make it a point to always have a high school student on our staff—everybody needs a chance, a place to have a first job."

Strides forward and backward aside, Bartle expressed her gratitude to the Oxford community for its support of the pharmacy over the last 50-plus years, and, in particular, over the last year.

"We're very blessed," said Bartle. "I think we have a good community presence and a good patient population. The community has supported us throughout our 50-plus years in Oxford and I hope that would continue."

Asked if there's anything the village could do to support the pharmacy in the future, Bartle said, "Unfortunately the Village of Oxford has also used a mandatory mail-order. It's unfortunate that local municipality is using a company that mandates mail ordered maintenance medications, I wish the village would re-consider that."

"I hope more people take the attitude of sort of, 'Use us or lose us,'" said Bartle. "If you like your community and you like it the way it is and you don't like empty buildings and storefronts, support them."

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In Your Own Words

City of Norwich Mayor Christine Carnrike

Mayor of the City of Norwich brings with it the opportunity to work each day overseeing and evaluating City operations while assessing efficiency and performance of activities that will make a difference in restoring our Norwich community.

For the past 2 years, I have been fortunate to collaborate with business, community and elected leaders, at the city, county, state and federal levels, to enhance revenue, control or reduce expenditures and tax burden, while preserving necessary services for today and tomorrow.

A typical weekday for the Mayor includes waking before dawn and arriving home long after the sun has set, while the weekend includes a veritable on-call status, always available by phone or e-mail. Mayor is a part-time position and I maintain a full-time job in the private sector and take pride in serving both entities to the very best of my abilities. Nearly every day in City Hall has been rewarding, whether

it is a small achievement, a minor or significant change in an operation or process, or a one-on-one conversation with department leadership, council members or staff in the Mayor's Office.

I have and maintain an open-door policy and welcome folks to my office to discuss their concerns and questions. When a visitor leaves my office, they do so knowing that I listened attentively, offered guidance, resolution or promise of further investigation.

Not too long ago, a gentleman entered City Hall and asked to speak with the Mayor. We talked for more than an hour and his issue was not something that I could assist with or offer relief from his dissatisfaction (in fact it was a matter totally outside the realm of the Mayor's office). As every citizen counts, along with their perspective, I was able to provide contact information for proper relief. When this gentleman and others like him leave my office, their concerns have been heard – for me this is

rewarding. Hopefully I have made some of these folks' days better, if not a little brighter, merely by taking the time to listen and share a conversation.

It would be unrealistic to expect every day to be a good day, and for those days that are less than ideal, I feel confident that with the City Council's assistance, consideration and direction, we are turning negatives into positives while making the right decisions for the betterment of the City.

I encourage public attendance at monthly meetings with the Joint Committees of Public Works, Public Safety, Finance and Personnel and at regular City Council Meetings respectively scheduled on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held in Council Chambers in City Court, and if unable to make these meetings, the public is also invited to view the City's website www.norwichnewyork.net for meeting agendas, minutes, and budgets, past and present.

As Mayor, I am willing

to put in whatever time is necessary to achieve positive goals for our community. With the Council's cooperation and commitment, our efforts are shifting to a proactive approach rather than reactive.

If you see the light on in the Mayor's Office, be assured the door is open to you. Constructive ideas to restore our Norwich community are welcomed; however, I must caution that the wheels of government may turn slower than expected. Norwich's transformation may take longer than we may like at times, but the results will be worth it – I guarantee it.



City of Norwich Mayor Christine Carnrike

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2018

Success Story

Nazzitto's Wines & Liquors

Still fine after 59! This would make a great catch phrase for Nazzitto's Wines & Liquors as 2018 marks their 59th year in business. Nazzitto's Wines & Liquors is the oldest operating wine and liquor store in Chenango County with the original liquor license dating back to the 1930's. Frank J. Nazzitto moved his family to Norwich in 1950. Frank loved Norwich and felt it would be a great place to raise his nine children (eight girls, one boy).

In 1959 Frank purchased Herman's Liquors Store which was located on American Avenue in Norwich. Frank, along with his wife Grace, ran the small store until 1976.

"We've aged as well as our finest wines," since 1959.

