

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2018

## Success Story

### Rolling Antiquer's Old Car Club

The Rolling Antiquer's Old Car Club (RAOCC) will be holding its 53rd Annual Auto Show during the 2018 Memorial Day weekend. The 29th Muscle Car & Street Rod Show will be on Saturday, May 26th, with the 53rd Annual Antique Auto Show held on Sunday, May 27th. The Club encourages folks to bring and show off their vintage vehicles. The two day event will bring gleaming chrome and vivid auto colors to the Chenango County Fairgrounds in Norwich, N.Y. AACA National Award Winners have displayed their vehicles at the annual RAOCC shows. The Car Parts and the Antiques & Collectibles Markets run both days.

Each year the RAOCC offers two \$1,000 Scholarship Awards to DCMO BOCES students interested in furthering their education in the automotive field or pursuing a career in the automotive industry. The scholarship may be applied to tuition of the college selected by the student or received as a set of automotive tools. One award is given to a Senior Student from the Automotive Technology Program and one award for a Senior Student from the Automotive Collision Program.

The RAOCC represents the local Norwich Region of the national Antique Automotive Club of America (AACA). As with its parent organization, the Club aims to further interest in and the preserving of classic and antique automobiles. "Automobile," includes all self-propelled vehicles designed for passenger use and powered by gasoline, diesel, steam or electric sources. Hence, an "old car" can be a car, race vehicle, truck, bus, fire vehicle, motorcycle, etc. The RAOCC has complete local autonomy in planning and running its own events and programs, which include the annual car shows and its Automotive Scholarship Awards.

Saturday will feature Muscle Cars and Street Rods (2003 and older) such as Mustang and Corvette. Sunday will highlight the Antique and Classic Cars (1993 and older) from Model A to Studebaker. Restored and original condition show vehicles are drawn from every decade and include motorcycles, tractors and trucks. The RAOCC Show draws several hundred vehicles and their proud owners from across New York State, and further afield from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the New England region, and the Mid-Atlantic States.

Alongside the RAOCC Car Shows, the local NY-PENN Military Vehicle Collectors Company exhibit restored military vehicles and equipment. The Antique Engine display presents gas powered hit-and-miss engines used in the early days of agriculture and industry. Top-notch food will be served by a variety of local food vendors. All of these

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## Another record breaking year for NBT



NBT's United Way Campaign Co-Chairs Joe Skundrich (far left) and John Stafford (far right) presented a trophy to representatives of the staff from the first floor of the main building at 52 South Broad, including Brian Burton, Natasha Graham and Jackie Brunschmid. The 'Coin War' campaign was a great success, yielding over \$2,000. Even better, employees in Chenango County exceeded the goal and raised over \$100,000 last fall.

BY MELISSA STAGNARO  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – John H. Watt, Jr. is the first to admit he had big shoes to fill when he succeeded Martin Dietrich as president and CEO of NBT Bancorp in late 2016. With his first full calendar year a record-setting one for the 161-year old financial institution, some might say he's clearly risen to the challenge.

"We delivered strong results in 2017, including

record net income for the fifth straight year and a new annual EPS record," Watt reported. EPS is banking parlance for earnings per share – good news for NBT's shareholders, who are poised to enjoy their 504th consecutive quarterly dividend payout.

When earnings were announced on January 22, the financial holding company's assets were \$9.1 billion.

The bank's 1,850 employees – 575 of whom are based in Chenango County – also

received exciting news that day. As a result of the newly enacted Tax Cut and Jobs Act, the federal tax rate for corporations will decrease from 35% to 21% starting in 2018. NBT has announced it intends to channel a portion of that to permanent raises for employees.

"The company is raising the starting hourly pay rate of \$11 to \$15 per hour, and employees earning \$50,000 or less will receive a permanent minimum increase of 5 percent," explained NBT's SVP

and Director of Corporate Communication Florence Doller

According to Doller, the move will positively impact more than 61percent of the company's workforce and their families.

The reduction of expense will also enable the organization to enhance customer-facing technology and increase contributions to nonprofit organizations in its footprint, she said.

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## Mid York Press: old company constantly makes itself new



BY MELISSA STAGNARO  
The Evening Sun

SHERBURNE – Just inside the main entrance at Mid-York Press sits a display case filled with items you might find in your local pharmacy or grocery store.

Vitamins, pregnancy tests, over-the-counter pain relievers, prescription drugs, cold medicine, make up brushes, baby food and more.

Of course, it's not the products themselves on display in this particular case, but the packaging.

An expert printer, Mid York's packaging expertise has made the company a trusted partner for manufacturers in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic

An expert printer, Mid York's packaging expertise has made the company a trusted partner for manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and food industries. (Melissa Stagnaro photo)

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# Principle Design and Engineering, PLLC discuss bringing a hotel to Norwich



The old Morrisville building viewed from Main Street.

By GRADY THOMPSON  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – After city planning reports have acknowledged a substantial need for quality lodging in the City of Norwich, a vacant downtown building will now be restored into a 60-plus room hotel slated to open in 2019.

Local brothers Mike and Dan O'Reilly, and their company, Principle Design and Engineering, PLLC, announced in December 2017 that they were chosen to receive a \$500,000 New York State Consolidation Funding Application (CFA) grant to restore a vacant building at 16 South Broad Street in the City of Norwich into a hotel.

"We were looking at other projects and talking with people locally about those projects, but everyone kept bringing up the point that we need a hotel more than anything," said Mike O'Reilly, who brings 13 years of engineering expertise to Principle Design and Engineering.

"We looked at building a new hotel, but we started looking at the numbers and

realized that they were really upside down because it was so costly," said Mike. "So Patrick McNeil had the idea of looking at a building that was already existing. We were actually in [McNeil's Jewelers] and he said, 'What about the old Morrisville building?' And by the next day, we were looking at it...Patrick has been a tremendous help and has orchestrated many of our meetings."

Having been involved in local projects like the Chenango County Fairgrounds grandstand renovation in Summer 2017, as well as other regional projects, like an expansion project of the Visitor Center at Ommegang Brewery in Cooperstown, the O'Reilly brothers decided to throw their hat in the ring for CFA funding to build a hotel in Norwich, writing the grant application themselves.

"We literally took three nights before the grant was due," said Dan O'Reilly, who has been a practicing engineer since graduating four years ago. "After work I would go home and write it, Mike and I would text back and forth, and if we

had any questions we would ask local entities. We kind of got lucky, sent it in literally an hour before it was due, and crossed our fingers."

