



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.

January/February, 2015
Issue 1, Volume 1

Garry L. VanGorder
Executive Director/CEO

Michael McMahon
Chairman



Thank you for picking up a copy of *Today: Cortland County*, a new bimonthly publication of the Cortland County Business Development Corporation.

This inaugural issue will feature a look at the Forkey family and its recent acquisition of the former Borg Warner manufacturing facility in Cortlandville; a piece on Song Mountain and Labrador, two long-time local ski centers that have formed a new partnership; summaries of other recent economic development stories; information about business resources; and much more.

We hope that you will find the publication informative and easy to read.

Our cover photo this month features an iconic county snow scene, this one from a

vantage point at Courthouse Park in the city of Cortland. The courthouse dome has been the subject of many photos over the years, but this one stands out for its simplicity and its beauty. We thought it was the perfect choice as we roll the newsletter out in the heart of winter, and that it might provide for a more reflective consideration for a season that helps define us as a Central Upstate New York community. Enjoy!

The BDC and the Cortland County Industrial Development Agency are the county's principal economic development organizations working for business and community growth. Together, their programs, projects, and services aim to support existing businesses while promoting other job-creating opportunities across the county.



Garry L. VanGorder
Executive Director/CEO

Forrest Earl, recently honored by the Cortland County Chamber of Commerce for his longtime commitment to local educational and other not-for-profit organizations, did not let the occasion pass without enthusiastically encouraging others to consider swapping some couch time for community time.

It was a well-placed call to arms, laser-focused on the challenge all ambitious communities face to tap into the talents of their citizenries.

We are fortunate that people like Forrest do step up in Cortland County—many of the projects and initiatives detailed in this inaugural edition of *TODAY* would not have been possible without them—but clearly, far too many others are staying on the sidelines, preferring the comfort of anonymity to the risk of being “out there” doing something they really don’t have to do.

It is regrettable, but understandable. Private time is precious time in today’s fast-paced world, and it can be a challenge to fit community work into busy professional and personal lives. Most board work outside of elected office is not compensated, yet some of it is nonetheless covered by the press. It can be challenging, frustrating, and often times, thankless.

But there is a tangible reward for being involved, and it can be found in knowing that despite all the reasons not to, you are working to make your community a better place to live, a better place to call home.

*Your contributions can have a real impact
on the quality of our community.*

Our needs are many. We need competitive school board races across Cortland County. We need planning board members and zoning board members. We need people to step up and make the commitment of commitments by running for public office. Arts organizations, music groups, public health groups, neighborhood revitalization groups, municipal advisory positions, ad hoc committees and youth sports boards all will welcome new energy, new ideas and new commitment.

Perhaps it’s not too late for a New Year’s resolution to get involved, to make a personal commitment to a board, group, or organization of some interest to you. I think you’ll find the experience to be personally rewarding, and that your contributions can have a real impact on the quality of our community.

6

Flavors of Byrne Hollow
Farm Greek yoghurt

18

Million dollars in economic
impact created by the
Cortland Regional Sports Council

35.8

Median age
in Cortland County



37 Church St., Cortland, NY 13045
P: 607/756-5005
www.cortlandbusiness.com
info@cortlandbusiness.com

City Joins Program

The City of Cortland has become a member of the “Energize NY” program administered by the New York State Energy Improvement Corporation. The Energize NY program aims to provide energy efficiency and renewable energy benefits to New York property owners helping them save money and reduce energy waste in their buildings.

Foreign Trade Zone

The BDC is operating a new county Foreign Trade Zone that could benefit manufacturers that import materials for use in producing their goods. Companies interested in learning more should contact the BDC for information helping to calculate whether potential duty exemptions or deferrals would mean a significant return on investment in the program.

Company Expanding

Square Deal Machining, a Marathon-based fabricating, machining, warehousing, and welding company employing more than 175 people, is expanding its 180,000-square-foot Marathon facility and hiring 65 new workers over the next three years.

In a \$1 million project facilitated by the BDC and the Empire State Development Corporation, the expansion will comprise internal renovations, equipment acquisition, and construction of 17,000 square feet of new space to accommodate growing business.

Customers served by Square Deal are in sectors including military/defense, transportation, commercial/consumer, industrial, energy and medical.

Square Deal chose to remain in Cortland County over opportunities to move elsewhere, including Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Project Nears Completion

The Cortland Downtown Partnership is close to completion of a building renovation project at 42 Main St., where a new elevator is being installed to service all floors of the building. The renovated building is also home to the CDP’s entrepreneurship program.

Byrne Project Continuing

Construction of the Byrne Dairy manufacturing and agri-tourism campus will continue in 2015 with completion of an artisan cheese facility, visitor’s center, and amphitheater. Work is also expected to continue on the grounds of Byrne Hollow Farm, with the installation of decorative windmills, a reflecting pond, and more.

