



BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Attracting Residents to Saratoga's Adirondacks

Brett Allen



Prepared by:

BEHAN
COMMUNICATIONS
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

April 2021

George Hanstein

Table of Contents

Introduction	Pg. 3
Best of Both Worlds.....	Pg. 4
Challenges and Opportunities.....	Pg. 6
Local Profiles: Curt Schreiner.....	Pg. 8
Embracing the Rural Life	Pg. 17
Local Profiles: Matthew & Kerry Hanlon.....	Pg. 21
Strong Rural Schools	Pg. 23
Interest Among Young Adults.....	Pg. 25
Local Profiles: Bob Campbell	Pg. 26
Overall Assessment.....	Pg. 28
Local Profiles: Pastor Steve Clark	Pg. 29
Marketing Opportunities.....	Pg. 31
Recommendations	Pg. 32
Appendix 1: Recreational Opportunities & Historic Sites	
Appendix 2: Schools & Colleges	
Appendix 3: Hospitals & Health Care Providers	
Appendix 4: Real Estate Agencies	
Appendix 5: List of Interviewees	



Life here is great; see for yourself,
and if you agree, we hope you'll join us.

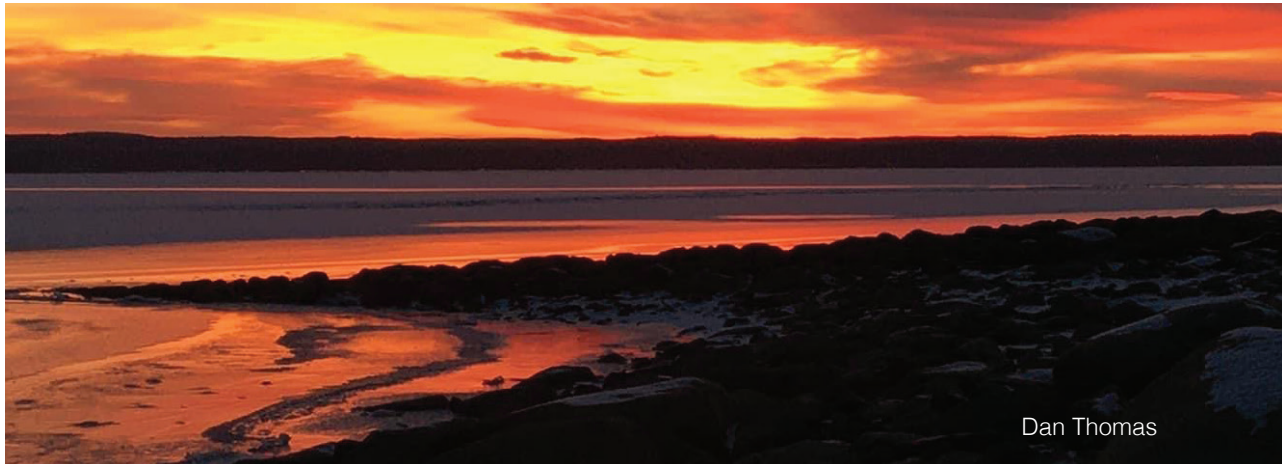
Holly Miller

introduction

The global pandemic of 2020-21 has unleashed a new wave of migration in the United States. An October 2020 study by Upwork, a web-based platform that helps companies and individuals find skilled remote workers for required tasks, found that [up to 23 million Americans](#) plan to relocate, in many cases out of major cities and into smaller communities that have lower costs of living and are perceived to be safer and healthier. This emerging trend led to a cooperative, regional initiative by the elected supervisors of the towns of Corinth, Day, Edinburg and Hadley to commission this study exploring the benefits and challenges of attracting new, year-round residents who value unspoiled natural beauty, unsurpassed recreational opportunities, lower living costs and job and educational opportunities.

Supervisors Arthur Wright (Hadley), Preston Allen (Day), Jean Raymond (Edinburg) and Richard Lucia (Corinth), working in concert with the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership, engaged Behan Communications Inc. to conduct both an assessment of the communities' strengths and challenges, and recommend an approach to identifying adults and families who might be willing to relocate to the four towns now that working remotely has been widely accepted.

Best of Both Worlds



Dan Thomas

Hadley, Day, Edinburg and Corinth are located in the Adirondack foothills of northwest Saratoga County, an area of extraordinary natural beauty, reasonable housing and living costs and practically limitless opportunities for outdoor recreation and enjoyment. Yet, like many rural communities, their populations are aging and declining. Local elected leaders are concerned about maintaining a healthy balance of younger and more senior residents as well as retaining the overall populations necessary to support essential services, keep local businesses and community assets strong, and to keep schools, volunteer fire departments and emergency squads viable.

While the communities seem remote, they are actually in close proximity to two small cities and to a larger regional community with

strong commercial, industrial, retail and professional opportunities, major colleges and cultural institutions, leading health care facilities and an international airport. Saratoga Springs, a dynamic and fast-growing small city that features world-class cultural and entertainment venues, shopping, dining and other amenities, is within a 30-minute drive as is Glens Falls, which offers manufacturing and health care employment, professional opportunities, popular entertainment, dining and shopping options. A home in any of the four towns typically is larger and has more land than comparably priced properties in the region's anchor cities. People who live in the four communities have an average commute to work that is on par with that of the region's more densely populated cities and suburban



communities. But when they leave home, the residents of the four towns enjoy the benefit of driving on well-maintained roads through bucolic scenery. And when they return, it is to a peaceful community where a place to fish, walk in the woods, relax around a campfire or take a quick spin on a snowmobile is often right out the back door.

Indeed, residents of the four Northern

Saratoga communities enjoy the best of both worlds – rural living with easily accessible urban amenities like brew pubs, ethnic restaurants, libraries, theaters, book shops and coffee houses. The four communities have become home to an increasing number of small businesses and recreational entrepreneurs and artisans, providing a base upon which to build a new, sustainable micro-economy.

Residents of the four Northern Saratoga communities enjoy the best of both worlds – rural living with easily accessible urban amenities like brew pubs, ethnic restaurants, libraries, theaters, book shops and coffee houses.

Challenges and Opportunities

This is not to say the region is without challenges that are common to rural areas and require broad support for policies to address issues such as improved broadband internet and cell phone coverage. Broadband internet, particularly, is recognized nationwide as an impediment to economic development in rural communities and has the attention of elected officials at the local, state and federal levels. Passage of national legislation similar in scope and nature to rural electrification of the 1930s has the potential to remove technological barriers to schools, businesses and individuals who rely on high-speed internet access to communicate, study, receive health care or conduct business. This is the most significant factor limiting residential and commercial growth in the four communities.

It should also be noted that several residents in each town made clear in interviews they are not interested in significant development that would dramatically change the character of their communities. Indeed, it is the unspoiled, rural character that is each community's chief asset.

But given their special combination

of rural and recreational assets and proximity to services in small cities, the communities have the potential to become a model of new rural solutions, success and resiliency — a place where new community members can find a home and a future, raise a family, build a business, and contribute to the betterment of the community — alongside neighbors of all ages.

The towns of Corinth, Day, Edinburg and Hadley together encompass approximately 235 square miles. They have a combined year-round population of 10,600, for a regional density of roughly 45 people per square mile. (Saratoga County as a whole has a population density of 283 people per square mile (Data Source: Census Reporter).

