



Photo by Roger William Theise

# TODAY: Cortland County

TODAY: Cortland County is the Business Development Corporation's newsletter promoting industry and business growth in Cortland County.

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Volume 2 Issue 4

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**T**his issue's cover shot says it all when it comes to summertime in Cortland County: It's spectacular! Aside from enjoying the warm weather, we are also presented with the opportunity to enjoy a host of activities covering a broad spectrum of tastes, from outdoor sports and the arts to great food and entertainment.

Two staples of summertime fun in Cortland are detailed inside: The Cortland Repertory Theatre's performance series, now entering its 45th season at Dwyer Memorial Park's Little York Lake Pavilion, and the Main Street Music Series, now entering its 13th year on its open air stage next to the Marketplace Mall.

You will also find some useful information

on the important upcoming Innovative Readiness Training event set for the middle of July, as well as some updates focusing on community and economic development.

Finally, we've included some interesting statistics on the strength of Downtown Cortland. The statistics are provided courtesy of a national consultant, who recently identified for stakeholders our number one challenge to developing an even more vibrant and vital downtown: a pervasive negative attitude about what it is and what it can be.

*The BDC is Cortland County's principal economic development organization working for economic and community growth. Together, its programs, projects, and services aim to support existing businesses while promoting other job-creating opportunities across the county.*



**Garry L. VanGorder**  
Executive Director/CEO

**B**y the time this is published and distributed, we should know whether the city of Cortland has been successful in its bid for the state's \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant.

Our submission to the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) was the product of hours of work by a collaborative team representing a number of downtown stakeholders, and I believe it to

be highly competitive with entries from the cities of Oswego, Fulton, and Auburn.

*Our submission to the Central New York REDC was the product of hours of work by a collaborative team representing a number of downtown stakeholders.*

Even if we fall short, the process will have been a productive one as we continue to coalesce around themes and approaches designed to move downtown Cortland forward. Exciting projects are underway or in planning, and I think all of us came away from this planning effort with the belief that Cortland is primed and ready for that next step.

**With the DRI competition wrapped up** it's time to begin working on Round VI of Governor Cuomo's REDC Consolidated Funding Application competition. The five counties of the CNYREDC—Cortland County included along with Onondaga, Madison, Cayuga, and Oswego—have fared well in the first five years of the program, bringing home more dollars for economic development programs and projects than any of the 10 regions statewide. Cortland County is again expecting to be well-represented with project requests aiming to drive job creation and capital investment.

**Congratulations to the city of Cortland and Youth Bureau Director John McNerney** for their tireless efforts to renovate Wickwire Pool. Raising the dollars necessary for the project was never a sure thing, but a concerted campaign to leverage state resources and private donations culminated with the work and pool ribbon cutting June 20. Some had called for the pool's permanent closure when reports first surfaced of the facility's shoddy condition and the significant financial commitment that would be required to renovate it. But many, with Mayor Brian Tobin and McNerney leading the way, called for an all-out effort to keep a historic and valued recreational resource. Here's to another 50 years of summertime fun at Wickwire Pool!

*On the cover: Smoke and flame illuminate the night sky during a fireworks display over Little York Lake.*

# 4

CNY cities vying for \$10 million in DRI competition

# \$17

Million awarded to Cortland County in 5 years of REDC competition

# 125

Years since Cortland Hospital opened



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## Cortland is Lacrosse Central

Downtown Cortland came alive again last month with the return of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Girls Lacrosse Championships. Hosted by the Cortland Regional Sports Council (CRSC) in partnership with Section III athletics, the event brings to town 12 teams and their entourages from all corners of the state.

Next year, the tournament will expand to 16 teams as another class is added to the sport. "I think this truly shows the potential in partnering for sports-related events," said CRSC executive director Machell Phelps. "There is an unquestioned economic impact on the community."

Over 11 years, CRSC events have brought more than \$25 million into the county economy. The agency is funded primarily through county occupancy tax dollars and contributions from the city and the town of Cortlandville.

## NYS Senior Games

The Sports Council also facilitates the annual state senior games competition, and it also brings a wealth of visitors and visitor dollars to the Cortland community over four days of events. The games are run primarily at SUNY Cortland facilities, but others around the community are also enjoyed by the hundreds of participants visiting each summer.

The CRSC and the city of Cortland began hosting the games when the state of New York dropped funding for it several years ago.

## Schools and Education

The New York State budget provides \$24.8 billion in school aid, the highest amount ever. Governor Cuomo says that while total state spending has been held to two percent annual growth and most state agency budgets have been held essentially flat, school aid is increasing by 6.5 percent for the 2016-17 school year and will have increased by nearly 27 percent since 2011-12.

