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see pg. 14

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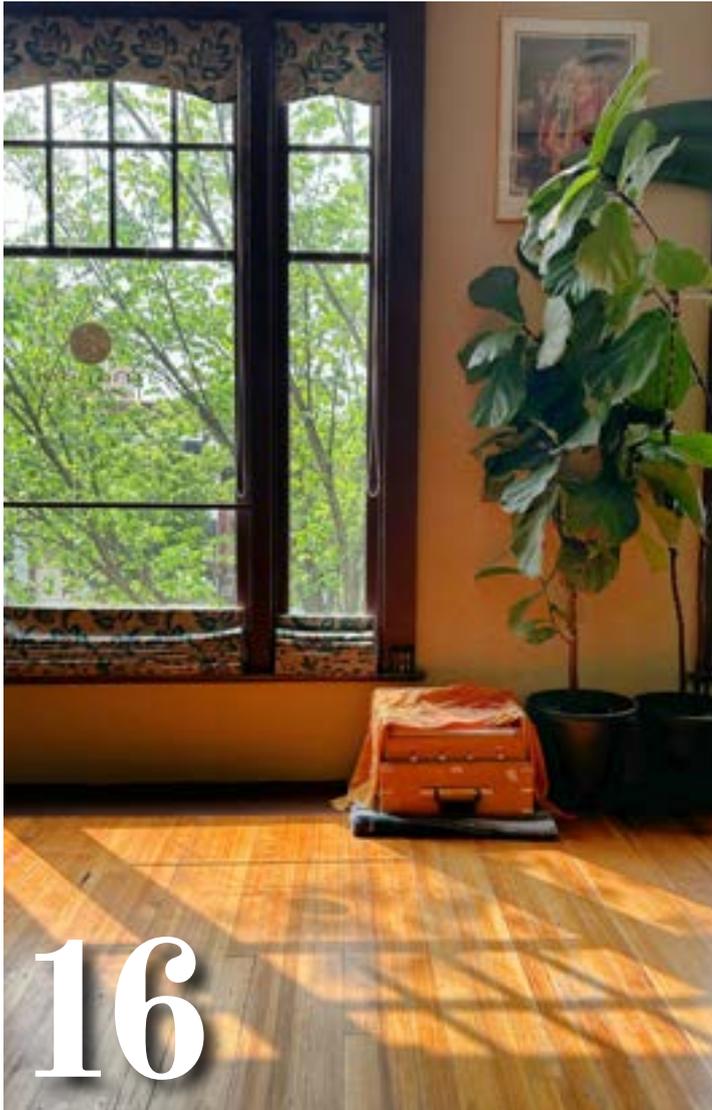
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RESOURCE TOOL BOX



ADIRONDACK REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) is a 100% membership funded organization with the mission of supporting our business community through advocacy, education, connection and collaboration. The ARCC offers numerous benefits intended to help businesses grow and thrive, including resources in the following areas: business and professional development, money savings, marketing and promotion, ribbon cuttings, and sponsorships.

518-798-1761 | AdirondackChamber.org

LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & CVB

The mission of Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB, Inc. is to drive tourism to the Lake George region year-round while fostering a vibrant business community. The Chamber seeks to promote growth and development of its member businesses by offering networking events, educational programs, ribbon cuttings and other opportunities.

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Saratoga Builders Association Offers Two Student Scholarship Awards in 2026

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COMMUNITY

The Saratoga Builders Association is proud to announce their continued monetary commitment to education and will be awarding two student scholarships once again in 2026. One is the \$1000 SBA Scholarship award and the other is the \$1000 "Bob Best" Memorial Scholarship award. The organization makes these cash scholarships available annually to students who are planning to pursue a construction-related education.

These scholarships are open to any high school senior or college undergraduate who lives or works in Saratoga County who is planning to pursue a construction education at a 2 or 4-year accredited college, university, technical school or for students who would like to purchase tools and/or equipment for employment/career or to start a business in the construction industry. Students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. They must demonstrate current or past involvement in the construction field, including classes taken in high school or college, to be eligible for these awards. Each applicant must also submit a high school or college transcript or list of trade classes taken plus a short essay (or video) describing why they are interested in a construction industry career.

Applications for the Saratoga Builders Association Scholarship program must be postmarked on or before April 30, 2026. Only the first 25 completed applications will be accepted so please apply early. The winners and their schools will be notified by June 1, 2026. To receive a scholarship application, please contact Barry Potoker, Executive Director at 518-366-0946 or bpotoker@saratogabuilders.org.

About Saratoga Builders Association

The Saratoga Builders Association, Inc. is a specialized professional trade association representing an industry basic to the well-being and economy of the people of Saratoga County. Its membership includes residential and commercial builders, developers, remodelers, building material suppliers, sub-contractors, financial institutions, architects, engineers, Realtors, attorneys and other industry professionals. SBA is committed to the continued growth, prosperity and quality of life in Saratoga County. The SBA has contributed nearly \$1.7 million dollars to our local charities through their annual fall event – The Saratoga Showcase of Homes which is celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2026. ■

March 17, 2026
Holiday Inn, Broadway, Saratoga Springs

Saratoga Springs 74th Friendly Sons of St. Patrick's Dinner



Pictured above are the 2026 officers for this year's dinner: Treasurer Jack Parrish, Vice President Steven Rowland, President Patrick Fleming, Secretary Michael Mitchell, and Past President and Keeper of the Shillelagh Mark Phillips.

The Saratoga Springs chapter of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick will celebrate St. Patrick's Day with their 74th annual dinner on March 17, 2026, at the Holiday Inn on Broadway in Saratoga Springs. The group is a fraternal organization that meets once each year on St. Patrick's Day to honor the patron saint of Ireland and to raise money for local Catholic charitable organizations.

The 2026 officers for the dinner are President Patrick Fleming, Vice President Stephen Rowland, Treasurer Jack Parrish, Secretary Michael Mitchell, and Past President and Keeper of the Shillelagh Mark Phillips.

Many cities throughout the country have chapters of the society, including Albany and Troy, New York. One of the first chapters of the society was founded in post-Revolutionary War New York City by Irish American Daniel McCormick. The purpose of the society was to help impoverished and displaced immigrants who arrived in New York in the wake of the British evacuation. The first meeting of the New York City chapter was held in 1784 at Cape's Tavern.

The Philadelphia Friendly Sons of St. Patrick is believed to be the first chapter of the society and was founded in 1771. ■



Mother-Lovin' 5K Registration Opens

Give the gift of bringing smiles to children and families by signing up for the 2026 Kelly's Angels' Mother-Lovin' 5K Run/Walk, and get a free car wash when you register for the family event of the spring!

Registration is now open for our annual Mother-Lovin' 5K Run/Walk, which is returning to Saratoga Spa State Park on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10. The 14th annual event serves as the main annual fundraiser for Kelly's Angels' mission to help families who have lost loved ones to cancer or other illnesses or are battling life-threatening conditions.

"We would love for you and your friends and family to join us for a morning of fun for a great cause," said Kelly's Angels founder Mark Mulholland. "Our annual 5K has been bringing families together for 14 years. It is so much more than a walk or run in the park."

Music, food, and refreshments, raffles, and good vibes abound. And new this year, our good friends at Hoffman Car Wash are providing a free car wash to each person who registers!

The activities on Mother's Day step off at 8:45 a.m. with a free Kids' Fun Run in which children ages 9 and under race toward the finish line with moms and dads rooting them on or running alongside.

The Mother-Lovin' 5K begins at 9:15 a.m.



14th Annual Kelly's Angels Mother-Lovin' 5K Run/Walk

WHEN: Sunday, May 10, 2026

WHERE: Orenda Pavilion, Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga Springs, or virtually from wherever you are.

HOW: Sign up at ZippyReg.com or www.kellysangelsinc.org



Sign up!

Join us before the 5K for an auction of great prizes such as restaurant gift certificates, wine, fitness and beauty baskets, and gifts for kids.

As in past years, there will be complimentary treats and goodies from businesses that are longtime supporters of Kelly's Angels.

Registration is \$40 for individuals through May 9, and \$45 on race day. Included t-shirts are guaranteed for the first 1,000 who sign up by April 21. Individuals, families, and teams are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible.

Online registration can be done through ZippyReg.com or www.kellysangelsinc.org, and continues through May 9.

This year, we will again offer a virtual run/walk, where participants can support our cause from afar. (Virtual participants do not receive t-shirts.)

Awards will be given to the top finishers across eight age groups.

Those participating in person can pick up their registration packets in advance on Saturday, May 9, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Spa State Park's Orenda Pavilion. Day-of-race registration and packet pickup begins at 7:30 a.m. Sunday, May 10 at Orenda Pavilion.

About Kelly's Angels

Now in its 16th year, Kelly's Angels has brought much-needed joy to hundreds of Capital Region children who have lost a parent or primary caregiver to cancer or other illness or event. Kelly's Angels was founded by NewsChannel 13's Mark Mulholland in memory of his wife Kelly, who passed away in 2007 at the age of 37, leaving behind the couple's 7-year-old son Connor and 5-year-old daughter McKenna.

Since then, Kelly's Angels has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and scholarships to Capital Region children and families.

Kelly's Angels gives Fun Grants to children who have lost a parent, primary caregiver, or sibling to cancer. The grants allow kids to buy something special or visit a place that makes them happy. Kelly's Angels also provides college scholarships to area students who have overcome adversity and shown a commitment to helping other children.

Our "Angel Aid" helps families struggling with expenses related to life-threatening illness, and our "Angel Hugs" are a single, modest grant to remind a surviving parent that we remember and are here for them. The "Hugs for Ukraine" program aids children who relocated to the Capital District to flee the war in their home country.

