City Weighs Water Options

By Nate Dougherty

For the past 100 years, every time Ithaca residents have taken a bath or a drink from their tap, there was how the new plan would be implemented.

The city is long past due at deciding the future of its water source. “I think, ideally this decision should have been made a bit earlier, but for whatever reasons, historically this has been on the table since 1996,” she says. “Our administration wants to get this done and the choices made.”

Federal guidelines regarding water sources undergoing updates over the next five years, the decision becomes even more pressing. “Bolton Point has already met the 2012 guidelines, so that would give us another reason to have to rebuild our own plant if that option is picked, aside from the fact it’s more than a 100 years old,” Peterson says.

Assessing Choices

Either option would come with considerable construction that would affect near-by natural areas. To rebuild the Six Mile Creek facility, the city must construct a new plant to handle seven million gallons of water per day.

To connect to Bolton Point, the city would need to extend the existing transmission pipeline. The work would impact two natural forests and three other natural areas.

Either option would mean construction on local roads. City officials could set up an upgrade to the access road from Route 79/Slaterville to the two acres of vegetation to be cleared. Another access road off Burntrose in the

TCF Monitoring Draws Concern

By Anthony Hall

Without belching smoke-stacks, roaring furnaces, or choking clouds of dust to underscore the image of industrial pollution, the electronics industry for many decades enjoyed the reputation of a quiet, safe, even neighborhood friendly business to have in your backyard.

The skilled jobs paid well. The assembly plants were low-profile; the business was usually steady. The electronic age was an economic fix for the manufacturing sector that once balanced the sheets on the backs of a nation that were once

thought to have sidestepped the horrors of environmen-
tal malfeasance.

The chemical at large is trichloroethylene, or TCE, a scale-greening chemical used in many industries. The Morse Chain assembly plant on South Hill in Ithaca, merged into a firm known as Allen-Wales in 1943, which produced adding machines. The company was purchased by National Cash Register in 1957, according to the South Hill in Ithaca-SHIP web site (SHIP standing for South Hill Industrial Pollution).

At the plant, according to Ithaca-SHIP, 1,200 gallons of TCE were used each week during peak production years in the late 1970s. And while the plant is now gone, the groundwater, soil and the ambient air inside many homes on South Hill bear the scars. TCE in the groundwa-
ter turns to vapor, which follows the path of least resist-
ance, seeping through cracks and holes in base-
ment floors.

Through a process known as vapor intrusion, the fumes are “vacuumed into homes” by the lower air pressure in basements, according to environmental activist Lenny Siegel, who visited Ithaca last week to discuss the issue with home-
owners and politicians.

“There has to be a crack or a hole, so a building that is perfectly sealed may not have evidence of vapor intrusion, but a potential for it,” he says. Siegel, the execu-
tive director of the Center for Public Environmental Oversight, based in southern California, is visiting five communities in New York this week, discussing the issue of TCE contamin-

Part of the problem, he says, is the TCE contamin-
aion near many of the nation’s military bases. With the Department of Defense on the defensive regarding this issue, there is pressure on the Environmental Protection Agency to define the problem with standards higher than those recom-

mended further study on the issue. Some EPA’s current acceptable levels.

Meanwhile, Siegel says, current testing is very uneven. In a long building, it’s possible to register high readings while

another might come up with lower levels of TCE. Monitoring sites are also placed first outside of homes, which is not an accu-
rate predictor that tests should be conducted inside, Siegel says.

During a meeting with homeowners at the Tompkins County Social Services Building, Siegel explained that Sen. Hillary Clinton would soon intro-
duce a bill to pressure the EPA into lowering the acceptable threshold levels for TCE contamination. Siegel says the bill will have no tangible impact by itself, but that pressure on the EPA could help move the issue forward.

Congressional aide Dan Lamb, who was at the meet-

ing, said that Rep. Maurice Hinchey is seeking sponsors to introduce a similar bill in the House.

The EPA, Siegel says, also took the path of least resist-
ance. When the National Academy of Sciences’ report on the issue suggested the lower threshold levels were acceptable, the EPA recommended further study on the issue. “What scientist wouldn’t recommend more studies?” he asked.

At Cornell, researchers unwind DNA

"Simpsons Movie" delivers wit and satire

Advocates push for personal independence

Gallery finds a home in village storefront
In Search of the Elusive Ladybugs

By Sue Smith-Heavenrich

The first annual “Ladybug Blitz” took place on July 27 and 28, when citizen scientists, including children to grandparents, grabbed nets and joined researchers in Cornell’s fields along Hanshaw Road to seek New York’s state insect—the nine-spotted ladybug.

The nine-spotted ladybug, Coccinella novemnotata, is a native predator of aphids, consuming many mites, mealy bugs and other pests. It was so common that in 1989 the New York State Legislature adopted the insect as an official state wildlife emblem. But trying to find this once-ubiquitous bug today is like searching for a needle at the bottom of the sea. Over the past 20 years, native ladybug species that were once common are now considered rare. During this same time, exotic species have increased their populations and extended their ranges.

The last official observation of the nine-spotted ladybug was nearly 15 years ago, and biologists were wondering whether it might have been extirpated, made locally extinct. In October 2006, two children, Jilene and Jonathan Penhale, found one in their Arlington, Va., backyard. Now two Ithaca scientists, John Losey at Cornell and Jason Hamilton at Ithaca College, are collaborating on a project to learn more about the decline of native ladybug populations. “It may have to do with a farm insecticide,” Losey explains. “Or perhaps it is something in the way they interact with decreasing farmland,” Hamilton suggests. He’s noticed that during the same decades of population decrease there was significant global climate change. He wonders whether changes in temperature, UV radiation, or carbon dioxide might have an effect on the insect. “Perhaps there’s a global aspect,” Losey says. “Lost Ladybug” project encourages folks to get outside and help hunt ladybugs. Those who showed up at the Hanshaw Road collection site received a quick lesson in how to use a sweep net, a ladybug identification guide and some practical tips on how to corral these feisty ladies into plastic vials so that they could be chilled and counted.

“We’re finding lots of the longer, pink skinny ladybugs,” says Mary Hood, “but no nine-spotted ones.” A rose-colored ladybug was found, but it’s a different species that in 1989 the New York State Legislature adopted the insect as an official state wildlife emblem. The insect will warm up and fly off to join its comrades in the field of red clover.

To get involved, visit the “Lost Ladybug” Web site at http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/ocures/1cb44/Lost_Ladybugs.htm. There is information on when and where to collect ladybugs, and how to send digital photos to the researchers.