Main Street Openings

Reports of the death of Main Street Cortland have apparently been premature. In recent months no less than four new operations (quilt shop, bagel shop, tasting room, diner) have opened their doors, and others are in planning or in construction. Main Street Homer remains robust, as well.

Buckbee Mears/IED

The remarkable renovation of a factory left for dead continues. Developer David Yaman’s crews were busy all fall and into winter gutting the former Buckbee Mears/IED manufacturing facility in the city of Cortland, effectively transforming an abandoned 200,000-square-foot magnet for vandals into a viable new community asset. With its own power station, access to rail, appropriate zoning, access to the interstate, and a wide-open floor plan, the facility is nearing productive re-use after years of neglect. The BDC, the City of Cortland, and others brokered a deal helping to win local site control from the Bank of India.



Greek Peak is open for its second season under new ownership. Ongoing reinvestment in the ski center has been designed to enhance the skiing experience, and the resort already offers top-flight accommodations and entertainment options.

Home Sweet Home: Community Initiatives Keep Forkey Construction in Cortland County

Father and son business partners Charles Forkey Jr. and Charlie Forkey III recently found themselves with the type of problem most business owners dream of—heading a company that was growing so large so fast that it was bursting at the seams.

The company, Forkey Construction & Fabricating, Inc., is a machining and fabricated parts facility that provides computer numerical control machining, turning, forming, welding, saw cutting, and sheet/plate processing services for industrial customers worldwide.

The company was barely 20 years old, but in those two short decades had grown from a handful of employees operating out of a garage to 83 workers squeezed into a 30,000-square-foot facility located in Lapeer.

The family-owned business had been accommodating its growing size by adding on to the existing manufacturing facility. But in spite of these expansion efforts, the Forkeys eventually found themselves unable to add clients, forcing them to turn away additional business.

“Turning away business is a terrible feeling,” Charlie Forkey III says. “Here we have a thriving company with customers clamoring to give us work, and we are telling them we just can’t do it. Do that for too long and you find yourself getting written off by customers very quickly. We had to make some changes, and fast.”



The Forkeys had only one option—it was time to make a big move to much bigger space. They put feelers out to various business associates as well as to the Cortland County Industrial Development Agency, with which they’d had a strong relationship for 10 years. They found promising properties in the Southern Tier and Northern Pennsylvania, but were reluctant to make such a drastic move.

“Our employees are our most valuable asset,” Forkey says. “We knew we would lose a lot of them if we had to leave Cortland County. We live here, our kids go to school here, our whole life is here. It was important for us to try and stay in the area if we possibly could.”

The CCIDA, in turn, was not about to let 80-plus jobs vanish from Cortland County, and worked tirelessly with the Forkeys





FORKEY FACTS

- 2003:
6 employees
- 2015:
80+ employees
- Family founded,
owned and operated
- Serving customers
worldwide
- Providing fabricated
parts and value
engineering services
to industrial
customers
worldwide
- Creating 50+ new
well-paying jobs in
the next two years

Forkey Construction & Fabricating, Inc. owners Charlie Forkey III (left) and Charles Forkey Jr. had a real dilemma on their hands when their business outgrew its existing space. CCIDA stepped in and helped them find new quarters, keeping the company—and 80-plus jobs—in Cortland County.

to identify suitable locations and develop a strong incentives package to keep them here.

The hard work paid off: The Forkeys decided on a \$2.2 million acquisition and retrofit of an existing 131,000-square-foot facility in Cortlandville, the former Borg Warner powder metal facility closed by the company a year earlier.

CCIDA incentives comprised a payment in lieu of tax agreement and a mortgage tax exemption on the acquisition of the property. The Town of Cortlandville also sponsored a community development block grant program through the State Office of Community Renewal.

“The Cortlandville town board did a great job helping move the project forward,” Forkey says. “It was clear from the start that they were professional, supportive, and committed to community growth. With their support—along with Thoma Development, which helped with a grant application to New York State—we were able to secure a large portion of the funding that was needed to close the deal.”

Forkey Construction & Fabricating, Inc. began a staged move into their new facility beginning in October, and fully relocated by December. The company has already begun to expand its client base and add to its workforce.

“I remain truly impressed by this experience,” Forkey says. “In the beginning, all we knew was that we needed larger quarters for our business to grow. We shared that need with the community, and Cortland County rallied in support of us and helped make this expansion happen. Cortland County will always be our home.”

Revolving Loan Fund Program

The goal of the BDC is to retain and create quality employment opportunities in Cortland County. One of the ways we accomplish this is to make low-cost loans available to new and existing local businesses through our Revolving Loan Fund Program.

Eligible borrowers include those engaged in business for profit and conducting, or proposing to conduct, business in Cortland County. Retail businesses that can demonstrate a substantial amount of sales originating from outside of Cortland County will also be considered.

