



SWPC is a neighborhood organization funded for and by the South Wedge community

South Wedge Victory Garden

by Allison Clark

Calling all neighbors! This is your chance to be part of a great community project and hone your gardening skills at the same time. If you've ever wanted to grow your own summer vegetables, then the South Wedge Victory Garden is for you!

The South Wedge Planning Committee is creating a community garden this summer where anyone from the neighborhood can reserve a lot, free of charge, and grow vegetables.

The garden will be located at 122 Hamilton Street. SWPC and its sponsors will provide plots to individuals and families who want to grow their own vegetables. In addition, a number of plots will be available to community associations and local block clubs.

The Victory Garden will consist of approximately 27 raised 4 ft. x 8 ft. beds. The beds will run north south to maximize sunlight exposure. Each raised bed will be enclosed by a 12" high painted common pine frame. The ground will be tilled and a weed barrier will be used. The beds will then be filled with a mix of soil and compost materials. All of this preparation will be completed by volunteers, and the plots will be ready and waiting for you to plant your

vegetables of choice.

There is no cost to the individuals. The plots will be shovel ready to the users. Here are a few Victory Garden "Musts" for the betterment of all: Plot holders must keep their garden maintained (weeded and watered) The site will have a compost area to collect and reuse garden waste. Vegetables should be harvested in a timely manner. No chemical sprays allowed; natural fertilizers only please. Each plot holders will help to keep the site neat and orderly. The beds may be used to produce vegetables for personal consumption only. Accent flowers may be added if you wish.

Aside from these few requirements, individual plots may be planted based on personal desires. However, smart gardeners have told us that tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, eggplant, greens and broccoli will do best under the anticipated soil conditions.

Need seeds, equipment and know how? SWPC is ready to provide seedlings to plot holders if requested, and several South Wedge Farmers Market members have agreed to offer technical gardening advice. And as usual, the South Wedge and Cornhill Tool Library gardening tools can be borrowed

when available at scheduled times.

Don't delay! Garden plots will be assigned on a first come first served basis, so sign up today for your plot. This is a great way to get to know others in your community, enjoy the Rochester summer and provide healthy nutritious food for you and your family.

Watch for special Victory Garden events! SWPC is planning a community read of Newberry Medal Winner Paul Fleischman's book, *Seedfolks*, sometime during the growing season. *Seedfolks* is a collection of vignettes by 13 characters describing the first year of a community garden in a Cleveland immigrant neighborhood. (Pete Seeger bought several copies of the book to share with others). The date for the discussion of this book will be announced in the next issue. Start reading.

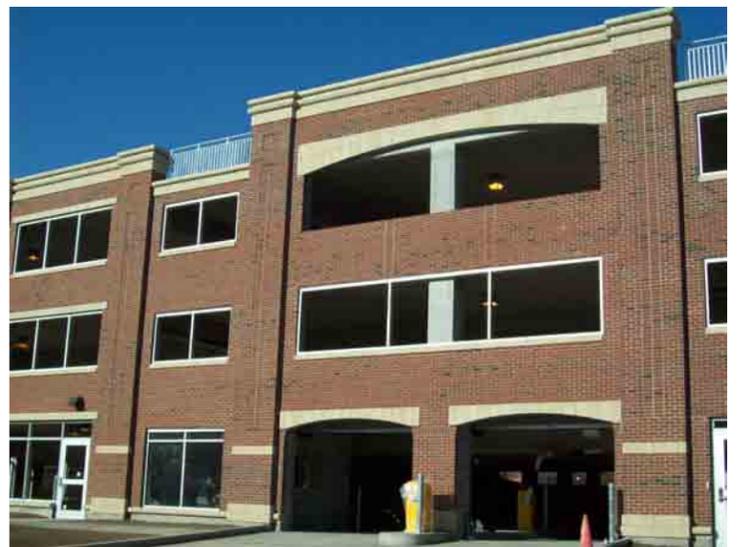
If you are interested in a plot, there will be an informational meeting gardeners are required to attend. The dates are May 4 at 6:30 p.m., May 7 at 7:00 p.m. or May 9 at 10:00 a.m. If you are interested in reserving a garden plot, please contact Allison Clark at (585) 256-1740, ext. 106 or aclark@swpc.org. Plots are on a first come first serve basis, so reserve yours soon. ♦

Highland Hospital Neighbors Are Seeing Red—Bright Red

by Robert Boyd

The Highland Hospital Parking Ramp on South Avenue is nearing completion. The South Avenue side is a very subtle brick design with a color that fits the street. The other sides of the building were stained a very bright red. The red color does

not match the façade nor any of the adjacent buildings. It is an awful color. Many residents complained, and the Hospital is considering changing the color. Please contact the hospital at 585-341-6210 and express your concern! ♦



A sedate brick front façade on South Avenue--The new Highland Hospital Garage's front façade shows all the signs of the long, long discussions between the hospital and its neighbors. The construction was not welcomed by Linden Street residents when they learned about it in summer 2006. The current design is a result of attempting to meet the needs of the hospital and the neighborhood and is significantly better than the initial proposal. (Photo by Robert Boyd)

Nominate Gardens of Distinction

by Nancy O'Donnell

The South Wedge Planning Committee is on the lookout for gardens of distinction in

the greater South Wedge area. Please consider nominating your or a neighbor's garden for any number of its wonderful characteristics: flowers, statuary, layout or landscape from formal to whimsical. We'd also like to see the work of young

gardeners, too!

Nominated gardens will be featured in the June/July photo spread in the *Wedge*.

For more information, contact Allison Clark at 256-1740, ext. 106. ♦



The garden outside of Cheryl Stevenson's home on Averill Ave. won the award for "Best Streetscape" in last year's garden contest. (Photo by Allison Clark)



And hot tamale red on the sides--Early on in the planning, Highland Hospital notified SWPC and the affected neighborhood that they wouldn't be using brick around the entire garage. However, the hospital assured the groups that when the sides were going to be painted, they'd be consulted about the paint color. Mid March neighbors on Linden Street discovered a volcano of color had erupted on their horizon. One thing to be grateful for? The garage is only three stories of electric red instead of five (Highland Hospital's first design). (Photo by Robert Boyd)

Calling all South Wedge Artists

Wedgestock 2009 quickly approaches, and this year we'll be showcasing South Wedge Artists. If you are an artist (or know of one living in our neighborhood), this is your opportunity to exhibit your talent to the South Wedge neighborhood and the City of Rochester.

All artists are welcome to exhibit and sell. The only requirement is that you set up and take down your own booth/table; no fees to show or sell. Interested? Please contact Allison Clark at (585) 256-1704 or aclark@swpc.org.

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Stars of the Wedge – Meet Jeff Schuetz

by Nancy O'Donnell

Every month we'll be giving a shout out to people in the Wedge who are adding to the quality of life in our South Wedge urban village. This month's star was nominated by Hickory NUTS Block Club President Jayne Morgan.