In 1974 he was joined by his son John, and in 1976 they moved the family operation (now known as Nazzitto's Wines & Liquors) to a new downtown plaza anchored by the new A&P Supermarket and new Rite Aid Drug Store. This plaza was located on South Broad Street across from NBT Bank. Nazzitto's remained in this plaza for 25 years until the year 2000 when the A&P Supermarket left Norwich and Rite Aid moved to its new location.

In 2000 John Nazzitto, now the sole owner and operator after Frank's death in 1985, relocated in the Chenango Towne Plaza (Price Chopper Plaza) on Route 12 just South of Norwich. Always expanding their inventory with new wines and spirits Nazzitto's has one of the largest selections anywhere in Chenango County. Nazzitto's features wine and spirit tastings which gives customers the opportunity to "Try before they buy."

When it comes to weddings, graduations, parties or any other celebrations their 59 years of experience is most helpful in choosing the right wines and spirits. Nazzitto's also "Specializes" in "Special" requests, if they do not have the product you want in stock, they will order it for you. Providing the best customer service, having the most knowledgeable and friendly staff, and offering a great selection of wines and spirits is just part of a family tradition that has continued Nazzitto's Wines & Liquors success since 1959.

BID hopes residents feel positive impact

By GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – Since 1986, the Norwich Business Improvement District (BID) has strived to foster an attractive and welcoming business environment in downtown Norwich.

Spearheading a number of community events like the Main Street Sweep, the Memorial Day Weekend Cruise In, Saturdays in the Park with Chobani, and the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony in downtown Norwich, the BID has spent the last 22 years devising ways to contribute to the beautification of the business district, to nurture a neighborly business environment, and to add to the quality of life for greater City of Norwich residents.

"A big focus for us the past year was to revitalize, to formulate a strategic planning session," said BID board president Barbara Fowler. "We want to streamline the BID and focus on bringing more awareness to the community about what we are and what we do."

Comprised of BID administrator Ann Coe, a five person executive committee, nine

board members, and three legacy members, the BID meets monthly with separate sub-committee meetings taking place around meetings.

In addition to Fowler, other executive committee board members include vice president Jamie Gaudreau-Moore, treasurer Pegi LoPresti, secretary Mike McCormack, and former president Michael Hayes.

Currently serving on the BID board are Norwich community members Jeff Genung, Bryan McCracken, Anna McLaughlin, Dinnett Moore, Jill O'Hara, Tyler Oliver, Alecia O'Neill, Isaiah Sutton, and Tom Sutton. Coe said Genung, Moore, and O'Neill are new additions to the board in 2018.

With the exception of Coe, who receives a stipend, all of the BID board members are volunteers.

"We're kind of behind the scenes because everything is volunteer based," said Fowler. "Everyone on the board comes from the local community."

New in 2018, according to Coe, is the implementation of legacy members on the board.

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A photo from the 2017 Tree Lighting Ceremony in downtown Norwich, organized annually by the Norwich Business Improvement District. (Frank Speziale photo)

Artists' Palette offers a world of creation

By HANNAH BENJAMIN
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – The Artists' Palette has experienced success, change and growth in the past year, and owner Jill Kraft says she expects nothing less in the coming year.

"This is my third year in this location, eighth year in business, and this year has been really kind of interesting. The shop has shifted and changed quite a bit," Kraft said. "New this year we've really extended a lot of our programming."

In addition to being owner, instructor and artist at The Artists' Palette, Kraft is also the executive of a non-profit organization established in early 2016 called Creative Works, Inc. It was recently granted 501(c)(3) status and was organized to



Artists' Palette owner Jill Kraft. (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

Continued on Page 25

BID hopes to be more visible –



Back: Norwich BID Director Ann Coe and City of Norwich Mayor Christine Carnrike stand with Santa and Mrs. Claus and eager children at the 2017 Tree Lighting Ceremony. (Frank Speziale photo)

lines we used for the Main Street Sweep, contacted the merchants to see what kind of projects they might need, and they sort of went from there.”

Other ways the BID contributes to the beautification of the business district include organizing the annual Tree Lighting ceremony, Santa’s Igloo, holiday music in the city, choreographing the flower baskets throughout the city, and helping fund property improvements for businesses in the district. Fowler added that the BID pays for snow removal for BID members.

“The BID also offers up \$500 to any property owner if they want help with store signage or an awning,” said Coe. “We can help them with the outside look of their building.”

Fowler said if a business is interested in exterior improvements, they should notify the BID so that Coe can include the specifications in grant applications.

