



HOOPS | 1B
Syracuse
tops W.Va.



HOOPS | 1B
Hawks
rally to win



FOOD | 1C
Women
don't get
their veggies



The LEADER

CORNING | NEW YORK

TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 15 | 2011

75 CENTS

Rural broadband access

\$12.2M project unveiled

Corning Inc. to split cost with counties

BY DERRICK EK
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CORNING | A plan to build a new, \$12.2 million fiber optic cable network to improve high-speed broadband capability across Steuben, Chemung and Schuyler counties was unveiled Monday.

The announcement was made by the Southern Tier Central Regional

Planning and Development Board, the Corning-based agency that has spearheaded the planning process.

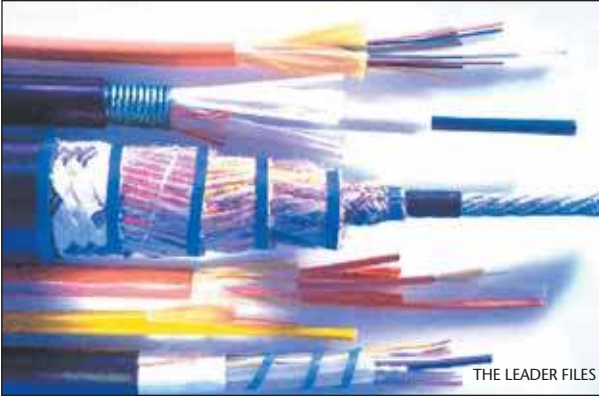
The project will be funded with \$10 million from Corning Inc., with the other \$2.2 million coming from the three local counties.

Local officials say the project – in the works for more than a decade – will greatly enhance high-speed Internet access, espe-

cially in rural areas.

It will be a vital economic development tool because it will make the area far more attractive to new businesses, officials say. A top consultant on the project said it could potentially have an even bigger impact than Interstate Highway 86 in that regard.

SEE **BROADBAND** | 8A



THE LEADER FILES

\$3.7T budget includes big cuts

BY ANDREW TAYLOR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON | Putting on the brakes after two years of big spending increases, President Barack Obama unveiled a \$3.7 trillion budget plan Monday that would freeze or reduce some safety-net programs for the nation's poor but turn aside Republican demands for more drastic cuts to shrink the government to where it was before he took office.

More news on the budget

- The budget: How will it affect you?, **6A**.
- Experts: Both sides duck major issues, **7A**.
- Proposal revives rejected tax hikes, **7C**.

The 10-year blueprint makes "tough choices and sacrifices," Obama said in his official budget message. Yet the plan, which sets the stage for this week's nasty congressional fight over cuts in the budget year that's already more than one-third over, steers clear of deeply controversial long-term problem areas such as Social Security and Medicare.

The budget relies heavily on the recovering economy, tax increases and rosy economic assumptions to estimate that the federal deficit would drop from this year's record \$1.6 trillion – an astronomical figure that requires the government to borrow 43 cents out of every dollar it spends – to about \$600 billion after five years.

SEE **BUDGET** | 7A



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama speaks at Parkville Middle School and Center of Technology Monday in Parkville, Md.

Reed: Plan 'disappointing'

THE LEADER STAFF

WASHINGTON | U.S. Rep. Tom Reed echoed the feelings of many Republican House leaders Monday calling President Obama's 2012 budget "disappointing."



REED

"We're grappling with making very difficult cuts in the remainder of 2011 because it is the responsible thing to do for future generations," Reed continued.

SEE **REED** | 8A

Gillibrand: A good start

THE LEADER STAFF

U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said she doesn't agree with everything in the president's budget, but it's a good place to start.



GILLIBRAND

"Current spending is not sustainable and we need to cut the waste, fraud and abuse. But the cuts must be responsible and preserve security funding and

SEE **GILLIBRAND** | 8A

Families sue gas drilling company over tainted wells

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ELMIRA | Nine homeowners are suing a Denver-based gas driller, claiming it contaminated their drinking water.

New York City law firm Napoli Bern Ripka & Associates filed the lawsuit Friday in state supreme court in Elmira. It claims two wells in Big Flats drilled by Anschutz Exploration Corp. contaminated nearby water wells.

A spokesman for Anschutz didn't return a call seeking comment Monday. A state Department of Environmental Conservation spokesman wouldn't comment on the claim.

A fact sheet DEC released in November says DEC investigated and found it unlikely the gas contaminating the wells came from drilling, but was naturally occurring and could be dispersed by venting the water wells.

Grand jury:

No charges in stabbing case

BY JOHN ZICK
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CORNING | A Steuben County grand jury has declined to bring charges against a Corning woman who police say nearly stabbed her boyfriend to death, according to an indictment report released Monday.

The grand jury determined Cindy M. Cassetta was justified when she stabbed Stephen Boskett during a domestic dispute Oct. 31 in the Town of Corning.

As a result, the first-degree assault charge against Cassetta was dismissed. Had she been indicted and convicted, she could have spent 25 years in state prison.

Cassetta's relationship with Boskett didn't end after the stabbing, according to police.

After Boskett was released from the hospital, he and Cassetta reconciled despite a court order prohibiting Cassetta from seeing the victim, according to police.

Approximately a month and a half after getting back together, Boskett allegedly assaulted the woman on two separate



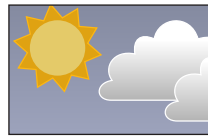
CASSETTA

SEE **STABBING** | 8A



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TODAY'S LOCAL WEATHER



M. SUNNY, COLDER
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forecast | **8A**

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