



## A New Way Forward for America

### Ex-Congressman to 'Rally' Chamber

Former U.S. Rep. Chris Gibson has been a busy man since leaving Congress last year, but he will find time to address the Chamber's next breakfast meeting on May 30 and discuss his latest book.

"I believe this will be my fifth time appearing before the Chamber," said Gibson, a Kinderhook Republican who retired from Congress to enter academia. "It's a great privilege and honor. I very much enjoy the audience interaction."

"I always know I'm in a room with strong leaders when I'm there because they're leading the economy and I really look forward to the opportunity."

The breakfast, sponsored by Begnal Motors, is scheduled for 7:30-9 a.m. at the Best Western Plus in Kingston. Things may go longer than advertised, though, as Gibson has promised to stay and sign copies of his book, "Rally Point: Five Tasks to Unite

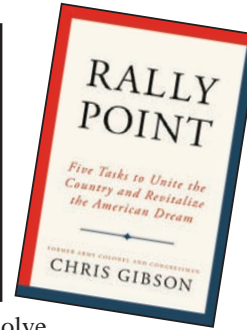
the Country and Revitalize the American Dream," which will be free to breakfast attendees.

The book has drawn rave reviews on such sites as Amazon and Goodreads. Former U.S. Attorney General Ed Meese calls it a "fresh and compelling vision for our country—a must-read."

The five tasks Gibson outlines in his book include:

- Strengthening national security.
- Restoring founding principles.
- Promoting a flourishing life.
- Keeping faith.
- Unifying and growing the movement.

"What I present is really a review of founding principles and make the argument that through that perspective, we can actually find a way forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Gibson said. "This is a way of applying the lessons of the past to help us come to-



gether as a people to solve the major problems of our time."

"I think it's really important to embrace these founding principles because they really helped our country. Our country was really very diverse from the outset."

Gibson said America in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century featured diverse economies and perspectives on a number of issues.

"But by committing to the Constitution, which itself was a compromise, it helped bring

*Continued on page 4*

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# UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

**May 8 | 9:00 - 11:00 am**

## UC Chamber of Commerce Foundation Seminar Presented by Jackson Lewis

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Reservations are required.

For more information contact:

Ingrid Kulick | 845.338.5100 | Ingrid@UlsterChamber.org

**May 17 | 6:00 - 8:00 pm**

## YUP Meet Up @ Mariners Harbor

1 Broadway | Kingston, NY

Networking event for young professionals.

Registration is required.

**May 22 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm**

## Membership Mixer @ Wiltwyck Golf Club

404 Steward Lane | Kingston, NY

There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.

Reservations are required.

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**May 30 | 7:30 - 9:00 am**

## Chamber Breakfast Meeting Chris Gibson (Former U.S. Congressman) BEST WESTERN PLUS

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# Come and See the 'New' Wiltwyck

## Changes Galore for Iconic Golf Club

The times, they are a changin' at the Wiltwyck Golf Club.

If you haven't been keeping up with the news, the venerable golf course and club at 404 Steward Lane has new owners and a new vision that can be seen at the Chamber's next Business-After-Hours Mixer from 5-7 p.m. on May 22.

"We're hosting the Mixer to kind of showcase what the new Wiltwyck is, and obviously, the Chamber is an opportunity to get in front of business professionals and the movers and shakers throughout the community," said Luke Burbach, the new golf pro at Wiltwyck.

"It's a nice chance for us to show what we're capable of doing and how many changes we've made for the better here."

Burbach said Chamber members can see the renovations to the Capital Tavern. The golf course will also be open.

"We'd love to give them a tour of the facility and then show them and talk to them about some of the things that are happening on the course, including our membership and leagues," Burbach said.

A major change is that the fabled golf course is now semi-private and open to the public.

"For the first time in 85 years, we're basically accepting public play," Burbach said. "Members of the community can come out here and enjoy the golf course on any day of the week. We're really looking forward to the opportunity to show the whole community what Wiltwyck is all about."

