

Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development * Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency * Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce * Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association * Sullivan County Democrat

Leading the State: High job growth, Low unemployment in Sullivan County

BY JOSHUA POTOSEK
 SULLIVAN COUNTY MANAGER

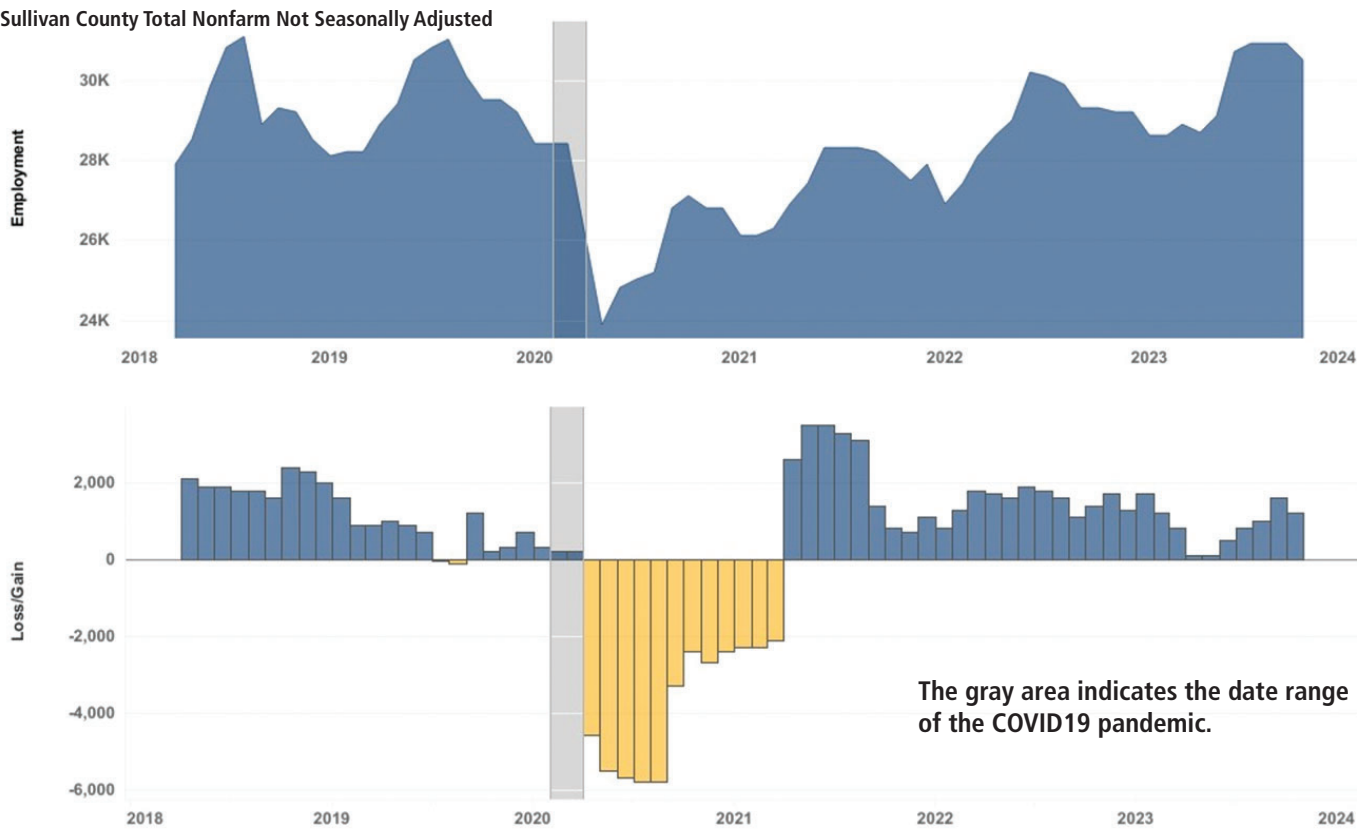
We're often hardest on ourselves, and that stands true for Sullivan County as an entity as well. We understandably focus on our challenges, our failures, our dilemmas. Certainly we need to constantly put effort toward improving our lives and our services, endeavoring not to repeat mistakes of the past. But we should be careful not to dwell on the negatives to the exclusion of all else. Two prime examples of what's going right is our robust job growth and our consistently low unemployment rate.

True, this is part of a nationwide trend, but when compared to many of our upstate and downstate counterparts, Sullivan County has been seeing great (and, of late, phenomenal) numbers. Perhaps most dramatic has been the swing in our unemployment rate. During the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, nearly 16% of our workforce was out of a job – the highest such percentage since electronic recordkeeping began in 1990. Thankfully, that dropped by 10% (to just under 6%) by November of that year. But the unemployment rate kept

falling, to an historic low of 3.1% by December 2021. And then it fell further, to 2.9% in May 2022, then 2.7% that October, finally bottoming out at 2.5% in April 2023. Since then, it's only slightly crept up, standing at 3.3% in October. Meanwhile, our job growth rate climbed stratospherically. In fact, we led the State for many months after the pandemic eased, and we've consistently remained in the top five job



Please see **LEADING** page 5E



INSIDE:

President's message:
As you sow, so shall you reap
 page 3E

Tourism and Hospitality:
'24 to be full of innovation and excitement
 page 6E

Sullivan County Real Estate Market Update
 page 8E

ServePro: There when you need them
 page 10E

J&G Law: Serving the Hudson Valley for 50 years
 page 12E

Carpentry apprentices learning a trade at SUNY Sullivan
 page 14E

Chamber Update: Small business authenticity & growth
 page 16E

CONTRIBUTED IMAGES



GET

\$100*

OFFER VALID 12/6/23 – 12/31/23



FEATURING THE MICHELIN X-ICE SNOW TIRE

Get \$100* (\$70 tire rebate, plus a \$30 bonus rebate) total savings via Visa® Reward Card¹ or Visa® Virtual Prepaid Card² after online submission* with the purchase of four new select Michelin winter passenger or light truck tires. Offer valid 12/6/23 – 12/31/23.

* Reward Card or Virtual Prepaid Card eligibility is limited to tire purchases from participating dealers only. See redemption instructions handout for a full list of qualifying tires. Void where prohibited.

¹ Michelin Visa® Reward Card is issued by The Bancorp Bank, N.A., pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. and can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. Reward Card expires six (6) months after issuance. No cash access. The Bancorp Bank, N.A., Member FDIC. The Bancorp Bank, N.A. does not endorse or sponsor and is not affiliated in any way with any product or service offered by Michelin.

² Michelin Visa® Virtual Prepaid Card is issued by Pathward®, National Association, Member FDIC pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. The card may be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted online in the United States, US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Visa is a registered trademark owned by Visa International Service Association. Virtual Prepaid Card expires six (6) months after issuance. No cash access.