The O'Reilly brothers said they supplemented their application with about 15 letters of support for the project. City of Norwich Mayor Christine Carnrike, Chenango County Clerk Mary Weidman, Chenango County Democratic Chair Patrick McNeil, and Norwich Supervisor of Wards 4, 5, 6 Bob Jeffrey were big supporters of their efforts, according to the O'Reilly brothers.

In addition to Mike and Dan, the project is being spearheaded by fellow investors, George Liaskos and Tasi Karabinas of Removal Corp. The O'Reilly brothers said they chose to work with Liaskos and Karabinas because they each offer something unique and necessary to the project: Liaskos has experience in the hotel business after building a Holiday Inn in a community similar to Norwich, and Karabinas is a local developer based in Oneonta.

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“We all realized this would be a good partnership because of our expertise,” said Dan. “Tasi has kind of the development abilities, George has been through the process before, and we have the expertise in the infrastructure and finer details. It really makes this kind of a dream team where we know each aspect of the process so we can make this thing successful.”

The O’Reilly brothers said they are aiming for 60 to 70 rooms in the three-floor hotel, with the third floor’s rooms being larger than a typical hotel room and intended for extended stays. As the building currently stands, the first floor remains broken up, the second floor is still in the condition it was in as the former Morrisville building, and the third floor is an empty shell.

“The rooms we’re shooting for are not your typical rooms,” said Dan. “When we spoke to a lot of business entities, they said, ‘We need a lot of professional rooms, we need rooms that we can bring people in that are clean and well-maintained,’ and they said that it was really hampering the development of Norwich.”

“That’s what we’d like to do with the third floor is try to get longer stay rooms in there, because there’s a need,” said Mike. “Kind of like an apartment, but someone comes in and cleans and changes the sheets regularly.”

The O’Reilly brothers said once the building is

restored into the hotel, the hotel will get a flag, but just what that flag will be is unknown at this time.

“The big thing with a flag is it will help us bring people from out of the area into Norwich because it’s connected with other hotels, that’s what you pay for more or less,” said Dan.

Dan said that larger brand flags tend to steer away from restoring old facilities, preferring to build a new facility from scratch, but that there are other flags they are looking into that specialize in refurbishing existing buildings.

“A lot of these big brands don’t want to deal with renovating a building, but they have special offshoots that do,” said Dan. “That’s what we’re shooting for.”

While the tentative opening date is 2019, the O’Reilly brothers said it’s all dependent on when they get the state funding, because they are legally not permitted to start until then.

“We’ve got the letter of commitment from them, but now we have to go through the process,” said Mike.

Remaining details that need to be ironed out over the next year, according to the O’Reilly brothers, include where the hotel’s parking and entrance will be located.

“We have some meetings with the city and local entities, but Mike and I think in talking with the city that we can squeeze more spots out of [the Hayes Street municipal parking lot], but

there are some details we’re working out,” said Dan.

“We’re hoping for a canopy in the back so people can do a pull-in to the old Morrisville entrance,” said Mike.

Dan added, “Our hope on Main Street is to really brighten up the alleyway, make a nice storefront so you can see it on Main Street, and if you pull off, you can walk through the alleyway to the entrance.”

The O’Reilly brothers said it’s their hope that the addition of a new hotel in Norwich will benefit the city.

“The lack of a hotel really stifles everything,” said Mike.

“It hurts Main Street,” said Dan. “If we can’t keep the money local, how does it help the little shops, how does it help the restaurants, how does it help the movie theater? Keeping stuff local is a big thing, and I think one of the greatest qualities of Norwich is that people see that now and they do what they can to help local businesses, because it’s good for everyone.”

“That’s a big part of why Mike and I came back to Norwich to start a business here. We’re young, our parents’ generation did what they could do, and it’s our turn to really do something and get involved in the local community.”

“To be honest I don’t see Norwich as a dying area,” said Dan. “I see it as an area with a lot of potential, and I hope that something like this will help.”

## Success Story

### Stella’s Meat & Deli

Back by Popular Demand! Welcome to Stella’s Meat & Deli. Our new store’s greatest strengths are fresh top-quality products, backed by fast and friendly service. At Stella’s you have our promise that we will provide you the best of both every day! Our greatest asset is our many loyal and satisfied customers. It has been a rewarding opportunity to re-open in Sherburne and a privilege to serve so many wonderful customers who we call friends.

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Our meat department features a large variety of beef, chicken and pork items. All our beef is USDA Choice. Our burger is fresh ground in-store daily. All our sausage is freshly made in-store, including link sausage. In our deli, we feature a large choice of meats and cheeses. Perfectly sliced just the way you like it. By the half pound or pound, they all make a tasty sandwich at home.

If you haven’t heard by now, we also make the best subs in town. If you haven’t tried one yet, just order one and you will

quickly see why. We also have hot fresh soup made daily and back by popular demand our famous homemade peanut butter pie! We make custom order meat and cheese platters and offer several freezer pack specials. We are a small local family owned and operated business, but big on service.

Steve Youngs has over 25 years’ experience as a professional meat cutter. Steve’s wife Lori spends time helping in the store, as well as their two sons Judd and Joe. The Youngs

family decided to name their new store after their family pet Stella, a one-year old English bulldog. Even though Stella doesn’t spend any time at the store, she was recently promoted to President and CEO.

Stella’s Meats & Deli is located at 11 East State Street in downtown Sherburne. Plenty of convenient parking. We are open Monday thru Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call ahead to order (607) 674-6036.



A view of the backside of the building Principle Design & Engineering, PLLC, will renovate into a new hotel.

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# Mid York Press —

Continued from Page 39

and food industry for decades. The company's capabilities include many commercial printing services, but the core of their business is printing and producing folding cartons.

Mid York was incorporated in 1946, but in truth the company has been in business since 1828 — making it 190 years old. President Bob Tenney is the sixth generation to run the family business. He's now been at the helm for 35 years.

"2017 was an excellent year," said Tenney. The company added capacity, welcomed new customers and realized the highest profits in recent years.

Mid York invested \$2.6 million in a new Heidelberg press, which came online in mid-December.

"It doubled our capacity," Tenney said, as well as enables the company to do UV coating in-house, something they have previously needed to outsource. The coating adds incredible shine, and is popular with cosmetic packaging.

Having the capability to do it themselves will save money and time for Mid York, and allow them to bid for that type of work more competitively.

In the three and a half decades since Tenney has

lead the business, much has changed in the industry.

"There used to be 1,400 carton manufacturers in the United States. Now there are 479," Tenney said. Much of that is a result of consolidation. A handful of competitors remain in Elmira, Rochester and Buffalo, but they now face more international competition.

Their customer base has also shifted. Historically local and regional manufacturers were the core of their business. Today, less than 20 percent of their customer base is located regionally. While two of Chenango County's manufacturers still make their list of top twenty customers, their largest customer is a Boston-area pharmaceutical company.

