

Congressman To Speak

Chamber Featuring U.S. Rep. Antonio Delgado at Jan. Breakfast

Congressman Antonio Delgado will be the featured guest speaker at the Ulster Chamber's first breakfast meeting of the New Year, scheduled for Jan. 26 at The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus, 503 Washington Ave. Kingston. Ulster Savings Bank is sponsoring the breakfast from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.

Delgado represents the 19th Congressional District, which comprises all of Ulster, Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, and Sullivan counties, as well as parts of Broome, Dutchess, Montgomery, and Rensselaer counties. He is currently serving his second two-year term. He last appeared before the Chamber virtually in 2021.

In the past year, Congressman Delgado worked for his constituents to lower costs for gas and heating, travel, prescription drugs, education, and childcare.

Additionally, he pushed for American goods and jobs with his BuyAmerican.gov Act, which was included in the bipartisan infrastructure bill. Delgado said it will provide transparency and better connect U.S. manufacturers with contracting opportunities. He noted the importance of the legislation in the effort to repair and rebuild the supply chain in the wake of COVID-19 and make long overdue

investments in the nation's infrastructure.

Delgado recently was named the "most bipartisan Democratic member of Congress" in the Common Ground Scorecard, according to his website, delgado.house.gov.

The Common Ground Scorecard was released prior to the 2020 election and updated in October 2021 by the Common Ground Committee (CGC), a nonpartisan, citizen-led organization devoted to improving public discourse in politics.

"Now more than ever, we need leaders who are solutions-oriented and focused on finding common ground, as opposed to being divisive and driven by partisan politics," Delgado said. "We must work together to ensure our democracy can responsibly and effectively represent all Americans, irrespective of party affiliation. I am honored to be the fourth most bipartisan member in all of Congress, and first among Democrats."

Delgado has passed 12 pieces of legislation into law under both Republican and Democratic administrations. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has twice awarded him the Jefferson-Hamilton Award for Bipartisanship.

Congressman Delgado is the Chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on



Antonio Delgado

Commodity Exchanges, Energy and Credit. He also serves on the House Small Business and Transportation and Infrastructure committees.

Delgado, who is from Schenectady, lives in Rhinebeck with his wife, Lacey, and their twin sons, Maxwell and Coltrane.

Chamber Breakfast meetings are a great way to stay on top of current events. Reservations

January Breakfast
January 26
7:30-9:00 am
The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus
503 Washington Ave.
Kingston, NY
Sponsor:
Ulster Savings

are required. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door for Chamber members (\$35 for non-members.) For more information, contact the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

Ulster Savings Bank Is The January Breakfast Sponsor

Ulster Savings Bank is Ulster County's longest-running community bank and one of the area's most successful businesses. As one of only 494 mutual savings banks left in the United States today, Ulster Savings Bank remains strong. An award-winning bank, Ulster Savings was chosen as the Best Bank in the 2021 Chronogram voting contest, awarded the 2022 Community Champion by Bank World, and awarded the Five-Star Superior rating from Bauer Financial for safety and soundness.

"Here at Ulster Savings, we have a strong set of core values: we believe in being a major driver of positive change in our community, we believe we can help change the trajectory of people's lives, we believe in having the customer's back, we believe in pulling together to get things done and we believe in creating a workplace we can all brag about. We're a mutual savings bank and this is what we were founded to do. We have no shareholders. The community is our shareholders. So we pay a good part of our profit back out, no matter what is going

on," said Bill Calderara, President and CEO, Ulster Savings Bank.

In 2021, Ulster Savings made a substantial investment in driving positive change in their community with its Going Green Initiatives. Solar panels were installed in several branch locations. At its Kingston Headquarters, a solar-powered electric vehicle charging station was recently completed that can charge six vehicles at any given time. More green investments are planned for 2022.

Ulster Savings has a long and distinguished history of being responsive and giving back to the community through its philanthropic and volunteer support. Last year was no exception. Ulster Savings distributed over half a million in donations and grants to non-profit organizations along with thousands of employee volunteer hours to help bring about positive change and impact throughout the community.