Jeff Schuetz began his 22-year career in real estate with a group of friends. Eventually, he sold off all his properties except for a six-apartment "turn of the century" house on Hickory Street. In recent years, the landscaping he's added to his property has met with great praise from Hickory St. neighbors.

So far Schuetz has planted several Japanese maples, azalea bushes, and variegated rhododendrons in the large shaded backyard.

"I'm grateful to have good neighbors," said Schuetz who added that he is very "selective" of the people he rents to as well. "If you treat your tenants well, you have stability." Today one tenant has lived there eight years while another is reaching six years. He even gets calls from tenants who want to return after they've moved away.

"Previous tenants put in perennials," said Schuetz. "There's a nice bed in the front. I'm planning to add to things, and enhance the look so everybody can enjoy it. It's win-win for everyone."

Schuetz said he's enjoyed seeing the changes in the Wedge from the late 1970s when he first bought into it.

"There are lots more young

professionals moving in, empty nesters. Quite a number of properties [on Hickory] have had serious rehabs," Schuetz said. "There's an unusual mix of people interested in a sense of community," noting the Hickory NUTS e-mail list and the landlord/resident meet and greet the group held last year.

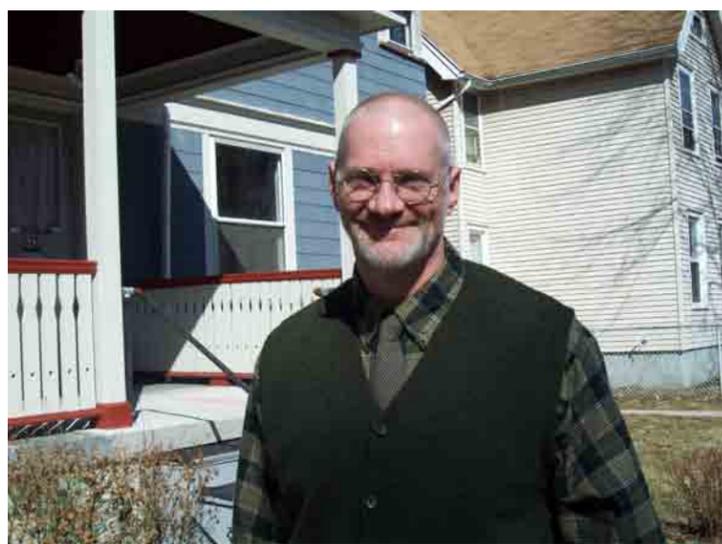
The South Wedge landlord is especially complimentary about the "housing stock" in the area. "I always say they're not building new old homes."

"There are all kinds of price ranges, really attractive older homes from bungalows for \$40K to larger [Highland Park] homes for a couple hundred thousand."

Schuetz grew up in Elma, NY, outside of Buffalo, and came to Rochester to study physics and astronomy at the U of R. After a brief stint behind the cameras at WXXI, he began selling houses for Mitchell, Pierson Jr. Realtors in Pittsford.

Today he lives in Perinton with his wife Nita Beck, a software developer and RIT professor, 15-year-old son Kelby and 12-year-old daughter Addy. Two cats, Lilly and Molly, "named after characters in Harry Potter" complete the family.

When Schuetz is not adding to the South Wedge landscape, he works in his 9.8 acre garden alongside Irondequoit Creek and manages to play racquetball several times a week with "the best racquetball players in the area." ♦



Jeff Schuetz visits his Hickory Street property. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

In Memoriam

Cassandra Torres

Cassandra Torres, former marine, Gulf War Veteran, and guest at St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center and St. Joseph's House of Hospitality died in January.

Torres who was often seen wearing her camouflage fatigues was remembered with affection by SWPC Director Bob Boyd. "I'd never met a person like Cassandra," said Boyd. "She made me laugh and made me cry. She was a feature of the South Wedge landscape."

Torres attended the dedication of Nathaniel Square Park (a photo shows her reading information about the event) and was a vocal participant in the celebration including having a few words with the statue of Nathaniel Rochester, Boyd remembered.

She is survived by her son Aaron Pierre. ♦



Cassandra Torres in the Nathaniel Rochester Park in 2008.

Catherine A. Lorson

Beloved mother and grandmother Catherine A. Lorson, 98, died on March 12, 2009. She was predeceased by her husband John J. Lorson in 1956. She is survived by two sons George Lorson of Rochester and Francis J. of Washington, D.C. and stepson John J. (Pat) Lorson; two granddaughters, five great grandchildren and five step-great-grandchildren. She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Lorson was born Nov, 4, 1911 in Rochester. She was a graduate of Brockport State Normal School and taught in a grammar school in Penfield for many years. She was interred in St. Marcy's Cemetery, Fairport. Memorial donations in lieu of flowers may be made to Our Lady of Victory/St. Joseph Church or McQuaid Jesuit High School. ♦



Catherine Lorson celebrating her 97th birthday with great grandchildren (l-r) Justine, Nathan and Heather Bloom. (Photo by George Lorson)

Letter to the Editor

The two "guard" dogs at Kennedy Plumbing, 11 Comfort Street, corner of Mt. Hope, bark all the time, any time of day or night. This has been going on for at least seven years now. They have been ticketed by Rochester Animal Control numerous times. With fines amounting to \$300 per ticket, I am told by the Rochester Police department that the business has been ticketed many times over the years and has ignored all tickets. None of the fines have been paid. I want to be clear; these dogs bark all the time, any time of day or night! Rochester law says it is not a violation until they bark for 15 minutes uninterrupted. I have emailed everybody in City government from Mayor Duffy to the police and all in between. Everybody knows about this problem.

I have signed two notarized Municipal Code Violations Bureau Services Supporting Deposition stating that the dogs won't stop barking. These dogs have been kept in a fence in a yard all their life. In addition to the destruction of peace & quiet in this part of the South Wedge neighborhood, these animals are being abused with endless outdoor conditions.

Tim Welscher of Rochester Animal Control gave Kennedy Plumbing a ticket after I called 311 to complain about the illegal noise. Mr. Welscher told me that the Rochester Noise law permits animal control to take custody of offending animals. They used to do this when complaints were lodged, but the city attorneys told them to stop so dogs are no longer "arrested" even though the law permits this.

Last fall, animal control told the dog owners to sell the dogs. This did not happen as apparently there were no buyers for old dogs. Animal control then had electric collars placed around the dog's necks to give them a jolt whenever they barked. This has not stopped the problem. Animal control told me there were other neighbors in the Comfort Street neighborhood who previously complained.

If you are in this area and are bothered by the barking dogs, please get in touch with me via email at: rochesternoisefacebook@gmail.com. You can read about local noise ordinances at <http://www.nonoise.org/lawlib/cities/ny/rochester.htm>

On April 21, there is a regular scheduled City Council meeting. If you have a problem with noise, please come and speak out with me. ♦
Harry Davis, South Avenue.