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Volunteers Offer the Gift of Reading

By Glynis Hart

“The last part of a prison that ever gets any money is the library,” says Miles Latham, who served time for a drug conviction in Vermont. “Most prison libraries are coordinated by bibliophiles that are inmates. For people in prison, the libraries are seen as places of quiet, as places of normality within a crazy, crazy system. The problem is always getting books. There ain’t no budget for it.” Prison libraries, as a result, are often small, with a limited or unbalanced collection. Latham explains the importance of books to many in prison: “I would say, from a very personal point of view, that the prison is an illusion of your own making and that books allow you to escape. That saved my sanity. Books were a major factor in my ability to deal with the endless stream of letters from prisoners requesting books, and check the rules, if any are known, for the prisons. Some institutions won’t accept hardcovers and many have a limit on the number of books inmates are allowed to recieve. Some prisons stipulate that only new books be sent, and only directly from the publisher. Further rules apply to mailing and packing, such as only bubble wrap. “Since 2004 we’ve sent 6,000 books to around 3,000 prisoners,” says Van Leuken. The recipients aren’t asked to pay for the books, but often, says Van Leuken, “They aren’t asked to pay for the books, but get interested when you respond to the endless steam of letters. We just send books.”

Books thru Bars sometimes holds meetings of the many libraries get wrapped for sending by a group of volunteers. “Then the people who have to wait behind us in the line at the post office, they aren’t very happy. But even though we are a handful of people, we have quite the base of support. We’re very thankful that we get a lot of support from the community,” Van Leuken says. “We’ve had wonderful fundraisers at Lost Dog Cafe and the Nines, and especially at Castaways. The list of people we can thank for helping us is very long.”

As one prisoner puts it on the Web, “The most difficult, even painful part of the prison experience is not so much the physical violence, the…segregation, being rejected by loved ones, nor the struggle with dependency issues and personal demons. No, the real struggle is for growth. In prison you don’t truly grow as a human being, you just sort of grow old. We fear what we can grow into.” For people cut off from the world, books provide a link to the human family.

Van Leuken notes that instructonal books for carpentry, starting a business, or wiring a home are always in high demand. Further, she says, books on computers and how to navigate the Internet are popular. “When you’re in prison for 15 years you’ve probably missed the computer revolution. Most likely, people who have been in a long time have missed that whole development.”

“The books most requested are dictionaries, especially Spanish/English versions. “Dictionaries in any shape and form. We never have enough,” says Van Leuken. “Sometimes we send people Spanish language textbooks because they have small vocabulary lists at the end of the book, or each chapter. We never have even close to enough dictionaries.”

Other categories in high demand are black and Latin history and fiction, law books, westerns, mysteries and fantasy and nonfiction. “We have a small but steady demand for books of nature photography,” says Van Leuken. “That is a need, to see what the natural world looks like. Some people are interested in art, too. They’d like books they can draw away with.”

Interested book donors or volunteers may call 257-3156. “We have a system where once we’ve shown you how to do it, you can come in and prepare packages in an hour on your lunch break,” says Van Leuken. “It’s a good experience.”

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Trenton Weekly August 6
Talent, Leadership on Display at 4-H Fair

By Ann Krajewski

This year’s Tompkins County 4-H Youth Fair enjoyed good attendance, decent weather and plenty of enthusiasm. The annual event, held at 4-H Acres on Lower Creek Road, just off Route 13, is the setting for participating local youth to showcase their talents in a variety of categories, such as gardening and using recyclables creatively, with the livestock competition perhaps being the most well-known.

The showing of cows, goats, sheep and rabbits was the big draw for many and the judging was watched closely by the competitors’ owners as well as those in the viewing stands in the pole barn.

Arin Hallett and his stepsister Kelsey Harris, both 10 years old, had their hands full during the events which were held from July 26 through 28. Both children, from Newfield, were in the running for honors with their cows and rabbits, all of whom made an excellent showing as exemplified by the multiple ribbons each of their animals had won and were proudly displayed on their stalls and cages.

"Almost all of our rabbits won blue ribbons, both my brother’s and mine, which automatically makes them eligible to compete at the state fair," Kelsey says as she cuddles a small brown lop-eared rabbit. "Except for this one — he’s free to a good home," she adds as she watches judge Gail Kaiser examine Erik Jorgensen’s Dutch breed, who stayed very still, but wiggled his nose furiously.

The cows that Kelsey and Arin brought for judging were comfortably resting in their stalls filled with freshly strewn hay. The names above the stall read April and Jenney. Arin had acquired Jenney after entering a contest in which he wrote an essay describing why he should win her. Arin was quick to thank his benefactor.

"She was donated by Howard Jenney, so that’s how she got her name," he says of winning the auburn and white bovine.

The fair also featured the creative handiwork of area 4-H members, as the Kiwanis Hall practically overflowed with original artwork, some of which looked so professionally executed one would think they were done by seasoned artists and artisans. Also impressive was the photography category, filled with images that belied the ages of those who took the pictures. There were collections of carefully organized scrapbooks and beautifully intricate needlework that also commanded attention. In addition, a silent auction was held. The items up for bid consisted of imaginative gift baskets, all of which had been donated by parents and associates of 4-H.

Spread out over the grounds of 4-H Acres were booths that advertised games of chance. "We have all kinds of ways to win prizes here," says teen superintendent Jason Ruoff, "including football, ring and beanbag tosses. You win tickets which can then be exchanged for prizes and they are donated by a lot of our parents and friends. Everybody seems to have a lot of fun."

Youth Development Team Coordinator Megan Tifft praised the program from her post at the prize pavilion. "We’re associated with Cornell Cooperative Extension, and what we’re most proud of here is that the 4-H program teaches our children how to care for entities beyond themselves. This is what it’s all about," she says. "It sets up an example for future leadership."
Bicyclists Merit Lane on East Hill

By Jennifer Dotson

This is the latest installment in our Social Sustainability series.

Responding to Ithaca’s ranking as the area with the highest bicycle commute rate in New York state, city engineering staff are planning a painted bike lane going up East State Street and “sharrows” on Cayuga Street to remind motorists of state traffic laws. “The most important thing is to better clarify the expectations for motorist and bicyclist behavior. The hope is to reduce conflicts,” says engineering technician Kent Johnson. “The main roads that cars want to go on, bicyclists want to use those same places. These [changes] increase motorist awareness that bicyclists will be using the road.”