Kelly's Angels, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, and all donations to the organization are tax-deductible under the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service. ■

STRONGER TOGETHER

How Chamber Affinity Groups Build Connection and Community



ARCC Women's Business Council Leadership - Past Chair Tracey Wardwell (Capital Bank), Communications Chair Brooke Reynolds (Funky Solutions), Immediate Past Chair Ginny Brandreth (Zobel & Co. Kitchens), Membership & Sponsorship Lead Alexis Colucci (The Queensbury Hotel), Education Lead Ann Donnelly, Vice Chair Jessica Botelho (Botelho Law PLLC), and Chair Lourene Bouffard (Every Penny Bookkeeping & Business Services).



by **Amanda Blanton**,
ARCC Vice President,
Marketing & Communications

Photos provided

At its core, a Chamber of Commerce is about connections and bringing people together to strengthen businesses and the broader community. Affinity groups take that mission a step further, creating intentional spaces where members can engage around shared interests, industries, and experiences. They provide platforms for learning, leadership development, and collaboration, ultimately strengthening not just individual businesses, but the fabric of our entire business community.

The ARCC Women's Business Council (WBC) was established in 2019 to provide opportunities for women-owned businesses, sole proprietorships, and women professionals to connect, collaborate, and grow. Over

the years, the group has fine-tuned these opportunities to combine education and networking into an hour-long meeting hosted once a month at various locations. The WBC kicked off 2026 with an engaging panel discussion on the basics of HR and the benefits of outsourcing these services. In February, meeting attendees were treated to a special tour of the *Feast of Fruits and Flowers* exhibit featuring women still life painters of the seventeenth century and beyond, led by curator Bryn Schockmel. And as a bonus, the ladies were also led through the *Fake Plants and Other Curiosities* exhibit by curator Derin Tanyol. To bring the business community together, the WBC is planning a summit event open to all on May 6th at SUNY Adirondack, with a panel discussion focused on the applicable use of AI for small and mid-sized businesses.



1

The Adirondack Nonprofit Business Council (ANBC) of the Adirondack Regional Chamber has been supporting nonprofit organizations since 2013 by providing opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions, sharing of resources, and raising awareness. One of the most beneficial ideas to come out of this group is the monthly Nonprofit Chats—an informal gathering of nonprofits to learn and network. Giving nonprofits an opportunity to learn more about each other and discover ways to collaborate has resulted in some incredible partnerships in the region. In addition, most meetings are held at a nonprofit location, allowing attendees to learn about these organizations, tour facilities, and have unique experiences.

When a couple of veterans in business approached the ARCC in 2021, expressing the need to establish an affinity group for veterans, the Veterans Business Network (VBN) was established. Throughout the years, the leadership of this group established solutions to the needs of veteran-owned, veteran-friendly, and veteran entrepreneur businesses. Some of these solutions included seminars on benefits, networking opportunities, and the annual Veteran & First Responder Walk for Suicide Awareness, now planning for its sixth year. In 2026, the group has planned a fun outing at ADK Karting to build camaraderie and an educational event in May featuring speakers from the McNulty Veterans Business Outreach Center. Planning for the annual Walk is underway for mid-September in Glens Falls City Park.



2

Realizing that we spend about one-third of our lives at work (and for some, it may be more), the Workplace Health & Wellness Council is creating opportunities for people to step away from work for a bit and learn about the health and wellness resources available right here in our communities. Their Community Wellness Chats feature a different topic each meeting and invite attendees to connect with health and wellness professionals, ask questions, and gather resources to bring back to their workplaces. Additionally, an annual symposium event is planned, currently for April, which the public is invited to attend.

New for 2026, the ARCC is developing a Young Professionals Network to empower emerging leaders through education, connection, collaboration, and advocacy, therefore strengthening the future of our local business community. Led by a small leadership group of young professionals, plans are already underway to host quarterly networking opportunities, develop a mentorship program, and learn leadership skills.



3

As chambers evolve to meet the changing needs of today's workforce and entrepreneurs, affinity groups represent a powerful model for engagement. When members find their people, real growth happens. Through affinity groups, the Chamber continues to foster relationships that extend beyond business—building a community rooted in connection, shared learning, and mutual support. ■



4

PHOTOS:

1. February Nonprofit Chat, presented by the Adirondack Nonprofit Business Council
2. ARCC staff and members of the Veterans Business Network Leadership - ARCC Director of Membership Development Ava Kanninen, VBN Communications Dustin Hall (Amsure), ARCC President Tricia Rogers, VBN Chair Chris Thomas (Elite 9 Talent Solutions), VBN Vice Chair Kris Brunelle (White Glove Service), VBN Immediate Past Chair Sean Dion (Mr. Electric).
3. A few ANBC Leadership Members and February's guest speaker April Weygand - Christine Hoard (The Hyde Collection), April Weygand, Chair Sarah Hoffman (Lake George Land Conservancy), Michele Morehouse (ASCEND Mental Wellness), and Cheryl Lawyer (The Moreau Community Center)
4. Past Community Wellness Chat at Common Roots Cafe

DOWNTOWN DOGS SPA & BOUTIQUE

Brings *New Life* to
South Street in Glens Falls



Interviewed by
Matthew Knoth

Photos provided



G

Glens Falls has long been known as a walkable, community-driven city, but like many downtown areas, it has also faced its share of quiet streets and empty storefronts. For years, South Street in particular sat underutilized. An area locals recognized as full of potential, but in need of the right businesses and the right energy to bring it back to life.

That's exactly where Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique comes in.

Owned and operated by Alisha Stosic, Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique has quickly become one of the most exciting new additions to downtown Glens Falls. Located at 45 South Street, the business officially opened on November 20, 2025, with a ribbon-cutting celebration held on December 16. And while the shop is new, the impact it's already making on the neighborhood is significant.

"We are in downtown... where we are the beginning businesses to the revitalization of South Street," Stosic shared. She explained that South Street has been "pretty empty and kind of rundown for the past decade or more," but now the momentum is shifting, and Downtown Dogs is part of that change.

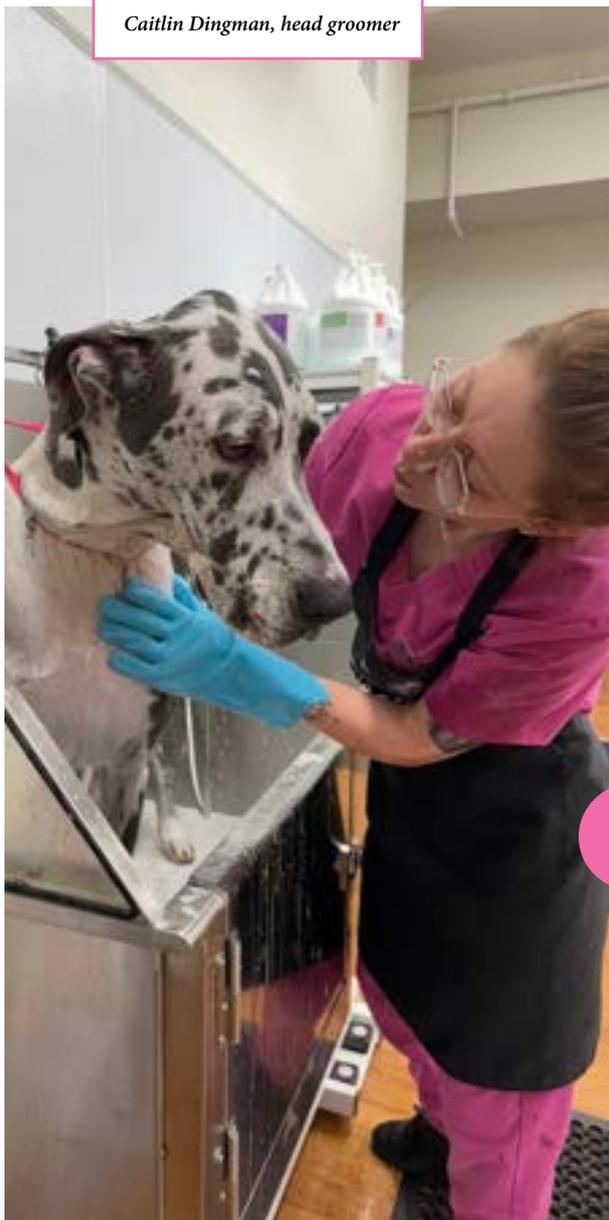
From Corporate Life to Community Business Owner

Stosic's path to entrepreneurship wasn't immediate. Before opening Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique, she spent 20 years working in healthcare and nonprofit management. Like many aspiring small business owners, she reached a point where she wanted more freedom and something she could build herself.

"I just decided to kind of get out of the corporate life and wanted to do something on my own," she said.

But she didn't just want to start any business. She knew it needed to reflect her passion for dogs.

Stosic grew up in a dog-loving family and even spent time helping her grandparents, who operated a kennel when she was younger. That lifelong connection made it clear what direction her next chapter needed to take. When she found the South Street space, the idea came together quickly.



Caitlin Dingman, head groomer



Caitlin and Alisha standing outside the storefront.

A Unique Dog Spa Meets Boutique Experience

Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique isn't just another grooming business. It was intentionally designed to be something more. Part grooming salon, part specialty boutique, and part community hub for pet owners.

On the grooming side, the shop offers full grooms, baths, brushing services, walk-in nail trims, and seasonal grooming packages. She also mentioned fun add-ons such as hair tinsel for long-haired dogs and even pet-safe fur coloring, which they are beginning to roll out.

Currently, Downtown Dogs has two groomers, but the space is built to expand, with the ability to support four full-time groomers as demand grows.

On the boutique side, customers can shop for specialty toys, treats, wearables, and unique pet products that aren't typically found at major retailers like Target or Petco. Stosic emphasized that many of their products are USA-made, sourced from across the country, with a few locally produced items as well. One standout product? Dog beer. Something that has quickly become a fun talking point among customers.

For those outside the Glens Falls area, the boutique also ships nationwide directly through their website, with orders already sent as far as Montana and California.



Alisha Stosic and 2 of her 4 kids, Caden and Chloe - who you will often see at the shop helping out.

Helping Revitalize South Street

While Stosic doesn't consider herself a historian, she understands the importance of what's happening in this area of the city. She credits Glens Falls leadership with helping create the conditions for growth, saying the city has done a "wonderful job of getting the right people to do the right things" to move the street forward.

And the future looks big.

Stosic noted that by the end of upcoming development plans, the neighborhood is expected to gain over 200 new apartments within just a couple of blocks, an expansion that will dramatically increase foot traffic and demand for downtown businesses.

