

# Ulster County's A Hot Location

## Real Estate Market on Breakfast Agenda

People are moving to Ulster County in droves and this is your chance to find out why and how it affects you.

Ulster County Board of Realtors President Harris Safier and Hudson Valley Catskill Region Multiple Listing Service (MLS) President Timothy Sweeney will address the Chamber's next Breakfast, scheduled for 7:30-9 a.m. Nov. 14 at the Best Western Plus in Kingston.

"We're going to speak

about the outlook for the real estate market and what's gone on over the last couple of years in Ulster County real estate-wise," Safier said. "Our region has been discovered again and things are hot in the real estate market.

"The inventory in most price ranges is short of demand. The blogging and writing about communities in Ulster County has continued to bring added interest, particularly among millennials."

Safier said the two would update Chamber members on average and median selling prices, mortgage rates, trends and even proposed legislation before Congress.

Safier said some New York City residents are being priced out—and they're finding the Mid-Hudson more and more attractive.

"Ulster County and the Mid-Hudson Region have a growing reputation for being a really beautiful place



Harris Safier



Timothy Sweeney

to live with expansive opportunities for an outdoor lifestyle," Safier said. "We have public lands and public access unlike many other areas in the state.

"As a result, because

of the proximity to New York City, and the accessibility via transportation, we're seeing a lot more people who have discovered a

*Continued on page 9*

**November Breakfast**  
 November 14  
 7:30-9:00 am  
**BEST WESTERN PLUS**  
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## The November Breakfast Sponsor is the Ulster County Board of Realtors



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*Continued on page 8*

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**Mixer**  
 Nov. 16  
 5-7 pm  
 Best Western Plus Kingston

# Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce

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# UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

**November 14 | 7:30 - 9:00 am**

## Chamber Breakfast Meeting Harris Safier and Timothy Sweeney BEST WESTERN PLUS Kingston Hotel and Conference Center

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**November 15 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm**

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Chamber Members and the general public.

**November 16 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm**

## Membership Mixer @ BEST WESTERN PLUS Kingston Hotel and Conference Center

503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY  
There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.  
Reservations are required.

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**December 14 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm**

## Membership Mixer @ John A. Coleman Catholic High School

430 Hurley Avenue | Hurley, NY  
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Reservations are required.

**Register for all Events (845) 338-5100  
www.UlsterChamber.org**

# Have You Seen The Changes?

## Best Western Plus Hosts Mixer

The Best Western Plus Kingston Hotel & Conference Center has long been the site of the Chamber's popular Breakfast meetings.

However, if you simply rush in and rush out for work as things wrap up around 9 a.m., you might have missed all this hotel has to offer, especially the changes from a recent \$6.2-million renovation.

That's all the more reason to attend the Chamber's next monthly Networking Mixer from 5-7 p.m. Nov. 16 at the hotel, which is located at 503 Washington Ave. in Kingston. The mixer sponsor is HealthAlliance (Member of the WMC Health Network).

"We would like to expose people to the other areas of the hotel and to see more than when they're just here for breakfast meetings," said Debra Harris, the hotel's director of sales.

Owned and operated by Cooper Hotels, the Best Western Plus features 208 guest rooms and is the largest hotel and conference center in the area. It's a favorite for business and leisure customers alike.

The extensive makeover of the hotel recently included a new indoor heated pool and natatorium, game room and fitness center.

In addition, the property increased its event space from 6,000 square feet to more than 8,300 square feet, including new breakout rooms and a private dining room overlooking the courtyard.

"We added more conference space with the renovation," Harris said. "We have breakout rooms now and additional catering space at the hotel. That was all part of the renovation and we want Chamber members to see what we've done to upgrade the event space here at the hotel."

Harris said the hotel and conference center now features two breakout rooms next to the main conference room.

Another change was combining the existing restaurant and lounge area to a shared space in the lobby.

"That gave us room for a separate, 1,200-square-foot

dining room called the Gazebo Room," Harris said. "It used to be part of the restaurant, but now it's totally separate. It's a great area for small conferences, brunches, baby showers, and business and social gatherings, but on a smaller scale.

"It's also wonderful for a cocktail party near the bar or for conferences that need to break into four sessions. We now have that ability. It provides great flexibility, much more than we had before."