All four towns lie within the Blue Line boundary of the Adirondack Park. Development is limited and



Susan Chase LaMere



More than half of millennials surveyed in 2018, well before the pandemic, **rated family as most important**, followed by health and wellness — well ahead of friends and career.

highly regulated, which is protective of the region's natural beauty but imposes limits on commercial and residential growth. Located at the far southeastern corner of the Park, the towns are among the closest to large population and employment centers of any Adirondack community. Therein lies their advantage.

This report focuses on the desire to attract individuals and families who would buy existing homes, perhaps build a few new homes, buy existing businesses or start new small businesses, embrace the rural lifestyle of the region, and work to maintain the overall community character that has existed for generations.

Even with the technological challenges the communities face, the four towns have seen the first indications that people in densely populated urban areas are reassessing the attractiveness of rural communities. As more companies and employees have embraced remote work, small communities outside population centers are suddenly more appealing to millions of young people and families who are seeking safe, uncrowded, healthy, peaceful places to live where they can successfully pursue their professional



careers and personal, lifestyle interests.

They want greater access to a unique, adventurous, healthy and less hurried lifestyle without giving up all the benefits of their urban lifestyle. More than half of millennials surveyed in 2018, well before the pandemic, rated family as most important, followed by health and wellness — well ahead of friends and career (“[Millennials: The ‘wellness generation’](#)” Sanford Health, Sept. 12, 2018).

A [recent study](#) commissioned by two other regional economic development organizations, the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) in Essex County, and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of Warren County, found high interest in relocating to the Adirondack

Curt Schreiner

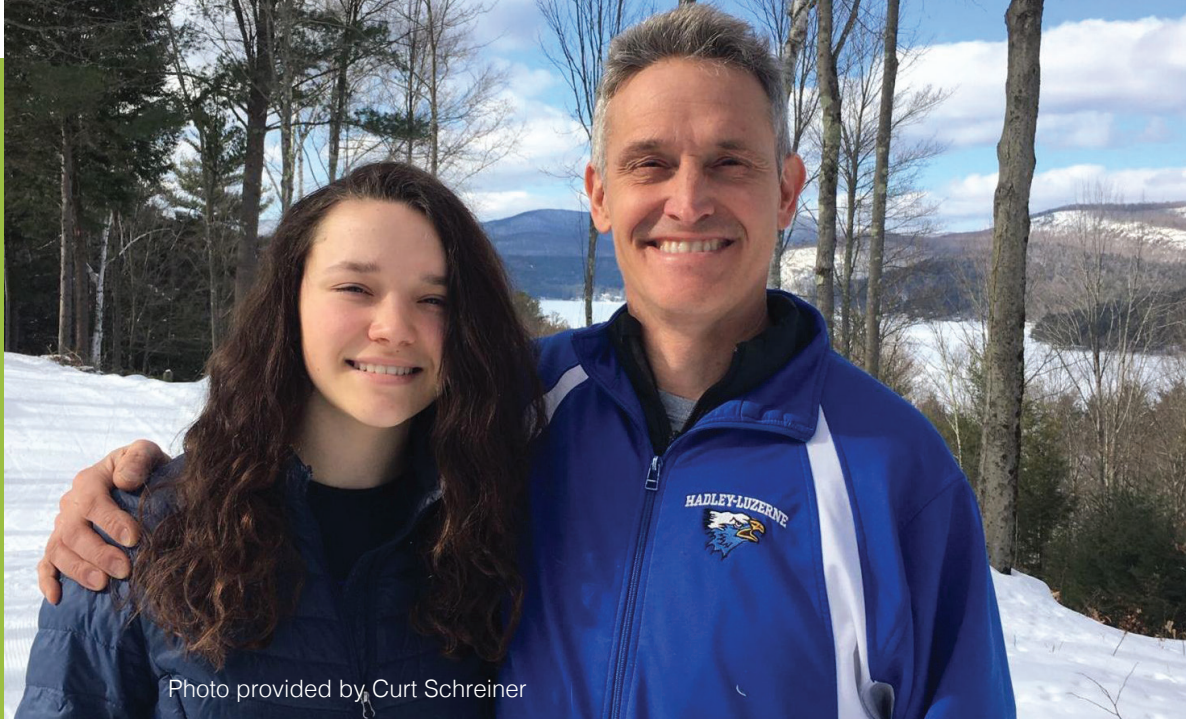


Photo provided by Curt Schreiner

The Town of Day as an Olympic Training Ground

I grew up in the Town of Day, NY, and was an avid cross country skier as a youngster. I was wide-eyed as the 13th Olympic Winter Games setting was right in my backyard in Lake Placid, NY.

While most people focused on the U.S. Men's Olympic Hockey team and the "Miracle on Ice" story or speed skater Eric Heiden's five gold medals, I was fixated on a new sport I had never heard of — the biathlon. There were a total of eighteen nations competing that year, including six exceptional United States athletes. It was there in Lake Placid during the 1980 games that I experienced my first biathlon.

These fantastic athletes were slinging a .22 rifle onto their back, skiing as fast as they could for a mile, then shooting five shots from the prone position at a target the

size of a silver dollar. Then skiing and shooting again; then again. If they missed a target, they added a penalty loop to the skiing each time.

My adrenaline was pumping, and I became laser-focused after the 1980 winter Olympics. We developed a shooting range in my family's driveway, which my Dad plowed to set targets. I trained non-stop and eventually became a U.S. Champion. I made my first U.S. Olympic Team in 1988 and competed in Calgary, Canada. I made two more Olympic Teams before retiring from competition in 2002 (Albertville, France and Lillehammer, Norway). I fell a bit short of making the winter Olympic teams in Nagano, Japan and Salt Lake City, UT. But, I had the great honor of spending more than a dozen years competing against some of the best athletes in the

world, and I had fun every single day.

My wife, Deborah, is also an Olympic biathlete. As we began the next chapter of our lives together, we knew we wanted to raise our family near family, and we chose to return to my hometown Day, NY. We built our own house next door to my parents.

Skiing will always be a part of my life, and so will the south shore of the Great Sacandaga Lake, where I launched my athletic career. We have 175 acres and we're so close to Glens Falls and Saratoga Springs. What an excellent place for our kids to grow up.

It is right here that we also created The Saratoga Biathlon Club. Today we have over

100 members, half of whom both ski and shoot. I groom the trails with my Dad and my brother Jim. We have 5 miles of trails around the family property. I have even had the opportunity to train my three children as coach of the Hadley-Luzerne High School Nordic Team.

Some of the more beautiful areas I have skied have been in Anterselva, Italy, Bariloche, Argentina and Canmore, Canada. Besides those three places, I think that Day, NY is just as beautiful.

I firmly believe that a connection to mind, body, and spirit is crucial to success in life, and here in the magnificent Town of Day, we have found that and so much more.

Photo provided by Curt Schreiner



region. Nearly 7,000 people responded to an emailed questionnaire, with 91% saying they would consider moving to the Adirondacks with the right housing options and ability to work remotely. Nearly 25% indicated they were either “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to relocate here in the next five years. (“Adirondack Relocation Assessment Survey” March 2021, Camoin 310)

This presents a natural opportunity that the four towns are well-positioned to capture and want to be prepared for.