## Downtown as an Economic Driver

Pardon the pun, but here is some food for thought, especially for those who somehow think Downtown Cortland is dead: downtown restaurants are driving the local economy! Using data developed by Kennedy Smith, a nationally-known downtown consultant, downtown Cortland generates more than \$49 million of the \$106 million in sales for the county's restaurants and other eating places. That's 47 percent!

And there's more. For the fifteen quarters ending November 2015, the "restaurants and other eating places" category has accounted for an average of 7.21 percent of countywide taxable transactions. Retail transactions came in just a bit higher at 7.9 percent.

The district is the county's largest employer, with more than 5,000 jobs, and pays 23 percent of the city of Cortland's property tax bill.

Here is a list of some recent downtown successes:

- Downtown Grocery Store (The Local Food Market and Whole Heart Cafe);
- Cortland Repertory Theatre (it's not just a college downtown);
- Long Island Bagel (SUNY student startup created because of the Cortland Downtown Partnership's [CDP] Business Incubator partnership with SUNY);
- Downtown daytime police presence (return of the beat cop); and
- Downtown landscaping (professionally maintained flower beds).

Smith's assessment of our downtown was that it has very much to offer and is ripe for further development. Our greatest challenge: a pervasive negative outlook about what downtown Cortland is and what it can be.



Photo courtesy of Tom Millard and Brockway Truck Preservation Association

Tradition continues this year with the 17th Annual Brockway Truck Show ready to roll August 11-14 in Downtown Cortland. See details at [www.brockwaytrucks.org](http://www.brockwaytrucks.org).

## success story

# The Stage is Set for Another Stellar Summer Season at Cortland Repertory Theatre

In winter 1971-72, James Palmer, associate director of theater at SUNY Cortland, and David Yaman, a local real estate developer, recognized the need for a quality summer theater experience for residents of Central New York. From their vision, and through the generosity of 23 charter members, Cortland Repertory Theatre (CRT) was born.

CRT opened on July 5, 1972, in a turn-of-the-century pavilion at Dwyer Memorial Park on Little York Lake and featured a young, semi-professional company dedicated to bringing popular plays and musicals to theater lovers in the area.



For six years, the theater played an eight-week season in rotating repertory, after which the format was changed to five plays running for two weeks each. Currently, CRT offers six plays plus a special production for children and families, with one or more being musicals.

Through the years, CRT has received invaluable support from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Cortland County Legislature, the Central New York business



Cortland Repertory Theatre's 2016 season kicked off in June with "The Fox on the Fairway," a comedy about the exploits of members of the Quail Valley Country Club as they prepare to take on their archrivals, the Crouching

community, and many generous individual donors. CRT has been awarded a number of capital improvement grants sponsored by such supporters as Senator James Seward, Assemblyman Clarence Rappleyea, Assemblyman Dan Fessenden and Assemblyman Marty Luster.

CRT utilized these grants to add dressing rooms and air conditioning to the pavilion, replace antiquated lighting and sound equipment, and install a sprinkler system and handicapped accessible elevator. Most recently, CRT founded CRT Downtown, a performance and community space that houses a front office and lobby; a technical space for scenic, costume and props shops and storage; and a grand hall and theater space with a 200-seat performance area for shows and rehearsals as well as community events, dances and meetings.

CRT boasts a superb artistic and technical staff, built around a core

### The 2016 Summer Season

**June 8-18:**

#### **The Fox on the Fairway**

Come join the "teed off" gang down at the Quail Valley Country Club as they prepare to take on their archrivals, the Crouching Squirrels, in the annual Inter-Club Golf Tournament. This regional premiere is a charming madcap adventure about love, life, and man's eternal love affair...with golf.

**June 22-July 9: West Side Story**

In this breathtaking musical, two rival gangs struggle for control of their west side New York City neighborhood. Amid the chaos, star-crossed lovers Tony and Maria find themselves wrenched between their worlds.



**July 13-30: A Chorus Line**

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and nine Tony Awards, this dazzling musical tells the story of the unsung heroes of the Broadway stage—the dedicated, talented and overworked chorus dancers.

**July 14, 16, 22, 23: Pinocchio**

A lonely woodcarver who longs for a son creates a wooden puppet named Pinocchio who magically comes to life but wants to be a real boy. Through many challenges and life lessons he learns what it means to become a loving son.



*Squirrels, in a golf tournament. A regional premiere, the play is a madcap adventure about love, life and man's eternal love affair...with golf.*

*Photo by Eric Behnke*

of professionals augmented by talented local performers. Dedicated community volunteers devote many hours to the innumerable activities that go on behind the scenes.