The rooms are decorated with black-and-white photographs featuring the area's attractions, Harris said.

"It's nice to have that local component," she said.

The former Kingston Holiday Inn, which opened in 1969, became a Best Western Plus in January 2015. The hotel hosted a Mixer in April of that year, but Harris said while the bulk of the renovations were done, there is now more to see.

Harris said the Mixer will begin in the large courtyard and Chamber members can see some of the adjacent guest rooms, which will be open for tours.

"We also will have some of our meeting rooms set up as they would be for a business or social event," she said. "People can wander in those rooms and take a look.

"We'll use all of our spaces just so we get people to move around. It's nice because you're not in a small, confined space. We certainly will have some food and beverage out in the open courtyard."

You also might get a look at the Tourism Business of the Year Award the Best Western Plus received recently at the Ulster County Business Awards Dinner.

With Ulster County's burgeoning film industry, the Best Western Plus is often the go-to spot for out-of-the-area film crews. The hotel is just blocks from historic Uptown Kingston, where a lot of films are shot.

"We are fortunate because of our size," Harris said. "We have over 200 rooms and a typical film crew needs 30 to 40 rooms.

"Our huge parking lot is great for them and some of their oversized equipment. This place feels like a second home to them. So many of them have been up here on different film projects repeatedly. I have some crews who have stayed three times and they're comfortable here."

Harris said the Best Western Plus staff, many of whom have been with the hotel for decades, is looking forward to hosting the Mixer, including Ralph Saccoman, the Director of Food and Beverages and John Turner, Rooms Division Manager.

"It's wonderful to celebrate and have the Chamber members see us other than just that quick breakfast and then off to work," she said. "It helps them consider us for social and corporate events that they might be involved in."

*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.ulsterchamber.org](http://www.ulsterchamber.org).*

# Mixer

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# Local Church Has Rich Tradition

## Clinton Avenue United Methodist Needs Help

Big changes are coming to the Clinton Avenue United Methodist Church in Kingston.

The Rev. Darlene Kelley, who has been the church's affable and socially conscious pastor since 2004, is moving to South Carolina to be closer to family this coming June—if not sooner.

Kelley said the church may not be able

to pay her that long.

"Clinton Avenue has been wonderful, but it's been a challenge," she said. "I threw my heart and soul into it and I loved every minute of it, but it wasn't easy. I think fresh eyes might be good for everybody. I feel like an old soldier at this point."

Kelley said she hopes to remain a pastor in the South.

"God willing," she said. "Let's see what the Lord has in store for me. We'll see what God wants me to do next. I'll just pray and see what happens."

Kelley has been a driving force to help Kingston's poor and downtrodden and her loss will leave a huge void in the community, especially at a church that could really use help as the holidays approach.

Clinton Avenue is home to the Caring Hands Soup Kitchen—which is open for breakfast and lunch every weekday—and the county's warming center, which Kelley said might not open this year.

The warming center was open for 67 nights during the winter of 2016-17 and saw 159 people find warmth within its walls.

Kelley and Jeremy Mills, the church's assistant pastor, said many of the clients suffer from mental challenges and substance abuse issues. This church felt it needed to hire security, just one of the costs that must be paid upfront.

"Sometimes we don't get paid for the contract with the county for months and months and months," Kelley said. "The county has been good to us, but it's not immediate. I need to raise the money upfront to pay folks."

Mills said the church simply doesn't have the cash flow to do that this year.

"We are living from donation to donation right now, but we are doing a lot of good work," Mills said.

That includes the Caring Hands Soup Kitchen, which served 13,905 meals from Jan. 1 to Sept. 30. Mills expects that number of reach 15,000 by the end of the year.

"The soup kitchen is run from whatever we can raise," Kelley said. "We've had some generosity from some other churches. We're trying to do everything we can to be sustainable. It's a struggle."

Mills said the church's food pantry helps an average of 238 households a month.

The church also has given out milk cards good for 360 gallons since January and distributed 51,383 pounds of food from its food bank.

Under a relationship with Hannaford, another 133,574 pounds of food was distributed this year through September.

"Food usually isn't our problem, it's the water, sewer, electric, especially now with winter coming up," Mills said. "That's kind of where the money is needed."