As appealing as the Northern Saratoga lifestyle may be, it is important to acknowledge that rural life is not for everyone. Many people still prefer the social and economic benefits of urban living. The towns’ marketing efforts must be carefully targeted to audiences that are most likely to be receptive to the idea of rural living. This can be achieved through social media advertising and content generation that identifies audiences based on interests as expressed through their own online behaviors. An earned-media campaign that is focused on regional, metropolitan and specialty media will reach a broader audience, which can assist in creating additional opportunities for potential new



residents to explore and evaluate the region.

Tapping into the growing movement of families and young adults looking to improve their quality of life by living outside (but near) traditional population and job centers and willing to trade immediate convenience for open space and tranquility will significantly increase the likelihood of success. The individuals and families best suited for long-term success in this region may be natives of the area or newcomers who will appreciate and embrace friendly, down-to-earth, unpretentious communities brimming with opportunities for growth. Working collaboratively as a regional unit, the four towns can complement

each other’s strengths to provide an enticing alternative to more densely populated areas. We recommend a branding campaign with the theme: **“Saratoga’s Adirondacks: On the Edge of Everything.”**

The names Adirondack and Saratoga long ago achieved international prominence and appeal, an almost magical combination that blends images of outdoor adventure, beautiful natural, cultural and historic venues, horse racing and a vibrant social scene – indeed, an escape for everyone.

The pressing need to improve cell phone service and for fast, reliable broadband internet access are top-of-mind issues for community leaders across the Adirondacks. While the pandemic of 2020 has led many people to consider moving to more remote areas,

it also has highlighted the difficulty of managing remote work and basic online activities like education and health care without a reliable connection. Some progress has been made over the last 10 years, but this issue cannot be resolved purely at the local level. It requires more resources and leadership from both the state and federal governments.

Research for this report found evidence that connectivity with reasonable speeds and relatively consistent service is generally available in the four towns along main roads where providers have run cabling. But more substantial geographic coverage continues to be a first-priority need for this region, as well as for many other rural communities across upstate New York and the U.S.

Hadley resident Kerry Hanlon, who co-owns an acclaimed art restoration

10-YEAR POPULATION TREND

Community	2010	2019	Percent Change
Corinth	6531	6393	-2.11%
Day	856	841	-1.75%
Edinburg	1214	1213	-0.08%
Hadley	2048	2004	-2.15%

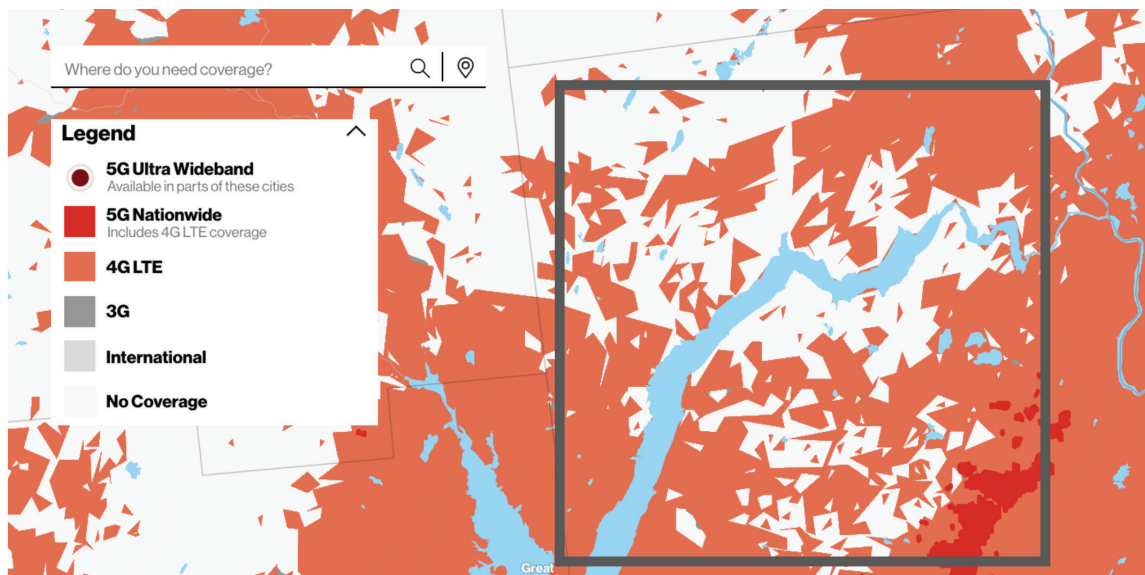
company with her husband, noted a recent conversation with young families she met in New York City. When she asked them what it would take for them to move out of the city to a rural area, they answered without hesitation, “Good schools and good internet.”

During our interview with Ms. Hanlon, she noted that she personally has had no issues on either front, with a good connection at her home in Hadley and a positive school experience for her children.

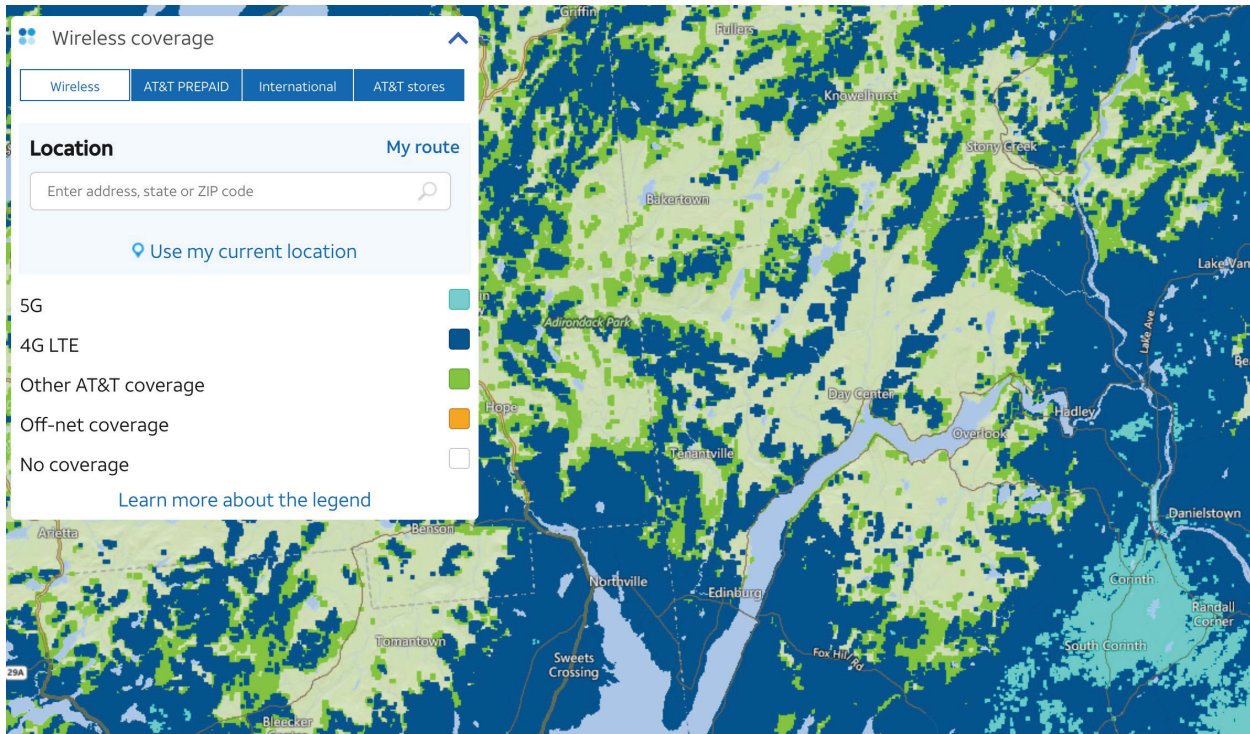
Still, coverage maps below show large swaths of the region continue to

have limited or no access for cell phone coverage. To be sure, those who want to live in one of the four towns while working remotely for their current employers will look carefully at connectivity before making any decisions.