Ulster Savings has their customer's backs in unique ways such



as preventing fraud before customers even realize it! Awareness of potential fraud and how to prevent it is critical, which is why they offer free financial

literacy tools, fraud prevention, and identity theft resources on the bank's website and Facebook page. Their smart business solutions products include tools for businesses, too, like Positive Pay to help protect against check and ACH fraud.

Ulster Savings is more than just a bank. Whether it's supporting the community, finding the right financing solution for a mortgage or small business, providing convenient banking options, or protecting what matters with proper insurance coverage, Ulster Savings has it all!

Ulster Savings Bank is proud to once again sponsor the first breakfast of the New Year. It's something we've done since 2006 and we are honored to do so again in 2022. We welcome guest speaker Congressman Antonio Delgado and look forward to gaining insight into the year ahead.

Back At The MAC!

First Mixer Of 2022

MAC Fitness in the Kingston Plaza is the place to be on Jan. 19 for the Chamber's much-anticipated first Mixer of the New Year, a chance for local business leaders to re-establish old relationships and build new ones.

Due to the pandemic, the chamber hosted just one Mixer in 2021, outdoors at Keegan Ales, which nearly 300 members attended. Prior to that, the last pre-COVID Mixer was at Diamond Mills in Saugerties, where also, close to 300 crowded inside the cozy tavern.

For the first Mixer of 2022, attendees will have to show proof of vaccination.

The policy dovetails the fitness club's recent changes, according to MAC Fitness owner Holly Snow.

"Starting on Dec. 13, the new governor instituted another mask mandate to combat the rising numbers of COVID-19 from Thanksgiving," she said. "MAC Fitness chose to allow entrance to members by vaccination only, so we did not have to become the 'mask police.' In our business industry the previous year, it was a huge deterrent for most members to work out with a mask.

"Currently, members provide their vaccination card or New York State Wallet app, which then gets documented onto each individual account going forward, so that they do not have to continually show proof of vaccination upon entering the health club."

Snow added that members who provide proof have the option to wear masks while working out but are not required to do so.

Prior to Gov. Kathy Hochul's reinstating the mask mandate, 85 percent of MAC Fitness members had already been vaccinated, Snow said.

"The small percentage of MAC members who have chosen not to be vaccinated have worked with our staff to place their memberships on a temporary freeze until Jan. 15, 2022, to see what happens," she said.

MAC Fitness holds the record for annual Chamber Mixers, having begun almost two decades ago by Snow's late husband and MAC founder, Lyle Schuler. Last January marked the first time the gym did not host the business community due to COVID-19 concerns and a pause in Chamber Mixers.

Snow said while the gym was closed for five months in 2020, she made several upgrades that included 20 new treadmills, refinishing the saunas and regrouting shower areas for men and women.

In addition, MAC Fitness brought in a fogger machine that uses Alpha HP solution, one of the most effective disinfectants against the COVID-19 virus. The staff fogs the entire gym at closing every night.

Snow said while she was happy to reopen on Aug. 24, 2020, it took some time to "find out what our new normal would be." Even so, she said

her staff and members are adjusting to the changes.

"We're trying to do the right thing for all our members as best as we can," Snow said.

Every year before the MAC Mixer, Snow emphasizes the "New Year, New You" theme, and during a pandemic, there is nothing more important than maintaining good health.

The gym offers several ways to do that, including yoga-based classes called BodyFlow, Zumba and spin classes, BodyStep, a full-body cardio workout, and a program known as BodyVive 3.1, a low-impact full body cross-training workout.

MAC Fitness also has a fully certified professional training staff that will custom design fitness programs to suit each person's lifestyle, schedule and goals.

"At MAC Fitness, we strive to meet and exceed the needs of our members and guests," Snow said. "We always uphold a professional, relaxed, family-friendly environment. We offer programs for all ages and all levels of fitness enthusiasts. From kids to Baby Boomers, we have something for everyone."

At the Jan. 19 Mixer, not only will Chamber members get a chance to catch up and network but enjoy food from Savona's and beer from Keegan Ales.

For more information on Mac Fitness, call (845) 853-7377 or go to macfitness.net.

Chamber Mixers are a great way to network and



Holly Snow

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.