Customer expectations have changed, as well. They are more demanding, particularly when it comes to turnaround times, but there is more of an opportunity for Mid York to serve as a business partner, rather than simply a vendor.

"We are more integrated with our customers," Tenney explained. "We're involved in every step of the process."

One of Mid York's newest services is highly customized digital packaging, which they sell direct to consumer through their website, [midyorkpress.com](http://midyorkpress.com). Using XMPie technology

from Xerox, customers can upload images, and personalize text to create highly personalized gift boxes that can be used for wedding favors, birth announcements and similar gifts. And, since they are printed digitally, the end result is flawless quality at low cost.

"It's packaging that speaks to people," Tenney said.

Mid York collaborated with Steve Craig of Commerce Chenango to create a video promoting the new capability. That video, featured on Mid York's website, is now being used by Xerox itself to promote the technology.

According to Tenney, Mid York's reputation in the industry is built on the quality and consistency of its product, and the level of service they provide.

"We offer a level of confidence customers rarely see," he said.

It's a point of pride that customer calls are returned, not within hours, but within 15 to 30 minutes.

"It's the number one thing our customers say about us," he said.

The same can't be said for others in the industry, firms Tenney described as so busy and so big that they no longer send proofs to their customers.

Mid York, on the other



Palettes of printed sheets waiting to be cut down to size at Mid York Press. (Melissa Stagnaro photo)

hand, is meticulous about proofs.

"Repeatable quality is very important to us," he said, because they understand that what they produce today may end up on the pharmacy shelf next to packaging produced six months prior and from a consumer standpoint, they have to look the same.

Tenney's focus on quality and process control was fostered early in his career, when he had the opportunity to learn from W. Edwards Deming, the thought leader acknowledged as the father of Total Quality Management.

"It still guides all of our process controls," Tenney said, of Deming's teachings.

The growth Mid York experienced in 2017 has not been without a few growing pains. Finding new team members has been one of the biggest challenges.

Mid York increased their workforce by 14, bringing their total head count to 79.

"We interviewed 200 to get 14," he said. They lost 45 percent of the applicant pool because they do random drug testing.

Of the 18 they initially hired after process, eight didn't work out.

That was a shock to the system for an organization with very low turnover. Most employees have great longevity with the company.

That in itself will pose a recruiting challenge in com-

ing years. With the average age of their current workforce is 54, a number of long-term employees are nearing retirement.

It's the people that have kept Tenney at Mid York for the last 35 years.

"These people are my family," he said.

The newest generation of employees are just discovering what makes Mid York a special place to work. According to Tenney, the entire organization has a team/family philosophy.

For example, there's a 'family first' policy, where it's understood that family is always the top priority. Scholarships are regularly given to children and grandchildren of Mid York employees. The organization strongly supports local organizations and events, from Gus Macker to the United Way and countless other community groups. And they still throw an annual Christmas party with real gifts.

There's also a generous bonus structure for all employees, with bonuses paid both quarterly and at year-end.

"People are appreciative of the bonuses they get," Tenney said. "They know it's all based on their effort."

Since those bonuses are a percentage of the bottom line, employees are attuned to company performance in a very real way.

In fact, it wasn't that

long ago that there were no bonuses. In 2014, Mid York saw a \$7 million drop in business. Tough decisions had to be made. In the end, they sold one of their presses.

They kept going, and kept selling, and were able to eventually be able to not only recoup those lost volumes, but grow.

In mid-2107, Tenney felt confident enough to order a new press to replace the one they'd been forced to sell. They didn't anticipate a six-month wait for delivery. The entire team pulled together to make it happen.

"For six months, we ran three shifts," he explained. There was both relief and excitement when the new press, a Heidelberg CX capable of printing 16,500 sheets per hour, was installed and put into service in December.

This wasn't the career Tenney envisioned for himself when he took over as president of the company at age 23. In those first few years, he said he entertained offers to sell the business.

Now, his son Kyle is getting involved.

"Maybe he'll be the seventh generation," Tenney said.

If he does, he'll be inheriting a much different company than his father did.

"We're a very old company because we continually make ourselves new," said Tenney.

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**In Your Own Words**

**Melissa deCordova,  
Board President Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival**

**NORWICH**— A lovingly crafted bench sun-kissed with carefully chosen colored glass patterned in the shape of black-eyed Susans and painted daisies greets me every time I pass in and out through my front door. Unlike the garden - which makes up its own mind whether to bloom for me or not - this kaleidoscope of color entices me to smile and maybe even take a rest.

I absolutely love this bench for three reasons: 1. I've gotten to know the artist who made it, 2. She explained and physically demonstrated the time-consuming process it took for her to make it, and 3. She said she loved it, too, and, in fact, hated to part with it.

And that right there is the thing about art. As opposed to a decorative item purchased at a big box retailer - whether it be a piece of furniture, dishes, jewelry or just about anything else - when you know and feel the love that went into creating something, you covet it so, so much more.

I adore this bench, crafted by Michelle Villante of Greene, NY, as I do all of the art I've collected over the past 23 years at Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival. If you're like me, and one of the estimated 11,000 people who throng to our beloved two-day festival each year, I'm sure you have one or two Colorscape pieces in your own home or office. I'm sure that you love your art in the same way I do, too, most likely because you met the person who made whatever it is and you like them.

Oh, how I would love to be an artist! Truth is I don't draw, I don't dream in color, I can't picture anything in 3D, nor do I see the difference between acrylic and oil-based paints. I don't even doodle, unless you call the Ice Age cave-art like lines I sometimes find myself scratching in the corners of my notepad doodling. In grade school, while finger painting rated pretty cool, the cut and paste thing bored me to tears and field trips to art museums meant nothing to me save a lot of walking, standing and listening. I remember taking a stab at drawing a tree in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade - which kept my attention until the real thing beckoned from the playground.

The only aspect of art education that meant anything to me at all in my formative years was the Color Wheel. The names of colors, the combinations

of colors and the juxtaposition of colors held my interest. And it was this interest - the pure beauty of color - that caught on and grew and developed so by the time I was in college, I actually ended up taking Art History not once, but twice. These days, I'm known to linger long in museums.

