

CORNING FALLS TO VESTAL

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HAWKS LOOK TO AVOID 1-3 START

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 84/59 78/58 68/52
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Rome mayor nixes bid.
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The LEADER

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LOCAL

Corning man charged with burglary

A Corning man is facing charges after allegedly stealing items from a garage, Bath state police said.

Brandon Bradford, 22, of Mountainbrow Terrace, Corning, was charged with third-degree burglary, a class D felony, and petit larceny.

On March 5, he allegedly unlawfully entered a garage on County Route 87 in Urbana and stole tools.

Bradford was arraigned in Bath Village Court and sent to Steuben County Jail on \$2,500 cash bail or \$5,000 property bond.

Deputies: Post resident faces burglary charge

A Painted Post resident was charged recently with third-degree burglary after Steuben County Sheriff's deputies responded to a burglary in progress in the Town of Corning.

Scott L. Woodhouse, 46, of West Water Street, allegedly entered a barn in Hicoek Road with the intent of committing a burglary, deputies said.

He was arraigned in Corning Town Court and sent to Steuben County Jail on \$5,000 cash bail or \$10,000 property bond.

Public Employees group backs O'Mara for Senate

The New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF) has endorsed state Sen. Tom O'Mara, R-Big Flats, for re-election in the 58th District.

O'Mara is being challenged by Democrat Leslie Danks Burke. PEF represents 54,000 professional, scientific and technical employees across the state, including nurses, parole officers, road and bridge workers, and employees at local correctional facilities, youth centers, psychiatric centers and other health care facilities.

Elmira district to celebrate Ernie Davis statue move

A ceremony welcoming the Ernie Davis statue to its new home in front of Ernie Davis Academy will be held at 3:45 p.m. Friday. The statue was recently relocated from the former Ernie Davis Middle School on Davis Street to the plaza in front of the academy on 951 Hoffman St.

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ECONOMIC GROWTH

Airport expansion gets state boost



Gov. Andrew Cuomo announces that Elmira-Corning Regional Airport will receive \$40 million for expansion. SHAWN VARGO/THE LEADER

Cuomo announces \$40 million award to Elmira-Corning Regional

By Jeffery Smith
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BIG FLATS — Ground is expected to be broken in early-to-mid-2017 on a \$58 million project to upgrade and expand the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport.

The airport, last renovated about 25 years ago, received \$40 million in state funding to undertake long-overdue enhancements through the first round of funding through the state's Upstate Airport Economic

"This significant, \$40 million state investment will create jobs, make the Southern Tier more competitive and deliver economic growth. Thank you to Cuomo and his administration, and all of our state and local leaders, for securing this major investment."

— State Sen. Tom O'Mara, R-Big Flats

Development and Revitalization competition.

"Sixteen applications came in, and there were two winners," said Gov. Andrew Cuomo to a large crowd Wednesday at an

event near the airport. "Obviously, you are one of the winners."

Cuomo said under the proposed plan, the cost was \$58 million to build an airport of tomorrow.

"It's ambitious," Cuomo said. "It has a real vision. Kudos to everyone who worked on the plan. Of the \$58 million, you asked for \$40 million from the state. The other \$18 million will come from other airport sources. I am pleased to tell you, because of the job you did and the product submitted, your plan won all \$40 million dollars. Congratulations, you deserved it."

SEE AIRPORT, A9

NSB SOLD

Arbor lays out plans for ex-school

By Jeffery Smith
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CORNING — Arbor Housing and Development officials hope to begin razing the vacant Northside Blodgett Middle School in early-to-mid-2017.

Residents voted 928-269 Tuesday to sell the near 100-year-old school to Arbor Housing.

"I would love to be able to get to a point where we can start 'demo-ing' the building in early- to mid-2017," said Jeffrey Eaton, president and chief executive officer at Arbor Housing. "That's the hope."

SEE PLANS, A9

ELMIRA POLICE:

Welfare check leads to meth lab

The Leader staff

Authorities asked to check the welfare of a resident and a pet at an Elmira home uncovered a suspected one-pot meth lab, Elmira police said.

