



Fighting the Second Impact

Ray Ciancaglini Promotes Concussion Education for Athletes



Ray was a professional middleweight boxer from 1966 to 1974.

Photo Courtesy of Ray Ciancaglini

Ray Ciancaglini had all of the potential for a successful boxing career and a normal life. Ray's career as a professional middleweight boxer began in 1966 and lasted until 1974. Throughout his career, he won the Golden Glove Heart award and later the Jerry Flynn Courage Award. These awards gave Ray a sense of invincibility. The Geneva native, however, suffered a second impact injury early in his career, changing his life forever. Ray would not know the full extent of his injury until later in his adult life. Fourteen years into a job at Eastman Kodak in Rochester, Ray noticed his memory weakening and started developing hand tremors. Ray was then diagnosed with Dementia Pugilistica and Parkinson's syndrome (Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy or CTE).

Second impact injuries occur when an initial concussion is not diagnosed or treated properly, and is then followed by a second concussion. The resulting brain damage often does not show symptoms until later in life. When Ray was boxing in the 1960s and 1970s, it was commonly believed that a concussion only occurred when a boxer was knocked unconscious. Further, headaches were considered a normal part of a boxer's life. Unfortunately, for Ray, neither of these misconceptions are true. In fact, most concussions do not cause unconsciousness. All those years ago, when Ray suffered a first concussion followed by a constant headache, he still entered the ring less than a week later, where he suffered his second impact injury. In 1971, a test of his brain activity, called an electroencephalogram, made him ineligible to fight in New York State. But like many young athletes, Ray refused to let this stop him, and he continued to fight in other states under different names. "The two things that did me in were lack of concussion education and peer pressure," said Ray. Now Ray spends a lot of his time as an advocate for concussion awareness, visiting schools and educating young athletes about the importance of proper care after an injury.

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The Geneva native visits schools
to educate young athletes
about the dangers of second
impact concussions.

Photo Courtesy of Ray Ciangalini

During his visits, Ray talks to young athletes, teachers, coaches, and parents about the risks of second impact injuries. He stresses the importance of correctly treating a concussion, by taking a break for as long as the doctor says is necessary. When treated properly, these injuries are as treatable as any other injury that could be sustained in a game or a match. Problems arise when athletes are allowed back into sports before the first concussion has healed, Ray says, since that is when they are at risk for a second impact injury.

“We have anywhere from 6-10 deaths nationally every year from brain injuries in high school football. The brain is still developing, so the swelling is much more dangerous and exhaustive. We have to be a little bit more diligent and strict with our youth when it comes to concussions,” said Ray. He recognizes that young athletes tend to have a stubborn mentality often convincing their coaches to put them back in the game before they are ready. Ray urges coaches and parents to be aware of the dangers associated with second impact injuries, and remain steadfast with doctor’s orders.

Ray provides advice for all types of athletes, even scholarship recipients that are planning on pursuing their sport at the collegiate level. Often times, these athletes feel that they are under a higher level of pressure to perform, regardless of possible injury. Ray encourages them to take the proper break in order to protect their future, instead of acting on the adrenaline rush in the moment and risk a potential second injury. Most college scholarship recipients have already been evaluated by coaches, and by sitting out of a game because of an injury, student athletes are not hurting their chances at playing at a higher level. In fact, when playing injured, young athletes are not at their full capacity and are not actually helping the team, Ray argues.

“If you have a scholarship, and you step back and take a break for a concussion, you get rewarded for that—not penalized. They’ve already evaluated your talent, this isn’t going to hurt you,” Ray explained.

Ray heartily believes in the importance of youth athletics. He believes that sports build character and work ethic, both important lessons kids might not find elsewhere.

After 20 years of advocacy, Ray has had several accomplishments of which he is very proud, including raising awareness of the issue among game officials and referees. The NYS Football Officials Association of New York State has enacted two verified laws within its organization that grant member officials the right to use their discretion in two particular instances. First, an official can remove a player for a concussion evaluation. Second, an official can now also remove a player who is behaving in a manner that endangers other players on the field, and puts them at higher risk of a concussion. Ray helped tremendously in getting these rules put into place.

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Ray is also proud of his work in passing The Concussion Management Awareness Act in 2011. This law directs the State Health and Education Departments to identify and adopt regulations for treating and monitoring students with mild traumatic brain injuries, and establishing minimum guidelines in the event of a brain injury. He has received several awards recognizing his role in passing this important legislation, including the Rochester Hickok Center Community Hero Award, the Public Policy Award from the Annual Brain Injury Association of NYS, the Geneva High School Class of 1969 Positive Impact Award, and the Camp Good Days Courage Award, among others. Furthermore, the City of Geneva proclaimed December 8, 2011, to be “Ray Ciancaglini Day.”

“If I had known that I would have CTE, I would still have competed with the same dedication and tenacity. But I would have immediately addressed any symptoms of injury,” said Ray. “We’ve come a long way. Young athletes just have to be smart about it.”



Ray and Senator Helping met in Geneva to discuss his work and concussion awareness.

For more information about second impact concussions and concussion awareness, please visit www.thesecondimpact.com.

Taking a Look at Upstate Healthcare

Attracting Medical Professionals to Rural Areas

It is no secret that the most rural areas of New York suffer from physician shortages. As of 2016, the Healthcare Association of New York State determined that hospitals have a very difficult time recruiting primary care physicians, and often do not have enough primary care providers to meet the current needs of the population. While recently-enacted telehealth laws provide critical access to medical services in our more remote communities, there is always a need for attracting more physicians to rural practice. Iroquois Healthcare Association (“IHA”), a regional trade organization and advocate for hospitals and health organizations, has taken their own steps to achieve this.