The church also worked with Family of Woodstock over the summer to provide 8,828 meals to the children attending local day camps.

With Thanksgiving approaching, Clinton Avenue will deliver meals on Thanksgiving to those who can't make a sit-down community meal at 1 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Kingston.

Kelley said the church, which has been operating on an ever-decreasing endowment, draws about 50 people each Sunday morning, a drop from recent years.

"I don't know why we've stopped going to church," she said. "We're feeding more people than are coming to church on Sunday. That's kind of sad."

The church offers Narcotics Anonymous (NA) four nights a week, a legal clinic on Fridays and a GED program three days a week.

"All of these things seem to go together," Kelley said. "Alcoholism and substance abuse are huge in our community. They are hurting people a lot, along with a lack of education. I'm proud to say that we kind of link the high school equivalency and the mutual support groups pretty quickly.



"For over a decade, we've been saying, 'Here's food and a chance for you to turn things around for yourself.' It's one thing to feed people, but it's something else to say, 'Let's do better and here are some opportunities to do better.'"

Both Kelley and Mills said their heart for the least of these comes from their Christian faith.

"I think you really do have to love people," Kelley said. "There's a lot of grace. I believe in prayer, so I feel like I've been running on a wing and a prayer for a long time now."

"God has been really good to us so you pray and you try to do the next thing, and on your best days, you love some people."

Mills said he tries to "give everyone a hand up" so they can "have a better life."

"There's just always been something inside of me to give back," he said. "It's our mandate as Christians to love everyone and to serve as much as we can and give back."

Kelley said the responsibilities at her church kept her from being as active with the Chamber as she would have liked, but she did find health insurance there.

"The thing we've been most appreciative of is we've been able to insure me through the Chamber," she said. "That really was helpful for us. It was a great benefit."

*Clinton Avenue United Methodist Church, 122 Clinton Ave. in Kingston, can be reached at (845) 331-7188 or [www.clintonavenueumc.com](http://www.clintonavenueumc.com). Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 1099, Kingston, NY, 12402.*

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In the 1970s, corn farmers Gordon and Robert Davenport, then Binnewater customers through the 1940s, purchased Binnewater to improve their farm-to-market process. Today Binnewater is

*Continued on page 10*

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# Dependable, On-Time Service

## *Not A Pipe Dream At Lowe Plumbing*

The heating season is just around the corner, but if you thought that was the busiest time of year for Jeff Lowe Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning of Kingston, you would be wrong.

Lowe and his 30 employees are busy pretty much the year round serving residential and business customers in the Hudson Valley.

“The busiest time for us is usually March to the end of December,” Lowe says. “Then, depending on the weather, if it gets really cold in January and February, that can be busy too.”

Lowe is busy all summer with air-conditioning and then comes heating season, when the company cleans, maintains and replaces boilers and furnaces. Many Lowe customers have maintenance agreements.

“The big thing we do, usually after Labor Day, is we begin doing service and preventive maintenance in preparation for heating season,” he said.

Furnaces usually last 20 years and boilers 30, Lowe said. His company can perform a heat-loss calculation via computer to make sure your heat isn't escaping—along with your money through higher utility bills.

“If the age of the equipment is getting up there, and the customer requests it, we can do an estimate for a

replacement,” Lowe said.

Customers that put in new window or insulation over time can sometimes purchase a smaller heating unit and save money, Lowe said.

Lowe Plumbing offers an array of services, including video pipe inspection, drain cleaning, water pumps and softeners, garbage disposals, hot water heaters, water filtration systems, bathroom remodeling, sewer lines, ultraviolet systems, duct work, gas boilers and furnaces, central air-conditioning, ductless air-conditioning, heat pumps, geothermal systems, radiant heat systems, air filtration systems and server room conditioning.

Lowe's great-grandfather started the company in 1912 and you don't last that long in any business if you're not dedicated to customer service—and that's what sets Lowe Plumbing apart.

“A lot of people tell us that 99 percent of the time we show up on time,” Lowe says. “We also call people back, which apparently doesn't happen all the time. We have enough employees that if a call comes in that day, we can usually do same-day service in most cases. We always have men on call—after hours, weekends and holidays for emergencies.

