

Herkimer County Newsletter

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2024



Herkimer County Senior Citizen Picnic

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Herkimer County held the annual Senior Citizens Picnic on June 12, 2024. This picnic was organized with the help of all county departments and was an all hands on deck event. We had a great turnout for the event and over 450 people participated.

The participants were provided donuts, coffee, soda, ice cream & were able to purchase a meal from K-Dogs BBQ for \$6. We had many lively sessions of Bingo and 215 gift cards were distributed to the lucky winners. The gifts cards were donated by legislators, county employees, the county administration, community members, and local businesses. There were also over 80 prizes donated that included flowers, clothing, a pair of eyeglasses, car care kits, lottery tickets to name a few. Valley Cinema in Little Falls donated 550 movie passes, enough for each attendee to receive one. The donuts were also paid for by a few very generous community members. Tractor Supply donated over \$5,000 in various items for those who attended. We would like to thank all of those who donated gift cards, prizes, and other items for this event. This event is a community wide effort.

We would also like to thank the Mr. Bunce & the Central Valley Academy Choir for their stunning performance. Maria Robb, an older adult from Little Falls volunteered her time to provide music at the picnic. Thank you to Maria for being the DJ for the picnic. Thank you to all the volunteers that planned the event and volunteered the day of the event. We had local, state, & federal elected officials who volunteered the day of the picnic and helped serve food, drinks, & ice cream. Thank you to the Herkimer County Fairgrounds and all the staff that assisted us. It is wonderful to see so many people come out to support the older adults that live in Herkimer County.

Thank you to all the older adults that attended the picnic. It was great to see everyone. We are starting our planning for the 2025 Senior Picnic and look forward to another successful picnic.

For more information about services that are available to older adults for please contact the Office for The Aging/NY Connects office at 315-867-1415. Or visit the OFA website at www.herkimercounty.org, go to departments, then to Office for The Aging. If anyone is interested in volunteering please call.

Upcoming 2024 Legislature Meeting Dates:

- July 10 – 2:00 PM
- August 14 – 7:00 PM
- September 11 – 7:00 PM

All meetings are held in the Legislature Chambers
 109 Mary Street
 Herkimer, NY 13350
 Check our website for Meeting minutes at www.herkimercounty.org

Civil Service Exams:

- July 13
- September 28

Please visit www.herkimercounty.org and click on "Civil Service Exams" for more information!



Legal Holidays. All Herkimer County Offices will be closed:

- July 4— Independence Day
- September 2—Labor Day

*Highway and Deputy Sherriff's Association Employees excluded



County Office Building
 Summer Hours
 8:00AM—4:00PM
 May 24, 2024—September 3, 2024

SUMMER HOURS



HERKIMER COUNTY LEGISLATURE MEETINGS



During the July 12, 2024 Legislature Meeting, Legislator Weakley presented Mr. Donald K. Dutcher with a proclamation honoring him for the upcoming 55th anniversary of his act of great heroism in saving his Sergeant during the conflict in Republic of Vietnam. Thusly, it is proclaimed that Wednesday, June 19, 2024 is **“DONALD K. DUTCHER DAY”** in Herkimer County the residents of the County are urged to join in the celebration. Thank you for your service, Mr. Dutcher!

During the July 12, 2024 Legislature Meeting, Legislator Weakley presented awards to employees Melissa Parese, Eva Kirchberg, Mary Talbot, Cathy Lowell, Me, Christine Marsden, Debbie Smith (no pictured), who volunteer their time to assist with the VITA Program.



The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) is a free IRS sponsored program to help low and middle income workers have their Federal and State personal income taxes prepared and filed electronically at no cost. The VITA program, through the efforts of its volunteers, also strives to ensure that customers receive all of the tax credits which they are entitled. All volunteers and preparers are certified by the IRS in the program areas as well as their official Standards of Conduct. The VITA program formally began at HCDSS in 1999. At the time it consisted of primarily processing paper returns and was loosely organized. It gradually began to take shape by 2003 and as E-Filing became increasingly prevalent. The volume of processed returns continued to increase. VITA volunteers have processed returns at DSS, at regularly scheduled intervals at Working Solutions in the evening, and additional outreach sites including Old Forge.

MENTAL HEALTH VISITS

Mental Health Clinic Visits		
Mar. - 561 (28% tele-health and 72% in-office)	Apr. - 679 (26% tele-health and 74% in-office)	May - 620 (23% tele-health and 77% in-office)

Mental Health Jail Visits		
Mar. - 50	Apr. - 45	May - 74

FROM OFFICE FOR THE AGING:



Herkimer County Office for the Aging/NY Connects is launching "Blooming Health" a new communication service for you to receive timely information and alerts about our programs and activities.