Officers responded to a residence on the 100 block of East Chemung Place, where they met with a concerned family member.

Officers did not locate anyone during their investigation inside the residence but found materials and

SEE METH LAB, A9

Q&A: THE PIANO MAN

H'heads native Pawlak to solo with OSFL

By Stephen Borgna
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When the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes launches its 2016-2017 season this Sunday at the Clemens Center in Elmira, an ascending young pianist will play amongst its ranks. Award-winning pianist Benjamin Pawlak will join the orchestra as a guest soloist. A Horseheads native and senior at Ithaca College majoring



Horseheads native and pianist Benjamin Pawlak will perform with the Orchestra of the Southern Finger lakes at its opening season concert in Elmira Sunday. PHOTO PROVIDED TO THE LEADER

in piano performance, Pawlak has dedicated countless time and energy to the piano over the

past decade. The Leader caught up with Pawlak Wednesday to talk about his musical career and his

upcoming performance in Elmira.

How did you get involved with the orchestra?

When I was little, my mom played with them. I grew up knowing about the orchestra, and I joined the organization when I was 10 as a string player in the junior string ensemble. I played in a youth orchestra until I graduated high

SEE PAWLAK, A9

If you go

What | Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes concert: "Star Wars Overture", Franz Liszt's "Piano Concerto #1" and Gustav Hoist's "The Planets" When | 4 p.m. Sunday Where | Clemens Center, Elmira Tickets and information | www.osfl.org or 936-2873 Transportation | Live in Corning and need a ride to the concert? The OSFL is running a concert bus from Wegmans to the Clemens Center and back. The bus begins loading at 2:45 p.m. A bus pass is \$5. Space is limited, so call the OSFL by Friday.

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AIRPORT

From Page A1

Chemung County Executive Tom Santulli said the governor and his staff have opened a ton of doors, but success doesn't come just with money.

"It just doesn't. It takes hard work," Santulli said. "The only way it works for us is to create the environment and bring the people here. The money just opened the door. We still have a lot to do."

State Transportation Commissioner Matt Driscoll said upgrades at the

Elmira-Corning Regional Airport, which handles 50 percent of all air traffic in the area, will be the front door to a new world for the airport.

The airport, built in 1960, has seen a 25 percent increase in passengers over the past five years.

"Which is significant," Driscoll said. "It's outdated, passengers are sometimes forced to walk on the tarmac, often in the winter to board their aircraft."

Transformations to the hub will increase capacity and improve the passenger experience with 25 percent

increased space, Driscoll said. Additional concourses and two new jet bridges will be also added.

"No more walking outside on the tarmac to your flights," Driscoll said.

Other upgrades, when completed, will include plenty of new parking spaces, airport cafes and retail both prior and after TSA stop points, additional meeting spaces, an open-plan interior, energy-efficient lighting, upgraded security cameras and programmable glass walls.

"This significant, \$40 million state investment will create jobs, make

the Southern Tier more competitive, and deliver economic growth," said State Sen. Tom O'Mara, R-Big Flats. "Thank you to Cuomo and his administration, and all of our state and local leaders, for securing this major investment."

Assemblyman Phil Palmesano, R-Corning, agreed.

"The investments are not only important to improve public safety but they're critically important to foster prime sector investments, economic development and job creation," Palmesano said. "So this is a great day."

PAWLAK

From Page A1

school. And throughout that time I had spent many nights at the professional orchestra rehearsals just going with my mom. I got to know the musicians, and after I started college they invited me back to play as a member of the orchestra several times. And as a result of that, I was asked to be a soloist.

How did you begin playing piano?

I started taking piano lessons when I was six, as a part of school. I loved music, but I didn't really consider piano to be something that I wanted to do.

I figured I would play viola and go to college as a viola student, and so I started taking piano lessons again after quitting when I was about 11. I think I was about 14 when I started up again, and it was just to be proficient on the instrument because when you go to college for music, they want you to be able play piano regardless of whatever else you're majoring in. And I gradually switched places. I started loving piano a lot. And I played viola until the

end of high school, but when I became a senior in high school I started auditioning everywhere as a piano student.

What would you say you are most proficient in, the piano or viola?