“One thing we’re going to do by the second quarter [of 2018] is send out surveys just so we can open it up to people a bit more: what could we do for you? What are you looking for as far as improving your property, so that if we apply for grants – whether we get them or not – what are you as a local business owner or a tenant in the district looking for?” said Fowler.

“Anything along those lines would be things we are interested in knowing so that the BID can try to spearhead some of those things for them.”

Fowler said a highlight for the BID in 2017 was the fall harvest market, dubbed Saturdays in the Park with Chobani, in its second year running.

“We’ve tried a few different things to revitalize community involvement and bring in that type of event for the parks,” said Fowler. “The first year was successful, but this past year was very, very successful.”

By design, Fowler said the BID planned Saturdays

Continued from Page 21

“Legacy members are assets to the board who contribute but aren’t always able to make it to the meetings,” said Coe. “It allows them to contribute when their schedules allow and also helps when we need to have a quorum.”

The BID legacy members are Todd Dreyer, Patrick Flanagan, and Marylou Stewart.

“We also welcome non-board members to volunteer to serve on our committees,” said Coe.

Coe said the BID exists on an assessment from all the property owners within the business district, and it applies for further fund-

ing at local foundations and through New York State Main Street Grant Funding to help finance its projects.

One of such projects, the Main Street Sweep, is an annual BID initiative in May where volunteers contribute to spring cleaning at businesses and properties within the district. It’s the first of two annual clean-up initiatives the BID is involved in, the second being Alvogen Day in the fall.

“Luke [Murphy, human resources manager at Alvogen] called me a few years ago and told me about Alvogen Day,” said Coe. “It’s like the Main Street Sweep on steroids. They come in with a plan and a team leader for each group, and they do a lot. I gave Luke the guide-

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Norwich residents evaluate their options at a Saturday in the Park with Chobani in Fall 2017. It was Norwich Business Improvement District's second year organizing the fall harvest market, which was considered to be a success by all involved. (Frank Speziale photo)

in the Park with Chobani to take place every Saturday between Colorscape Chenango and the Pumpkin Festival. For six straight Saturdays in 2017, a number of local vendors gathered in Norwich's West Park to offer some of the area's best seasonal items at an event sponsored by Chobani and NBT Bank.

"We think we've created a fall theme for Norwich and we're looking to continue on with that," said Fowler.

Another initiative of BID's that has picked up steam since its implementation is its Blues Bus, which transports hundreds of Chenango Blues Festival campers to downtown Norwich, allowing them to patronize businesses during their stay.

"It was important to get people downtown after they've had a few drinks to see the other bands play at Norwich bars," said Coe. "Last year we hired A&D transport and they shuttled

people back and forth from the fairgrounds to anywhere within the city limits."

Coe said they intend on keeping the Blues Bus going in future years, but they are considering other options, like potentially capitalizing on the growing Uber ride sharing service business if there are enough drivers in the area.

Another tweak that the BID made in 2017 was holding its Commitment to Community Award

Ceremony as a business after-hours at the Wild Owl Cafe as opposed to its typical breakfast event.

Coe said the night was considered a success by all as the BID honored local business owner Dave Shull as its 2017 Commitment to Community recipient, acknowledging the philanthropic duties Shull's businesses continually perform in the community.

Success stories aside, the BID has also encountered its

fair share of obstacles in the city, too, particularly struggling to recruit businesses to the area.

While Coe said it can be a challenge getting businesses to come in to the city and helping businesses remain in the city who are competing with big box companies, Fowler said local figures who are committed to the community are ensuring that the city continues moving forward.

"I think we have some local businesses and employ-

ers that are huge advocates of the local community," said Fowler. "We're a little different than some other deteriorating community and cities because, though it's a struggle and a struggle for all, when you have somebody like NBT Bank, Chobani, Norwich/Sidney Pennysaver, all these organizations that really believe and help promote, donate, and contribute to the area—that type of stuff keeps up thriving and moving forward."

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connections to electronic devices, they have sold and shipped products to all parts of our country, including Alaska. The office systems, being the most up to date available, make online sales and shipping fast and efficient.

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Artists' Palette -

Continued from Page 1

safeguard the valuable programs and expand art expression and education opportunities available to the region.