Eligible applicants include sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies. Examples of eligible activities include business acquisitions; manufacturing; acquisition, construction, renovation, leasing or development of real property; purchase or lease of equipment; pollution control and abatement; transportation services; agricultural production; convention centers or recreational facilities; startup operating costs and/or working capital; feasibility studies; and reasonable professional fees related to eligible projects.

A minimum of 10% owner equity is required for all loans. The maximum loan allowable is \$100,000; the minimum is \$10,000. The interest rate for all loans is 6% fixed.

If needed, the BDC will coordinate with other participating lenders to obtain the best collateral position possible. If the borrower is a business entity, the BDC will require the personal guarantee of all owners of the entity and will require a mortgage to secure all loans related to the improvement of real property.

For further information on the Revolving Loan Fund Program, contact IDA CFO Karen Niday at 607-756-5005 or karen@cortlandbusiness.com.

BDC Awards Downtown Assistance Grants

The Finger Lakes Tasting Room, Long Island Bagel (*see story on page 7*), **The Local Food Market** and **The Bridal Barn** have each been awarded \$5,000 through the BDC's county downtown assistance grant program.

From its new storefront at 31 Main St., **The Tasting Room** will offer local wine, beers, spirits, and other agricultural products along with various gifts, books, and accoutrements associated with the Central Upstate region. The new enterprise will strive to "Bring the Finger Lakes Experience to Main Street," using its NYS Farm Brewery License to offer consumers products from a variety of sources.

The Local Food Market, a new grocery occupying the former Cortland Hardware Store at 37 North Main St., Cortland, has totally renovated the space and will use grant dollars to help offset the cost of cooler and refrigeration installation at the store—a critical component of the overall project.

The Bridal Barn, located on North Main Street in the Village of Homer, is a one-of-a-kind boutique offering a variety of products from bridal gowns, veils, headpieces, shoes, jewelry, tuxedos, and suit rentals.

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:

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-1010
www.dec.ny.gov

NYS Department of Health

Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237
www.health.ny.gov

NYS Department of Transportation

50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232
www.dot.ny.gov

New York State Empire State Development Corporation

633 Third Avenue, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10017
www.esd.ny.gov

NYS Energy Research & Development Authority

17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399
www.nysesda.ny.gov

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

Agency Building 1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12238
www.nysparks.com

NYS Department of Taxation and Finance

Building 9, Room 215
Albany, NY 12227
<http://www.tax.ny.gov>

For more resources visit us online at cortlandbusiness.com/resources/

Creating Opportunities for Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is alive and well in Cortland County thanks in large part to SUNY Cortland, the Cortland County BDC and IDA, and area business professionals who are working together to share their knowledge and experience with future small business owners.

At the heart of the initiative is a two-phase entrepreneurship sequence offered at SUNY Cortland which was developed through a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. The program teaches students how to take a small business concept and develop it into a fully operational enterprise.

“The first phase focuses on idea generation, developing a business model, and beginning a business plan,” explains Professor Kathleen Burke, chair of the economics department at SUNY Cortland. “The second phase is independent study, with students focusing on business plan refinement—performing more in-depth market research and concept testing with the goal of taking the plan to market.”

The Cortland County business community is an important part of the program.

“Each component within the model has business experts—many of them alumni—coming to the classroom to share their knowledge,” says Burke. “Lawyers, bankers, business owners, and representatives from the Small Business Administration, IDA and BDC are all involved.” Students also have the opportunity to intern with local businesses to get valuable firsthand experience.

Does it work? Just ask Paul Mangiamele, co-owner of **Long Island Bagel**, a small business which opened in Cortland in October 2014.

For years, Mangiamele and his long-time friend and business partner, Sam Braine, dreamed of one day owning their own small business together, and still have spiral notebooks from high school filled with business ideas to prove it.

Mangiamele got wind of the entrepreneurship program during his senior year as a business economics major at SUNY Cortland. “The

tag line for the course was ‘Learn how to take an idea and turn it into an actual business,’” recalls Mangiamele, a native of Rochester. “That’s exactly what I wanted to do, so I decided to try it.”

Mangiamele’s business idea evolved from longstanding debates between his college dorm mates over upstate versus downstate New York food—particularly pizza and bagels—and which was better. “Part of my market research showed that 52 percent of SUNY Cortland students were from downstate,” he says. “If they were unhappy with the upstate version of these foods, I thought maybe a business that catered to that could be successful.”



Long Island Bagel opened on Main Street in Cortland in October 2014. Owner Paul Mangiamele developed the business plan for LIB through the entrepreneurship program at SUNY Cortland.

Through the first phase of the program, Mangiamele chose to develop a business model and plan focused on a bagel shop after his market research led him to a Long Island-based distributor that prepared traditional uncooked bagels and shipped them to retailers to freshly bake and sell.

