

NEWSLINE

A BUSINESS PUBLICATION OF THE **Fulton**  **Montgomery**
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



September 2021

Fonda Fair Returns

By **Joanne E. McFadden**

The Fonda Fair was a COVID-19 casualty in 2020. In fact, last year was the only time the fair had been cancelled since it began in 1841. But this year, the fair is back with all the rides, exhibits, contests, animals, food, and entertainment that fairgoers enjoy each summer. The Montgomery County Agricultural Society will put on its 180th fair from September 1 through 6 at the Fonda Fairgrounds at 21 Bridge St. S. in Fonda.

The board of directors of the society plans the fair a year advance, so the 2020 event was ready to go in January last year. For the fair this year, the board will be rolling out the plans that had been put on hold last summer.

One change is the scheduling of the grandstand events in the evenings. For example, the monster truck show that was typically on Saturdays is now taking place on Thursdays. A complete schedule of activities is posted at www.fondafair.com.

Tractor pulls, which draw big crowds at the fair, will take place on Wednesday, opening day. In these events, tractors are hooked up to a sled that gains weight as the tractor pulls it. The contestant who pulls his or her tractor the furthest wins. Four-wheel drive truck pulls take place on Friday, September 3.

New this year is that exhibi-



Photos courtesy FondaFair.com
Familiar sights will be returning to the Fonda Fair this September.

tors of sheep, goats, beef, and swine from counties outside of Fulton and Montgomery will be allowed to participate in the fair. “We started with horses, and a few years ago, we opened up the dairy cows, and this year, livestock,” said Richard Kennedy, president of the board of directors.

Each day judges evaluate a different type of livestock. Kennedy said that watching the swine judging is interesting. Unlike cows, sheep, and goats, pigs do not wear halters. Instead, those showing pigs use a sorting stick to direct the pig’s movements. “It’s completely different than the way you do it with sheep or goats,” Kennedy said.

Musicians will be performing each day entertainment center. This year’s bands are Dust ‘til Dawn, Skeeter Creek Band, MaddHaus, and Whiskey Creek. The finals of the popular karaoke contest take place on Monday evening. “Karaoke is one our more popular events,” Kennedy said.

The fair’s one event that did take place last year during the height of the pandemic was the Convoy for a Cause. On September 5, participants driving all kinds of different trucks will gather at BBL Trucking and Excavation in Fort Plain between 9 and 10 a.m. to register, and at 10:30, the convoy of

See Fair, on page 3

Gloversville Sewing Center Gears up for National Sewing Month

By **Joanne E. McFadden**

Gloversville Sewing Center (GSC) started out in 1981 selling and servicing sewing machines, an “iron shop”

as owner Diana Marshall puts it. The business operated out of a storefront in downtown Gloversville that was less than 1,000 square feet. Not long

thereafter, Marshall, who owns the store with her husband, John, knew they could not stay in business unless they moved to a larger location. Diana spotted the property on the corner of Harrison and S. Main Streets in Gloversville, and the couple purchased it in 1984, opening a new store in January the following year.

They added onto the building, doubling the main floor, and then in 1990, they built another addition to bring the store to its current size—enough to house 5,500 bolts of

fabric and a large classroom space – making it the largest sewing center in a four-hour radius and one of the largest beyond that circle. Their regular clientele comes from as far north as the Canadian border, west toward Syracuse, east to Springfield, Mass., and south to northern New Jersey.

Beyond that, GSC has become a destination spot for those who sew and quilt. Customers from all over the country, including the west coast, make semiannual or annual “pilgrimages” to shop at

the store. “A lot of people will say to us, ‘This is the only store I can come to to find the piece of fabric I need to complete my project,’” Marshall said.

The store carries an eclectic mix of fabrics. “We like it all, so we have it all,” she said. This includes novelty, vintage 1930s-style, reproduction, traditional, modern, and newer trending fabrics. “The thing is, because we grew the business slowly, we didn’t get into the problem of overbuying or not

See Sewing, on page 3

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We are the leading voice in business, and tourism development, providing our members with resources to enhance their organizations and our local communities

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Five Guys holds ribbon cutting in Amsterdam



Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Five Guys on Friday, August 6th, 2021, at 10:00 am. Five Guys opened their doors for guests on Monday, December 28th, 2020.