Community Partner



OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE SOUTH WEDGE
South Wedge Planning Committee
224 Mt. Hope Avenue • Rochester, New York 14620
(585) 256-1740

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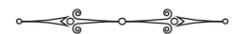
The Wedge Newspaper, a not-for-profit newspaper, is published by the South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC), a grassroots organization serving the South Wedge Urban Village. Its mission is to provide accurate coverage of neighborhood news as well as local, state and national news that affect the area.

Today, the Wedge is printed bimonthly (February, April, June, August, October and December) with a circulation of 7300. The newspaper is mailed to homes in the South Wedge and distributed to area businesses and retail shops and other drop points in the Greater Rochester area.

Articles in this paper do not necessarily reflect the view and/or opinions of SWPC.

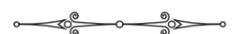
Please send any story suggestions or news releases to Wedge Newspaper Editor Nancy O'Donnell, 224, Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620 or nodonnell@swpc.org. Please see our complete Advertising Deadlines and Rates online at www.swpc.org.

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Our Mission Statement

SWPC builds community in the South Wedge, encourages a full range of housing opportunities, and promotes a diverse, historically significant, and commercially viable urban village.



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**Ad Deadline
for Next Issue
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by Nancy O'Donnell

American Idol Contestant Works in the South Wedge

Who knew that Demaris Rivera, owner of South Avenue Pinky's Pet Connection, was a contestant on this season's *American Idol*? We even missed the clues when a camera crew flew to Rochester to film her store and follow her walking her dog.

Rivera made it all the way through several grueling months of singing Celine Dion and Christina Aguilera songs before producers, directors, and the dreaded Simon Cowell.

Despite being rejected, she did get a free trip to Hollywood, and left lots of new friends behind.

"I'm very confident about my [singing] talent," said Rivera. She currently sings with several area bands-- the Bill Welch Band, the Mambo Kings, and the Latin Jazz Quartet.



Damaris Rivera. (Photo courtesy of Damaris Rivera)

Sector Six Chair to Make City Council Run

Swillburg Neighborhood Association Chair and Sector Six Chair David Chappius has announced a run for Rochester City Council. Five "at-large" seats on Council are up for election this year.

His Council bid website is up and running at www.davidchappius.com

Any questions regarding the campaign, can be e-mailed to david@davidchappius.com.



City Council member Elaine Spaul and David Chappius work the crowd at the Lucky 13 Dinner organized by the Swillburg and Highland Park Neighborhood Associations. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Somali Center Reopens on Plymouth Avenue

Abdirashid "Abdi" Rashid and other committed volunteers of Somali Community Outreach and Education Center have moved into their new home at South Plymouth Avenue.

The Center, which provides education and recreational activities for the Somali community, moved out of its original home in River Park Commons as the redevelopment began. The group also provides the Somali community in Rochester with rides when needed and help in navigating a new culture.

"We need volunteers, office supplies and more computers," said Rashid.

The Center is located at 775 S. Plymouth Avenue. For more information, call 319-4587.



The new Somali Community Center. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

SEAC Needs Help After Office Fire

A recent fire in the SEAC office building on South Clinton Avenue caused substantial smoke and water damage. All of the office furniture was destroyed. The community organization needs desks, reception area furniture, lamps, bookshelves, etc. For more information, contact the SEAC office at (585) 244-7405 or by email jballet@myseac.org.

Lamberton Conservatory Re-opens April 3

Humidity nearly brought the roof down, but Highland Park's Lamberton Conservatory is reopening April 3 after several months of renovations. The Spring Show is installed and ready for viewing.

"It's fantastic to have it rebuilt after almost 100 years," said Mark Quinn, Monroe Co. Parks superintendent of horticulture.

The front façade of the 98-year-old building on Reservoir Avenue was dismantled to the ground at the cost of nearly \$1 million.

Butterflies may also be on their way. "We discussed the possibility," Quinn said, but there are no immediate plans to add butterflies to the mix.

Quinn hopes more visitors will consider becoming friends of the conservatory. "An individual can get a full year membership for only \$10," he said.

For more information, visit <http://www.monroecounty.gov/parks-highland.php>.

Boulder Coffeehouse in Brooks Landing to End Kiddie Art Exhibit

Hurry in to Boulder Coffeehouse at 955 Genesee Street before it takes down its young artist exhibition. Walls and hangings provide space for an amazing collection from students at School No. 2, 12, 16 and 19. Lori Bryce helped to organize the exhibition and a family games night and opening reception in February.



Wild sunflowers are among the children's exhibits at Boulder Coffeehouse in Brooks Landing. (Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)

Coffee Connection Launches "Bamba Bikes" Campaign

Nancy Sawyer-Molina, director of the Coffee Connection, points to a photo on the wall of an elderly Peruvian weighed down by a huge sack of coffee beans. Behind him, graffiti spells the words "Es major" - "It's better." Every day workers like this carry up to 150-lbs of coffee beans to the market in places like Quibamba, Peru.

Sometime next year, if the collaboration between Sawyer-Molina and RCommunity Bikes, Inc. (RCB) succeeds, bikes will be rebuilt to allow riders to carry heavy loads, and that Peruvian man might be able to hop aboard one.

"I'm trying to make that sign come true," said Sawyer-Molina.

Along with RCB, Sawyer-Molina plans to turn to Edison Tech's School of Engineering and Manufacturing. "We'll use their [students'] welding skills," she said.

RCommunity Bikes warehouse, located at 226 Hudson Ave, houses and repairs bikes and provides them to children and adults in need.

Dan Lill, who manages RCB, writes in an e-mail that that in the warehouse "bikes are inspected, repaired and catalogued before they are distributed. Parts from unusable bikes are always reused and recycled as much as possible. In order to insure that individuals are indeed needy, they must be referred to the clinic by a community agency, church or school. Bikes are then fitted properly and given out free of charge. To date, more than 5000 bicycles have been distributed."

"We'd like to do 50 bikes the first time out," said Sawyer-Molina.

Two Hoods, One Party

Swillburg and Highland Park Neighborhood Associations held a Lucky 13 Party on March 13 at the Historic German House. Auctions and raffles, Live music by Book and Mike, a DJ, and a magician made the evening a smashing success.



Enjoying the Magic 13 Party, (l-r) Lori Bryce, Ross Janezic, 6, Lawrence Jones, Frieda Jones, 9, Claire Janezic, 8, Franklin Jones, 6, and Vera Versteeg. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



President of the Upper Mt. Hope Neighborhood Association Dan Hurley and Christopher Kumar, professor of Engineering, Science and Physics at MCC. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

SWPC Says Farewell to Intern

Courtney Atkinson, 20, will be leaving SWPC after a four month internship spent researching farmers markets and community gardens in the area. Atkinson, a native of Vestal, NY and accounting major, is in her junior year at SUNY Geneseo.

