

## Inn In The Clouds

### August Lodge Seeks To Fill Market Niche

By JIM KEVLIN

#### HARTWICK SEMINARY

**A** couple of winters ago, Steve, Jamie, August and Sidney Stegman, then of Otsego, the Oneonta suburb, went skiing in Stowe.

Steve had been "carrying around the idea" of a luxury lodge on 180 acres he owns in the hills a minute or two from Cooperstown Dreams Park, but the Stegmans emerged from the Trapp Family Lodge more motivated than ever.

**ON THE WEB**  
- For more on the new inn, visit: [augustlodge.com](http://augustlodge.com)

It was "totally huge," Jamie recalled, first-rate, in a Green Mountain setting that was relaxing and energizing at the same time.

Back in Otsego County, Steve and Jamie - along with architect Lee Mari-gliano - plunged into nine months of back and forth with the Town of Hartwick Planning Board, then another nine months of intensive construction.

On June 29, their dream became a reality, as 25-room August Lodge - named after son August; the most luxurious room is the Sidney Suite, after the Stegmans' daughter - opened, almost completely booked, for its first season. (August Lodge has been using Cooperstown Stays, one of a half-dozen Internet-based rental agencies that have sprung up in the 11 years since Dreams Park opened.)

Monday, July 16, was a "Sound of Music" kind of day, as the Stegmans sat on a bench made of rhododendron roots - more on that later - on a second-floor balcony of the Adirondack-style structure high above Seminary Road. The breeze was Alpine-like, dry and cool. Cottony clouds scudded across the blue sky. Hill folded upon

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Jim Kevlin/The Freeman's Journal

**Jamie and Steve Stegman of Otsego are realizing a dream. They are operating 25-room August Lodge, providing luxury accommodations within minutes of Cooperstown Dreams Park.**



**Visitors from Chicago enjoy the pool and panoramic backdrop.**



**Phil Meeker, a hospitality mainstay in these parts, is helping manage the staff.**

## BEST BETS

Sample what our area has to offer this week in:

#### ART

72nd Annual National Exhibition, July 21-Aug. 24, Cooperstown Art Association, 22 Main St., in Galleries A, B & C. A juried art show celebrating the talents of national artists. This year's jurors are Felicia Blum and Gretchen Sorin. Preview Party, 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, July 20. Awards will be at 6 p.m.

#### MUSIC

Roberta Flack, 8 p.m., Saturday, July 21, Belleayre Music Festival, Highmount. Tickets are \$65, \$60, \$55, \$45. (800) 942-6904 ext. 344 or [www.belleayremusic.org](http://www.belleayremusic.org).

#### LECTURE

"Best Seller" James Fenimore Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans," 7 p.m. Thursday, July 19, 22 Main St., Village Trustees' Chambers. Hugh MacDougall will speak about the famous novelist. MacDougall is the founder of the James Fenimore Cooper Society, the Cooperstown Village Historian and a retired diplomat. The Cooperstown Bicentennial Lecture Series is co-sponsored by The Friends of the Village Library and The Freeman's Journal.

#### OPERA

Glimmerglass Opera 2007: Orphee, 8 p.m., Saturday and 2 p.m., Monday; Orphee et Eurydice, 2 p.m., Sunday; Orpheus in the Underworld, 2 p.m., Tuesday, 7300 State Highway 80, Cooperstown. 547-2255 or [www.glimmerglass.org](http://www.glimmerglass.org).

#### MUSEUMS

NYSHA's Annual Benefit Gala: "Fenimore, Farmers' and Frederic: Celebrating Remington and Visions of the American West," 6:30 p.m. Friday, July 20, The Farmers' Museum and the Fenimore Art Museum. Fundraiser for the acquisitions funds of both the Fenimore Art Museum and The Farmers' Museum, with gourmet cowboy cuisine, dancing to the Thunder Canyon, and Old West-themed activities. \$175 each or \$325 for a set of two. 547-1524.

#### APPLIED ARTS

27th Annual Quilting Conference, July 22 through Aug. 4, Quilting by the Lake, SUNY Morrisville. Admission to quilt show and vendor mall is free. Closed July 28. 2-, 3- and 5-day quilting classes are available. (315) 255-1553 or [www.quiltingbythelake.com](http://www.quiltingbythelake.com).

#### SAM GOODYEAR

ART BEAT

### Glory at Glimmerglass

**G**et to the Glimmerglass Opera box office as soon as you can.

On the strength of the opening weekend, there is sure to be a run on remaining tickets. (You may want to interrupt your reading at this point to call 547-2255 to secure seats. No offense will be taken.)

When Rossini described Jacques Offenbach as the "Mozart of the Champs-Elysees," he meant it either as a very high compliment or a very deep insult.

