

The WEDGE

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE SOUTH WEDGE

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



Konar Breaks Ground on South and Hickory Place

by Nancy O'Donnell



Taking a shovel at the South & Hickory Place Groundbreaking ceremony (l-r) Hartley Zwahlen, Tanya Zwahlen, Lyjha Wilton, Michael Trojan, Howard Konar, City Councilmember Adam McFadden, Dan Buyer, City Councilmember Elaine Spaul, Rick Rynski, Mayor Robert Duffy and Timothy Schmid. (Photo © James Wolff)

The long-awaited Konar Properties South and Hickory Place, a \$4.8-million, 40,000 square-foot apartment and retail project on South Avenue, broke ground on July 16 amid the pop of champagne corks and wild cheers.

Developer Howard Konar was joined by Mayor Robert Duffy, City Council members Adam McFadden and Elaine Spaul, South Wedge Planning Committee staff and board members, Business Association of the South Wedge Area members and local businesses.

"There's so much vitality in the South Wedge," said Mayor Duffy. "It's risen to the occasion time and time again. It's a beautiful thing to see." The Mayor went on to credit Konar and SWPC for the project saying the "best thing [the city] did was get out of the way."

Duffy praised the commu-

nity-driven project.

"From start to finish, we wouldn't be here without SWPC," said Konar. He noted especially board member Tanya Zwahlen, who "kept phoning" when the project bogged down during the three years of planning.

The four-story brownstone exterior building at 661-663 South Avenue will hold 33 apartments (studios and 1 and 2-bedroom) on the upper floors. Some 7,000 square feet below will be used as retail space.

For several years, SWPC courted Konar Properties because of "their reputation for appropriate urban design and their ability to create new buildings that blend into existing neighborhood architecture," said SWPC Executive Director Robert Boyd.

Former SWPC Executive Director Dan Buyer, who began wooing Konar in 2005, spoke of the project's uniqueness: "I've

travelled all over New York state, and you don't see enough of these kinds of projects."

Council member Adam McFadden, summing up the mood of the day, said "This community rocks."

Rochester City Council recently approved a \$1 million loan to help Konar's Gregory Street Transfer LLC develop the site. The project was also approved for tax breaks and incentives from COMIDA.

Local business owners added to the celebration. John Fanning, Solera Wine Bar, provided the champagne; Nancy Sawyer Molina served Coffee Connection coffee while Casey Hollenbeck of Mise En Place brought trays of hor 'd'oeuvres.

The expected completion date is summer 2010. Timothy Schmid, Konar's residential properties director, said that there's already a waiting list for people interested in both apartments and retail space. ♦

Wedgestock 2009 Is Coming!

by Victoria Walsh

It's that time of year again: South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC) is holding their annual meeting at Highland Bowl on Sunday, August 30. Sound boring? You must be new in town.

Wedgestock 2009 runs the fun from 2 p.m. to sundown. This year we've added a tent for local artists to showcase their work and a cooking/baking contest to be judged by local chefs. We're looking for the most delectable cookie and savory salsa in the South Wedge! For details and to enter the cooking contest, go to www.swpc.org.

Bring your family and join your neighbors in celebrating SWPC'S triumphs of the past year. Vote for new board members, and enjoy some great music. Local vendors will be supplying food so you can savor the flavors of the South Wedge as well.

Bands headlining the event this year: *The King Pins*, a 5-member rock 'n roll band, The 9-member *Buddhahood*, a local band

renowned for their "worldternative" style encompassing reggae, calypso, samba, afro-beat, funk, blues and rock. Also on stage: the local band *Java*.

Other performers include Irish dancers from the *Rince Na Sidhe* Dance School.

Expect more activities for everyone this year at Wedgestock. As always, children will have several different arts and crafts projects to choose from, and families can try their luck at various lawn games!

Don't miss out on this annual community reunion of the South Wedge urban village! Check out www.swpc.org for more information. ♦



Two more "Gardens of Distinction"

by Nancy O'Donnell

Last month the *Wedge* featured three gardens from a range of possible beautiful choices. (We're bringing them back for a second look this month on page 7; they were that good!)

For this issue, two very different gardens were nominated. One has an air of quiet serenity while the other vibrates with movement and sound. Both express the creativity of two master gardeners.

South Ave. Miniatures

There's nothing unexpected in the front yard of Betsy Knapp's 1860's South Avenue cottage. But, walk along a driveway, into the backyard, and you'll arrive in a world of miniature gardens.

Knapp has spent over a decade cultivating alpine gardens and housing the plants in "hypertufa troughs" she builds herself. (Hypertufa containers, which resemble stone, are made from a combination of cement and peat moss.)

A former manicurist, Knapp discovered dwarf perennials, whose origins are above the treeline, through the North American Rock Garden Society.