Her SWPC internship has helped her to be much more "outgoing."

"I've interviewed at least 30 people," said Atkinson.

One of her favorite interviews was with Maggie Carter who runs the Grow Green Program SWAN (Southwest Area Neighborhood Association) that teaches children how to become entrepreneurs via gardening.

"I liked how they get kids involved in gardening and they get the profits," said Atkinson. "They grow the vegetables, sell them at farmers markets and then put the money into the bank." ♦



Courtney Atkinson (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

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Make sure you do your part to keep the South Wedge "green"

Recycle this paper

by Allison Clark

Neighborhood Clean Sweep Set for May 2

Time to get the streets looking great in time for the upcoming planting season, summer, and the Lilac Festival.

Volunteers are needed to help out with the following duties on Saturday, May 2. Bring along the family for a great day of spiffing up our neighborhood.

- Weeding, cleaning, and mulching in Star Alley
- Preparing the Victory Garden Plots
- Cleaning & weeding the Byron St. median
- Cleaning our street benches.

Call 311 to volunteer! To sign up as a team captain, contact Robert Boyd at 256-1740, ext 102 or rboyd@swpc.org.

Recession Procession Planned for Spring 2009

The South Wedge neighborhood merchants are planning a *City Paper*-inspired "Neighborhood Crawl" 5 p.m. May 7 reports Christine Jones, president of the Business Association of the South Wedge Area.

"SW businesses are encouraged to make a 'ridiculous offer' (half price, free PBJ's) to crawl attendants for goods and or services on that evenings visit and or a return visit at a later date," writes Jones in an e-mail.

The goal? "To bring *City Paper* readers down to the Wedge for a spring evening walk to discover or re-discover the neighborhood and patronize the SW businesses."

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities Host Rochester's History Events

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities at River Edge Manor will host a series of six presentations by the Rochester Historical Society in honor of Rochester's 175th Anniversary.

April Presentation:

"Rochester, Young Lion of the West". April 14 at 2:00 p.m. at 535 Mt. Hope Ave.

May Presentation:

"Rochester, the Civil War at Home". May 19 at 2:00 p.m. at 535 Mt. Hope Ave.

Come hear about the history of Rochester. Visit www.rochesterhistory.org for more information.

Special Note: Media is welcome to attend the event and take photos or video.

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities has been helping older adults live life to the fullest since 1868.

Heartbeats for Life support group News

Monthly meeting of Heartbeats for Life support group for cardiovascular patients, their families, friends and those interested in prevention.

Monday, May 11, 2009: 6:30 - 8:45 p.m. at Monroe County

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Auditorium located at 249 Highland Avenue, Rochester, NY, across from Highland Park. Itinerary includes 6:30 pm Potluck: Bring a low fat, vegetarian dish to pass (or some cut fruit), your own place setting and beverage. 7:30 Presentation: Spice up Your Kitchen!

The key to tasty meals is using spices and herbs. Find out how to use these taste-makers in your cooking.

\$4.00 guests; free to HFL members.

Monday, April 13, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. Spring Dinner - Ornish Style. Low-fat, vegetarian dinner prepared to our specifications. Lento Restaurant, Village Gate, Rochester, NY. \$25. per person includes dinner, tax, tip, decaf coffee, tea and donation to Heartbeats. Reservations and prepay required by 12:00 noon, Friday, April 10, 2009. Cancellations after this time cannot be reimbursed.

Reservations and details: 585-234-7076 or www.heartbeats4life.org.

Fundraiser for Ellwanger Barry Nursery School Scheduled for April 25

Tom Knight brings "A Children's Performance Extravaganza!" on Saturday, April 25, 10:30 a.m. at South Presbyterian Church, 4 East Henrietta Rd. Expect great music, songs and puppets. Tickets \$5. Family maximum of \$20, children under 2 years old free. Visit www.tomknight.com or EBNS.org for more information Call 461-4250 for tickets.



Tom Knight juggles some friends. (Photo by Shai Eynau)

NeighborWorks Pix and Mix at the Public Market

NeighborWorks Rochester is hosting a new event this year to recognize their 30th anniversary. This event will take place from 5-8 pm on Wednesday June 10, 2009 at Rochester's Public Market. It will be an evening of celebration and will include a photo competition featuring favorite photographs of people and things in the City of Rochester. Tickets are \$10 per person.

You are invited to participate in the photo competition. It will take place at Pix and Mix at the Public Market, and photographs will be displayed at several businesses at the Public Market. For more information on how to enter the photo competition or to purchase tickets, please contact Kerri Mandelaro at NeighborWorks Rochester at 325-4170 or e-mail her at kmandelaro@nwrochester.org.

Foundation Invites Grant Applications

The Marie C. & Joseph C. Wilson Foundation is pleased to announce local funding availability through its Rochester Small Grants program.

Qualified 501(c)(3) organizations may apply for grants in the range of \$1,000 - \$25,000 throughout 2008. The grants are given to effective organizations that can impact positive change in the community.

Grants will not be made to individuals, partisan political organizations or to support lobbying efforts. Requests for capital projects also will not be considered. For more information and an on-line application form, go to the Foundation's web site at: www.mcjwilsonfoundation.org or call 461-4696.

South Wedge Farmers Market Opens June 4

Dust off your shopping bags and baskets for the Grand Opening of the South Wedge Farmers Market. Visit the website, www.swfarmermarket.org, for info on the special events of the day and the season. The Market runs each Thursday 4 p.m. - 7 p.m. through October at the Market Grounds behind Boulder Coffee Company on Alexander St. and South Clinton Avenue.

Thanks to Our Special Friends

Thanks to our special SWPC Supporters--Amy Herlihy at Citizens Bank and Alex Castro at the Housing Council—for the much needed donations to our office. Citizens Bank recently donated office furniture that will be put to good use in our Mt. Hope Avenue headquarters. The Housing Council provided us with a new phone system that advances us into the 21st century—We can now make conference calls!

These donations will help us in our ongoing work supporting the Greater South Wedge community. We are very appreciative.

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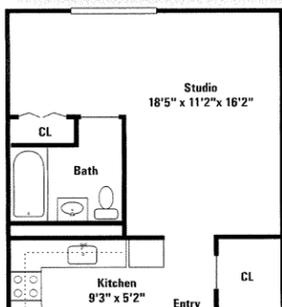
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The Rebirth of Mt. Hope Avenue

by Robert Boyd

Spring is a time of new beginnings, and spring has sprung on Mt. Hope. The high rise tower at River Park Commons is now known as "The Hamilton." The interior renovation has begun – the new windows show you the progress so far. The units are receiving a total makeover with new kitchens, bathrooms, and heating and cooling units. This will be done by the end of the summer.

