

## Report to the Membership, September 2022

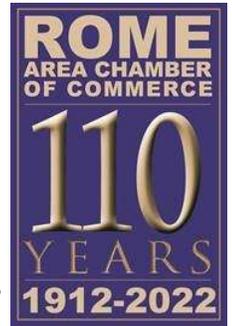


John Calabrese  
*Chamber Board  
Chairman*  
June 1, 2022 -  
May 31, 2023

With nine months remaining in my term as Board Chairman, I continue to be impressed and inspired by the economic progress our community is making and the overwhelming support Chamber members eagerly provide to our various programs and activities.

Rome is seeing unprecedented business growth across multiple industry sectors, as highlighted in our new Member Directory & Community Guide—a publication we use to promote the attributes of Rome to people who are considering relocating here. It is also a valuable tool used to promote the hundreds of businesses, organizations, professional firms, and individuals who support the growth of Rome through their membership investments in the Chamber.

When you receive your membership certificate and your window cling, we hope you will display them proudly as further confirmation of your commitment to the importance of belonging to an organization that for 110 years has been successfully advocating on behalf of Rome, its businesses, and its community.



## Key Initiatives Since June 1, 2022

At the **110th Annual Business Meeting** held on June 7, welcomed guest speaker AnneMarie Walker-Czyz, President & CEO of Rome Health, and recognized the following members for their significant achievements: AmeriCU Credit Union, Bonacio Construction, Capitol Theatre, Wes Cupp, and the Griffiss Institute. New board members were welcomed and those with terms expiring were acknowledged for their loyal service.

**Promoting Rome** as an ideal community for businesses to succeed is a major initiative of the Chamber. We have organized 14 grand openings, ribbon cutting ceremonies, and presented First Dollar of Profit Awards. Included in that number are Congratulatory Certificates presented in recognition of significant anniversaries/achievements by Chamber members.

**Business After Hours**, a networking program that the Chamber first introduced to the Mohawk Valley in 1984, can be informal and fun networking opportunities or seminar-style informative and educational meetings. Chamber member businesses usually host the receptions at their company offices or approved locations. Nine receptions are scheduled or have already taken place since June. Call to find out how you can show-off your business!

With local support, the Chamber organized the successful return of the 750 bicyclists who enjoyed the hospitality offered at Rome restaurants, stores, shops, and historic sites on July 14 & 15 during their 8-day trip from Buffalo to Albany along the historic route of the Erie Canal. Due to the covid pandemic, however, this was the first time the **Rome Bike Tour** was held since 2019. The Chamber actively supports the annual visit because it means so much to our local businesses.

Often referred to as “Rome’s biggest day of the year,” the **Honor America Days Celebration** held on July 30th marked the return of the Parade, Pops Concert, and Fireworks that were put on hold due to the pandemic. This year, the overwhelming support of our sponsors made it possible for the Chamber and the City to provide an entertaining program that promotes Rome’s heritage, boosts community pride, and generates economic activity. Thousands of people situated themselves along the Parade route to be entertained by performing groups, floats, bands, marching units, clowns, and more—fun for the entire family. Later that evening at Fort Stanwix, Symphoria Symphony Orchestra performed rousing show tunes, patriotic marches, and the crowd favorite, the Armed Forces medley - a salute to our veterans - culminating with the *1812 Overture*, and the *Stars and Stripes Forever*, followed by a spectacular fireworks show! Our loyal and generous sponsors make Honor America Days possible each year for the community’s enjoyment.



On July 21, the Professional Development Committee offered members a **webinar that covered key updates to state and federal labor and employment laws**. Topics included Paid Family Leave; Paid COVID Leave; Paid Sick/Safe Leave; Marijuana in the Workplace; and more. The Chamber welcomes your suggestions for future programs.

Annual publication of the Chamber's **Member Directory & Community Guide** is ideal for promoting the products and services available from our members. Additionally, descriptions of the many attributes of Rome, including our cultural, educational, recreational, and health-related amenities, make the publication a "must have" for businesses considering locating in Rome and individuals interested in living here.

The **Chamber revamped website**, [www.romechamber.com](http://www.romechamber.com), allows for improved interaction with our members and the public. Members are encouraged to use the site to enhance your visibility, including adding your offerings to the Events Calendar and Job Posting portals.



The **Rome Chamber Young Professionals Exchange** is a dynamic group of young professionals who work together to build strong professional relationships, learn from their peers and colleagues, and give back to and get involved in the Rome community. This group will be critical to the future growth and success of our organization. For more information, contact the Chamber.

The **Member of the Week** program, designed to recognize Chamber members for their continuing support, was re-established in August. Membership dues makes it possible for the Chamber to offer this and other programs, and we will take as many opportunities as we can to publicize the products and services of your business establishments.

Hosted the largest and most successful annual **Chamber Golf Tournament** on August 10, providing a venue at Rome Country Club for Chamber members to enjoy friendly competition while reinforcing business relationships—and building new ones! This is another event that is enthusiastically supported by our sponsors.

In 1985 the Chamber began offering **health insurance plans** underwritten by the major carriers to our membership. Today, the Chamber is still in a position to offer policy alternatives and affordable choices to small businesses and individuals through arrangements made with our on-staff licensed broker.

The Chamber, in cooperation with the Professional & Business Women of Rome, will present the **Congressional Candidates Forum** on Wednesday, October 19, Delta Lake Inn, 7:30am. To be held during National Business Women's Week, the forum gives you an opportunity to meet the candidates and hear their responses to questions on relevant topics. Also, the PBW will provide important recognition to successful local women who are at the top of their professions.



Local sales tax dollars help the City and County meet their financial obligations without raising property taxes. The Chamber's **Shop Rome First** campaign continues to emphasize that by shopping locally we help to keep our City and County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.



The united association among local and regional chambers and affiliate partners provides a structure to address topics such as tourism, economic development, health care, business/community promotion, and workforce development. With participation from the Rome Chamber, the **Mohawk Valley Alliance of Chambers of Commerce and Affiliate Partners** continues to meet monthly to develop relevant programs for the 23 chambers and organizations that are members of the 6-county alliance.



Since 1966, the Chamber has been providing staff and administrative services for the **Rome College Foundation** to assist in their mission of offering scholarship opportunities for graduating high school seniors and students enrolled in our local colleges. Additionally, **workforce development** continues to be a topic at Chamber meetings with local leaders and education professionals. We hope to re-introduce successful programs for students in the Rome district.

The Chamber continues to serve as the **primary source for business and community information for Rome**.

The office is accessible and staff is eager to respond to your needs as well as the needs of the public.

We always recommend our members first, and sincerely appreciate your continuing membership support!