Copyright © 2023 Michelin North America, Inc. All rights reserved. The Michelin Man is a registered trademark owned by Michelin.

118376

TIRE DISCOUNT CENTER

SERVING YOUR AUTOMOTIVE NEEDS SINCE 1968! **Alignments • Brakes • Tire & Wheel Services • TPMS • Nitrogen Axle & CV Joint Repair • Steering & Suspension • Vehicle Inspection**

176 EAST BROADWAY, MONTICELLO, NY (845) 794-4455 Mon-Fri 8 AM – 6 PM **76 DOLSON AVE, MIDDLETOWN, NY (845) 342-2036 Mon-Fri 8 AM – 6 PM** **395 ROUTE 211 EAST, MIDDLETOWN, NY (845) 343-3328 Mon-Fri 8 AM – 6 PM**

Visit us online at www.TireDiscountCenter.com!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TO THE PEOPLE

As you sow, so shall you reap.

As we close out the holiday season and prepare for New Year celebrations, I can't help but think about better days ahead. Not that 2023 was bad. Our economy was stable, unemployment low, and we experienced some of the best job growth numbers in the region yet again, but it just felt like we were doing a lot of sowing. So where is the reaping? Tourism once again thrived; even with all of the rain. Yes it did rain virtually every Saturday this summer. I guess if you planted a lot of trees, which I did, it was a good thing. True to form I always have a glass half full approach to everything in life because that is what works for me. Even with inflation, global uncertainty, and an upcoming contentious national

election we look to continue our good works locally to build on the progress we have made by doing all of that seed sowing. Next year promises to provide enjoyment of the fruits of our labor in 2023 and years past.

At the Partnership we worked hard to secure preapprovals for sites to be able to attract new investment while facilitating current projects that will be approved in 2024. Now four sites have been preapproved representing over 2 million sq. ft of space in our Industrial Commercial zones. We are assisting developers to secure desperately needed infrastructure for those preapproved properties so that we can better compete for projects in our region. The Environmental Impact Statement for the NYS17/I-86 expansion project is well underway and should be completed by year end with construction to begin in



CEO/President Marc Baez

2025. The Sullivan County Chamber has elevated the Bagel Festival to a sought-after annual event that draws people from well beyond our borders with thousands now attending. The Sullivan Catskills Visitors just announced a new podcast "Talk of the Town," that will highlight each of our town's unique assets to add to their award-winning menu of initiatives that continue to bring visitors to our community and bolster our tourism economy. New elected officials in County and Town government seek to bring fresh ideas, and complete current projects like the new airport terminal and aquatic center projects at SUNY Sullivan

Local labor has worked with BOCES to help develop our future vocational

workforce ensuring that our critical services industries can continue to support our community and our young folks have a chance at making a reasonable living. Our health care industry is investing in new facilities and upgrades to help enhance services and our schools are investing in facilities and new programs to keep pace with an ever-changing world.

Sure, it is plainly evident that there is much more work to be done, but we have made significant progress in recent years and the work that we have collectively been doing all along will begin to reap rewards in 2024 and beyond. So, stay strong and stay positive. Our best years are yet to come. May you have a joyful holiday season and Happy New Year!

SULLIVAN COUNTY
PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sullivan County Partnership
for Economic Development
196 Bridgeville Road • Monticello, NY 12701
845-794-1110 • Fax 845-794-2324

SULLIVAN COUNTY
CHAMBER
of Commerce

196 Bridgeville Road, Suite 7
Monticello, New York
PO Box 405 • Mongaup Valley, NY 12762
845-791-4200 • Fax 845-791-4220

COUNTY OF SULLIVAN
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

548 Broadway
Monticello, NY 12701
Phone: 845-428-7575 • Fax: 845-428-7577

SULLIVAN CATSKILLS
VISITORS ASSOCIATION

15 Sullivan Ave. • Liberty, NY 12754
Mailing Address: PO Box 248
Ferdale, NY 12734
845-747-4449 • Fax 845-747-4468
www.scva.net

Published by Catskill-Delaware Publications, Inc.
Publisher: Fred Stabbert III
Designer: Rosalie Mycka
Senior Director of Advertising: Barbara Matos
Advertising Representative: Susan Panella
Business Manager: Sara Wendell
Production Associates: Briona Harjes, Elizabeth Finnegan, Nyssa Calkin, Debra Thomas, Justin Mednick, Ruth Huggler, Katie Dnistrian
Distribution: Allen Davis, Phil Grisafe, John Fischer
P.O. Box 308, Callicoon, NY, 12723 • 845-887-5200

Building a Future Together

- Commercial Lending
- Residential **SimpleMortgage**

30th Anniversary
1993-2023

CATSKILL HUDSON
BANK
Simply Better Banking



Serving the Capital and Mid-Hudson Regions

111038

Member
FDIC
EQUAL HOUSING
LENDER



**SUPERIOR
SURFACING
SYSTEMS LTD.**



ASPHALT CONTRACTORS 845.733.5507 AND RELATED CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Commercial Asphalt Paving & Repairs | Signage & Line Striping
Crack Filling | Concrete Work | Excavation & Site Work
Drainage | Sports Court Construction



www.superior-surfacing.com

PO Box 4299, Middletown, NY 10941 | Yard/Shop: 21 Allen Lane, Bloomingburg, NY 12721

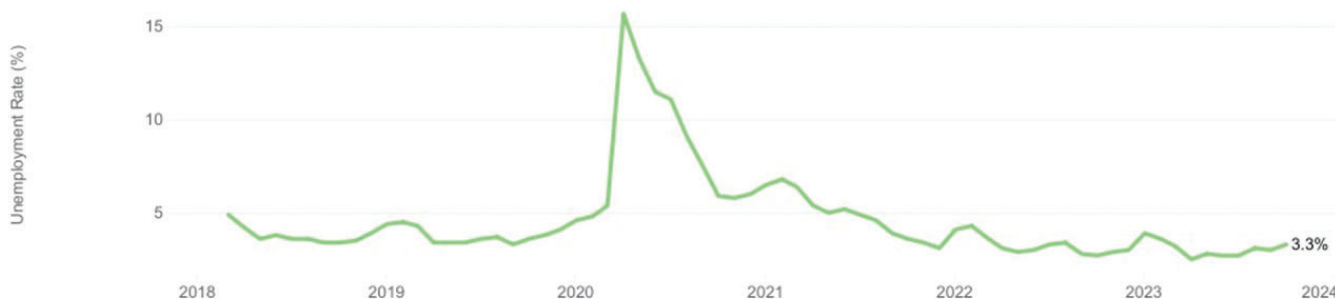
LEADING:

Continued from front page

consistently remained in the top five job growth performers Statewide this entire year.