I'm not sure how my passion for Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival began, whether I had written articles for The Evening Sun during the exciting planning stages of the festival in the early 1990s, or because I was so impressed with the positive energy and scope I found at the first Colorscape in 1995. Nonetheless, I eventually ended up volunteering to write press releases that promoted the festival and its exhibiting artists all across New York State. In 2001, I recruited my good friend, Norwich High School Teacher/Poet Rich Bernstein to create a literary arts component for the festival, which resulted in the Literary Arts Tent and, later, our popular Poetry Slam. Then, I found a fun and engaging team in the Art Market fundraising tent where I enjoyed collecting donated artwork from the exhibiting artists. It doesn't get much better than "shopping" for art in every single booth and walking out with something gorgeous that I personally didn't have to pay for!

But in the beginning, I mostly remember the board had no qualms with me toting my two youngsters along to meetings. That camaraderie, acceptance and laid-back atmosphere (if you're looking to volunteer and make a difference somewhere...) is still with us today. The group at Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival makes volunteering *and* making a difference in the community positively rewarding.

Today, Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival is known as Central New York's premier arts festival. We've grown from hosting 46 art and fine crafts vendors in '95 to packing East and West Parks with 124 last year. We've become a free music festival with nationally recognized singer songwriters performing on the NBT Main Stage. Most every genre of music from gospel to folk; to country, blues and bluegrass; to rock; to opera; and classical music is represented either on the NBT Stage or Peggy's Stage. In addition to the aforementioned Literary

Arts (now called the Guernsey Literary Arts Tent), we have the Chobani Culinary Court, a children's Art Zone Stage complete with dancers, jugglers and puppeteers, the Golden Artist Colors hands-on Art Zone 1 Tent and student and senior art shows held at the Artists' Palette.

Speaking of making a difference, just witness some of the children and adults who come to Colorscape. Watch them as they create their own masterpieces, interact with artists and art teachers, proudly showcase their school artwork or recite their own poetry for prizes. Colorscape educates, and the process is a ton more fun than what I ever experienced.

I'm personally charmed that 23 people donated a day of their lives to dream big for Colorscape at a Strategic Development retreat held this past January. That's right:

We gathered 23 voices and visions from a variety of viewpoints on a very cold winter day to help create a three-year plan for the festival. There were city and county officials, artists and dancers, teachers and business executives, lawyers, a banker and youth and senior citizens - all there to show their enthusiasm and appreciation for the premier arts festival in Central New York.

We have some surprises in store for you when Colorscape celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> in 2019. Plan to be in the county seat's parks every weekend after Labor Day. This year's fest is from 10

to 6 on Sept. 8 and from 11 to 5 on Sept. 9.

Lest we forget...all activities at Colorscape are FREE due to the generous support from our local and state foundations, corporations and businesses, individual financial and in-kind donors and valuable, fun volunteers.



Melissa deCordova

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# NBT —



Members of NBT's training staff at an employee conference. Pictured (from left to right) are Jeff Witts, Karen Sastri, John Watt, Olivia Desmond and Debbie Elwood.

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"Tax reform has created an important opportunity for NBT to invest in our employees, the customer experience and our communities," said Watt.

Watt credits the organization's 'talented team of professionals' for driving its success. Creating that team doesn't happen by chance, but by design.

"Recruiting is one of the

most critical activities we engage in," he explained. "We're very particular about who joins our team and we don't settle."

At times, that means leaving a position open until the perfect candidate — one both technically qualified and culturally aligned with the vision and values of the organization — is found.

"We fill every position we set out to hire and we fill those positions with people

who are excited to be here and aligned with who we want to be as a company," he said.

Every year, NBT invests significantly in the training and development of their team, including developing career paths to ensure employees have opportunities to advance.

"The aligned workforce and culture is our biggest competitive advantage," Watt said.

That's true across all of the organization's business units.

NBT Bancorp Inc. traces its origin to a lone storefront on South Broad Street in Norwich, where the Bank of Norwich first opened its doors in 1856. Today, it's a financial holding company that primarily operates through NBT Bank, N.A., a full-service community bank, and two financial services companies — NBT-Mang Insurance Agency and EPIC Advisors, Inc., a 401(k) plan recordkeeping firm based in Rochester.

It's 152 locations stretch across New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine.

"In addition to offering personal and commercial banking, we also offer services through NBT Wealth Management, including trust and fiduciary services, investments, financial planning and retirement plans," Doller said.

According to Doller, each branch serves as an entry point for customers. Wherever they first engage, team members work to understand the person's

needs. From there, they'll bring in business partners within the organization to identify the services and solutions to fully meet their individual needs.

That 360 degree view of the customer and the collaboration that takes place to meet their needs, is "really what makes the difference," she said.

According to Watt, it's this direct face-to-face service that is at the heart of the community banking model to which NBT has always subscribed.

NBT employs technology to enhance, not replace, those customer relationships, he explained.

Watt described NBT as a 'fast follower' in terms of technology. They prioritize projects that enhance the customer experience, data security and employee effectiveness. And their recipe for success has been to carefully watch innovative technology, learn from the mistakes of early adapters in the industry, and then bringing their own version to market in advance of banks their own size and smaller.

That model is an example of the 'smart growth'

Watt said is the goal for 2018.

Watt speaks often of the community banking model, which drives business decisions and customer interactions, and also defines how NBT sees itself as a partner in the communities it serves.

"Across six states, every one of our employees is focused on community," he explained.

In 2017, they infused \$190,000 into festivals, events and non-profit organizations in Chenango County alone.

"It's critically important that we contribute. It's our mission as a community bank," said Watt.

From Chenango Blues Fest and Saturdays in the Park, to Colorscape Chenango, Chenango Memorial Hospital and the Chenango Arts Council — it would be difficult to name an event or group who hasn't benefited in some way from NBT's commitment to improving the quality of life in its communities.

And then there are the contributions that NBT employees themselves make. They serve on countless community boards, and



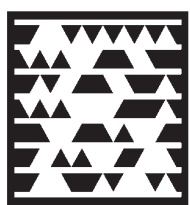
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spend thousands of hours volunteering, coaching and participating in events.

Numerous smaller causes have also benefited from Casual for a Cause days held at individual locations across the company, where team members who donate dress down for the day.

"It's entirely employee driven," said Doller. "It's part of our culture."

For Chenango United Way's 2017 Fall Campaign, NBT's employees raised more than \$100,000, making them the campaign's largest contributor.

During the campaign, Watt himself climbed onto a desk to make a presentation

to employees, personally encouraging them to donate.

"Charitable giving is something they need to have in their every day life," he explained.

It's not unusual to see Watt and his wife enjoying the festivities at the events NBT helps sponsor. The couple is building a house not far outside the Norwich city limits.

"I really enjoy being here in Norwich," said Watt. "When we move in, it will give us a great opportunity to be even closer to the community."

When Watt is asked about what he considers the biggest accomplishment

of his first year, he doesn't cite earnings. For him, it is the success of the transition itself that has defined 2017.