Finally, the much anticipated demolition of the low rise apartments on Mt. Hope has begun. The area is fenced in, and equipment is on site. The first step is asbestos removal, then removal of windows and interiors and then finally structurally demolition. The site should be leveled in the next few months and then the new Erie Harbor project will rise up! This is a major change for the neighborhood and will benefit everyone.

Mt. Hope Avenue itself will also undergo significant changes in the late summer and early fall after many years of planning. The street will be narrowed from four lanes to two lanes from just approximately Gregory St. to Comfort St. This will slow traffic and create parking on Mt. Hope. There will be bump outs and new cross walks at Averill and at Alexander Street allowing for safer crossing of Mt. Hope and access to the Genesee River. New street lights will make the area more pedestrian friendly and bright. These changes will greatly improve the connection between the South Wedge and the Genesee River and the new Erie Harbor development.

It's been a long time coming, and SWPC is grateful to have had a role in this renaissance on Mt. Hope Avenue. ♦



It's been a long time coming, but demolition of River Park Commons has finally begun. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Look Who's Talking

by Nancy O'Donnell

It seems like every day another Wedge business or neighbor or event makes the news. The *Wedge* has been keeping track, collecting the clips. Here are just a few of your neighbors in the news and yet more reason to live here.

Mise en Place was featured on CBS/WROC-TV Fox Ch. 8 News on March 23. SWPC Director Bob Boyd in promoting the *Wedge*, pitched a story about how small businesses survive the current financial downturn.

Nancy Sawyer-Molina's The Coffee Connection and **Jacob Kane's Muddy Waters Coffeehouse** were featured in the March/April issue of the *Rochester Magazine* ("On the Trail of Fair Trade Coffee"). Writer Joseph Sorrentino describes Sawyer-Molina as "an early force in fair trade" in Rochester. She sells both fair trade and fair practice merchandise from Peru in her South Avenue coffee shop. (See "Heart of the City" for more about Sawyer-Molina. Kane sells fair trade exclusively at his South Goodman Avenue business, and he plans to do the same at his second coffeehouse in Genesee.

Small World Bakery got a mention in *Chow Hound*, the dining column in *City Paper* (March 18-24 issue). Writer Tricia Seymour describes the new bakery sharing space with the *Mez* on Gregory St. She also announced their plans to partner with the *Mez* on Saturday brunches that will feature "blueberry buckwheat pancakes" sometime soon.

Open Face Sandwich on South Avenue was also recently featured in March 6 Insider "Tastes 2 for \$25" food review because of its "unconventional" sandwich creations (Corn Mash sandwich with ginger carrots, salad was featured), its amazing cookies and unusual drinks ("America's oldest soda Moxie," tonics and "phytotherapy tea".

Let us know when you see a Wedge business or neighbor mentioned in the media. Send news reports to nodonnell@swpc.org. ♦



The Somali Community Outreach and Education Center is settling in on South Plymouth Avenue and working with other businesses to help their center thrive. They share a row of shops with Gregory's Pizza. The take-out is the first business for owner Ben Hollamby. Its name is in remembrance of his 19-year-old brother who died in a car accident. From left to right: Abdi Rashid, Abukar Ali, Jebeti Mohamed, Naphan Gadle and Ben Hollamby.

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SWPC'S WORK IN PRESERVING THE

PRESERVING PROPERTY IN THE WEDGE

By George Lorson

The South Wedge Planning Committee recently marked the one year anniversary of the completion of major property rehabilitation at 111-113 Hamilton Street. Purchased by SWPC at a City auction in 2005, this original Boston style, two family, 2395 square-foot house, sat vacant for nearly six years until SWPC undertook an extensive rehabilitation project. Today it provides quality affordable rental housing for the neighborhood. Each unit contains two bedrooms, living room, kitchen, dining room, bathroom, front porch and a large back yard for the tenant's enjoyment. All mechanical systems were replaced along with new roofing, windows, siding, insulation, kitchens, bathrooms and landscaping.

SWPC also incorporated many green features in the renovation of this house as noted below:

- High efficiency 90+ power vented gas furnaces
- 40 gallon high efficiency power vented water heaters
- Low flow faucets and toilets
- Refinished hardwood floors in lieu of carpet

- Low VOC paints throughout
- Range hoods, bath fans and dryers vented directly to the exterior
- Hardie Plank (cement board) siding in lieu of vinyl
- Basement walls insulated from the concrete floor to the ceiling joists
- Attic insulation upgraded to R-40
- Energy efficient replacement windows
- Energy Star light fixtures throughout
- Energy Star appliances
- Glass block windows installed in the basement
- All roof soffits vented for air circulation
- All exterior penetrations were air sealed

The South Wedge Planning Committee continues to fulfill its mission to build community in the South Wedge, encourage a full range of housing opportunities, and promote a diverse, historically significant, and commercially sustainable urban village.

BEFORE



The front view of 111-113 Hamilton before the beginning of renovations (photo by George Lorson)

BEFORE



A view of the kitchen at 111-113 Hamilton before the renovations. (Photo by George Lorson)

AFTER



The front view of 111-113 Hamilton after the completion of renovations (photo by George Lorson)

AFTER



A view of the kitchen at 111-113 Hamilton after the renovations. (Photo by George Lorson)

THE SOUTH WEDGE URBAN VILLAGE

NATHANIEL SQUARE

The South Avenue and Alexander St. corner stood vacant for several decades, and neighbors were concerned that the empty space attracted drug use and crime. By the 1980s the city had only done minor improvement to the site. It wasn't until the South Wedge Environmental Enhancement SWEEP Program, led by resident Cheryl Steven, began work that the transformation of the once blighted began. Grants paid for a decorative pagodas and park benches. Originally the community asked that a fountain anchor its center, but when the city refused, efforts began to find an alternative. In May 2008, the Pepsy Kettavong's statue of a contemplative Nathaniel Rochester was unveiled. Today the space is used for community events and as a neighborhood meeting place.



A view of Nathaniel Square when it was just an empty lot in the early 1980's



Nathaniel Square during the renovations.



Nathaniel Square as it stands today. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

SWPC HEADQUARTERS BEFORE AND AFTER

The Shuler Hass Electric Corp. was originally located at 224 Mt. Hope Avenue. Siding covered the 19th century brick exterior. In 2002, the Shuler family donated the property to the South Wedge Planning Committee. The front was uncovered, and two doors became one. Most recently, a new roof was added and the exterior was repainted a cheery red, white and blue.