Savita and Tejraj Hada (RSVT Holding, LLC) opened their first Five Guys location in July 2005 in Niskayuna, NY. That was the first Five Guys store in NY state. They own Five Guys restaurants in Capital and Central New York region. This is their 25th location. They are very excited to be part of Greater Amsterdam community. Store has created 35 new part-time and full-time jobs.

RSVT Holding, LLC has been awarded the Best Franchisee of the year award by Five Guys Corporate in 2015, and Best Customer Service in 2017.

Bill Rabbitt is the Director of Operations; Craig Wood is the District Manager and Reanna Morey is the store general manager.

Five Guys has been a Washington, DC area favorite since 1986 when Jerry and Janie Murrell offered sage advice to the four young Murrell brothers: "Start a business or go to college." The business route won and the Murrell family opened a carry-out burger joint in Arlington Virginia.

Under the guidance of Jerry and Janie the Murrell family served only hand-formed burgers cooked to perfection on a grill along with fresh-cut fries cooked in pure peanut oil.

Now, 30 years after Five Guys first opened, there are almost 1,700 locations worldwide and another 1,500 units in development. Five Guys continues to receive generous media attention and has grown a cult-like following around the world.

Five Guys Facts:

- We only use fresh ground beef.
- We only use peanut oil.
- There are no freezers in Five Guys locations, just coolers.



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Fair, continued from page 1

over 300 vehicles will make its way through Fort Plain, Canajoharie, and Fonda, ending at the fairgrounds.

“Each year, it grows in popularity and the number of trucks,” Kennedy said. When organizers started the fundraiser seven years ago, it was limited to commercial vehicles, but now it is open to pickup trucks, emergency vehicles, and Department of Public Works vehicles as well. The majority of entrants in the convoy will be tractor trailers.

Entrants pay a registration fee and are requested to bring a new, unwrapped toy. Proceeds from the event go to the WGY Christmas Wish Campaign, which provides holiday gifts for children in the Capital Region, including Fulton and Montgomery Counties, and to WBUG’s Stuff the Bus campaign, which does the same for children in the greater Utica

area and Herkimer County.

In its first year, the event raised, \$5,000; last year, it raised around \$10,000. “Every year we hope to exceed that,” Kennedy said.

A fair wouldn’t be a fair without food, and the Fonda Fair will not disappoint with over 50 food vendors offering fair fare, including blooming onions, BBQ, pizza, and steak sandwiches, just to name a few.

The Saturday before the fair, organizers crown Miss Fonda Fair and her court. Roughly 100 girls participate in the pageant’s four divisions to have a chance to represent the Fonda Fair all year.

Volunteers are an important part of the fair. Each day, parking volunteers from different groups work facilitating entry to the fair. Other volunteers, including those from 4-H groups and Future Farmers of America, work cleaning the grounds,



Looking back on scenes from previous Fonda Fairs as it is poised to return in September.

helping the superintendents prepare for events, and cleaning and painting buildings.

“That the community pulls together every year to make this fair happen for 180 years is really outstanding,” Kennedy said.

He recalls in 2011 after the flooding when the fair’s board of directors was considering cancelling the fair. Remnants of Tropical Storm Lee deluged the area on the Sunday, and the fair had been scheduled to open



Photos courtesy FondaFair.com

on Tuesday. “There was between four and six feet of water throughout the fairgrounds,” Kennedy said. People came from all over the area to help with cleanup so that the fair could happen. When the fair was able to open its gates on Thursday, Kennedy was at the gate. He saw a young boy with his parents, and the boy’s eyes lit up when he glimpsed the rides inside. “He said to his mother, ‘Mom, I want to ride every ride,’” Kennedy said,

reminding him that the hard work had been well worth it.