IHA’s “Take a Look” program provides an opportunity for healthcare professionals training in New York to consider practicing in upstate communities. On “Take a Look Tours,” medical residents, fellows, and students embark on three-day tours, to get to know a specific community in upstate New York and to get an idea of what it would be like to live and work there. They have just finished their fifth such tour, amidst raving reviews from the participants.

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The Spring 2017 participants visited the Finger Lakes and Central New York regions.

Photo Courtesy of Iroquois Healthcare Association.

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“The tour has absolutely no downside,” said William Carroll, Chief Medical Resident Physician at Stony Brook University. Dr. Carroll participated in the Spring 2017 tour as a resident trying to determine where to locate his future practice as a primary care physician. The Spring 2017 tour focused on Central New York and the Finger Lakes region.

“There is generally a shortage of primary care in rural areas. It is a matter of exposure for a lot of physicians, and hearing about the opportunities that exist,” said Carroll on the value of the program in attracting physicians to choose to practice in rural New York. The tour brings participants to several area hospitals and facilities, while also immersing them in the culture of the local community by way of excursions and meetings with local organizations and leaders.

Increasing rural access to medical care is a longtime priority for the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. To this end, the Commission recently obtained a significant increase in funding for federally-designated Critical Access Hospitals. Under the leadership of Senator Catharine Young, Senate District 57, the Commission was also instrumental in the passage of legislation establishing telehealth coverage requirements throughout the State. The IHA Take-a-Look Tours program is yet another funding priority for the Commission, which has supported funding to IHA to continue these important tours and other related outreach activities for the past two years.

“It’s nice just to get your feet on the ground,” said Carroll. His favorite extracurricular trip was the walking tour of Ithaca, featuring the scenic waterfalls in the area. The group also enjoyed a wine tasting as a part of the cultural tour of the Finger Lakes, stopped for ice cream, visited Wegmans, and had group dinners at local restaurants.

While the excursions highlight the cultural significance of the regions visited, the main focus of the tours are the medical facilities in which the physicians might practice. And, in Dr. Carroll’s experience, the impression lasted. During Dr. Carroll’s tour, two things surprised him in particular: the advanced technology at Cayuga Medical Center, and the sophisticated use of telemedicine.

“The use of telemedicine in outpatient facilities was really amazing,” said Carroll. Dr. Carroll has had many other experiences throughout his academic and medical career to compare to the Take-a-Look tour. After growing up in Massachusetts, he completed his undergraduate education at McGill University in Canada. For medical school, Carroll attended St. George’s in Grenada, which allowed him to also spend a year in England. He currently practices at Stony Brook University in Long Island, but is attracted to the lifestyle he experienced on the tour and is seriously considering a future practice in upstate New York.

Carroll also endorsed the natural draw of upstate communities. “Upstate is friendlier, there’s less traffic, and the cost of living is cheaper,” Carroll said. “The likelihood of physicians staying in upstate New York is higher when they do this program. I hope to come back up there eventually.”

Dr. Carroll is one of 33 participants so far. After each tour, IHA surveys the participants, and there is usually a unanimous agreement that the tour positively influenced their opinion of upstate New York. All participants in the last three tours said they would consider a career in the upstate area because of the tour. In fact, three of the medical students that participated in the Fall 2017 tour have applied to residencies at several of the hospitals visited on the tour.

“I think we need to keep taking physicians to upstate,” Carroll said in support of the program. The tours this fall visited Central New York and the Southern Tier. While the program is still relatively young, the impact of the program will be felt in years to come. There have been five tours since the program’s implementation in 2013. The first tour was in the Mohawk Valley, followed by the Capital Region in 2014, a North Country tour in 2016, a Finger Lakes tour in 2017, and a Central New York/Southern Tier tour also in 2017.

“I think there’s sometimes a misperception or lack of understanding about Upstate New York, that it’s a poorly connected or desolate area, when really there’s thriving communities and a health care system that’s very sophisticated,” said Amelia Trigg of Iroquois Healthcare.

To learn more about the Iroquois Healthcare Association Take-a-Look Tour program, please visit: www.iroquois.org/take-a-look-program/.

Meet the Farmer

Todd Kusnierz: Candy Canes, Politics, and Family

Todd Kusnierz still resides in the town where he grew up, where he continues to operate the family's Christmas tree farm, appropriately called Candy Cane Farm. The farm is situated in the town of Moreau, where Todd was just elected Town Supervisor. He has served on the Town Board for 16 years, but, perhaps more impressively, he has also worked in the state legislature for 28 years.

Todd always knew that he wanted to go back to the family's farm. At the age of ten, he began raising dairy replacement heifers on the farm on his own. He continued this endeavor until college, where it became apparent that beef cattle would be better suited for the time he could devote to the farm while also studying Animal Science at Cornell University.

"We have been raising black angus seed stock ever since then, in the late 70s," Todd said.

Right after college, Todd went to work for General Dynamics, putting his science education to use. From there, he went to NYS Senate Research, where he used both his energy background from General Dynamics and his agricultural background on the farm, to create a portfolio that would follow him throughout his career. During this time, Todd was still active on the farm with his five sisters, and together they expanded the farm to offer four varieties of Christmas trees, as well as trees for the landscaping industry. Todd needed the expansion in order to make the farm more profitable, especially for all six families.

"The trick was how to do the farm, because it wasn't large enough at the time to support a family, and how to keep it going while still being involved in agriculture in other ways," Todd explained. Todd and his wife Mary Ellen have two children, Ted and Jacqueline.

Outside of the farm, Todd continued to contribute to agriculture through work at the New York State Senate and Assembly in different positions, until he eventually became the Director of the Senate Agriculture Committee and Chief of Staff for Senator Patty Ritchie, who chairs the Committee.

"I do a little bit of everything," said Todd. Throughout his career, Todd has also picked up a unique hobby as an airplane pilot.