Oh piano by far. I haven't taken a viola lesson since the end of high school. Definitely piano.

At this point how long have you been playing piano?

I'd say about maybe 13 years.

How much time and effort do you dedicate to practice each day?

My default answer is I practice until I'm done (laughs). In school I will probably practice anywhere between four and five hours, and the rest of the day is filled with rehearsals and lessons and stuff. My playing time for every day is probably around eight hours.

What is the hardest piece of music you've had to master?

Actually right now, I'm working on a piece I would say is the most challenging. It's caused more frustration than anything I've

ever had to play. It's "Gaspard de lanuit" by Maurice Ravel.

At what point in your musical career were you able to start tackling complicated pieces?

I would say about halfway through high school. Junior year I started doing competitions, and started really getting into the repertoire that's for the piano. And that was the year I started building a good solid foundation of pieces of music.

At what point did you really start to grasp reading music? That's a challenge for a lot of people who take up an instrument.

I've been able to read music as long as I can remember, and I think that's a testament to my mom being a musician. I definitely can read music better than I know English. (laughs) It's second nature to me at this point just because I've done it for so long.

So when you're on stage in front of an audience and your hands are running across the scales at a thousand miles an hour, how do you keep it together? How do you make sure you don't miss a note?

Oh, they are missed, don't worry. (laughs) Playing any instrument, any performing art is probably 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical. It's all in how you mentally prepare yourself.

You know those movies before some sporting event and your main character is preparing for what's going to happen? That's kind of backstage with musicians. Getting ready is kind of the same thing; you're preparing for battle. If you've ever played a sport and you've been nervous for a game, that's exactly how we feel.

So what's your pregame ritual?

I will pace back and forth and breathe. And that is always a subconscious thing, I never consciously start doing that. I just find that I am doing that beforehand.

Tell us about the show this Sunday?

So this Sunday, I am performing the "Piano Concerto No. 1". I have been playing this piece for about two years, and this is my first performance with it. It's definitely a long time in the making, as far as this piece in particular is concerned.

"The results of the vote on Northside Blodgett is a sign the people in this community understand the need for more housing development in line with our housing strategy. I was pleasantly surprised by the vote to demolish Northside Blodgett by such a great number."

— Mayor Rich Negri

PLANS

From Page A1

Eaton said the Arbor Housing Board will make a final decision to close on the property in the next 30 days.

"Our clock is ticking," Eaton said. "We've got our numbers pretty much together. The board will meet and kind of lay out the cost, what those numbers are and make a decision to go to a closing."

Eaton said once a decision is made to go to a closing, the timeline will be determined by how fast the funding can be obtained.

Phase one of the project includes the acquisition of the property, the demolition and getting the site shovel-ready for development.

The second phase would involve approvals for the subdivisions, selling lots and building houses.

"Right now we're focused on phase one," Eaton said. "Obviously, phase two will have to be successful because the money generated off selling the lots pays for the demolition and acquisition of the property."

Mayor Rich Negri said the city supports the housing project.

"The results of the vote on Northside Blodgett is a sign the people in this community understand the need for more housing development in line with our housing strategy," Negri said. "I was pleasantly surprised by the vote to demolish Northside Blodgett by such a great number."

Arbor Housing currently believe a lot with a home would cost between \$150,000 to \$175,000, Eaton said.

Arbor Housing would like to build homes with a cottage feel that would fit with the Northside neighborhood.

"(Arbor Housing) has not decided if it will just sell the (28) lots or hire a contractor to do spec houses at the site," Eaton said.

The Corning-Painted Post school board approved the property sale Wednesday night.

Superintendent Mike Ginalski said the district will close the sale with Arbor Housing, and the sale is expected to be approved by state officials in early 2017.

METH LAB

From Page A1

a one-pot vessel used to manufacture methamphetamine, police said.

An Elmira police officer with clandestine lab training was called in to assist. The Elmira Fire

Department and state police Contaminated Crime Scene Emergency Response Team also responded.

No charges have been filed, and the investigation continues.

Anyone with information is asked to call the police department at 737-5626 or the tip line at 271-HALT.

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