- These messages will be sent either to home phone via Voice message, a text message to your cell phone, or an e-mail.
- If you would like to sign up it is easy. Just provide: Name, Phone Number or E-Mail, Language, & your preference of communication.
- Once you provide your information you will begin receiving communications from Herkimer County Office for the Aging from the following numbers: **315-860-0271 & 315-860-0272**

Questions or To Sign up
Go to herkimercounty.org then
Office for the Aging or
Call us at 315-867-1121

**A NEW WAY
 TO STAY IN
 TOUCH**

**RECEIVE
 NOTIFICATIONS OF
 UPCOMING
 COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**RECEIVE
 NOTIFICATIONS OF
 PROGRAMS
 OFFERED BY THE
 OFFICE FOR THE
 AGING**

**PARTICIPATE IN
 SURVEYS TO TELL
 US HOW WE ARE
 DOING AND WHAT
 THE NEEDS ARE IN
 THE COMMUNITY**

Herkimer County Office for the Aging



FROM SEWER DEPT.:



CONGRATULATIONS ALVIN! The inductees are individuals who have worked on-site in the operations, maintenance, laboratory or process control of a Wastewater Treatment Plant or a collections system or have a NYS Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators certification. Membership in the society is by invitation only and members are selected for inclusion for their significant contribution, time effort and energy in support of the Wastewater industry.

FROM HIGHWAY DEPT.:

Herkimer County Highway Awarded Three Projects Under NY's BridgeNY Program

New York State authorities have selected three of four projects submitted by the Herkimer County Highway Department for funding under the BridgeNY Program. The projects selected include: Dyke Road (CR 37) Bridge over Ferguson Creek; Bleeker Street extension (CR 241) Bridge over Ferguson Creek; and a large culvert replacement on Bleeker Street (CR 241) over a tributary stream to the Mohawk River. The total awarded cost of these projects is \$3.267 million dollars. All three projects are located in the Town of Frankfort. Highway Superintendent Mark Nagele, PE stated that *these are much needed projects for Herkimer County, and since the funding is from State and Federal sources, it will have a greatly reduced financial impact on local taxpayers.* Construction is anticipated to occur during the summer of 2026.

The one project submitted for consideration that was not selected was a large culvert replacement on Johnny Cake Road (CR 136) in the Town of Danube.

Herkimer County Highway Department is responsible for 574 centerline miles of county roadways, which is the fourth largest county highway system in New York State. The County also owns and maintains 67 bridges along with approximately 130 large culverts that range in size from six to twenty feet in width.

FROM SOIL & WATER:

Herkimer County Soil and Water Conservation District Fulmer and Steele Creek Water Quality Project

The District was awarded funds through Round 27 of the NYS Ag. Non-Point Source Abatement and Control Program. The project started construction in 2023, including the construction of a concrete waste storage structure, waste transfer components, and heavy use area protection for a large dairy farm in the Fulmer Creek Watershed. The Round 27 project timeline was set back by weather and failing side slopes due to poor soil conditions. The project was completed in June, and the farm is utilizing the storage to properly time and place the valuable nutrients contained in the manure on their crop fields.



Figure 1. The contractor works on excavating the footer elevation.



Figure 2. The contractor works on a solution to keep the soil from sloughing.



Figure 3. The newly constructed barnyard and push off area will be used to facilitate cleaning of the barn.



Figure 4. The manure storage with safety fencing, signs, and gates.

SOIL & WATER CONT'D.:

Herkimer County Soil and Water Conservation District Cripple Creek Water Quality Improvement Project

The District was awarded funds through Round 28 of the NYS Ag. Non-Point Source Abatement and Control Program in 2022. The funds were for an organic dairy farm that sits atop Cripple Creek's banks. Cripple Creek contributes to the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which has a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Goals to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediment entering the Chesapeake Bay by 2025 were set by New York and other contributing states. This project and many others alike will help contribute to the goal.

The first half of the project started construction in 2023 with a covered manure storage and barnyard and was completed in January 2024. The remainder of the project consists of a second covered barnyard closer to Cripple Creek and the barns to aide in the collection and exclusion of nutrients from Cripple Creek.



Figure 1. The monolithic footer and floor are poured for the manure storage.