SWPC headquarters before it was renovated in 2002



SWPC headquarters as it is today. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Method Machine Wins Raves for Stage play "Edge"

by Nancy O'Donnell



(L-R) Theater angel Deb Cleveland, playwright Paul Alexander, director David Henderson and actress Marcy "Sylvia Plath" Savastano at a MuCCC reception. (Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)

David Henderson, Method Machine co-founder, enjoyed a successful run of Paul Alexander's play, *Edge*, a powerful and brutal look at the last day in the life of poet Sylvia Plath. The play was staged at MuCCC, the "multi-use community cultural center, recently opened in a renovated 100 year-old church in the Neighborhood of the Arts (MuCCC's owner is Doug Rice, the former head of ARTWALK).

Marcy Savastano gave a riveting performance as the tortured poet who killed herself in 1963. The approximately

"15,000 word" monologue ran some two hours. Alexander, in town for the performance, is a former reporter for *Time Magazine* and *Rolling Stone*. He has written biographies of Plath, James Dean, J.D. Salinger and John McCain. His most recent book, *Machiavelli's Shadow*, details the career of Karl Rove.

Method Machine art performance collective is headquartered on 650 South Avenue. Its cofounders include Marcy Savastano and Michael O'Connor. For more info, visit methodmachine.org. ♦

Long Season Farmers Market Closes May 21

by Nancy O'Donnell

The very successful collaboration between Brighton and South Wedge Farmers' Markets to provide the South Wedge community with year-round access to healthy, local, sustainable foods closes on May 21.

"The Long Season Farmers' Market has been a successful introduction to expanding our local foods choices over the winter months," said Vicki Hartman, co-manager at the market. "We've gotten a great response from shoppers, enough so that the farmers will be planting

this spring with next winter's market in mind. So we expect to see a wider variety and larger quantities next year. The market has also been a great way for the community to stay connected over this season.

The indoor, winter/spring market, held every third Thursday 4 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Artisan Church at 1235 South Clinton Avenue, offered a wide range of storage crop vegetables and fruit, herbs, a wide range of meats, eggs, cheese, bread and baked goods, and wine, and many prepared foods from Savory Thyme Catering. ♦

Small World Bakery Opens Retail Shop on Gregory

by Nancy O'Donnell

Small World Bakery had a reputation for selling "fresh, local, organic artisan breads and sweets" at outdoor farmers markets. Now the nine-member cooperative bakery has added an indoor corner space at the Mez Café and performance venue on Gregory Street where they sell their loaves of bread—Swedish rye, black bean and raisin, multigrain and Jewish rye—along with pastries and custom made orders. They've also added yogurt from Wake Robin Family Farm.

When several co-op members met recently in a space they rent from the Ant Hill Cooperative on South Plymouth Avenue, they had time to talk. (Members Jenna Weidig, Andrea Salzman, Ruth Blackwell and James Allen were unavailable). As the weather warms and markets open in earnest, some members will begin working 12 hours a day. At the height of the summer, they'll be baking some 100 or more loaves of bread a week. Often ovens heat round the clock as one member comes in to relieve another.

Most of the bakers are combining college or other jobs with baking.

"We're meeting a need for locally made, sustainably grown food," said Jesse Gaby-Hughson, a former RIT student, works as a contractor in network cabling. "We're also helping the local economy because we work with local farmers."

Eli Rubin studies religion at U of R (his family have accepted that he wants to be a farmer when he graduates.) Leigh Michelow is getting a music degree at the Eastman. Andrew Eastman waits tables. (Currently he is the one member who clocks in the most hours at the Bakery).

Luke Stodola lectures and teaches classes on local food issue. He's discovered that he learns as he bakes. "Baking is a craft, a mixture of science and art. The technical knowledge and intuitive understanding go hand in hand. I need to think about what's happening at a molecular level and check the temperature and moisture content and ripeness of the dough

while deciding which slashing pattern will look nicest on the loaf and how dark and how chewy the crust should be. I'm constantly learning from the bread. The cookies always have something to teach me. Each batch of croûtons, muffins, bread crumbs, or granola comes with a little hint about what to do better next time. There's always something more to figure out. It's never boring."

The group has taken their art into the streets, delivering the hefty 1 ½ lb loaves to homes in the neighborhood.

The group is serious about their mission: providing nutritious breads made from locally grown, sustainably harvested ingredients. There's a larger message in each slice of bread produced by the bakery.

After the interview, two members sent e-mails just to make sure that their message—how to help the community eat better was clear.

"We are community based," writes Eli Rubin. "We strive to be an active community member. This is quite simply because we would not be able to exist without their patronage, but also we would have no reason to exist without their needs. It is not in our interest to grow into a national bakery corporation; our interests involve serving up the daily nutrition of our neighbors. To that extent, we act as more than a bread store, and more as a library of knowledge about local organic food and

nutrition, Rubin explained how the members attend food conferences and forums to educate others on how to eat sustainably grown food.

"...Our friends are food producers, and we know all kinds of sources to find fresh eggs, milk, veggies that most people just don't know. We want to share the bountiful food supply in Genesee Valley with everyone, and to do that, we bake bread," writes Rubin.

Luke Stodola, who described Small World as a "collectively run scratch bakery" writes, "I scout out local farmers, talk to distributors and importers, and oversee our own plots of herbs, fruits, and vegetables. (In fact, the coop has put a call out on their website for local sellers of "wheat, rye, oats, sunflowers, potatoes, herbs, carrots, pumpkins, and onions, honey, maple syrup, and dairy.")

"I'm constantly on the lookout for ways to get things grown more locally or in ways that are more environmentally friendly. I'm really interested in helping to re-establish an efficient local food system, and this [Small World] lets me do that on a daily basis," writes Stodola.

389 Gregory St. (corner of Cayuga St.) in the historic Weider Building. www.smallworldbakery.com. Storefront hours: Tues.-Fri. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. ♦



Small World Bakers outside Ant Hill Co-op. Lt-rt. Andrew Langdon, Eli Rubin, Jesse Gaby-Hughson, Leigh Michelow and Luke Stodola. (Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)

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Be Webwise

By Brian Bannerman
Crime Prevention Officer,
RPD

The Rochester Police Dept. is investigating an armed robbery that grew out of an Internet connection. The victim had advertised an item on Craigslist. The victim (seller) set up a meeting with the buyer (suspect) in a public parking lot. The suspect upon meeting the seller displayed a handgun and ordered the seller to drive to a different location where he shot and robbed the victim.

Dangerous crime can be prevented if you follow some of these crime prevention tips when selling or buying items, whether you're using the Internet or ad in the newspaper:

- Move the item you're selling into the garage or front porch when showing it to a buyer. Never let anyone in your home. Some potential buyers may be burglars casing your house.
- Make sure you are not alone at home when someone comes to look at the item; have a friend or family member there with you. Always have a cell phone with you with speed dial to 911.
- If you plan to meet someone at a location other than your home, (like a parking lot or coffee shop) make sure you pick a location that is well lit

with lots of pedestrian traffic. A grocery store parking lot or a Dunkin' Donuts lot (a police hang out), etc. would be a good choice. Make the meeting close to the front of the store where there is plenty of activity.

