

CHARLES "CHUCK" FRANZESE

Distinguished in the Fields of Engineering and
Community Service

The 2026 Distinguished Alumnus graduated from Watkins Glen High School in 1966. Chuck received an Associate's Degree in Construction Technology from SUNY Alfred and a Bachelor's Degree in civil engineering from Tri-State College in Angola, Indiana.

Chuck joined Hunt Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors, & Landscape Architects, DPC (HUNT) in 1981 after working for his family's public works contracting firm, D&T Franzese Bros., Inc., the Indiana State Highway Commission, and the City of Corning. In 1993, Chuck was one of the founding members when HUNT was re-formed after the firm was purchased from its founder Robert W. Hunt. Chuck was charged with building a civil engineering department that would enable the firm to compete for projects at the county and state levels. After 17 years of developing the transportation design group and establishing its credibility with NYSDOT, the New York State Thruway Authority, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and counties across the state, Chuck accepted responsibility for the management of HUNT's growing municipal engineering practice in 1998 as the vice president for engineering, continuing until his 2016 retirement.

In addition to his transportation engineering background, Chuck has been involved in the design and project management of public water and wastewater treatment projects, landfills and landfill containment systems, drainage studies, the development of parks and pedestrian ways, and other civil engineering design and consulting for municipalities in NY and PA.

Chuck's training and experience provided him with the tools to help his community when the need arose. He was involved in the start of the Five Lakes Development Corporation in the early 1980's. The Schuyler County community was suffering large property tax increases to offset the closing from the bankruptcy of the former Watkins Glen Grand Prix Corporation. Store fronts were closed and tax increases of 15-20% annually were common. Five Lakes allowed the raising of funds from membership and grants, invested with the Schuyler County IDA to save them from bankruptcy and complete the building of the Seneca Harbor Park. Ultimately, Five Lakes organized the selling of the properties behind the park and worked with a developer to build the now Watkins Harbor Hotel complex which has become an economic generator. Chuck was directly involved in a meeting between NASCAR and Corning Enterprises to look at purchasing the WGGC racetrack and reopen it as Watkins Glen International (WGI).

When Chuck was Chair of the Tri County Housing Council, the Steuben Church People Against Poverty, who served Steuben, Allegany, Cattaraugus, Yates, and Schuyler Counties, approached Tri County to merge and open up not only the area served but to bring the development of properties to serve the needs of the elderly, disabled, addicted, and other needs in the area. He was a part of the negotiations and took over as the Chair of the newly formed Arbor Housing and Development for the first four years. He served a total of 22 years on the respective boards.

Chuck was part of the investment group which purchased the former Seneca Frosted Food building. They tore down the neglected and debilitated structure but found funding that allowed the history of the original Watkins Brewery to be preserved with a new structure containing seven condos which is very similar to the original.

He is a former Director of the Southern Tier Regional Planning and Development Board and former chair of the Schuyler County Environmental Management Council. For over 35 years, Franzese has been active in the New York State Association of County Highway Superintendents, the Associated General Contractors, New York State Association of Towns, New York State Conference of Mayors, and the New York Rural Water Association.

Chuck has received numerous awards including the NYS Association of Environmental Management Councils, NYS Rural Water Association, NYS County Highway Superintendents Association, American Council of Engineering Companies, and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

CHARLES FRANZESE

Some projects in the community of which Chuck is most proud:

- Stone Breakwater protecting Seneca Harbor Park
- Improvements at WGI including distribution of water and sewer, new grandstands, paved out corners and catch fencing, reconstructed pit area, and the planning and consultation of the new Media Center as well as numerous pavement improvements.
- Watkins Brewery Apartments
- Numerous additions and improvements to the Watkins Glen Central School Campus
- Seneca Harbor Park and Catherine Valley Trail
- Numerous bridge replacements in Schuyler County
- Village of Watkins Glen Water Treatment Facility

From the program of the Class of 1966's production of "Lil' Abner".



EVIL EYE FLEAGLE - CHUCK FRANZESE

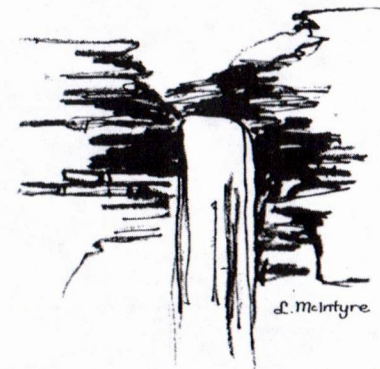
"Picture the warm friendliness of a rattlesnake. Picture five-feet-four of menacing manhood. Picture two eyes peering out with supernatural powers of malevolent intent." In other words, picture Evil Eye Fleagle, a character indispensable to General Bullmoose's diabolical plan. We think you'll all agree that Chuck Franzese's rollicking portrayal fits the above description to a "T".

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

2026

CHARLES "CHUCK" FRANZESE

GRADUATE OF THE CLASS OF 1966



Watkins Glen High School
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

JUNE 27, 2026

99TH ANNUAL ALUMNI BANQUET