Figure 2. The contractor had prepared the feed alley for concrete.



Figure 3. The contractor works on cutting grooves in the floor for hoof traction.



Figure 4. The newly constructed covered waste storage eliminates potential runoff from manure piles.



Figure 5. The covered barnyard with feed alley will allow the farm to capture the nutrients that were lost during rainstorms and a non-conductive cleaning surface.

SOIL & WATER CONT'D:



First Place Team-
BOCES Team 1



Ray Korce Award-
CVA Team A



Herkimer County Soil & Water Conservation District Hosts Local County Envirothon

We had our 29th annual Herkimer County Envirothon on Wednesday May 8th at Herkimer College. The event was again a huge success. Thank you to all our generous Sponsors and volunteers!

This year Central Valley Academy (CVA), Herkimer BOCES, Herkimer Central School, Mount Markham, Poland, and West Canada Valley all sent teams. Approximately 70 students participated with advisors and volunteers from NYS DEC, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Herkimer College, and Herkimer County Soil and Water Conservation District. The students competed in five categories: soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics, and a current issue of "Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future". The first-place finisher for Herkimer County was BOCES "Team 1". CVA "Team A" finished 2nd and BOCES "Team 2" took 3rd place. The top three teams will receive a plaque and each member of the 1st place team was presented with a \$50 cash prize for their achievement. CVA "Team A" was also awarded the Ray Korce Memorial Award for the highest score in Forestry, presented by Gary Miller, past forestry instructor and retired DEC Forester.

Each participant received a "2024 Herkimer County Envirothon" t-shirt designed by a local Mount Markham student, Bri Edson, and a delicious lunch consisting of pizza, chips, apples, cookies, milk, and juice. Everyone involved in the Envirothon had a great time and the teachers would agree that it was a great hands-on learning experience, focused on the conservation of our natural resources. This outdoor event gives students the opportunity to get away from the typical classroom setting and get their hands dirty with interactive science related questions.

BOCES "Team A" will go on to represent Herkimer County at the New York State Envirothon on Wednesday, May 22nd and Thursday, May 23rd at SUNY Cortland, in Cortland NY.

SOIL & WATER CONT'D.:

Herkimer County Soil & Water Conservation Districts Plants Trees with Little Falls Cub Scouts

Herkimer County Soil & Water Conservation District partnered with Hamilton County Soil & Water to give a tree planting presentation to the Little Falls Cub Scouts on April 28th. This presentation gives the scouts the knowledge on how and where to plant a tree. The district donated 25 Scotch Pine seedlings and technicians assisted in planting over 50 seedlings with the scouts. |



Pictured above is district technician Gabby Lewosko showing proper planting techniques to scouts.



Pictured above are district technicians (Gabby Lewosko and Alexis Sprague) and Hamilton County technician (Katie WhitKovits) giving tree planting presentation.



Planted Scotch Pine Seedling



Technicians with scouts

Top row left to right: Gabby Lewosko, Alexis Sprague, Katie WhitKovits

FROM HERKIMER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE:



Three Herkimer College Employees Receive Prestigious SUNY Chancellor's Award

The SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Excellence are system-level honors conferred to acknowledge and provide recognition for consistently superior professional achievement and to encourage the ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Aaron Alford is the recipient of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service. Alford recently retired after a 24 year-career at Herkimer College, where he served in numerous positions including technical assistant, financial aid assistant, assistant bursar, and bursar.

"Aaron has continually strived to maintain and improve his department's operations and to provide clear information to students, always giving his fullest and best effort," said Herkimer College Officer-in-Charge Nicholas F. Laino.

Robert Gassmann, Professor of Communication and Media, received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Gassmann joined the faculty in 1990, and spent 26 years teaching in the Radio and Television Broadcasting program, and the past six years in the Communication and Media program.

"Professor Gassmann is a very active and engaged instructor who strives to grow professionally and pedagogically. Students rely on him for his expertise and for forging professional connections. Bob is always accessible and sees real possibilities for intellectual growth in every one of his students, ready to help them discover new things," Laino said.

Campus Peace Officer **Shea Manley** received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the Classified Service. Manley has served as a campus safety officer at Herkimer College since 2003.

"Officer Manley is very student-centered, putting our students first and remaining calm in all situations. He continually strives to ensure the safety of our campus community and has received several commendations throughout his years at Herkimer College, including a lifesaving award," stated Laino.

The honorees were presented with a certificate and medallion during the College's employee appreciation ceremony on May 8, and were also recognized during the 56th Commencement ceremony on May 10.



