



## ***WHAT'S INSIDE:***

[\*Small Business Saturday Boost Our Economy!\*](#)

[\*2019 108th District Constituent Survey\*](#)

[\*Lend a Hand this Holiday Season\*](#)

[\*New Library Hours in Cohoes\*](#)

[\*Financial Literacy Workshops\*](#)

[\*Holiday Green Show\*](#)

[\*Dunn Landfill Update\*](#)

[\*Small Business Saturday Boost Our Economy!\*](#)

A promotional graphic for Small Business Saturday. At the top left is a stylized icon of a storefront with a red and white striped awning and a sign that says "OPEN". To the right of the icon, the text "Small Business Saturday" is written in white on a dark blue background. Below this, on the left, is a red pill-shaped box containing the text "Nov. 30" in white, followed by the text "Shop local. Boost our economy." in blue. On the right side of the graphic are two overlapping photographs: one showing two women in a shop, and another showing a man in a shop with a chalkboard in the background that has "PLASTIC" written on it.

Small Business Saturday is this Saturday, November 30th! As a small business owner, former Mayor and now a state legislator I am happy to see this event building in popularity each year.

In 2010, American Express founded Small Business Saturday to help independent businesses with their most pressing need – getting more customers. The single day has grown into a powerful movement and more people are taking part than ever before.

It might surprise you to know that small businesses employ over 50% of our nation's workforce. It is small business that pays the property taxes (with little if any requests for tax breaks), pays income taxes (no offshore entities to evade taxes), employs residents in our communities and

supports the dozens of non-profits from Little League to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and beyond. During my tenure as Mayor and today as Assemblymember I can say that it was a rare moment when I had received a 'no' from any small business when we needed support for organizations in the community. I am sure that is a consistent trend across the state and nation.

Small business is an integral part of our economy and our community. It is small businesses that provide that personal service that we hear so often is absent with the online and large retailers. That is not to say that online and large retailers do not play a role, however it is a concern that we live in a depersonalized society now more than ever and it is personal service that wins the day more often than not.

Study after study has shown that every \$1 spent locally impacts an additional \$3 spending in our region. Not a bad return on our investment and nothing like staying close to home!

So, this Saturday and beyond, keep your small business in mind – they are the backbone of your community.

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### [\*2019 108th District Constituent Survey\*](#)

Please take a few moments to complete our 2019 108th District Constituent Survey! Your survey responses help guide my work as your representative in the New York State Assembly. I look forward to receiving your input since I rely on it when voting on measures, sponsoring and supporting legislation, and prioritizing funding in the budget process.

The third question in this year's survey is:

There is a bill that would propose to legalize paid surrogacy agreements in New York State. The measure passed the NYS Senate in 2019 but did not advance in the NYS Assembly. Do you support the legalization of paid surrogacy agreements in NY?

Complete this question and the full survey [here!](#)

## DISTRICT NEWS

### [\*Lend a Hand this Holiday Season\*](#)

The holidays can be a joyous time to spend with friends, family and loved ones and reflect on all that we have to be thankful for. But unfortunately, there are many New Yorkers who struggle to make ends meet and may not even know where their next meal will come from. As we prepare for the upcoming holiday season, it's important to remember those in our community facing food insecurity and think about what we can do to make their holidays a bit brighter.

According to the hunger-relief organization Feeding America, nearly 1 in 6 children struggles

with food insecurity in New York State alone.[1] Many of these children and their families rely on federal and local hunger prevention programs and food banks to give them the nourishment they need, and yet the federal administration has tried to cut aid to these individuals. Earlier this year, President Trump proposed changing the way the poverty level is calculated, which would underestimate the country's low-income population and keep millions of families and individuals from qualifying for assistance programs that help them put food on the table.[2]

Nothing will change unless we step up. The Assembly Majority has taken immediate action to combat poverty and fight for the struggling families in our communities. Earlier this year, the Assembly passed a state budget that provides \$4.5 million for the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative to continue its work reducing inequality and lifting New Yorkers up. The budget also includes \$2.3 million to ensure eligible students don't have to pay for reduced-priced meals so that they can focus on their studies – not hunger pains.

There are many ways that you can help provide local families with access to healthy food, such as supporting local food banks and soup kitchens with donations, volunteer hours or both. You can visit [health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/hpnap/regional\\_foodbank\\_map.htm](http://health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/hpnap/regional_foodbank_map.htm) to find the regional food bank serving our area. We are blessed to have so many strategic nonprofit partners in our region such as the Regional Food Bank, The Food Pantries of the Capital Region just to name a few. I encourage you to help out this holiday season – even the smallest contribution can make a huge difference in someone's life.

With your help, we can combat hunger in New York.

[1] [feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/new-york](http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/new-york)

[2] [nytimes.com/2019/05/07/us/politics/trump-poverty-level-proposal.html](http://nytimes.com/2019/05/07/us/politics/trump-poverty-level-proposal.html)

### [New Library Hours in Cohoes](#)

Join the Cohoes Public Library as they celebrate new Saturday hours. Starting in December, you can come and visit the beautiful, historic Library at 169 Mohawk St. on Saturdays, from 10 am – 1 pm. Those hours will be expanded on January 4 to 10 am – 4 pm.

To kick off the new hours, there will be a special grand opening party on December 7. Everyone is welcome. Check out their Facebook page for updates [here](#).

### [Financial Literacy Workshops](#)

Capital Region BOCES and SEFCU's Financial Education team are hosting two upcoming financial literacy workshops in December.

The first workshop will cover basic budgeting tips and tricks on **Wednesday, December 4 from**

**1:30-3 p.m.** at 20 Warren Street Albany, NY 12202

The second workshop will focus on fraud prevention and will take place on **Thursday, December 12 from 5:30-7 p.m.** at the West Hill/Arbor Hill Literacy Zone 388 Clinton Ave Albany, NY 12206

These events are open to all members of the community at no cost to the participants. However, attendees are asked to contact Literacy Zone Coordinator Cody Netzband at 518-694-4567 to reserve a spot (space is limited). See the event [flyer here](#) for more details.

### [Holiday Green Show](#)

In the tradition of a historic holiday celebration, members of the Van Rensselaer Garden will transform 12 rooms of the 1827 Federal-style Hart Cluett Museum into a green winter wonderland. The Holiday Greens Show has been the community's signature holiday event since 1956 and inspired Troy's celebrated Victorian Stroll.

You can visit the Holiday Green Show between December 5th - 8th. To learn more or purchase tickets visit: <https://www.hartcluett.org/events>

## IN THE NEWS

### [Dunn Landfill Update](#)

It was recently announced that the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has stepped up their oversight of the Dunn Construction and Demolition (C/D) Landfill in Rensselaer. This has been a gradual process based on complaints from the community and continued dialogue between the residents and government officials from the state level such as me and Senator Neil Breslin to the county and city level as well.

Please take a few moments to check out [my blog piece here](#) to read more about this ongoing situation.