"A transition can be a rocky time and challenging for everyone," he said. "I'm proud to say in this case it was very smooth."

He gives full credit to the guidance of the bank's board of directors, and particularly to his predecessor, who is now chairman of the board.

"It was the hard work Marty Dietrich put into ensuring that the transition would be smooth. I'm very grateful to him for that," Watt said. "He set a great example to live up to."



Inside NBT's main branch in Norwich. (Frank Speziale photo)

## Rolling Antiquer's Old Car Club

Continued from Page 39

events will occur against the musical backdrop of a DJ service. Rain or shine, the show runs 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. General admission: \$5 each day per person. Admission is free for children under 12 years old.

During 2018, the Club will meet the third Sunday of each month at

the North East Classic Car Museum. Guests or prospective members are welcome. For show registration forms, scholarship information, and other Club information, visit the website [www.raocc.org](http://www.raocc.org); email [raocc@frontiernet.net](mailto:raocc@frontiernet.net); or write to RAOCC, PO Box 712, Norwich, NY 13815.

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*Internal Medicine*

**Medical School:** National University of Mogadishu, Somalia (affiliate of University of Rome, Italy)  
**Specialty Training:** UHS, Johnson City, NY  
**Board Certification:** Family Medicine; Internal Medicine



**Anna Marie Ward, MD**  
*Family Medicine*

**Medical School:** New York Medical College, Valhalla, NY  
**Specialty Training:** Mid-Hudson Family Services, Kingston, NY  
**Board Certification:** Family Medicine



**James Wood, MD**  
*Internal Medicine*

**Medical School:** University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY  
**Specialty Training:** North Shore University Hospital, Manhasset, NY



**Brenda Lynn Carr RN, FNP-C**  
*Nurse Practitioner*

**Education:** SUNY Binghamton Decker School of Nursing, Binghamton, NY  
**Certification:** Family Nurse Practitioner



**Mary M Martin-Vavra, RN, MSN-FNP, NP-C**  
*Nurse Practitioner*

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## Success Story

### ACHIEVE

ACHIEVE and Chenango County ARC/CWS unified on June 1, 2017 beginning joint operations. Chenango County ARC/CWS is now known as ACHIEVE, Broome-Chenango-Tioga; they are a chapter of The ARC New York. ACHIEVE is the largest voluntary provider of services supporting people with developmental disabilities in Broome, Chenango and Tioga counties, supporting over 2,200 individuals, and their families. ACHIEVE operates residential, day, and employment programs to support people with developmental disabilities and employs over 550 staff.

“The unification of our two organizations will improve our ability to fulfill our mission of providing life-changing support for hundreds of families in Chenango, Broome and Tioga Counties”, said Mary Jo Thorn, CEO for ACHIEVE. “By building on the strengths of both organizations, Chenango County ARC/CWS and ACHIEVE we will be able to combine talents to ensure the residents of our communities who have developmental disabilities can enjoy the maximum possible integration into the community and have access to the best possible services,” said Ms. Thorn.

ACHIEVE continues the CWS integrated manufacturing services in Norwich. CWS is projecting an approximate 15% revenue increase in 2018 thanks to several new contracts that have been secured. New marketing efforts and initiatives, combined with significant increases in consumer confidence and market output produced a flood of new projects that CWS was able to quote and gain consideration for; resulting in an over 50% increase in project opportunities quoted. With the increase in quotes, CWS was able to capture and convert a large number of these opportunities, further supporting the revenue growth for 2018. Based on the notable growth, CWS is in hiring mode to enhance its support of its operations. “CWS has been diligent in its efforts to stay ahead of the workshop transformation initiative and further expanding our diversified labor force. Our uniquely abled resources have remained not only gainfully employed, but 100% utilized with no downtime to their work schedules and a maximization of their earning potential.” said Jason Lasicki, VP Sales and Marketing for CWS.

ACHIEVE has announced their four major fundraisers of the year, The 23rd Annual Bob Warner Pin Crushing Bowling Tournament presented by Visions Federal Credit Union, Saturday April 21, 2018, The 64th Annual Dinner Dance, Friday June 1, 2018, The 9th Annual Savor the Summer presented by M&T Bank— beer, wine and food tasting event Thursday August 23, 2018 and The Binghamton Devils Charity Golf Tournament, October 2018. Please visit [www.achieveny.org](http://www.achieveny.org) or contact Bob Brazill at ACHIEVE for more information on how you can become involved: [bbrazill@achieveny.org](mailto:bbrazill@achieveny.org) 607-231-5262

## Norwich - an Alvogen Company

A global pharmaceutical company with a deep local history



Between 2015 and 2017 alone, Alvogen spent \$26 million to convert 20,000 sq. ft. of existing warehouse space into a state of the art production area, as well as construct a 10,000 sq. ft. utility building.

By MELISSA STAGNARO  
The Evening Sun

NORTH NORWICH – Fever. Body aches. Cough. The signs of flu season are all around us.

As the telltale symptoms of influenza set in, antiviral medications are one of the few available treatment options. Available by prescription only, these drugs can lessen the severity and length of the illness.

In the past, the most popular choice on the market was Tamiflu, a high-priced brand-

name drug manufactured by Roche. But this year, a lower cost generic version of the same drug – oseltamivir phosphate – is on the market.

There are only three manufacturers licensed to produce the drug in the United States. One of those manufacturers is Alvogen.

Approved in late October, Alvogen’s North Norwich facility had mere weeks to ramp up before an unexpected influx in influenza cases heralded an earlier than normal start to flu season. Since then, they’ve raced to keep

up with skyrocketing demand for the drug in what is proving to be the worst flu season in more than a decade.

They’ve done so well, in fact, that they’re dominating the market.

“We’re the majority supplier,” confirmed Charlie Andrews, vice president of operations at Alvogen.

Not only is this a benefit to the company’s bottom line, but it also positions them for longer-term gain by strengthening their reputation in the market.

“This is very positive for us,” Andrews said.

In a global industry like pharmaceuticals – particularly the generic drug marketplace where Alvogen operates – competitive advantage is everything. They face stiff competition from pharmaceutical firms across the globe, as well as within their own organization. As the only U.S.-based manufacturing facility in the Alvogen portfolio, Norwich has sister sites in in

Continued on Page 48

## Chenango United Way’s new projects hold great promise

MEAGAN SCHULZ  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – Chenango United Way’s \$419,000 campaign goal, set in 2016 for its

2017 campaign, was surpassed with a final number of \$421,000 received in donations.

Thanks to the community’s support, the funds went

towards the successful projects the organization was able to provide for the residents of all ages in Chenango County.