Building a Business Rooted in Community

Beyond grooming and retail, Stosic has a vision that goes deeper. Her goals include meaningful community involvement, such as partnering with organizations that support veterans and service dogs, and educating the public on service animal awareness.

One of her most impactful plans is launching a pet loss support group, something she believes is missing in the local area. She has even completed certification to become a pet loss specialist so she can lead and moderate the group.

"It's such a needed outlet... for people that lose their pets," she explained, describing it as a space for connection and support. The group is expected to begin soon and may be hosted at local coffee shops or outdoor spaces during warmer months.

Advice for Future Entrepreneurs

When asked what advice she'd give her younger self, Stosic didn't hesitate:

"Take the leap."

She acknowledged that fear often delays big decisions, but the truth is there's never a perfect time to start. Her message is simple: *do it anyway*.

Learn More About Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique

Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique continues to grow as one of Glens Falls' most exciting new businesses, bringing energy not only to pet owners but also to the ongoing revitalization of South Street.

To learn more, shop online, or book grooming services, visit downtowndogsspaandboutique.com. You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram to see daily updates and photos of the pups that come through the shop. ■

YOGA



Interviewed by
Stephen Zabala

Photo provided

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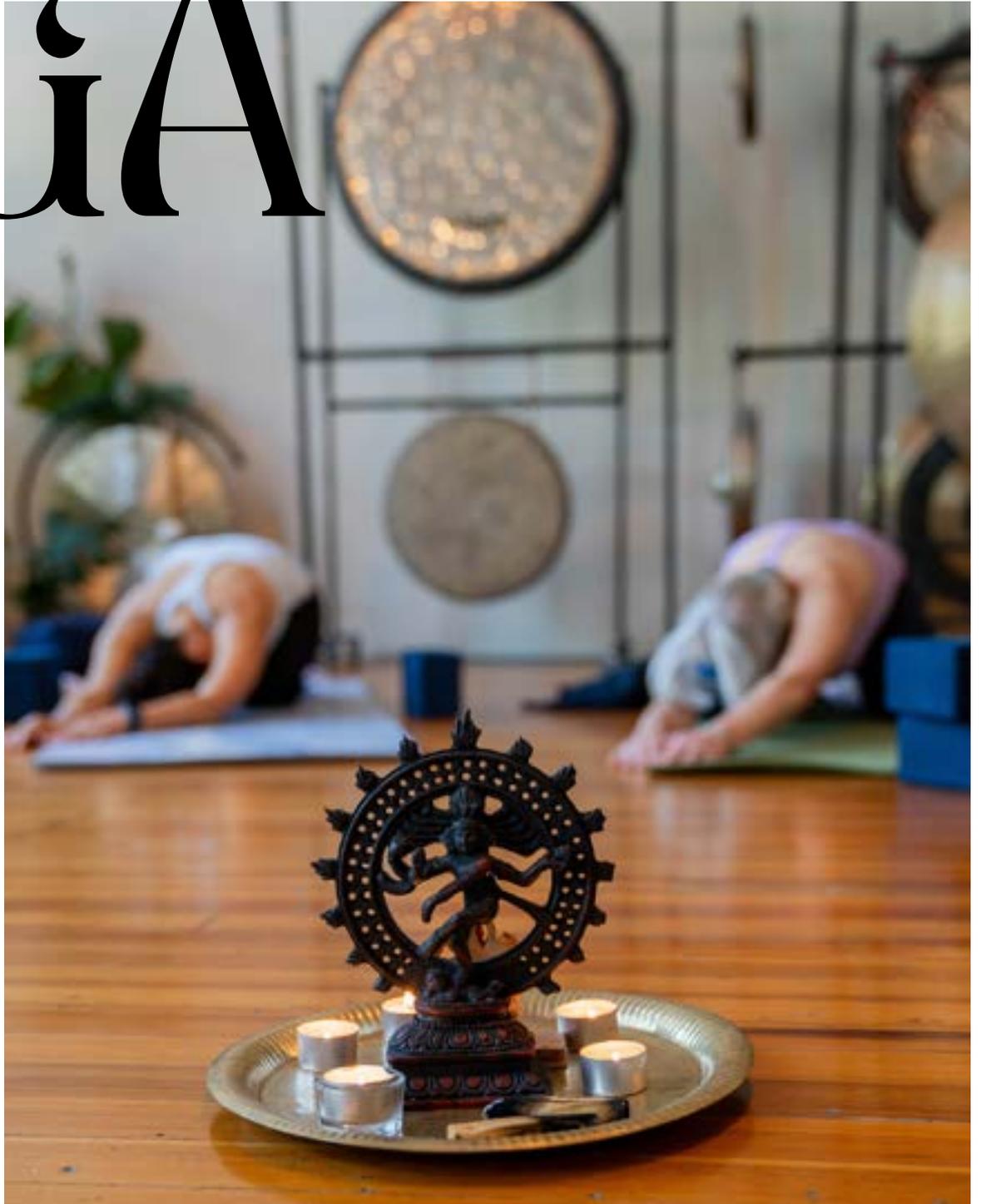
In the heart of downtown Saratoga Springs, on the second floor of a Broadway building overlooking the bustling street below, Yoga Mandali has quietly served as a spiritual anchor for two decades. The studio, Saratoga’s oldest yoga training and wellness center, recently marked 20 years of offering a space rooted in Bhakti yoga—the path of love, devotion, and surrender. At its helm stands Kristen Nelson, whose journey from a college gym requirement to studio owner reflects both personal transformation and a deep commitment to fostering genuine community.

From College Class to Lifelong Practice

Nelson first encountered yoga during her time at Hartwick College, where a physical education class introduced her to the practice. “I really love this,” she recalls of that initial experience. Life soon pulled her in other directions, but after relocating to Saratoga Springs, she found herself drawn back.

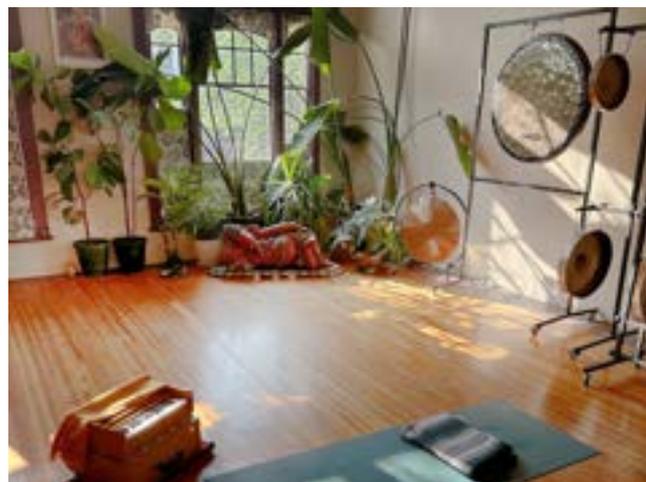
That turning point came when she stepped into Yoga Mandali. The studio’s emphasis on Bhakti yoga, a devotional tradition within the Gaudiya Vaishnava lineage, spoke to her in a way physical asana alone never had. “This could open up your heart in a way that just physical movement didn’t do.” Unlike many Western yoga studios that focus primarily on fitness and flow, Yoga Mandali centers on the heart chakra, mantra chanting, and the understanding that we are eternal souls, not merely bodies or minds.

.....



beyond the mat

Kristen Nelson Brings Heart-Centered Bhakti Yoga to Saratoga Springs



Taking Ownership and Honoring the Lineage

Nelson began teaching at the studio in 2014 and took ownership in 2018. She describes the space not as *her* studio, but as a shared community resource. “It’s our space,” she says, crediting previous owners and longtime teachers for creating its welcoming atmosphere. The wood-paneled rooms, filled with statues, plants, and natural light, offer a serene contrast to the busy world outside.

The studio’s lineage shapes everything: classes often include harmonium-accompanied chanting, stories from the Bhagavad Gita, and reminders that life’s temporary nature and inevitable suffering can be met with love and devotion. Accessibility remains a priority—Sunday donation-based classes let participants pay what they can, with proceeds supporting local charities. Over recent years, such events have raised thousands for community causes, and the studio partners with initiatives like girls’ education programs in India through Food for Life.

Creating a Healing Community Space

What sets Yoga Mandali apart is its breadth of offerings. While vinyasa and power classes exist, the schedule leans heavily into restorative yoga, yin, weekly gong baths, sound healing, Reiki, and kirtan—devotional call-and-response chanting. These practices aim to release stored trauma, quiet the “monkey mind,” and cultivate heart-centered awareness. “Mantra actually translates into freeing the mind,” she explains, noting how chanting helps practitioners drop from the busy headspace into the heart.



The studio also hosts workshops on chakras, philosophy, and bone health, alongside teacher trainings and retreats—including trips to India. Teachers and front-desk staff share a genuine intention to support each other and practitioners alike. “Every single person here... has absolutely the best intentions and the best love for each other,” Nelson says. The studio functions as a safe gathering place where people can move, meditate, chant, or simply rest—often emerging feeling more centered and connected.

A Message of Love, Devotion & Participation

For Nelson, yoga became a lifeline during difficult times. Facing personal struggles, she attended classes almost daily, finding nourishment in both the physical practice and the spiritual teachings. “I can actually make sense of some of this somehow,” she recalls realizing. The Bhakti perspective—that life involves suffering, impermanence, and the potential for devotion—helped her move from a surface-level existence to one grounded in love and service.

Yoga Mandali stands apart from many other yoga studios by prioritizing inner work over perfect alignment. Kristen Nelson encourages newcomers to try it without pressure: “Even if you’re like, I don’t care about yoga at all... come and lie down and get cozy.”