Mixer
Wednesday, Jan. 19, 5-7 pm
MAC Fitness
Kingston Plaza 338 Plaza Road
Kingston, NY
Sponsored by:
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Ulster County
Black Business Achievement Awards & Mixer
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The Intermission Is Over!

NCG Makes Movie-Going An Experience

The long COVID intermission for the movie industry has ended. Theaters like NCG Cinema in Kingston are open again and looking forward to a blockbuster holiday season and better 2022.

NCG opened on April 19, 2019, replacing the former Regal Cinemas at the Hudson Valley Mall. NCG closed in March 2020 when the COVID pandemic struck and didn't reopen until Oct. 19 of that year.

At first it was a little slow because no one was releasing any movies, said NCG General Manager Jason Harucki.

Things began to pick up this year, especially with the release of Marvel's Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings on Labor Day Weekend. Harucki said the theater has had some "very strong weekends" since as new movies hit the big screen.

One of them was the third weekend in December when "Spider-Man: No Way Home" hit the big screen.

"It's been crazy. We've seen numbers that we haven't seen since December 2019," Harucki said. "We had three separate movies back then — "Stars Wars: The Rise of Skywalker," "Frozen II" and "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle," and we've surpassed those numbers with just this one. We're setting records because of this movie. We have 20 shows a day, and all of them, especially on the weekend, are selling very well. People have been wonderful with the new mask mandate, and we couldn't be happier.

"As long as things stay the way they are, especially in Ulster County, we should be pretty good," Harucki said. "The studios have all committed to releasing the movies that are scheduled. I can only assume 2022 is going to get better as things go on. As long as nothing collapses, we should be fine."

NCG boasts 12 movie houses, including nine that can accommodate more than 100 viewers and three that hold 66. NCG is also proud of its luxury reclining chairs and affordable ticket and concession prices.

"We try to make it a personalized experience," Harucki said. "We're starting to see more and more regulars. We do offer more of the premium seating than our competition does. We also offer unlimited refills on our popcorn and soda."

NCG currently employs 30 people but will be adding people for the holidays. Harucki said that number could grow to 40 or 45 if the theater gets as busy as it was prior to the pandemic.

Harucki said he is excited

about the "outside the box" ideas being floated for the Hudson Valley Mall, which he noted has two turn-key restaurants ready to go.

"I've always been thrilled to be in Ulster County," he said. "I love Ulster County and think it's one of the best places in the state. One of the reasons I took this job is because I wanted to be a part of the mall's resurgence.

"I hope we would do what Ulster County does best," he said. "I hope more local businesses come up here and use the space."

Harucki said Chamber President Ward Todd had him on the radio show "Spotlight on the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce" and also introduced him to the Facebook group Ulster Eateries United. On Fridays during the pandemic, NCG offered popcorn-to-go to enjoy with a movie at home and Harucki said Todd would often pop by for a bag or two.

"The Chamber has been wonderful about promoting us and urging people to come see us," he said. "Ward has been in our corner since we opened."

Harucki was new to the theater business when he came on as general manager in 2019, but he was no stranger to the area. He grew up in

Kingston and managed two local fast-food restaurants.

"I went from serving burgers, fries and shakes to movies, popcorn and soda," he said. "Customer service is still customer service. We're serving the same people. It's always been about making sure they enjoy the experience. You can go almost anywhere to watch movies and get food. You can watch movies at home. We have to make sure we're giving them something that they can't get at home.

"I'm just happy that I can give people a little two-and-a-half-hour vacation every once in a while. It's been a pretty rough 18-month stretch."

NCG Cinema, located in the Hudson Valley Mall at 1300 Ulster Ave. in Kingston, can be reached at (845) 481-7474 or www.ncgmovies.com.