The most successful ini-

tiative, if it were to rate the projects provided by the organization this past year, was Chenango United Way’s Dental Task Force.

After receiving word that the Greater Chenango Cares IRT was unable to continue its program, the Chenango Dental Task Force was created to continue with ongoing efforts to provide better oral health education to the children of the area.

The importance of teaching local kids the proper way to brush their teeth along with other daily routines needed to maintain good dental hygiene became a top priority for the local United Way after the overwhelming amount of community members took advantage of the no-cost services provided by military service personnel last summer.

Consequently, the Chenango Dental Task Force collected and packaged over



The Dental Health Task Force is seen getting ready to hand out oral hygiene packs, full of items donated by many members of the community at Gibson Elementary School back in December of 2017. (Evening Sun Photo, Frank Speziale)

Continued on Page 48



# Chenango United Way

Continued from Page 47

4,000 oral hygiene items that were donated by local companies, dental offices, small business and individual members of the community.

The donated goods given away in the packages were items like toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes, packets of floss, and toothbrush holders. In late November, the Task Force was able to successfully deliver the goods to each and every elementary school student in the county.

“With the amount of donations we had throughout the collection period, [Chenango United Way] was able to call the project a success from the start,” said Chenango United Way Executive Director Elizabeth Monaco. “We are hoping that with the success of the this project in its first year, it can help grow into more opportunities with an ultimate goal of being able to provide dental care.”

Monaco also said that the Dental Task Force is starting to appear in the classrooms of schools in the area to provide awareness and education to youth, because that is where the habits can be created at the earlier stages in life.

With a successful initiative like the Dental Task Force, Chenango United Way evaluated another project that the organization has done in the past that is now considered outdated, and thus will

no longer be embraced this year.

CUW’s Personal Hygiene Initiative has seen a decrease in the amount of donations over the last year. In consideration of that one factor, it will no longer be something the organization provides to Chenango County residents.

“We noticed that a good amount of our projects have a life span of five years. Of course there are some that do not last that length, while there are some others we have lasted longer than 10 years,” said Monaco.

Another new project the organization created was to ensure foster kids in Chenango County receive a bag full of goodies when they are placed into the system.

This venture was put in place so kids in the foster care system do not have to put the few belongings they may own into garbage bags—a sad trend noticed by those at the United Way. The bags children are given feature goods such as books, personal and oral hygiene items, and a stuffed animal.

“These bags give these children going through a difficult situation a sense of security as well as something to call their own. It feels good when you see a kid smile after receiving their pack,” said Monaco.

In 2018, the Chenango United Way plans to continue

these services and plan on the ways to grow both—as well as grow another program, called ALICE.

ALICE is an acronym that stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed used to describe households that currently earn



Pictured are items that are supplied in the Foster Care Bags that are passed along to children. As a result of receiving the items, the kids feel they have something to call their own. (Submitted Photo)

more than the U.S poverty line but less than the basic cost of living for the county. It is the families or individuals who are working but still are not making enough to cover all of their necessary costs each and every month.

These families must make difficult decisions every day about how and where to spend their limited resources and many are just one paycheck or accident/sick day away from financial disaster, said Monaco.

But the local United Way

organization is teaming up with the Income Community Impact Team or CIT. CIT is a collaborative group of local non-profits, churches, government agencies and businesses.

With both parties committed to looking at the

aren’t educated that there is help available, or they aren’t sure that they can qualify,” said Monaco

To help create awareness, the Chenango United Way duo of Monaco and Victoria Mitch are enlightening businesses that a good amount of their employees are the people to fall into the ALICE population.

In fact, when applying for funding towards their business, the application questions if the particular business is currently supporting ALICE in any way. Because of this, many business owners are beginning to jump on-board.

Each year when it comes times to campaign for its upcoming goal, the Chenango United Way faces challenges. 2018 will be no different—except with the types of tests thrown in the organization’s way.

With the new tax law being passed at the end of 2017 now including a standard deduction nearly doubling in amount, itemized deductions will no longer be seen a benefit to taxpayers. A highly sought after deduction is that of charitable giving, which will likely diminish as most donations come in small-to-moderate amounts.

Engaging millennials is

another challenge the organization faces every campaign season. This objection will be met by the United Way’s Marketing committee: a group of volunteers that help with the way the organization advertises the campaign. Millennials engage with social media, websites, email marketing, etc., and these advertising mediums will be the channels the committee will begin to focus on for campaigns to come.

Another challenge the United Way has always been faced with is the ongoing assumptions that the organization is only available to help the poor. “It’s not the case at all,” said Monaco. “This belief can only be met with the constant need of educating the public that the money that is raised here actually stays here.”

With the 2018 campaign goal of \$419,000 coming in just shy of \$6,000 short, Monaco stated the amount of new contributors has increased drastically.

“As of right now, we don’t have a figure on the actual amount of first-time contributors or a dollar-figure of how much they donated or pledged. What we do know is that we have nine pages of new patrons,” said Monaco. “We now have 12 months to figure out how to convert said donors into yearly donations.”

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# Norwich - an Alvogen Company

Continued from Page 47

Romania, Korea, Taiwan and Iceland.

“Each year, the world seems to be a smaller and smaller place,” Andrews said. “As a global organization, Alvogen continuously monitors costs of production across its manufacturing facilities. Norwich must employ highly efficient systems in order to maintain its place in this network.”

According to Andrews, the organization has made significant investments in lean manufacturing processes, striving to eliminate waste while delivering the highest quality product at the lowest cost.

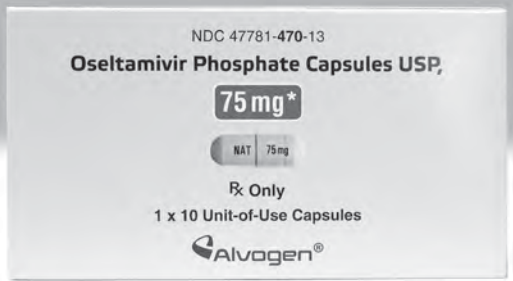
Millions of dollars has also been invested in the North Norwich manufacturing facility to help keep the 1970’s era plant to increase efficiency, expand capacity and diversify their capabilities.

Between 2015 and 2017 alone, Alvogen spent \$26 million to convert 20,000 sq. ft. of existing warehouse space into a state of the art production area, as well as construct a 10,000 sq. ft. utility building.

“Earliest production capa-

bilities were centered around familiar tablets and capsules,” said Andrews. “Today, Alvogen has a broad range of drug delivery categories, including transdermal patches, injectables, oral suspensions and biologicals.”