With a rough bagel-business model in hand, Mangiamele moved on to the second phase of the program—the independent study. “This was the real world,

do-or-die phase, which was incredibly exciting,” he says. “I had support from the university, the Cortland Business Development Corporation, the IDA—there were so many people that wanted us to succeed.”

Mangiamele graduated in May 2014, signed a lease in June for a storefront on Main Street in Cortland, began renovations in August, and officially opened Long Island Bagel on October 13. In their first week, he and Braine drew 400 customers a day (four times his business plan projection) and sold more than 8,000 bagels—which required them to make two emergency road trips to Long Island to restock. Business has now leveled off to a manageable 200 daily customers and is still going strong.

“It’s exciting to see Paul in his element and watch his dream come to fruition,” says Burke. “He saw a need, figured a solution and put it into practice, and now he is in charge of his future. That’s what our entrepreneurship program is all about.”



37 Church Street, Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: (607) 756-5005

Fax: (607) 756-7901

cortlandbusiness.com

Cortland County offers the best in small town living with easy access to some of the nation's top metro centers.

♻️ Printed on recycled paper

Song, Labrador Mountain Ski Resorts Merge

A friendly, decades-long rivalry between two area ski resorts has come to an end with the merger of Song Mountain Resort in Tully and Labrador Mountain in Truxton.

Peter Harris, owner of Song Mountain since 2000, is now president and general manager of both ski centers. Bruce and Susan Wilson, who have owned and operated Labrador since 1990, remain in their management positions at Labrador for the current season. The Wilson family first opened Labrador Mountain in 1956.

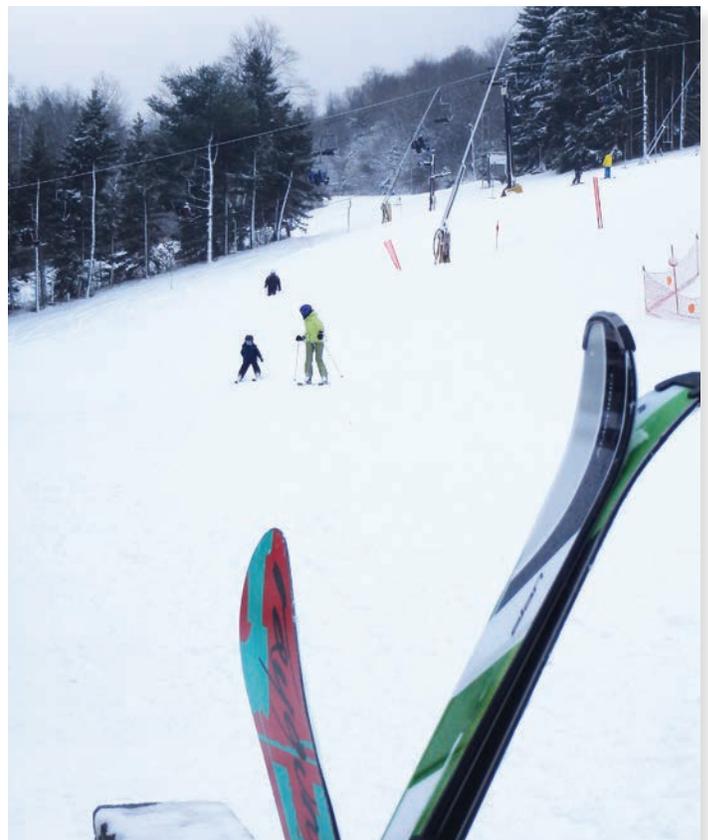
Over the years, Song and Labrador have routinely swapped the top spot in the *Syracuse New Times*' annual Best of Syracuse/Sports & Leisure award. Each an integral part of an active Central New York ski scene, the two ski resorts attract hundreds of thousands of skiers and snowboarders to the slopes each year.

Peter Harris says that he has no immediate plans for major changes to staffing or operations at either area. "I expect to keep doing what seems to have worked well for the past 28 years," he says, "concentrating on abundant snowmaking, impeccable grooming, a safe and reliable lift system, first class instruction, good food and drink, and superior customer service.

"It all comes down to one simple thing: If you live in Central New York, you really should take full advantage of our wonderful, snowy winters," Harris says. "And where else better to do that than on the slopes of Song and Labrador Mountains?"

A new, full-season Inter-Mountain Passport is being offered to skiers and snowboarders to encourage them to challenge both ski

areas, which are about 20 miles away from each other. Labrador Mountain, which has 6 lifts, offers 22 trails for skiers and snowboarders. Song Mountain provides visitors with 5 lifts and 24 trails.



The snow—both man-made and natural—is flying at Labrador and Song Mountain ski resorts, and forecasters are predicting another great season on the slopes for CNY skiers and snowboarders.