In the far back of the yard, beyond a small lawn carefully mown by husband Robby Ade, Knapp has created a sunken garden. The recessed area came courtesy of a building long ago demolished.

In troughs large and small, "hens and chicks" and other varieties of miniature plants reside alongside clematis, delphiniums, alliums, Asiatic lilies, Japanese anemone and painted ferns. "It's nice to see something beyond something else," said Knapp, explaining why a taller plant is planted in front of a small one.

Topiaries are also scattered throughout the yard. "I'm not afraid to prune," said Knapp.

Along with the plant life, Knapp added a narrow bench

continued on page 8



The Asian gate opens on a Benton Street 'Garden of Distinction' filled with waterfalls, ponds and pet Peking ducks. See more on page 7. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Check out our newest South Wedge Totems 2009
Artist-designed bicycle racks (see page 7)

Artists 🚲 Wendy Rust 🚲 Rob Marvin 🚲 John Archer 🚲 Tyler Guay 🚲 John & Laurie Grieco 🚲
Kevin Mentus 🚲 Patrick Doyle 🚲 Christine Knoblauch

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Star of the Wedge - Chris Jones

by Nancy O'Donnell



Chris Jones and "Max" (Photo by James Wolff)

Chris Jones, co-owner with partner James Wolff of Historic Houseparts, says she never expected to be "selling door-knobs" for a living.

Add to doorknobs, antique doors, bathtubs, stained glass windows, fireplace mantels, tin ceilings and hundreds of other items small and large, and it would be a more accurate description of the South Avenue business devoted to preserving and promoting architectural history.

Jones never planned on a career in house restorations when she was growing up on the city's West Side.

"I was an AP geek [in high school], and I majored in Fine Arts at SUNY Potsdam," says Jones.

After graduation, Jones worked as a photographer shooting weddings and "glamour portraits" or toiled in "photo labs around the city."

In the late 1980s, Jones and Wolff bought their first house on Averill Avenue.

"It was a run down double," said Jones. "The house was just falling apart." Soon the couple was tearing off the siding, discovering "fish scale shingles underneath," and using "as much of the old as we could."

This led to frequent visits to Historic Houseparts, then owned by Karen and Harry Caulfield.

"I was a [Historic Houseparts] junkie. I was spending my lunch hours there," says Jones.

By 1994, Jones and Wolff had moved to a "carpenter Gothic" house on Linden Street and had a whole list of new renovations to make. When her favorite retail hangout came up for sale, they bought it.

"Like many small businesses, we dove in," says Jones, who today is credited with furthering the South Wedge's renaissance. "We felt like we were on

an island. Not a lot of people walking by," says Jones.

The couple expanded the business, purchasing a warehouse next door in 1997. The third floor became an office and workshop where Wolff repairs and rewires antique light fixtures.

"We try to take decent old pieces and restore them. We get old lamps covered with nicotine stains and make them serviceable," says Jones.

The business salvages many historic pieces from houses, circa 1900-1930, being demolished locally and in neighboring states.

Today Historic Houseparts includes a large mail order business along with local retail sales. Their inventory ranges from \$8 doorknobs to \$400 claw-footed bathtubs.

Jones' preservation work continues beyond her business. Since 2005 she's served on BASWA's (Business Association of the South Wedge Area) board, most recently as president.

During her tenure, art totems have replaced parking meters on South Ave. She's promoted community building events: the Recession Procession (co-sponsored with City Newspaper), the Third Thursdays music series and Summer Stimulus evenings, which advertises "Free and cheap stuff to eat, drink, buy and do." (A final one is planned for August 20).

"We are really marketing the neighborhood," says Jones.

Despite initial doubts about her career path, a recent genealogical discovery explains it.

"I've made the coolest find," says Jones. "I've discovered that I'm a third cousin, four times removed of Louis Comfort Tiffany."

Historic House, 540 South Avenue, 325-2329, www.historichouseparts.com. ♦

No. 49 Comfort St.— A "Moving" Story

by Tom Cantin

Once upon a time, this old post-and-beam house resided at 161 Hamilton St. After the Civil War, it was moved to the back of the lot to accommodate the present house. The Wedge has numerous backyard homes — perhaps we came to major recycling early on!

The house condition was deplorable, reminiscent of the old shanty town song: "the roof was so slanty, it touched the ground". To save it, a substantial rear section would have to be removed, making this small house even more so.

Despite this, I felt our little survivor from the Wedge's primordial past deserved to survive again. With major restoration, rebuilding and relocation required, the house needed a real estate version of the Witness Protection Program. Fortunately, the City of Rochester had recently instituted a house moving program that could save this house and others like it.