As the New Year rolls around, Todd will be flying into a new role as Town Supervisor for Moreau and leaving the New York State Legislature. He has been involved in town government since 2001. His interest in town government began when he realized that half of the town was in an agricultural district, which had no representatives. He decided to run for town board and be the voice for agriculture in the town, with hopes of preserving its character.

"I have a strong interest in preserving the character of our Ag District, and wanted to see it controlled and measured. Having

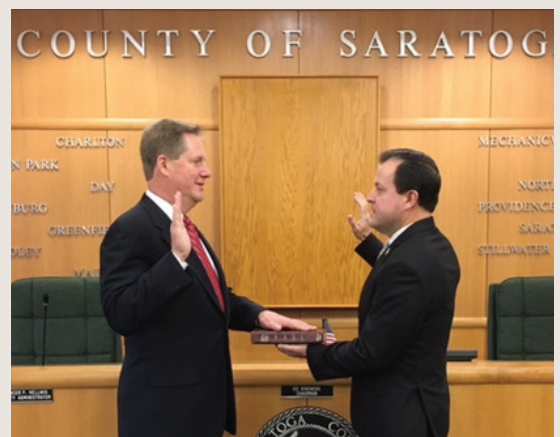


Todd is the primary operator at the Candy Cane Farm.

Photo courtesy of Todd Kusnierz.



Candy Cane Farm is located in the town of Moreau, in Saratoga County. *Photo courtesy of Candy Cane Farm.*



Todd was sworn into Saratoga County's Board of Supervisors in December, 2017.

Photo courtesy of Todd Kusnierz.

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Todd raised dairy replacement heifers in fourth grade, but has since transitioned to beef cattle.

a strong, viable agriculture district is beneficial to the community in many different ways,” said Todd. He decided to move from Town Board to Supervisor when there was an opportunity this past year.

“I realized there was a leadership void,” said Todd. “I thought it was important that there was a strong voice to look out for agriculture in the community.” Todd beat his opponent by the largest margin ever for a Moreau Town Supervisor— 612 votes. While on the campaign trail, Todd went door to door in Moreau, something that most candidates do not typically do.

Although he is leaving the legislature, Todd will continue his role as primary laborer for the farm while in his position as Supervisor. He operates the farm with the help of his nieces and nephews—all 18 of them! He expects his 14 year old nephew, Will, to eventually come back to the farm and operate it.

“Will operates machinery, he works with cattle, he trims the trees—he’s right there with me,” said Todd. “I’m not getting any younger, so it’s nice to have the younger generation coming in right behind me.” Candy Cane Farm has never employed outside labor, and has always relied entirely on family members to keep it going.

“I’m hopeful that the farm will continue long past when I’m gone,” said Todd.

The Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is grateful for Todd’s hard work and dedication while in the NYS Senate, and we wish him much success both in public service and on the farm.

Albany Law School Providing Legal Services to Rural New York

Running a business always has its challenges, but rural businesses face unique and often increased challenges. Businesses in rural areas of the State tend to have limited legal resources available to them, since more than 96% of New York licensed attorneys gravitate towards urban centers. Sustaining and developing businesses is vital to the quality of life and well-being of our State’s rural communities, and the farm families and small business owners that work hard to provide goods and services for the public benefit deserve access to lawyers and legal support, too. Albany Law School’s Government Law Center, in response to this issue, formed The Rural Law Initiative. The RLI was created in order to bring legal assistance to rural New York, often underserved by the legal community. Rural businesses, including farms, are able to use the services provided by RLI’s staff attorney, Taier Perlman, in order to help mitigate this problem.

The program is funded in large part by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. It provides free legal education and assistance to qualifying businesses and individuals who are in need of legal consultation. Perlman rotates her time between their four satellite offices, located in Herkimer, Otsego, Schoharie, and Sullivan counties.

Each grant that RLI receives has certain deliverables for the target area they are serving. For example, the Schoharie County office is collaborating with SUNY Cobleskill to create publications and educational materials for their clients.

“The relationship is pretty fluid,” Perlman said of RLI’s partnership with SUNY Cobleskill. RLI is part of SUNY Cobleskill’s new Institute for Rural Vitality, which focuses on promoting businesses in rural New York.

“SUNY Cobleskill’s partnership with Albany Law’s Rural Law Initiative will facilitate much-needed legal consultation assistance for individuals and businesses in the region who often need only a little time with a legal professional to make more informed decisions. Increasingly, understanding of regulatory and other types of law are key to business start-up

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Staff Attorney Taier Perlman provides legal services to rural areas through Albany Law School's Rural Law Initiative. Photo Courtesy of Taier Perlman.

and expansion and so we believe that this endeavor is a timely one," said Dr. Jason Evans, Director of The Institute for Rural Vitality at SUNY Cobleskill.

Perlman goes to her Cobleskill office about twice a month to provide legal services for Schoharie County clients. Her other offices are located in Mohawk, Liberty, and Oneonta. She will be providing legal services at an office in Utica also, starting in 2018. Although her satellite offices were created specifically to target areas of need and provide them with legal services, any businesses in the following counties can also qualify for free consultation services: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Montgomery, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, St. Lawrence, Steuben, and Sullivan.

"There is flexibility. We have permission to serve additional counties, but our grants specify deliverables in certain areas," Taier said. "The nature of the work is helping businesses on a single issue. I don't have the capacity for more, although I am building a network to refer clients to."

So far, one of the most pressing needs that Perlman has seen is in farm succession planning, an especially important issue for local economies and the future viability of farms. She is actively working to build a network in

the area, and plans to host workshops for local professionals and attorneys to learn more on these and other specific issues.

To see if you qualify for The Rural Law Initiative's services, or to request a consultation, please visit <http://www.albanylaw.edu/centers/government-law-center/programs/the-rural-law-initiative> and click the box on the top right-hand corner to register.