As Saratoga Springs continues to grow, Yoga Mandali remains a steady presence, reminding residents that true wellness often begins with opening the heart. For more information on classes, workshops, and events, visit yogamandali.com or follow @yogamandali on social media. ■

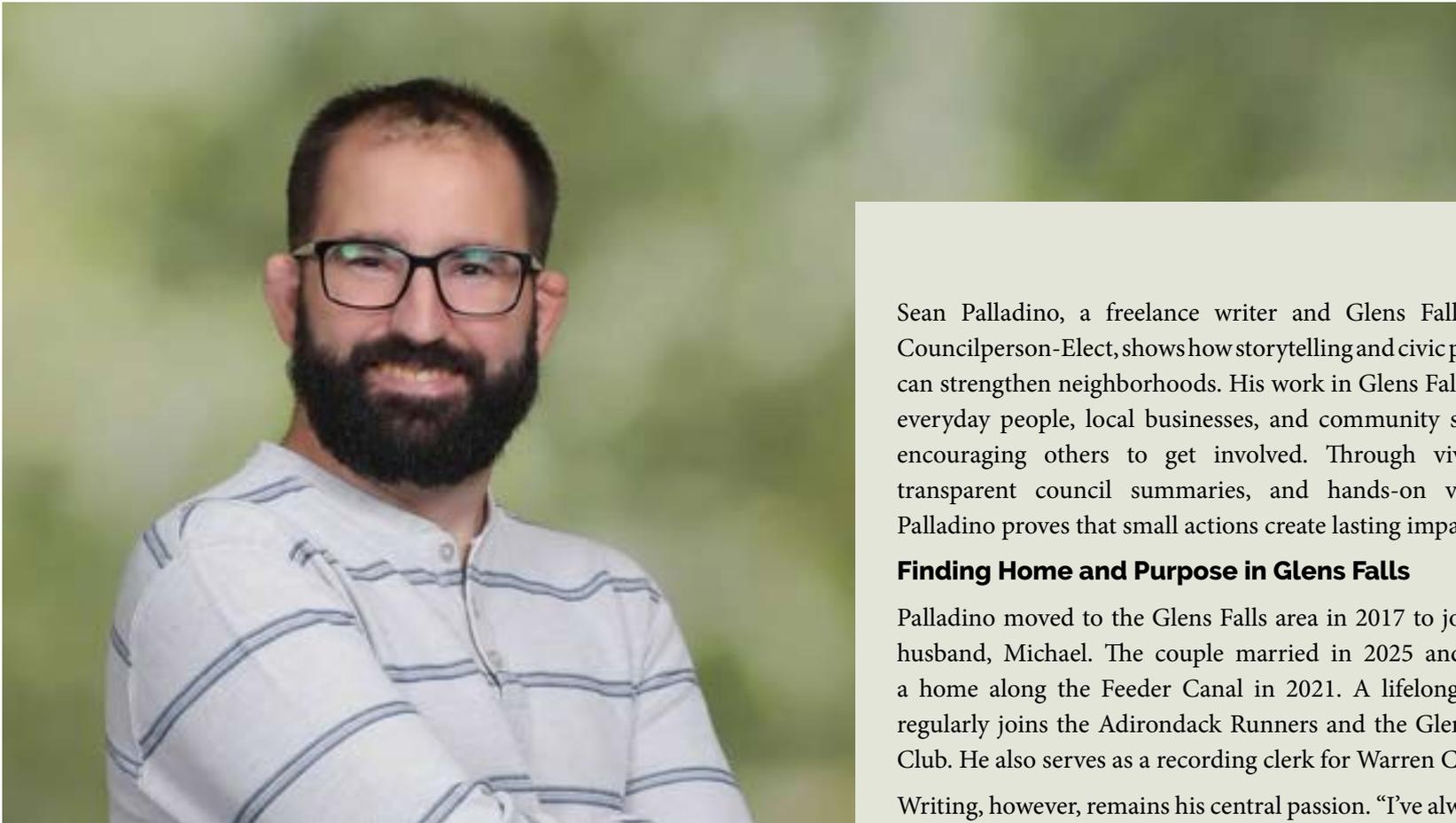


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Sean Palladino, a freelance writer and Glens Falls Common Councilperson-Elect, shows how storytelling and civic participation can strengthen neighborhoods. His work in Glens Falls highlights everyday people, local businesses, and community spaces while encouraging others to get involved. Through vivid articles, transparent council summaries, and hands-on volunteering, Palladino proves that small actions create lasting impact.

Finding Home and Purpose in Glens Falls

Palladino moved to the Glens Falls area in 2017 to join his now-husband, Michael. The couple married in 2025 and purchased a home along the Feeder Canal in 2021. A lifelong runner, he regularly joins the Adirondack Runners and the Glens Falls Run Club. He also serves as a recording clerk for Warren County.

Writing, however, remains his central passion. “I’ve always loved to write since I was little,” he says. After years in logistics and manual labor jobs, he discovered his calling through freelance articles and public service.



Interviewed by
Matthew Knoth

Photos provided

sean PALLADINO

Writing & Local Action in Glens Falls Community

Bringing Local Businesses to Life

Palladino’s pieces for *Buying Local* stand out for their immersive storytelling. He’s written stories on places like the Glens Falls Karate Academy, Stinky’s Coffee, and a local pinball arcade called Arcade Archaeology. Rather than arriving with a fixed idea of what he wants, he combines prior research with open conversations that let the subject’s energy shine through.

“I try and walk into an interview not knowing where it’ll go, but also try and research history beforehand to get the context,” he explains. His attention to detail helps him notice small elements others might miss: handcrafted bookshelves in a romance bookstore, decades-old artifacts at a karate dojo, or the unique backstory of pinball machines donated to children’s hospitals through Project Pinball.

His goal is simple yet powerful: help readers feel the same vibrancy he experiences. When writing about the pinball arcade, owner Lonnie’s enthusiasm was so contagious that Palladino noted this, hoping readers would leave knowing far more about pinball history than when they walked in.



Writing as Healing and Connection

Palladino openly shares how writing has been a lifeline for him. In 2024, he faced a serious mental health crisis that led him to seek treatment at Glens Falls Hospital. Journaling, creative projects, and therapy helped him rebuild. “When it’s out of your mind, you’re able to think clearly again,” he says.

By speaking publicly about his journey, he hopes to reduce stigma around mental health. “We all deal with depression, anxiety, or trauma,” he notes. “Finding that confidence again after depression has allowed me to try things I never thought possible, like reaching out to a local paper to write or running for office.”

Serving on the Common Council

Palladino won his seat on the Glens Falls Common Council by just 28 votes in his first run for public office. “Every single vote matters,” he says. Motivated by a lifelong desire to help people, he now focuses on improving the quality of life for Ward 5 residents.

On his website, seanpalladino.com, he publishes clear, accessible summaries of council meetings. These posts highlight key discussions and make local government easier to follow. He credits recent improvements, like better-organized agendas with page numbers and links, to the city’s new chief of staff and deputy clerk.



Cleaning Up and Giving Back

In his spare time, Palladino volunteers with the Feeder Canal Alliance, helping organize cleanups that have removed over 100 trash bags since May of 2025. These efforts protect wildlife, keep public spaces welcoming, and show how small, consistent actions benefit the entire community. He also recently helped submit a Parks and Trails application to “adopt” a section of the canal trail, aiming to secure supplies and better reporting channels for maintenance issues.

A Call to Get Involved

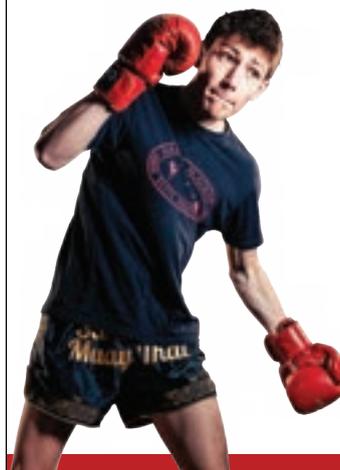
Palladino’s core message is straightforward: anyone can make a difference. “If I can do something, anybody could do something,” he says. “There should be no gatekeeping. Democracy requires our active participation.”

Whether joining a running group, pitching a story to a local publication, picking up litter, or running for office, small steps matter. In today’s world, a quick search can show anyone how to begin.

Visit seanpalladino.com to read his articles, council summaries, personal essays, and reflections on Glens Falls life. His work reminds us that community isn’t something we simply live in. It’s something we build together, one story and one action at a time. ■



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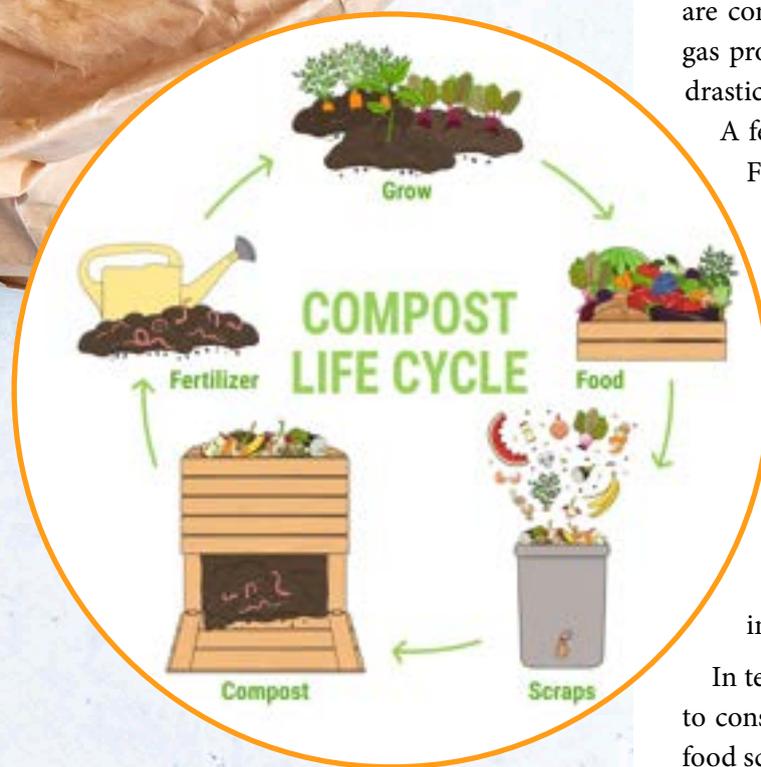
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COMPOSTING

IN GLENS FALLS



Fight Climate Change Locally!