We came close this year to eclipsing our historic August 2018 high of 31,100 people employed (non-farm) in Sullivan County, as we reached 30,900 employed in July 2023. However, unlike any year prior, we maintained that level of high employment for a full three months this summer. (Typically, we spike in August, then rapidly fall.) And in October – the latest month for which the NYS Department of Labor has graphed data – we only fell to 30,500 employed.

It's safe to say that we haven't seen unemployment decreases and job growth like this since the heyday of our resorts era. And while County government (particularly our Planning Division and Center for Workforce Development) has most definitely played a role in this dramatically positive uplift, I must also give credit to our economic development partners: Partnership for Economic Development,



Year	Month	Area Name	Employed	Unemployed	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
2023	October	Sullivan County	37,400	1,300	38,700	3.3%
	September	Sullivan County	38,200	1,200	39,400	3.0%
	August	Sullivan County	38,700	1,200	39,900	3.1%
	July	Sullivan County	38,900	1,100	40,000	2.7%
	June	Sullivan County	38,000	1,100	39,100	2.7%
	May	Sullivan County	36,300	1,000	37,300	2.8%
	April	Sullivan County	36,000	900	36,900	2.5%
	March	Sullivan County	36,000	1,200	37,200	3.2%
	February	Sullivan County	35,500	1,300	36,900	3.6%
	January	Sullivan County	35,500	1,400	36,900	3.9%

Unemployment spiked during the pandemic but quickly recovered.

Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Agency, and Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association.

We have worked together to achieve the very best for Sullivan County, knowing full well that “a rising tide lifts all boats.” We have fostered a climate of helpfulness to

local businesses and job-seekers. We have strategized collaboratively on attracting and creating better-paying jobs. And we have sought to identify pathways to continued growth, as firmly evidenced by the above workforce numbers.

There is always work to be done,

but residents, businesspeople and visitors alike continue to benefit from a robust economy in Sullivan County – one that we will continue to cultivate in the years to come. Amidst the weight of our struggles and challenges, this is something we should not fail to recognize.

COOMBE, & BENDER COMPANY

Financial Planning & Investment Management

Investment Advisors

Creating and Preserving Wealth

Philip Coombe III, CFP® • Catherine M. Coombe, CFP® • Lynn McDonald

Office locations:

Main Office:

P.O. Box 333 / 6872 Route 209
Wawarsing, NY 12489

548 Broadway

Monticello, NY 12701
Call for appointment

104135

SULLIVAN CATSKILLS

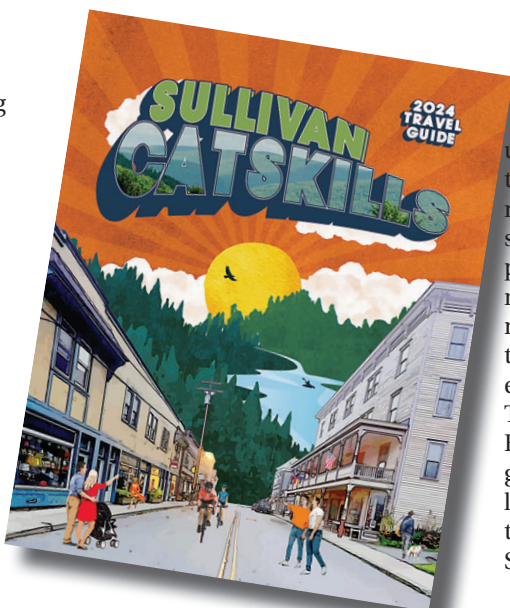
WHAT'S ON DECK FOR 2024

As we eagerly step into 2024, the Sullivan Catskills region is gearing up for a transformative period that holds immense potential for both residents and visitors.

With a focus on enhancing the overall travel experience, the Sullivan Catskills is set to unveil a range of exciting developments, from a comprehensive travel guide and a cutting-edge website to an expanded Catskill Cuisine festival in the spring.

Travel Guide: Navigating the Beauty of Sullivan Catskills

One of the cornerstones of the Sullivan Catskills has been our annual Travel Guide. Aimed at providing visitors with an immersive experience, the guide will showcase the region's diverse offerings, from outdoor adventures and cultural attractions to hidden gems and culinary delights. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a seasoned traveler, this guide will be your go-to resource for unlocking the true essence of the Sullivan Catskills.



and engaging visitors.

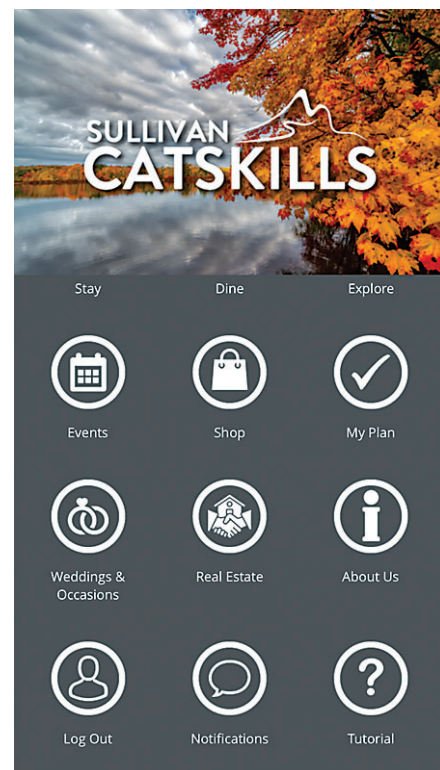
Sullivan Catskills is set to launch a new and improved website, featuring a modern design and enhanced functionality. The website will serve as a dynamic platform, offering real-time information on events, accommodations, dining options, and more. With a user-centric approach, the website aims to make trip planning a seamless and enjoyable experience, enticing travelers to explore the region's offerings.

New Properties: Elevating the Hospitality Landscape

To meet the growing demand for unique and luxurious accommodations, Sullivan Catskills is welcoming new properties that redefine hospitality standards. From boutique hotels with personalized experiences to eco-friendly resorts that harmonize with the region's natural beauty, these additions will cater to a diverse range of preferences. We are excited to welcome Hemlock Neversink, The Domes at Catskills, and a revamped Holiday Mountain to our region. The goal is to not only provide comfortable lodging but also create memorable stays that reflect the distinctive charm of the Sullivan Catskills.

Celebrating Excellence at the Annual Meeting

In the beginning of December, the Sullivan Catskills community came together to celebrate these exciting developments at the annual meeting, held at Bethel Woods. Industry leaders, local businesses, and community members joined together to reflect on achievements, discuss future goals, and foster collaboration.



The 2024 Sullivan Catskills Travel Guide, at left, and the new cutting edge website, above, are just two of the exciting offerings coming in the new year.