The Real Bedford Falls

Seneca Falls holds 21st Annual Holiday Festival

Most people are familiar with the 1946 Christmas classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*. The film stars actor James Stewart and is directed by Frank Capra. Many in Seneca County are also familiar with Seneca Falls' annual *It's a Wonderful Life* Festival and *It's a Wonderful Run 5k*. The festival takes place in Seneca Falls, which has a striking resemblance to the fictional Bedford Falls from the movie.

Although unconfirmed, rumor has it that Seneca Falls was the real inspiration for Bedford Falls. A great proponent of this "rumor" is actress Karolyn Grimes, who played George and Mary Bailey's daughter Zuzu, and delivered one of the most memorable lines in the film: "Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." This line kicks off the *It's a Wonderful Run 5k* each year, and Grimes has participated in the festival every year since 2002.



Karolyn Grimes, Carol Coombs, Jeanine Roose, and Jimmy Hawkins attended the 2017 Festival.

Photo courtesy of Henry Law.

There are many similarities between the fictional Bedford Falls and Seneca Falls. One of the most striking is the steel truss bridge in Seneca Falls. On this bridge, a plaque is dedicated to the memory of the late Antonio Varacalli, a resident of Seneca Falls who sacrificed his life to save another. Sadly, Varacalli perished after rescuing a girl who had jumped

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off the bridge. The Seneca Falls community suffered this event in 1917, and some recognize a similarity in the film's character George Bailey, who considers a fateful jump from the bridge in Bedford Falls almost 30 years later. After Varacalli's death, the town of Seneca Falls came together to raise money to bring Varacalli's family to America, much like how Bedford Falls teams up to help George Bailey in the film.

Another rumor places Frank Capra in Seneca Falls on his way to Auburn to visit his aunt in 1945. He reportedly stopped at a barbershop, where a fellow Italian immigrant, Tommy Bellissima, cut his hair. Capra would have been traveling to Auburn from New York City, and the most direct route in 1945 would have taken him through Seneca Falls and Ithaca. Furthermore, the movie mentions Rochester, Buffalo, and Elmira as being close by.

Whether or not the folklore is true, the festival continues annually and the community of Seneca Falls comes together to share in the holiday spirit. The event features: a Taste of Bedford Falls, showcasing local food and vendors; the Bedford Falls Express, a 90-minute train ride that travels across Cayuga Lake and back; a Holiday Lights Contest; and the It's a Wonderful Run 5k, among other events.

This past year's festival saw more people than ever. For the first time in 20 years, four actors from "It's a Wonderful Life" appeared together, and this occurred at the festival. Carol Coombs (Janie Bailey), Jeanine Roose (Young Violet Bick), and Jimmy Hawkins (Tommy Bailey) accompanied Karolyn Grimes to Seneca Falls in December to celebrate the film's 71st anniversary.

The 2017 race attracted over 4,500 runners, who ran through the decorated streets of Seneca Falls with residents cheering them on from their yards. The proceeds from the race are used to award scholarships and local charity donations. This coming year, the "It's A Wonderful Race 5k" is on track to hit \$250,000 in donations and scholarships since the race's inception in 2009.



Olan Mack, Executive Director of Seneca County House of Concern, is presented with a \$10,000 check from the children of the race's directors.

Photo courtesy of Jeff Rook.



A plaque commemorates the life of Antonio Varacalli on Seneca Fall's Bridge St. bridge, who sacrificed his life to save a young girl. The "It's a Wonderful Run 5k" begins on this bridge.

So far, the race has awarded four scholarships to four Mynderse Academy graduates in recognition for their hard work in school and on the athletic field. The race has also donated \$10,000 to Seneca County's House of Concern. Seneca County House of Concern, located in Seneca Falls, provides basic needs such as food, clothes, and household items to residents of Seneca County that are in need. The non-profit human services agency operates a food pantry and a thrift store of gently used clothing, shoes, furniture and house wares, five days a week. In 2017, they provided over 140,000 meals to Seneca County residents, bus pass assistance, as well as housing, job, SNAP and health insurance referrals.

"The Run's generous donation supplements us in our ability to pay salaries, pay utilities, purchase supplies, do light maintenance, and upkeep on our facilities. The run's positive impact on the agency and the community are undeniable, and we are very grateful for their continued support," said Olan Mack, Executive Director of Seneca County House of Concern. Please visit www.houseofconcern.org to learn more.

For more information, and to watch the video from the latest race, visit itsawonderfulrun5k.com, or visit the "It's a Wonderful Life" Museum in Seneca Falls.

New York State Royalty: Dairy Princesses



New York State's Dairy princesses: Sarah Rohe, Sydney Parkin, and Grace Harrigan.
Photo courtesy of Sarah Rohe.

If you have ever set foot in a county fair, chances are you recognize the young women with sashes and crowns handing out various dairy products to fairgoers. These dairy princesses and ambassadors represent each county in New York, and help promote dairy products and dairy farmers. Every February, a New York State Dairy Princess is crowned, after competing with the rest of the county princesses for the esteemed position. The NYS Dairy Princess, along with her two alternates, then spend the rest of the year doing outreach to schools, grocery stores, and sporting events, attending organization meetings, and various other efforts in order to promote the dairy industry.

Last February, Sarah Rohe of Onondaga Hill, was crowned the 2017 NYS Dairy Princess, Sydney Parkin of Warwick was named first alternate, and Grace Harrigan of Chateaugay was named second alternate. For the past year, these three girls have been working tirelessly as the face of the

New York State dairy industry and the American Dairy Association. The American Dairy Association is a non-profit organization that promotes dairy farming and its benefits through outreach and education. They provide cookbooks for eating dairy products, promote health benefits of dairy consumption, and help promote healthy lifestyles in American youth through school nutrition and physical activity programs. The girls have passion for dairy farming too, which often stems from family farms or their communities at large.