We are assuming the former, for "Orpheus in the Underworld," which opened

the Glimmerglass 2007 season Saturday, July 7, is a madcap romp that you should not miss. (Dial that number now if you decided to put it off.)

Using the Orpheus myth as a vehicle for very subtle satire of the French 19th-century bourgeois ethic, this exuberant operetta addresses politics, philosophy, sociology, marital discord, family dynamics and sex. A lot of this last, and since we are talking about France, it is pleasurable, healthy fun, and all-consuming.

*Please See OPERA/Page 10*

#### ARTISTS LONGA



Jim Kevlin/The Freeman's Journal

**Sculptors Hortense and Bernard Kassoy, Burlington Flats, who along with Cooperstown's Susie Weil are among the Smithy-Pioneer Gallery exhibitors of longest tenure, were in the crowd at the opening of "Food Art and Artful Food," the new exhibit, Monday, July 16. Also featured is "Lost Worlds," a solo show by Sandra Z. DeVisser**

#### ELIZABETH TREVER BUCHINGER

THIS WONDERFUL LIFE

### I've Made a Few

**E**verybody makes mistakes. And while most of my professional mistakes aren't life-threatening (Reason No. 683 that I'm not a physician), they are in print.

Forever. For example, I recently wrote about the Cooperstown Central School graduation ceremony.

I wanted to capture the emotion of the day - that giddy mix of relief, elation, trepidation and bittersweet nostalgia. And because these students were still grieving for a classmate who died in a car accident just two and a half months earlier, I wanted my story to reflect accu-

rately the weight of that grief, as well as the ways in which these kids have transformed grief into one more thing that makes them close.

I wanted to do all those things in my story.

Instead, I incorrectly referred to two students as valedictorian and salutatorian - titles that don't exist at Cooperstown Central School.

Every year, the school names the top four students in no particular order. This year's honors went to Brian Reis, Rachael Kuch, Kyle McGillivray and Audrey Henkels.

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# August Lodge Offers Plenty of Room at the Inn – Plus a Pool

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 hill toward the southeast.  
 If Julie Andrews in dirndl had come running into view, it would have been hardly surprising.  
 It sounds idyllic, and it is, but this idyll is based on a hard-nosed business plan.  
 Figure it out: 25 rooms at \$2,000 a week for the 13-week Dreams Park season generates a chunk of revenue.  
 As to demand, the sky's not quite the limit, but it's up there.  
 August Lodge can accommodate 325 families over the season, but that's only 2.5 percent of the 13,000 families who bring young ballplayers to test their skills in the nearby

tournament park.  
 Potentially, there's a sociological benefit as well.  
 Dreams Park families have sucked up all the rental properties at premium prices, forcing single people and young families out of the market and, among other things, endangering Milford Central School's future.  
 August Lodge, potentially, is part of a solution. No one's being displaced. It's a new business focused on serving a new niche, and it can do so with precision.  
 And the summer season may be just the beginning.  
 "If it's possible for us to stay open year-around, we will,"

said Jamie.  
 The "four-season beauty" makes the lodge an option for leaf-peepers, plus cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing, she said, and there are "great sledding hills."  
 So far, so good.  
 "It's been great," said Peter Cline of Redmond, Wash., playing catch in the pool with son Regan, 10, while older son Adam competed with the Mudville Nine down in the valley.  
 "It's brand new, and that's nice. The pool was a big plus: No 10-year-old wants to be down there 12 hours a day."  
 Each room is a suite, with a fridge and microwave, so families don't have to eat out at

every meal. There's a comfortable lobby. A detached spa is due for completion in the next few days, with licensed massage therapist Jacqui Briguglio of Otego ready to begin applying hot-rock treatments and body wraps.  
 Steve Stegman is originally from New York City, but was introduced to Otsego County when he came up to SUNY Oneonta.  
 He traveled around after college, and was a ski instructor in Taos, N.M., one winter. Jamie, visiting from Texas, signed up for a class. That was 15 years ago.  
 Steve recently sold his pest-control business in the Oneonta area, so the new project came at an ideal time.



Steve Stegman photo  
**The launch staff at August Lodge included, from left, Brent DeLanoy, Phil Meeker, Hannah Ackerman, Scott Cobstill, Heidi Lancaster, Jacqui Briguglio, Sara Weigel, Danielle Shaver, Amanda Breck and Evan Kister.**

side venture: August Lodge Furniture, and have contracted with a manufacturing concern in the Albany area.  
 Rhododendron roots have the consistency and heft of mahogany, and the resulting furniture is comfortable and sturdy.  
 Go take a look for yourself.

## Dining Guide

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