

## **Website launched to ‘discover southwest NY’**

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February 27, 2004

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SALAMANCA — A new website for Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Allegany counties — [discoversouthwestny.com](http://discoversouthwestny.com) — was launched Thursday.

The website is designed as a resource for area residents as well as a comprehensive information source for visitors and businesses, said Donald Rychnowski, executive director of Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Agency, one of the project’s sponsors.

“Today we launch a program to market southwest New York — to ourselves and to the world,” he said.

While introducing the area to visitors, “Many times I have heard the phrase ‘your region is the best kept secret in the world,’” said Rychnowski. “Well, a secret no more.”

The 200-page website is broken down into three main sections: business, living and recreation. The website is was described as “comprehensive” by Brian Schrantz, director of information services, but not intended to duplicate the tourism and other website the individual counties have already put together.

Instead, the new website was designed to compliment the work the counties had already completed and bring them together in one place, with many links to existing county websites.

One of the most interactive aspects of the website are the photographic “virtual tours” at the bottom of each page except the home page, said Schrantz.

Using selection menus, web site visitors can specify what community or area they want to view and what sort of attractions. Orange dots appear on a map, and clicking on them reveals photographs of the area selected.

The interactive photograph tours (including some 6,500 photos of the area) are provided by PixEarth technology, including a brand-new HyperNav feature that allows viewers to jump from picture to picture.

The photos allow viewers to “tour around the photos and literally get lost in the region,” said Schrantz.

The website also includes downloadable files on every community in the area, outlining basic information.

“The purpose of Southern Tier West is to promote the social, physical, and economic development of Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties, and the DiscoverSouthwestNY Web site will go a long way towards that goal,” said Rychnowski.

“If we grow the economic pie, there’s a bigger slice for everyone,” said Jane Eshbaugh, director of marketing at Holiday Valley.

The business section information includes:

- Statistical Data on labor force, education, taxes and cost of doing business.
- Regional profile of the technology, infrastructure, industry types, growth and opportunities and natural resources.
- Through the use of the business tool box, business incentive information such as industrial parks, municipal power and incentive packaging can be accessed.

Living section information includes:

- Cultural information on ethnic diversity, religious concentrations, Amish and Native American heritage.
- Data concerning housing, demographic, personal tax and climate statistics.

- Housing essentials such as police and fire protection, housing costs, area developers and architectural flavor.
  - Community details on government, public lands, safety, historic settlement and community facilities.
  - Educational facts regarding public and private schooling, preschools, colleges and universities, and work force training.
- Recreation section content includes:
- Attraction images and links to discover the arts, parks and public lands, history and heritage, wineries, farms, markets and more.
  - Avenues to experience culture in destinations, performing arts and exploration.
  - Sporting information on collegiate sports, children organized sports, professional sports, motor sports and winter sports.
  - Links to accommodations including hotels and motels, bed and breakfast and condos and rental units.

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