"We try to reach out to everyone, whether it's future generations in schools or parents in grocery stores, and stress the importance of buying local," Sarah said. Sarah is currently in the Occupational Therapy program at Nazareth College.



The three princesses have worked together to promote dairy products and the dairy industry for the past year.
Photo courtesy of Sarah Rohe.

Sarah's passion originated on her family's farm, Rohe Farms, in Onondaga Hill. Sarah grew up with three sisters on the farm, where they milked 70 cows until 2010. For several years thereafter, the family focused solely on crop farming, although cows have come back to the farm recently. In the summer, Sarah, her mom, and sisters run a summer camp for kids at the farm.

"My sisters and I have always run an educational farm camp for kids aged 6 to 12, where they live a day in the life of a farmer and we teach them about the land. Every year it gets bigger, and some of the kids have gotten their own animals at home, too," said Sarah. The program is a week-long day camp during the summer months, and last year they had about 40 kids participate in camp.

That is not all Sarah and her sisters do together. In fact, two of Sarah's older sisters were also dairy princesses. Her oldest sister Caitlin was the NYS Dairy Princess in 2006, and her sister Meghan was first alternate Dairy Princess in 2013. Sarah also has a sister

Erin, who was Onondaga County's princess but did not run in the state competition.

"It's meant a lot to me to be the New York State Dairy Princess. I've always looked up to my older sisters," said Sarah. "Ever since my sisters were Dairy Princesses, I've always wanted to be one too. I've been ready for this for a really long time."

Sarah's role as NYS Dairy Princess requires her to speak to large crowds, interact with community members, and present at schools on the nutritional value of dairy products. The designation just adds to her long list of leadership accomplishments. Sarah and her alternates all receive college scholarships for representing New York State's dairy

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The princesses have many responsibilities, including public speaking.

Photo courtesy of Sarah Rohe.

industry. Other participants in the New York State pageant also have the opportunity to win monetary prizes through winning various competitions held in the pageant. In New York State's pageant, there are three judges. Each contestant participates in a five-minute interview with the judges, gives a 3-5 minute prepared speech, and takes both a written test and a multiple choice test about dairy farming and products.

"I love doing it. Growing up on a farm, I can answer anyone's questions and address everyone's misconceptions about farming. It's an easy job for me and I get to educate everyone. It's important to me for people to see how hardworking farmers are, since a lot of people don't know," Sarah said.

"Being a dairy princess allows me to connect with consumers about the hard work dairy farmers put in day in and day out, how these farmers are committed to quality, and about the nutritious products they bring to the marketplace. It has certainly been a humbling experience to speak on behalf of those who are just as passionate about the dairy industry as I am," said Grace Harrigan, second alternate NYS Dairy Princess.

Grace Harrigan grew up on a third-generation dairy farm in Clinton County. She was a recipient of a scholarship calf through the New York Guernsey Breeder's Association, and is a proud member of both 4H and FFA. She is the first dairy princess in Clinton County in almost thirty years, and has played a huge role in reviving the county's program.

"Through my experience as a county and state dairy princess, I have met countless individuals and have been a part of so many memorable events that have certainly changed my life for the better and further ignited my passion for the dairy industry and agriculture as a whole. It is these experiences and the stories of dairy farmers that inspire me to further my education in agriculture and stay involved with the industry. It is my hope that I continue to grow and to someday fully embody the selflessness and work ethic that farmers possess. I truly have been humbled to be able to represent and further my connection to such an amazing industry," said Grace.

Watch out for the next NYS Dairy Princess, set to be crowned in February, as she follows in the big footsteps of Sarah, Grace, and Sydney.

Cornell, DEC Launch New Hemlock Pest Biocontrol Lab

Article courtesy of Krishna Ramanujan and the Cornell Chronicle

Cornell and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced the creation of a new biological control lab on campus to protect the state's ecologically important hemlock trees.

The announcement of the \$1.2 million lab, partly funded by the DEC with support from the state's Environmental Protection Fund, was made at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 17.

The lab, headed by Cornell Forest Entomologist Mark Whitmore, will research and rear biological controls to slow the spread of hemlock woolly adelgids, invasive pests that threaten trees in roughly half of New York's 62 counties and in more than 15 other states.

"Our team has been monitoring the spread of the hemlock woolly adelgid from our more southern states," said Kathryn J. Boor '80, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "We've been preparing to meet the challenge of an invasive threat that, if left unchecked, will significantly impair water quality in our watersheds, particularly in the Catskills."

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Eastern hemlock trees are among the oldest trees in New York, with some more than 700 years old. The trees often occupy shady, north-facing slopes and stream banks and help maintain erosion control and water quality. Shade from the trees cools streams that are home to many of New York's freshwater fish, including brook trout.

The hemlock woolly adelgid is a tiny insect native to the Pacific Northwest and East Asia. A Japanese variety was first discovered in New York in 1985. The pest attacks forest and ornamental hemlock trees, feeding on young twigs and causing buds to die and needles to dry out and drop prematurely. Hemlocks typically die within four to ten years of adelgid infestation in the insect's northern range.



From left, Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton (LCRR Member); Kenneth Lynch, Executive Deputy Director of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; Mark Whitmore, Forest Entomologist at Cornell; and Kathryn J. Boor '80, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, look at a container for rearing a Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in a Cornell lab. *Photo Courtesy of Jason Koski/University Photography at Cornell University.*

Damage from the insect has led to widespread hemlock deaths throughout the Appalachian Mountains and the southern Catskills. Hemlock woolly adelgid infestations can be detected by the small, white, woolly masses produced by the insects that are attached to the undersides of twigs near the base of the needles.

Research has shown that *Laricobius nigrinus* beetles and silver flies, which both only prey on hemlock woolly adelgids, are effective biocontrol agents in the Pacific Northwest, where adelgids are native. The Cornell lab has been researching how effective these predators will be on invasive adelgids on the East Coast.