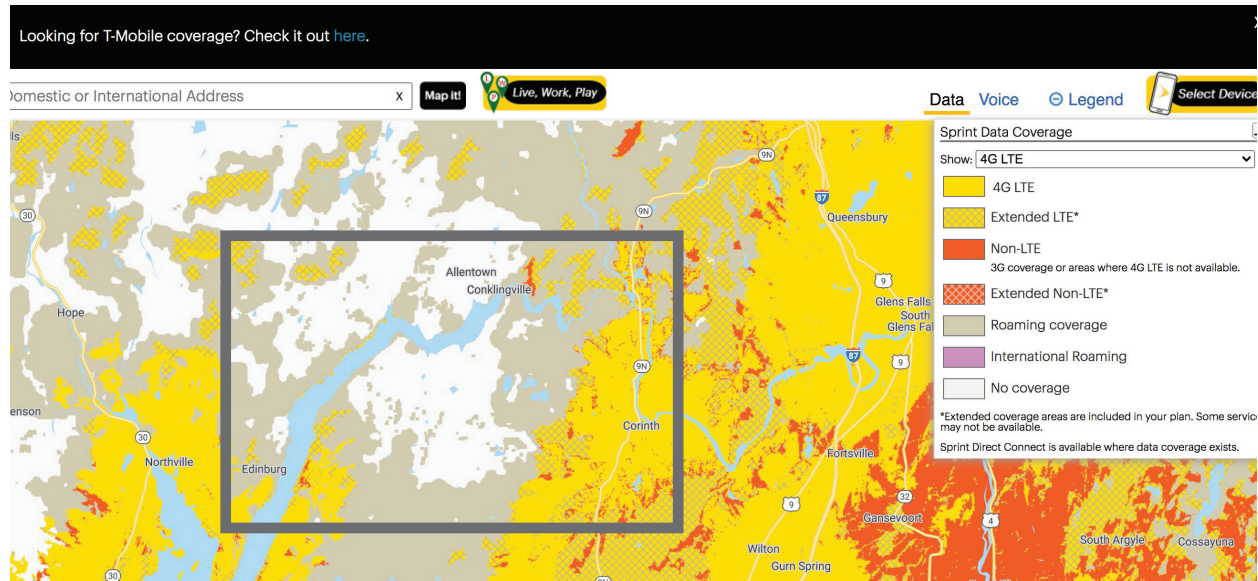
Data compiled by the Saratoga Prosperity Partnership through the geographic information system company Esri show a total of 418 employers across the four towns, including the municipalities and school districts. As would be expected, most are small businesses with fewer than 10 employees, and a significant number are



Verizon’s current map shows large swaths of missing coverage around the region (with the approximate area denoted by the box).



AT&T's map similarly shows significant areas with limited or lacking coverage.



Sprint / T-Mobile shows reasonable coverage in Corinth, with limited service in much of the rest of the area.

tourism or hospitality-related businesses.

Particularly notable are the emerging businesses and venues like the Saratoga Biathlon Club in Day, and the Adirondack Adventure Center (located in Lake Luzerne, though owner Dane Morton lives in Hadley), indicative of an growing entrepreneurial energy in the region that can be leveraged and cultivated.

Town leaders should work closely with these entrepreneurs to support their efforts, help clear obstacles to growth, and highlight them as examples of smart, motivated individuals who are invested in the future of their communities. Such independent business owners enhance the reputation of the region while embracing the values of individualism and natural balance and can help draw like-minded individuals who feel a sense of community.

Over the last five years, each town's population has fallen slightly, from a 1 percent drop in Edinburg to slightly more than a 2.5 percent decline in Hadley. Since 2010, the numbers show a similar trend, with Corinth down 2.11% over the decade, Edinburg nearly flat at -0.08%, Day lower by 1.75% and Hadley's population down 2.15%.

School enrollment data show a much larger drop, confirming the sense of local elected officials that there are fewer young families in the communities. The



combined enrollment across the area's four school districts (which include students from neighboring communities beyond Corinth, Day, Edinburg and Hadley), has decreased by 8 percent over the last five years, from 2,517 students in Pre-K through 12th grade to 2,307. The four school districts reviewed are Corinth, Edinburg, Hadley-Luzerne and Northville.

Day and Edinburg have seen a continuing and welcome increase in

Community	Population Density Per Square Mile
Northern Towns Region	45
Saratoga County	283
Saratoga Springs	995
Glens Falls	3,636
Colonie	1,479
Clifton Park	760

the number of affluent retirees who are purchasing homes in those communities, either for permanent or seasonal residence, along the shores of Great Sacandaga Lake, a reservoir with 115 miles of shoreline through Saratoga and Fulton counties.

Though Hadley borders both the Sacandaga and Hudson rivers, and the Hudson flows through Corinth, neither community has seen significant housing growth along their shorelines, at least in part because the rivers in those areas are less conducive to pleasure boating than the lake.

However, the year-round populations of each town are on par with each other relative to income. The U.S. Census Bureau tracks median household income by census tract (Day and Edinburg are in

the same tract, while Hadley, the town of Corinth and Village of Corinth each are in their own census tracts).

Median household income ranged from \$57,216 in Hadley to \$60,446 in the Town of Corinth in 2018 — the most recent year with available data — with Day and Edinburg at \$57,907. The Village of Corinth was significantly lower at \$46,875. In the region, real estate agents report a marked increase in interest in 2020, attributable to the pandemic, with potential buyers looking to move out of more densely populated areas, particularly downstate.