Perfect. *Fit.*



BLS

BILLIG LOUGHLIN & SILVER, LLP

BUSINESS. LAW. SUCCESS.

Results-oriented and client-centric, we are a leading multi-practice law firm in the Catskills & Hudson Valley.

- REAL ESTATE
- COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
- LITIGATION
- ESTATE PLANNING
- BUSINESS LAW

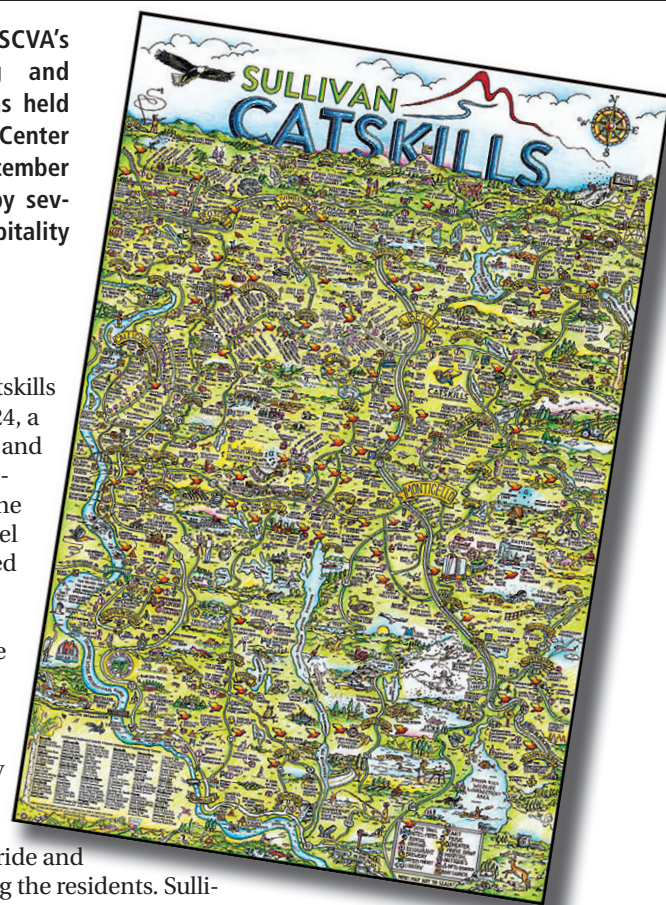
845.794.3833

www.BLSlaw.net



AT LEFT: The SCVA's Annual Meeting and Cocktail Party was held at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts on December 6 and attended by several hundred hospitality supporters

As the Sullivan Catskills looks ahead to 2024, a wave of optimism and excitement permeates the air. With the launch of our Travel Guide, an upgraded website, and the introduction of new properties the region is poised for unparalleled growth. These initiatives not only aim to attract new visitors but also foster a sense of pride and community among the residents. Sullivan Catskills is not just a destination; it's a thriving community with a vision for a vibrant and prosperous future.



The Sullivan Catskills map was drawn by Rocky Piniciotti and took a year and a half to produce.

Merrell Bencó

Insurance Agency

Personal coverage

- Automobile
- Homeowners
- Umbrella policy

Business coverage

- Business automobile
- Package policies
- Workers' compensation

67 East Broadway, Monticello, NY 12701
(845) 796-1500



Instant online quotes at: mbagency.com

**FROM WELL DRILLING TO WATER TESTING,
WE MEET EVERY NEED.**



Contact us for dependable drilling contractors who ensure your water systems are operating as they should.

**1-800-GO-TITAN
1-845-586-4000**

99053

264 Co. Hwy. 38, Arkville, NY 12406

www.titanwelldrillingny.com



Find us on Facebook



Smalls

Plumbing, Heating, and AC

Serving
Sullivan County
Since
1953



Specializing in all phases of service & installation . . . plumbing, radiant heating, hot water/hot air heating, hydro air, air-conditioning
• AC Ductless Split Units • Water Treatment Systems • Geothermal Systems
CALL TODAY FOR ALL YOUR SERVICE NEEDS

Certified & Factory Trained Professionals in the Latest Technologies
"NO JOB'S TOO BIG FOR SMALLS"

FULLY INSURED
- 876 Old Rt. 17, Harris -
845-794-7780



20929

Real Estate sales slow as prices continue to edge upwards

BY FRED STABBERT III

The combination of high interest rates and low inventory dampened buyer demand and were the chief causes in significant declines in sales transactions during the third quarter throughout the Hudson Valley.

In Sullivan County, third quarter single-family home sales declined 28.5% from 2022 – from 302 to 216.

However, Median and Mean sale prices increased 7.3% and 9.7% respectively during the same period.

The median sale price is the sale price in the middle of the data set when you arrange all the sale prices from low to high. The median sale price, then, represents the figure at which half of the properties in the area sell at a higher price and other half at a lower price.

In Sullivan County, that price is now \$299,500 – which is up from \$199,000 in 2020.

The Median Sales price in 2021 was \$251,125 and in 2022 it was \$279,000.

“The prolonged high interest rate environment has kept many possible home sellers on the sidelines.”

The Mean Sales Price is calculated by adding all home prices, then dividing that by the number of closed sales.

In Sullivan County, the 2023 third quarter Mean Sales Price was \$356,714.

That is up from \$218,375 in 2020, \$291,961 in 2021 and \$325,179 last year.

The prolonged high interest rate environment has kept many possible home sellers on the sidelines. The 30-year fixed mortgage rate was at 7.67% for the week ended Oct. 6, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association—the highest level since 2000 and 40 basis points higher than a month ago.

Steingart Printing

Four Generations of Printing Excellence

A Full Service Printer!

- Offset & Digital Printing □ Design □ Bindery
- Mailing Service

Call for prices!!

5211 Main St., South Fallsburg, NY 12779 • www.steingartprinting.com

845.434.4321

54072



150 JEFFERSON STREET, MONTICELLO, NY 12701
845.794.5900 | WWW.SCHMIDTSWHOLESALE.COM

“It is nonetheless inevitable for rent growth to slow because of the construction of multiple new apartments. Inflation and interest rates will be lower next year.”

Lawrence Yun
National Assn. of Realtors Chief Economist

Inventory levels in every market took a turn for the worse

The six-county report, released by Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, also noted that Sullivan County registered the smallest decline in inventory – dropping from 440 single-family houses on the market in 2022 to 420 houses on the market during the third quarter of this year.

Looking Ahead

Area Realtors believe that the current sales environment will continue until the Federal Reserve Board provides more clarity on its interest rate strategy in battling inflation going forward.