Ulster County residents can play 18 holes for \$35 on weekdays and \$55 on weekends.

"It's a new focus on making Wiltwyck a fun spot to be, making it a community center, a place for the whole family, so it's pretty darned exciting," Burbach said.

Kingston attorney Joe O'Connor, one of 11 investors who bought Wiltwyck when it appeared the club might close, said the Mixer will be a chance to catch the new vision.

"It's the first opportunity for everyone to see all the physical changes and our mission to kind of open the place up to everyone, the whole community," O'Connor said. "It's amazing. When you walk into the restaurant, you won't even recognize you're at Wiltwyck."

"We're in the process of making a whole bunch of other changes, not only to the golf course, but to the facilities, the parking lot and the pool area. This will be the first opportunity for the businesses and Chamber members to see what we've done."

The championship golf course, designed by Robert Trent Jones, remains the centerpiece.



"It's just a wonderful course," O'Connor said. "There's nothing like it not only in Ulster County, but in the Hudson Valley. It's clearly the preeminent course as far as architecture."

"We saw a great opportunity to save not just the golf course, but the banquet facility, the restaurant and the pool and we've got some great ideas, including possibly a gym/spa area in the clubhouse. There are a whole lot of changes coming that are positive."

O'Connor said business leaders can look around and ask questions the night of the Mixer.

"We're going to be out around the course if anyone has any questions about the changes we've made and the vision," he said. "We've got some ideas for year two and year three."

"Our main focus this year was to get the course open and in great condition and to get the restaurant open."

The food and drink on the night of the Mixer will come from the new Capital Tavern, which is the vision of restaurateur David Amato and chef Kenny Callaghan.

"This is my way of showing the business community I appreciate their support," Amato said.

The Capital Tavern will employ 30 to 35 people.

"We've completely renovated the restaurant," Amato said. "We'll be constructing a new outdoor bar overlooking the golf course and the Catskills. We're going to have outdoor dining and the outdoor bar. We're bringing a new, hip, exciting restaurant to the area—and catering too."

Wiltwyck, which also features a pool and tennis courts, was incorporated in Kingston in 1933. It moved to its current location off Lucas Avenue in 1954 due to construction of the state Thruway.

"In our opinion, this is going to be the best year yet and we're excited about what the future brings," Burbach said.

For information on membership and Wiltwyck's full array of offerings, call (845) 331-0700 or go to [www.wiltwyck.org](http://www.wiltwyck.org).



Chamber mixers are a great way to network and promote your business. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards. This free networking event is open to Chamber members and prospective members. Reservations are a must and can be made by calling the Chamber office at (845) 338-5100 or by registering online at [www.ulster-chamber.org](http://www.ulster-chamber.org).

# Mixer

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# Ex-Congressman to 'Rally' Chamber

Continued from page 1

our people together and helped them make decisions and sort their way through the major issues in a way that still kept us unified," Gibson said. "At a time when we're so highly divided in our country, I make the point that this tried and true approach has worked for our nation in the past and, quite frankly, we have walked away from it."

Gibson argues in the book that we don't enact major political change that way anymore. The last two decades have seen change by fiat and executive orders and actions.

"This is not just President Trump," Gibson said. "This is also

presidents Obama and George W. Bush. That has exacerbated the divide in our nation."

Gibson argues for a flourishing economy, "where every American has the opportunity to rise to their God-given potential." He also calls for a return to faith—"not just in God, but in ourselves."

"Increasingly Americans are throwing their hands up thinking that we can't fix this," he said. "They're losing faith in our ability to be self-governing and that's a particular concern of mine. We need to keep faith in our exceptional way of life and our ability to be self-governing."

Gibson, who served in Congress from 2011 to 2017, said he

plans to talk for 20 to 25 minutes and then take questions.

The audience may be surprised about the decorated war hero's position on the new omnibus spending bill, which dramatically increases military spending.

Gibson, in his book, advocates for a \$25 billion to \$30 billion increase in military spending to \$625 billion to \$630 billion overall.