“I think we do our best



to service the customer in a timely manner. We're not known for being the least expensive people around, but we are known for standing behind our work and all the guarantees we offer.”

Lowe said he doesn't do a lot of advertising, but depends on word-of-mouth to generate business.

*Continued on page 8*



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# Lowe Plumbing's Dependable Service

Continued from page 7

"It's more referrals than anything," he said. "They also see our trucks around. Most of the time people say, 'We saw your truck someplace.'"

Lowe has fond memories of joining the company in 1974 and working with his father. He actually had been helping out since he was in junior high and took a service technician course at the former Ulster County Community College.

Lowe Plumbing has deep roots in Kingston. Lowe's great-grandfather, Ferdinand, got into the plumbing business around 1912. The business continued with Lowe's grandfather, Ken Lowe Sr., and father, Ken Lowe Jr.

## MEMBER PROFILE

**"I'm the fourth-generation in the company right now."**

**– Jeff Lowe**

"I'm the fourth-generation in the company right now," Lowe says. "I took over the company from my father around 1980."

The family business will continue into the future. Lowe's son, Jason, and son-in-law, Andrew Benjamin, now work for the company.

Lowe said being listed in the Chamber's

annual Resource Guide & Membership Directory has helped him pick up commercial clients.

"When new people move into town, sometimes they refer to that directory

too," Lowe said.

*Jeff Lowe Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning, located at 101 Smith Ave. in Kingston, can be reached at (845) 331-2480 or [www.jeffloweplumbing.com](http://www.jeffloweplumbing.com).*

## Breakfast Sponsor

Continued from page 1

influence upon matters affecting real estate interests."

The Code of Ethics was adopted in 1913 with the Golden Rule as its theme.

In 1916, the National Association of Real Estate Exchange's name was changed to The National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB). That same year, the term 'REALTOR', identifying real estate professionals who are members of the National Association and sub-

scribers to its strict Code of Ethics, was devised by Charles N. Chadbourne, a past president of the Minneapolis Real Estate Board.

The collective marks REALTORS® and REALTOR® were registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office on Sept. 13, 1949, and Jan. 10, 1950

In 1972, the name of the National Association of Real Estate Boards was changed to the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR). The block "R" logo was adopted by

the Association in 1973.

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# Ulster County's A Hot Location

Continued from page 1

lifestyle here is not only affordable, but superior to what they could have in the suburbs of Manhattan or Manhattan itself.”

One trend Safier will discuss is how many Gothamites once saw Ulster County as a perfect place for a second home. These former “dual residents” are making a major change in their lives.

“We’re seeing an incredible amount of young people who are choosing to make this their primary residence,” he said.

Safier said another trend is that these young people are not coming alone.

“Now we’re seeing their parents,” he said. “Their parents are following them and moving here from places like Chicago and California. They want to be near their grandchildren. That’s

definitely a new trend; I’ve been doing this for 40 years and never seen that before.”

Safier said he hopes Chamber members will “see the opportunities they have to make inroads with these new transplants.”

“I hope they realize the region is going to change, particularly Kingston, in a very positive way,” Safier said. “For the first time in the 40 years I’ve been doing this, a lot of these people are making this their full-time home.”

The two are also expected to discuss the relative affordability of homes in our region, as well as attractive interest rates.

Sweeney said in 2007, prior to the real estate crash, the average sale price was \$300,742 and the median \$250,000. The market hit a low in 2012 when the average sale price plummeted to

\$226,328 and the median \$192,000.

“From 2013 to 2016 we saw a steady increase in units sold, but virtually no movement in average and median sale price,” Sweeney said.

However, the number of units sold in 2016 was 2,010, which was the highest ever in the MLS.

Sweeney said an interesting statistic from 2017 is that for the first time since 2013, the MLS is seeing significant appreciation with an average sale price of \$257,279 and median of \$210,500.

“Much of the appreciation can be attributed to a decline in inventory. This lack of inventory should lead to housing starts and undeveloped land sales,” he said.

Safier will also discuss a proposal before Congress to eliminate the tax deductibility of local real estate taxes.