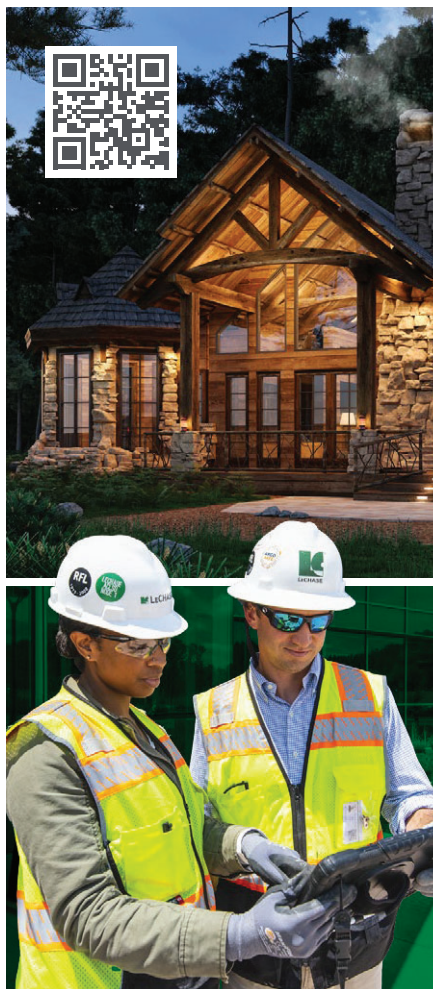
National Association of Realtors Chief Economist Lawrence Yun said, “The Federal Reserve’s goal of raising the interest rates has been to bring

inflation to near 2%.

“We are not quite there yet, partly because gasoline prices have been moving up for four straight months, now up 3% from a year ago and up 68% from pre-COVID days, Yun continued.

“Despite many private sector data pointing towards softer rent growth, the official government measurement is still showing a fast increase. Rents rose 7.4% from a year ago,” Yun said.

“This is the main reason why consumer prices are not fully under control and why the Fed refuses to consider cutting interest rates,” Yun added. “It is nonetheless inevitable for rent growth to slow because of the construction of multiple new apartments. Inflation and interest rates will be lower next year.”



Building projects that build community

At LeChase, our reputation for integrity, safety and quality has earned us the privilege of building projects – large and small – that continue to shape the future of Sullivan County. Whether a project is in healthcare, K-12, higher education, commercial, manufacturing, hospitality or housing, we are proud to support efforts that make the community an even better place to live, work and learn.



119026

Cooper Arias, LLP
Accounting & Accountability

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Individual Taxation | Corporate, Partnership & LLC Taxation |
| Estates & Trusts | Government & Fire District Auditing |
| Not-for-Profit Accounting | |
| Financial Statements | |

892 State Route 17B
Mongaup Valley, NY 12762
845-796-1800

2527 Route 17
Goshen, NY 10924
845-343-2215

133 Route 304
Bardonia, NY 10954
845-623-0300

Certified Public Accountants
www.cooperarias.com

56069

C.T. Male Associates
A DESIGN PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION



- Civil Engineering
- Environmental Services
- Survey Services
- Land Services
- Architecture
- Energy & Building Systems Services
- Electrical Engineering

C.T. Male Associates Engineering, Surveying, Architecture, Landscape Architecture & Geology, D.P.C.
50 Century Hill Drive, Latham, NY 12110
(518) 786-7400
www.ctmale.com

115877

SERVPRO: There when you need them

STORY AND PHOTOS BY FRED STABBERT III

SERVPRO is a company which you hope you never have to call.

But when you do, you'll be very happy to get one of their highly-trained employees on the phone, who will respond to your emergency 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"We are there when you need us," said Brittany Johnson, whose family has owned the Middletown SERVPRO franchise for the last 38 years.

"We cover Orange, Sullivan and most of Ulster County," Johnson said. "We respond to all kinds of emergencies – fire damage, water damage, or mold clean-up."

"We also handle and offer such other services as air duct cleaning and post construction cleaning," Brittany said.

"We also have a full construction division who can put everything back together," she said.

One of the biggest and most

recent challenges SERVPRO tackled was the flooding in southern Orange County this past summer.

"We responded to the West Point Military Academy, where 12 buildings were affected," Brittany said.

She said the clean-up was assisted by three other SERVPRO franchises and it took three weeks – seven days a week – to restore the buildings back to usable condition.

The Hudson River rose so fast and so high, Brittany said one building had water on the second floor.

SERVPRO also went into Highland Falls, the nearby community, to assist in the clean up of the Town Building, Police and EMS building.

"We also donated our services to help clean up Grandma's Pizza, which is a main street business," she said.

Family Affair

Brittany said SERVPRO originally started in the



Having clean, well-organized equipment ready to go in a moment's notice is vital in the emergency clean-up business. Above, air movers and dehumidifiers sit ready to use.

basement of her parents' house – Brad and Barbara.

"You could say I was born and raised in the business," she laughed. "I always saw everything that was happening because the business was in the basement of our house for the first 10 years of the business."

"I wanted to be a teacher and have a college degree to be one," she said. "But I really missed the whole family aspect and would call home to see how everything was going."

So 10 years ago, after college, Brittany joined SERVPRO and is now in charge of Marketing, Finances and Relationship Development.

Her mother has now retired and her dad "Is here when he's here," she laughed. He is still always available as a mentor.

Sister Laura, a 15-year veteran of the company, is now the General Manager, handling the day-to-day responsibilities of the business.

And so the Johnson family tradition remains strong at SERVPRO.

In fact, the ladies' grandmother, Rita Blood, was busy baking 300

boxes of cookies for clients in the company's kitchen last week.

"My grandfather, Richard Blood, was still working here when he was 89," Brittany said.

"We have a great group of people [here at SERVPRO]," Brittany said. "There is a constant level of moving parts but we work as one team to get things done."

"Our technicians are our front lines and are very valuable," she said. "And our goal in 2024 is to expand into more commercial work."

To that end, Brittany is a board member of the Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development and member of the Orange County Chamber of Commerce and also a board member of Leadership Orange.

"The Partnership is awesome," she said. "I always recommend those two organizations because they both have a lot of growth and a lot of things happening."

Today, the company has 32 employees in its sprawling Dolsontown business office, complete with business offices, storage space and plenty of room for equipment storage and clean up areas.



It's a family affair at SERVPRO with Brittany Johnson, left, and her sister Laura, embracing Grandma Rita Blood, who was busy last week baking more than 300 boxes of cookies for all of SERVPRO's customers and friends.

SERVPRO®

of Orange, Sullivan & S. Ulster Counties

Here to help®

845-342-3333



Fire



Water



Mold



Construction



Storm Disaster



Commercial



CALICOON
NEW HILLS YORK

New Year's Eve at The Hills

Spend New Year's Eve at Callicoon Hills and Conover Club as we bid farewell to the year and welcome the new one! Join for an evening of filling bites, boozy pours, dancing to DJ beats, and so much more.