The improvements support connections to key destinations. State Street is part of a connection between downtown and East Hill schools, Collegetown and Cornell, while Cayuga Street is a preferred route to Ithaca High School, Boynton Middle School and Stewart and Dewitt parks.

“Streets most in need of improvement will be the ones we’re looking at,” Johnson says. In this case the objective is to clearly designate space for cyclists inching, and sometimes wobbling, up East Hill to avoid confusing and dangerous conflicts with cars and trucks. State law says that bicyclists and motorists must share the road, with the slower users moving right where it is safe to allow faster vehicles to pass.

“You don’t want bicyclists weaving in and out of the parking lane,” Johnson says. He anticipates that both the painted lane and the sharrow marking will increase the predictability of bicyclists and motorists on these routes.

The “sharrows” on Cayuga Street are bicycle symbols combined with a double chevron, placed roughly in line with a car’s right side mark. “These shared lane markings were chosen because standard bike lane markings wouldn’t fit on the narrow roadway,” says Johnson. “The idea is that the bicyclists ride over the center of the marking.” Ithaca’s experience with the symbols will be shared with other communities as part of a federal study on the markings, which Johnson expects to become standard nationwide within two years.

Visions of an Eco-City

A recently-formed group is exploring the idea of Ithaca becoming an “eco-city.” Rob Morache, a design consultant, says the group is in its infancy. Thus far the group has talked about “rebalancing the transportation system for things that almost everyone has — particularly feet,” he says. “It’s about making sure we have an environment that’s socially equitable.”

Concern for the safety of children and the elderly have combined with an interest in increasing the potential for economic development. “Can we make downtown a ‘family friendly’ zone and drop the speed limit? I want to bring in traffic for the foot traffic,” says Morache, noting the value of foot traffic in business location decisions.

Johnson, of the Ithaca engineering department, says “It’s notable what we have started here [with the Ithaca Commons].”

The group includes residents of downtown, EcoVillage and other areas of Tompkins County who are active in planning, transportation and land use issues. Gay Nicholson notes that work in recent decades by progressive land use and planning groups fed into the recent planning for development in Ithaca’s southwest area, and now into this group.

Joan Bokaer has developed a presentation that reflects her vision of Ithaca as an eco-city. The group is currently combining individual and existing community visions from municipal files and exploring the possibilities for eco-city visions to “get worked into the 2009 transportation plan, which is a 20-year vision,” says Morache. The group plans to convene a public gathering in the fall to solicit artistic visions for Ithaca as an eco-city. Other steps group members have taken include spearheading “urban cooperative blocks,” with several neighboring households working together on vegetable gardens and sharing household tools. The eco-city concept spans the personal to the institutional: Fernando de Aragon and I both are working to launch Ithaca Carshare to provide hourly access to cars parked downtown, in neighborhoods and on the Cornell and Ithaca College campuses.

Jennifer Dotson is executive director of Ithaca Carshare, and a member of Ithaca’s Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Council and Board of Public Works. Her favorite part of the day is usually biking, walking, or busing around Ithaca in her daily routine.

County Discusses Real Estate Talks

In special session, the Legislature conducted a three-hour-long executive session to discuss real estate negotiations.

The closed-door meeting was the latest step in the ongoing analysis of potential alternatives for headquarters for the County’s Health Department. An additional site option that is now under consideration prompted the legislative discussion.

The Health Department Building Committee has studied and evaluat- ed site alternatives since the begin- ning of the year, charged with pre- senting options for consideration by the full Legislature. Potential alternatives initially presented to the Legislature in June included building a new headquarters on land adjacent to the current Biggs B site on West Hill or leasing space at the NYSEG headquarters on Route 13 in the Town of Dryden, as well as the option of renovating the current Biggs Building, which has been home to the Health Department for 40 years.

The Legislature hopes to reach a decision on the matter this month, permitting the design phase to be completed by year’s end and con- struction to begin in 2008.

CoffeeMania

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For Craig and Michelle Brooks, owners of Cortland’s popular CoffeeMania drive-thru, gourmet coffee business—great service is a key ingredient in their success. So much so that they’ve become service “connoisseurs” elsewhere in their lives.

Banking at the Tompkins Trust Company is a perfect example.

From the friendly loan officer that helped them establish a new location: “We were able to sit down with someone who makes the decision about loans… They saw the potential that we saw,” to simple things like small change for their fast-paced, cash-based operation: “It may seem small, but it’s really big to me… They always have it right there. It saves me time…”

The Brooks do all their business and personal banking at Tompkins Trust Company.

Nothing crazy about that.
Clarifying the Role of Town Supervisor

I was disappointed by negative comments in a recent letter in Tompkins Weekly about Ithaca Town Supervisor Cathy Valentine. Are some folks upset that Cathy has forced our town supervisors to a choice through an election by running against the Democratic committee’s chosen candidate? A primary election is a hallmark of the democratic process, allowing voters, rather than party leaders, to select candidates for the November election.

There seems to be some confusion about the respective roles of the supervisor and town board. The supervisor is appointed by the town board, with input from the board. Although New York State law does not designate the town board as the administrative head of town government, it also allows delegation of this authority; either to the supervisor or to a professional administrator.

In 2001, I served on a bi-partisan town committee that made recommendations concerning the duties of the town supervisor. As a result, the town board adopted a resolution making the post of town supervisor a full-time position and apportioned the salary to separate line items, one for supervisory functions, the other for administrative functions. This arrangement provides substantial savings for taxpayers, yet still delivers efficient government. The position town board should be aware of this so it appreciates the budget each year.

Cathy has been working co-operatively with local leaders for more than 20 years, establishing new and innovative programs in the Ithaca community. She is a seasoned professional who puts inter-municipal cooperation and governmental efficiency ahead of partisan politics. She works effectively with other town and county officials and municipal boundaries for the good of the citizens of the Ithaca area. Many who have been working during her tenure as town supervisor are also the result of a smooth working relationship with the dedicated and talented staff in Town Hall. All Democrats should be proud of the many achievements that have occurred during Cathy’s tenure.

Why has repeatedly helped elect Democrats to the town board and was a close ally and confidante of former supervisor and current town board member Shirley Raffensperger. I think Shirley would be pleased to see her legacy continue in such capable hands.

John G. Whitcomb
Former Ithaca Town Supervisor and Town Board Member

Library Director Explains Staff Bonuses

I am responding to the story in the July 30 issue of Tompkins Weekly regarding the library and staff being at impasse. The spokesperson for the library’s UAW unit, Jon Long, asserted that the library director and assistant director received $22,000 bonuses the year that the library moved.

