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Region, New York

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symbolizes the  
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**HISTORY**

**RECREATION**

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Please recycle this publication.

It is with great pleasure and excitement that I present to you the 2017 edition of Focus Fulton Montgomery Region New York.

This is our third year of publishing this annual quality-of-life, informational magazine about our great region in partnership with McClary Media of Amsterdam. After many years of contracting with an out-of-state company, keeping Focus “in house” allows for better control of print and editorial, while at the same time supporting a local business and its employees. And this edition proves just that, with the content and quality surpassing that of previous years’ editions.

Focus Fulton Montgomery Region NY is meant to detail and highlight the wonderful quality of life and opportunities that exist in our two-county region. From the majestic beauty of the Mohawk River Valley with its rich history, to the rugged wilderness of the southern Adirondack Mountains, with its scenic trails and hidden ponds and lakes, and everything in between, our region offers something for everyone.

The region has numerous small communities, each with its own novel personality. Our region’s character is as diverse as the people who call it home.

Our communities are historically unique, created by centuries of immigration from a variety of countries. People of German, Irish, Polish, Italian, Ukrainian, Hispanic descent and more traveled to the area because of the richness of its natural resources and the opportunities they presented for a better life. That cultural diversity is still evident today. From north to south, the Fulton Montgomery region is full of small villages and towns with their own unique cultural fingerprint based on their history. The Mohawk Valley is rich in history. Being the home of Sir William Johnson, our region played a vital role in both the French and Indian War, as well as the American Revolution. Visiting our many well-maintained historic sites can bring you back to the early days of the

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Fulton  Montgomery  
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

birth of our nation.

In the Valley, agriculture has always played a major role in the economy. Hundreds of farms and orchards, small and large, make for scenic trips on the back roads of the Valley, where you can stop by one of many Amish stands for bread, pies, vegetables or maybe even a rocking chair. Nearly every community offers regularly scheduled farmers markets, and we have great places like the Mohawk Harvest Cooperative Market and Liberty Fresh Market that sell goods and foods from local producers.

For the sporting type and those with a taste for the outdoors, I’m sure we can fill the need. For the winter enthusiast, downhill skiing, miles of groomed cross-country ski and snowmobile trails are available. Hiking into one of our scenic wilder-

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**ON THE COVER: An aerial view of the Mohawk Valley Gateway Outlook pedestrian bridge in Amsterdam, NY. Photo taken by Dave Warner using a drone.**

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### **Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce**

[www.fultonmontgomeryny.org](http://www.fultonmontgomeryny.org)

2 N. Main Street, Gloversville, NY 12078

1166 Riverfront Center, Amsterdam, NY 12010

(518) 725-0641

ness lakes or ponds can be breathtaking while also offering a challenge for the hunter or fisherman. Several records for fish and big game have been set within our borders. And for those with a desire for a more “sedate” experience, Fulton County with its 44 lakes is just the place to enjoy the beach or take advantage of the many boat access sites throughout the area. Fulton County is home to two New York states DEC campsites, and you can find private cottages and sites on many of our lakes as well, as well as stays in our full-amenity hotels. In Montgomery County, if boating is your thing, enjoy the Mohawk River and its locks, and maybe stay in one of our picturesque beds and breakfasts that dot the hill-sides. Whether for a weekend or a week, this could be just the tranquility the doctor ordered.

During the early 18th century, many Irish and English settlers came to this area and to take advantage of the abundance of hemlock and water, both necessary for the tanning of leather. From that, the region became home to the largest center of leather processing and glove and garment manufacturing in the world. Although the size of the local industry has lessened due to the worldwide economy, many local tanners and processors continue to thrive by finding niches and specialized markets for their products. As with Fulton County, the carpet industry flourished in Montgomery County because of the presence of the Mohawk River and its tributaries to allow the mills to make the floor covering. These two industries have defined who we are today.

Our region is also home to world renowned corporations founded, and still headquartered locally. Beech Nut Nutrition Corp., Taylor Made Group, and Keymark Corp. are just a few of the companies that were started locally and now have products that span the world. While these and others continue to flourish within our region, others have chosen to move here.

FAGE USA Dairy with their North American headquarters, Benjamin Moore with the company’s largest capacity plant in the world to produce quality paints and Target Distribution are just a few who have moved here and continue to call the region home. These, and the many other large, regional businesses help support the thousands of smaller businesses such as machine shops, hospitality, retail, service, etc. to collectively keep the region’s economy stable, as these small businesses help support their larger counterparts. And others continue to see the attractiveness of our community, such as the new Dollar General distribution center soon to be under construction in Montgomery County and set to open in 2018, creating over 400 new jobs for the residents in and around our region.

Not only will our local residents find this publication informative, but thousands of copies will be distributed outside our region to those who may be interested in traveling here, relocating or scoping out opportunities to siting a plant or building a new business in Fulton or Montgomery Counties.

Take a look at the snapshot of our region in the economic and demographic profile in the magazine. Again, we want to thank our partners at McClary Media, along with their reporters, advertising reps, graphic artists and production associates for making this year’s edition another great success.

We also want to give thanks to the many great Chamber member advertisers and other supporters who make this magazine possible – what a great way to showcase all our region has to offer!

Please let us know what you think about this project. Contact us at the Chamber at (518) 725-0641 or via email at [president@fultonmontgomeryny.org](mailto:president@fultonmontgomeryny.org).

— **MARK KILMER,**  
President/CEO

Fulton Montgomery Regional  
Chamber of Commerce



## **THE ARKELL MUSEUM AT CANAJOHARIE**

**5 Erie Boulevard, Canajoharie**

**(518) 673-2314**

**www.arkellmuseum.org • Facebook • Twitter •**

### **Instagram**

The Arkell Museum showcases a world-class collection of American paintings purchased by founder Bartlett Arkell for the people of Canajoharie. It includes 21 works by Winslow Homer, and significant paintings by many distinguished artists, including George Inness, William M. Chase, Childe Hassam, Mary Cassatt, Georgia O’Keeffe, Robert Henri, and other members of The Eight. Permanent and changing exhibitions also feature selections from the museum’s Mohawk Valley history collection, as well as early 20th century advertising material for Beech-Nut, which was founded by Arkell in 1928.

## **FORT PLAIN MUSEUM**

**389 Canal Street, Fort Plain**

**(518) 993-2527**

**www.fortplainmuseum.com • Facebook • Twitter**

Revolutionary War Fort Plain, also known as Fort Rensselaer, was built in 1778 and remained in service through 1800. The museum and historical park are 65 acres that includes the museum and more.

## **FULTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM**

**237 Kingsboro Ave., Gloversville**

**(518) 725-2203**

**www.fultoncountyhistoricalsociety.com • Facebook**

The Fulton County Museum hosts exhibits and events to showcase the county’s rich history in Native American and colonial life, and its roots in agriculture, industry, and leather making. Highlights include exhibits of local history in sports, military, schools, technology, the FJ&G Railroad, public service, business and more. Open May through October.

## **JOHNSTOWN SCHOOL MUSEUM**

**501 Glebe Street, Johnstown**

**(518) 762-7646**

### **Facebook**

Collection of Johnstown school nostalgia dating back to the 1700s. Enjoy The Baronet yearbook (1925-present), sports memorabilia, photos, historical documents, artwork and more. Class reunions welcome! Open June 1 to September 30, Saturdays 9:00 am - 2:00 pm or by appointment.

## **NORTHAMPTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM/PAUL BRADT MUSEUM**

**South Main Street adjacent to the Village/Town Offices, Northville**

**(518) 863-4211/(518) 863-4040**

Two separate facilities - Northampton Historical Museum is a one-room former schoolhouse preserving the history of the townspeople; Paul Bradt Museum hosts a collection of logging, hunting, fishing and other settler history.

## **PECK’S PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SCHOOLHOUSE & MUSEUM**

**104 Peck’s Lake Road, Gloversville**

**(518) 725-6236**

The school was built by John Peck, a businessman whose businesses included a tannery and sawmill, for his children and his workers’ children. Built in 1857, the school continued until 1959. Open June through September every Wednesday and Saturday 1-4pm; special tours for groups encouraged on other days.

## **WALTER ELWOOD MUSEUM**

**100 Church Street, Amsterdam**

**518-843-5151**

**www.walterelwoodmuseum.org • Facebook • Twitter**

The Walter Elwood Museum is a gateway to learning using the past to illuminate the present. Utilizing local experience, stories and artifacts, we examine history and culture in all its dimensions. We offer educational programs, unique collections and creative activities to enrich understanding of ourselves and each other. Our extensive assortment of approximately 25,000 artifacts fall into four categories: multicultural, Victorian, natural history, and items that relate to Mohawk Valley’s colorful industrial past (documentary, photographic and tangible).

## **WILDLIFE SPORTS & EDUCATIONAL MUSEUM**

**3747 State Highway 30, Vail Mills/Amsterdam**

**(518) 883-5933**

**www.wildlifesportsmuseum.com - Facebook**

The largest collection of mounted animals - bird, fish, deer and bear - in upstate New York. Extensive collection of antique hunting, fishing and trapping equipment. Over 160 record white-tail deer mounts. Art gallery and gift shop. Open seven days in June, July, August; Fall/Winter/Spring Saturdays only. Plans for new Library and Research Center adjacent to Museum.

# REGION IN FOCUS: Nature & Agriculture



**State Flower:**  
Rose



**Tree:**  
Sugar Maple



**Bird:**  
Blue Bird



**State Fruit:**  
Apple



**Snack:**  
Yogurt



**Freshwater Fish:**  
Brook Trout

## Fulton & Montgomery Counties encompass the natural beauty of New York State

Located in the Mohawk Valley, Montgomery County is split by the Mohawk River which flows east finally converging into the Hudson River in Albany County. Much of the valley's geography was formed by glacial carving. The river has provided rich fertile soil making the valley a prime agricultural seedbed for early settlers.

Fulton County is in the Southern Adirondacks. It is approximately 533 sq. miles, and 59% of the county sits within the Adirondack Park.