Time was of the essence. Sentry Color Labs (now Echo Tone) was starting construction on the old Blanda Fruits & Vegetables property, and our access to South Ave would be

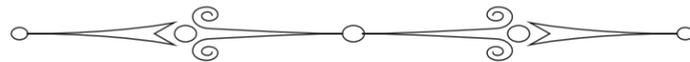
lost. The house was blocked up, and since it was our youngest son's third birthday (he's 30 today and living in the Wedge), we tied colored balloons to the house and had "lift-off".

As the house inched its way onto South Ave, causing a traffic jam, one frustrated driver called out, "Where are they taking that piece of crap?" Well, it was our piece of crap, and we were on our way to an improved situation.

I will admit that once we got the house up on its extra-high cribbage, reality set in. It was an ugly sight! Its new neighbors were not in a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" frame of mind. One of them wanted to sue us and one wanted to burn it down, but not necessarily in that order. To be sure, burning would have saved much time, expense and frustration.

Demolition, the difficult move, major restoration and building/rebuilding complicated "stuff" were just the known problems. Numerous unknowns faced us. One favorite was finding Comfort St had cypress-wood sewers, and con-

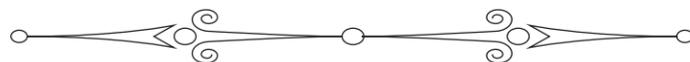
continued on page 9



The Executive Committee of the SWPC Board of Directors apologizes for the dissatisfaction created by the inappropriate placement of the "What's Wrong With this Photo" article in the June/July issue of The Wedge newspaper. The article was not consistent with our typical approach to community development. Our mission is to support the South Wedge community by supporting a full range of housing opportunities, and promoting a diverse, historically significant, and commercially sustainable urban village. We strive to do this by working with residents, landlords, and business owners in a positive, collaborative way.

We value the comments provided in this forum and encourage continued feedback to SWPC regarding our organization, our work, and activities taking place in the South Wedge. We are always seeking to increase resident representation and involvement in SWPC. Our calendar of events is posted at <http://swpc.org/calendarofevents.php>. If you would like to shape the character and effectiveness of your neighborhood organization, please attend a meeting and/or email the SWPC Executive Committee through southwedge.org or swpc.org. Several board meetings are open to the public and you do not need to be a board or committee member to attend. Thank you.

--Lyjha Wilton, Tracy Saville, Sarah Johnstone, and Tony Sciarabba.



SWPC Community Calendar by Tracy Saville

All meetings are held at 224 Mt. Hope Ave. except when noted

***Marketing & Membership**
TBD: email tsaville@rochester.rr.com

***Housing & Structures**
Email: mmcullough@dor.org
Tuesday, Sept. 1 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 11 @ 5:30 p.m.

Finance
Email contact: tsciarabba@hotmail.com
Tuesday, Sept. 8 @ 1 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 15 @ 1p.m.

***Commercial Business & Development**
Email: chris@historichouseparts.com
Dates TBD

SWPC Executive Board Committee
Email: lyjha@aol.com
Monday, Sept. 14 @ 5 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 12 @ 5 p.m.

***Community Engagement & Marketing**
Held at Boulder Coffee House, 100 Alexander Street
Saturday, Sept. 13 @ 12 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 11 @ 12 p.m.

***SWPC Board of Directors**
Thursday, Sept. 10 @ 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 8 @ 6:00 p.m.
***Open to the Public**



Community Partner



South Wedge Planning Committee
224 Mt. Hope Avenue • Rochester, New York 14620
(585) 256-1740

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Anthony Sciarabba, Treasurer
Sarah Johnstone, Secretary

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Felicia "Bo" Clark, Neighbor
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Nancy O'Donnell, Editor
Allison Clark, Layout
Ashley Radonski, Layout
Webster Printing, Printing & Mailing

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Nancy O'Donnell, Eillean Thomas,
Vicki Walsh

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Nancy O'Donnell, James Wolff

To reach The Wedge,
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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.

Before recycling this printed newspaper, why not pass it on to a friend or co-worker.



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 sustainable urban village.

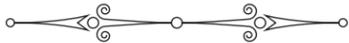
Ad Deadline
for Next Issue
September 1

by Nancy O'Donnell

Behind the facades of Victorian painted ladies and Arts & Crafts bungalows hide a virtual Wall Street of small neighborhood businesses. From filmmaking to world travel, the South Wedge is the coziest place to do business.

Here are just a few neighbors who have made their homes headquarters for both startups and established businesses.

More at-home businesses will follow in this column in the coming months, and you'll discover lots more reasons to shop local.



Melinda Johnston (Photo courtesy of LUX World Travel)

Lux World Travel: travel for the Journey Inside You

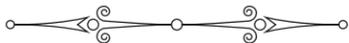
Anyone can sign up for a ho-hum every-minute-accounted-for Cancun cruise. Intrepid adventurer Melinda Johnston's specialized travel agency promises "personalized travel experience to engage your mind, body and spirit which contribute to the Wellness of the world we live in."

