

BRIEFS

Cornell student charged with rape

ITHACA — A Cornell University wrestling team member has been charged with first-degree rape in connection with an incident Saturday morning.



Mesko

Peter J. Mesko, 22, of Honesdale, Pa. is accused of unlawfully entering a female's bedroom around 5 a.m. and engaging in "sexual intercourse with her without her knowledge or consent as she was sleeping soundly at the time," Ithaca police officials said. The woman did not know Mesko, according to a police report. Other charges are possible, they added.

Ithaca and Cornell police officers conducted an extensive investigation, including multiple interviews, and arrested Mesko on Tuesday. He is free on \$5,000 bail and is scheduled to return to court on Friday.

Mesko is enrolled in Cornell's college of arts and sciences and is majoring in natural resources with a minor in business. University officials said they could not comment on an active investigation, and did not respond to questions about how pending criminal charges affect students' academic standing.

Cornell hosts fracking discussion

ITHACA — Environmental writers Tom Wilber and Seamus McGraw will discuss fracking and its impact on the region during a moderated public discussion at 5 p.m. Thursday at Millstein Hall on the Cornell campus.

Wilber is the author of "Under the Surface" and Seamus McGraw is the author of "End of Country." The writers will discuss their coverage of shale gas development in the Twin Tier region and they will consider our regional situation in the larger context of our global energy future.

The discussion will be moderated by professor Wendy Wolford of Cornell's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future.

Peace Corps director to speak at CU

ITHACA — Peace Corps Acting Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet will visit Cornell University on Friday to deliver an address, "Making a Difference: Peace Corps in the 21st Century," to the Cornell City and Regional Planning Colloquium.

Hessler-Radelet will make her address at 12:20 p.m. in Milstein Hall. She will also be on campus to renew and expand her agency's post-graduate partnerships with Cornell.

Cornell ranks fourth on the Peace Corps' 2013 Top Colleges for medium schools.

LOTTERIES

N.Y. lottery: (518) 388-3300
On the Web: www.nylottery.org

N.Y. Daily (day): 4-1-7
N.Y. Win 4 (day): 2-0-7-7
N.Y. Daily (night): 2-3-4
N.Y. Win 4 (night): 6-7-3-8
N.Y. Take 5 (Monday): 15-16-18-23-35
N.Y. Pick 10 (Monday): 1-2-3-4-6-12-13-17-23-26-38-39-42-54-56-57-59-60-66-71
N.Y. Sweet Million (Monday): 6-10-21-27-28-39
See Thursday's editions for Mega Millions results.

FOR CORRECTIONS

The Journal attempts to correct errors in its news columns. To report a need for a correction or clarification, call 272-2321 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Farmers' Market opens Saturday

150 local vendors to offer goods at 'nice rite of spring'

By Meagan McGinnes
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ITHACA — Signaling the true start of spring in Tompkins County, the Ithaca Farmers' Market reopens for the year on Saturday.

The market, which features 150 vendors living within 30 miles of Ithaca, will offer fruits, vegetables, meats, eggs, poultry and dairy products, as well as locally made crafts and goods from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

It's a "nice rite of spring" according to Anton Burkett of

Early Morning Farm in Genoa.

Early Morning Farm, which sells organic vegetables, plans to bring a variety of storage crops, including carrots, beets and turnips, for the pavilion opening.

In this early season, it will also focus on getting more people to sign up for its community supported agriculture program, for which the market is a major pick-up location.

There will also be plenty of flowers to choose from, according to Amanda Shenstone, of Graceful Gardens. On opening

weekend, Graceful Gardens will be selling violas, pansies and perennials.

"The mix of vendors between crafts, foods and farms is really unique and holds a great reputation for quality products," said Don Weed from Schoolyard Sugarbush of Moravia, in its sixth year at the market.

Schoolyard Sugarbush maple cream, first introduced at the market, has taken first place at the New York State Fair for a third year in a row.

Both Burkett and Shenstone

said the cold and snowy winter did not affect their growing seasons thanks to planting schedules and greenhouses.

According to Mary McGarry-Newman of Buried Treasures Organic Farm in Groton, most farms in the area use some sort of hoop house or green house during the winter months.

Buried Treasures will not be at the Farmers' Market for opening weekend in order to compile its spring produce.

The market will only be open on Saturdays in April. It will open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays, beginning May 5.



Ithaca High School Code Red Robotics team member Ian Thompson, left, works at a computer while Wade Engelhart, Cameron Burbank and Drew Walters study their robot's mechanical arm assembly. PROVIDED PHOTO

IHS captures robot title

'Raptor' and the Code Red headed to international event

By D.W. Nutt
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ITHACA — A few weeks after it faltered at the Finger Lakes Regional due to mechanical problems, Ithaca High School's Code Red Robotics team swept aside the competition to take the top spot at last weekend's Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotics Competition in Cleveland.