“My favorite part of the fair is watching the enjoyment of the kids who come to participate in showing their animals and going on the rides,” Kennedy said. “It’s a tremendous amount of work for the board of directors and all the volunteers and staff who put the fair on, but once you see the participation of the youth in the area, it makes it all worthwhile.”

Sewing, continued from page 1

being able to pay our bills,” Marshall explained as one reason that GSC is able to keep such a large inventory and variety of fabrics.

To celebrate National Sewing Month, GSC will be having an eight- to ten-day garage sale mid-month. There will be fabrics, sample quilts and sewing machines on sale. Early next year around the time of the Superbowl, the store will host its “Big Game Sale,” a 10-day event for sewing machines only. Last year during the pandemic, the event was extremely scaled down. “People missed that,” she said.

In addition to its wide variety of fabrics, the store flourishes because of its highly knowledgeable technicians who service all types of sewing machines. Marshall said that she thinks the employees’ extensive knowledge of sewing machines themselves, whether they are repairing or selling them, draws customers to the store. She herself, worked as an educator for eight years for one of the sewing machine companies whose machines they sell. “Customer service and repair is really what grew this business to what it is,” she said.

This high level of expertise is due to the fact that the Marshalls started by working on old sewing machines in the 1970s when they first entered the industry. Thus, they have the knowledge of the old, mechanical sewing machines, the ones that were a mainstay before electronic machines made their entry into the market. The electronic machines have board and a processor in them, Marshall explained. “It’s a whole other world with sewing machines now,” she said.

With the knowledge of the old and the brand new and everything in between, John is able to repair just about any sewing machine. “We could fix anything from 1865 on,” Marshall said. “We have the history of the old

machines and the new machines. Customers come here because we have that institutional knowledge. That knowledge is becoming lost.”

Marshall said that some customers have brought in machines because someone told them that John Marshall is the only one who could fix it.

The store is a dealer for Bernina and Janome sewing machines and has been the number one dealer in its district, which extends from northern Virginia to Maine, for six years in a row.

Navigating COVID

GSC did a booming business during the first year of the pandemic. “The phone rang off the wall,” Marshall said. Even though it was closed to customers from March through June, 17 employees, who worked from home, were busier than ever, fulfilling online orders and sewing masks and surgical gowns for the hospital. Marshall supplied the kit with fabric, and they sewed at home. Another pandemic activity was having the store deep cleaned before reopening. Currently, with the spread of the delta variant, the store is requesting that customers wear masks inside. While it is not mandatory, it is appreciated.

The Marshalls did close their second location in Saratoga Springs, which they had operated for eight years, during the pandemic. “COVID made it difficult to keep that store open,” Marshall said. “They kept getting closed for reports of COVID exposure.” With that store doing much less business than the Gloversville location, the Marshalls decided to close the Saratoga store.

However, the Gloversville location continues to do a great business. Many customers ask if the couple is going to retire, but they have no plans to. “We’re here and going strong – we’re not going anywhere,” Marshall said.

For more info, visit www.gloversvillesewingcenter.com.

Vishnu Music & Varieties continues in new location

Nicole DeLorenzo, owner of Vishnu Music & Varieties LLC has recently moved the longtime family business from Gloversville to 18 West Main Street in Johnstown, NY. The store, originally Vishnu Varieties, started as a variety store in 1987 by the current owner’s father, Vincent Ottalagano. He repaired instruments, gave guitar lessons, sold guitars and a variety of other items. After a short time, he relocated to another location in Johnstown where he renamed the store Vishnu Music. His father, Gregory Ottalagano helped him run that location.

After a few years, Vishnu outgrew that location and moved to its Gloversville location where it remained for many years. Vince’s future son-in-law and Nicole’s future husband, Ronald DeLorenzo worked there in the beginning years of that location. Later, Nicole worked for him for just over 12 years. She learned a tremendous amount from her apprenticeship, including instrument set-ups and repairs. She took a break for a few years to be a preschool teacher and then returned to Vishnu when Vince became sick with thymus cancer. When Vince passed away Nicole took the reins as owner/operator of Vishnu.

