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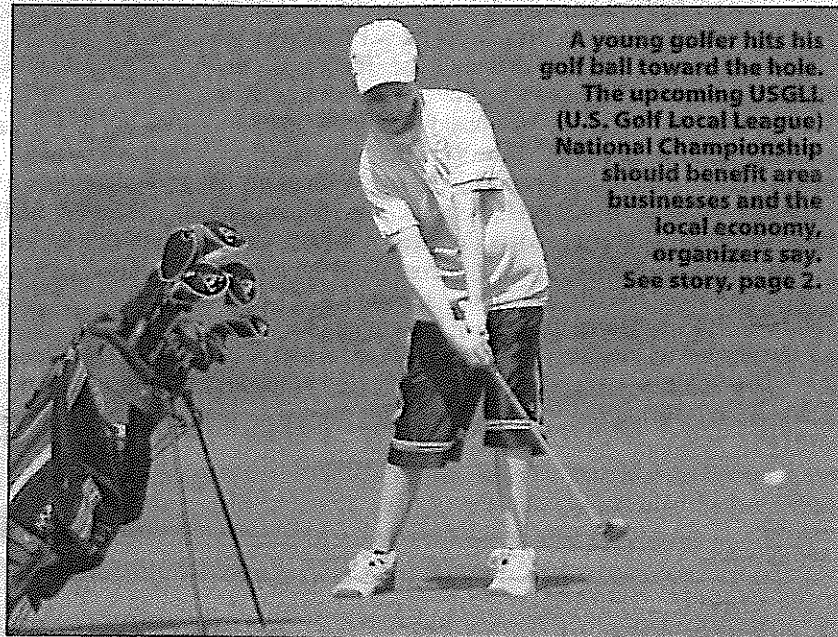
Binghamton Consumer Confidence dips slightly in Q2

BY RICK SELTZER
JOURNAL STAFF

Binghamton consumers continued to resist opening their wallets in the second quarter of 2012, according to an index from the Siena (College) Research Institute (SRI) that showed a slight erosion of willingness to spend in the region. Overall consumer confidence in the Binghamton metropolitan statistical area (MSA) dropped 0.1 points to 65.8. The area

See CONFIDENCE, page 5

■ ECONOMIC IMPACT



A young golfer hits his golf ball toward the hole. The upcoming USGLL (U.S. Golf Local League) National Championship should benefit area businesses and the local economy, organizers say. See story, page 2.

PHOTO COURTESY OF USGLL

Bing base Solut sold t comp

BINGHAMTON Inc., a Binghamton-based energy retailer, has sold its Spanish-based subsidiary and another subsidiary.

Houston-based Iberdrola calls itself a clean energy company. On July 12, the company sold Solutions and an owned subsidiary for \$110.2 million in cash plus additional working capital. Iberdrola USA is part of the Spain-based Iberdrola, S.A. NYSEG is headquartered in Binghamton, respectively,

Small-business owners slash optimism in June

BY RICK SELTZER
JOURNAL STAFF

Small-business owners' plans to hire dried up in June, helping to cause a monthly optimism index to sag to its lowest level since October 2011. The Small Business Optimism Index, measured by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), slipped 3 points to 91.4 in June. It hit its lowest point since registering 90.2 last October. In June, business owners cut plans to hire in the next three months. Seasonally

adjusted, a net 3 percent of owners anticipated increasing hiring in that time period. That's down 3 points from May, when a net 6 percent planned to hire over a three-month period.

New York director's comments

Small-business owners appear to be losing patience waiting for government measures to improve economic activity, according to NFIB New York State Director Mike Durant. The national optimism-index results and his anecdotal experience bear that out, he says.

"I think what we're seeing here is sort of a delayed response to the lack of significant action both in Washington and, frankly, in the last few months here in New York for business," he says.

