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SERVING THE TRI-COUNTY AREA INCLUDING SENECA LAKE AND KEUKA LAKE

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FOOTBALL SCRIMMAGE: Dundee and Penn Yan play. P9

Expensive homes selling more than last year

BY DAVID AUSTEN

TRI-COUNTY AREA—While many areas in the country are facing decreasing home sales and prices, Yates and Schuyler Counties have experienced an increase in more expensive homes selling so far this year.

For both counties, the increases were the two highest in the state. According to the New York State Association of Realtors, the median home price (comparing Jan. 1 to June 30,

of 2010 versus 2009) in Yates County increased 21.1 percent. For Yates, the 2010 median price was \$108,950, and in 2009 it was \$90,000.

There was still an increase, despite Yates County home sales staying basically even with last year (in 2010, 112 homes were sold and last year 111 were sold).

Of those 112 homes in Yates, 18 were sold at \$300,000 or higher. During the first half of last year, only seven homes

sold above this price. Ron Miller, Finger Lakes Realty representative and NYSAR member, said a small number of more expensive homes can easily influence the median price when sold, like what happened in Yates.

Also affecting the price were more homes selling between \$101,000 and \$125,000. The number of sales went up to 22 this year, from only eight last



In Yates and Schuyler Counties, more homes over \$300,000 were sold in the first half of this year compared to last year.

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More trees are needed in Dundee

BY PEG THOMPSON

DUNDEE—The streets in the village are lined with trees and although they may look healthy, many are in decline. Village Streets Superintendent Andy Howell spoke to the village board about the trees, stating, "At 2010, trees are falling fast." Howell said Jim Bagley of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has surveyed trees in the village and made recommendations.

Trustee Judy Duquette said she is concerned that if too many trees are removed it would make the village look bad. Village clerk Christine Sutherland said that for every tree that is removed, the village sends a letter to the homeowner and offers them a tree to plant in their yard. Planting the replacement tree within the homeowner's yard rather than between the sidewalk and street is important. The custom years ago

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Trees like this one in Dundee are very old and still provide some shade, but are in declining health and the dead branches are a hazard.



The state of New York continues to give area school officials less than clear information about the school funds that will be provided from the state. Penn Yan Academy is shown above.

Schools still unsure about state funds

PENN YAN—Uncertainty about state aid remains just days before the school year begins. That fact was outlined by Penn Yan Central School District Assistant Superintendent for Busi-

ness Doug Tomandl during the Aug. 25 meeting of the district board of education.

Tomandl said the original \$1.9 million gap in state aid seems to have been reduced to \$716,902.

Funds of \$541,394 will be available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), but the district still

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Residents have questions for museum officials

BY PEG THOMPSON

DUNDEE—When Keuka Lake State Park was selected as the site of the Finger Lakes Cultural and Natural History Museum in April, board chairman John Adamski said the work would really begin with securing funding for the project.



Adamski

Funding was just one of many questions fielded by museum organizers during an Aug. 26 meeting at Fulkerson Winery. Several individuals who live in the area near the park attended the meeting, asking questions following the presentation of a slide program that outlined some features planned for the museum.

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Fighting the hydrofracking fight in Yates

BY DAVID AUSTEN

FINGER LAKES—There are opponents to the Marcellus Shale drilling process all over the state, including several area residents who have taken up the fight against hydrofracking.

Some of the most active people speaking and acting out against hydrofracking are members of groups, like the Committee to Preserve the Finger Lakes. Several of its members find different ways to join the fight against hydrofracking.

Some are active like Himrod resident Jack Ossont, who was one of several people protesting Marcellus Shale drilling while Andrew Cuomo visited Penn Yan, Aug. 19. Peter Gamba, Branchport resident, who was not able to attend, also encourage people take a sign and participate.

Other opponents, like Dundee resident Steve Coffman, write papers on the subject. All three also want to educate people on hydrofracking, and take part in forums and open meetings.

Ossont said for himself, his interest in hydrofracking started when the Millennium Pipeline came to Penn Yan. He said after at-

tending a meeting about it, he felt afterward that it may not be the best idea. Ossont has also been involved with Van Etten residents protesting a gas company wanting to inject brine water from drilling into Mallula Well last year. He called it a precursor to the public backlash to Chesapeake's proposed injection well in Pulteney.

Gamba said the committee formed to look at both sides of the hydrofracking argument. He explained that as the group researched more, the members became more passionate against the drilling. As well as the committee, he is also part of the county's task force looking into drilling.

He said as part of the task force he has helped create a road use agreement that was given to municipalities within the county.

Coffman said he has written a number of position papers on the drilling. He said his involvement and interest came very gradually as he started to learn about the topic.

He explained that area people turned out with signs at Cuomo's visit to pass on a message. Coffman said he is not against Cuomo, but that his stance on hydrofracking is "out



Jack Ossont was one area resident who protested Marcellus Shale drilling at Andrew Cuomo's August visit to Penn Yan. He is also one of the more vocal opponents to drilling in the area.

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