Norwich’s ability to react so quickly to the oseltamivir



**A lower cost generic version of Tamiflu – oseltamivir phosphate – is on the market. One of three US manufacturers is Alvogen.**

market opportunity may be due to these strategic investments in part, but

“[Our] workforce is highly skilled,” said Ric Festarini, who serves as Alvogen’s director of human resources. “Significant effort is expended on internal technical training.”

According to Festarini, many of the company’s 300 employees are from Chenango and vicinity, and have long years of service with the organization. Recruiting new talent, however, can be a challenge, particularly in the scientific specialties.

“Requiring large numbers

of chemists, engineers and quality personnel creates an ongoing challenge to the business,” said Festarini. “These types of skills are most often found remotely and must be relocated to the region.”

According to Festarini, the entire Alvogen organization is committed to corporate social responsibility.

“Globally, the organization works with UNICEF and the Red Cross, and supports significant initiatives in developing nations,” he said. “Locally, we have been a longtime supporter of the United Way and represent one of the largest contributors to the annual campaign.”

And you’d be hard pressed to find an event in and around Chenango County without seeing scores of volunteers in Alvogen’s distinctive yellow t-shirts.

“Alvogen employees are committed to the community where they live and work,” said Andrews, something which is evidenced by the scores of Alvogen volunteers – often clad in the company’s distinctive yellow shirts – which help with almost every major event in the county.

And then there’s Alvogen Day.

“A few years ago, Alvogen received a request for support of cleaning up the downtown in preparation for some of the annual fall festivals in the

parks,” Festarini explained.

That first year, around a dozen employees took time off to spend their day weeding, raking leaves, etc. The following year, there was even higher participation. Now, the entire company is involved.

“We shut down production for the day, and everyone joins in the effort,” Festarini said.

You’ll also find Alvogen leaders on the boards of many

area non-profits, including UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital, Commerce Chenango, Chenango United Way and more. And it’s not only existing leaders that are encouraged to get involved.

“We are actively developing future leaders through participation in the Leadership Chenango program,” said Andrews. This year, the company is sponsoring four participants in the program.

It’s these leaders that will one way be charged with carrying on Norwich’s now 131-year legacy in both Chenango County and the pharmaceutical industry.

“Alvogen continues to evolve its business model and has every expectation to continue to celebrate major anniversary milestones as a regional employer,” said Andrews.

## Success Story

### McNeil Jewelers

McNeil Jewelers has been the hometown jewelry store in Norwich since 1946.

Started by their Dad Robert and Mom Josephine, Jim and Patrick will continue their family tradition of Personal service.

2017 brought several new gift lines to the store like highly collectable Jelly Cat stuffed animals, Eyebob reading glasses which have optic quality lenses and Scout bags. We also have a new Eco-friendly card line.

2017 also brought several new jewelry lines to the store like Becoming jewelry, affordable jewelry handmade in Maine, a new cuff style bracelet was added to the ever popular Wind & Fire recycled bracelet line. Lizzy James bracelet line, one of our best selling

lines, is always adding new styles. We have tripled our assortment of Concept hypo-allergenic earring.

The “boys” still do all our repairs, Jim does jewelry repairs and Patrick does the watch repairs, all at our downtown location. This means if you inherit your grandmother’s diamond ring, we have many newer settings and Jim can reset her diamond in your new mounting. And Patrick can refurbish your grandfather’s pocket watch for you to pass on to your kids and their kids.

We plan on shopping for new and exciting lines, both jewelry and gifts, to add to your shopping pleasure this year.

Check out are website [HYPERLINK](http://www.mcneiljewelers.com) “<http://www.mcneiljewelers.com>” [www.mcneiljewelers.com](http://www.mcneiljewelers.com) and Like us on Facebook.

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# New services offered as New Media Retailer keeps growing

By **MEAGAN SCHULZ**  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – With both tangible and intangible developments throughout the past year, the locally based tech start-up, New Media Retailer had an incredible year in 2017, said Francesca Baio, NMR’s Director of Marketing and Corporate Relations.

Featuring the implementation of the newest business venture for New Media Retailer, E-Commerce is the largest step in tangible growth

the company saw in 2017. “We have evolved our all encompassing online marketing platform to the next layer,” said Vice President Robert Martin.

The biggest challenge for the company, according to Martin, was figuring out how a mom-and-pop retailer – the majority of NMR’s customer base – can compete with the online retail giants, like Amazon.

“A lot of [small business owners] started to do local delivery, and that is where we

found a fit,” said Martin. “All of the proprietary technology that we have is specific to doing local delivery for our independent retailers.”

Baio said, “Because of the business model we have been able to create, it’s not just a build and leave it.

“We at NMR, are constantly working with our customers to help them get their customers to build larger carts by offering not only technology tools but the marketing tools and the customer service tools to make [E-Commerce] some-

thing that they do feel more comfortable with and can talk to their customers confidently about what they can do while seeing the success.”

Kicking their already successful year into overdrive, Phillips Pet Food completed the purchase of Petflow.com in 2017—one of NMR’s largest corporate affiliates. Much like New Media Retailer, Phillips was growing at a fast rate.

“Before the purchase, [Petflow.com] was actually a competitor of the mom-and-pop retailers we work closely with and Phillips were selling to. They were like the Amazon of the pet food store online. They offered the free one-to-two day shipping.”

Once Phillips sealed the deal, the mom-and-pop pet store

owners had the technology to ship their products to their consumers in the short shipping period with a program called ‘drop-ship.’

A drop-ship program provides a small business owner the products it sells in stock, said Martin. Instead, when a store sells the product to a customer, the merchant purchases the item from a third party and has it shipped directly to the customer without ever having to handle the product.

“With all of this in place by their purchase of Petflow.com, [Phillips] just needed the website partner to do it for all of their retailers, which is very complicated but it’s supposed to be simple. That, sales-wise, kicked us into overdrive and we have been growing like crazy since,” said Martin.

But E-Commerce wasn’t merely a way for the company to grow their profits.

“Internally for the staff, [E-Commerce] has really been a huge learning and growth opportunity for us,” said Martin. “We came across things that we’ve never wanted to deal with before like ‘how do I do recurring orders?’ or ‘how do I get someone to do auto-ship with delivery once a month?’ or ‘I want to run discount codes on my site, can I do that?’ We had to find solutions for all of those things to satisfy the needs of our customer base.”

Like any big new venture, there were times of struggle for NMR, but never in a negative way. While having some of their busiest months

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Bob Kawa, New Media Retailer’s Production Manager and Joe Pfeiffer, a Web Application Developer, are hard at work during the work day. (Evening Sun Photo, Meagan Schulz)

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since opening its doors in 2009, the company learned to grow their knowledge quickly. Many small business owners had questions—many the NMR staff didn't know how to answer at the time.