"We've gone through a lot of trial and error, but I think we have a productive solution now," said Kenneth Lynch, Executive Deputy Director of DEC. "And thanks to the investment in this lab by both Cornell and the state of New York, we're moving the ball forward."

Though colder temperatures generally slow the adelgid's spread, offspring that survive cold winters build a more cold-tolerant population, which in turn puts colder regions such as the Adirondacks at greater risk. Recent mild winters have favored the spread of the pest in New York, said Whitmore, an Extension Associate in the Department of Natural Resources.

"Implementing biological control is basically a numbers game," he said.

The possibility of releasing large numbers of biocontrol predators "greatly enhances the chances of successful establishment and it also enhances the possibility of the predator populations to grow more rapidly," Whitmore said. "So that's the purpose of this lab – to build the populations of predators so we can release them and hopefully they'll become much more effective."

Cornell and government partners first released *L. nigrinus* in 2009, and silver flies in 2015, both in small numbers in the state.

Engaging Local Leaders to Protect NY Farmland

Article courtesy of American Farmland Trust

In September 2017, American Farmland Trust surveyed community leaders across New York State about local government support for farms and efforts to protect farmland. The survey found that 90% of respondents felt that their local government had shown, through its actions, that farming is a priority in their community. These actions included creating or expanding agricultural districts, creating or updating farmland and agricultural protection plans, and passing farm friendly zoning laws.

New York, however, has lost nearly 5,000 farms to development since the early 1980s, and valuable farmland cannot be taken for granted. The survey also found that threats to the future of farming are believed to be: farmers retiring and selling land to non-farming uses, high property taxes, and the rising price of farmland.

Local Government's Role in Protecting Farmland

In November, the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) and American Farmland Trust (AFT), held three regional forums across New York to discuss the roles of local governments in supporting farm viability and protecting farmland. Nearly 100 local leaders attended these forums to hear presentations on the tools and funding available to assist them in protecting farmland. During the forums, there was broad discussion about the important roles local governments play in land use decisions. First and foremost, local governments interested in supporting local farms must be able to articulate the reasons that farmland and farmers matter to their communities. The most common reasons offered by participants at the forums included:

- Supporting the local economy and tourism
- Ensuring food security
- Sustaining lower demand for community services
- Protecting water quality and providing other ecosystem services
- Preserving rural character

At the forums, NYSDAM staff explained that local governments can ensure farms have a stronger future in their community by creating and implementing agricultural and farmland protection plans. NYSDAM offers grants for towns looking to create such plans or counties seeking to create or update an agriculture and farmland protection plan. Grant information is available on NYSDAM's Funding Opportunities webpage, and new grant announcements and opportunities for local governments and land trusts are expected to be released in early 2018. Anyone can stay informed of these opportunities by registering for the State of New York's Grants Gateway and checking: 'agricultural supports' and 'governmental supports.'



Senator Helming welcomes local leaders to the regional Farmland Protection Forum in Canandaigua.

Other communities have taken further steps to implement their plans and protect farmland by funding the purchase of development rights from local farmers, enacting farm friendly zoning laws, creating favorable subdivision ordinances, and/or passing Right to Farm laws. More information on these laws and programs can be found in AFT's booklet, "Planning for Agriculture in New York: A Toolkit for Towns and Counties," which is available for free at www.farmlandinfo.org.

Other issues emerged at these community forums, including the pressure to pull active farmland out of production for development such as commercial scale solar energy projects. Participants highlighted that such solar energy projects can generate income for farmers and landowners, but farmland, especially highly productive farmland, which is flat, sunny, open and well-draining, is a finite, precious resource often targeted by solar developers for lease or purchase. A local economy might also rely heavily on the land's agricultural production, and converting the land could have a negative impact on the reliant businesses.

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NYSDAM and other state agencies have released guidance for local communities in designing local laws to regulate these projects, including for the construction and decommissioning of projects to minimize impacts to farmland. These guides can be found by searching online for NY-SUN's "Solar Guidebook for Local Governments in NYS" or for NYSDAM's "Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Solar Energy Projects." American Farmland Trust hopes to continue to work with partners like NYSDAM and the Commission, to find the balance between supporting the generation of more renewable energy in New York while also protecting the State's most productive farmland.

Farmland and farms are valuable to New York communities, but threats to their future in New York will continue. Local governments play a key role in ensuring a bright future for agriculture. After all, No Farms, No Food!

To learn more about the regional forums on farmland protection, and to access videos from the event, please visit the website of the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, at <https://www.nysenate.gov/committees/legislative-commission-rural-resources>.

Community Supported Agriculture Fosters Connections to Local Farms

Article courtesy of Marie Anselm, Agriculture Economic Development Specialist,
Cornell Cooperative Extension Ontario County



Members of Fellenz Family Farm
CSA in Phelps, NY.

Photo Courtesy of Ontario County
Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a model of farming based on strengthening local farms and building community. A CSA farm is supported by members. Members sign up to be a part of the CSA and pay the farm for produce before the growing season even starts, with sign up occurring typically in late winter. In return, the CSA farm provides members with weekly shares of whatever fresh product the farm has available on a set basis. This means that members are sharing the rewards and risks of farming with the CSA. In good harvest years, members may receive extra produce; in poor years, members may receive a different mix of crops than expected. Farms benefit from this model by receiving up-front payment to cover planting costs for the growing season. Members benefit by having a reliable source of local produce available each week. Everyone benefits from connecting with each other, sharing feedback, ideas, and the harvest.

The CSA model has roots in Europe and first began in the United States in the Northeast in 1985. Traditional CSAs often included a work component where members contributed time working on the farm, giving them an opportunity to be more connected to the growing process. Today, connecting members to the farm is still a central component of CSAs, where both members and farms share the growing season together. Over the years, the CSA model has expanded to include many different arrangements with members to meet customer needs.