This past year, when the pandemic hit, the business began to struggle, and a decision needed to be made. Shake things up or close the doors? Nicole decided to push forward and revamp the business to fit into this new “COVID-19 era” by selling online and offering curbside pickup and local delivery, but the business continued to struggle. This is when her son-in-law, Brian DeLorenzo joined the family business, and they began their search for the perfect location. They finally found a location they loved, that was big enough to accommodate their large inventory. “When we walked in and saw the space, we knew it was a perfect fit for us”, said Nicole. They changed the name to Vishnu Music & Varieties LLC and have truly come full circle with both location and generations of family growing the business.

See Vishnu, on page 7

Local Hospitals Unite to Encourage Community Vaccination

The two healthcare entities; Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home and St. Mary's Healthcare are joining forces asking community members to get vaccinated. For the health and safety of the region the two healthcare organizations serve, Nathan Littauer and St. Mary's Healthcare are working closely to educate people in the Fulton and Montgomery County areas. "The Delta variant is here," says Nathan Littauer Hospital President and CEO Sean Fadale. "Locally, we are urging those to take advantage of the protection offered by the vaccines. The vaccines are safe and effective." "It is important we educate our communities that these vaccines are incredibly good at what they do," agreed St. Mary's Healthcare President and CEO Scott Bruce. "They are a vital component in making COVID a distant memory."

Positive cases and hospitalizations continue to increase nationwide from the "super-transmissible" Delta variant. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the Delta variant is "accounting for as much as 93 percent of all infections," and "spreads easily like chickenpox."

"The past 18 months have been a remarkable time," says William Mayer, MD, Chief Medical Officer of St. Mary's Healthcare. "The outpour-

ing of support we received during the start of the pandemic was truly humbling. Today, people still ask us: 'What can we do to help hospitals as we battle COVID?' The answer is simple. Vaccination is our way out, and we can end this together if we trust in science and protect ourselves and others by getting vaccinated."

Vaccination is available to everyone in the United States ages 12 years and over. In addition to vaccines being widely available through local county Public Health Departments, New York State has many vaccination sites. Local pharmacies in New York State even offer vaccination appointments. Those who are interested in vaccination have many resources available to them, and have the support of their local hospital and health care centers.

"There is no greater priority right now than to ensure the safety of each other, and for those who rely on us for safe care, often when they are most vulnerable. By getting vaccinated against Covid-19 we better protect those who are unable to get vaccinated which includes our children under 12. It's our duty to inform our community that we have the tool to defeat this virus, and it is readily available to them," adds William Mayer, MD.

Nathan Littauer and St. Mary's are

working together to share facts, treatments, and trends as the two healthcare organizations battle this new foe. The Delta variant potentially serves as a severe threat to unvaccinated individuals – prompting the two to come together again to ensure as many of their organization's patients and employees are vaccinated.

Addressing the community, "We have busy days in our future," Fadale adds. "We know you are relying on us to guide the community through the potential surge ahead. We are up to the task. We have the equipment, the sheer determination, and the talented staff to make it through whatever this pandemic throws at us. But now, we are asking you to help us, and to do your part – please get vaccinated."

Nathan Littauer and St. Mary's Healthcare are both committed to patient and employee safety. As such, both organizations believe that all healthcare workers (employees, students, credentialed staff and volunteers), should be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Therefore, both agree to implement required vaccination policies effective October 1, 2021, and are taking steps to achieve that goal in their respective institutions.

The two healthcare organizations will continue to promote vaccine in-

formation, educational materials, and resources on their website and social media.

For those looking to obtain more information about making an informed decision to be vaccinated, community members are encouraged to utilize resources found on Nathan Littauer Hospital and Saint Mary's websites and social media:

Website: www.nlh.org/

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/NathanLittauerHospital

Website: www.smha.org

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/smha.org

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Business Education Partnership News

HFM Pathways in Technology Early College High School (HFM PTECH)

AT RIGHT and BELOW: Last month, HFM PTECH incoming freshmen and counselors participated in this year's Summer Bridge at FMCC. The students focused on teamwork and culture building to prepare them for the new school year. The students were also able to test out their newfound professional skills at the HFM PTECH Business Partner Meet and Greet. Students and business professionals gathered together for the first time since the pandemic. The event consisted of over 20 business professionals giving our incoming freshmen a brief elevator pitch explaining who they are and then everyone participated in an icebreaker scavenger hunt. Thank you to all of our business partners that attended.