Tickets may be purchased by visiting Callicoon Hill's website under Experiences or calling us at (845) 482 2420.



J&G Law has been providing legal expertise to the Hudson Valley for 50 years

BY FRED STABBERT III

J&G Law LLP is an integral part of the Hudson Valley community, embodying an unwavering commitment to both legal expertise and community service.

With offices in Monticello and Walden, J&G Law has been serving the region for over 50 years, becoming well known for its sophisticated legal representation across a diverse range of areas, including land use, environmental and zoning law, real estate, estate planning, litigation, business, and non-profit matters.

The firm has a team of over 20 highly-skilled attorneys and employs a collaborative approach to deliver optimal legal solutions, earning them a well-deserved reputation for excellence. The firm is proud of their community focus and the attorneys and staff support numerous local organizations and causes.

J&G also serves as legal counsel and board members for several Sullivan County charitable entities, exemplifying their dedication to local development



Managing Partner and Leadership Sullivan Graduate Michele L. Babcock, center, is congratulated by J&G Law Partner Benjamin J. Gailey and Partner Kelly A. Pressler.

and well-being.

Based on their commitment to the local community, the firm was recognized by the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce as the Sullivan

County Business of the Year in 2021.

Several of the attorneys who are most involved in Sullivan County include:

Managing Partner Michele Babcock

• Michele celebrates 20 years at J&G this year and has served as the Managing Partner of the firm since 2015.

She has represented private applicants and local governments in zoning and land use matters. Michele has served as a member of the Board of the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce and the Leadership Sullivan Chamber Foundation.

Michele graduated from Leadership Sullivan Class in 2018 and served as Vice President, Leadership Orange and Hudson Valley Patterns Fellows Program. S

She was recognized as one of Sullivan County's Business and Professional Women of the Year in 2017. She previously served several terms as Vice President and one term as corresponding secretary of the Women's Bar Association of Orange and Sullivan Counties (WBAOSC).

The firm is proud that five of their attorneys have served as President of WBAOSC including current President



Building and Custom homes

Specializing in Plumbing, Heating, Renovation and Restoration of Historic and Existing structures, and New Construction Builds

223 Old Route 17
Monticello, NY 12701

845-513-6400

Riggs@riggspl.com



Cynthia Hand, Esq. (Trust and Estates), Kelly Pressler, Esq. (Litigation), Rebecca Johnson, Esq. (Matrimonial), and Kara Cavallo (Real Property Tax Grievance).

Partner Gary Schuster

• Gary been with the firm for 19 years and concentrates in business and not-for-profit law, arts and entertainment, copyright, trademark, and

guardianships. He is a graduate of Leadership Sullivan, Leadership Orange, and Hudson Valley Patterns Fellows programs. Gary has served as a director of many nonprofits and is on the boards of the Orange County Arts Council and the New York State Council of Nonprofits (NYCON) where he also Board Secretary.

He is amember of the Hudson Valley Nonprofit Consultants and serves as counsel to many

businesses and not-for-profit organizations throughout Sullivan County.

Partner John Cappello

• John has been with the firm for 35 years and concentrates in land use, municipal, environmental, planning, and zoning law.

He regularly represents land use clients throughout Sullivan County. He is a frequent presenter on key community subjects such as housing, solar, and green solutions, planning and zoning and also graduated from the Hudson Valley Patterns Fellow Program.

Partner J. Benjamin Gaily

• Ben has been with the firm for 36 year and concentrates in municipal, land use, environment law and represents several Sullivan County municipalities, libraries, and the land bank.

Partner Kara Cavallo

• Kara has been with the firm for 19 years and concentrates in real property

tax exemptions and tax certiorari. She represents municipalities regarding tax assessments, exemptions, and valuation issues.



Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Jaime Schmeiser, left, and Samantha Mango, third from left, (formerly with Sullivan 180, now with Delaware Highlands Conservancy) congratulate J&G Law Partner Gary M. Schuster and J&G Law Managing Partner Michele L. Babcock on winning the chamber's Business of the Year in 2021.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

J&G Law Managing Partner Michele L. Babcock and Partner and Leadership Sullivan Graduate Gary M. Schuster.



111402

*Proudly Serving the Region
for over 36 years*

Tectonic

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS. EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE.



**Civil & Site Planning | SEQR Environmental Assessments & Phase I and Phase II ESAs
Wetland Delineations & T&E Studies | Geotechnical Engineering | Structural Engineering |
Surveying Mapping & Construction Stakeout | 3D Lidar Scanning | Special Inspections and
Materials Testing**

Mountainville, NY
800.829.6532
www.tectonicengineering.com



Everything For Your Backyard Escape - Sheds, Garages, Pavilions and Outdoor Furniture

Design your own shed or garage with our 3-D Builder on our website!

FREE Delivery in Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Large Outdoor Display at All 3 Locations.

GREY'S WOODWORKS
STORAGE SHEDS AND GARAGES

7862 Route 55 | P.O. Box 420 | Grahamsville, NY 12740
599 Route 299 | Highland, NY 12528 • 1A Matthews St, Goshen, NY 10924
845.985.7006
GREYSWOODWORKS.com



SUNY Sullivan now offers a two-year Associate Degree in Construction Technology.

Carpentry apprentices take advantage of SUNY SULLIVAN's new program

Program provides graduates with the skills and knowledge required to find immediate employment or advancement

SULLIVAN COUNTY — Founded in partnership with the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (NASRCC), SUNY Sullivan's two-year Associate of Occupational Studies (AOS) in Construction Technology degree program is thriving as the program heads into its second year this fall. Specifically designed to

meet growing state-wide need for a skilled labor force in construction, the Construction Technology Program offers graduates of and participants in NASRCC's apprenticeship programs the opportunity to earn an AOS degree from SUNY Sullivan after completing green building technology, accounting,

REAL ESTATE AND LAND USE LEGAL SERVICES

We help bring your VISION to FRUITION

- Environmental Law
- Site Suitability
- Landlord-Tenant
- Land Use Development
- Residential & Commercial Real Estate
- Solar Planning
- Planning Board and Zoning Board Representation

FOR MORE INFO VISIT JGLAW.LAW/SITE

Full Service Law Firm with Over 50 Years' Experience
Over 20 Attorneys • Over 30 Areas of Law

845-764-8828

WORLD CLASS ATTORNEYS
HUDSON VALLEY ROOTS
WALDEN | MONTICELLO

J&G LAW LLP

BUY

SELL

TRADE

Seven X Motors
Fine Pre-Owned Vehicles

Over 100 Vehicles In Stock!!
Sullivan County's biggest little dealership with the lowest miles in the mountains!

CALL 845-583-5110 OR JUST STOP BY!!!!!!

