



NEWS RELEASE

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FRIENDS OF BASSETT'S "HEART OF THE MATTER" BENEFIT LUNCHEON GAINS NBT BANK AND CENTRAL NATIONAL BANK AS LEAD SPONSORS

COOPERSTOWN, NY - NBT Bank and Central National Bank will be lead sponsors for the Friends of Bassett's "Heart of the Matter" Benefit Luncheon on Friday, Sept. 5. The first annual benefit luncheon will be held 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. at The Otesaga Hotel in Cooperstown with proceeds designated toward the ongoing Bassett Heart Care Campaign. The Friends' fund drive is raising \$12 million in support of the Bassett Heart Care Institute, Bassett's new, centrally located cardiac programs and services.

"We are extremely proud that two such highly respected, community-oriented institutions as NBT Bank and Central National Bank are lead sponsors of our first benefit cardiac luncheon," said Mike Stein, Bassett's vice president of external affairs. "We also are proud that in the five months since it began providing services within our region, the Bassett Heart Care Institute has performed 54 cardiac surgeries, 87 angioplasties and 337 catheterizations."

Daryl R. Forsythe, NBT Bank's chairman and chief executive officer, expressed his commitment to the benefit luncheon and the Bassett Heart Care Institute. "Like Bassett Healthcare, our banking divisions, NBT Bank and Central National Bank, strive to ensure that our customers receive the highest level of service and innovative technology-driven products," he said. "We firmly believe that good health care contributes to the success of our region's businesses and communities. That is why we joined Bassett to help foster the success of the Bassett Heart Care Institute."

Event chair Lisa Manna urged those who haven't purchased tickets not to miss the luncheon. "If you haven't heard Jane E. Brody speak, you're missing out on vital information tinged with entertainment that will ultimately enrich your everyday life."

Ms. Brody, The New York Times' popular and widely quoted personal health columnist and author of best-selling cookbooks, will deliver an address titled "Have a Happy and a Healthy Heart." Enhancing the theme, The Otesaga's famed kitchen will serve a healthy heart lunch, inspired by Ms. Brody's recipes. Before and after lunch, staff from the Community Heart Program, an integral component of the Bassett Heart Care Institute, will conduct free heart disease risk factor screenings for guests who register beforehand. Lunch guests also will get a peek at some of the newest technologies offered by event sponsors in the display area.

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In addition to NBT Bank and Central National Bank, Ms. Manna thanked the following corporate sponsors for their foresight and generosity in supporting the luncheon. “To date, Aventis Pharmaceuticals, Centocor, Inc./Johnson & Johnson Corp., Genzyme Diagnostics, Guidant Corporation, Medtronic, Inc., Olympus Medical Systems, Schering-Acute Coronary Syndromes, Scios, Inc., St. Jude Medical Inc., The Medicine Company, The Tom Morgan Group at Smith-Barney and Wilber National Bank are helping us to lead the way to eliminate heart disease,” Ms. Manna said. Corporate sponsorships are still available at several levels.

The Friends welcomes everyone in the region to attend. Individual tickets are \$50 each, and reservations are required for both the lunch and cardiac risk assessment screenings. Call the Friends Office today: (607) 547-3928.

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Bassett Healthcare is a leading provider of health services in the central New York region, offering quality primary and specialty care services targeted to address this region’s health care needs. For more information about Bassett, visit www.bassett.org