Making the assertion that the library are highly unusual and are given only in extraordinary circumstances. Unlike unionized work forces, salaried management/confidential employees are not entitled to such bonuses. The current library director, Janet Steiner, received $1,500; 1999, $2,500; 2000, $3,000; 2001, $7,500. The former assistant library director received bonuses of $2,000 in 2000 and $3,800 in 2001. Thus, it would be more accurate to assert that over the last four years (1997-2001) two individuals received merit pay which added up to $7,800.

Janet Steiner, Library Director
Tompkins County Public Library

Briefly...

Cliff Street in Ithaca Closed for Repairs

On Monday, August 6, the Ithaca Department of Public Works will close Cliff Street (Route 9B) for about six weeks for repairs and resurfacing. This will be a full closure for all through traffic, and detour routes will be posted.

The main work zone will be from the city line, on the north end, to the INCODEMA building (formerly Kolar Machine Shop), on the south end. The section below INCODEMA will receive a pavement overlay only, as the section is scheduled for comprehensive resurfacing next year.

The general vehicle detour will use Hector Street, Route 79 and Halseyville Road to bypass the work zone. Through truck traffic is encouraged to use Route 79 to avoid detouring the full section of the detour route. Emergency vehicles and local traffic will be sent over Campbell Avenue from Hector Street to Route 79.

The scope of work will include striping and adjusting storm sewer inlets and utility covers, repair of some street base failures, limited curb resetting, a new manhole cover pipe replacement, and hot mix asphalt surfacing. In addition, NYSEG will take the opportunity to replace a section of natural gas pipe.

Cliff Street residents will be provided access to their property driveways or the neighborhood parking lots during most of the street closure period using either Vinegar Hill or Brookfield Road. There may be times when access will be limited. When access must be limited to certain sections or properties, the effected residents will be notified as soon as possible. All residents will be notified of the paving schedules as the street must be closed to all traffic during the paving process. Residents should contact the department regarding any special access requirements needed during the construction period.

In addition, motorists are expected to closed to all traffic by the end of September. Questions related to the project can be forwarded to the Streets and Facilities Office at 272-1718.

Community Read Selection Announced

The Tompkins County Public Library, in partnership with Cornell’s New Student Reading Project, has announced that Nadine Gordimer’s “The Pickup” is the subject of its sixth annual Community Read. The novel, the Man Booker Prize for Fiction, “The Pickup” chronicles the complex relationship of a wealthy South African woman and an illegal Muslim immigrant. Themes of home and belonging, class-struc-

The Community Read began in 2002 with “Frankenstein.” In subse-

In 2002, the Thomas T. Raffensperger Library was opened to the public the library and Cornell work cooperatively to offer an assortment of programs related to each Community Read. The library and Cornell will announce information related to this year’s events as they become available.

Through the generosity of Cornell, TCPL has 350 copies of “The Pickup” in circulation, and free copies are available for book groups by calling 272-4557, ext. 235.

Farm City Day Comes to Dryden

On Saturday, Aug. 11, the Lew-Lin Farm in Dryden will host the 10th annual Farm City Day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Farm City Day is a free, family-friendly event that gives visitors a chance to visit a working farm and learn about agriculture through nearly 50 different exhibits, hands-on activities and demonstrations.

This year’s hosts, Lewis and Linda Stuttle and their son and daughter-in-law Steve, will welcome visitors to their farm at 433 Livermore Road for the day. Visitors will learn about farming practices that protect the watershed, how to compost and how to grow a garden and crotand call management. Other activities for the day will include farm tour wagon rides, how farmers grow and mix healthy food for livestock, an observation window on the milking parlor, baby calves, and a giant ice cream sundae made and served by the Tompkins County Dairy Princess and her court. There will be a food concession stand, including a chicken barbecue. A special activity for children is the Farm Fact Find Passport to Fun. Upon arrival, children receive a colorful passport on a lanyard directing them to visit different exhibits. The passport includes specific questions to be answered by the volunteer offering the activity. Children may gather information or photos to build their passport, receive some information about the topic that includes the answer, and then get a sticker or stamp for their passport. As they leave the event, the child presents their passport and receives a bag of fun farm activities to take with them. The Ag in the Classroom program includes some 100 books and services from many local businesses. For more information call 272-2292.

Letters Policy

Tompkins Weekly welcomes letters to the editor. In order to run letters in print or on the Web, the letter writer should be e-mailed to wrols@twcnyr.com, or mailed to PO. Box 6404, Ithaca, NY 14851. Please include name, address and the best way to reach you for confirmation.

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Briefly...

Enfield Hosts Community Yard Sale

This year’s Enfield Community Yard Sale is on Saturday, Aug. 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Residents may have a sale at their homes or register at the Town Hall or Valley Korner Store to get on the map. Or, they can rent a table at the community building for $15, or donate items to the Enfield Community Council’s “Another Man’s Treasure” sale at the Community Building to help benefit the Enfield Youth Program.

Maps will be available after Aug. 7 at the Valley Korner Store. Coffee and donuts will be for sale on Aug. 11 at the community building at 8 a.m. A full concession stand opens at 10 a.m. Contact Ann Rider at 277-3478 or Karen Stevenson at 277-2333 for more information.

Program Focuses on Health Care Issues

A forum titled “The Fight for Free Universal Health Care — How Do We Win?” will be held Tuesday, Aug. 7, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Women’s Community Building auditorium in Ithaca.

The speakers include Terry Sharpe, president of UAW Local 2300; Rebecca Elgie of the Tompkins County Healthcare Task Force and Bekah Schwartz of the Tompkins County Healthcare Task Force and the International Socialist Organization.

For more information visit www.healthcare-now.org, e-mail rjw35@cornell.edu, or call 280-4070.

Malcolm Bilson Performs at Cornell

Malcolm Bilson, David Breitman and Andrew Willis will perform at Cornell’s Indoor Concert Series, set for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 7, in the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts, 430 College Ave.

Bilson, the Frederick J. Whiton Professor of Music at Cornell, and two of his former students, David Breitman, associate professor of music at Oberlin, and Andrew Willis, associate professor of music at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, perform works of Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and others on the eighteenth-century version of the piano known as the fortepiano.