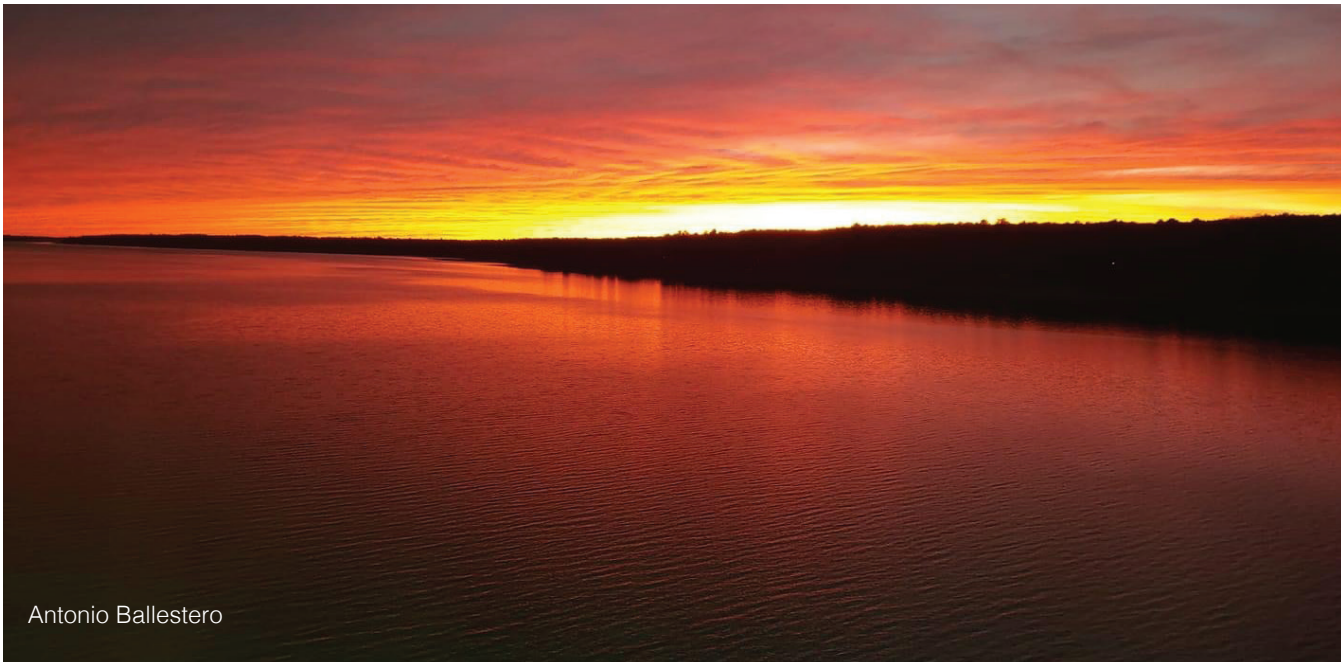
While the data are not yet in on the full impact of pandemic-related housing moves, more long-term data show the value of real estate continues to increase.

The median home price in 2020 was

Town leaders should work closely with these entrepreneurs to support their efforts, help clear obstacles to growth, and highlight them as examples of smart, motivated individuals who are invested in the future of their communities.

\$310,000 in Day, up from the 2015 median value of \$175,000, based on data from the town assessor's office. In Edinburg, the median price was \$234,500 in 2020, compared with \$228,850 in 2015. While Hadley and Corinth had more modest sales prices, they also saw property values increase over the last five years. Hadley's median sales price

was \$190,000 in 2020, up from \$147,000 five years earlier, and Corinth's 2020 median was \$188,900 — an increase from the \$140,000 median price in 2015. The median figures for Hadley, Corinth and Edinburg come from sales records of the Greater Capital Association of REALTORS.



Antonio Ballesterio

Embracing the Rural Life

Residents of the four towns made clear in interviews that they cherish the open space, quiet and abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities, but they stressed that acceptance of a rural lifestyle is also essential.

“We both had such a draw to the woods and did not want to raise a family in a concrete jungle,” said Kerry Hanlon, who with her husband, Matthew, moved their art restoration business to Hadley from New York City.

“There is a need to stock up on goods when we go to Saratoga. The closest store is in Northville – 20 minutes away,” said Day resident Ted Mirczak, who moved to the town permanently in 2001 upon retirement.

One concern expressed in multiple interviews with local residents was the lack of opportunity for jobs without significant travel to larger metropolitan areas. Yet this perceived drawback is not as significant as it might seem. The Census Bureau tracks “mean travel time to work”



Jeff St. John

and in 2015, the average across the four towns was 30 minutes — just three minutes more than the mean travel time of 27 minutes for residents of Malta, and only five minutes longer than the Saratoga County mean of 25 minutes.

During interviews, residents noted the need to travel for weekly grocery

shopping. Several said they make it a routine to stock up on nonperishable items for the pantry, and many have a second freezer to limit the need for more frequent grocery trips.

With no town centers or robust downtown retail areas, traditional shopping opportunities in the communities are limited. Several residents noted other small, rural communities, including Lake Luzerne, have had success attracting small retail shops. The Glens Falls Post-Star recently spotlighted three women-owned stores all opened in Lake Luzerne in 2020.

As they seek to attract new residents who are still working full time, the communities are also exploring ways to provide for senior citizens. The need for additional senior housing in the communities presents an important opportunity. Many seniors wish to remain in their communities, to age in place, but need a comfortable, secure place to call home. They are likely to be more inclined to sell their residences if there is local senior housing where they can be among friends and neighbors. Their longtime residences then could



Beth Rosenthal



become attractive new homes for young people moving into the community. In some parts of the communities, the conditions of residences has declined as owners find they are personally unable to manage the repairs, or find the costs of upkeep too high. An incentive for new owners to buy and refurbish these residences – freezing the assessed value for a period of time — warrants consideration.

Similarly, another common rural challenge may, in fact, be an opportunity for the four towns. The lack of high-quality, affordable and accessible child care is a major impediment to young women returning to the work force. Hospitality

businesses in the Adirondack Region report that a major impediment to their growth is the difficulty of attracting and retaining employees, in part because of child care and transportation challenges. New senior housing facilities in the four towns could become locations for first-floor children's day care centers. Retail services like pharmacies, convenience stores or liquor stores could be attracted to serve the young families and seniors.

Volunteerism amid the area's fire and EMS squads appears to be sufficient at this time, though there is an understanding among residents and local officials that response times may be delayed during workdays as

many members have jobs outside the immediate community.

To ensure the resiliency of local fire and emergency services, the communities may wish to consider seeking federal or state aid to train and compensate local people as first responders or to cross-train highway department and other municipal employees as first responders.

Glens Falls Hospital operates Evergreen Medical Center in Corinth that serves the surrounding area and provides routine

primary health care. Residents indicated they travel to Glens Falls or Saratoga Springs for hospital care or to see specialists.

Telemedicine has expanded exponentially across the country because of the pandemic. It is proving to be as successful in rural areas as it is in urban centers, with the caveat that those who lack reliable Internet access cannot participate in telemedicine.



Town leaders should work closely with these entrepreneurs to support their efforts, help clear obstacles to growth, and highlight them as examples of smart, motivated individuals who are invested in the future of their communities.

PROFILE

Matthew & Kerry Hanlon

**Conducting
Business
from Hadley**

Photos provided
by Kerry Hanlon.



I am originally from Hadley and so is my husband, Matt. We both went away to college. During his senior year, Matt was chosen to intern at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There he worked on the restoration of an ornate Italian room from the 1400s designed for meditation and study. During his last year of college and first year out of college he worked at Antiquarian Restorers in Manhattan.

Then, he started his own business serving private collectors, art dealers, and the major auction houses in New York City. I eventually moved to the city to join and support my then-new husband with his art restoration company.

Several years ago, while living in New York, we faced a choice; raise a family in the city or return to the country and raise children there. We had such a draw to the woods and the mountains and ultimately



chose not to raise our family in a concrete jungle. We relocated to Hadley on a hill overlooking the majestic Hudson River. Hiking, swimming, and outdoor activities now dominate our family life.

My husband continued to commute to New York City for a few years to our art restoration





business address in midtown Manhattan, and then we moved the business to Queens. We were recently able to relocate the business to Hadley altogether.

Now we both work from home and have successfully been doing so for the past several years. My husband may still occasionally go to New York City for work, but that is rare.

Looking back, we've hit some bumps managing our time. Trying to balance taking on the business and our responsibilities as parents, I feel like we've got it close to right.