"It was somewhat of an infinite frontier when we started the E-Commerce venture," said Martin. "We didn't have answers to certain questions and we were learning along the way."

"For every single department from production, to [development], to design, to service, to marketing, North Carolina to New York, every office and every single person," said Baio. "It's been a huge learning curve, but an incredible opportunity at the same time."

Baio said she believed the learning takes place on a day-to-day basis, and it's a large perk of working with NMR. Any employment in the technology industry will come with a large learning curve—"No two days are the same," said Baio.

She added, "Up to this point, it's been where we have a good groove for five-to-six months, then Google rolls out a new update or Facebook has a change to it's algorithm, and we then have to change our way of thinking; get a little bit of new education, and roll out a new process."

But to Baio, a season veteran with the company, E-Commerce is a whole new ball game.

"It's changed our respon-

sibilities, our job expectations, our education level and it's really allowed us to raise the bar for our customers to give their [customers] a good experience shopping."

With all of this happening over the last 12 months, what could NMR be looking at doing over the course of 2018?

E-Commerce will still be a main focus in 2018, according to Martin. Nevertheless, NMR will be adding another corporate affiliate to their plate, allowing for endless possibilities in growth.

A new partner that was brought to the table recently is Cargill feed company, of Nutrena. Cargill, the largest privately owned company in the world according to Martin, owns Nutrena. With the deal happening near the end of 2017, New Media Retailer will begin to reach out the small businesses that are affiliated with the brand to offer the company's services.

"All of the ventures we started have been very positive," said Martin. "We have all that technology that has been pieced together to carry out any of our solutions and will continue to find look into any that we don't have and may need to. It was, for all of us here, a crazy but amazing year and we are expecting the same for 2018."

Another avenue the NMR team is looking toward in the new year: Social Media Marketing.

While this is a service the company already provides,



A group of New Media Retailer employees pose for a picture in front of their sign outside their building. The group is also sporting their staff t-shirts with the NMR logo on the front. (Evening Sun Photo, Meagan Schulz)

the needs of their customers have changed in the way their business uses a Facebook page.

"[NMR's customers] might be currently paying us to post on their Facebook page 15-20 times a month, but now with the way a business can use Facebook, they want to run ads and target specific demographics in the area too," said Martin.

"Social Media Marketing is going to be a big component in helping drive revenue," said Baio. "And as Facebook continues to be a pay-to-play environment, it's something we need to be a partner for our stores to help offer."

However, this marketing may see a few new challenges. To meet the demand, a small restructure of the way the company operates maybe

instore.

Possibly in the near future, the New Media Retailer could convert into more of an agency type of environment—which could mean new hiring opportunities at NMR.

From four-day work weeks, to themed days, to crockpot luncheons, fun is to be had with the coworkers in office.

There is a position in a tech environment, as growth happens rapidly in the industry. Because of this, Baio stated New Media Retailer is always looking to fill positions or add new positions to the current employee structure.

"[NMR] is always collecting resumes, even when we don't have jobs available. And the amount of resumes we receive makes our job pretty easy when we go to

hire someone new.

In fact, we are looking to hire someone right now but we haven't posted anything because we have such good resumes already submitted," said Baio.

When asked about the education needed of the typical employment candidate New Media looks for, both Martin and Baio stated there really isn't a standard as far education level. If there is someone who has the drive to learn, to grow their knowledge of the industry as an employee by finding ways to learn while having a good attitude and strong customer service skills, that said person is a great fit for NMR.

In 2017, with the quick and successful start to the company's E-Commerce project, longtime employee Janet Thomas was promoted from

production manager to over see our top E-Commerce accounts.

Filling her previous position of Production Manager was Bob Kawa, another season veteran member of the NMR. Kawa advanced to Production Manager after being the Senior Front End Developer. When Kawa first started with the company, he was a graphic designer. Kawa self-taught website coding over the time of his employment and continues to learn as the industry is always changing.

The world of technology is a revolving door. If New Media Retailer continues their growth in education, employment opportunities and of course revenue, the possibilities are endless to where NMR will end up.

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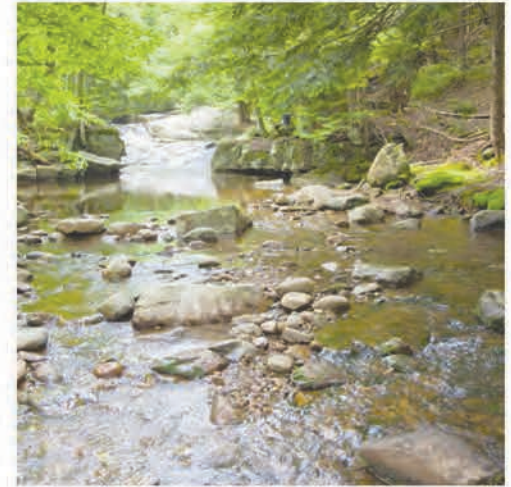
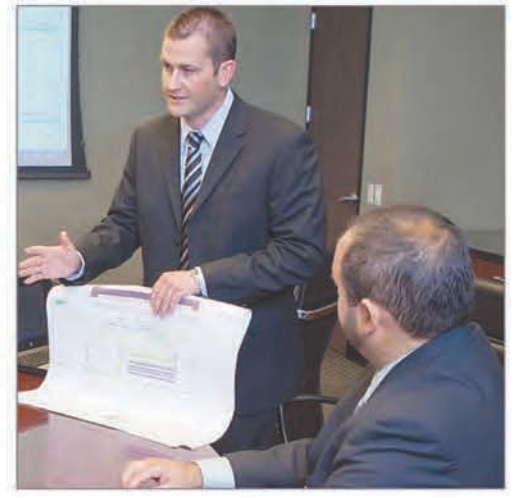
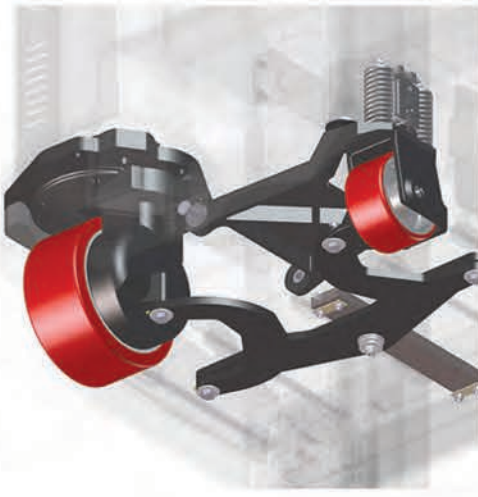
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