

*Ellicottville Special Effects – February 27, 2004*

## **Virtually Yours**

**STW Launches New Web Site: DiscoverSouthwestNY.com**

By HANK DUBEY

The Southern Tier West (STW) Regional Planning & Development Board held a press conference Thursday morning at its offices in Salamanca to announce the launch of the DiscoverSouthwestNY.com web site. Now up and running, the site was designed to provide virtual tours of the business, residential, and tourism opportunities that exist in Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua counties.

One of the unique features of the web site is the use of PixEarth technology that utilizes over 6,500 digital images of the area including industrial, commercial, residential, cultural, and recreation locations. PixEarth allows a visitor to the site to enjoy 360 degree views from hundreds of locations throughout the area. Another neat feature is the map system that allows you to zoom in and out of locations within the three county area and even measure the distance from one point to another.

“The purpose of Southern Tier West is to promote the social, physical, and economic development of Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua counties and the Discover Southwest NY web site will go a long way towards that goal,” Donald Rychnowski, Executive Director of STW, told the group. “This region possesses many of the amenities that people and businesses are looking for. This new site will allow us to receive more consideration because decision makers will have access to the information they want and need – something that did not previously exist.”

“Today, we launch a program to market Southwest New York to ourselves and to the world,” continued Rychnowski. “Most of the people in this room know that Southwest New York is a good place to live, work, do business, and play. Through the years as Director of STW, I have hosted a number of visitors representing both the private and public sectors from other areas of the country. They have been amazed at what we in this region have to offer. Many times, I have heard the phrase, ‘Your region is the best kept secret in the world.’”

Well, it may not be the best kept secret in the world for long now that this powerful marketing tool is in place. Echoing those sentiments to those assembled were Holiday Valley’s Marketing Manager Jane Eshbaugh, Executive Director of the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau Andrew Nixon, and President of Jamestown Community College Gregory DeCinque.

STW’s Brian Schrantz then guided the group through a live demonstration of the web site, detailing many of its features. As one browses through DiscoverSouthwestNY.com, the sheer magnitude of volumes of information contained in the 200+ page site is almost mind boggling. However, as Schrantz pointed out, it is still a “work in progress,” and additional information, updates, links, and photographs will be added on a regular basis. It is hoped that the number of photographs alone will be doubled within the next year.

So, to check out the only comprehensive web site that showcases business, cultural, family, and recreational opportunities available in the Southern Tier, go to: [DiscoverSouthwestNY.com](http://DiscoverSouthwestNY.com)

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