954 State Route 17B, Mongaup Valley, NY 12762 • www.sevenxmotorsinc.com

communications, computer literacy and other courses at the College.

“It has been a pleasure working with highly motivated students,” said SUNY Sullivan Green Building Technology Professor Larry Reeger, who said 40 students are enrolled in the Construction Technology Program for fall 2023. “Every student has their own individual story as they work toward earning their degree.”

Graduates of the Construction Technology program will have a mastery of the skills and knowledge required to find immediate employment or advancement in the residential and commercial construction industries⁶ and are eligible to use SUNY Sullivan credits toward a Bachelor of Technology (BTech) in Construction Supervision at Alfred State College.

Minisink Valley resident Kaycee McGovern, who has completed her NASRCC apprenticeship, said the Construction Technology Program will not only help her advance in her career and move into project management and higher-level work, but it has also given her eye-opening insight into green construction practices.

“This program gives me the knowledge needed to create a healthier and more sustainable environment while developing infrastructures for future generations,” said McGovern, who said she plans to pursue her bachelor’s degree at Alfred State. “Having a program like this will help develop ‘green-conscious’ architects, project managers, developers, contractors, and tradespeople enabling the continuation of the ‘green movement’ in construction.”

SUNY Sullivan offers seated in-person, online, and hybrid classes. For more information on SUNY Sullivan’s Construction Technology AOS Program, please visit sunysullivan.edu/construction-technology-aos or call 845-567-1810.

For more information on the NASRCC visit carpenterslocalunion279.org or call 845-567-1810. For more information about the



apprenticeship program, visit nasctf.org.

About the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

The North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters represents more than 28,000 men and women employed by the leading residential and commercial general contractors and carpentry subcontractors in the region. Work performed by carpenters includes wood framing; concrete; interior metal framing and drywall; ceilings; window installation; flooring; doors and hardware; finish/trim; mill work and furniture installation; pile driving; marine construction and diving. The union prides itself on offering the most comprehensive apprenticeship and life-long skills upgrade training to members at 18 locations. Curriculum is developed by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters with industry experts and often shared with vocational training programs. For more information visit nasrcc.org, and find the NASRCC on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube.

The NASRCC’s state-of-the-art training facility is located in Rock Tavern, New York. All courses are led by United Brotherhood of Carpenters (UBC) certified training coordinators. All training coordinators have received their training from the Carpenters International Training Center (ITC) in Las Vegas, Nevada, and are considered to be the foremost authority in their certified areas of expertise. For more information, visit carpenters.org/itc.

SCHMIDT'S RENTALS

- Aerial Work Platforms
- Air Compressors
- Air Tools
- Back Hoes
- Boom Lifts
- Breaker Hammers
- Carpet Cleaners
- Compaction
- Chain Saws
- Compressors
- Concrete Tools
- Concrete & Mortar Mixer
- Dump Trailers
- Excavators
- Extension Ladders
- Floor Cleaners
- Floor Sanders & Edgers
- Generators
- Heaters
- Hedge Trimmers
- Landscape Equipment
- Light Towers
- Miter Saws
- Mud Buggies
- Paint Sprayers
- Plumbing Snakes
- Plumbing Tools
- Power Washers
- Post Hole Diggers
- Scaffolding
- Scissor Lifts
- Skid Steer Loaders
- Stump Grinders
- Surface Preparation
- Table Saws
- Tile Saws
- Tillers
- Trenchers
- Turbo Dryers
- Water Pumps
- Wood Chippers
- And much MORE!

(845) 794-RENT

146 Jefferson Street • Monticello, NY 12701
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm • Saturday 8am-12pm



90258



Because of Jeff Bank’s long history as a community bank, we have an understanding of the local economy unmatched by newer or larger banks. With the help of our seasoned commercial bankers, your business will receive the reliable and personalized financial services you need.

To start receiving the financial support your business deserves, call (845) 482-4000 and make an appointment with one of our banking professionals today.



Bryan Flynn
Vice President
Commercial Lender
bflynn@jeff.bank



Heinrich Strauch
Vice President
Commercial Lender
hstrauch@jeff.bank

(845) 482-4000 • www.jeff.bank
Main Office: 4864 State Route 52, Jeffersonville, NY 12748



Small business authenticity & growth

BY JAIME SCHMEISER, PRESIDENT AND CEO, SULLIVAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The term “small business” often seems like an oxymoron. What small businesses lack in the number of employees, they make up for in dedication, drive, giving back to the community, and unique charm. Those things resonate with customers seeking authenticity, personalized service, and a sense of community.

But when it's time to grow, and take your business to the next level, you want to make sure that the very thing about you that is so appealing isn't lost. You want to maintain your distinct local essence, and strike that delicate balance between growth and preserving your identity in the hearts and minds of your audience.

Embrace the Strength of Community Engagement

At the heart of any local business's success lies its relationship with the

community it serves. Strengthening this bond can be a catalyst for growth.

Engage with the community through events, sponsorships, and collaborations with other local businesses or organizations, such as the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce. This involvement not only enhances visibility but also reinforces your commitment to your roots, no matter how many locations you open.

Hosting workshops, supporting local causes, or participating in community events can continue your position as a trusted and valued member of the neighborhood.

Moreover, actively seeking feedback from patrons and implementing their suggestions to tailor products or services can help you meet local preferences. This will continue to foster loyalty and word-

of-mouth marketing.

Leverage Digital Platforms, But Keep the Personal Voice

In the beginning, your social presence felt very personalized because you were the voice behind the business. But as you grow, your abilities are needed elsewhere.

Posting to social media is one of those things you will outsource or entrust to someone in-house.

But make sure you do not lose your voice. Work with someone who will adopt the same tone and post on the things your audience is most interested in. Retain that local flavor that characterizes your business.

Cultivate Unique Offerings and Specializations

If your success is due to specializing in niche products, services, or markets, don't give that up unless they're no longer

lucrative. Don't think that because you want to grow, you need to appeal to a wider audience.

After all, that specialization was a unique selling proposition (USP), and it helped you build what you are today—drawing customers seeking distinctiveness and quality over mass-produced alternatives.

If that product or service is no longer as successful as it once was, try figuring out why. If your audience is the same, how have their needs or desires evolved? You can serve the same audience, but you may need to do it in diverse ways.

Foster Partnerships and Collaborations

Again, this is where the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce can assist you and your business.

Collaborations with complementary local businesses



Kristt K Kelly
Office Systems Corp.