By Josie Hogan,
a Junior at Glens Falls High School

Composting is one of the most simple yet impactful ways to combat climate change in any community. When food scraps are composted rather than disposed of in landfills, greenhouse gas production, in the form of methane and carbon dioxide, is drastically decreased and otherwise wasted energy is renewed.

A few opportunities to easily compost already exist in Glens Falls, and more are coming soon.

Greenhouse gases are the main cause of the change in climate that the world is facing today. Because of the constant emissions of these gases, a thick, gaseous blanket is developing in our troposphere and preventing heat waves from escaping the atmosphere, leading to an increase in temperatures and more unpredictable weather. Two of the most abundant gases contributing to this gaseous blanket are methane (CH₄) and carbon dioxide (CO₂). Composting can prevent the emissions of both of these gases, contributing to a significant decrease in the thickening of this blanket.

In terms of the reduction of methane emissions, it's important to consider how food normally decomposes: in landfills. When food scraps are piled into mounds of plastic, furniture, and other types of waste that households send to landfills by the ton every day, they do not have access to oxygen, meaning they decompose anaerobically. When food scraps decompose anaerobically, they naturally release methane—tons of it. In fact, the EPA recently determined that methane produced by food scraps in landfills accounts for about 58% of the methane produced worldwide, meaning that our lack of composting is directly responsible for more than half of the emissions of one of the most dangerous greenhouse gases. We can stop this! Composting is so simple and allows all food to decompose aerobically, with oxygen, while also creating extremely fertile soil.

After composting sites process the food scraps they receive, they are left with healthy soil full of microbiomes, minerals, and nutrients. This soil is often donated or sold to local farmers or kept at the site and used to grow more food and plants. These plants, through the process of photosynthesis, absorb the excess carbon dioxide that we emit into the atmosphere every day through the burning of fossil fuels for our electricity, heat, and transportation. NASA predicts that plants are responsible for absorbing about 55% of human-produced CO₂ by undergoing a process that also gives us food.

Of course, plants can be grown without the use of soil made from composting. Fertile soil is naturally available; however, not permanently. When plants are grown in soil, either to be sold and consumed by people or to be used to feed farm animals in order to produce meat and animal products, nutrients from the soil are used. Soil must be nitrogen-rich and full of minerals and nutrients in order to yield any successful crop, and these nutrients are not always present in soil. When plants are repeatedly grown in the same soil for seasons on end, the soil becomes nutrient-depleted and unhealthy, unable to produce any more crops. This results in the desertification, or rendering of soil infertile, of about four football fields' worth of land every second worldwide,



according to the United Nations. Needless to say, this is not sustainable. Consuming energy from the earth and never returning any energy back will not work forever. The earth's resources are finite. Something has to change.

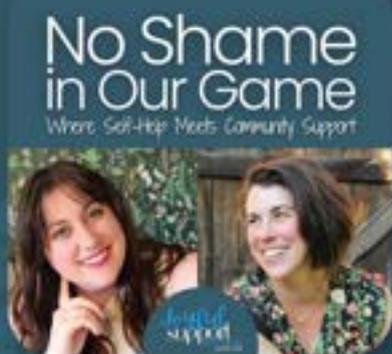
Composting, among other benefits, provides a solution to this broken cycle of resources. When food waste is composted and turned into fertile soil, the energy consumed in order to make the food (from the sunlight used to grow the plants, the food used to keep the animals alive, the water

used for growth, etc.) is given back to the earth. Instead of the path of all this energy ending in a landfill, it can continue on to power more energy by fertilizing future crops. Composting is capable of creating a fully sustainable food and energy cycle, whereas today we really only have a food and energy path... that ends.

As you can see, composting has numerous benefits. It can prevent the emissions of greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it can provide soil and nutrients for more food to grow, and it can create a sustainable cycle of energy. So, how can you utilize composting in Glens Falls? Well, the Farmers Market on South Street collects food scraps every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., and it's very easy to collect your household's food scraps in a small bucket and bring them then! In addition to this, a composting pilot program led by Warren County Soil and Water is set to begin before the end of 2026. People will be able to sign up to bring their food waste to a local drop-off site, where it will be picked up and brought to a composting facility that will process their food and turn it into healthy soil.

Composting is an incredibly simple and efficient way to improve the natural environment around us, and it's becoming more and more accessible in our community. Please consider composting today! ■

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Saratoga Winter Farmers' Market

Wilton Mall
3065 NY-50, Saratoga Springs

SCHEDULE:

Saturdays, November – April
9:30 AM – 1:30 PM

- FMNP Accepted: Yes
- FreshConnect Checks: Yes

Halfmoon Farmers' Market

Abele Memorial Park, Halfmoon
OR inside Halfmoon Town Hall,
Harris Road, Halfmoon

SCHEDULE:

Wednesdays, Year-round, 3 – 6 PM

- FMNP Accepted: Yes
- FreshConnect Checks: Yes

Glens Falls Farmers' Market (Winter)

The Market & Event Center "The Ed"
57 South Street, Glens Falls

SCHEDULE:

Saturdays, November 2 – April 25
9 AM – 12 PM

- Manager Contact: 518-792-4918
- FMNP Accepted: Yes

Spa City Farmers' Market

Saratoga Spa State Park
(Lincoln Baths)
Saratoga Springs

SCHEDULE:

Sundays, Year-round, 10 AM – 2 PM

- FMNP Accepted: Yes
- FreshConnect Checks: Yes

Cambridge Valley Farmers' Market (Winter)

The Old Firehouse,
11 W. Main Street, Cambridge

SCHEDULE:

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January 12 – May 11
10 AM – 1 PM

- FMNP Accepted: Yes





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IT'S A *Small World* AFTER ALL



by David A. Kubikian, Esq.
Herzog Law Firm PC

If you have ever gone to Disney World or Land, you most certainly have taken a ride on “It’s a Small World.” The ride is full of nostalgia and whimsy. The same song plays on loop, in different languages and with different voices, while you slowly make your way through the globe. Nearly every culture and region is depicted, and the artistry is impeccable. It’s a Small World is on the Mount Rushmore of Disney attractions, and it symbolizes, quite literally, that there is more that we have in common than we don’t. Since the internet, I would say the ride also takes on a meaning that the world is not as large as it used to be. The distance between different parts of the world is just a few moments into the next room away.

As I sat on the ride with my family last week in a quite cold Disney World, mesmerized by the beautiful surroundings (and serenaded by the woman behind me on the ride who decided it was her time to sing, non-stop and out of tune, the lyrics to “It’s a Small World”), my thoughts were more about the little things in life that matter. I thought about how the ride is perfect because of the details. As my colleague and partner at the firm, Phil Vacchio, commented to me later, “there isn’t a chip in any paint or item out of place.”

Details matter.

That is particularly true in the world of estate planning and elder law.

Perhaps my thoughts shifting to work instead of just enjoying the ride with my family came from the seemingly daily conversations we have with clients about how particular the law is and how every fact matters when dealing with my areas of expertise. And it's not just relevant information I am talking about. Sometimes the smallest details will determine how successful our clients are (or aren't) in accomplishing their goals of leaving money to the right people, avoiding probate, protecting their hard-earned assets, and still keeping control of their assets.

The difference between a trust that accomplishes ALL of those goals and a trust that doesn't could be a single phrase or even a single word. We have seen dozens upon dozens of trusts, signed elsewhere years ago, that, because of the wrong language, do not protect that family's assets like they thought they did. Those are not the best conversations. The worst meetings we have stem from false senses of security and hearing from an attorney that the planning you previously did was all for naught.

We have seen deeds that may help avoid probate but do so in a way that creates tax havoc down the road, all because of the way that the deed transferred title. We have seen "Medicaid Asset Protection Trusts," one of the most important ways to accomplish all of those goals above, that mistakenly name the client as their own trustee, almost certainly making that trust defective for its intended purposes of asset protection.



The truth is that there are ways that our clients can avoid probate and protect money and still have capital C "Control" of their assets, but that requires that you play by the rules that New York State has set forth. Using an attorney who specializes in estate planning and elder law is a good start.

Details matter.

If and when you start kicking the tires on creating that updated estate plan and giving

more attention to your long-term care exposure, realize that there are ground rules for how this game works. And like all games, if you don't play by the rules, you lose.

David A. Kubikian, Esq., is a Principal at Herzog Law Firm, P.C., where he focuses his practice on estate planning, elder law, Medicaid planning, and related matters. Visit www.herzoglaw.com/ for more information. ■



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MORTGAGE APPROVAL

WITHOUT JARGON OR PRESSURE WITH THE HELP OF **OHAD OREN**



Interviewed by
Matthew Knoth

In the high-stakes world of home buying, the mortgage process often feels overwhelming—filled with confusing terms, tight deadlines, and high pressure.

Licensed Loan Consultant Ohad Oren at loanDepot takes a different approach. As he shared in a recent *Buying Local* podcast interview, his goal is simple: help clients get approved for a mortgage without the jargon or pressure.

Oren, who serves New York and Connecticut through loanDepot (the third-largest independent mortgage bank in the U.S.), brings nearly a decade of real estate finance experience. His background spans tech at Goldman Sachs, auto financing, and credit unions before landing in mortgages. This diverse path shaped his client-first philosophy.

"I want to make the process educational and as simple as possible, but not simpler," Oren explains. He compares his role to a trusted mechanic or doctor—someone who explains options clearly, offers honest recommendations, and stays available when questions or stress arise.

The Three Pillars of Mortgage Approval

Oren breaks mortgage qualification down to three core pillars that determine approval and terms:

1 Credit — Your score influences rates and available programs. Mortgages use a "tri-merge" from Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax, taking the middle score. He reviews this early so clients know where they stand.

2 Assets — This covers your down payment and closing costs. Contrary to common myths, you don't always need 20% down. Conventional loans can start at 3-5%, and certain government programs allow even less. Oren helps clients understand realistic savings targets, including closing costs that often surprise first-timers.

3 Income and Capacity — Lenders assess what you earn versus what you owe. W-2 employees typically need recent pay stubs and tax returns. Self-employed borrowers provide two years of tax returns to verify stable income. Oren walks clients through documentation without overwhelming them.