- Never go alone to meet anyone and always have your cell phone with you. Never agree to get into a stranger's car or move to an isolated place to talk. Always tell a friend or family member what you are doing and where you are going.
- Never get lured into any deal where someone offers you money in exchange for cashing a check or receiving money in any other way. There are many variations of this scam out there and all of them will result in you losing your money.
- Never give anyone your PayPal, EBAY or other account numbers unless you're certain they are a legitimate seller.

The bottom line--If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is a scam. Don't trust everyone! Always use caution when conducting business with strangers.

Neighborhood Service Center,
846 South Clinton Ave, 585-428-7647 or BB0507@cityofrochester.gov. ♦

Victor Gomez Designs Opens on South Avenue

by Nancy O'Donnell

It's hard to describe the "Victor Gomez style" because, as the young clothing designer says, "It's always changing."

But if pressed he'll rattle off a list of signifiers: "young, hip, NYC-style, upscale, underground, exclusive."

Inside his South Avenue storefront, hoodies and tees from his "G Inc." line up on one side. On the other side, he shares space with Kevin Robinson incense and fragrance maker.

Gomez's creations have created a buzz in Rochester and farther afield.

During the interview, Crystal Walczak, 17, stands patiently as Gomez welds his creator's scissors and cuts strategic ovals in the front of her bright yellow top.

Last year he provided some pieces from his collection to Heather Chadwell (that's Heather from the reality show, "Rock of Love" and Charm School 2 on VH1). He also outfits the rap artist, Method Man.

Clients often bring their own clothing in and he "makes it fun." Making it fun can cost as little as \$20 and as much as \$100.

Gomez's father was a Commander in the Army, and his mother has had a long career at HSBC Bank. He attended Webster Christian High School where he excelled in basketball and soccer.

"As soon as I got out of high school, I veered off," says Gomez. "I wasn't afraid to be

different. I think people should strive to be original. There are too many copycats."

He worked for a time at Park Avenues boutique, A Step Apart.

"I did my own jeans, roughing them up, and friends liked them," said Gomez. "I was making a couple jeans a week and I found myself employees..." And so began his design company.

He doesn't have a list of inspirations although he "loved and wore" clothes from the Triple Five Soul label (a Brooklyn-based company)

"I have my own personal style," Gomez says.

Gomez has no aspirations to start his own label and move to mass production.

"I will remain completely exclusive. I don't ever want to see my clothes in malls," said Gomez.

That doesn't mean that he doesn't have to contend with copycats. "A couple of my logos have been boosted."

While Gomez might not be sure where Victor Gomez Designs will take him, he does know that his twelve-year-old son Adam wants to be part of his business.

"He loves to wear the clothes," said Gomez, "He plans on owning the place."

Gomez first shop was on Monroe Avenue, but as the thoroughfare became "more rundown" the thirty-one-year business owner looked to the South Wedge.

"I love being on South Ave.," adds Gomez. "all the business owners are so supportive of one another."

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Crystal Walczak waits for Victor Gomez to finish his on site creations. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

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South Wedge Social Calendar

by Nancy O'Donnell

Brad Cottier and Monica McCullough

SWPC Board member Monica McCullough announced her engagement to Brad Cottier in an exclusive *Wedge* interview.

"We met through a mutual friend--e-harmony," McCullough laughed. "I'm hoping to capitalize [on their online romance]. "I want to get on their commercials."

The proposal came after Cottier cooked dinner, "steak and baked potatoes" and started to clean up. "He'd put the ring on the placemat under the plate," said McCullough. "He kept saying, "don't you want to wash the dishes."

McCullough, tired after a long work week, kept saying, "No! No!" He kept saying, "Bring me the plates."

Finally, McCullough relented, discovered the ring and Cottier pulled out a bottle of champagne he'd hidden in a snow bank outside.

McCullough is the Executive Director for Providence Housing, a real estate development company affiliated with Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester. She sits on the SWPC Board and chairs the Real Estate & Structures committee, and assists the Monroe County Homeless Continuum of Care Team.

Cottier is an assistant hockey coach for the Genesee Valley Youth Hockey Club Ice Cats, a Big Brothers/Big Sisters youth mentor, and sits on the board of Step by Step, a non-profit that provides training to women in re-entry.

The couple plans to wed in Spring 2010.



Brad Cottier and Monica McCullough enjoy a family dinner. (Photo by Chrissy Cottier)

Colin Coffey and Michael Brundage

South Wedge residents Colin Coffey and Michael Brundage were married on March 17.

"As all my family is Irish, it was very special to be married on St. Patrick's Day," writes Coffey in a recent e-mail.

The couple traveled to Massachusetts for the ceremony conducted by Justice of the Peace Karen Avelle. (The couple's out-of-state marriage will be recognized in New York although the 1996 "Defense of Marriage Act" prevented them from a wedding in New York State.)

"It was incredible to be treated as full citizens with full civil rights," adds Coffey. "In 2005, full civil rights were extended to lesbian and gay couples in England. Since we have been together nearly seven years, we refused to be discriminated against in New York any longer, and went to Lee, MA to be married."

"When we have full civil rights," writes Coffey. "We will have to have a second wedding! But one where we can invite family and friends from England, Ireland, Australia, Texas, Florida and California; we hope that day will come soon! In the meantime, we plan a small celebration at our home during the Lilac Festival to acknowledge our marriage. We'd like to thank our families, friends, neighbors and colleagues in Rochester for the tremendous support and enthusiasm for celebrating our marriage - if only the New York State Senate were as forward thinking!"



Colin Coffey and Michael Brundage married with the Berkshire Mountains as a backdrop. (Photo by Karen Avelle)

Nancy O'Donnell and Johannes Bockwoldt

Nancy O'Donnell and Johannes Bockwoldt were married November 21, 2008 at City Hall. Witnesses to the marriage were musician Greg Newton and retired tailor Frederick Popkey. The wedding party dined afterwards at Good Luck Café where they were joined by photographer Gerry Szymanski.

Bockwoldt, a native of Oldenburg in Holstein, Germany met the Rochester native in 2005 in Sodus Bay.

"I was floating in Sodus Bay," said Bockwoldt, an independent filmmaker and former visiting professor at RIT. "Nancy was riding away on a boat with a mutual friend."

After his future bride rode back in from the sunset, the couple began to talk and began

dating a month later.

The couple honeymooned at Esperanza Mansion overlooking Keuka Lake.

O'Donnell is the editor of the *Wedge* and writes for several area publications when she's not offering office assistance to Diane Macchiavelli, L.Ac. at the Center for Classical Acupuncture. ♦



Johannes Bockwoldt and Nancy O'Donnell hug at their Good Luck Café reception. (Photo by Gerry Szymanski)

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Fighting Crime in the Wedge Four-Legged Style

by Kristin Ault

John and I moved into the Wedge two years ago. I had lived here previously, somewhere around 1997, and I knew it would be the perfect spot to rent an apartment and one day own a home.