369 Broadway, Monticello, NY 12701
845-794-6639

Commercial Office Specialists:

- ◆ Kyocera Printers & Multifunction Black & White & Color
- ◆ Office Furniture
- ◆ Computer Supplies
- ◆ Office Supplies
- ◆ Commercial Vacuums
- ◆ Computer Furniture

In Addition:

- ◆ Extensive Copy Center
- ◆ Authorized Fedex & UPS Shipping Center
- ◆ Extensive Art Supply Shoppe
- ◆ All Types of Framing

Home office Specialists:

- ◆ Computer Desks
- ◆ Desk Chairs, Chairs, Chairs
- ◆ Low Volume Printers & Multifunction Black & White & Color
- ◆ Laptops
- ◆ Desk Computers
- ◆ Supply Items

MALEK PROPERTIES
FULL SERVICE REAL ESTATE BROKER
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS IN SULLIVAN COUNTY!
COMMERCIAL & INVESTMENT CERTIFIED



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!
Fantastic opportunity on State RT-17B "The Woodstock Way". 5 Units: 4 Commercial + 1 Residential in high traffic area, plenty of parking. Zoned for multi-use, perfect for retail, medical, office, restaurant & more! On the way to Bethel Woods. **\$499,000**



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!
Terrific corner location in Liberty by SCCC. High visibility on NYS RT-52. Recently operated as a pizzeria & car sales with large 1 BR apartment in the rear. Parking, access on two roads. Needs work, boiler approx. 2 years old. Municipal water. **\$249,900**

(845) **583-6333** SEARCH ALL MULTIPLE LISTINGS AT **MALEKPROPERTIES.COM**
10 Waldheim Road, White Lake, NY 12786

can be mutually beneficial, amplifying visibility and attracting diverse customer bases. For instance, a restaurant might partner with a nearby florist for themed events or collaborate with a local artist to display and sell artwork within its space.

Additionally, forming alliances with nearby businesses to create joint promotions or loyalty programs can encourage cross-pollination of customers, fostering a sense of community among various establishments.

You see this in digital marketing all the time when senders plug their peers into their newsletters. They are simply sharing audiences.

Expand Thoughtfully and Sustainably

Expansion does not necessarily mean extensive physical growth. Consider alternative avenues such as online sales, pop-up shops, or partnerships with local markets or fairs to reach new customers

without compromising the small business ambiance.

Establishing and managing multiple locations is not for everyone.

If you are interested in physical expansion, prioritize locations that align with your business's standards, values, and appeal. Think of your audience and its needs.

Retaining a coherent brand identity across multiple locations is crucial to preserving the local feel when expanding your business's footprint.

Invest in Employee Development and Customer Service

The backbone of your business's success lies in your employees and the quality of customer service they provide. Invest in employee training because your employees are your business personified.

They communicate your business's values and commitment to personalized service in every interaction. Happy and well-trained

employees contribute significantly to a positive customer experience, fostering loyalty and word-of-mouth recommendations.

Maintaining a high standard of customer service, coupled with a personalized touch, distinguishes local businesses from larger, impersonal corporations, creating an impression on customers.

Successful small businesses possess a distinctive charm that resonates with customers seeking genuine connections and unique experiences.

While expansion is a natural progression, preserving your business's authenticity is imperative. Balancing growth and your special something is an art and takes practice and compromise.

But with a strategic approach, and with assistance from the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce, you can continue to thrive, serving as a favorite in the community while embracing new opportunities for success.



Planning & Research Consultants

**100 Fourth Street,
Honesdale, PA 18431
Phone 570-251-9550**

Fax 570-251-9551

**www.shepstone.net
mail@shepstone.net**

95635



Discover why over 17 million homeowners trust State Farm®.

Robert Wells, Agent
18 Thompson Square
Monticello, NY 12701
Bus: 845-794-7000
robert.wells.k2on@statefarm.com

With your new home comes new responsibilities – like protecting your new investment with the right amount of homeowners insurance. That's where I can help.
Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®
CALL ME TODAY.



0907507.1

State Farm Fire and Casualty Company,
State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL

37697

**Joseph N. Garlick
Funeral Home**

**(845) 794-7474
388 Broadway, Monticello**

**(845) 647-7747
186 Canal St., Ellenville**

www.josephngarlickfuneralhome.com

56978

Blustein Shapiro Frank & Barone

Barbara A. Garigliano, *Managing Partner*

Sullivan County and Catskills Office
449 Broadway, Monticello, NY 12701
845/796-1010 • Fax 845/796-1040

111034

Laura Quigley receives the outstanding Rural Health Program award

SULLIVAN COUNTY—The New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH) is pleased to announce that Laura Quigley has been selected as the winner of the 2023 Outstanding Rural Health Program award for the MOVE Sullivan transportation program. Laura Quigley is Commissioner of the Sullivan County Division of Community Resources. This Division includes the Office for the Aging, the Center for Workforce Development, County Transportation, the Veterans Services Office and the Youth Bureau.

to detail and excellent problem solving abilities.

When Sullivan County was faced with the dilemma of a non-existent transit system, Laura stepped up to the task along with government agencies and community partners to develop MOVE Sullivan. Laura has gone above and beyond and continues to do so, with the ever-expanding transit system in our county. Her ability to think critically and find innovative solutions to challenges is truly commendable.



Laura Quigley

The genuine commitment and collaborative network spearheaded by Ms. Quigley are proving that support for achieving health and well-being can be realized for community members in a rural NY county.

Ms. Quigley is recognized for exceptional leadership skills, dedication and overall character. Laura is an outstanding individual who consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic, attention



Think Staffing, Think Differently!

Connecting the right people
to the right businesses

845.434.8300
www.newhopecommunity.org

103851



Silverman Mechanical Corp.

*For All Your
Plumbing
& Heating Needs*

P.O. Box 446
Mongaup Valley, NY 12762
Tel: (845) 583-6595
Fax: (845) 583-4969

*Certified NY State
Pump Installer*



90713



Think Staffing, Think Differently!

Connecting the
right people
to the right
businesses



845.434.8300
www.newhopecommunity.org

103850

Realtime - Honest - Transparent - Communication



**Repairs • Modernizations • New Installation
Preventive Maintenance • Annual Testing & Violation Remediation
Commercial & Residential/Material Lift Installations**

Donald Gelestino, President and CEO

**New York
212.292.4430**

**Nassau & Suffolk
516.307.0907**

**Hudson Valley
845.783.2601**

**Westchester
914.287.7353**

**Connecticut
203.350.3550**

**New Jersey
908.996.7800**

**Pennsylvania
215.770.6679**

info@Champion-Elevator.com • Champion-Elevator.com

APPLE ICE

Family Owned & Operated Since 1990



FIREWOOD • ROCK SALT

CUBES • BLOCKS

ICE SCULPTURES



CRUSHED

DRY ICE

SNOW



1-800-ICE-TO GO

845-288-0808

33 Plaza Dr. Monticello, NY 12701



DEER PARK • BRONX • HUDSON • MONTICELLO