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Pictured, from left, are Betty Palmer, Falconer Public Library clerk; Joe Dispenza, Falconer resident; Sue Seamans, Falconer Public Library director; and Brenda Cavallaro, Falconer historian.
Photo submitted by Laurie Becker

Legislators OK Updated Sewer Plant Project

BY JIMMY MCCARTHY
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MAYVILLE — County legislators unanimously approved new plans and more spending to upgrade a sewer plant in Mayville during Wednesday's meeting.

Specifically, the legislature authorized the issuance of \$1.1 million more in bonds for the project at the North Chautauque Lake Sewer District's treatment facility. The proposed project originally garnered legislative approval to issue bonds in May 2015. It was estimated at \$2.8 million at that time.

With a change in engineers from AECOM to O'Brien and Gere, and new DEC disinfection requirements, the project is now estimated at \$3.9 million. The county was able to secure zero percent financing, however, which means user rates won't increase.

The legislature also approved a resolution stating that new plans are in the public's interest. One of the major changes surrounds the use of ultraviolet technology for treatment of incoming wastewater at the facility, which eliminates the need for chlorine gas to disinfect. Per the state Department of Environmental Conservation, chlorine that's used to disinfect must be taken out.

Rates for the typical single-family home within the district were going to be \$472 a year, a jump of \$94 from original rates. With no-interest financing available for 30 years, rates will instead be \$466 per year, an increase of \$88.

A public hearing held before legislative action yielded no feedback. Legislator Pierre Chagnon, R-Bemus Point, complimented the project.

"It's an improved project, which is broader in its scope," Chagnon said. "It's better for the environment at a cost to the users that is lower than what's previously proposed and approved. I'm very proud of the work that was done."

In other matters, legislators approved to set higher salary grades for transfer station supervisors, senior emergency and police dispatchers and nurse practitioners in public health and mental health. Pay grade increases were made to bring more recruitment and retention to each position.

Transfer station supervisors will move from grade 12 to grade 14, which brings anywhere from \$38,813 to \$49,878 per year. Senior emergency and police dispatchers will move from grade 15 to grade 17, which brings anywhere from \$47,341 to \$64,189 per year. Nurse practitioners will move from grade 32 to grade 35, which brings anywhere from \$78,114 to \$101,137 per year.

Over 20 budget reconciliations were also approved by legislators. The biggest budget overage came from the County Jail, which was around \$700,000.

Legislators also authorized the director of finance to increase appropriations for the South Main Street Bridge in the city of Jamestown. Project construction, which was originally estimated at \$2.3 million, rose to \$3.7 million. The project isn't a full bridge replacement but instead a major rehab. Federal funds will foot 80 percent of project costs. Out of the remaining 20 percent, the state will fund 15 percent while the county will provide 5 percent.

"It's an improved project, which is broader in its scope."

A Few Good Deeds

Village Residents Find Wills Of Original Falconer Family

BY A.J. RAO
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FALCONER — Imagine finding a significant piece of history right in your own home — one that dates back well over 100 years.

That was the experience of Joe and DeEtte Dispenza, a Falconer couple who recently stumbled across the wills and testaments of the original Falconer family; specifically, Patrick Falconer, along with his son, William T., and granddaughter, Ethel.

"My dad, who used to own our house (on West Everett

Street) had passed away, and I knew he had a little strongbox upstairs," said Joe Dispenza. "Inside, there was a title search for the home, and only recently did I read through it and discover the last wills and testaments of the Falconers. It was really quite surprising."

Indeed, Patrick's father, Robert, is believed to have purchased the land — now known as the village of Falconer — from Edward Work, back in 1836.

The documents found in the Dispenza's home date back to 1881.

"I don't know how in the

world (these documents) ever got in with the title searches for this property," Dispenza said. "They don't even pertain to the house, they pertain to the whole village of Falconer."

Brenda Cavallaro, Falconer historian, said it's unclear whether joining property documents with wills used to be a common practice back in the day. Researching this, she said, is part of the thrill.

"To a historian, it's really quite fascinating," she said. "Anything like this that involves our founding families is really significant. It's like

adding another piece to the whole puzzle of what things were like back then."

Dispenza said he immediately brought the documents to the attention of Sue Seamans, Falconer Public Library director, who in turn, informed Cavallaro. Both agreed the documents were never before seen and an incredible find.

Initially kept in the village safe, the documents are now being examined by Cavallaro. She said copies will be prepared and made public at the Historian's Office above the Falconer Public Library.

Graduation Report Finds Girls Have Advantage Over Boys

BY KATRINA FULLER
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The girls are taking the lead in Upstate New York when it comes to graduation rates, according to Buffalo Business First.

The publication's recent report on graduation rates shows that girls are graduating at a higher rate than boys in the upstate area. Buffalo Business First analyzed the 2016 graduation rates for the 349 Upstate New York school districts in which at least 20 girls and 20 boys entered high school in 2012. The rates were the percentages of students who earned diplomas by June 2016.

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| GIRLS VS. BOYS GRADUATION RATES | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Schools | Girls | Boys |
| Bemus Point: | 90.6 percent | 94.7 percent |
| Cassadaga Valley : | 83.3 percent | 75.8 percent |
| Chautauque Lake: | 87.0 percent | 76.9 percent |
| Dunkirk: | 80.3 percent | 74.6 percent |
| Falconer: | 85.7 percent | 92.5 percent |
| Forestville: | 82.6 percent | 91.2 percent |
| Fredonia: | 90.7 percent | 88.5 percent |
| Frewsburg: | 90.7 percent | 92.3 percent |
| Jamestown: | 81.1 percent | 67.6 percent |
| Panama: | 100 percent | 100 percent |
| Pine Valley: | 87.1 percent | 65.2 percent |
| Silver Creek: | 83.7 percent | 82.9 percent |
| Southwestern: | 94.4 percent | 93.5 percent |
| Westfield: | 91.3 percent | 75.0 percent |

Bills Targeting Transgender Bathroom Access Are Floundering

BY DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

Bills to curtail transgender people's access to public restrooms are pending in about a dozen states, but even in conservative bastions such as Texas and Arkansas they may be doomed by high-powered opposition.

The bills have taken on a new significance this week following the decision by President Donald Trump's administration to revoke an Obama-era federal directive instructing public schools to let transgender students use bathrooms and locker rooms of their chosen gender. Many conservative leaders hailed the

assertions by top Trump appointees that the issue was best handled at the state and local level.

Yet at the state level, bills that would limit transgender bathroom access are floundering even though nearly all have surfaced in Republican-controlled legislatures that share common ground politically with Trump. In none of the states with pending bills does passage seem assured; there's been vigorous opposition from business groups and a notable lack of support from several GOP governors.

The chief reason, according to transgender-rights leaders, is the backlash that hit North Carolina after its legisla-

ture approved a bill in March 2016 requiring transgender people to use public restrooms that correspond to the sex on their birth certificates. Several major sports organizations shifted events away from North Carolina, and businesses such as PayPal decided not to expand in the state. In November, Republican Pat McCrory, who signed and defended the bill, became the only incumbent governor to lose in the general election.

"We don't need that in Arkansas," said that state's GOP governor, Asa Hutchinson, earlier this month. "If there's a North Carolina-type bill, then I want the Legislature not to pass it."

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QUESTION OF THE DAY

Should transgender bathroom policy be decided at the state level?

To give your answer, go to <http://www.post-journal.com>

Today's Thought

"Be kind to unkind people. They need it the most."

— Ashleigh Brilliant, English-born American writer

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57°

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