June's optimism index does not reflect small-business owners' reactions to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that upheld key portions of the federal health-care reform law, according to the NFIB. The court issued its ruling June 28, but ramifications on business owners' outlooks will not be felt

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*News of note for and about
Greater Binghamton businesses*

Report: New York apple production fell 4 percent in 2011

End-of-season surveys of apple growers and processors peg New York's 2011 production total at 1.22 billion pounds, 4 percent below the 2010 crop, according to King Whetstone, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service, New York Field Office.

Fresh-market production of 565 million pounds, down 6 percent from 2010, comprised 46 percent of the total. Apples for processing amounted to 645 million pounds, down 2 percent from the 2010 crop year, according to the field office. The value of utilized production, on a packinghouse-door equivalent basis, totaled \$251 million. Price per pound averaged 20.8 cents. The price for fresh apples averaged 33.3 cents per pound, while processing apples averaged \$196 per ton, the field office said.

Nationally, utilized apple production for 2011 was pegged at 9.31 billion pounds, up 1 percent from 2010. The value of the nation's 2011 apple crop, at \$2.72 billion, increased 17 percent from the 2010 crop value. Price per pound averaged 29.2 cents in 2011, up 15 percent from the previous year, the USDA reported.

Youth golf event should bring boost to area hotels, restaurants

July 16-29, 2012

BY TRACI DELORE
JOURNAL STAFF

BINGHAMTON — From hotel guests to diners, the upcoming USGILL (U.S. Golf Local League) National Championship should benefit area businesses and the local economy, organizers say.

The event, slated for Aug. 6-10 at Traditions at the Glen Golf Course and Resort, will not only bring 24 all-star youth golfers, plus their coaches, to the area, it will also bring their parents, their siblings, and other family members who will come along to cheer them on, says Robert Warholic, East Coast regional director for USGILL, Inc., a Long Beach, Calif. nonprofit organization that promotes youth golf.

"Right now, there are four states involved in this championship," Warholic says. A team from California and two teams from Pennsylvania will join the local New York team for the event. Their coaches bring the total number to 32 people participating in the event, and that has already resulted in the book-

ing of 25 rooms at Traditions, Warholic notes.

He expects another 150 to 200 family members to join the teams, with all of them needing a place to stay and places to eat. USGILL (championship.usgill.org) is hosting a meet-and-greet barbecue the first night of the championship and will ask local businesses to sponsor lunches for the players during the event, but everyone will be on their own for the rest of their meals, he says. That will likely mean good business for Traditions, which operates Bogey's at the Glen and The Tavern, as well as nearby restaurants such as McDonald's, Warholic says.

The benefits will spread beyond hotels and restaurants as well, he adds. The Binghamton Mets donated 24 tickets for the young golfers to attend a game on Aug. 7, but their family members will have to purchase their own tickets if they want to tag along.

The same goes for Chucksters mini-golf course in Vestal, which donated tickets for the golfers to come play



PHOTO COURTESY OF USGILL
Young participants walk the course during a previous year's USGILL event.

Wednesday night. Once again, their family members will have to buy their own tickets if they want to play along, Warholic says.

There will be plenty of other entertainment options for the players and their families as well, he says. "The [Greater Binghamton] Chamber of Commerce has already put to-

gether an information packet for me," he says. The packet, which includes information on places to eat and things to do, will be handed out to each player's family, he says.

On top of the players and their families, Warholic says he also expects some local specta-

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New York

the New York market."

Earlier this year, Direct Energy added 280,000 new Northeast customers when it acquired Vectren Source, a natural-gas supplier in Ohio, Indiana, and

GOLF: This is the third year of the championship event

Continued from page 2

tors to turn out for the event at a cost of \$5 per person.

"We have a really good buzz going around about it," he says of the championship. He expects anywhere from 50 to 100 spectators to attend the event.

This is the third year of the championship event. The previous events were held in Long Beach, Calif., but USGLL opted to move the event east this year to make it more affordable for the teams attending the event.

The teams include children ages 8 through 14, who completed all 10 weeks of their regular golf season and were selected by coach ballots based on their skills as well as their golf etiquette. Golfers from 15 states, including New York, California, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Florida, participate in the USGLL. □

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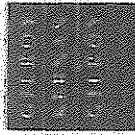
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