He emphasizes starting with pre-approval. Whether working directly with a buyer or through a realtor partner, Oren sends a quick application link, they review it together, and he provides clear next steps. This gives buyers confidence to shop for homes within their actual budget—much like knowing your car-buying range before visiting dealerships.



CREDIT SCORE



ASSETS



INCOME & CAPACITY



APPROVAL!

Why His Approach Stands Out

Current market conditions highlight the value of Oren's style. With rates elevated for several years, most activity focuses on purchases rather than refinances. Yet Oren educates clients on both, preparing them for potential rate drops that could make refinancing attractive. He stresses realistic expectations: "Nobody has perfect credit. No title is always perfect. No house has zero issues." By setting the bar slightly higher on time and costs upfront, he ensures clients feel relieved rather than stressed when things go smoother than anticipated.

Oren also builds strong partnerships with real estate agents. He views realtors as "clients" and borrowers as "customers," working in lockstep so agents look good and deals close successfully. His personality—warm, humorous, and approachable—helps diffuse tension during what is often the largest financial decision of someone's life.

"Life keeps happening," he notes. A satisfied client today becomes a source of referrals for family, friends, and colleagues tomorrow.

Getting Started with Confidence

The process is simple. Reach out for a conversation with Oren today. You can visit his loanDepot page directly at loandepot.com/loan-officers/ooren.

Whether you're a first-time buyer, growing family, or considering a refinance, Oren's message is clear: You deserve a mortgage process that educates rather than intimidates, supports rather than pressures, and delivers results with clarity.

In an industry known for complexity, professionals like Ohad Oren prove that transparency and empathy can make home financing far more approachable. If you're ready to explore your options, a straightforward conversation could be the first step toward your new home—without the stress. ■



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#2

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#3

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4.7 Great

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#4

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cerroneplumbinghvac.com
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#2

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4.9 Excellent



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#4

★★★★★

4.9 Excellent



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#5

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#3

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4.0 Great



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#4

★★★★★

3.7 Good



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#5

★★★★★

3.7 Good



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Interviewed by
Derek Foster

Breaks Down the Foundations of Mindset Mastery

Photos provided • Above (left to right):

Stacy Spector, Leadership Coach • Jason Spector, Leadership Coach • Scott McKenna, President Catamount Consulting

In a compelling roundtable

on *Blue Collar StartUp*, Stacy Spector, Jason Spector, and Scott McKenna of Catamount Consulting unpack the essential mindsets that fuel leadership growth and high-performing teams in blue-collar industries. Relying on lessons learned and experiences in the sport psychology space, along with backgrounds in consulting and leadership, the trio outlines what they call the “Three Truths”. Core principles every leader must embrace to improve themselves and their organizations.

The first truth Catamount emphasizes is simple but profound: everyone is flawed. Acknowledging imperfection isn’t a weakness but a starting point for growth, requiring the self-awareness to recognize shortcomings, outdated beliefs, and ingrained defaults. When leaders and team members accept their own shortcomings, they open the door to authentic development rather than hiding behind pride or defensiveness. In sectors like construction and skilled trades, where resilience and self-reliance are cultural norms, admitting flaws can create space for reflection, humility, and real improvement.

Mindset as an Infinite Game

The second truth centers on mindset, and Catamount frames personal and professional growth as an *infinite game*. There’s no finish line where a leader can say, “I’ve arrived.” Instead, seasoned leaders continually lean into learning, adopting the belief that growth is never complete.

Jason Spector, drawing from his years of experience working with students and athletes, makes a vivid comparison: just as the body needs nutrition and oxygen to survive, the mind needs information and mental input to thrive. Without conscious effort toward growth through reading, self-reflection, coaching, or new experiences, leaders risk stagnation or regression. This mindset orientation puts development front and center as a daily priority rather than an occasional task.



Coaches Model Vulnerability and Create Psychological Safety

Alongside mindset, Catamount highlights the importance of psychological safety. An environment where team members feel comfortable sharing ideas, admitting mistakes, and engaging openly without fear of judgment. This culture of safety is not about soft leadership; it's about trust.

Stacy Spector, a leadership coach with a background outside traditional trades, emphasizes that vulnerability is a learned skill, not an innate trait. When leaders model vulnerability by owning missteps or asking thoughtful questions, they help their teams feel secure enough to take risks and innovate. This openness accelerates learning and strengthens relationships across an organization.

Scott McKenna adds that one of the biggest barriers to development is fixed mindset thinking—believing you already know what works and resisting new perspectives. He describes it as the silent killer of performance, turning problems into excuses, feedback into threats, and potential into stagnation. By contrast, a growth mindset reframes challenge as fuel, feedback as direction, and effort as a pathway to real results.

Practical Strategies for Growth

Beyond framing leadership principles, the Catamount team dives into practical tools leaders can use immediately. Journaling is a tool for self-reflection, accountability, and manifestation.

Writing experiences down increases awareness and accountability. They also advocate for micro-habits: behaviors that are simple to start yet easy to skip, which reveal internal obstacles and provide insights into behavior change.

Other strategies include intentional daily learning, regular feedback loops, and creating accountability systems through peer groups or coaching. These practices may be small in isolation, but over time they compound into meaningful shifts in thought patterns and leadership behavior.

Leadership Is a Daily Practice

One of the episode's strongest takeaways is that leadership is not a title; it's behavior rooted in consistent practice. Catamount Consulting urges leaders, especially in blue-collar fields, to embed personal development into daily routines rather than treating it as a luxury or afterthought. Growth becomes more sustainable when shared with peers, mentors, or coaches who can offer perspective, support, and accountability.

This discussion resonates with business owners, managers, and team leaders across skilled trades and construction, where leadership quality directly impacts safety, performance, retention, and culture. For those who want to take the next step, Catamount Consulting offers coaching, workshops, and leadership development services designed to accelerate individual and organizational growth. You can learn more at CatamountConsultingLLC.com. ■



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How to Build an Organization Chart That Supports Strategy (Not People)

If you've ever tried to scale a trades or service business, you've probably felt the pain of growth without structure. You hire when you're overwhelmed, shift responsibilities to your best employees, and patch holes wherever the business is leaking. It works for a while—but eventually the organization becomes dependent on a few key people rather than on a repeatable system.



Interviewed by
Michael Nelson
Photos provided

That's where the organization chart becomes one of the most valuable tools a growing business can use. In an interview on *Blue Collar StartUp*, Bill Tansey Jr. of The OpEx Shop explains why organization charts are often misunderstood but incredibly powerful when used correctly. But they only work if they're designed to support the company's future vision and strategy, not designed around the people you have today.

Organization Charts Aren't About Hierarchy

One reason business owners avoid organization charts is that they associate them with corporate bureaucracy. Bill argues the opposite. He describes an organization chart as “the simplest communication tool” for showing how a business is structured and how the “people design” supports the company's goals.

The key word is **communication**. A well-built chart makes it clear how roles connect, where accountability sits, and how work should flow through the organization. It is not meant to communicate ego, seniority, or pay. Bill warns that many teams assume the top of the chart means “most important,” but that's not the case. Instead, it should represent how people relate to each other in order to achieve the strategy.





The First Rule: Build Roles, Not Titles

One of Bill’s core points is that an org chart should be built around standard roles, not individuals. “As we look at the org chart, we should see a collection of standard roles, not people,” he explains.

This concept is essential for scalability. Without standard roles, businesses struggle to define what success looks like, and every position becomes customized. Bill ties this into a broader operational truth: you can’t have standard work without standard roles first.

Standard roles make the business predictable. They allow you to hire, train, and manage consistently, rather than reinventing expectations for every new employee.

The Biggest Mistake: Designing Around Your Current Team

Bill explains that “The single biggest mistake... is building the organization around the people you have today, not building the organization around your vision, your goals, your strategy for the future,” he explains.

This often shows up when a talented employee gets handed unrelated responsibilities simply because they can handle it. Bill gives the example of a “rockstar” team member suddenly becoming manager of three unrelated departments. The company isn’t structured logically—it’s structured around whoever is most capable in the moment.

That approach works temporarily, but it eventually becomes a growth ceiling.

Take the Names Off the Board

One of Bill’s best pieces of advice is to remove all names during org chart design. Step one is getting clear on strategy, and step two is throwing out all the names. The org chart should be built using standard roles that support the strategy, not personalities.

This removes emotion from the process. Bill points out that leaders care about their teams and that loyalty can cloud decision-making. Removing names allows the leadership group to design objectively first, then assign people afterward.

He describes it like “pin the tail on the donkey”—build the structure first, then see who fits where.



Functional Accountability: The Decoder for the Org Chart

Even with a strong org chart, confusion still happens if roles aren’t clearly defined. Bill introduces the idea of functional accountabilities, calling them “the secret decoder glasses for the org chart.”

Functional accountabilities are typically three bullet points that summarize the key responsibilities of the role. Bill compares it to explaining your job to someone’s grandmother at Thanksgiving: simple, clear, and easy to understand.

Without these accountabilities, organizations become ripe for conflict because people interpret roles differently.

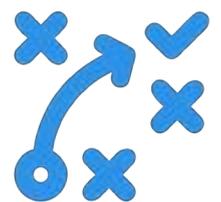
Org Charts Should Support Strategy and Stay Stable

Bill emphasizes that org charts should be revisited during annual planning, but shouldn’t constantly change throughout the year. If your chart is shifting every month, that’s usually a sign that the organization was never designed properly in the first place.

The only time the org chart should change mid-year is when something external forces a major shift—like policy changes, global disruptions, or economic conditions. Otherwise, your team should focus on executing the plan instead of constantly redesigning it.

A Better Way to Scale

Bill’s overall message is simple: your organization must be designed to win. “Good people want to win,” he says, and leadership’s job



is to position them correctly. That starts with designing a structure that supports strategy instead of depending on individuals.

For business owners in construction, trades, and service industries, this approach creates clarity, stability, and growth. When the structure is right, hiring becomes easier, accountability improves, and your team can execute the vision without constant chaos.