"Quite frankly, I think they overshot the target here," Gibson said. "What they just enacted went over \$700 billion. I don't think that was all necessary. I didn't support that bill. I would have been a no."

Gibson's book also discusses the crushing national debt, which has reached \$21 trillion. He noted that he worked to help reduce the annual budget deficit from \$1.5 trillion the year before he was elected to \$400 billion by the time he left office.

"We're on track to double the deficit now by next year," Gibson said. "I'm paying very close attention to this. I say that that deficit and the debt are a national security threat."

Gibson fears the annual budget deficit could exceed \$1 trillion again.

"We can't sustain this," he said. "We have to be able to balance our budgets. Whatever we argue for and debate, we ultimately have to pay for."

Gibson, who normally addressed the Chamber each January to present a legislative update, said he is "not likely" to discuss the 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional District race between his successor, U.S. Rep. John Faso, and a crowded field of Democratic challengers.

"I don't really think that's in good form," he said. "I can talk to the overarching political dynamic. I certainly can do that and talk about where we are as a nation and where we are in our politics and our policy."

Gibson recently agreed to chair the campaign of Republican gubernatorial candidate Marc Molinaro, the Dutchess County executive. As for returning to politics himself, Gibson does not close the door.

"Well, we'll see," Gibson said.

Gibson, the Stanley Kaplan Distinguished Visiting Professor of American Foreign Policy at Williams College since last year, is committed to that post until the summer of 2019—when his youngest child graduates high school.

"I've said that's another opportunity for us to take a look at and make a decision as to where we go next year," Gibson said. "Whether or not I sign on and stay in academia will be a decision for the future, or whether or not we get back in national leadership in some form or another, that's another possibility. But that's a decision for the future, not for today."

The 54-year-old Gibson served 24 years in the U.S. Army and rose to the rank of colonel after attending Sienna College. He was deployed seven times, including four combat tours in Iraq.

Gibson, who also holds a doctorate in government from Cornell and also taught American politics at West Point, was awarded the Purple Heart, four Bronze Stars and many other medals during his military career.

In 2008, Gibson published his first book, "Securing the State."

*Chamber breakfast programs are a great way to network with other local business leaders and stay on top of current events. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register, call the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at [www.ulsterchamber.org](http://www.ulsterchamber.org).*

## It's time to get **Brilliant!**

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# A Company With Deep Roots

## Augustine Nursery Grows, Sell Quality Trees

Ron Augustine drove his pickup truck behind the sprawling plot on Van Kleeck Lane with the pride of a patriarch and the eye of a purist.

“I always raise the bar every year,” said the 70-year-old co-owner of Augustine Nursery. “I’m never happy where I am. You got to stay on top of your game.”

The Kingston native and his brother, Mike, have managed to do that for 40 years.

What started out as a siblings-based grass-cutting business in 1974 has evolved into a well-respected operation where trees are cultivated, sold and used in residential and commercial landscaping designs.

The brothers bought the six-acre nursery that parallels U.S. Route 9W in 1987 and they have been there since.

The Augustines also operate a Lawn Doctor franchise at the Van Kleeck Lane retail space and over the years have added other components to their landscaping business such as a stone yard and bulk materials like mulch and gravel.

The brothers continue to work well together, with Mike concentrating on the buying and selling, and Ron focusing on the design end of the business.

Mike’s wife, Penny, runs the nursery operations, and their son, Mike, joined the business as an estimator.

Ron Augustine is self-taught as a landscape designer and deals directly with homeowners.

“I have a natural feel for it and a lot of experience. Not much puzzles me,” he said. “When I go to people’s yards, it doesn’t take me long to figure out what the needs are. People come to us because we really care about what we’re doing.”

To get to the stage of a good outdoor design, it takes more than a keen eye. Premium plants are key, Augustine said.

On that recent truck trip, he pointed to the hardy hemlocks and pines, crabapples and locusts, hydrangeas and lilacs all neatly laid out at the nursery and ready to be snatched up by customers itching to beautify their lawns this spring.