Free tickets are required and are available (four per person) starting at 6:30 p.m. on the day of the performance in the theatre lobby. For more information call 255-4987, or visit www.schwcornell.edu/events

Children’s Choir to Hold Auditions

The Ithaca Children’s Choir (ICC), a national recognized program for children and young adults, will hold auditions on Thursday, Sept. 6, and Tuesday, Sept. 11, from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Auditions are open to young people between the ages of 7 and 20, and no previous singing experience is necessary. Call 277-1474 to schedule a 10-minute audition.

The Ithaca Children’s Choir is a recognized program for children and young people, committed to excellence while emphasizing the joy of singing. There are five choruses within ICC, including a young men’s chorus for boys whose voices have already entered the treble range. The ensemble members work frequently with guest artists and composers.

A History of Summer Fun on Display

What do boat builders, train conductors, ice-cream scoopers and hotel housekeepers have in common? All of these jobs support the summer vacation industry in the Finger Lakes region, and all are explored in The History Center’s current exhibit, “From Lifeguard to Wine Steward: Summer Work in the Finger Lakes.”

The exhibit, which runs through Aug. 15, explores the history of the jobs attached to the region’s summer vacation industry — and the people who fill them — through vintage and contemporary images and artifacts from The History Center’s collection.

“Summer Work in the Finger Lakes” is one of six exhibitions at history museums around the region this summer that explore the history of vacationing, tourism and summer activities in the Finger Lakes region. For more information visit www.thehistorycenter.net.

Question: How old do you think Ithaca is?

Ithaca: “One hundred seventy-five years.”

— Erik Frank, Ithaca

Cora Rose Machan (right), Ithaca: “One hundred seventy-five years.”

Alexis Santi, Ithaca: “Two hundred twenty-seven years.”

Submit your question to Street Beat. If we choose your question, you’ll receive gift certificates to GreenStar Cooperative Market and Ithaca Flower Shop. Simply log onto www.tompkinsweekly.com and click on Street Beat to enter.
Researchers Unwind Secrets of DNA

Deoxyribonucleic acid, better known as DNA, is the key component in every cell of every living thing on Earth. DNA contains the genetic information for transmitting the particular characteristics of each species from one generation to the next.

Since the time that James Watson and Francis Crick determined the true double helix shape and biological function of DNA in 1953, many great strides have been made in understanding this very small yet complex molecule, of which a single strand can consist of billions of atoms. Their findings are detailed in the June 29 issue of the journal Cell.

One of the researchers who made the find is Daniel S. Johnson, a graduate research assistant in the department of physics working in the laboratory of associate professor and principal investigator Michelle D. Wang. Johnson, who is also one of the authors of the Cell paper, describes how their work resolved an important question about an enzyme found with DNA called a helicase: Does this motor protein actively or passively separate the double helix strands of DNA to allow them to replicate and pass along their genetic codes?

The Cornell team used an instrument called optical tweezers, which consist of a modified microscope in which a laser beam is directed through the microscope objective. Designed and built at the Wang Laboratory, the instrument allows the team to trap plastic beads just 500 nanometers wide in the microscope sample plane (one nanometer is one billionth of a meter).

In this experiment, we attached one end of the DNA to a glass microscope slide, and the other end to the bead,” Johnson explains. “By trapping the bead in the laser, we were able to displace the ends of the DNA (thus applying force) by moving the trap relative to the glass microscope slide. With the helicase on the DNA, we were able to observe DNA unwinding by measuring the movement of the bead in the laser trap.”

The optical tweezers allowed the team to conduct single-molecule experiments on the helicase/DNA system. Researchers could then team to study individual helicase reactions, as opposed to an ensemble average of many helicase/DNA systems.

“It is only 500 nanometers wide; the strands of DNA are too small to be seen even with the optical microscopy equipment in the lab at Cornell’s Clark Hall.”

Daniel Johnson points out the small plastic bead attached to a segment of DNA. The bead is only 500 nanometers wide; the strands of DNA are too small to be seen even with the optical microscopy equipment in the lab at Cornell’s Clark Hall.

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“These studies we were able to observe the helicase translocation rate on single-stranded DNA,” says Johnson. “We also were able to observe the helicase unwinding rate of double-stranded DNA. In these experiments, we applied an external force to the single-stranded/double-stranded DNA fork, and as a higher force was applied to the fork, the helicase unwound the DNA faster. This suggested the DNA fork acted as a barrier to forward translocation of the helicase.”

In order to better understand their results, the Wang Laboratory team developed two quantitative theoretical models. The first model is based on a “passive” unwinding mechanism. In this model, the helicase translocates on single-stranded DNA. As it encounters the double-stranded DNA fork, it waits for the base pairs next to the helicase to thermally fluctuate open before stepping forward. In that situation, the helicase did not destabilize the DNA fork.

“This model did not fit our experimental results, in that our observed unwinding rates were faster than those predicted with the passive model,” Johnson says. “We therefore formulated a model based on an active unwinding mechanism, which consists of an additional component in which the helicase energetically destabilizes the base pairs near the fork junction.”

This model fit well with the research results, suggesting the helicase functions to destabilize the double-stranded DNA near the fork junction.

Johnson and the team chose a bacteriophage, or virus, named T7 to conduct their experiments, due to its relative simplicity. The helicase of the T7 virus has many similarities to helicases found in a variety of other organisms, including humans.

“Knowledge gained from studying this helicase will provide insight into helicases in more complex organisms,” Johnson says. “This is just one small part of understanding the entire DNA replication system, but in order to understand very complex systems it is important to understand the individual parts. One possible application of understanding how helicases unwind DNA is that we may be able to design drugs that prevent this replication and thus reduce the production of cancerous cells.”

Though his educational background is in biology, Johnson has been fascinated by the complexity of biological systems since his undergraduate days.

“I first became interested in single-molecule biophysics when I was researching graduate school programs,” he says. “I felt that it was an area in which the experimental techniques found in physics could make a meaningful contribution to understanding biological systems. My educational training intends to teach at the undergraduate level, as he enjoys working with students.

“During his current work at the Wang Laboratory, which was initially set up with the intention of studying biological systems, Johnson hopes that as a physicist he can make a contribution to biology through the Cornell... Please turn to page 16
Witty Fun, Biting Satire from ‘Simpsons’

By Marni Gauthier

1/2 The Simpsons Movie, directed by David Silverman. At Regal Pyramid.

As I sat in the packed theater at the opening of The Simpsons Movie, Homer Simpson asked the very same question that was playing in my head; and thus implicitly answered it and provided the movie’s first great laugh. It is the same question: Why would anyone pay for something you can see on TV for FREE? I think everyone in this movie theater is a big sucker [turns to face the audience directly and points like Uncle Sam], most of all YOU!