Hadley and the region around us permitted us to find the balance we need, and we wouldn't do it any other way.



Strong Rural Schools



Laurie Sieling

The region is served by four major school districts: Corinth Central School, Edinburg Common School, Northville Central School and Hadley-Luzerne Central School. The reputation of and environment in schools are critical to parents when considering relocating, and the four school districts boast excellent student-teacher ratios.

All four schools are in good standing with solid report cards, test scores and safety policies. Despite their small size, the high schools offer robust after-school programs, physical education and sports programs, arts offerings, and extracurricular activities. Similar age-appropriate programs are provided at the younger grade levels.

STUDENT-TEACHER RATIOS

Corinth Central School

1,178 students
Grades: K to 12
Student to teacher ratio – 12

Edinburg Common School District

70 students
Pre-K — 6
Student to teacher ratio – 9.6

Hadley Luzerne Central School

672 students
Grades Pre-K to 12
Student to teacher ratio: 9.5

Northville Central School

464 students
Grades Pre-K to 12
Student to teacher ratio- 10.9

Edinburg Common School District

Superintendent Michelle Ellis became Superintendent after starting her career in Edinburg teaching 2nd grade. She stated, “This is a great school district that’s the hub of an exceptional community. We welcome additional residents and students into our family.”

Corinth Central School

Superintendent Mark Stratton said, “This is a great district. The students are very respectful and hardworking, as are the faculty and staff. I love this community and look forward to working with other districts to showcase our very best qualities to potential new residents.”



Interest Among Young Adults

The Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages, in its “Adirondack Strategies” report issued approximately five years ago, found 70 percent of students graduating from colleges located in the Park were willing to “build their lives and livelihoods in the park if the right career or business opportunities” were in place. (“Survey: College grads look to live, work, stay in Adirondacks,” The Press-Republican, July 8, 2015)

Pairing the natural beauty and abundant outdoor recreational opportunities of Corinth, Day, Edinburg and Hadley with their proximity to Saratoga Springs and the Capital Region compared to other areas of the Adirondacks provides a “best of both worlds” opportunity.

Outdoor recreation programs are growing in popularity to the extent that SUNY Adirondack in Queensbury offers an Associate’s Degree in “Outdoor Education” teaching students to develop leadership, management and hands-on experience with outdoor adventure sports and recreation.

Similarly, Paul Smith’s College near Saranac Lake offers a degree in

Recreation, Adventure Education and Leisure Management that prepares students for careers in ecotourism, as recreation outfitters and environmental educators.

Graduates in these programs are ideal candidates for living, working and raising a family in “Saratoga’s Adirondacks.”



Allyson Marie



Linda Eastman



George Thomas

PROFILE

Bob Campbell

Who Says
You Can't
Go Home?

My family relocated to Edinburg, NY, when I was in second grade. I'm a proud Northville Central School District graduate. I spent most of my youth on and around The Great Sacandaga Lake. I even worked summers for Edinburg Marina. I left the region to attend Ithaca College, then joined Corporate America for a 20-plus-year career.

Along the way, I married my soulmate and we grew our family with three wonderful children. We prioritized frequent visits to Sacandaga Lake from the various urban communities where corporate America took us. We moved around quite a bit and although I stayed in the same industry – we moved as the job opportunities presented themselves.

One day my wife and I were taking a good hard look at our future. We talked about making significant changes. In my head, I could hear my Dad saying, "Whatever you do, Bob, find a way to be your own boss." That voice was my driver.

Shortly after our "it's time to make changes" conversation, I stopped by the Edinburg Marina while visiting Sacandaga Lake. I asked the office manager if she thought the owner might be interested in

Bob and Joan Campbell.



selling the business. It turned out at that very moment he was looking for a buyer. It was a sign. My wife and I sold everything we owned and went all in. After two years of negotiations, in February 2005, my wife and I became Edinburg Marina and Powersports' new owners. Partners in life and business.

Working at the marina as a kid was such a fabulous experience. I was pumping gas for customers who were always in great spirits. I was familiar with the business, the location is close to family, and we have a cottage here — so many positives. The company is now a



One day my wife and I were taking a good hard look at our future. We talked about making significant changes. In my head, I could hear my Dad saying, “Whatever you do, Bob, find a way to be your own boss.” That voice was my driver.



Photos: Bob Campbell

year-round, full-service marina and a recreational equipment dealership for water, land and snow.

We all enjoy the location – it is a well-kept secret. The area has an excellent cost of living and it is simply beautiful here—so many outdoor opportunities. The region is rural and yet only 30 minutes from everything. Saratoga Springs, Glens Falls, Lake George, Warrensburg, Amsterdam – all just a short drive away and they have whatever you could need.

My three children were all raised in the region. Bringing them to the lake and removing our family from the suburban world has been a positive experience.

As I settled back into the region, I’ve become active in the community, as a member and now chairperson for the Great Sacandaga Lake Advisory Council and a board member for the local snowmobile club.

As I reflect on my life’s journey, I can hear Bon Jovi and his lyrics from Who says you can’t go home. That song speaks directly to me. I’m right where I belong.



Overall Assessment

The region offers a special combination of virtues: Wide open space with a broad diversity of recreational opportunities; access to unique and interesting small cities with outstanding restaurants, culture and shopping; easy access to domestic and international travel; reasonably priced housing and land, high-tech and professional jobs within a commute of an hour or less, and a growing community of entrepreneurs and artisans.

The four towns offer opportunities for purchasing residential properties with acres of land and within minutes of hiking, skiing, and snowmobiling trails. There are high-end, modern homes with waterfront or lake access and protected viewsheds, as well as more modest properties inland either

secluded from other homes or within sight of neighbors. There are schools with small class sizes and dedicated teachers. There are easy, beautiful drives to larger areas with employment opportunities. There are multiple public boat launches within the area providing access to one of the largest recreational lakes in upstate New York, and opportunities to hunt and fish are unparalleled in the state.

Trips to gas stations, convenience stores and grocery stores involve some more travel than in many other communities. Students have longer bus rides, especially when competing in sporting events. But they also have access to more outdoor adventures and personalized attention in smaller classes.

urban reassessment

Even with the technological challenges the communities face, the four towns have seen the first indications that people in densely populated urban areas are reassessing the attractiveness of rural communities.

Pastor Steve Clark



Steve Clark

**A Community
Welcome With
Open Arms**

After completing my theological studies, I began exploring my options for ordination to pastoral ministry. My lifelong dream was to form a deep connection with a small community church within striking distance of the Adirondack Region. I sought the mountains and lakes and a healthy church community I could integrate into and call home. Could I find a location that provided both?

I discovered the Corinth First Presbyterian Church in Corinth, NY. The church is a family of believers in Jesus Christ and has held a strong presence in Corinth's community for over two hundred years. Further research uncovered Corinth's town slogan, "Gateway to

the Adirondacks.' I knew in my heart this was the ideal location for my first church assignment, and the proximity to my family in Boston and New York City was also a huge pull. Only a few hours away in either direction.

As I began the ordination process, I nervously sent out my first pastoral application to the Corinth, NY church. As it would turn out, that email arrived in an elder's inbox five minutes before the pastoral search committee's meeting. God does work in mysterious ways, and I was soon welcomed to the Corinth First Presbyterian Church with open arms. While other areas came calling, it was Corinth where I wanted to be.