**Annual Rain**  
Fall 42.97"  
**Annual Snow**  
Fall 74.5"



**Avg. Temperature (°F)**  
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Spring 40.6  
Summer 66.3  
Fall 51.2




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[visitmontgomerycountyny.com](http://visitmontgomerycountyny.com) — [co.montgomery.ny.us](http://co.montgomery.ny.us)

# Heritage & History

## **Elizabeth Cady Stanton Women's Consortium**

(518) 762-7638 – [www.ecswc.org](http://www.ecswc.org)

Dedicated to providing a forum for discussion of women and community issues. The consortium supports women's education, history, culture, leadership and equity through a variety of activities.

## **Elizabeth Cady Stanton Hometown Association**

PO Box 753, Johnstown • (518) 773-8800

[www.ecstantonhometown.org](http://www.ecstantonhometown.org) • Facebook

An organization dedicated to honoring the life and legacy of Elizabeth Cady Stanton through community service, educational activities and by fostering charitable outreach on behalf of women of all ages and is centered in the home of Stanton's birthplace.

## **Friends of Sanford Stud Farm**

Route 30 and Tessiero Square, Amsterdam

(518) 761-0703 • [www.sanfordstudfarm.org](http://www.sanfordstudfarm.org)

Facebook

Works to preserve the legacy of the Sanford Stud Farm, at one time one of the largest and most recognized thoroughbred breeding facilities in the country.

## **Fulton Montgomery Quilt Barn Trail**

Across the two-county region

[www.fmquiltbartrail.com](http://www.fmquiltbartrail.com) • Facebook

Tourism trail that visually connects the outdoor landscape with unique barn squares through the region. A quilt barn square is a painted wooden square, once displayed, helps create a trail. Over 80 squares currently on display.

## **Johnson Hall State Historic Site**

139 Hall Avenue, Johnstown

(518) 762-8712

[parks.ny.gov/historic-sites/](http://parks.ny.gov/historic-sites/) • Facebook

18th-century Georgian home of Sir William Johnson and Mohawk Indian Molly Brant. Johnson was the most influential and largest landholder in the colonial Mohawk Valley. Visitors are able to interpret the Johnson family through guided tours of the period room settings and of the historic grounds, educational programs and special events.

## **Johnstown Historical Society**

17 N. William Street, Johnstown

(518) 762-7076

[fulton.nygenweb.net/history/johnsvisit.html](http://fulton.nygenweb.net/history/johnsvisit.html) • Facebook

Operates and maintains three historic sites:

The Historical Society Museum (17 N. William St.), The Drumm House (117 W. Green St.) and The Jimmy Burk Inn (200 S. William St.) in Johnstown, NY.

## **Knox Mansion**

104 W. Second Avenue, Johnstown • (518) 752-8231 • Facebook

The Knox Mansion is a historical home built in 1889 by businessman Charles Knox, owner of Knox Gelatine Factory. With 42 rooms, elevator, grand staircase, lava ash fireplace, it cost \$1.2 million when it was built.

## **Mohawk Valley Collective**

Fort Plain and Canajoharie

(518) 993-5506

[mohawkvalleycollective.com](http://mohawkvalleycollective.com) • Facebook

Dedicated to the restoration and adaptive reuse of two of our area's historic architectural gems: Unity Hall in Ft. Plain and the former West Hill School in Canajoharie. Promotes tourism, the arts and job creation. Also maintains the regional visitors center in Canajoharie.

## **National Shrine of Kateri Tekakwitha**

3628 State Highway 5, Fonda

(518) 853-3646 – [www.katerishrine.com](http://www.katerishrine.com) – Facebook

The site of the Mohawk village of Ossernenon, the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, established in A sacred place of peace and healing, with a 17th-century Kanienkehaka village site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, an 18th-century Catholic chapel, 150 acres of trails, and museum.

## **Northville 5 & 10**

122 South Main Street, Northville

(518) 863-4424 – [www.northville5and10.com](http://www.northville5and10.com) - Facebook

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## **Shrine of our Lady of Martyrs**

136 Shrine Road, Fultonville

(518) 630-9922- [www.auriesvilleshrine.com](http://www.auriesvilleshrine.com) – Facebook

The site of the Mohawk village of Ossernenon, the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, established in 1885, honors the martyrdom of three Jesuit missionaries and is the birthplace of Roman Catholic Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Individuals and groups are welcome to visit the Coliseum church, museums, chapels, gardens, gift shop, and picnic pavilion. May-October, open dawn to dusk.

## **Tribes Hill Heritage Center**

Tribes Hill

(518) 829-7031 • Facebook

Future community center and educational facility in Tribes Hill, NY dedicated to preserving the cultures and ways of life of those who came before us in this area.

*For more information on historical sites in our region visit: [www.44lakes.com](http://www.44lakes.com) (Fulton County tourism) and [www.visitmontgomerycountyny.com](http://www.visitmontgomerycountyny.com) (Montgomery County tourism)*



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# REGION IN FOCUS: Recreation



## The Mohawk River

The Mohawk River flows through the city, villages and towns that make up Montgomery County and provides waterfront opportunities for tourists to enjoy and a pathway for traveling boaters. The river's canal is open from May to late November.

There are a number of marinas and boat launches in the county, including the St. Johnsville Municipal Marina, Canajoharie Pavilion Landing, Schoharie Crossing, Amsterdam's South Side boat launch, and Riverlink Park in the city of Amsterdam.

The City of Amsterdam's Riverlink Park plays host to an elevated walkway that links downtown Amsterdam to a riverside plaza – not to mention its breathtaking views. Riverlink Park includes an open-air stage, children's playground, visitor's center, gardens and 600 feet of boat docking. Free concerts are held during July and August. On-site laundry, shower facilities and power hookups are a few of the amenities offered here. Amsterdam Waterfront Foundation organizes concerts and events in Riverlink Park; check them out online for schedules at [www.riverlinkconcerts.com](http://www.riverlinkconcerts.com) or on Facebook.



River's Edge Restaurant, located adjacent to Riverlink Park, is open in the summer months and its waterfront location offers BBQ, steaks, seafood, burgers, pasta. It seats 135, event tent seating 275, and they offer off-premise catering up to 2,000. Find more information on Facebook or by calling (518) 320-4868. The village of St. Johnsville maintains a beautiful municipal park and marina. River travelers can stop at the boat launch, fill up on fuel, have a picnic, and be treated to a summer's evening concert. If you dock, camping is nearby, along with other lodging. You can find more information about the village and its amenities through the St. Johnsville Chamber of Commerce, [www.stjcoc.com](http://www.stjcoc.com) or on Facebook.

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# Great Sacandaga Lake

There are 44 lakes in Fulton County, and the biggest and most heavily frequented is the Great Sacandaga Lake. This tremendous body of water stretches 29 miles through two counties and laps ashore in five towns. From ice-fishing contests to an end-of-summer Ring of Fire celebration, this man-made reservoir provides opportunities for lake dwellers, their families and friends, in winter and summer. Let's start with summer.

## Accommodations

Places to stay abound around and near this lake, from tenting to large, resort-style house rentals. We have beds and breakfasts – The Inn at the Bridge in Northville, ([www.innatthebridge.com](http://www.innatthebridge.com) or Facebook); Betty's River Road Bed & Breakfast in Northville/Benson, ([magicratproductions.com/bettysriverroad/](http://magicratproductions.com/bettysriverroad/)); or the Finch Guest House in Broadalbin ([finchguesthouse.com](http://finchguesthouse.com)) to large, amenity-filled RV parks like Sunset Bay Vacation Resort RV Park & Marina ([www.sunsetbayny.com](http://www.sunsetbayny.com)) and 185-site Birch Haven Campground in Broadalbin (Facebook), cabin rentals at Lapland Lake Nordic Vacation Center ([www.laplandlake.com](http://www.laplandlake.com)), at the Orendaga on Northville Lake ([www.orendaga.com](http://www.orendaga.com)), or Ward's Lakefront Retreat, (518) 863-8837, or search through great vacation and home rentals through Adirondack By Owner ([www.AdkByOwner.com](http://www.AdkByOwner.com)). At Pops Lake Campground you can tent, bring your RV, or rent a cabin (Facebook).

## The Northville Lake Placid Trail

This trail is 133 miles long, and is utilized by advanced hikers. The trail head is located on Main Street in the village, and the trail also has a starting point at the Trailhead Lodge in the town of Benson. For more information, visit: [www.nptrail.org/Home.php](http://www.nptrail.org/Home.php)