Most, he said, have been lovingly grown at the family’s 67-acre Kingston farm on the delta of the Esopus Creek. Augustine calls it a tree paradise, where each sapling is given room to become the grand hardwoods, ornamentals and evergreens the nursery is known for.

“A lot of people don’t know that we grow 20,000 trees in 200 varieties locally. I dig up between 750 to 1,000 trees annually, and every year I put about 1,500 back in the ground,” Augustine said.

“The soil is so great that I don’t have to irrigate my farms. I dig under the ground and the soil is moist and cool. I can go down 10 feet and not hit a rock.”

The result is better trees for better landscapes, he said.

Right now, the Augustines are in the thick of things as Mother’s Day approaches and discerning homeowners look to plant trees flush with color and fragrance.

A recent trend Augustine has capitalized on is the extension of living space to the outdoors—whether simple or elaborate.

“It’s amazing what people are doing. They’re putting in fire pits and stone walls around their patios,” Augustine said. “It used to be just simple things like shrubs, but now, they’re getting more sophisticated, creating outdoor rooms.”

“In Westchester County and Long Island, it’s always been big, but we’re seeing more of it here. It becomes another living space outside.”

Homeowners represent about 75 percent of Augustine’s business, so he said his philosophy of raising the bar each year further enhances his reputation.

“My biggest joy is seeing the landscaping process unfold so quickly. Within four to seven days, we come back with a plan. When we pull up in the morning with a crew, we can do a lot in one day. The transformation that takes place in an eight or 10-hour day is really rewarding.”

Though more time may be required for bigger projects like adding an irrigation system or putting in lighting, Augustine said his expert crews work hard to get them done in a reasonable period.

“It’s important to stay in that period you commit to. Nine out of 10 times, we’re right on. It’s really rewarding for all involved—both my guys and my clients. That, for me, is the champagne popper.”

*Augustine Nursery, 177 Van Kleeck Lane in Kingston, can be reached at (845) 338-4936 or [www.augustinenursery.com](http://www.augustinenursery.com).*



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# Holy Cow! What A Place!

## Catskill Animal Sanctuary Opens For Season



Tucker, the mammoth steer known for his affectionate kisses, is set to receive the thousands of guests expected this year at the 148-acre haven on Old Stage Road in Saugerties.

In fact, some 200 rescued beings at Catskill Animal Sanctuary are primed for a new season of one-on-one interaction with the public that will include new programs, expanded tours and the return of Camp Kindness.

Kathy Stevens, the founder and executive director, said the season kicked off on March 31 with close to 200 visitors anxious to bask in the sun with the portly, pot-bellied pigs, tantalizing turkeys and happy

horses that inhabit the peaceful, well-kept grounds.

In addition to offering weekend day passes for the first time, the sanctuary is rolling out a new mentoring program for those considering a vegan lifestyle and hosting more child-centric tours.

“We’ve got a lot going on this year,” Stevens said. “For starters, after a year on hiatus, Camp Kindness is returning and is being expanded. It’s going to be four weeks as opposed to two weeks, with three different sessions offered.”

Camp Kindness, a program for youths ages 8 to 14, offers an engaging experience that fosters compassion and respect for animals and the environ-

ment. It covers issues related to the plight of farmed animals, animal protection, humane choices and vegan nutrition.

“The cool thing about Camp Kindness is that it’s way more than just a fun experience. Kids will work to create an initiative in their own communities, and we will support them in truly becoming leaders on behalf of animals,” Stevens said.

Along those same lines, the CAS culinary team is working on its first in a series of vegan cookbooks, with the working title “*These Are Our Friends; This is Our Food.*”

The book will feature 130 recipes developed by its in-house vegan chefs and stories

*Continued on page 7*

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# Catskill Animal Sanctuary Opens For Season

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about some of the sanctuary's residents. Stevens, the author of two previous books, is contributing those entries.