To learn more about Bill Tansey Jr. and his work, visit [The OpEx Shop at theopexshop.com](http://TheOpExShop.com). ■



5 Minutes to 10x Your Marketing



by Michael Nelson

— Part 2 | What Should You Talk About?



In a recent *Buying Local* article, we introduced the concept of “Five Minutes to 10x Your Marketing.” The strategy is simple: record one focused, five-minute video each month and use it as the foundation for a range of marketing assets.

While many business owners appreciate the idea, a common question follows: What should the video actually be about? The uncertainty around content often creates more hesitation than the act of recording itself.

The answer begins with a clear understanding of what marketing truly is.

A PRACTICAL DEFINITION OF MARKETING

At its core, marketing can be defined as identifying a specific group of people who have a specific set of problems and positioning yourself as the solution.

This definition shifts the emphasis away from promoting your company and toward understanding your audience. Effective marketing does not begin with your history, your features, or your accomplishments. It begins with the problems your ideal clients are trying to solve.

When you clearly describe a problem someone is experiencing, they immediately recognize themselves in your message. That recognition builds trust and positions you as someone who understands their situation.

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR MONTHLY VIDEO



To make your five-minute video effective, focus on one specific issue your target audience regularly encounters.

For example, a veterinarian might discuss a common seasonal health concern. A chiropractor might explain frequent causes of back pain. A B2B company might address operational inefficiencies that impact profitability. The more specific the problem, the more powerful the connection.

Once you identify the problem:

1. Explain why it occurs.
2. Provide helpful insight or guidance.
3. Clarify how your services address this issue.

This approach demonstrates expertise without turning the video into a sales pitch. Your goal is to educate and build confidence, not to list credentials.



WHAT TO AVOID

Many businesses default to talking about themselves, highlighting their team, their achievements, or their capabilities. While that information has value, it does not always help a prospective client understand how you solve their problem.

Even “Meet the Team” content should connect back to customer outcomes. Instead of simply introducing a team member, explain how their role contributes to solving client challenges.

Most online searches, whether through search engines or AI tools, begin with a question. People are looking for answers. When your content directly addresses those questions, it becomes far more relevant and effective.

WHY THIS STRATEGY WORKS

Consistently creating problem-focused content strengthens your authority and improves clarity in your messaging. Over time, you build a library of videos that address the real concerns of your audience and position your business as a trusted resource.

The formula remains straightforward: identify the audience, identify the problem, and present yourself as the solution.

With one focused five-minute video each month, you create meaningful content that supports your broader marketing efforts and keeps your messaging aligned with what your audience truly cares about. ■



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How Gold Star REFERRAL CLUBS

Helps Business Owners



Grow Through Networking



Interviewed by **Matthew Knoth**
and **Michael Nelson**

For many business owners, networking can feel like a gamble. You show up to an event, shake hands, swap business cards, and hope something comes from it. But more often than not, the conversations don't go anywhere, and the connections fade as soon as the meeting ends. That's where Gold Star Referral Clubs stands out. Because it isn't networking built on chance, it's networking built on structure, consistency, and trust.

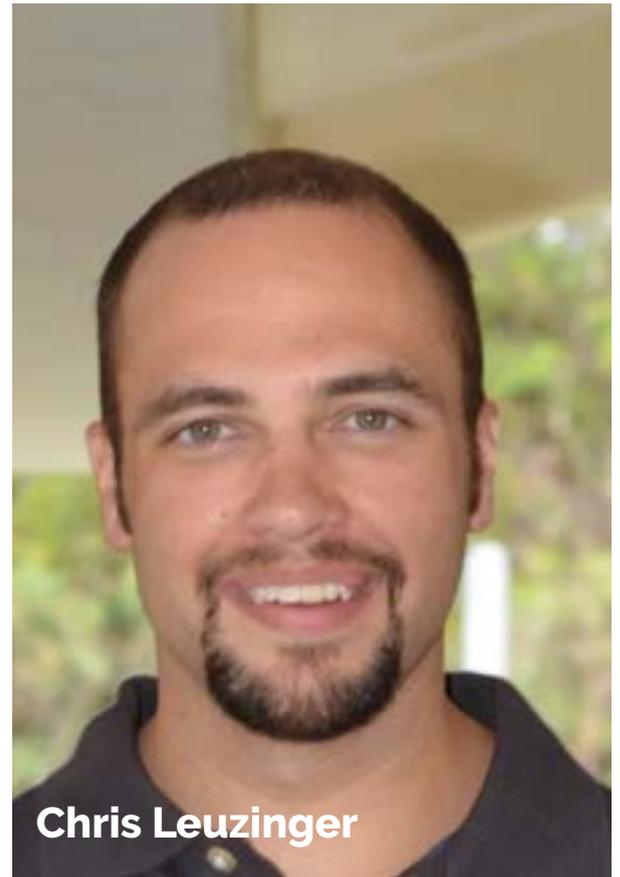
In a recent *Buying Local* interview, Bob Fitch, Chris Leuzinger, and Shawn Moodie sat down to explain how Gold Star Referral Clubs helps professionals create real business growth through a proven referral-based system. Their message was clear: when networking is done intentionally, it becomes one of the most powerful tools for scaling a business.



Bob Fitch



Shawn Moodie



Chris Leuzinger

Photos provided

A Structured Format That Produces Results

One of the key differences with Gold Star Referral Clubs is that meetings aren't random or unorganized. Shawn Moodie explained that the organization follows a consistent one-hour agenda each week. Members meet regularly, share a business tip, give a "62-second commercial" about what they do, and have opportunities to ask for specific referrals. The meeting also includes a longer presentation segment where one member can do a deeper dive into their business.

That structure is important because it eliminates the uncertainty many people associate with networking. Instead of wandering into an event and hoping to meet the right person, members are placed in an environment where everyone is there for the same purpose: to grow, collaborate, and support one another.

As Shawn pointed out, Gold Star strikes a balance that many networking groups miss. Some groups are overly rigid and stressful, while others are too casual to produce real outcomes. Gold Star's format creates consistency without feeling forced.

Building Relationships, Not Just Transactions

While referrals are an important part of the organization, Bob Fitch emphasized that Gold Star's value goes far beyond exchanging leads. He compared networking to the dating world: not every group is the right fit, and success comes from finding a community where you genuinely connect with people.

Over time, Bob said the group becomes something deeper than a weekly business meeting. It becomes a trusted circle of professionals who learn from each other, support each other, and grow together. That trust is what makes referrals powerful. When you know someone personally and professionally, it becomes easier to confidently recommend them to others.

Chris Leuzinger echoed this idea, explaining that the strongest benefit is how the group creates a "family feel." Business owners face many of the same challenges, regardless of industry. Being surrounded by people who understand those challenges makes it easier to stay motivated and focused on growth.

Consistency Creates Long-Term Growth

A major theme throughout the conversation was consistency. Referrals don't happen instantly, and Gold Star members don't expect overnight results. Instead, the group focuses on showing up week after week, building relationships over time, and staying "top of mind" in the business community.

This consistency is what separates Gold Star Referral Clubs from casual networking. When members meet regularly, trust develops naturally. Over time, people begin to understand what the other does, who their ideal clients are, and how to connect them with real opportunities.

As Bob explained, success in referral-based networking comes down to "trusting the process." It may take weeks, months, or even longer before major business comes through, but those relationships compound. The longer you stay involved, the more value you gain.

Cross-Clubbing Expands Opportunity

Another feature that sets Gold Star apart is the ability for members to visit other chapters, often referred to as "cross-clubbing." Chris explained that this gives members a huge advantage because it allows them to instantly meet dozens of new professionals in different areas without needing to join multiple groups.

In one hour, a member can introduce themselves to an entirely new room of potential referral partners. Chris shared that he has closed business directly from these cross-clubbing opportunities, and it helped him expand his network far beyond his home chapter.

Shawn added that Gold Star's culture encourages an "abundance mindset." Instead of seeing others in the same industry as competition, members learn to collaborate and look for ways to help each other. That mindset creates more partnerships, more referrals, and ultimately more growth.

Why Gold Star Referral Clubs Works

Gold Star Referral Clubs succeeds because it combines the three most important elements of business networking: structure, relationships, and repetition. The weekly format keeps members engaged, the one-on-one meetings deepen trust, and the consistent attendance creates long-term momentum.

For business owners who are tired of ineffective networking events and want real growth, Gold Star offers a system that works. It's not just about meeting people—it's about building a community that helps you grow your business through genuine connection and consistent referrals.

To learn more about Gold Star Referral Clubs and how to get involved, visit goldstarreferralclubs.com. ■

MARCH UPCOMING NETWORKING EVENTS

FRI

BNI
Meets every Friday at 7:30 AM
Southern Adirondack Realtors
296 Bay Road, Queensbury

SARATOGA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March Mixer at The 408 **12 MAR**
4:30 – 6:30 PM
The 408,
408 Broadway, 2nd Floor (Cantina),
Saratoga Springs

Fees/Admission:
\$10 for members, \$15 for walk-ins

Join us for our March Mixer, bringing together professionals, business owners, and community members for an evening of connection and conversation at the 408. Designed to be relaxed and welcoming, this mixer is all about building relationships, exchanging ideas, and spending time with people who are invested in our local community. This evening will also include a moment to honor Love Our Locals, recognizing the impact of supporting local businesses and the people who help our community thrive. Our 2025 Love Our Locals campaign had another record year for performance at over \$440,000 in spending and donations in Saratoga County!

Looking Ahead...