Around the same time we noticed the spike in violent crime in the city of Rochester. Local convenience stores were being robbed at gunpoint; young people were victims of street crime. Soon after "Operation Impact" was created in response to some violent deaths in the northeast part of Rochester. I became disenchanted with this city life. Our neighborhood however, was thankfully, avoiding much of the violent crime surge. Still, I didn't feel comfortable walking outside my home at night, that is, until we got Kaya.

Kaya is our Great Dane/mastiff mix puppy. At two months she was small, but at six months, she reached the size of a full grown Labrador. Way too sweet to be a threat, yet somehow she made me feel safer. I found that while walking in the Wedge during the evening, people would cross the street.

In spring 2008 two guys came to my door supposedly soliciting for youth programs. I would have thought them legitimate if not for their dog-eared

information page, that and their obvious lack of eye-contact. As I was about to question their credentials, a six-month-old Kaya came bounding down the stairs. They were off my porch and down the street very quickly. It was possible that they were "casing homes," checking to see where the single women and senior citizens lived, possibly to rob later. I can safely assume they won't be back.

So, that is how we came up with "D.W.A.C." or "Dog walkers Against Crime". We wanted

to do something in response to the crime in our area, a way to get involved. People walking their dogs are often out when others are not. If they observe suspicious behavior and carry their cell phones with them, they can be a great help to the police. Also, dogs are incredibly intuitive- they often notice suspicious people before we do. They are also a good defense against crime. I personally think my dog can protect me better than say, a baseball bat. We have to walk our dogs anyway,

so why not multi-task?

So let's all walk our dogs while checking out our neighborhood, and if we see something suspicious, call it in. We may just stop a home burglary or an attack on a fellow neighbor. D.W.A.C. is starting up soon. Our first walk of the season is scheduled for April 7, at 7 p.m. We meet at Marie Daley

Park.

If you own a dog and are sick of crime in the city, you too can be a dog walker against crime.

Visit www.dogwalkersagainstdogcrime.com or e-mail Dogwalkersagainstdogcrime@gmail.com for more information. ♦



Kristin Ault and her dog Kaya (Photo by John Chajka)

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Local History - Genesee Expressway Expansion

by Tom Cantin as told to Ben White

Since 1956, when President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act into law, almost 47,000 miles of expressway have been built across the country. The United States is home to the largest interstate highway system in the world allowing for easier and increased leisure travel, better national defense and improved commerce.

But in the 1960's, Swillburg residents, and what would later become the South Wedge, viewed the proposed expansion of I-390 aka the Genesee Expressway as a very real threat to the neighborhood's existence.

While government, business and industry players were drafting proposals, their opposition was forming.

Tom Cantin, former director of the South East Area Coalition and a 40-year South Wedge community activist, recently recalled how the group formed to organize community awareness and activism in the area.

"Early 1970's funding by sectarian groups such as SEM (South East Ministries) and the YMCA Youth Outreach made it possible to form the Southside Coalition, parent to SEAC," said Cantin. "This enabled existing groups from East Avenue to the Highland Park Area

to coalesce. It also provided the opportunity to help create groups in the unorganized areas between Monroe and Mt. Hope Avenues where South Wedge would develop."

Southside Coalition founders included Clem and Helen Bayer from St. Boniface Church parish; Rev. Robert Gillespie of Third Presbyterian Church; respected social activist Rev. James Rice; skilled community coordinator Tom Swartz, activist Marie Daley, president of the Southside Seniors; and the YMCA. As SSC Vice President, Cantin had "an unenviable task" to organize and establish groups into one cohesive partnership.

During SSC's early years, it was renamed SEAC in 1970, members debated over what the group's focus. Topics such as welfare rights and community restoration provided divisive and led to an overhaul of its staff. Cantin, discouraged by a what he perceived as a negative attitude toward community planning, left his job with the City of Rochester and was hired as the new director of SEAC in 1972, the same year thousands of citizens squared off against the forces behind the 390 expansion.

Coalition staff members banded together under this

unifying purpose. Recalling the fate of Rochester's Dutch Town, torn apart to accommodate I-490 West, the group believed the same fate awaited Swillburg and neighboring communities.

"Homes were being demolished along South Clinton Avenue in Brighton. One woman died of a heart attack after the demolition of her home and the Transportation Department was negotiating the taking of homes in the city," Cantin said. "The entire power structure was for this expressway. All levels of government, business, industry, major institutions and, yes, our auto-happy society viewed this as progress--we did not! Our little "David" organization stood on Clinton Ave. facing down its Goliath."

On a blustery winter evening in 1972, Cantin and the staff, numbering less than a dozen, met in the old coalition offices on the corner of Clinton Ave. and Meigs St., and resolved to take a stand. Activists in San Francisco and Toronto had fended off similar freeway expansions, Cantin felt that, "if they could do it, why couldn't we?"

Help would later emerge from national organizations such as the Sierra Club and Ann and Roger Nelson's Eco Trans, groups that were often dedicat-

ed to causes that today are seen as central to the Green movement. Cantin recalled Eco Trans, then an emerging organization, approaching SEAC with help. They provided information and advice that was vital to combating the expansion, focusing on the need for more public transportation and less of a reliance on automobiles. Likewise, the Sierra Club argued effectively against the detrimental environmental impact the expressway would have. Even the local government began helping, with workers risking their jobs to attend meetings where they provided secret information.

SEAC's actions were initially met with resistance, even by some residents most affected by the expressway. Cantin recalled one meeting where two men took offense, accusing the group of using government funds to derail government projects and declaring them "socialists."

"We later learned both of them had deals [with the state] to take their homes and like many at the time wanted out of the city," said Cantin.

Over time, more and more in the community got behind SEAC's efforts and the fight for better public transportation. Cantin says the battle dragged on throughout 1972. Ultimately facts and logic prevailed, and

the expansion was voted down 9 to 0 by City Council members, including John Parrinello, Esq., today a prominent Rochester defense attorney. Swillburg and the surrounding neighborhoods were spared and, for a moment, Rochester stood in the national limelight for transportation improvement.

While "trickle-down" economics and cheap oil in the 1980's dampened the momentum for better public transportation, Tom believes the current state of the automotive industry reflects what he and many others in the community predicted nearly 40 years ago. Although he lamented that he felt SEAC's efforts to reform public transportation simply happened too early to achieve that goal, he did add, "I believe that the actions started by those from our urban neighborhood will eventually prove to be on the right side of history."

Cantin still believes that sound community organization benefits neighborhoods like the Wedge. "Now our country has entrusted its leadership to a former community organizer," said Cantin. "How far the meek have risen." ♦

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