For anyone who knows the Virginia native and former English teacher, animals and education are her passions.

Since founding the rescue and teaching operation in January 2001, she and her team have rescued close to 5,000 animals.

It started with a 3-foot-tall Shetland pony named Dino. He survived an arson in 2000 that killed 23 horses at Brooklyn's Bergen Beach Stables. While Dino sustained burns on his body, a great deal of internal scar tissue and eye damage, he lived seven happy years at CAS.

"Our mission is to provide a haven for desperate animals—one that allows them first to recover, and then to thrive both physically and psychologically," Stevens said.

"Some of them become larger-than-life ambassadors for the second part of our mission, which is to encourage good people of conscience ... to adopt a vegan lifestyle—a lifestyle of non-harming and one that has the best chance of stopping this collision course that we're on with global warming."

Stevens said CAS workers approach their "urgent mission" in a non-confrontational way.

"Our tagline is 'Love Spoken Here.' I hope people feel that. This is a no-judgment zone. We encourage people to come on down, kiss a pig and learn something in the process about their unintended role in the suffering of our fellow beings, but most importantly, about how to be part of the solution."

That's where animals like the 3,000-pound Tucker come into play.

The Holstein steer had been living at a petting zoo and was rescued in 2007 while being loaded onto a truck headed for auction.

"He's as gentle and loving as an old Golden Retriever," Stevens said. "Children lie on his back and sit under his 300-pound head and hug him. He craves human companionship and oozes love. In fact, a lot of people cry when they meet him. I think it's the combination of his mass and his gentle, sensitive nature. I also think people feel his love."

All the animals, in fact, have heart-tugging stories and individual personalities that make the sanctuary what Stevens calls a "disarming" experience.

The saga of Ashley, an ancient, blind Appaloosa and her son, Pliers, illustrates the point.

In danger of being shot by their owner, the severely neglected horses were rescued from a field in late 2016.

"Pliers was not only her son. He had become her protector, so he would charge at us, threatening to kick," Stevens said.

"We had a very dangerous situation on our hands with this big boy, but after months of work to undo the various emotional challenges that mother and son had, each one is thriving. When we took them, we thought, 'We'll give them a few months of knowing what love feels like.' After all, Ashley was 36. Pliers was 34. That's likely all the time they had left."

Instead, the horses are thriving 18 months later and have become emblematic of the agency's calling.

"It's a loving and joyful place, where people are of-



Photo by Martha Sachser

ten completely disarmed when they are kissed by a cow or have a turkey climb in their lap. Those experiences change people," she said.

CAS, which relies on donations, has evolved into a substantial operation with 350 animals, nine large barns and many smaller ones, multiple educational programs and an annual budget of more than \$2 million.

Now with close to 150 acres, including property off state Route 32 in Saugerties, CAS has been nationally recognized for its accountability by Charity Navigator. In fact, it is the No. 1 ranked sanctuary in the nation for fiscal accountability.

The farm also is accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries for having the highest standards of animal care.

In addition to hosting thousands of visitors each year, the agency offers overnight stays at its renovated pre-Civil War bed and breakfast known as The Homestead. Guests at the 1813 farmhouse are treated to a complimentary vegan breakfast and are free to roam the grounds throughout their visit.

Stevens said she is one day looking forward to hosting a

Chamber Mixer and is anxious to raise awareness about the sanctuary and its mission.

"We believe that when you look an animal in the eye and see someone—not something—looking back at you, it is one of the most profound shifts people can make in their understanding of the world and their place in it," she said.