Albany Common Roots Joint Mixer with Capital Region Chamber **09 APR**
5 – 7 PM
Common Roots Brewing
19 Quackenbush Square, Albany
Admission: \$15/member

ARCC EVENTS

ARCC Women's Business Council March 2026 Meeting **10 MAR**
9 – 10 AM
Crandall Public Library
Christine L. McDonald
Community Room (lower level)
251 Glen Street, Glens Falls

Fees & Admission:
This event is FREE to attend.
Please register in advance

Veterans Business Network Community Race Day **11 MAR**
4 – 6 PM
ADK Karting,
Aviation Mall
578 Aviation Road, Queensbury

MEETING POINT

Glens Falls Chapter **16 MAR**
11 AM
EOS Office -
9 Broad Street
Union Square -
2nd Floor, Glens Falls

Saratoga Springs Chapter **19 MAR**
8:30 AM
Saratoga National
Bank, 171 S Broadway,
Saratoga Springs

Albany Chapter **20 MAR**
8:30 AM
22 Corporate
Woods Blvd,
Suite 501, Albany

LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & CVB

After-Hours Business Mixer at Jamo's Pub **18 MAR**
5 – 7 PM
Jamo's Pub
192 Canada Street, Lake George

Register: <https://pci.jotform.com/form/260423767968168>

Keep the St. Patrick's Day spirit going with the Lake George Regional Chamber at a festive After-Hours Mixer at Jamo's Pub! Join us Wednesday from 4-6 PM for an easygoing evening of connection, conversation, and a touch of Irish cheer.

Bring your friends and enjoy great company—plus a little karaoke fun for those ready to take the mic. With tasty bites, lively energy, and plenty of opportunities to mingle, it's the perfect midweek pick-me-up to celebrate community together. We hope to see you there!



Struggling with HR issues that slow down your business?

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Scan to learn more!





Facilitating the growth and development of Blue Collar businesses. We will showcase REAL Blue Collar businesses in interviews, and use these stories to help educate and empower the next generation of trades workers to become Blue Collar business owners.



EPISODE 113

How to Sell a Blue-Collar Company with Shemar Wood

In this episode, host Mike and Derek chat with Shemar Wood, who shares his remarkable journey from Apache helicopter pilot to founding Dynetek Solutions, a niche underground utility conversion company that he successfully sold to private equity. In this raw conversation he reveals the financial discipline, leadership mindset shifts, and strategic decisions that allowed him to scale fast, break through bonding & debt ceilings, and exit profitably.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 114

Project Management in the Trades with Caitlin Beaudry

In this episode, hosts Mike and Derek sit down with Caitlin Beaudry, Project Manager at Bonacquisti Brothers Construction, to break down what project management really looks like inside a commercial construction company. Caitlin shares her path from working in the field to managing up to 15 projects at once, along with lessons on leadership, loyalty, and why asking questions is a superpower in the trades.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 115

Why Every Leader Needs a Coach: Catamount Roundtable

In this episode, host Derek Foster sits down with Scott McKenna, Stacy Spector, and Jason Spector of Catamount Consulting for a roundtable discussion on leadership development, mindset mastery, and the personal growth tools that help blue collar teams perform at a higher level. They break down the “Three Truths,” explain why psychological safety and vulnerability matter, and share actionable strategies like journaling, micro-habits, and building discipline over motivation.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 116

The Biggest Mistakes Contractors Make with Greg Spaun

In this episode, hosts Mike and Derek sit down with construction attorney Greg Spaun to break down the legal risks contractors face and why contract details matter just as much as quality work. From “pay if paid” clauses to change orders and paperwork requirements, Greg explains how business owners can protect themselves before problems turn into expensive lawsuits.



SCAN TO LISTEN!

LISTEN ON





Saratoga, Warren, and Washington County have no shortage of fantastic goods & services to offer! In this podcast, our host Mike Nelson will clue you in on the gems hidden **in your very own community!**



SEASON 3, EPISODE 61

How Downtown Dogs Is Redefining Local Pet Care

In this episode, host Matt Knoth sits down with Alisha Stosic, owner of Downtown Dogs Spa & Boutique, to talk about leaving the corporate world, opening a dog-focused business in downtown Glens Falls, and helping revitalize South Street. They discuss the challenges of starting out, the importance of community, and how pets can bring people together in powerful ways.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



SEASON 3, EPISODE 62

Mortgages Without the Stress with Ohad Oren

In this episode, host Matt Knoth sits down with Ohad Oren, Licensed Loan Consultant at loanDepot, to break down what actually goes into getting approved for a mortgage without the jargon or pressure. Ohad shares how education, trust, and long-term relationships help buyers navigate one of the biggest financial decisions of their lives with confidence.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



SEASON 3, EPISODE 63

Sean Palladino Turns Creativity into Community Impact

In this episode, host Matt Knoth sits down with Sean Palladino, Writer and Councilperson-Elect, to talk about storytelling, spotlighting small businesses, and what it's like capturing the heartbeat of the Glens Falls community through writing. Sean also opens up about mental health, public service, and why getting involved locally can truly change everything.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



SEASON 3, EPISODE 64

The Power of Structured Networking: Gold Star Referral Clubs

In this episode, Mike and Matthew sit down with Bob Fitch, Chris Leuzinger, and Shawn Moodie to break down how Gold Star Referral Clubs helps business owners grow through structured networking, relationship-building, and consistent referrals. They explain what makes their group different, how meetings are run, and why trust-based connections often outperform traditional advertising.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



Join host Stephen Zabala, lifelong wellness enthusiast and founder of Greenfork, as he unpacks real-life, practical approaches to nutrition, wellness, and success—without the over complication.



EPISODE 30

Recovery Matters More Than Your Workout

In this episode, host Stephen Zabala sits down with returning guest Patrick Campbell of Ecotone Performance Health & Fitness to explore movement, recovery, and what it really means to feel good in your body. They dive into flow-based training, nervous system regulation, and why rest, recovery, and intentional movement matter just as much as the workout itself.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 31

Movement as Medicine with Kali Meliski

In this episode, host Stephen Zabala sits down with yoga teacher and personal trainer Kali Meliski from Continuous Evolution to discuss mindful movement, functional training, and why fitness should support your life—not dominate it. They explore yoga, barre, strength training, and creative movement as tools for longevity, balance, and mental well-being.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 32

Chasing Big Goals One Mile at a Time

In this episode of Food for Thought by Greenfork, host Stephen Zabala sits down with Jessica Hauprich, who is organizing the Saratoga half-marathon, to explore how running, endurance sports, and community can drive personal growth, resilience, and purpose. From marathon training to founding a welcoming run culture in Saratoga, Jessica shares how movement has shaped her mindset, motherhood, and leadership.



SCAN TO LISTEN!



EPISODE 33

Yoga Beyond the Mat: Energy, Mantra, and Eternal Soul

In this episode of Food for Thought by Greenfork, host Stephen Zabala interviews Kristen Nelson, owner of Yoga Mandali in Saratoga Springs, about her journey from college yoga classes to owning a heart-centered studio rooted in bhakti yoga—the path of love and devotion. They explore the full spectrum of yoga beyond physical postures, including breathwork, meditation, mantra, restorative practices, kirtan, gong baths, retreats, and teacher trainings that help release stored emotions, regulate the nervous system, and foster community.



SCAN TO LISTEN!

LISTEN ON

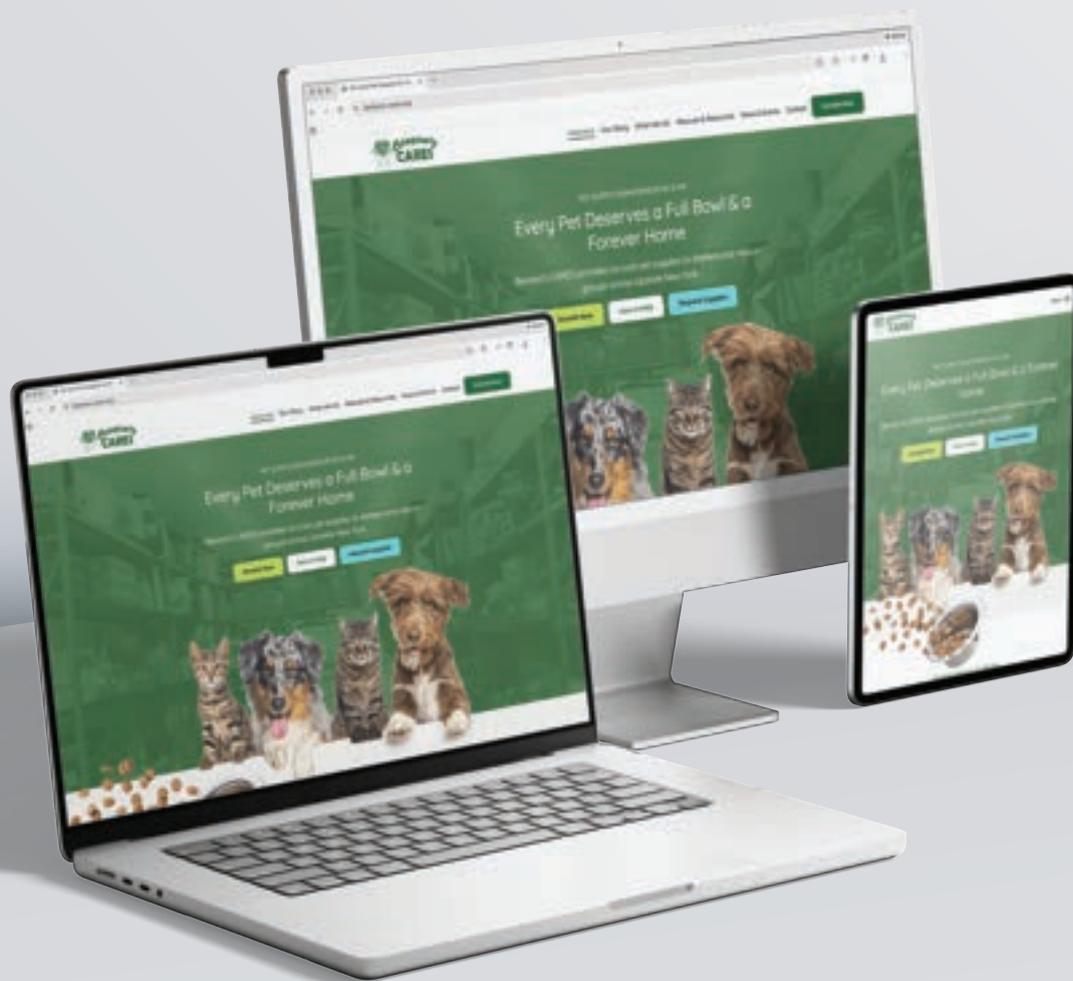


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