Today, it is estimated that CRT adds more than \$2.5 million annually to the local economy, based on its three month summer season and new fall, winter and spring events in the new downtown facility.

“This year marks our 45th anniversary, which we chose to celebrate by bringing our audiences shows which are all CRT debuts,” says Kerby Thompson, producing artistic director. “For the first time we can bring our audiences popular, dance-oriented shows like *West Side Story* and *A Chorus Line* because of the rehearsal space we now have in CRT Downtown. It’s a great lineup with tremendous variety; each show has a different feel that we are sure will be exciting for subscribers and single ticket buyers alike.”



*Little York Pavilion, ©1906 Eugene O. Dean*

## Little York Pavilion Has Been Part of the Cortland County Landscape for More Than a Century

Also known as Dwyer Memorial County Park Main Pavilion, Little York Pavilion is considered an Historic Trolley Park Pavilion. Trolley parks were recreation areas created in the 19th century along streetcar lines in many American cities, and were the precursors to amusement parks.

The two-story Little York Pavilion was built about 1906, with later additions and modifications, in the Stick/Eastlake architectural style. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1979. The pavilion has been home to the Cortland Repertory Theatre since 1972.

The pavilion was originally designed by the Cortland County Traction Company as part of a resort destination. At the time, Little York Lake provided the only resort area between Binghamton and Syracuse. Besides the pavilion, the park housed several boathouses, an observation deck above a water tower, and amusement rides. The pavilion originally housed a restaurant on the ground floor and a dance hall on the second floor.

In 1932, the New York Power Corporation, successor to the Cortland County Traction Company, abandoned the park. Attempted revivals met with little success. At the urging of the Little York Garden Club in the late 1930s, the County Board of Supervisors eventually purchased the property. But not until 1951, under County Highway Superintendent William Dwyer, were improvements seriously and successfully implemented.

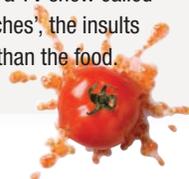
Located at the north end of Little York Lake, the 55 acre Dwyer Memorial Park offers picnicking facilities from April through September. Three shelters are located there, along with a softball field, horseshoe pits, boating facilities and children’s play areas, numerous nature trails, and other amenities.

### Aug. 3-13: Agatha Christie's Cards on the Table

Wealthy collector Mr. Shaitana invites a Scotland Yard superintendent and a crime novelist to visit his home and view his latest “acquisition”—four people who have committed murder and gotten away with it. When Shaitana himself is daringly murdered, the lawman sets out to catch the killer.

### Aug. 17-27: The Kitchen Witches

Isobel Lomax and Dolly Biddle are two low-budget cable-access cooking show hostesses who have hated each other for years, ever since Larry Biddle dated one and married the other. When circumstances put them together on a TV show called ‘The Kitchen Witches’, the insults are flung further than the food.



### Aug. 31-Sept. 10: The Marvelous Wonderettes

Take a trip back in time to the 1958 Springfield High School prom and meet Betty Jean, Cindy Lou, Missy and Suzy—four girls with hopes and dreams as big as their crinoline skirts. As we learn about their lives and loves, the girls serenade us with classic ‘50s hits. Then, in Act Two,

jump forward in time as the girls reunite to perform at their 10-year reunion.



To reserve tickets, call the Box Office at 607-756-2627 or visit [cortlandrep.org](http://cortlandrep.org) to purchase tickets online.

## Annual Comptroller's Report Credits CCIDA, State IDA Performance

An annual state comptroller's report released last week lauded the Cortland County IDA for its efforts to monitor projects and adjust assistance to those projects when job-creating goals are not met. The report relied on the findings of a CCIDA performance audit completed earlier this year.

The comptroller's report also cited the overall good performance of New York's 109 Industrial Development Agencies in their work to attract, retain, and expand business within their communities.

"We were pleased when the initial audit report was released in January, and it's nice to be cited again now in the comptroller's annual report," said CCIDA president and CEO Garry L. VanGorder. "It reflects not just our commitment to business and job growth, but also to the taxpayers. We do not take either commitment lightly."

Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, who credited improved statewide IDA performance to reform legislation he spearheaded last year, said IDAs are an "important catalyst" for economic development, but that "as the value of tax exemptions to private businesses continues to increase, taxpayers must be reassured that their community is receiving promised benefits."

DiNapoli's CCIDA audit showed that its Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILOT) deals help keep and create jobs while adding to the tax bases of the communities for which they were approved.