Kraft says Creative Works controls the individual classes and programs like Art of Me, an expressive art education program designed to meet the needs of the general public as well as specialized audiences. Kraft says the program could benefit children and adolescents with behavioral concerns, those on the autism spectrum, individuals with mental illness and the agencies who provide them care.

"I'm in different nursing homes every month, we do classes for the developmentally disabled, we're really trying to push in with Springbrook and the ARC," said Kraft. "We're trying to open the doors to different groups and individuals with special needs, as well as those without, who are looking for art classes no matter what their skill and technical level is. We do the classes either here or at their location if they can't travel."

The non-profit also has a 60 and over group that meets twice a month called Age of Art, which is their longest running non-profit program. "They can come in and do their own thing, we're taking new participants for that program."

Kraft said, "We have a lot of events, in 2017 we had our Ladies Night Out event and our Witches Night Out event, those were both new."

In addition to the art classes, The Artists' Palette offers yoga with Kelly Smith on Monday nights, has space available for birthday parties, a photography studio, life casting, as well as the art retail and custom framing with Heartwood Frames out of Sherburne.

"We show for 20 different artists right now, anywhere from soaps and jewelry, lighted bottles to painted glass, gourd art, paintings, drawings and everything in between," Kraft said.

The business also offers a Paint N Sip program that

Kraft says is expanding more rapidly. "Instead of just being called Paint N Sip, we now call it Create N Sip because we offer projects with woodworking, glass fusing, knitting and others in addition to the usual painting events."

Since The Artists' Palette is always changing, Kraft says she has always called it a giant work in progress. "You never know

We've really extended a lot of our programming

who's going to walk in and say "hey I do this" or "do you have anyone that does this" so it's really interesting to see how it all shifts and changes. You never know, this time next month we may be onto something completely different."

They are always looking for new and unique instructors to teach community classes and bring more diversity to the art community of Chenango County.

In 2017 The Artists' Palette also added The Cottage Bakery; run by mother-daughter team Jeanne and Kate, and Willow Primitive & Boutique; owned by Tabitha Eccleston who is also an artist and instructor.

Kraft says the two businesses really helps to make the entire building flow really well, and add exciting components to the already unique shop. "All of us work together even though we're our own separate entities," Kraft said. "We really work as a team, if I'm not here they will cover for me just like I will cover for them if they need me, we really work well together."

She says the addition of the other components in the store is a huge help because it's allowing it to grow more than if it was just her.

"People can come in and have a cup of coffee, browse through the items for sale or create something at their own leisure."

Though they are unsure what changes 2018 will bring, Kraft and the owners of the other businesses located within The Artists' Palette are looking forward to them nonetheless.



Art student Catherine Jennings at the Artist's Palette. (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

"We have a brand new program that we're just rolling out in the beginning of this year called Artreach, instead of Outreach, and we're going to try to pair up with the Fire Departments and the Police Departments throughout the county and beyond and really start opening the doors to different specialty groups to come in and do different art."

Kraft would really like to continue building toward the non-profit and adding more instructors. "The increase in instructors is our biggest goal because we'd like to continue to offer really unique programming."

"It's funny because I've always said I just let the shop tell me what to do, I don't dictate what it does I'm not there pulling all the strings, it's really pulling my strings," Kraft said. "It tells me and it shows me, like if something isn't working, we just move on and get into something else. There have been a lot of people that have had a hand in building it and running it, being a part of it and things change, and they go on to different things and the shop shifts and changes."

She says that is one of her favorite parts of The Artists' Palette, that it is

always changing.

The inspiration for The Artists' Palette came 11 years ago when Kraft was trying to buy white paint right before Christmas and asked herself why Norwich didn't have an art store. She also worked at The Evening Sun at the time and was interviewing and highlighting community members and realized there were a

lot of artists who really only had Colorscape to participate in. "It just seemed baffling, we're an art community with no art store."

Though some programs are designed for people who take it very seriously, the majority of our programs are for beginners and people just trying it out.

Kraft said she tries to stay really involved in the

community. "I was born and raised in Norwich, I'm raising my family in Norwich, my Mother was born and raised in Norwich, it's a generational thing really. It's the only home I've ever had. If I'm going to stay, I decided I was going to build something that made me want to stay here. It was definitely a decision that was very easy to make."

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The Artists' Palette has been trying to offer more baked goods going into the new year. (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

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