Police Academy at Herkimer College Graduates Sixth Class



Herkimer College graduated its sixth class from the Phase I Pre-Employment Police Basic Training course at a ceremony held on Thursday, May 30. The course is offered in partnership with the Little Falls Police Department.

Seven of the eight have secured employment with a law enforcement agency, where they will complete the remainder of their police training.

In speaking to the graduates, Police Academy Director Mike Masi said, "I congratulate and commend you for your sacrifices for this very honorable and noble profession. Every one of you have achieved my standards. Going forward, don't forget what you overcame to get here, what you and your families have sacrificed to get here."

Herkimer College's Pre-Employment Police Academy launched in the Fall of 2018. Coursework covers topics such as criminal investigations, community relations,

emergency preparedness, defensive tactics, and more.

For more information about the Pre-Employment Police Academy: www.herkimer.edu/police

Pictured from left: Collin Paul (Norwich), Bruce F. Clouthier (Palatine Bridge), Nicholas G. Scarafile (New Hartford), Theodore L. Schoff (Little Falls), Logan F. Cirillo (Mohawk), Brayden M. Zahniser (Frankfort), Grant L. Rasha (Lee Center) and Bryanna N. Houck (Sidney).

HCCC CONT'D:

Congratulations to the Class of 2024!

Herkimer College holds 56th Annual Commencement

Herkimer County Community College held its 56th Commencement on Friday, May 10, 2024, at 4 p.m. in the Physical Education building. There were 310 graduates and candidates for degrees and certificates, with 140 having completed their programs entirely online.

Officer-in-Charge Nicholas F. Laino presided over the ceremony. The National Anthem was sung by Joshua Lanza '12, academic support specialist and esports coach at Herkimer College. The invocation and benediction was delivered by Chaunsey Brown, Lead Pastor, New Hope Christian Fellowship, Dolgeville, NY. The procession was led by faculty representative and macebearer, Associate Professor of Social Science John McLean, Ph.D.

In his greeting, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Michael Stalteri Sr. said, "You each had goals when you enrolled at Herkimer, whether it was to prepare for a particular career, or to continue your education at a four-year college. Regardless of your expectations when you started college, there is no doubt you are leaving here with valuable new skills and a greater awareness of the world...and yourself. The opportunities you have had here at Herkimer and the degree that you have earned have set you up for success."

Student Government President Elizabeth Cingranelli '24, of Stittville, said " Take a moment to acknowledge your current success and know this is just the start. Appreciate the bumps in the road, as this will enrich your appreciation for life. Find the courage to overcome the challenges regardless of the settings, field, court, or classroom. And that is what will define legacy, not the jobs you get or connections you make but the impact you leave, determination and the positive words you spread. So may the victory become sweeter, and our abilities be pushed."

Grace Marjorie Smith '24, of Eaton, delivered the student address titled To the Class of 2024. Smith reflected on her time at Herkimer and what made it special. "As we stand here today, on the brink of this new chapter in our lives we have come a long way since we started. We all have made new friends, learned new things, and grown as individuals," she said.

Laino recognized the following awards:

- Elizabeth Cingranelli '24, SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence
- Rebecca Lynn Swart '24, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society All-New York Academic Team Award
- Lydia M. Reimer '24, SUNY Scholar Athlete Award



Pictured from left: Grace Marjorie Smith (Eaton), Lydia M. Reimer (Newport), and Rebecca Lynn Swart (Little Falls)

HCCC CONT'D:

Herkimer College Students Certified as CarePath™ Coaches

Three Herkimer College students enrolled in the Human Services program were recently awarded certification as CarePath™ Coaches through Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc. (MHANYS).

As part of the certification process, Alexis Lynch (Utica), Natalie Daley (Herkimer), and Samantha Childs (Ilion) each presented their interests and career aspirations in the mental health field. These topics included senior care, adolescents at risk of foster care placement, and parents in need of support for their children. Each student was awarded CarePath™ certification following their presentations.

Lynch and Daley are May 2024 graduates, and Childs is planning to complete her degree in August 2024.

MHANYS CarePath™ is a non-clinical program designed to support teenagers and adults who experience behavioral health challenges. This is achieved by training certified coaches who work with individuals in recovery and their families or chosen supporters over a three-month period.

Herkimer College is the first college to partner with MHANYS to offer academic learning opportunities.