Anyone interested in joining a CSA will find many different options available. New CSA members should consider several factors when deciding which CSA to join. First, customers should consider how many people they will be feeding and what their budget is. Many CSAs offer full shares or half shares of produce to cater to a variety of family needs. Each CSA will price their shares differently as well. Some CSAs have set prices, some offer sliding payment scales, and some involve members in setting a price. Next, it is helpful to take delivery methods into account. Most CSAs offer pick-up on-site at their farm on a scheduled day each week. Others have drop-off locations where members can pick-up shares. Both styles offer benefits, such as meeting other CSA members, getting to see the farm regularly, or a convenient pick-up site close to home.

CSAs may offer other perks to customers as well. Several CSAs still encourage members to contribute time on

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Produce share from Fellenz Family Farm in Phelps, NY.
Photo courtesy of Ontario County Cornell Cooperative Extension.

the farm, and others offer their members benefits such as members-only U-Pick opportunities. Another CSA variation is how weekly produce shares are offered. CSAs take members into consideration when choosing what crops to plant to include a wide variety of exciting produce. Part of the fun of CSAs is getting to experience new varieties of produce straight from the farm. Some CSAs give members a standard share or allow members to pick and choose the items in their share week to week.

Finding a CSA to join today is as easy as ever. The CSA model has taken hold; as of 2012, in New York alone, there were 578 CSAs according to the United States Department of Agriculture's Census of Agriculture. CSAs usually start to solicit membership in winter before planting begins in order to better plan for the upcoming

season. Winter is a good time to look out for CSAs seeking new members or CSA events open to the public such as CSA Fairs. A great place to begin a search of CSAs is through county Cornell Cooperative Extension offices, which often maintain and advertise lists of CSAs and local farms in their area. The Northeast Organic Farming Association of NY, which was instrumental in introducing CSAs to the state, also has a directory of local farms on their website: www.nofany.org. Other local online farm directories such as www.localharvest.org maintain records of CSAs as well. With so many CSAs offering unique products, customers are sure to find a CSA that works for them!

WXXI: Reaching Out to the Community

Article provided by WXXI

When it comes to reaching audiences in our 11-county region, WXXI Public Broadcasting tries to be as accessible and present as possible. Though our television channels have solid cable penetration, we understand that cable television is not always the answer for many in rural areas. That is why WXXI tailors its over-the-air signal to be as strong and robust as viewers need. With any number of available antennas, viewers can watch all four of our television channels with a perfectly clear signal. While many viewers are only familiar with our main PBS channel, we have several varied offerings:

WXXI-TV (21.1) An award-winning producer of local and national programs, WXXI-TV provides safe, non-commercial children's programming along with a varied PBS schedule throughout the day.

WXXI WORLD (21.2) Provides current affairs and documentary programming from PBS.

WXXI CREATE (21.3) Includes lifestyle programs like travel, how-to's, and cooking.

WXXI KIDS 24/7 (21.4) Our newest channel airs PBS KIDS shows 24-hours-a-day.

But, WXXI does more than broadcast. We reach out to the communities we serve – especially in the vital area of children's education and early learning. WXXI Education staff participates in community events such as the Regional Primary Care Network's Back-to-School Health Fairs in Mt. Morris, Lyons, and Rushville, NY. WXXI provides information on literacy, learning, hands-on activities, parenting resources, and upcoming events.

WXXI also provides training for educators through regional events sponsored by partners such as Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES. This summer, WXXI Education staff provided a multi-district training for teachers on how to implement classroom-ready media using PBS LearningMedia. The PBS LearningMedia service provides 120,000 classroom-ready, digital resources including videos, games, audio clips, photos, and lesson plans. This service is provided free to NY educational institutions, teachers, students, and parents from NYS Public TV stations and PBS.

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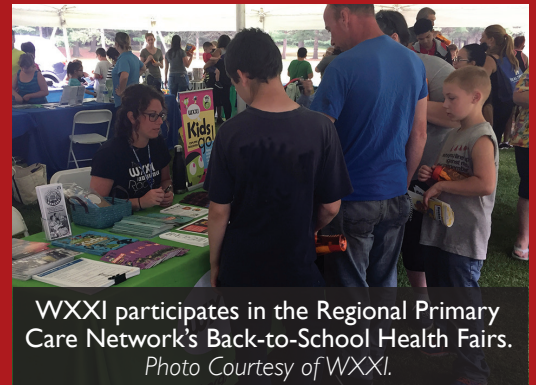
The news and public affairs programming that our NPR News station (AM-1370/WRUR-FM 88.5 in Rochester) provides is another great way to keep in touch with your community and the world. In a partnership with Hobart and William Smith Colleges, WXXI helps program WEOS 89.5FM with a mix of local and NPR news, as well as music programming. The program provides lifelong learning and reporting on the region, with opportunities for listeners in the region to weigh in and learn about topics of interest. Meanwhile, local news reporting throughout the day covers regional schools, rural issues, and connects all of our urban, suburban, and rural neighbors to the issues of the day.

WXXI values all of our viewers and listeners – whether in downtown Rochester or in the beautiful outlying areas. Our mission states that we will be the essential, life-long educational public media resource that engages, inspires, and strengthens our community. We strive for that goal every day and hope that by making our services easily accessible to everybody, WXXI can help make a difference in our region.

To learn more about WXXI, please visit WXXI.org.

