

# Steuben County Newsletter

Winter 2020



**\*\*\*Please Distribute to All Interested Board Members and the Public\*\*\***

## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK....**

The New Year marks significant change for Steuben County government. As I assume the role of Chairman of the Legislature, I'd like to thank my colleagues for the confidence and trust they've placed in me. I'd also like to recognize the years of thoughtful and dedicated service of former Chairman Joe Hauryski.

We all keep a watchful eye as the New York State Legislature gavel into session and prepare ourselves for the unforeseen mandates that may be coming. The State is facing a projected \$6 billion deficit and will likely explore funding cuts or cost shifts to the local taxpayer. We will keep you all informed as to what we are hearing.

With that said, I look forward to continuing to work with you all and I wish you a very happy New Year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott VanEtten", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott VanEtten  
Chairman  
Steuben County Legislature

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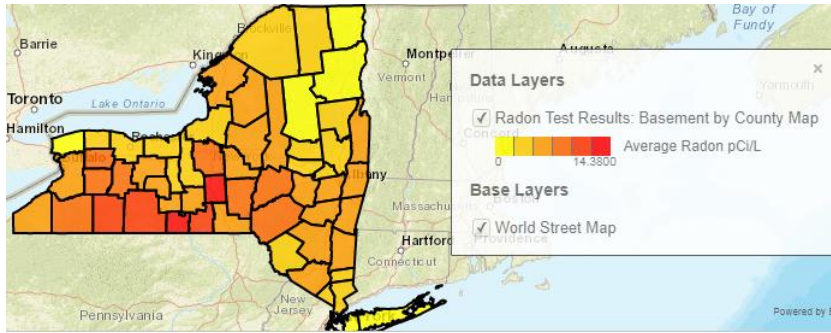
## **Public Health**

### *January is National Radon Action Month*

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer related death in Steuben County. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the decay of uranium from the Earth that is found in nearly all soils. Radon moves up through the ground and can come into homes through cracks and other small openings in foundations. Any home can have high radon levels, but the only way to find out if your home is affected is through testing. Steuben County Public Health has free radon test kits for residents.

A radon level of or above 4.0 pCi/L is considered high, and it is recommended that a system be added to keep radon out of your home to reduce exposure and risk of lung cancer. The map shows the average radon test results in basement readings completed in each county beginning in 1987 to now. You can see Steuben is a darker orange color, indicating higher radon levels. In fact, of the 1,560 homes tested, the average radon level is 11.84 pCi/L. Get your home tested today by picking up your kit at Public Health, Monday - Friday between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.



## *2019 –2021 Community Health Assessment (CHA) & Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)*

Every three years, Steuben County Public Health and our local hospital systems — Arnot Health, Guthrie, and St. James — complete a community health assessment to determine the health needs of the community. To address these identified needs, the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is created with area partners who commit to a variety of activities to work towards improving the health of the community. The newly completed CHA and CHIP are available on Public Health’s Community Health webpage at: <https://steubencony.org/pages.asp?PID=419> .

We are extremely lucky to have a large number of very dedicated partners who are enthusiastic about helping to better the health of Steuben County residents. Partners in this CHIP include the hospitals noted above, the Steuben Rural Health Network, the Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC), Oak Orchard Health, Finger Lakes Community Health, UR Center for Community Health and Prevention, Steuben County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (SCASAS), the Center for Tobacco Free Finger Lakes, the Pregnancy Resource Center of the Valleys, Steuben County Suicide Prevention Coalition through Mental Health, and ProAction of Steuben and Yates, Inc. Additional support of the CHA and CHIP is provided by the S2AY Rural Health Network and Common Ground Health.

Health focus areas for 2019—2021:

1. Child and Adolescent Health
2. Tobacco Prevention
3. Mental and Substance Use Disorders Prevention

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### **Office for the Aging**

As you probably know, Steuben Senior Services Fund, Inc., operating in partnership with the Steuben County Office for the Aging, offers Full Circle America (FCA) services, which utilizes technology, specially trained volunteers and a new philosophy about safety and independence to allow Steuben County residents to age in place.

Gabe Smalt of Bath was recently hired as the Full Circle America Coordinator and comes to us from the Arnot/Ira Davenport Health System where he worked with tele-medicine, and from the Bath VA where he served as a nurse and tele-health coordinator. In a recent report on Full Circle America, 27 members have been served to date including those living in all areas of Steuben County: Avoca, Bath, Canisteo, Cohocton, Corning, Greenwood, Hammondsport, Painted Post, Perkinsville, and Pulteney, The newest installation of this virtual assisted living program is in Hornell. The average age of our members to date has been 92, with an average use per client of 230 days. The Full Circle America cost for those 230 days was \$1,890, as compared to nearly \$21,000 in assisted living costs and over \$100,000 in nursing home costs for those 230 days.

To learn more about this innovative program, call (607) 664-2298.

## **Board of Election**

There are three elections scheduled for 2020: Presidential Primary - April 28, 2020; Federal, State & Local Primary - June 23, 2020; General Election - November 3, 2020. There will be nine days of early voting before each election. For those who will be running for office this year, designating petitions start February 25th.

During 2019, there were 50 new election laws passed. Please call or stop in to the Board of Election to make sure you have the most up to date information and paperwork.

Take a minute and visit our web page at [www.steubencony.org/boe](http://www.steubencony.org/boe), and you will find information like dates and hours for voting, voter registration forms, absentee ballot applications, election results, view your ballot before an election and information on everything from how to change your party to running for office.

Our office is also looking for Election Inspectors, who are a very important part of the election process. Applications to become an inspector are available on our web site or they can call our office and speak with Angie 607-664-2240.

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## **Appalachian Leadership Institute – Session 2: “Economic Opportunities”**

*Steuben County Youth Bureau Coordinator Bill Caudill is participating in the 2019-2020 Appalachian Leadership Institute, a 9-month training initiative sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission.*

The second session of the Appalachian Leadership Institute was held in Dalton, GA, the “Carpet Capital of the World”, in early December, with the theme of “Identifying Economic Opportunities”. The pre-assigned reading, “Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future” by Martin Ford, painted an ominous picture of the future of the workforce, with many jobs in all sectors being replaced by automation.

Consistent with the text, the session included a tour of a brand new Q Cells manufacturing plant, which is completely automated, including wi-fi operations throughout. While the technology was certainly amazing, a key take-home learning was how the city was able to secure Q Cells to build in Dalton.

After the Great Recession in 2008/09, the city created an industrial park and was committed to landing industries other than flooring to occupy it in order to diversify the region’s economic base. The commitment to this plan was impressive, as after ten years of rejecting flooring-related manufacturers, the park finally attracted Q Cells, which built their high-tech factory within four months and now employs hundreds from the area. The Q Cells representative indicated that they selected Dalton because: 1) the industrial park was already graded flat, allowing them to start building immediately; and 2) there was a highly skilled workforce in the area.

The opportunity to walk the downtown of our host cities has quickly become a favorite learning lesson, and Dalton did not disappoint. The director of the chamber of commerce was proud to describe the transformation of the downtown from “dead” to “vibrant” in just a few years. When I asked him what the catalyst was, he felt it was the creation of a downtown open-air concert space in a public park and, surprisingly, the adoption of an “open-container law” which allowed the public to enjoy dinner at a restaurant and then move to the park for a concert, making the downtown more “liveable”.

Dalton has recovered from the Great Recession through the creation of a regional plan to diversify from “the Carpet Capital”, and just as importantly, a commitment to stick to the plan for the long-term good. Add in a swirl of creativity and community reinvestment, and Dalton is certainly an example of the vibrancy of the Appalachian Region.