Pictured from left: Alexis Lynch, Natalie Daley, and Samantha Childs

Roepnack Named NJCAA Athletic Trainer of the Year

Herkimer College Athletic Trainer Kyle Roepnack, of Ilion, was named NJCAA Athletic Trainer of the Year at the NJCAA Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, in April.

The award recognizes an individual who strives to make the optimal student-athlete experience on their campus while performing duties far beyond the institutional level.

“Congratulations to Kyle on this well-deserved honor,” said Herkimer College Dean of Students/Director of Athletics Don Dutcher. “His expertise, commitment and knowledge in the athletic training field has supported countless student-athletes throughout the years. He continues to be a leader in the NJCAA, Region III, and at Herkimer by always putting the health of all NJCAA student-athletes as his number one priority.”

Roepnack has completed his 19th year as head athletic trainer at Herkimer College, where he evaluates and treats athletic injuries and works with athletes through rehabilitation. In addition to his athletic training responsibilities at Herkimer, Roepnack is the Region III Health and Safety Committee Chair, a member of the NJCAA Student-Athlete Safety and Welfare Council, and the NJCAA representative on the National Athletic Trainer’s Association Intercollegiate Council for Sports



FROM HERKIMER COUNTY IDA:

We have some new additions to our website! We recently added a page for our newly formed LDC, as well as a page dedicated to all of our brownfields in the county!

Check it all out here: <https://www.herkimercountyida.org/>

Welcome our most recent addition to the HCIDA team, Alaina Valeriano! Alaina started with us in January of this year as our Community & Business Development Specialist. She comes from a background in business management and insurance and we are happy to have her with us!



Check out our new 76 acre property in Schuyler, NY: the Four Corners Business Park! Located only 5 miles from Utica on NYS Route 5, this property is a great space for development!



FROM HERKIMER COUNTY STOP-DWI:**DID YOU KNOW???****4-WAY INTERSECTIONS MOST DANGEROUS**

Vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities occur on all types of roads in all types of conditions every day of the year. The sad fact is that approximately 100 people die every day in the U.S. and about three are killed daily in New York State because of traffic crashes. A significant percentage of traffic fatalities occur at intersections.

A new study that investigated the most dangerous types of intersections in New York revealed that Four-Way Intersections are the leading type of crossroad for fatal motor-vehicle crashes. The study was conducted by personal injury law firm [Injured In Florida](#), which gathered and analyzed crash data across various intersection types in New York. The data were taken from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on fatal crashes that occurred at an intersection between 2017 and 2021.

Four-Way Intersections top the list as New York's most common intersection for deadly collisions, with 61.2% of all recorded intersection fatal crashes occurring at this type of crossroad. The analysis found that out of the total 1,642 fatal crashes examined, 1,005 were at Four-Way Intersections, higher than any other category. T-Intersections were identified as the second most common site for fatal crashes, with 565 incidents making up 34.4% of the total. Y-Intersections were the third most common among the studied intersection types, accounting for 55 fatal crashes or 3.4%.

At the national level, Four-Way Intersections are also the most common type for fatal motor vehicle crashes, with 27,335 such incidents comprising 61.8% of the total of 44,219 crashes that were related to an intersection.

T-Intersections follow, accounting for 14,778 crossroads crashes or 33.4%. Y-Intersections saw 1,079 fatal crashes, making up 2.4%. There were 200 fatal crashes at intersections with five points or more (0.45%), and 127 at a roundabout (0.29%).

A spokesperson for the law firm that did the study commented: "The study found that out of the 4,785 fatal crashes that occurred in New York over the five-year period, 1,642 happened at some type of intersection, which is 34.3%. This data is always a reminder to all road users of the importance of driving carefully, but especially when approaching any type of crossroads or intersection."

This article was submitted by the Herkimer County STOP-DWI Office. This article is a one in a series of articles developed and published by the Franklin County Traffic Safety Board and is being reprinted with their permission.



FROM CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION:

Veggie Van Schedule



Cornell Cooperative Extension | Herkimer County

THE MOBILE MARKET SEASON IS FROM JUNE 18 TO OCTOBER 31. FEATURING WEST END FARM OF HERKIMER.



SNAP, FMNP, and FCC accepted

TUES

10am - 1pm

GALINSKY APARTMENTS

105 Protection Ave, Herkimer



TUES

3 - 7pm

EASTERN PARK

Waverly Place, Little Falls
Across from Little Falls Library

THURS

10am - 1pm

LONDON TOWERS

100 West Main St, Ilion



THURS

3 - 7pm

THE RED DOOR

661 US-20, West Winfield



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