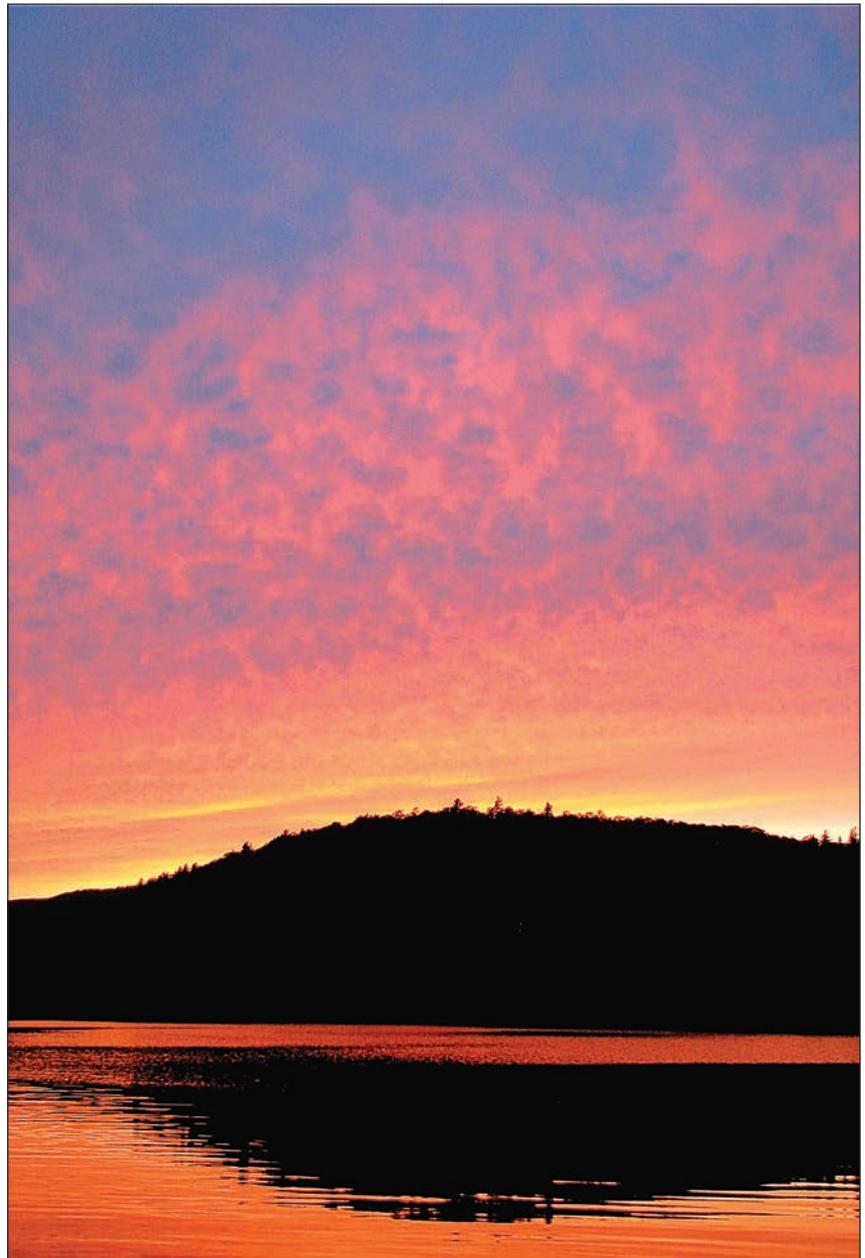


PHOTO BY TREVOR JUNQUERA

### The sun sets on the Great Sacandaga Lake in Fulton County.

## Boat Launches

Suppose you are looking to take your vessel for a ride on Sacandaga waters. The lake offers four state boat launches for public use. For more information, visit: [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor)

## Winter Activities

In the winter, the Sacandaga becomes an ice-covered playground for those who enjoy seasonal activities.

The lake transforms into an arena for ice fishing, snowmobiling, ice skating, snowshoeing and skiing.

Two of the largest ice-fishing contests of the season are scheduled in January — the annual Walleye Challenge Ice Fishing Tournament and the Great Sacandaga Lake Fisheries Federation winter fishing tournament.

These events draw thousands of participants, and 54 percent of the competitors come from out of town.



# Rolling along

**Robert and Stephen Brown provide transportation to students, commuters and travelers on a weekly basis**

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY MORGAN FRISCH**



**Stephen Brown, left, and Robert Brown, right, of Brown Transportation**

**B**rown Coach started with a handful of buses transporting students and has expanded to five operations that transport at least 1,000 people, from preschoolers to seniors every week. Robert Brown, the company's president, got started in the school bus business in 1976 with about six to eight buses running school contracts in Amsterdam. He was a transportation director for the Niskayuna School District and through being involved with the industry, he learned about an opportunity to purchase a business.



One of Brown Transportation's many school buses.

In 1980, he bought nine motorcoaches, which began that venture of the Brown Coach.

Vice President Stephen Brown said he worked parttime for his brother Robert while he was attending Union College studying mechanical engineering.

"My college choice kind of put me in the same geographic area," he said. The two grew up in Syracuse.

In 1984, the brothers purchased the Little Falls Fonda Bus Corporation,

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Please recycle this publication.

**‘It’s** all like spokes in the wheel or links in the chain. The person that’s cleaning the motorcoach at midnight on a Friday night so it can work on Saturday, or the person that’s driving the bus, or the mechanic that’s making sure it’s safe to operate, or the people in the office that answer the phone and deal with the customers. They all play an equal role in making sure we provide the service that our customers expect.’

— STEPHEN BROWN, vice president



Vehicles are parked outside of Brown Transportation’s headquarters in Amsterdam.

which is now their St. Johnsville location. They purchased Upstate Transit of Saratoga LLC in 2005.

Stephen Brown said they operate in five locations with about 400 employees. The locations are Amsterdam, Saratoga Springs, St. Johnsville, Fonda, and Scotia. Amsterdam is the main headquarters.

“We are the most diversified bus operator in the area,” he said.

The Browns offer school and commuter transportation, charters and school charters, tours, rural transit and a travel agency and tour company. The Montgomery Area Express (MAX)

bus offers transportation throughout the county. The commuter service makes stops to General Electric in Schenectady and downtown Albany in the Empire State Plaza.

Brown said they have vehicles from seven-passenger vans and sprinter vans to different passenger coaches that hold 28, 38 or 55 people. Charter services are used for local weddings or day trips. Recently, there was a 21-day tour of the Grand Canyon and Rocky Mountains.

“You can pretty much charter one of our buses and take your group anywhere in the continental U.S. or Canada,” Stephen Brown said.

The Browns were Metro Magazine’s 2015

Motorcoach Operators of the Year.

“We were very flattered and humbled to receive that because it’s recognition within our industry,” Stephen Brown said. “It wasn’t expected by any means, but we were very honored to receive it.”

The brothers have been active in the several trade associations in their industry. Stephen Brown served on the board of the United Motorcoach Association (UMA) for nine years and Robert serves on the board of the New York State School Bus Contractors Association and the Bus Association of New York.

One of Robert Brown’s pilot projects is adding trolleys to the company’s location in Saratoga Springs during the summer.

“We have had a request for [trolleys] for wedding shuttles or wedding transportation and local sightseeing,” Stephen Brown said.

He said sometimes growth opportunities just present themselves, but they continue to have “a small family-unit” at each location.

The goal for the future, Brown said, is to take advantage of opportunities when they present themselves while moving slowly and steadily forward trying to improve products and the quality of service.

“What’s kind of nice about what we do is each of our operations is small enough that we pretty much know everybody that works there and each one of those is its own community,” he said.

A number of the employees have been with the business for more than 30 years and every single person plays an important role, Brown said.

“It’s all like spokes in the wheel or links in the chain,” he said. “The person that’s cleaning the motorcoach at midnight on a Friday night so it can work on Saturday, or the person that’s driving the bus, or the mechanic that’s making sure it’s safe to operate, or the people in the office that answer the phone and deal with the customers. They all play an equal role in making sure we provide the service that our customers expect.”

### **BROWN COACH**

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**ABOVE:**  
 Roger's  
 Family  
 Orchards, 260  
 Route 131 in  
 Johnstown.

**LEFT:** A close-up of their quilt sign.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** The Fulton County Visitors Center in Vails Mills is a location on the Fulton-Montgomery Quilt Barn Trail. The square made by Liz Argotsinger is a pineapple, which she said is the universal symbol for "welcome."

# Quilt Barn Trail

**Unique art on display at various businesses throughout Fulton and Montgomery counties**

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY DUSTEN RADER**

**T**here are more than 105 artistic treasures waiting to be discovered around Fulton and Montgomery counties.

The Fulton Montgomery Quilt Barn Trail is a tourism opportunity that connects the visual beauty of the region with one-of-a-kind quilt barn squares. The squares are created by local artists and adorn various structures and properties throughout the two counties.

According to Liz Argotsinger, founder, she started the trail in 2014 as one of many projects to keep herself busy after retirement. She said she always wanted to start a trail because she is a quilter and a painter. So, she decided one day to make a square for her family farm on Route 29 in Gloversville.

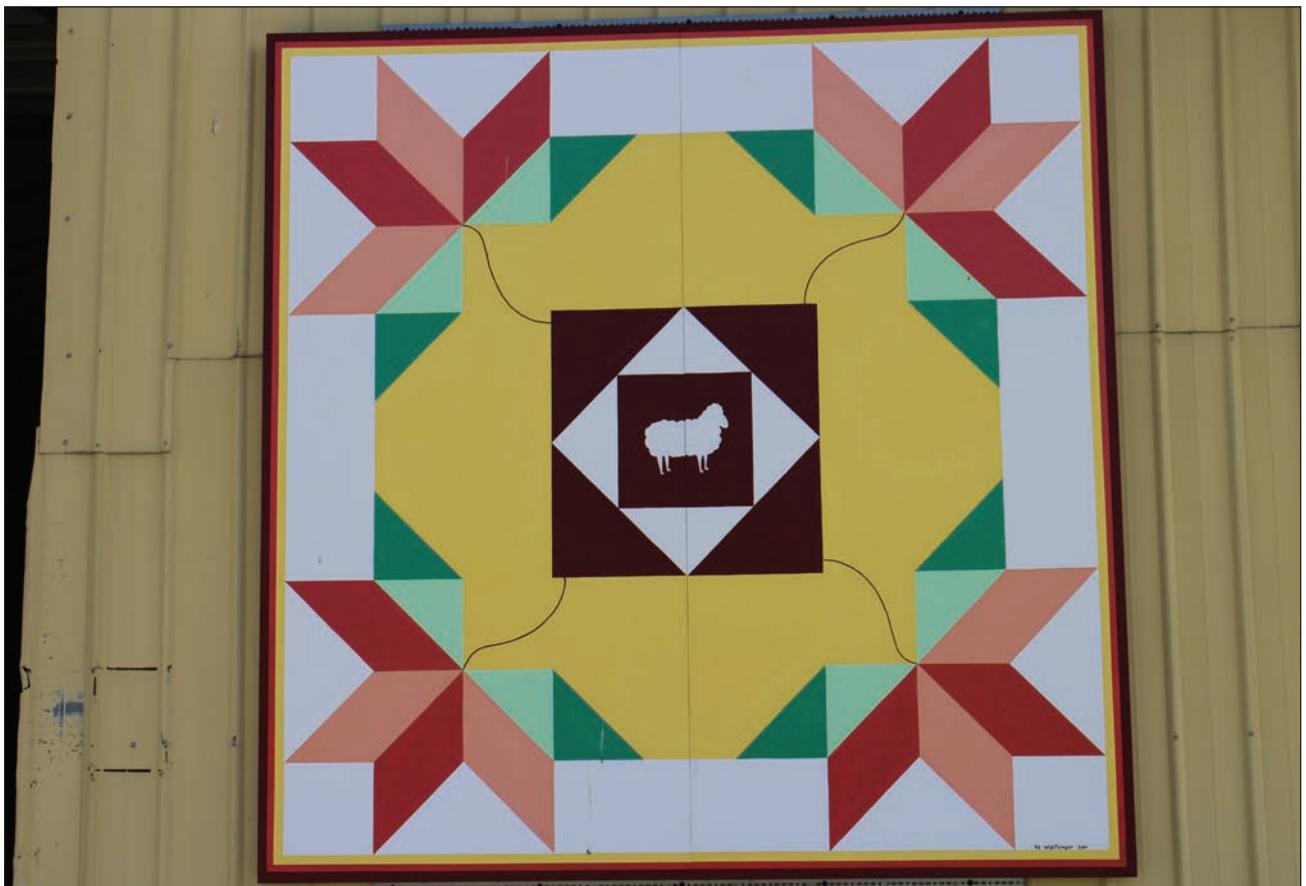
“We’ve grown from just a handful to 105 locations,” Argotsinger said.