"It's really exciting for us to win this regional this year and we're really proud we were able to pull it off," said team president and IHS senior Istvan Burbank.

Fifty of Code Red's 65 members made the trek to Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center with their 120-pound robot, "the Red Raptor."

The team spent six weeks strategizing, designing and building the robot, which has the appearance of a long-necked crane and the ability to

ON THE WEB

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launch Frisbees with enormous accuracy into a narrow target. It can also climb a 120-inch pyramid made from metal tubes, as specified by the competition's challenge, "Ultimate Ascent."

A total of 53 teams with of more than 1,200 high school students from across the U.S. and Canada took part in the competition. The Ithaca team won 9 of 10 qualification matches and went undefeated in six best-of-three elimination rounds, in which they were partnered with the Mavericks, from Milan, Ohio, and the Bionic Barons, from Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

"Every time the stress kept building, the excitement kept building," Burbank said. "And by the end we were all downright in front of the field, having a great time and biting our nails."

On April 24, Code Red will head to the FIRST international championship in St. Louis. The team will spend the weeks leading up to the finals performing tweaks on the robot and finding more sponsors.

The team is supported by a number of local organizations, among them Kionix, which has announced a challenge grant whereby the technology company will match gifts to the team up to \$7,500.

"I think it's really powerful that we've made it to the international championships, both through winning a regional and (last year) through winning the Engineering Inspiration Award," said Burbank. "One of the common phrases on our team is it's not just about the robot. And it's true. It's about the community involvement and really spreading the message of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology)."

HEALTH WATCH

Hospicare offers grief support

By Shawnee A. Barnes
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ITHACA — Hospicare & Palliative Care Services is offering two support groups for those who have lost a loved one.

The first group is called "Standing in Our New Lives: Women Moving Forward After the Death of a Spouse or Partner," which will run from 2:30 to 4 p.m. for four sessions on Tuesdays starting April 9 at Lifelong, 119 W. Court Street. Register for all four sessions by Friday.

The group is facilitated by Hospicare bereavement volunteer Elaine Mansfield. To register, contact Donna George, at dgeorge@hospicare.org or

272-0212, or Elaine Mansfield at 592-4354.

The second is a four-week group, "Singing Through Grief," which runs from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays starting April 10 at the Unitarian Church of Ithaca, 306 N. Aurora St.

Participants will express their grief through music and song.

The group is facilitated by bereavement counselor Kira Lallas and Hospicare's music coordinator, Jayne Demakos.

To register by Friday, contact Kira Lallas at klallas@hospicare.org or (607) 272-0212.

CARS helps families

The Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services offers an ongoing group called the Family Rebuilding Program for family members and friends of chemically-dependent individuals from 5 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays.

It's an opportunity to understand the nature of addiction, its impact on the family and the recovery process.

The group meets at the Ithaca Outpatient Clinic, 334 W. State St. For questions, call Jennifer Streid-Mullen at (607) 273-5500 ext. 24.

Submit health items to ijnews@gannett.com.

Reed endorses converting Lansing plant

Changing from coal to gas would boost tax base, he says

By Ray Finger
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Converting the coal-fired Cayuga Power Plant in the Town of Lansing to natural gas will result in job growth and tax base stabilization, U.S. Rep. Tom Reed said Tuesday.

"This is a great step in the right direction," Reed, R-Corning, said of the facility that is now owned by Upstate New York Power Producers after former owner AES Eastern Energy filed for bankruptcy.

He referred to studies that accompanied applications to the state Public Service Commission for the conversion that said it would produce dramatic potential job growth.

Coal plants face an uncertain future in New York as the state looks to decrease carbon

emissions and natural gas prices hover near decade-long lows. Costs to convert the Lansing plant range from \$60 million to \$370 million, its owner said.

Lansing would see 500 construction jobs as a result and 90 permanent jobs associated with facility itself, he said. Also, the manufacturers and consumers would see lower utility rates, he said.

The local tax base would benefit as well, Reed said, pointing out that 10.5 percent of the Lansing Central School District tax levy, 6.9 percent of the town tax levy and 1.3 percent of the Tompkins County tax levy is associated with the Lansing power facility.

"To stabilize this local tax base would be a great development," he said, adding that if the facility is not converted, the tax burden would shift to local residents and businesses.

"My understanding is the applications have been made. All the plans are coming together to see these conversions occur," Reed said. "But as you know in life, you can't guarantee anything until the actual buttons are pushed, the I's are dotted and the T's are crossed."

However, all indications are that plans are on the right track, he said.

Reed said he hopes the expedite the process of lifting New York's moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in the exploration for natural gas.



Rep. Tom Reed