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HFM Career and Technical Education (CTE)

BELOW: As they sharpen their own professional skills, students in the two-year Digital Multimedia and Communications program at the HFM Career and Technical Center have the opportunity to highlight what students are learning in other career programs.

The below photos were taken by Digital Multimedia students during the 2020-21 school year.

The HFM Career and Technical Center offers 16 career and technical programs for high school juniors and seniors in the local area.

To learn more visit: www.hfmbooces.org/cte/



Chamber Member Anniversaries

The following businesses realize the value of their Chamber investment and have renewed their membership in the month of December of this year. Please note these member businesses and the year they joined! Thank you to all our renewing Chamber members:

10 to 19 Years continued

- Ferguson & Foss, P.C.....2005
- The Shults Agency - Johnstown.....2006
- Sacandaga Protection Committee2009
- Hotel Broadalbin.....2009
- Gehring Tricot Corporation;
DBA Helmont Mills.....2010
- Jim's Odd Jobs and Jim's Bait Shop.....2011

20 to 29 Years

- Mayfield Central School District.....1992
- Adirondack Country Store.....1993
- Sacandaga Veterinary Clinic.....1994
- Town of Northampton.....1994
- Epimed International, Inc.....1994
- Sarah Jane Sanford Adult Home.....1996
- Alpin Haus.....1997
- Brown's Ford of Amsterdam and
Collision and Coachworks.....1999
- State Farm Insurance Beatty Agency.....1999

Less than 5 Years

- Upstate Coffee Company.....2018
- Angelica's Angels.....2019
- Liberty Tax Services.....2019
- New York Lunch.....2019
- Thompson's Marina.....2020
- What Sharon Likes.....2020
- Glove City Graphics LLC.....2020
- Great Point Publishing.....2020

5 to 9 Years

- A to Z Indoor Comfort Systems.....2014
- Taco Bell.....2014
- DHL Supply Chain.....2015
- Loopie's Irish Pub.....2016

10 to 19 Years

- Catholic Charities of
Fulton and Montgomery Counties.....2002
- Soroptimist International of
Fulton & Montgomery Counties.....2004
- The Floor Coverings of the Galleria.....2004
- Loyal Order of Moose Lodge 1185.....2004

30 to 39 Years

- Rooney Sign Company.....1985
- Albanese & Albanese, Attorneys.....1988
- HFM BOCES-Hamilton-Fulton-
Montgomery Board of Cooperative
Educational Services.....1990

Tourism News



Anne Boles
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Eisenadler Brauhaus opens first brewery in county

Family-Run Brewery Will Focus On Bavarian Style Beers, Bringing Tourism To Area

FONDA – Eisenadler Brauhaus officially cut the ribbon on the first brewery located in Montgomery County, on Wednesday. Eisenadler Brauhaus, which is located on Route 5, in the Village of Nelliston, will specialize in Bavarian-style beers. The brewery will open to the public on Friday, Aug. 13, with a Grand Opening in the works

for the fall.

“This is a great announcement for Montgomery County,” County Executive Matthew L. Ossenfort said. “Microbreweries have become key economic drivers and provide employment opportunities, in addition to being attractions and tourist destinations. We’ve seen across the state that local craft breweries tend to provide a positive ripple effect to the local economy and it’s great to see that beginning here at home.”

Eisenadler Brauhaus, located at 88 E. Main Street, in Nelliston, will be Montgomery County’s first brewery to produce handcrafted microbrews, with a specialization in Bavarian-style beers. The inspiration for the brewery’s name and theme come from co-owner Jodie Rodriguez, who lived in Germany for a few years, while she was growing up.