Steve Clark

The Bible says,
“Climb Every
Mountain.”
Well, it actually
comes from
“The Sound of
Music,” but I’ve
taken it to heart
while in my new
surroundings.

My arrival was even more majestic than I expected — the terrain is glorious and the community is warm and welcoming — a meaningful experience from the start. My new church family and the community as a whole exceeded my expectations — food deliveries, invitations to dinner, boat rides, hikes, and fishing trips. The warm welcome continues nearly two years later.

The Bible says, “Climb Every Mountain.” Well, it actually comes from “The Sound of Music,” but I’ve taken it to heart while in my new

surroundings. I am working toward becoming an Adirondack Forty-Sixer, climbing all 46 peaks of the Adirondack mountains.

There have been many positive life changes since my zip code changed to 12822. I was ordained as a pastor on July 14, 2019, in my home church in Rhode Island; my ministry began in Corinth on August 4, 2019, and then I was married to my lovely wife, Kim, on June 20, 2020. It’s been quite a ride — and I’m grateful it brought me here to Corinth, a special place at a special time.

Marketing Opportunities



The key to success in attracting new residents lies in carefully targeting an audience receptive to the four towns' virtues. Natural targets include those who are interested in the outdoors, both passive and active users, as well as professionals, entrepreneurs and artisans intrigued by the inspiration of nature all around them. The goal is to stand out among other small rural communities in the Northeast when vying for the attention of those who are considering places to relocate.

Young adults are leading the movement toward a "greener" lifestyle and prioritizing experiences over possessions. The four towns' future is with the up-and-coming wilderness guides, the aspiring maple farmers and chainsaw artists, the writers,

creators, restorers and artisans who find inspiration in nature, and the young families who want good schools for their children and professional opportunities for themselves in high-tech industry, public service, health care and education.

A targeted campaign aimed at directly recruiting from a demographic pool of pre-disposed young people and families across the Northeast, with a special focus on Adirondack-area college students, is recommended.

The Town of Day's vision statement makes clear the community recognizes its natural strengths. "Simply put, 20 years from now, the Town of Day should look and feel as it does now — rural, rustic, quiet and unspoiled with woods and lake and mountain views."

1. CREATE A REGIONAL BRANDING STRATEGY

Saratoga's Adirondacks, The region's greatest asset is the dual promise of a rewarding rural lifestyle and its proximity to job, educational and cultural opportunities. We recommend consideration of "Saratoga's Adirondacks" as a regional identifier illustrated with a logo and the launch of a website and other social media platforms, including Instagram, promoting the region and its amenities.

The website should emphasize that in Saratoga's Adirondacks one finds both unlimited natural beauty and recreational opportunities as well as world-class cultural venues such as Saratoga Performing Arts Center, The Hyde Collection and Saratoga Race Course; employment opportunities with industrial leaders such as GlobalFoundries, GE, and Regeneron, 15 local colleges, universities and medical facilities. The broad theme of the site, and related advertising would be to entice people to live like they are on vacation — minutes from lakes and rivers and hiking trails, with easy access to excellent job opportunities, live performances, outstanding restaurants, museums and schools.

2. SUPPORT AND LEARN FROM THE EMERGING SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Ventures like the Saratoga Biathlon Club in Day, the Adirondacks Aquaponics farm in Hadley, and the Adirondack Adventure Center in nearby Lake Luzerne are treasures that represent a new entrepreneurial energy on which the four towns should build. These businesses represent the start of a critical mass of future small businesses in these communities. We recommend engaging directly with the owners of these businesses to tap into their creative energy, ideas, credibility and professional networks through the formation of a Northern Saratoga Entrepreneurs Group to identify ways the communities can create a hospitable environment for small start-ups and existing businesses and foster their growth.

3. CREATE A STEERING GROUP FOR ADVICE AND IDEAS

We recommend the creation of a steering group of local elected, community and business leaders to oversee and advise the effort to encourage people to relocate to the four towns. This group ideally would generate ideas and suggestions, identify problems to be addressed, and help promote the communities as great places to live. The real estate community should play a key role in this organization.

4. CREATE PLACES TO GATHER, CREATE, SOCIALIZE AND DO BUSINESS

While there are some areas with reliable service, lack of cell and broadband coverage remains for now a challenge in large parts of the four towns. We recommend the creation of regional co-working and maker spaces where cell and internet services are reliable and, for a modest fee, creators and entrepreneurs could gather to work, build, and collaborate. These would be ideal community gathering spots for social interaction and alternative “offices” for those who want to live in the four towns but prefer to work outside their homes. They might also be locations for child care services.

5. THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN

In addition to the development of a Saratoga’s Adirondacks website and the creation of other social media platforms to promote the Saratoga Adirondacks lifestyle, we recommend direct outreach to GlobalFoundries, GE, Regeneron, RPI, Union, SUNY Polytechnic, area hospitals and health care networks, as well as regional colleges to introduce their Human Resources departments to the virtues of living in the four towns.

These organizations regularly engage in recruiting talented prospective employees and providing an opportunity to live amid natural beauty and minutes from a world-class lake would be beneficial in their recruitment efforts.

6. TAX INCENTIVES

To attract people to their rural communities, Maine and Vermont offer incentives. Maine is seeking to attract and retain recent college graduates and offers tax incentives to offset their student loans. The state's [Educational Opportunity Tax Credit](#) was first applied to graduates of Maine's colleges and universities, but has now been expanded to college and university graduates from anywhere in the U.S.

Vermont is offering financial incentives to full-time remote workers who moved to the state after January 1, 2019, through its [Remote Worker Grant Program](#). It can reimburse workers up to [\\$10,000 for relocation expenses over two years](#).

Offering a local property tax credit to offset relocation costs, including the purchase of a home, is a step worthy of consideration.

Examples of this approach can be found in Minnesota ([“Between 30 and 49 years old? New initiatives are recruiting you to move to rural Minnesota”](#) The Star-Tribune, Sept. 1, 2019) and The [“Remote Shoals” program](#) in Northwest Alabama, among others.

In December 2020, legislation was introduced in Congress to encourage college graduates to live in small towns. The “Rural Revitalization Now Act” would provide up to \$50,000 in student loan relief to graduates who commit to live and work in rural communities for at least eight years.

7. INTERMUNICIPAL MOUS

Craft a Memorandum of Understanding between the towns, setting up a structure to work together to apply for federal and state grants that would help achieve local economic and community development objectives.

8. EARNED MEDIA

We recommend approaching the news media with story ideas about the growing number of entrepreneurs and artists who could live anywhere but have chosen the four towns and found personal and professional success here.

9. TRANSFORMING VISITORS INTO PERMANENT RESIDENTS

We recommend special outreach to seasonal visitors who already are familiar with the region. At every business or venue a visitor might touch, he or she should find welcoming signage and attractive marketing materials with the theme, “Why Just Visit? We Want You Back.” Staying in touch with those visitors through frequent emails from the four towns would help foster connection and interest in visiting more frequently and perhaps in relocation.

10. DEVELOP REGIONAL, TOPICAL BROCHURES & A CALENDAR

Together, the four towns of Saratoga’s Adirondacks have a multitude of recreational and historical sites (*see appendix*), as well as seasonal and annual events that should be marketed together through regional cultural, historical and recreational brochures. In addition, a comprehensive, regularly updated calendar of events for the region should be posted online.