“Every day, every week we’re making more. It’s considered the largest grassroots arts movement to ever go across the U.S.”





**ABOVE:** Liz Argotsinger's barn, 1586 Route 29 in Gloversville. **BELOW:** A closeup of the quilt sign.





ABOVE: Goderie's Tree Farm, 338 Route 106 in Johnstown. BELOW: A closeup of the quilt sign.



The squares are made with materials sourced from local businesses such as Tanner Lumber in Broadalbin and Kingsboro Lumber in Gloversville.

The Fulton County Visitors Center in Vails Mills at the round-about is a location on the trail. The square behind the center made by Argotsinger is a pineapple, which she said is the universal symbol for “welcome.”

Other popular sites include Goderie’s Tree Farm, Roger’s Family Orchards, Fulton County Museum, Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts, Fonda Fairgrounds, Fulton County Office for the Aging, Mayfield Historical Society, Hales Mills Golf Course, Fox Run Golf Course and many more at private residences.

There also is one completed by students and faculty at Northville Central School that is mounted in the front of the school on Third Street entitled “Falcon’s Journey” that depicts a falcon surrounded by trees and the Great Sacandaga Lake.

The trail is not a business, rather it is a volunteer-run effort by Artgotsinger, Carol Hart and other artists. All the funds raised from applicants looking to be on the trail were used to create and print a brochure to advertise the trail.

To create the brochure, Argotsinger enlisted the help of two high school seniors who were students at HFM BOCES — Courteney Hill of Johnstown and Alex Purdy of Northville. The 11 by 17 inch brochure was published earlier this year.

The brochure features a map and a key of all the locations throughout both counties. The map groups the square locations into primary and secondary sites. The majority of the squares on the primary trail are larger than 4 by 4 feet and many are as large as 8 by 8 feet. Anything smaller than 4 by 4 is part of the secondary trail.

“I’m from Johnstown and it’s a way of giving back to the community,” Argotsinger said.

“In one small part I can help with tourism.”

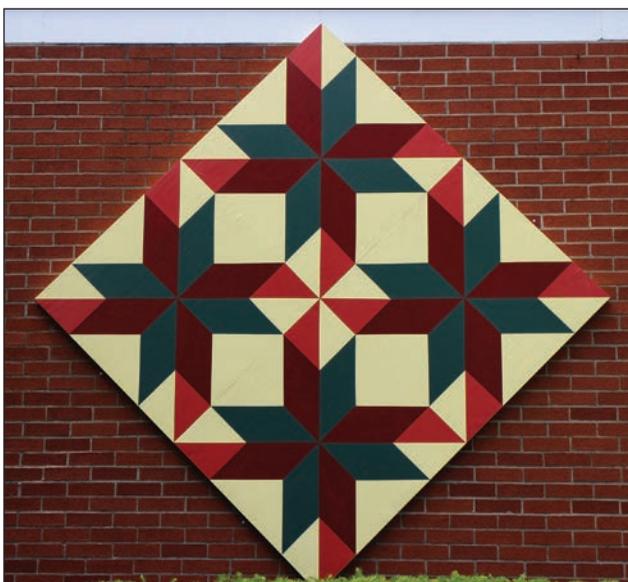
For more information, call Argotsinger at (518) 774-8717 or email [argotsinger18@hotmail.com](mailto:argotsinger18@hotmail.com). Information is also available on the website at [www.fmquiltbartrail.com](http://www.fmquiltbartrail.com) and on Facebook.



**Gloversville Sewing Center, 385 S. Main St., Gloversville.**



**Adirondack Kayak Warehouse, 4786 Route 30, Amsterdam.**



**Fulton County Office for the Aging,  
19 N. William St., Johnstown.**

# REGION IN FOCUS: Transportation

**Fulton County**, located just north of the New York State Thruway (I-90). State Routes 30, 30A, 10 and 29 connect the traveler to the interstate highways.

**Montgomery County** is accessible by Route 5 and 5S and by the NYS Thruway from exits 27 (Amsterdam), 28 (Fonda/Fultonville), and 29 (Canajoharie/Palatine Bridge), as well as by scenic Routes 10, 30 and 30A, heading south from the Adirondack State Park, and Route 67 from Saratoga Springs.

**Fulton County Airport** is a county owned, public use airport for general aviation aircraft. It is within an hour's flight time from Boston, New York City and Montreal. A fixed-base operator is available: The 195 Factory ([www.the195factory.com](http://www.the195factory.com)). For airport information visit [www.fultoncountyny.gov](http://www.fultoncountyny.gov)

**Albany International Airport:** 33 miles from Amsterdam: [www.albanyairport.com](http://www.albanyairport.com)

**Amtrak station in Amsterdam:** [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)



EASTERN TIME ZONE

Both counties are in "Upstate" NY,  
33 miles from Albany, the state capital



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33	186	hia	114
Bingham-	Boston	260	S a r a t o g a
ton	200	Buffalo	Springs
135		260	30

## Business Directory

**Nathan Littauer Hospital**  
99 E State St, Gloversville NY 12078  
518-725-8621 • [www.nlh.org](http://www.nlh.org)

**St. Mary's Healthcare**  
427 Guy Park Ave, Amsterdam NY 12010  
518-842-1900 • [www.smha.org](http://www.smha.org)

**Fage**  
N Comrie Ave, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-762-5912 • [usa.fage](http://usa.fage)

**Fulton-Montgomery Community College**  
2805 NY-67, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-736-3622 • [www.fmcc.edu](http://www.fmcc.edu)

**Universal Warehousing**  
204 County Rd 157, Gloversville NY 12078  
518-725-6960 • [www.universalwarehousing.com](http://www.universalwarehousing.com)

**Benjamin Moore**  
155 Union Ave, Johnstown NY 12095  
855-724-6802 • [www.benjaminmoore.com](http://www.benjaminmoore.com)

**Ruby & Quiri**  
307 N Comrie Ave, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-762-7829 • [www.randq.com](http://www.randq.com)

**River Ridge Living Center**  
100 Sandy Drive, Amsterdam NY 12010  
518-843-3503 • [www.riverridgelc.com](http://www.riverridgelc.com)

**Holiday Inn**  
308 N Comrie Ave, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-762-4686 • [www.igh.com](http://www.igh.com)

**Mangino Chevrolet**  
4447 NY 30, Amsterdam  
518-620-4984 • [www.manginochevy.com](http://www.manginochevy.com)

**Family Counseling Center**  
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518-725-4310 • [www.thefamilycounselingcenter.org](http://www.thefamilycounselingcenter.org)

**Palmer Pharmacy**  
2 E Main St, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-762-8319 • [www.palmer-pharmacy.com](http://www.palmer-pharmacy.com)

**Microtel Inn & Suites**  
136 N Comrie Ave, Johnstown NY  
518-362-7022 • [www.wyndamhotels.com](http://www.wyndamhotels.com)

**Montgomery County Business Development Center**  
9 Park Street, Fonda NY 12068  
518-853-8334 • [www.mcbdc.com](http://www.mcbdc.com)

**Gloversville-Johnstown Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility**  
191 Union Ave, Johnstown NY 12095  
518-762-3101 • [www.g-jwastewater.com](http://www.g-jwastewater.com)

**Fuel-n-Food**  
3006 State Hwy 30, Mayfield NY 12078  
518-661-6917 • [www.fuelnfood.com](http://www.fuelnfood.com)

**Alpin Haus**  
4850 NY 30, and Rt 5S, Amsterdam NY  
518-843-4400 • [www.alpinhausrv.com](http://www.alpinhausrv.com)

**Berkshire Farm Center**  
171 S Main St, Gloversville NY 12078  
518-725-1701 • [www.berkshirefarm.org](http://www.berkshirefarm.org)

# Johnson Hall

## A 254-year-old estate brings history to life

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DUSTEN RADER



**Johnson Hall State Historic Site, a 1763 Georgian-style estate, was the home of Irish immigrant Sir William Johnson, Molly Brant, a native American of the Mohawk, and their eight children.**

**O**n the western end of the City of Johnstown, in the heart of Fulton County, is a preserved slice of local history.

The 30-acre Johnson Hall State Historic Site was once the location of a 700-acre self-sustaining community. The 1763 Georgian-style estate was the home of Irish immigrant Sir William Johnson, Molly Brant, a native American of the Mohawk, and their eight children. Johnson was the largest single landowner and is regarded as the most influential individual in the colonial Mohawk Valley.

Johnson is credited with playing a largely influential role in England's victory over the French

and native struggle for control of North America. For his service, the British Crown bestowed upon him the title of Baronet, and later superintendent of Indian Affairs.

According to Wade Wells, historic site manager, one of the primary reasons for visiting the site is the uniqueness of the family that lived there.

"The house and our tours reflect the cross-cultural lifestyle that they lived here," Wells said.

Johnson had great success dealing with the Six Nations of the Iroquois and his home served as important meeting place for council gatherings.

"This was on occasion the scene of great diplomatic councils, somewhere up to 600 to 900



Sir William Johnson's room, which doubled as an office and meeting space.