“This is a very meaningful topic and

as businesspeople we want to share with them the importance of speaking up about this,” Safier said. “The real estate taxes in our region are generally high compared to nationally.”

Safier said property taxes on a second home here are approaching \$10,000 a year on average, an amount that can now be deducted. If that is eliminated, other states with lower taxes may be more attractive to prospective homebuyers.

*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).*

## There's a Reason Business Borrows Here



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# Binnewater Ice Has Solid History

Continued from page 5

owned by Gordon Davenport's daughter, Diane, and her son, Marshall Gogg.

Today, ice production is not as labor intensive and a line of bottled waters, coffee, tea, ice melt, and firewood has been added to the list of products sold by Binnewater.

"Anyone living in Ulster County cannot help but notice our trucks on the road delivering water and coffee products to homes and offices in and around Ulster County," Diane Davenport said.

"Our ice trucks can also be seen delivering to local stores, supermarkets and convenient markets throughout the area."

Gogg said the company's success is due to "dependable, local quality service" and fair prices.

The company's snow-making capacity has led to several jobs for movie productions, including

"The Road to Wellville," which was filmed at the Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz. "We've also been hired by retailers who want snow in their visual advertisements," he said.

"We've provided snow effects for a Campbell's Soup commercial. We've been hired to provide snow for skiing and snowboarding ramps in all seasons. We've even been hired to 'dress up' houses in Christmas season when there was no natural snow. It's impossible to list all the jobs we've done."

The company was hired in 2004 to cover a snowboarding ramp with snow for the David Letterman Show.

Binnewater, which employs nine people, is a small company with a big and warm heart, donating and helping to sponsor events of all sizes.

"We provide water for the Kingston Classic," Gogg said. "It's mostly a lot of small events that we donate to. People come in and we do a lot of

donations for fundraisers."

Binnewater also donated a quarter parcel of land several years ago for the South Pine Street Farm, a joint effort with the Kingston Land Trust.

Binnewater is also a strong supporter of the Chamber and takes advantage of the popular networking Mixers. Gogg said the annual Business Directory and Resource Guide helps in "getting your name out there."

"The Chamber has been good for networking and talking to other local business owners and getting your foot in the door with other businesses," he said.

Davenport added, "Everyone here at Binnewater would like to thank the Chamber for all they do helping small businesses in our area be noticed and thrive."

**Binnewater Ice Co., located 25 South Pine St. in Kingston, can be reached at (845) 331-0237 or [www.binnewater.com](http://www.binnewater.com).**

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For more info contact Carol Ricken  
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## These Members Have Renewed

Arts Society of Kingston  
 Assemblymember Kevin A. Cahill  
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 Drs. Chasin & Guarente Optometrists, PC  
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 Law Offices of Brett Ian Harris  
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 Off Track Betting Corporation  
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**INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, November 15, 2017 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm**

**Holiday Inn Express & Suites  
 1835 Ulster Avenue, Lake Katrine, NY**

For more info. contact Carol Ricken  
 845.338.5100 x104 | Carol@UlsterChamber.org

For detailed itinerary & registration form visit  
[www.UlsterChamber.org](http://www.UlsterChamber.org)

# Mixer

**Oct. 16, 2017**  
**Mariner's Harbor**  
1 Broadway  
Kingston, NY

October Mixer  
Sponsor



Our Mixer Host, Mariner's Harbor on the Kingston Waterfront, with Manager Jeff Lipton (R) and staff.



Fredric Hugue (SVN Deegan-Collins Commercial Real Estate) with John & Terry Gaffken (Boiceville Wines and Spirits).



Joshua Donnelly (Madison Square Design), Vindora Wixom (Arts Society of Kingston), Steve Markle (Madison Square Design) Marian Odenwald (WBPM), Daphne Braun and Brittany Horton (both from H & V Collision Center).



Peter Ingellis (Marshall & Sterling), Lynda Bertling (The Twaalfskill Club) and Robert Baum (Robert G. Baum Commercial Real Estate).



Tim & Cheryl Bowers (Rondout Savings Bank) with Karen & Clayton Van Kleck (Van Kleck's Tire).



Penny Dombrowski, Merle Bordenstein (Armadillo Bar & Grill), Jess Davis and Nicole Martin (all representing Family of Woodstock).