Specifically, the audit looked at 11 active CCIDA projects and found that for each one the board had completed a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis to aid in its decisions to support



them. The audit further reports that those IDA deals have been successful in increasing the long-term tax bases of the corresponding taxing municipalities, pointing out that in four of them, PILOT payments over the terms of the agreement would net those taxing entities \$377,000 more than the real property tax revenues would have been if no projects had occurred at those locations.

Auditors estimated that the improvement value of all 11 projects totals nearly \$12 million, which will increase the assessments on those properties—and correlating tax revenues—when the PILOT deals expire.

"As a result of their effective project management and monitoring, including verification of reported data, the board and CCIDA officials ensure that the community is receiving an appropriate return on its investment," the audit report stated.

Statewide, IDA projects produced nearly 36,000 new jobs in 2014, an increase of 18 percent over the prior year. The projects created more than 640,000 new jobs overall. See details at [osc.state.ny.us](http://osc.state.ny.us).

Businesses have access to numerous resources at the local, state, regional and federal level to help them succeed. In addition to Cortland County's Business Assistance Programs, here are other resources to help your business:

### **Cortland County Government**

60 Central Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[cortland-co.org](http://cortland-co.org)

### **County Planning Department**

37 Church Street  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[cortland-co.org/Planning/index.html](http://cortland-co.org/Planning/index.html)

### **Cortland County Health Department**

60 Central Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[cchd.cortland-co.org/](http://cchd.cortland-co.org/)

### **City of Cortland**

25 Court Street  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[cortland.org](http://cortland.org)

### **Town of Cortlandville**

3577 Terrace Road  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[cortlandville.org](http://cortlandville.org)

### **Town of Homer**

31 N. Main Street  
Homer, NY 13077  
[townofhomer.org](http://townofhomer.org)

### **Village of Homer**

Homer, NY 13077  
[homerny.org](http://homerny.org)

*For more resources visit us online at  
[cortlandbusiness.com/resources/](http://cortlandbusiness.com/resources/)*

## 2016 Cortland Main Street Music Series Features an Eclectic Lineup of Local, Regional and National Performers

The Cortland Main Street Music Series is gearing up for another great summer of downtown outdoor concerts.

Now in its 13th year, the series is designed to enhance the city's culture, promote downtown Cortland and expose audiences to music they may not often get to hear.

"We bring in local, regional and national artists and try and create an eclectic blend of shows that appeal to a range of audiences," says Howard Lieberman, one of the series organizers. "You will hear a variety of popular musical forms—blues, funk, R&B, soul—really great stuff from some truly excellent performers."

The 2016 series features four concerts, each featuring two bands.

**City Limits** and **Hadden Sayers** will open the season on July 8. City Limits is a high-energy blues-rock band playing tunes from classic rock and soul to contemporary blues. Dan Paolangeli on guitar, Andy Lockwood on vocals, Glen Porter on drums, Lisa Bloom on bass, Bob Fisher on trumpet, Jim Hull on trombone, and Robert Sarachan on sax and keyboard, will cover tunes from The Rolling Stones, Van Morrison, Joe Cocker, Lennie Kravitz and more.

Hadden Sayers will bring to the stage his unique style of Americana-blues, performing a range of songs including some from his acclaimed album, *Hard Dollar*, which featured the single "Back to the Blues," a nominee for Song of the Year at the 33rd Annual Blues Music Awards.

The July 15 concert features **Stone Cold Miracle** and **The Jeff Love Band**. Stone Cold Miracle is an Ithaca-based soul band featuring vocals by LaTrece Stevenson backed by several veterans of the local music scene including Nick LaVerne and Dustin Stuhr on guitar, Zaun Marshburn on drums and Andy Adelewitz on bass.

The Jeff Love Band is an R&B-soul-funk band from Ithaca featuring lead vocalists Jeff Love, Ariel Arbisser and Amanda Massa; and a rhythm section with Donald House on bass, De'Marquis Malone on drums, Neal Massa on keyboards and Jim Wells on percussion. Marc Devokaitis on tenor saxophone, Bob McMahon on trumpet and Nick Pauldine on alto sax round out the band.

July 22 brings **Dirt Farm** and **The Heavenly Chillbillies** to the stage. Dirt Farm is a Americana-rockabilly-country band out of Binghamton featuring Jeff Stachyra on lead vocals, guitar, and

harmonica; John Kanazawich on vocals, acoustic piano and organ; Scott Harrington on vocals and upright bass; Bob Kerber on vocals, banjo and guitar; and Larry Ricciardi on percussion.

The Buffalo-based Heavenly Chillbillies mix blues, rock, country and honky-tonk and feature Eural Irving on bass, Gabriel Mayer on guitar, Mike Olczak on drums and Ben Abdallah on keyboard.