The self-referential humor embodied in Homer’s opening shtick — and densely woven through the film — makes us laugh at ourselves; and it reminded this viewer why The Simpsons is still refreshingly entertaining a decade after it provided a much-needed late-night study break in graduate school. Sure, The Simpsons Movie is mostly like a super-extended TV episode, complete with a commercial and television "internment," but the extra hour and big screen allow for more than sheer entertainment value; Springfield fans belies perhaps the true bent of countless would-be American environmentalists. In the mode of true satire, it is hilariously, darkly comic. There are plenty of merry surprises in The Simpsons Movie. Without spoiling them, here are a mere handful of teasers: grandpa gives a personal inconvenience; Springfield teeters on the edge of apocalypse and our favorite actor-cum-politician prepares to expose humanity’s vices and follies, playing impetus to change or reform through ridicule. Reflecting on the wide demographic of the Simpsons, its often-sophisticated satire along with its slapstick humor, I had to wonder, does the witty decision of The Simpsons inspire any social consciousness? In the line-out-the-door for the movie on a Monday evening stood fans spanning at least 50 years in age. The Simpsons appeals both to the mischievous kid in many of us and the rationally skeptical adults we have become; the hourly-wage worker and the advanced degree-holding professional.

The theme of The Simpsons Movie is the chic topic of the environment. For those fans who are in it for more than sheer entertainment value, the conscience-pricking question is, other than Lisa Simpson — who gives a presentation on the condition of Lake Springfield entitled “An Irritating Truth” — does anyone really care? Given that it will almost surely follow such an announcement at an actual Green Day concert. But what ensues from the raucous Springfield fans belies perhaps the true bent of countess would-be American environmentalists. Connecticut’s best. (including original creator Matt Groening and developer James L. Brooks, along with Joel Cohen, David Mirkin and many others) to develop a more substantial storyline than a single episode can. With fine subplots and numerous scenes featuring the full set of facetious stock characters from the TV show, the movie is, in this sense, classic. Its themes, however, are immediately current, making for what may be the freshest and most far-reaching satire on contemporary America today.

One of the funniest, and archetypal Simpsons satirical, scenes occurs at a Green Day concert. “We’ve been playing for three and-a-half hours,” says the lead rocker, “and now we’d like to take just a minute for the environment.” You can imagine the politically correct reaction that would follow such an announcement at an actual Green Day concert. But what ensues from the raucous Springfield fans belies perhaps the true bent of countess would-be American environmentalists. In the mode of true satire, it is hilariously, darkly comic. There are plenty of merry surprises in The Simpsons Movie. Without spoiling them, here are a mere handful of teasers: grandpa gives a personal inconvenience; Springfield teeters on the edge of apocalypse and our favorite actor-cum-politician prepares to expose humanity’s vices and follies, playing impetus to change or reform through ridicule. Reflecting on the wide demographic of the Simpsons, its often-sophisticated satire along with its slapstick humor, I had to wonder, does the witty decision of The Simpsons inspire any social consciousness? In the line-out-the-door for the movie on a Monday evening stood fans spanning at least 50 years in age. The Simpsons appeals both to the mischievous kid in many of us and the rationally skeptical adults we have become; the hourly-wage worker and the advanced degree-holding professional.

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Advocates Push for Personal Freedom

By Ann Krajewski

The Finger Lakes region, and Tompkins County in particular, has long been an area where people living with a disability have been able to find a safe haven in terms of the many programs offered to fit their needs. The Finger Lakes Independence Center (FLIC) in downtown Ithaca has a wide range of services designed to foster independence for those affected and most of what they have to offer is open to the public and free of charge.

Headed by longtime executive director Lenore Schwager and program director Larry Roberts, FLIC maintains a staff of about 10 at its Fifth Street location. The spacious reception area and offices make it convenient for someone using a motorized wheelchair or other apparatus to get around.

“We’re a civil rights organization and advocacy group,” says Roberts, who has cerebral palsy. “Currently we serve about 1,600 consumers throughout the county.”

Among FLIC’s services and programs are information and referral, ongoing peer counseling sessions addressing a variety of issues including depression, a library and loan closet that has an inventory of adaptive equipment such as wheelchairs, portable ramps and PocketTalkers. They also offer classes in cooking and homemaking, budgeting and self-advocacy. Roberts notes, “The majority of those who serve on our board of directors are people with disabilities.”

FLIC works in cooperation with other agencies including Social Services and the United Way and offers information about the eligibility requirements to receive benefits like Medicaid, Social Security and the Physically Handicapped Children’s program. There are conferences showcasing the latest in assistive technology and work-shops where people can learn American Sign Language. Even the services of an interpreter can be obtained through FLIC.

An aspect that the organization spends a significant amount of time and energy on is the outreach program. “All of our staff goes out to make educational presentations throughout the area,” says Tien Le, FLIC’s rural and minority outreach coordinator. “Last year we did 180 presentations that were attended by more than 4,000 people.”

Those audiences include area schools, college groups and businesses. They are also available to speak to civic organizations. The literature and brochures they offer state that the outreach program is important because it educates people on what it’s like to live with a disability, moving beyond stereotypes and learning how large and diverse the “disability community” really is.

Working with children is a key element of what FLIC does in the community. “We spend a lot of time talking to kids,” Le explains. “We have free programs for them that have a flexible format that can include utilizing role-playing games, informal discussion and important introductions to kids about disability in a non-threatening, matter-of-fact manner. We offer a Student Services program that helps youth from ages 15 to 21 and we provide services to parents in order to better assist their disabled child.”

FLIC was incorporated in 1988 and is a state-funded center. “We were incorporated two years before the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law,” Roberts notes. “We’ve got a lot of activities and events coming up this fall including a visual support group and a technology fair, and I’m proud to say that we’ll be celebrating our 20th anniversary next year.”

He encourages advocates and those with a disability to talk with their lawmakers and to vote. “Laws and policies that are passed by Congress directly affect those with disabilities and we really are in a position to help ourselves,” Roberts says.

For more information about FLIC and its programs call 272-2433 or e-mail at flic@clarityconnect.com.

FLIC program director Larry Roberts and outreach coordinator Tien Le with some of the equipment available from the organization’s loan closet.