*Catskill Animal Sanctuary, 316 Old Stage Road in Saugerties, is open for weekend tours through November. For more information, call (845) 336-8447 or go to [www.casanctuary.org](http://www.casanctuary.org).*



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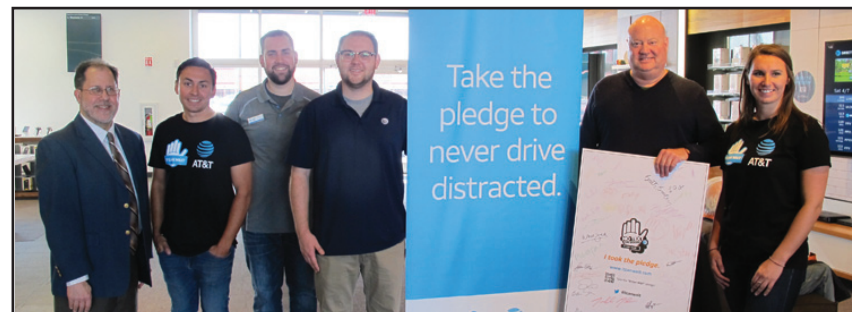
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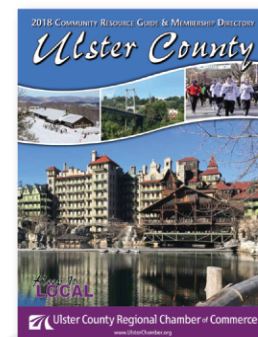
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**Ronald Zorrilla** - Director of Operations

Category: Education/Tutoring

Description: *Our vision at GCSEN is to promote greater peace and prosperity in local community economies and eventually regional, national and international economies by supporting a growing generation of social entrepreneurs, their teachers, mentors who support them and the impact investors, entrepreneurial philanthropists and sponsors who seek to invest in them. We seek to increase the number of prosperous social entrepreneurs and by doing so we will strengthen local economies while improving the rate of environmental stewardship necessary for a civil, prosperous, self-governing, free society.*

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**Pete Carr** - President

Category: Insurance

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### HUDSON VALLEY SEED

380 Main Street Suite 200  
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www.hudsonvalleyseed.org  
(845) 419-3871

**Omari Washington** - Executive Director

Category: Non-Profit Organizations

Description: *Hudson Valley Seed educates children in school gardens, empowering students through curriculum-integrated lessons focused on healthy eating, food literacy, outdoor learning, and academic success.*

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**Steve Meyen** - Manager

Category: Recreation

Description: *Sporting Clay Facility.*

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Kingston, NY 12401  
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**Paula Mitchell** - Founder and President

Category: Communications

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**Joey LoBianco** - President

Categories: Breweries; Restaurants

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(914) 391-0296

**Jacqueline M. Williams** - Owner

Categories: Bed & Breakfasts; Event Venues; Retail

Description: *Proposed opening will be late fall 2018. The goal is to have a bed & breakfast with a speakeasy and an ice-cream bar. The venue facility will be in a glass tent on the grounds of our beautiful gardens.*

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**Christopher Buchanan** - Operations Manager

Category: Rental Service

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# Mixer

**April 19, 2018**  
**Hudson Valley**  
**Sudbury School**  
84 Zena Road  
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Our Mixer Host, Founder Jeff Collins (C) with staff, students and volunteers at the Hudson Valley Sudbury School.



Our Mixer Sponsor, Ulster Savings Bank (L-R) John Finch (Executive Vice President, COO), Steve Hack, Connie Harkin, Phyllis Tabler, Rocco Pucino, Kayleigh DeCicco, Kelly Maroney and Anthony Troccia.



Christopher Buchanan (United Rentals, Reliable Onsite Services), Jennifer Borrero (Hudson Valley Magazine), Matt Laspada (Residential Home Funding), Barbara Sarah (Circle of Friends for the Dying) and Paula Mitchell (Mitchell Communications).



Nina Doyle (Woodstock School of Art) with Stephanie Wasser and Steven Wasser (both with SCORE Chapter 533).



Steve Williams (Simpson-Gaus Funeral Home), Lee Johnson (TD Bank), Leigh Bahnatka (Record Storage Solutions) with Ed Bergstraesser (AT&T).



Lou Kolano (Lou Kolano Tax/Financial Services), Jillian Caruso and Paul Hammerl (both with Simpson-Gaus Funeral Home) and Steve Hack (Ulster Savings Bank).