**A** joint venture between the cities of Gloversville and Johnstown in the 1970s resulted in the creation of a Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility located near the Cayadutta Creek. Many upgrades over the years have led to a state of the art Facility allowing for the use of wastewater to create enough energy to not only operate the Facility with Green Power but to provide excess to the grid.



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**Johnson Hall State Historic Site includes the main home, slave quarters, left, and visitor’s center.**

natives would be here,” Wells said.

Perhaps the largest and most important council held at the estate was in 1774. It would be the last council Johnson held, as he died from what is believed to have been a heart attack during it.

“The main focus of interest has always been Sir William and the life that he led in his dealings with the Six Nations and nations from the Ohio region and Canada,” Wells said. “A lot of people come here who are interested in native relations and colonial government affairs because this was the seat of a great deal of that.”

Not only does the tour provide a broad interpretation of the family and its dealings, it also shines a light on the enslaved people that were at the site. In 2016, a reproduction of the for-



**The white parlor was the “Common Room” where the family and their friends took their meals throughout the day.**

mer slaves’ quarters was made possible with funding from Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s 20/20 Plan. The funds were used to restore the Johnson Hall West Stone House to what it may have looked like in 1763.

“We know that there were roughly between 30 and 40 enslaved people working here on the estate,” Wells said. “We’ve restored South West Stone House, which was referred to in the 18th Century in the 1774



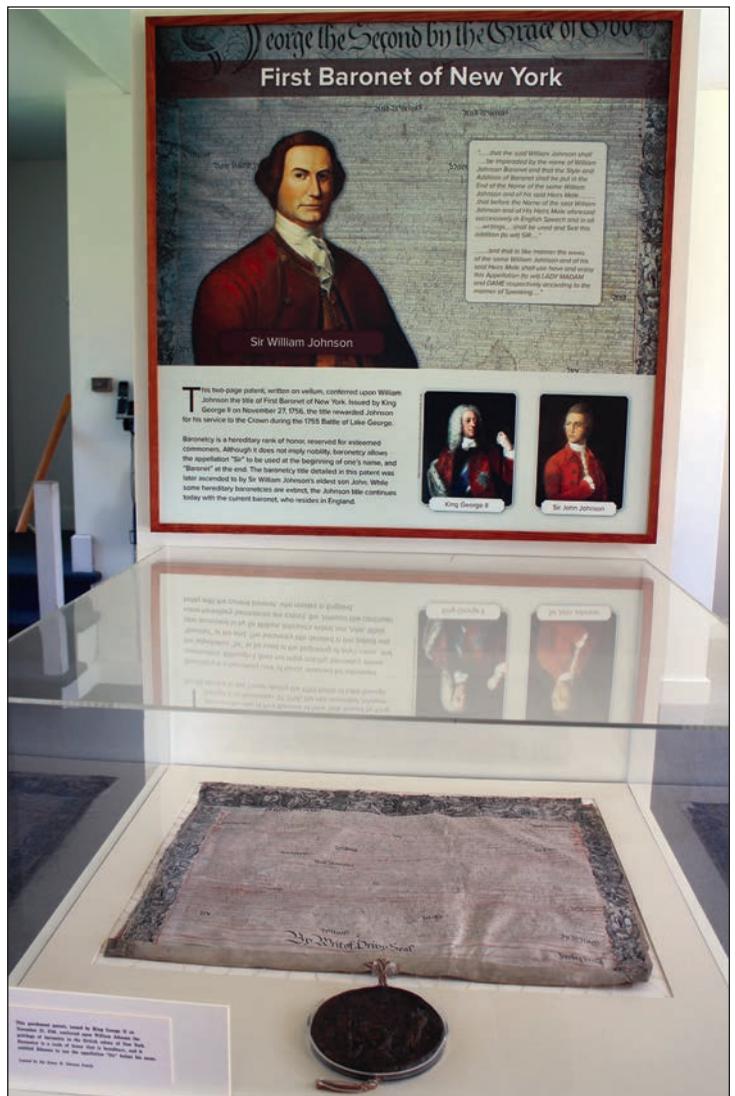
**LEFT:** The blue parlor is considered Sir William Johnson's "Cabinet of Curiosities." This was where he displayed the native curiosities he collected. It was also used on formal occasions.

**BELOW :** A visitors center is located in the Johnson Hall East Stone House.

probate inventory as the negroes' room. The inventory gives us a strong indication that there were approximately 10 people living in that building. It's important to discuss their lifestyle as well."

A lecture on Slavery in the Mohawk Valley in the 18th Century by Travis Bowman, historic sites curator, is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 24. During the annual Market Fair scheduled for July 15-16, a presentation on African-American food ways in the 18th Century will be held. Another event exploring African-American culture, Children of the Hominy, is scheduled for Oct. 7 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Johnson Hall is at 139 Hall Ave. in Johnstown. The site is open from May 17 through October 8 for tours Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. or by appointment. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors, and free for children under 12. Special rates are available for schools and groups. For more information, call 518-762-8712 or visit <https://parks.ny.gov/historic-sites/10/details.aspx>.





Andy Heck, president of Alpin Haus, stands along one of the campers for sale at their store on Route 5S in Amsterdam. The business specializes in seasonal outdoor recreation.

# Four seasons

**Alpin Haus began as a ski shop in 1964, but has since expanded to include other seasonal niches**

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY MORGAN FRISCH**

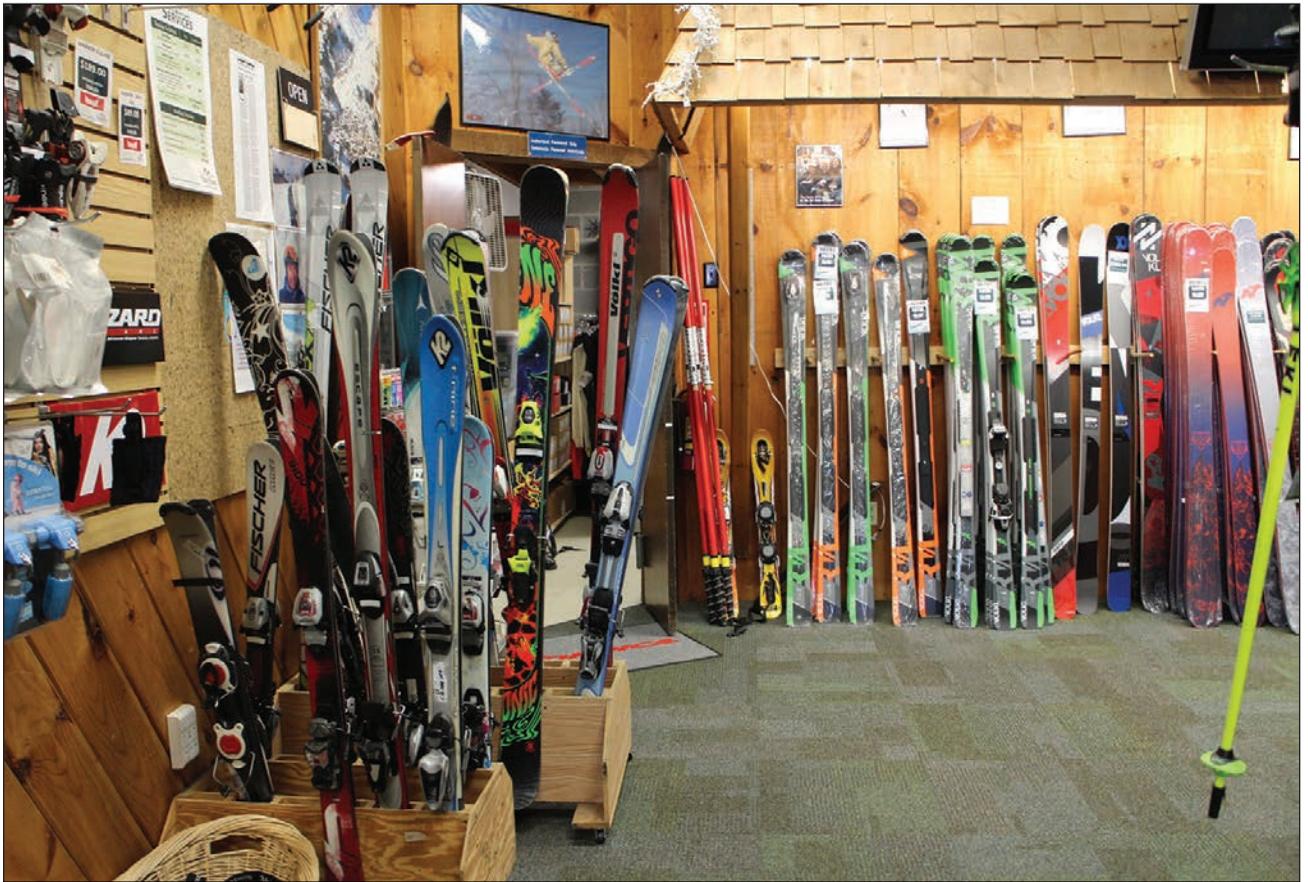
**A**lpin Haus, the small family-owned business, which started as an A-Frame ski-shop in Amsterdam, is now in five locations selling multi-seasonal recreational products.

Alpin Haus President Andy Heck said his father, Bud Heck, and John Daly, who founded the original ski-shop in 1964, decided to add recreational vehicles (RVs), pools, and snowmobiles in 1967 to make it a year-round business.

“As each business grew they kind of grew into their own businesses, so to speak,” Heck said.

Today, there are five stores located in the town of Amsterdam, town of Florida, Port Jervis, Saratoga Springs and Clifton Park. Alpin Haus also sells boats, winter apparel, spas, personal watercrafts, and patio furniture.

Heck said preparation for each season usually begins the season before, such as the winter season starting mid-August. Skis and ski apparel will start coming out, although there are still end-of-the-



**ABOVE:** Alpin Haus specializes in ski and snowboarding equipment and clothing during winter months along with snowmobiles. **BELOW:** Motor boats are among the many warm weather items sold by Alpin Haus. The business that began as an Amsterdam ski shop now has five locations in New York.





**The parking lot of Alpin Haus' store on Route 5S in the Town of Florida is full of recreational vehicles.**

season pool supplies available in stores. Heck said many people start shopping for winter supplies in September as well as stocking up for pool maintenance.