Public broadcasting is a valuable community resource. Many local stations receive Community Service Grants (CSGs) from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, in order to provide public service programming to their communities. Other stations serving rural NY include:

Northeast Public Radio, Albany: WAMC-FM www.wamc.org
North Country Public Radio, Canton: WSLU-FM www.ncpr.org
WRVO Public Radio, Oswego: WRVO-FM www.wrvo.org
WMHT, Troy: WMHT-FM www.wmht.org
Central New York, Syracuse: WCNY-FM www.wcny.org
WNED | WBFO, Buffalo: WNED-FM www.wned.org
Finger Lakes Public Radio, Geneva: WEOS-FM www.weos.org
WSKG Radio, Vestal: WSKG-FM www.wskg.org
Radio for the Arts, Jamestown: WRFA-FM www.wrfalp.com
Radio Catskill, Jeffersonville: WJFF-FM www.wjffradio.org



WXXI participates in the Regional Primary Care Network's Back-to-School Health Fairs.
 Photo Courtesy of WXXI.

United Way's 2-1-1 Program Continues to Expand to Serve New Yorkers

Article provided by United Way

In November 2017, 2-1-1 became available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year in all 62 counties.

In 1999, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) set aside 2-1-1 as the national number to use for health and human services information and referral. United Way and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) are responsible for the management of 2-1-1 nationally. Subsequently, the New York State Public Service Commission assigned the number to 2-1-1 New York to develop the service on a statewide basis. Since its inception, 2-1-1 has continuously grown and reached record usage in New York, becoming a valuable resource to constituents across the state. Today, 2-1-1 sees more and more repeat callers, tracks sources of referrals, and conducts follow up surveys to ensure the service remains useful and relevant.

As 2-1-1 grew, United Way of New York State has advocated annually for more state support to enable operations to keep up with demand. Thanks to the ongoing support provided by the Legislature over the last several years, the service continued to grow, and in November 2017, 2-1-1 became operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year in all 62 counties across New York State for the first time. This means residents across the state have access to information, referrals, and resources whenever they need it. This service can be especially useful in rural areas where access to information and referrals can be difficult due to geography or lack of access to the internet. 2-1-1 provides

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information on the work of public agencies and private organizations in the fields of social services, public health, law enforcement, homeland security and emergency services, legal assistance, corrections, temporary and disability services, and more. 2-1-1 currently has the largest database of health and human services in the State, listing about 30,000 agencies and organizations that provide about 70,000 programs.

2-1-1 is also a critical resource in time of natural disaster, which can be especially beneficial in rural areas. 2-1-1 was a tremendous help to constituents during Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. This year 2-1-1 once again proved very useful during the Oneida/Herkimer County flooding, Western New York snowstorms, and other disasters as 2-1-1 provided access to reliable, up-to-date, relevant information. In addition, for both emergencies and ongoing planning purposes, 2-1-1 gathers and reports on unmet needs data based on calls and searches.

For more information about 2-1-1, visit their website at <http://211nys.org/> or contact your local 2-1-1 contact center. You may also contact Brenda Episcopo, President and Chief Executive Officer at United Way of New York State at episcopob@uwnys.org.

Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases

Just because it's winter doesn't mean you can't get Lyme and other tick-borne diseases! Ticks are able to survive in any temperatures above freezing and often survive through freezes. Remember to be vigilant in checking for ticks after being outside. Find more information at: LymeActionCenter.com



Identifying Signs of Stress in Farm Families

By Extension Associate Daniel Welch and Extension Support Specialist Kate Downes

New York State farm families are experiencing higher levels of financial and emotional stress due in part to several years of low commodity prices. This is an especially difficult time for dairy farmers because regional conditions in dairy markets have further reduced farm revenues. Farm families can also experience stress as the result of a sudden event—such as crop loss, an accident, a personnel change, or family death. In other instances, it may be a gradual change from a prolonged physical illness, excessive working hours, or relationship difficulties.

Selected New York Resources to Support Stressed Farm Families

NY FarmNet

NY FarmNet provides completely free and confidential on-farm services for farmers and farm families in New York. Specializing in personal wellbeing, stress management, family communication, financial analysis, business planning, transition planning, and estate planning, FarmNet financial and personal consultants guide farm families through periods of transition, opportunity or challenge. 1-800-547-3276, www.nyfarmnet.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255 (TALK), www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Crisis Text Line

Text “START” to 741-741, www.crisistextline.org

New York State County Mental Health Directory

http://www.clmhd.org/contact_local_mental_hygiene_departments/

Adapted with permission from Associate Extension Professor Leslie Forstadt and Associate Extension Professor Tori Jackson, University of Maine, “The University of Maine Cooperative Extension Bulletin #4805, Recognizing Signs of Farm Family Stress.” www.extension.umaine.edu/publications/4805e/

NY FarmNet is hosting a webinar on March 1st at 10:00 AM for dairy and farm management educators on managing stress in this difficult time for many of the farmers we work with. Erica Leubner, MSW, farm family consultant will cover the following topics during the webinar:

- Discuss the different perspectives as well as different types of stress
- Identify symptoms of stress and warning signs
- Discuss stress management techniques
- Illustrate how stress may affect farm business management decisions
- Identify warning signs and evaluating individual stress levels
- Where to get Support

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://cornell.zoom.us/j/532639920>

NY FarmNet is offering a free webinar for agri-service and farmers on stress, titled “Stressed?, What to Do About it”. The webinar is scheduled for March 29th at 1:00 pm. Participating in the webinar will provide information on stress and where farmers may go to get support.

To participate in the webinar, go to <https://cornell.zoom.us/j/305255353>



Rural Futures

SAVE THE DATES!

Maple Weekends

March 17-18 & 24-25, 2018
NYW Maple Producers Association
members offer sugar house tours
www.mapleweekend.nysmaple.com

National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operations Certification Program Training

Tuesdays, March 13 through April 10, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Various locations, contact Seneca County CCE at 315-539-9251
or email smc226@cornell.edu for more information and to register.
Registration is \$20 per person.

If you have any suggestions for upcoming editions,
Please email the Commission at RURALRES@NYSENATE.GOV