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UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

Wednesday January 19 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

**Networking Mixer
 @ MAC Fitness**

Kingston Plaza 338 Plaza Road | Kingston, NY
 There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.
 Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Bank of Greene County

Wednesday January 26 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

**Chamber Breakfast Meeting
 U.S. Congressman Antonio Delgado**

The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus
 503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY
 \$25 Members-Advanced Pay • \$30 Members-At The Door
 \$35 Non-Members

Sponsor: Ulster Savings Bank

Thursday February 3 | 9:00 - 10:30 am

Business Card Exchange

Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Kingston
 1835 Ulster Avenue | Lake Katrine NY
 Space is limited. Reservations are required

Sponsor: Hudson Valley Credit Union

Wednesday February 9 | 5:00 - 8:00 pm

**Inaugural Ulster County Black Business
 Achievement Awards and Mixer**

Ulster Savings Bank
 Corporate Headquarters Main Conference Rooms
 180 Schwenk Drive | Kingston NY

There is no charge for admission but space will be limited.
 Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Ulster Savings Bank

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 The official publication of the
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 is a special advertising supplement to the **Daily Freeman**
 115 Green Street, Kingston, NY 12401 – A Media News Group publication

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Lace Up, Have Fun!

Rondout Ice Rink at Ole Savannah Open To The Public This Winter



Dave Amato

It was a magical moment for Dave Amato. In fact, the guests who attended the Chamber's Ribbon Cutting festivities and Grand Opening for the Ole Savannah/Rondout Ice Rink on Dec. 2 remarked that it felt like a heart-warming scene from a Hallmark movie.

Folks were skating. Music was playing. Lights were twinkling. Faces were glowing. The cliched scene made Amato beam and Kingston proud of its newest form of winter entertainment outside Ole Savannah Southern Table and Bar at 100 Rondout Landing.

"Honestly, it all came together magically," Amato said of the ice rink's grand opening and tree-lighting ceremony. "It took a lot of planning to put it together. That night, I was blown away. It was one of those events where everything kind of fell into place."

"The response to it has been unbelievable. Everybody's talking about what a wonderful thing it is. They can't wait to take their kids here. It's been overwhelming."

The idea for the ice-skating rink had been brewing in Amato's mind for some time.

He said he got down to serious business last year, researching companies that could make his vision a reality.

"I had to find something that wasn't permanent, so we could take it down in spring," said Amato, the owner of Ole Savannah. "I talked to a company and figured out the largest size that I could get, and they custom-made it for me. It took a week to put it together and another week to install the ice. It is a process to make it solid and smooth, and we then have to maintain it nightly."

Even during warm, springlike spells like we saw in December, Amato and his team have been able to keep the surface frozen.

"It will maintain the ice above 50 degrees," Amato said. "It really would take a long warm period for the ice to defrost. Since it's been up, I've had days in the mid-50s, and that didn't affect it at all. You're guaranteed to have ice through the winter."

The 30-by-60 Rondout Ice Rink is open to the public and can accommodate up to 20 people at a time. Skaters pay only \$20 per hour with skate rentals and \$15 per hour without skate rentals. Group rates also are available. Amato even offers free walkers for beginners who aren't brave enough to go it alone.

Hours for the rink are 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday. There is even an after-school special for just \$10 per hour, including skate rentals, Monday through Friday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The way Amato sees it, the ice rink is a great community magnet and excellent form of leisure during the long winter months. He also considers it as a plus for the Downtown business community.

"Basically, we know that there's a lot going on at the waterfront during the summer, but not so much in the wintertime. It's typically pretty quiet here at this time of year, so we tried to strategize a way to get people down here. We wanted to give them something fun to do. We look at it as something good overall for our community," he said.

"It really is great for all the businesses down here, not just us. People are going to come down to eat at Ole Savannah or the other restaurants and then go skating or vice versa."

Now that the holidays are over, Amato already is thinking ahead to Valentine's Day and possibly offering a romantic dinner package for couples that will include a skating ticket.

"It's great for a date night or getting the kids out or even for a girls' night out," he said.

He's also thinking of something fun and creative to do in the weeks ahead. Amato hinted that he might do some sort of local celebrity event or charity fundraiser.

As for Amato himself, you may be wondering if he's laced up

his skates yet.

"No, I haven't gotten on the ice so far—at least, not with skates on," he said with a laugh. "We'll see what happens."

Ole Savannah Southern Table and Bar, located at 100 Rondout Landing in Kingston, can be reached at (845)331-4283 or olesavannah.com.

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