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www.FingerlakesPT.net

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The Sixth of Ten Good Reasons to have a 100% Tobacco-Free Policy

COUNTERACTS THE TARGETING OF CHILDREN BY THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY.

The tobacco industry is losing millions of customers who are dying or becoming disabled from tobacco use. They need new users. Internal industry documents indicate that tobacco companies have purposefully marketed to children as young as 14.

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When Roger and Adrienne Bea Smith opened the Main Street Gallery in Groton in 2003, there was a vivid sense that they were defining the term defying-the-odds.

The small storefront gallery, opening with a group show in May of that year, was the brainchild of Roger’s relatives in England.

They were not interested in hotel lobby art pieces or art posters.

They had chanced upon an Utne Reader magazine article naming Ithaca as one of the nation’s most enlightened communities and liked the small town’s rural feel. So, just as they had done when moving to Arizona, they packed up their art supplies and their own artwork (she paints; he concentrates mostly on sculpted work) and landed in Tompkins County with no jobs waiting for them.

But Adrienne, one of the originators of the Lancaster Literature Festival (in Lancashire, England) had experience as an administrator. Both had considerable knowledge of modern art and both had contemporary tastes.

Their vision, then, was to bring sophisticated shows to a rural community gallery following the traditions of an art space in Soho, London. They were not interested in hotel lobby art pieces or art posters.

Their aim was to bring high quality original work to the languishing factory village of Groton.

Along the way, they have mixed it up, displaying a cool approach to surviving in small town by putting on shows with a variety of themes. They have held an exhibition with a focus on motorcycles to coincide with the community’s motorcycle festival. They have offered a show on food called, “Stuff Your Face” and a show on “artooning,” which is a deliberately comedic mixture of stylized art and illustration, usually done with a farcical point to make.

Their late summer shows also reveal the Smiths’ talents for putting together exhibitions that are both appealing and refined and for finding ways to attract artists from near and far.

The 2007 National Small Art Quilt Work Exhibition brings the intriguing world of fiber art to the Main Street Gallery. It is the fourth year they have assembled small art quilts for a regional show. The first two years they ran it, they made it a regional exhibition. For the past two years the show has reached out to artists around the country, and this year’s exhibition includes quilt artists from Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona and the northeast.

Quilt shows are, of course, a staple of the culture from Maine to Virginia and beyond. Most art quilts are a modern mix of old quilting skills and urban art work. Do not expect to see hex signs, silhouettes of birds and exacting stitch patterns at this show.

For example, K. Velis Turan’s 8-by-12-inch fiber art piece called “Sex On The Beach” is not a work normally seen in the community center or county fair quilting shows. Nor is the medium always politically provocative. Fiber artists simply use cloth as their primary material (and not necessarily their only material) to create flatter, canvas-style work or three-dimensional work called “soft sculptures.”

The small town gallery has also attracted reviewers, often from Syracuse, who recognize the depth of the Smith’s vision. The Main Street Gallery is “cozy and Soho-esque,” writes Molly English of the Syracuse New Times. Katherine Rushworth, art critic for the Syracuse Post Standard/Stars, has reviewed several Main Street Gallery shows and says the owners’ vision is “courageous and exciting.”

While their juried shows expand from regional to national in scope, the Smiths are happy with the small shop. “We wanted to keep things small, so that it’s intimate and the communication is better.” Roger says. On the other hand, expansion is available in the digital realm, and the gallery is expanding and finding an audience on the Internet.

For Roger, working with his grandfather, a painter and designer, set the tone. He recalls cleaning brushes when he was three, and he remembers becoming infatuated with colors at that age.

The Main Street Gallery is the natural extension of those early artistic impulses. “It’s in our hearts,” Roger says. “It’s all creative in the end.”
### 7 Tuesday

3-6 Year Old Yoga, yogahana@7, 3:45pm. Info 271-1673 or liftehushi@gmail.com, 209 W. State St., ground fl.
Airplay: Juggling & Yo-Yos, 3-6 Year Old Yoga, 3-4pm. Info yogahana@7. Enfield Glen has rocky and wooded sections. Explore both sections on this 1/2-mile hike.
Tompkins County Community Calendar...
**10 Friday**

Almost, Maine, Cortland Repertory Theatre, 2 & 7:30pm. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. The Aurora Borealis blankets the town like falling snow & unexpected odors. The Aurora Borealis brings the cold, cold nights. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**11th Annual Brockway Truck Show**
Down Bottom Cortland. 8:30am Parade. Enjoy the railroad's history. Meet the drivers and look at their antique trucks. Stop at the Old Building for the classic car/tractor show. Rocketing Rods, Hot Rods, Street Rods, Classic Trucks, and Family Fun Events. Info & tix 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org

**Write the October Sky**, Written by Tom Robbins and directed by Paul Schurung. Showtimes are 8:00pm & 2:30pm. Tickets are on sale now. Ticket info & tix 273-4497 or info@hangartheatre.org. The argument, Cortland, 7:30pm. In this interactive story theater with audience participation, you will discover the truth about the Aurora Borealis and learn how to see it. Showtime is 7:30pm. Tickets are on sale now. Ticket info & tix 273-4497 or info@hangartheatre.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Scrabble & Board Games**, 2-3pm. Info 273-3552 or info@hangartheatre.org. Scrabble & Board Games are also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Stonehedges Golf Course**, 9am. 30 holes, 9 holes, 18 holes. Info 273-4560 or 797-6031 or 844-5211. 989 Dryden Rd. (in Dryden). This is a four-course winemakers' meal in the winery. Info 273-4560 or 797-6031 or 844-5211.

**Open Computer Lab**, 9am-Noon. Info www.TheHistoryCenter.net or info@thehistorycenter.net.

**Design Certification Course**, 10am-Noon. The program is designed to assist the student towards achieving certification in their field of study. Info 351-2945 or 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org.

**Create & Dynamic Resume**, 10am-Noon. What do you need to know in order to create the best resume possible? Learn how to present yourself in the best light. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org.

**Almost, Maine**, Written by John Godber and directed by Tom Robbins. Showtimes are 8:00pm & 2:30pm. Tickets are on sale now. Ticket info & tix 273-4497 or info@hangartheatre.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Buttermilk Falls State Park**, 2pm. Join park naturalist Andrew Bart as you hike to 115-foot-high Lucifer Falls. Meet at Old House Park, Cortland, 7pm. Court House Park on the Right Track, 2pm. Join park naturalist Andrew Bart as you hike to 115-foot-high Lucifer Falls. Meet at Old House Park, Cortland, 7pm. Court House Park

**Cornell Museum of the Earth**, 10-life-long, 10:30am-Noon; Introduction 1-3pm. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Bike Tioga 2007**, Enjoy a two-day bicycle- riding adventure. Bike Tioga 2007 is a celebration of all things cycling. Bike Tioga 2007 is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Impeachment Tailgating, Green 2:30pm.** Join us from 11am-2pm for a simple, social gathering. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org.