From a sales perspective, he said, some people start planning what they want to buy six months to a year in advance. All the pools were sold in the first two months of the season to people who planned last fall and over the winter, Heck said. Alpin Haus also does pool installation and maintenance.

"Ski season runs right through mid-March and then we start changing over to the patio furniture and pool stuff, gas grills and things like that," Heck said.

There are storage units at each store location. The ski equipment and gear had been purchased by the end of May for the 2017-18 season and will start to arrive in July. Some of the items were purchased at least six months ago. Employees gradually help switch over the products.

Heck said after the first of the year, people start thinking about spring, RVs and boats, while they are interested in buying snowmobiles or other winter sport supplies at the first sign of anticipated snowfall.

"It's pretty much a 10-month selling season," Heck said, "with the highest months being May through August."

Between the five locations, more than 200 employees man the stores. Heck said there are a lot more employees April through October, with less help during the winter months. For example, many

of the pool crew employees are seasonal, but have 10-plus years of experience.

"Once people get in our company, we just hire good people and they move around to all different positions," Heck said. "So that creates a lot of our openings and we always try to promote from within. With the growth we have had in the last few years, a lot of employees have bounced between stores and departments and different roles and into different areas."

Heck said no matter someone's age or experience, if they work hard and focus on their goals, they could move up or improve within the position.

"They are willing to try different things," he said. "There is no right or wrong, it's just a matter of finding what fits their skill set and their personality."

Heck said most of their employees reside in Fulton and Montgomery counties. The majority of the customer base in the greater capital region, but Heck said Alpin Haus also gets business randomly throughout the country. Every week, there are some first-time buyers who may not know anything about RVs, as well as people who have camped for years and have researched Alpin Haus online.

"Every now and then we have somebody that says they have been doing business with us since the late '60s or early '70s," Heck said. "As we have grown, there is still those loyal Amsterdam area people. They have supported us for our whole history."

Once people purchase from Alpin Haus, it's not unusual for them to become a lifelong customer.

“I think my father is still in awe when he sees what we started with just a little A-Frame ski shop and where it is now.”

— ANDY HECK, president



The front of Alpin Haus' store on Route 30 in the Town of Amsterdam.

Pool buyers typically need supplies for the entire life of the pool and some people who buy RVs or boats may keep them for a long time or trade them in like a car. The products also need maintenance, which is all provided at Alpin Haus.

Heck said as children, he and his siblings worked in the family business. As an adult, he worked elsewhere for awhile, but envisioned eventually working for Alpin Haus.

His father is still actively involved in the business, as well as his brother, sister and oldest daughter.

“I think my father is still in awe when he sees what we started with just a little A-Frame ski shop and where it is now,” Heck said.

“We are not just well known locally, but even

nationally. “People know us throughout the country through the RVs, boats and skis.”

As for the future, the goal is to keep growing. The last five to six years have been “explosive” and Heck said they keep trying to build systems, processes and a good team that can advance.

“My kids all want to get in the business too so we know that’s part of the goal to keep it a family business for a long time,” Heck said.

#### **ALPIN HAUS**

Locations on Route 5S and Route 30 in Amsterdam, Clifton Park Center, Port Jervis and Saratoga (888) 454-3691, [www.alpinhaus.com](http://www.alpinhaus.com), Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube

# Home is where the heart is

## The career path of two St. Mary's Healthcare employees lead them back to their roots

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOHN PURCELL

**B**ri Giulianelli says that while she was growing up she often had people tell her to leave the City of Amsterdam and move on to a better place, advice she considered, but never followed. Giulianelli's deep roots in Amsterdam and passion to give back to her hometown led her to remain in the caring community she loved.



**Bri Giulianelli, director of Community Benefits and Outreach for St. Mary's Healthcare, sits at her desk in her Amsterdam office.**

“There is a really close-knit group of people in this community that want to see it become very successful and want to see this place thrive, and I would like to say I’m one of them. I want to see so many good things happen here,” Giulianelli said.

After graduating from Amsterdam High School in 2006, Giulianelli attended Siena College in Loudonville and lived on campus, which is the farthest she’s lived from Amsterdam. She earned a bachelor’s degree in history and then moved back to her parent’s home while attending the State University of New York at Albany, where she earned her master’s degree in public health in 2012.

While her family mem-

bers had careers in healthcare, public health was a field she somewhat stumbled into after looking through the different master's degree programs the University at Albany offered. Her father, Vic Giulianelli, serves as the president and chief executive officer of St. Mary's Healthcare, and her brother, Matthew, is a dentist.

Giulianelli said public health ended up being a great fit for her because while she didn't want to be a teacher, she did enjoy education and teaching people who were interested in learning about a particular topic. She also enjoyed learning about different diseases and population health.

Giulianelli decided to permanently make Amsterdam her home after becoming director of Community Benefits and Outreach for St. Mary's Healthcare.

"We have a lot of people here who are also like me: born and raised here and are probably not going to go anywhere else. Why would you? I just think that it's a beautiful place," Giulianelli said.

"You got the Mohawk River right here. We have our summer concert series at Riverlink Park, and every community needs some big space like that in order to bring people together. I think that that's one of our biggest assets to our community."

**'We have a lot of people here who are also like me: born and raised here and are probably not going to go anywhere else. Why would you? I just think that it's a beautiful place.'**

**— BRI GIULIANELLI,  
Director of Community Benefits and  
Outreach for St. Mary's Healthcare**

**W**hen Dr. James Izzano was growing up in the Town of Perth, he had no idea he'd ever become a doctor, let alone in his home area.

Izzano, an obstetrician and gynecologist at St. Mary's Healthcare, attended the Rochester Institute of Technology and studied engineering after graduating from Broadalbin-Perth High School. While he enjoyed engineering, Izzano said he didn't love it.

"It was one of those things where I was like if I'm really not this happy with it, am I going to be happy when I'm 40 or when I'm 50? I stuck with it, but then I tried to figure out what else would I like," Izzano said.

He started shadowing local physicians and found he connected with the healthcare field, which he said was a better fit for him. The human aspect of the field drew him to it, along with the ability to help people.

"You weren't doing the same thing every day was my impression of it," Izzano said. "You got to talk to patients who are out and about in the hospital, you weren't stuck to a desk all day. I really liked people, so I thought that being a doctor would be a good way to interact with people."

Izzano said he didn't know he wanted to come back to his hometown until later in life, but what drew him back was his family, friends and the natural assets of the area.

"I spent a good portion of my life saying that I wasn't going to come back just like I think every person does," Izzano said. "You always want to experience something new, that's just human nature. But the unique thing about becoming a physician is that you're so sheltered for so much of your life."

Izzano said studying to become a doctor was like living in a box for 13 years and while the box is moving forward you only look outside of it periodically.

"You only look outside of the box every couple of months or years, and say, 'Oh geez, I'm 24. My friend is getting married, they're buying a house. Well, I'm still in school.' Then you go back in the box," he said. "When you're done with residency, the box opens up and then you're like, wow, I'm 31 years old. I spent my entire time studying. You start looking back on things that you may have



**Dr. James Izzano, an obstetrician and gynecologist at St. Mary's Healthcare.**

missed and that's when you start realizing, well, now that I've given up a huge chunk of my life, what's important to me?"

Izzano said what was important to him was being close to family and friends he had grown up with during his childhood.

"I have lived in different parts of the Northeast and this region is just as pretty as any area I've lived in. I think it's convenient access to a lot of things that you would want to be close to," Izzano said. "I've lived in parts of the Northeast that are absolutely beautiful, but it's really hard to get to New York City or to things like big cities, airports. Here it's quick to get to all those things."

Izzano said he was drawn to work at St. Mary's Healthcare because the community feel it had compared to larger a institution.

"You know everybody by name, the patients know who you are and they know your family, and you see them out," he said. "You lose a lot of stuff when you come to a small hospital that isn't in a big hospital, but at the end of the day you have to say what's important and for me that was important."

#### **ST. MARY'S HEALTHCARE**

Campuses on Guy Park Avenue and Route 30 (Rao Pavilion) in Amsterdam

Hospital (518) 842-1900, Rao Pavilion (518) 842-3100

[www.smha.org](http://www.smha.org), Facebook, Twitter, YouTube

**“I have lived in different parts of the Northeast and this region is just as pretty as any area I've lived in. I think it's convenient access to a lot of things that you would want to be close to.”**

**— DR. JAMES IZZANO,  
Obstetrician and gynecologist  
at St. Mary's Healthcare**

# Calling Dr. Bob

## Surgeon returns to Nathan Littauer

STORY AND PHOTO BY DUSTEN RADER

GLOVERSVILLE — After trying his hand at other hospitals around the region, Nathan Littauer Hospital has welcomed back General Surgeon Robert Wasiczko.

Wasiczko was born in Bronxville, but was raised in Yonkers. He recalled spending time as a child on family trips to Johnstown every August.

“Coming from the city I enjoyed the country, so when I had an opportunity, I moved here,” Wasiczko said.

After graduating high school, Wasiczko attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute before attending Albany Medical College. He completed his residency at Albany Medical Center Hospital and is certified by the American Board of Surgery.

Wasiczko began working for NLH in 2001 and stayed until 2006, when he decided to practice at St. Elizabeth Medical Center and Faxton St. Lukes Healthcare in Utica, where he stayed until 2016. He continued to work on weekends for NLH, maintaining professional relationships and with clients.

“In Utica, I was very busy, but when I was here on weekends, I was treated very nicely,” Wasiczko said. “I always had a deep feeling for this area, so I decided this is where I belong. I felt I was needed here and that I should be here.”

Wasiczko said his clients at NLH are very appreciative of having people to take care of them. As a general surgeon, some of the services he provides include hernias, gall bladders, colon resections and evaluations after trauma.

“I have always been intrigued to fix things,” Wasiczko said. “As a surgeon, I have a hands-on opportunity to fix problems with my patients. It’s very rewarding to help others like this.”

According to Littauer Vice President of Communications and Marketing Cheryl McGrattan, patients and faculty are excited and fortunate to have Wasiczko back at NLH.