“We’d like Eisenadler Brauhaus to become a tourist destination,” said Jodie Rodriguez. “One of our goals is to bring tourism to the area, while also providing a new attraction for our local residents. It’s been great working with the county and the Business Development Center. We first met with Director Ken Rose and his team, three years ago, with an idea and a dream to create this brewery, and with Eisenadler Brauhaus opening, it’s now become a reality.”

Jodie and her daughter, co-owner Jessica Rodriguez,



Eisenadler Brauhaus cut their ribbon at its microbrewery in Nelliston, on Wednesday, Aug. 11. Co-owner Jodie Rodriguez cuts the ribbon. From L-R: Economic Development Specialist Vincenzo Nicosia, Kaylee May, representative from State Senator Michelle Hinchey’s office, Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce Tourism Director Anne Boles, Co-owner Jodie Rodriguez, Nelliston Mayor Debbie Gros and Montgomery County Business Development Director Ken Rose.

first met with county officials in 2018, with the goal of opening a microbrewery. The Business Development Center assisted in the submission of a Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), in 2018, which was awarded by New York State Empire State Development.

“Jodie, Jessica and the rest of the Rodriguez family have done a great job retrofitting their building, which was home to a previous business, to suit an exciting new venture,” said Montgomery County Business Development Center CEO Ken Rose said. “This is a good project that will produce jobs, expand the tax base, and has the real potential to draw people to the area.”

The County Legislature

and Industrial Development Agency (IDA) approved a loan to Eisenadler Brauhaus, through the Revolving Loan Fund, to purchase equipment, including the fermentation tanks.

Enjoy the Fall Harvest experience at one of our local apple orchards:

Fulton County:

Lake View Orchards

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Mayfield 518-661-5017

Rogers Family Orchards

260 County Highway 131,
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Montgomery County

Pavlus Orchards

272 Hickory Hill Road
Fort Plain 518-993-2643

Bellinger’s Apple

Orchard, Fultonville
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Sand Flats Orchard, Fonda

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(2513 State Highway 30, Mayfield)

Stump City Brewery
(521 West Fulton St. Ext, Gloversville)



Rogers’ Cideryard (260 County Highway 131, Johnstown)

Trail is expanding soon! Stay tuned!

Vishu, continued from page 7

The new business has been modernized with an industrial feel and additional inventory, while still trying to keep the original feel of Vince's Vishnu. They will continue to offer guitar lessons, string changes, setups, minor instrument repairs, friendly conversations, and excellent customer service. They will continue to offer free layaway, as well. "We want to help people make their dreams a reality," says Nicole. New things to look forward to are open mic's, free wi-fi, and a variety of new items. "We just got in some new Aria guitars that play and sound beautifully and are listed at a reasonable price." New products are arriving daily. "We have something for everyone." They pride themselves on their excellent customer service and friendly atmosphere. They want people to leave feeling good, feeling happy, and feeling hopeful. They have also brought back a customer favorite, the musician's board. Players looking for other band mates can post their fliers on the board and hope to fill their empty slots. Bring in your show flyers and they will be hung in the store. They want to encourage and promote our local bands and the places hiring them.

The new store is loaded with merchandise, laid out so you can easily see and find anything you might need. If they don't have it, they can try to order it for you. They offer a variety of instruments including, acoustic guitars, electric guitars, basses, mandolins, ukuleles, drums, keyboards, microphones, recorders, harmonicas, bongos, school band instruments and more. They also have amps, straps, picks, strings, reeds, replacement parts and a variety of other offerings including, coffee mugs, blankets, stickers, pins, jewelry, lotions, candles, incense, T shirts, hats and tons of other cool stuff.

Regular hours will be Tuesday through Friday, 11 am to 5:30 pm, Saturday from 12 pm to 5pm and closed Sunday and Monday.

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www.fcfinancialcu.org

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Graduation from a regionally accredited or NYS registered college or university with an Associate's degree in environmental science, natural resources, marketing, public relations communications, journalism or a closely related field and two years of experience in solid waste operations, public relations, marketing or a closely related field; or An equivalent combination of training and experience as above.

Interested persons contact
David B. Rhodes, Director
FC Dept. of Solid Waste., PO Box 28, Johnstown, NY 12095
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