**Calligraphy**, June 19, 9am-Noon. Introduction to Open Source applications 10am-Noon; Writing 10:30am-11am. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Open Story Time**, 10:30am. Join us for stories perfect for infants & toddlers. Activities will follow. Info 273-3674 or 798-1100. Open Story Time is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**History Center**, 7:30pm. Tour the History Center in the area surrounding the History Center. Info 387-7041 x131. The History Center is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Almost, Maine, Cortland Repertory Theatre, 2 & 7:30pm. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. The Aurora Borealis blankets the town like falling snow & unexpected odors. The Aurora Borealis brings the cold, cold nights. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

**Green: A World Without Waste**, Saturday, July 14th, 10am-4pm. Info 273-2229 or lam26@cornell.edu. 1608 Trumansburg Rd. (in Dryden). This is a four-course winemakers' meal in the winery. Info 273-4560 or 797-6031 or 844-5211.

**Open Computer Lab**, 9am-Noon. Info www.TheHistoryCenter.net or info@thehistorycenter.net.

**Create & Dynamic Resume**, 10am-Noon. What do you need to know in order to create the best resume possible? Learn how to present yourself in the best light. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org.

**Dinner in the Sky**, 8:30pm. Info 273-6623 or info@hangartheatre.org. The Aurora Borealis is also seen at the Tompkins County Championships, 10am-Noon. On a cold February night, the Aurora Borealis dances in the sky. Some hearts are healed, some may be broken, but the Aurora Borealis is a symbol of hope. Everyone is “Almost” changed. Ticket info & drop-ins welcome. 273-3552. Info @ cortrep.org.

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In recent weeks new research has shown that some of the things that we thought were good for us are just not worth the time and money. Just like in the days when it was believed that babies should be encouraged to sleep on their tummies and frogs could cause warts, it seems scientists have changed their tune again.

Vitamin C, once believed to have preventive powers against the common cold, is shown to be pointless. While two-time Nobel Prize-winner Linus Pauling purported that Vitamin C produces curative effects, an analysis of Vitamin C supplementation, which consists of assessing more than 11,000 patients over 60 years in 30 studies, shows otherwise. Conducted by the Australian National University in Canberra and Finland’s University of Helsinki, the study produced interesting results: the subjects found not to be effective. A Journal of the American Medical Association study shows that there is no additional benefit when taking more than the recommended servings of five fruits and vegetables a day. The seven-year study involved more than 3,000 women. For the 2.4 million breast cancer survivors, and the 178,000 women expected to be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in 2007, the advice now is that there is no need to overdo it on fruits and vegetables.

Yet, scientists always leave room for modification and also point to other potential uses for Vitamin C, lycopene and diet changes. For example, some studies show that an increased intake of Vitamin C is linked to a decreased rate of mouth, throat, stomach, colon and lung cancer. Meanwhile, healthy adults don’t need Vitamin C supplements, but those who are elderly, on estrogen-containing birth control pills, or taking aspirin regularly can have lower Vitamin C levels in their blood and may want to consider increasing their intake.

Moreover, those taking iron supplements for iron deficiency anemia are often advised to increase their Vitamin C intake to increase the absorption of iron. Limited evidence still exists for a possible benefit for lycopene in preventing prostate, ovarian, gastric and pancreatic cancer. And it’s still true that eating plenty of fruits and veggies and sticking to a low-fat diet will help the body function better than if people were to live on chocolate candy, cake, and French fries.

The good news is that it seems the same old advice is sometimes still the best advice. A new study by Harvard University researchers shows that refraining from smoking, eating better and regular exercise not only helps people experience healthier lives, but can reap the rewards faster than expected. In a recent issue of Circulation, the study found that men who fol-

Cayuga Medical Center Birth Announcements
CASWELL – Charles E. Caswell and Sara F. Beckwith, Ithaca, a daughter, Tina Marie, on July 1.
PRENTICE – Matt Prentice and daughter, Tina Marie, on July 1.

Common Medical Advice Dispelled
By Jennifer Moyer

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Ten Thousand Villages Holds Rug Event

Ten Thousand Villages in Ithaca will hold its third annual Oriental Rug Event, featuring rugs from Pakistan made by fairly paid adult artisans, Aug. 24-26 at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, 302 St. Catherine Circle in Ithaca.

Hours are Friday, noon to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. A free, educational presentation, “Introduction to Oriental Rugs,” will be held on Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m., also at St. Catherine’s.

More rugs will be available at this year’s rug event. An extra 50 rugs will be trucked from Ten Thousand Villages central location in Pennsylvania to satisfy the great response from Ithacans in past years.

The rugs, handmade in Pakistani homes by fairly paid adults, will be available for sale in a variety of sizes and colors during the event. Examples of the rugs available in Ithaca can be previewed at the Ten Thousand Villages rug website at rugs.tenthousandvillages.com.

Ithacans have been very supportive of Ten Thousand Villages’ fair trade Oriental Rug Event, purchasing enough rugs in 2006 to support 40 Pakistani families. Rugs purchased at Ten Thousand Villages enrich the lives of artisans who create them by providing income for food, health care, education and improved housing.

For more information about the Fair Trade Oriental Rug Event, please contact the store at 256-0616 or visit rugs.tenthousandvillages.com.

Researchers

Continued from page 8

research lab.

“We have unique experimental techniques uncommon to traditional biology labs,” says Johnson. “The techniques of this lab are particularly useful for studying these motor proteins, because this instrumentation allows us to observe mechanical displacements and forces in ranges (on the order of nanometers and pico-newtons, respectively) that are relevant to molecular motor proteins.”

The Wang Laboratory is interested in many aspects of DNA replication. In the case of helicases, they are critical for many biological processes, which include DNA replication, repair and recombination.

“Without them, it would be impossible for cells to replicate themselves, as well as to repair themselves,” explains Johnson.

Along with Johnson and Wang, the other team members who made this important find for biology include Smita Patel, a professor at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Lucy Bai, who recently graduated with a Ph.D. in physics at Cornell and graduate student Benjamin Smith.

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