The 2016 Cortland Main Street Music Series wraps up on July 29 with **Molly & The Badly Bent Bluegrass Boys** and **Hypnotic Clambake**. Cortland's own Molly & the Badly Bent Bluegrass Boys present bluegrass with a modern twist performed by Molly Andrejko as lead vocalist; Ted Andrejko on bass and vocals; Aaron Berthelette on banjo; Eric Hatch on guitar; and Nathan Francisco on mandolin, fiddle and vocals.

Hypnotic Clambake is a band from Rochester known for exploring an eclectic range of musical genres. Members include ensemble director Maury Rosenberg on accordion, piano and vocals; JoAnn Vaccaro on guitar, harmonica, frottoir and vocals; Chris Reynolds on bass and vocals; Mark Phillips on drums and vocals; Tim Hull on sax and clarinet; and Rick McRae on trombone.

"In earlier years we had six concerts each summer, which we were able to do because there were state grants available," Lieberman says. "Since state funding ended, we've turned to the community for support, and CFCU Community Credit Union stepped up as our headliner sponsor. We are equally grateful to WHXC Radio, Cortland Bookkeeping and Tax Service, the City of Cortland and the Cortland County Occupancy Tax, The Deli Downtown, and Cortland Beer Company for their continued support and involvement in the music series. We also get a lot of donations from people at the shows and through contributing sponsorships from local businesses."

The Cortland Main Street Music Series takes place Friday nights at the municipal parking lot by MarketPlace Mall at 64 Main Street. Admission is free, gates open at 5:30 p.m. and music begins at 6 p.m. Shows are family friendly and food and beverages are available.

Organizers are now looking for community support in the form of volunteer workers to help make the summer concerts a success. If you'd like to lend a hand, phone Howard Lieberman at 607-423-5173 or email him at [howard\\_lieberman@hotmail.com](mailto:howard_lieberman@hotmail.com).





Phone: (607) 756-5005  
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## Healthy Cortland Innovative Readiness Training Program Takes Place July 15-24

From July 15 to 24, the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) will come to Cortland County to provide free medical, dental, optometry and veterinary services for the county's uninsured or underinsured population. The event will take place at Homer Intermediate/Junior High School.

Through IRT, military units perform services in communities that otherwise would not have the resources to conduct on their own. The goal of this civil-military partnership is to improve military readiness while simultaneously providing quality services to communities throughout the United States.

There are no income, insurance or residency requirements to participate in the program. Services will include the following:

**Dental** examinations, cleanings, fillings, fluoride treatments, sealants, and simple extractions.

**Medical** screenings for diabetes and blood pressure, fall risk assessments, depression screening, lifestyle and nutrition counseling, pain management (no narcotics will be administered) and more.

**Optometry** examinations and testing for cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration. Single-focal prescription eyeglasses will be manufactured on-site.

**Veterinary** spaying and neutering (limited to two pets per household) and rabies vaccines for companion dogs and cats.

Partner agencies involved in the Cortland County IRT program include the Appalachian Regional Commission, CAPCO, Cortland Area Chamber of Commerce, Cortland Council of Churches, many Cortland County departments, Cortland Regional Medical Center, Family Health Network, Homer Central School District, Homer Police

Department, Seven Valleys Health Coalition, Southern Tier East Regional Planning and Development Board, SPCA of Cortland, SUNY Cortland, United Way of Cortland and the Village of Homer.

"We got involved because we expect IRT to bring in a lot of people who may not otherwise access health services," says Jackie Leaf, executive director of Seven Valleys Health Coalition. "It is important to get them in the door and meet their needs, and to provide information on follow-up health care they may require after screening."

"The IRT program is going to draw a lot of people," adds Christella Yonta, executive director of United Way of Cortland. "Because we have a wide network of contacts in the area, we are able to recruit volunteers as well as spread the word on the services being made available to the community. The event runs for 10 days including weekends, and 50 to 60 volunteers are needed each day. That's a big challenge."

At press time, Healthy Cortland was still in need of volunteers. Those interested in helping should register at the website [healthycortland.org](http://healthycortland.org) or phone Cortland United Way between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 607-756-5639.

Walk-ins for medical screenings are welcome; dental, optometry and veterinary services must be pre-scheduled. For dental and optical services, phone 877-211-8667 / Monday-Friday / 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. For veterinary services, phone the Cortland SPCA at 607-334-0014 / Tuesday-Friday / 1 p.m.-6 p.m. or Saturday / Noon-4 p.m.



*Veterinary care will be available.*