This report was prepared by Bill Richmond, Kelly Donahue and Bill Callen of Behan Communications. It was designed by Troy Burns of Graphic Acuity. We are grateful for the assistance of Supervisors Richard Lucia (Corinth), Preston Allen (Day), Jean Raymond (Edinburg), and Arthur Wright (Hadley). We are also grateful for assistance from Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership’s Shelby Schneider and Annamaria Bellantoni; Saratoga County Real Property Tax Office’s Anna Stanko and Christine Aldrich; Day Assessor Peter Dziedzic; Edinburg Assessor Ron Beckering; Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce’s Richard Snyder; and Greater Capital Region Association of REALTORS’ Jason Hyatt.

We also thank the photographers for the beautiful images throughout the report: Brett Allen; Antonio Ballestero; Susan Chase LaMere; Linda Eastman; Evelyn Fenick; George Hanstein; Kim Koza; Allyson Marie; Holly Miller; Marian Rose; Beth Rosenthal; Christine Saturno; Laurie Sieling; Kathleen Smith; Jeff St. John; Dan Thomas; George Thomas.

Appendix 1

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HISTORIC SITES

- Batchellerville Bridge** (Edinburg)
- Bend of the River Golf Course** (Hadley)
- Boating & Waterskiing on Stewarts Pond** (Hadley)
- Boating & Waterskiing on the Great Sacandaga Lake** (Day, Edinburg, Hadley)
- Boating & Waterskiing on the Hudson River** (Hadley, Corinth)
- Bow Bridge** (Hadley)
- Copeland Carriage Shop** (Edinburg)
- Copeland Covered Bridge** (Edinburg)
- Corinth Free Library** (Corinth)
- Corinth Museum** (Corinth)
- Corinth Reservoir #5 Trail** (Corinth)
- David Rayfiel House** (Day)
- Dean Mountain Whitewater Park** (Hadley)
- Dodge House Lakeside Gallery** (Edinburg)
- Edinburg Historical Society** (Edinburg)
- Edinburg Marina** (Edinburg)
- Hadley Canoe Take-Out Park** (Hadley)
- Hadley Maple Festival** (Hadley)
- Hadley Mountain Fire Observation Tower** (Hadley)
- Historic Edinburgh Day** (Edinburg)
- Kayaking on the Sacandaga River** (Hadley)
- Majestic Mountain Marina** (Day)
- Nellie Tyrrell Museum** (Edinburg)
- Pagenstecher Park** (Corinth)
- Palmer Falls** (Corinth)
- Plateau Sky Ranch Airport** (Edinburg)
- Rockwell Falls Public Library** (Lake Luzerne)
- Rocky Manor Rentals** (Day)
- Rural Museum** (Edinburg)
- Sam Smead Memorial Park** – tennis, basketball, volleyball, softball, playground, bandshell concerts (Hadley)
- Scenic Rail Bikes on Warren County Railroad** (Hadley)
- Scenic River Walk** (Hadley)
- Snowmobiling** (Corinth, Day, Edinburg, Hadley)
- Snowshoeing & cross-country skiing** (Corinth, Day, Edinburg, Hadley)
- Spruce Mountain** (Corinth)
- Stewarts Bridge Reservoir** (Hadley)
- Town of Day Museum** (Day)
- Town of Day Picnic Area** (Day)
- Watersedge Campground** (Day)
- Whitewater rafting on the Sacandaga River** (Hadley)
- Wilcox Lake Wild Forest** (Corinth)

Appendix 2

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN THE ADIRONDACK-SARATOGA REGION

SCHOOLS

Corinth Central Elementary School (Corinth)

Corinth Central High School (Corinth)

Corinth Central Middle School (Corinth)

Edinburg Common School (Edinburg)

Hadley-Luzerne Junior/Senior High School
(Lake Luzerne)

Kings School (Corinth)

Northville Elementary School (Northville)

Northville High School (Northville)

Stuart M. Townsend Elementary School
(Lake Luzerne)

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
(Albany)

Albany Law School (Albany)

Albany Medical College (Albany)

Clarkson University (Potsdam)

Maria College (Albany)

Paul Smith's College (Paul Smiths)

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Troy)

Skidmore College (Saratoga Springs)

St. Lawrence University (Canton)

SUNY Adirondack (Queensbury)

SUNY Albany (Albany)

SUNY Canton (Canton)

SUNY Empire State College (Saratoga Springs)

SUNY Fulton-Montgomery

Community College (Johnstown)

SUNY Hudson Valley Community College
(Troy)

SUNY Plattsburgh (Plattsburgh)

SUNY Polytechnic Institute (Utica)

SUNY Potsdam (Potsdam)

SUNY Schenectady County

Community College (Schenectady)

The College of Saint Rose (Albany)

The Sage Colleges (Troy)

Union College (Schenectady)

Utica College (Utica)

Appendix 3

HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN THE ADIRONDACK-SARATOGA REGION

Broadalbin Primary / Specialty Care Center (Broadalbin)
Convenient Medical (Queensbury)
Edinburg Volunteer Ambulance Squad (Edinburg)
Evergreen Medical Center (Corinth)
Glens Falls Hospital (Glens Falls)
Hadley-Luzerne Fire Department / EMS (Lake Luzerne)
Jessups Landing / Town of Corinth EMS (Corinth)
Northville Family Health Center (Northville)
Queensbury Family Health Center (Queensbury)
Saratoga Hospital (Saratoga Springs)
Southern Adirondack Planned Parenthood (Queensbury)
St. Mary's Healthcare – Northville Health Center (Northville)
West Mountain Health Services (Queensbury)

Appendix 4

REAL ESTATE AGENCIES IN THE NORTHERN SARATOGA TOWNS

Howard Hanna (412) 967-9000

Thomas J. Real Estate (518) 863-4691

William J. Cole Real Estate (518) 863-2653

Welch Group Realty (518) 654-2100

Winslow Realty (518) 654-9552

Appendix 5

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Corinth

Supervisor Richard Lucia

Steve Clark — Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Corinth

Deb and Craig Stollery — Owners of the Corinth Barn

Tyler Kirchhoff — Apartment owner

Robert Densmore — Owner, Densmore's Funeral Home

Mark Stratton, Ed.D., Superintendent, Corinth Central School District

Day

Supervisor Preston Allen

Curt Schreiner — Town Councilman, Owner of Saratoga Biathlon Club

Ted Mirczak — Chairman, Town Planning Board

Ken Metzler — CEO, Town of Day

Dave Davidson — Chairman, Town Zoning Board, and Town Historian

Edinburg

Supervisor Jean Raymond

Chris Waite — Retired resident

Michelle Ellis — Superintendent, Edinburg Common School

Bradley Brownell — Owner, Brownell Lumber Company

Bob and Joan Campbell — Owners, Edinburgh Marina & Powersports

Hadley

Supervisor Arthur (Mo) Wright

Kerry and Matthew Hanlon — Owners, Matthew Hanlon Restorations

Dane Morton — Owner, Adirondack Adventure Center

Tim and Emily Hilker — School Business Official and School Teacher respectively

Sue Wilder — President, Hadley Business Association

Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership

Shelby Schneider



Stock Studios Photograph

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Attracting Residents to Saratoga's Adirondacks