“I am thrilled to utter the words ‘Dr. Bob is back,’” McGrattan said in a release. “His clinical expertise is valuable to our community.”

When not working, Wasiczko can be found enjoying the outdoors by running, biking, cross-country and downhill skiing, as well as exercising around the region. He said running and biking outside is far better in Fulton County than in the city.



General surgeon Robert Wasiczki, who grew up in Yonkers, returned to Nathan Littauer Hospital in Gloversville after working in the Utica area for 10 years.

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PHOTO BY MARK PERFETTI

The setting sun shines reflects off the Mohawk River and artwork on the Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge in Amsterdam, NY.

# River walk

## The Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge offers artwork, history lessons and beautiful views

STORY BY JOHN PURCELL

The Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge represents the heritage of Amsterdam and the broader region, but it's also symbolic of the area's revitalization and rebirth.

Decades after the idea was initially conceived, the public walked across the Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook for the first time on Aug. 31, 2016. New York State Lt. Governor Kathleen Hochul, U.S. Rep. Paul Tonko, Amsterdam Mayor Michael Villa and several other state and local representatives, along with community leaders, participated in an official ribbon cutting ceremony, which drew numerous residents, too.

"This is a day we can say Amsterdam officially began its comeback," Hochul said while standing on the bridge when it opened. "What I see here with the unveiling of this bridge is opportunity to celebrate our past and look forward to an incredible future."

Villa said during the opening ceremony the pedestrian bridge not only provides a new north to south access, but also a "new heart of Amsterdam" replacing the east to west downtown



PHOTO BY MARK PERFETTI

**Installer Vincent Mazzacone, left, looks on as Master Mosaic Artisan Stephen Miotto of Miotto Mosaic Art Studios applies grout to the Wheel of Life mosaic. It consists of approximately 40,800 tiles.**

core lost to urban renewal. He described the bridge as another step towards re-establishing the city as the urban center of the lower Mohawk Valley.

"Once, everyone came here to mill lumber and grain, or to work in the mills," Villa said during his opening remarks.

"Now they will come for



PHOTO BY DAVID WARNER

### The Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge on the Mohawk River in Amsterdam.

specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, attractions and recreation. This is not just good for the city, but for the region — the region that rejects sprawl and seeks to preserve its rural and natural character.”

Ten months after the pedestrian bridge opened, Villa said the new attraction had spurred renewed investment and interest in the city.

“You just see a rejuvenation of interest, the phone calls that have come to the Mayor’s Office interested in what properties may be available on the South Side,” Villa said. “You see a progression of growth that’s starting. Everybody says the South Side, but I think it’s everywhere.”

Villa pointed to the blossoming Sanford Clock Tower, a historic six-story brick building constructed in 1922, which has attracted several businesses and become a hub for new and growing entrepreneurs.

“Little by little I think you see a more vibrant Amsterdam,” Villa said.

The pedestrian bridge, spanning 511 feet over the Mohawk River in the City of Amsterdam, offers a unique combination of a park over the river and introduction to the history of the Mohawk Valley through examples from the city. Unlike most bridges, the structure is curved, which is meant to be symbolic of the river and valley’s natural contours.

City Historian Robert von Hasseln said there

are 12 stopping points along the bridge marked with thematic icons representing key topics of the Mohawk Valley’s history, which are grouped into four main categories: living, moving, working and renewing. These categories respectively include the markers for Native Americans, early settlers, and immigration; canal, railroad, and roads; farming, water power, and factories; nature, community, and vision.

The 12 thematic icons and four main categories are represented on the bridge’s northern overlook in the “Story Mark,” which a 12-foot wide compass repeating and visually organizing the icons. Inscribed around the compass is, “What once was home is home again ... my Amsterdam!” from “The Amsterdam Oratorio” composed by city resident Maria Riccio Bryce.

“When you take all this together and you look at the different people that came here, the different things they did, the different ways they change, what it says is this is home, this is a community,” von Hasseln said.

Planter boxes line much of the bridge, but the center of the structure was left open to provided a space to host events, von Hasseln said. The center area still continues to highlight the history of the city through six rounded patterns on the floor, which focus visitors’ attention to markers for six distinct neighborhoods:



PHOTOS BY JOHN PURCELL

**ABOVE:** Mike Martin and Randy Rathburn, both of Wilton-based Kubricky Construction, carry the first bronze letter “A” to be placed along the side of the pedestrian bridge spelling out “Amsterdam” on the Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge. **BELOW:** Kubricky Construction crew members place the letter “A” on the side of the bridge. “Amsterdam” adorns both sides of the MVGO.





PHOTO BY DAVID WARNER

**An aerial view of Mohawk Valley Gateway Overlook pedestrian bridge.**

East End, South Side, Downtown, Market Hill, Reid Hill and the West End. Inscribed onto the floor surrounding each neighborhood are places, persons or things associated with the location. Each neighborhood also has a plaque describing the neighborhood and a historical photo from it.

The southern overlook holds a replica of the “Wheel of Life” mosaic located at Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan. The mosaic pays homage to the most notorious carpet produced in Amsterdam, once known as Carpet City. The Waldorf Astoria Hotel commissioned Mohawk Carpet Mills around 1940 to create a carpet replicating the Wheel of Life mosaic in its lobby.

While the pedestrian bridge opened in August 2016, the mosaic was installed in May 2017.

Patrick Morelli, the sculptor who designed the replica, while overseeing the installation recalled Tonko inviting him to visit where the pedestrian bridge was proposed to be constructed.

“Tonko and I came out here whenever it was, and

there was two feet of snow,” Morelli said. “We’re standing there and Tonko says, ‘There’s going to be a pedestrian bridge there.’”

Morelli, of Loudonville, said he has a photograph of him standing with Tonko that day, which he called “Two Dreamers.” This time, he said, the dream actually came true.

The artistic aspect of the dream had appeared out of reach at one point, because the lowest construction bid came in over budget for the project. Morelli said this led to the three artistic elements he had designed for the bridge being scrapped to remain within budget.

Then Mayor Ann Thane and other city officials continued pursuing funding opportunities for artistic elements and eventually it paid off. Morelli was contacted after additional funding had been secured and one of his artistic elements, the “Wheel of Life” mosaic, was set to be included.

Funding for the “Wheel of Life,” totaling around \$255,000, was drawn from the \$1 million

Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara helped the city secure from the state Assembly to fully fund decorative elements on the bridge. These funds were also used for the Story Mark.

Morelli contracted with Miotto Mosaic Art Studios, based in Carmel, to install the mosaic on the bridge, which was completed over three days. The mosaic was created in Italy and shipped as nine separate pieces to Miotto's Carmel studio, according to Morelli.

He said the experience from conception to completion has seemed like a "long journey," which required the faith and teamwork to bring the piece to realization.

Erecting the pedestrian bridge involved the efforts of many state representatives, mayors and community members, but there was little question who championed the bridge from inception to completion among many at the grand opening ceremony.

"This will always be part of the Paul Tonko enduring legacy going forward," Hochul had said.

Several representatives credited Tonko, an Amsterdam native, for developing the initial vision of the pedestrian bridge and pushing for it to be constructed.

During the dedication ceremony, Tonko said the bridge celebrates the diversity of the community while creating a better access to the waterway, along with providing a new community space. Tonko said history and heritage creates the "heart and soul of a community," which is etched into the bridge.

"This bridge expresses growth, belief, a spirit of can-do and a redefining of the core fabric of 'us,'" he said. "It is a powerful statement of what people can engage in as a project to show growth and to show life."

The MVGO Art Committee is in the process of reviewing proposals from artists specializing in sculpture or metal work, or both, to create a sculpture on the north bank and another on the south bank, along with a decorative metal gate at the South Side entrance to the bridge. The decorative gate would also be functional, closing the bridge during the off season.

Funds for the artistic elements will be drawn from the remaining \$650,000 the city received through state grants.

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# Sports



The Amsterdam Mohawks have rapidly become one of the nation's most successful and historic summer collegiate baseball teams. Regularly packing historic Shuttleworth Park from early June to mid-August each summer, the Mohawks have dominated play in the region since moving to Amsterdam in 2003 by bringing in top collegiate prospects from schools like the University of Kentucky, Florida State and Auburn.

The Mohawks won numerous New York Collegiate Baseball League championships before helping to form the new Perfect Game Collegiate Baseball League, where in 2014 they claimed their third consecutive title, winning again in 2016.

More than 50 former Amsterdam Mohawks have been drafted by Major League Baseball teams.

Games at Shuttleworth Park provide a family-friendly atmosphere with contests for fans and several postgame fireworks shows during the season.

PHOTOS BY ADAM SHINDER

TOP: Mohawks' outfielder Eric Rivera slides into home plate during a game against Saugerties. ABOVE: Jake Mueller of the Mohawks gets a hit against Utica.

*Amsterdam Mohawks,  
Shuttleworth Park, Amsterdam • (518) 791-7546  
[www.amsterdammohawks.com](http://www.amsterdammohawks.com)*

### **Amsterdam Municipal Golf Course**

158 Upper Van Dyke Avenue, Amsterdam  
(518) 842-9731

[www.amsterdammuni.com](http://www.amsterdammuni.com) • Facebook

A historic 18-hole public golf course designed by Robert Trent Jones and run by the City of Amsterdam. Clubhouse restaurant offers lunch, dinner and breakfast.

### **Canajoharie Golf & Country Club**

154 Golf Club Road, Canajoharie  
(518) 673-8183 • [canajohariegolf.com](http://canajohariegolf.com)

An 18-hole public golf course located in Canajoharie, in the beautiful Mohawk Valley. Established in 1936, the Club includes a restaurant/banquet facility and pro shop. Conveniently located 5 miles off of Exit 29 on the NYS Thruway.

### **Fox Run Golf Club**

129 Fox Run Drive, Johnstown  
(518) 762-3717 • [www.foxrungolfclub.net](http://www.foxrungolfclub.net) • Facebook

An 18-hole championship layout, driving range, restaurant, pro-shop, chipping and putting greens, indoor simulators, lessons, memberships, open to public.

### **Hales Mills Country Club**

146 Steele Road, Johnstown  
(518) 736-4622

[www.halesmillscountryclub.com](http://www.halesmillscountryclub.com) • Facebook

18-hole golf course open to the public. All grass driving range, carts, extensive pro shop and full-service restaurant with bar. Banquet facility.

# Golf

### **Holland Meadows Golf Course**

1503 State Highway 29, Gloversville  
(518) 883-3318

[hollandmeadowsgolfcourse.com](http://hollandmeadowsgolfcourse.com) • Facebook

18-hole course and extensive pro shop for all your golfing needs. Open year round with four-Indoor Golf Simulators, driving range.

### **Kingsboro Golf Club**

301 N. Kingsboro Avenue, Gloversville  
(518) 725-4653

[www.kingsborogolfclub.com](http://www.kingsborogolfclub.com) • Facebook

Scenic golf club offering a competitive 9-hole course for novice and experienced golfers. Enjoy cold beverages and a varied menu in the Double Eagle Restaurant.

### **Rolling Hills Country Club**

2258 State Highway 5, Fort Johnson  
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# CHAMBER REPORT

A chamber membership is an investment in  
your business & your community

**The Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce** is a membership-based organization, right now composed of 950 business members from all over the Fulton-Montgomery counties region and beyond (Albany, Schenectady,

Saratoga, Schoharie, and more!)

Our vision statement: "We are the leading voice of business in the region providing advocacy, resources and solutions for our members" couldn't ring more true.

**Advocacy** – we speak as one voice for business

in the halls of government; from mayors of cities/villages in our two counties, to county governments, state and beyond. We speak up for pro-business issues to make for a stronger business climate for all.

**Resources and Solutions** – we provide ways for our members to network with each other and grow their businesses; we promote our businesses in many ways, online and offline; we provide educational resources and seminars on issues important to businesses large and small; we communicate with our members and help them communicate with one another.

Chamber membership is an investment in your business, and is best utilized when you take advantage of Chamber member benefits. One way to get involved is for Chamber member businesses and their employees to get involved with a Chamber Committee. Here is some information on these Chamber groups and the staff liaison who works with them. Please reach out and get involved!

**Ambassador Committee** – Led by Co-Chairs Carl Marucci (Patriot Federal Bank) and Lana Ruggiero (Ruggiero Realty), this Chamber committee is very active. The committee's mission statement speaks to their program of work – promoting the goodwill communicating the mission of the Chamber to new and existing members, encouraging business members and their employees to get involved with Chamber programs and services, and supporting business members and staff. Ambassadors are often the first link that new members have with the Chamber. Their goal is to make businesses feel welcome and comfortable at Chamber events and programs. They do this by attending ribbon-cutting events to welcome new businesses, they contact new members to answer questions and explain benefits, and more. They also serve as the official hosts at Chamber events, where they pay special attention to first-time attendees, meeting them and introducing them to other members. They truly are Chamber advocates. The group meets monthly at Chamber-member restaurants all over the region. The staff liaison to this group is Alex Ruggeri.

**Fulton Montgomery Young Professionals Network** (FMYPN) – This group's Chairman is Sam Zimmerman (Mohawk Valley Group at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management). Sam's Co-Chair is Shane Rauh (SEFCU). This active group's vision is "to serve as a catalyst to connect, develop and empower young professionals by offering networking, professional development, and civic engagement opportunities in a fun atmosphere. The professionals targeted will range from "20-something to 40-something" but the expertise, participation and camaraderie of professionals of all ages will be sought, welcomed and encouraged." FMYPN is led by a Steering Committee,

whose members chair group sub-committees. Anyone is welcome to be a part of the networking and community events in which the group participates. You can like FMYPN on Facebook, follow the group on Twitter (FMYPN) or Instagram #FMYPN for updates on events and more. Staff liaison is Nicole Walrath.

**Education Committee** – This committee is chaired by Diana Marshall (Gloversville Sewing Center) and is comprised of business leaders, and education leaders from school districts and HFM BOCES. The group works on events that foster collaboration between businesses and our schools (8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Exploration Day), gets businesses directly involved with

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## **Our vision statement: We are the leading voice of business in the region providing advocacy, resources and solutions for our members**

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students through mentor programs and internships, and helps to connect businesses with information about how educational initiatives in our region will help prepare the workforce of tomorrow. The group meets monthly at the Chamber office, HFM BOCES, or PTECH and is always looking for business members to help with its program of work. Staff liaison is Kelly Montanye.

**Governmental Affairs** – This important committee puts together an Advocacy Agenda for the Chamber each year, that helps focus on issues that are important for our businesses. They regularly meet with elected officials on municipal, county, state and federal levels to keep a finger on the "pulse" of legislation and to keep pro-business issues in the conversation. Mark Kilmer is the staff liaison to this committee that meets monthly on a rotating basis in the Chamber's Amsterdam office or Gloversville office. Kevin McClary, publisher of The Recorder and President of McClary Media is the Committee Chair.

Find out more about how the Chamber can help your business...and our region. Call (518) 725-0641, visit [www.fultonmontgomeryny.org](http://www.fultonmontgomeryny.org), Like us on Facebook, and connect with us on Twitter and Instagram. Remember, membership in the Chamber is a good investment for your business...and for our region.

# FULTON MONTGOMERY REGION PROFILE

The region's economy features agriculture, commercial, retail, industrial, warehousing and distribution, transportation, food manufacturing, and other businesses.

**POPULATION:** Total = 103,884 (2014 estimate)

Fulton County = 54,104

City of Gloversville 15,315

City of Johnstown 8,479

Montgomery County = 49,779

City of Amsterdam 18,206

**LAND AREA** in square miles (2010): 898.51

Fulton County = 495.47

Montgomery County = 403.04

**PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE** (2010):

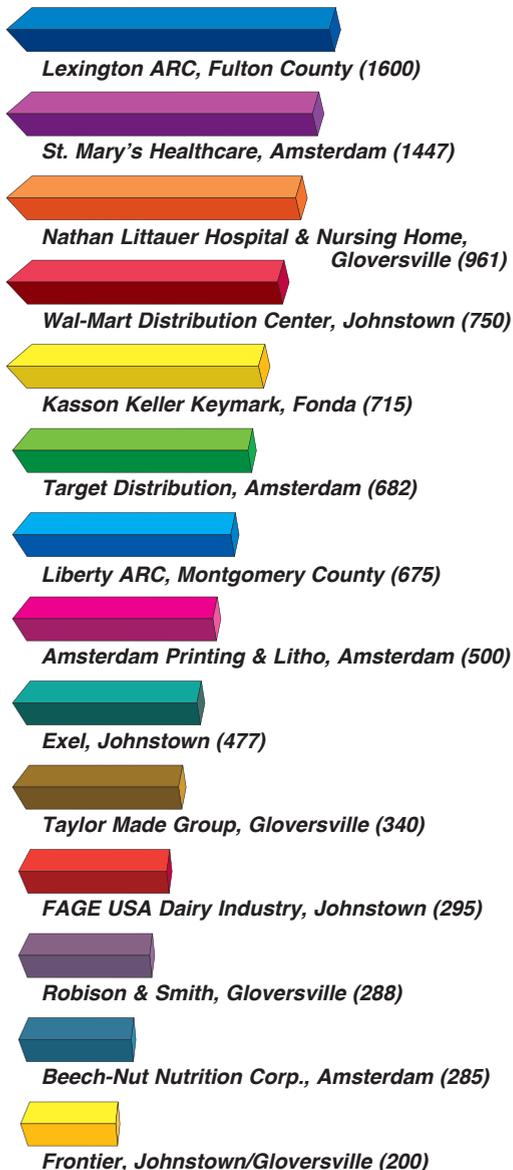
Fulton County = 112.1

Montgomery County = 124.6

**TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRMS** (2007): 7,914

## MAJOR PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS

(# of employees)



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

**Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.fultonmontgomeryny.org](http://www.fultonmontgomeryny.org)

2 N. Main Street, Gloversville, NY 12078  
 1166 Riverfront Center, Amsterdam, NY 12010  
 (518) 725-0641

**Fulton County Center for Regional Growth**  
 34 West Fulton Street, Gloversville, NY 12078  
[www.fcrcg.org](http://www.fcrcg.org)  
 (518) 725-7700

**Fulton County Industrial Development Agency**  
[ida.fultoncountyny.gov](http://ida.fultoncountyny.gov)  
 1 East Montgomery Street, Johnstown, NY 12095  
 (518) 736-5660

**Montgomery County Business Development Center**  
[www.mcbdc.org/](http://www.mcbdc.org/)  
 9 Park Street, Fonda, NY 12068  
 (518) 853-8334

## COST OF LIVING

Median Housing Prices (2016):

Fulton County = \$115,000

Montgomery County = \$97,000

Median Rental Price (average of three cities' rates):

For a 2 bedroom/1 bath = \$720/month

## SALES TAXES

County = 8% (Fulton County and Montgomery County)

State Sales Tax = 4%

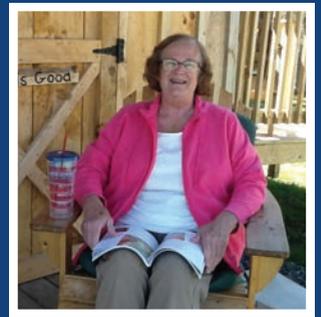
## OCCUPATIONS OF RESIDENTS

	Montgomery Co.	Fulton Co.
16+ Years Civilian Employed	21,714	23,639
Management, Business, Science & Arts	30%	28%
Service Occupations	18%	20%
Sales And Office	23%	25%
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	10%	10%
Production, Transportation, Material Moving	18%	17%

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(518) 673-2573

Gloversville Health Center  
(518) 773-8894

Johnstown Health Center  
(518) 762-3161

Johnstown Pediatrics Health Center  
(518) 762-3161

Northville Health Center  
(518) 863-4200

## SPECIALTY CARE

Cancer Medicine Center  
(518) 770-7557

Ear, Nose and Throat Health Center  
(518) 770-7830

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(518) 843-1240

Amsterdam OB/ GYN Health Center  
(518) 842-0373

Johnstown OB/GYN Health Center  
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