Johnston's Wedge home business specializes in specialties: yoga retreats, wellness vacations, multi-sport holidays, faith tours and sacred journeys. That means meditating at Buddhist temples, sharing in shamanic ceremonies in Machu Picchu or practicing yoga in Bali.

Johnston's also believes being responsible shouldn't stop when you debark in foreign lands. She offers volunteer vacations, low impact tourism and fundraising travel programs. Some of her clients have helped endangered animals, saved rainforests and taught English in South America. Organizations use LUX World Travel for fundraising programs that funnel proceeds back to the communities visited.

Ready to go? A November trip takes clients to Oaxaca, Mexico for a "Sacred Journey Photo Tour" led by Kodak photographer John Buck that includes sweat lodge ceremonies and sacred hikes in the colonial city.

866-269-2659 or 585-672-5587, www.luxworldtravel.com.



Good Cook's Herb Garden

Debra Eileen Lewis already has one business in the Wedge. The licensed massage therapist opened Highland Hands Massage and Bodywork in the historic German House last year. This year she added an at-home business with neighbor Amy Priestley, who herself owns an at-home landscaping business,

A Labor of Love (see below).

Lewis started growing vegetables when she worked with Boston Natural Areas Network, an organization that preserves urban space through community gardens.

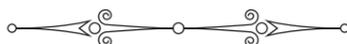
With her new venture, Lewis, a Master urban gardener takes all the work out of a client's home herb garden. Using "sustainable, reclaimed lumber," her company builds a 3'x3' raised bed that holds nine cooking herbs. Instructions for care and a recipe booklet also are included.

"It's important to us that we keep everything as local and organic as possible, for the health of the community, as well as the individual," said Lewis. "We've grown most of the herbs ourselves in organic Vermigreen worm compost from Palmyra, NY. The lumber is reclaimed from ReHouse in Rochester."

442-8132, amydebra@good-cooksherb garden.com, www.good-cooksherb garden.com.



Debra Lewis and Amy Priestley (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Decor! Decorating Solutions

M. Eve Elzenga, "decorating strategist" is the ultimate Renaissance woman when it comes to her newest, most comfortable career of making homes beautiful. Elzenga brings her previous careers as fundraiser, restaurant reviewer, fashion writer (former student at the Fashion Institute) and researcher (M.S. in Library Sciences) to her at-home business Décor! "I let clients experience how I live," said Elzenga.

"This house is my laboratory," said Elzenga. "I get to experiment." (Her home and backyard artist studio across from Highland Park was a highlight of the Landmark Society's 2008 house and garden tour.)

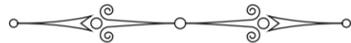


M. Eve Elzenga (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Her work was also featured in last year's RPO Symphony Showhouse held at the Ellwanger Estate on Mt. Hope Avenue. "I created a French contemporary media room in black and white," said Elzenga.

Elzenga's mission: "to help people find what makes them joyful and comfortable in their home."

415 Mt. Vernon Avenue, 585-256-1915, <http://www.decoratingsolutions.com>



Annette Dragon Photography

Maine native Annette Dragon has spent a total of 22 years photographing. Ten years ago she followed her partner M. Eve Elzenga when Elzenga returned to her hometown of Rochester. Since then Dragon's photographed everything from Hindu weddings to the Buffalo Bills camp.

"I love Rochester," said Dragon, "I love the diversity. I get invited to such a variety of cultures. I get to be part of a very intimate part of people's lives. It's such a privilege to be allowed into their lives... to get a chance to record the event."

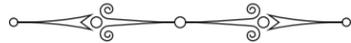
"The power of photography is its ability to stop time," said Dragon.

Dragon especially enjoys working out of a snug office in her home that abuts Highland Park. "The park is my studio," said Dragon, who often uses it for wedding and graduation photos. "People come see my work, and we can sit and chat in a warm and cordial environment."

585-256-1915, www.annette-dragonphotography.com.



Annette Dragon (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Labor of Love Garden Design and Consulting

Amy Priestley was a natural to open a garden design consulting business: "I come from generations of farmers; on my dad's side, in Ontario, and on my mother's side in Hungary. But first Priestley tried engineering at Ohio Case Western before returning to New York to study environmental science and forestry at SUNY Syracuse.

After graduation, she studied "plant pathology" while living in a trailer on an Indian reservation in Colorado, but realized research wasn't for her.

When she moved back to

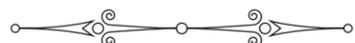
be closer to her family, Priestley started to think about landscape gardening. "Horticultural was new to me, but I knew my plant materials," said Priestley.

In 2009 she opened Labor of Love, specializing in "rehabilitation of historical properties and estates."

"I like to work with people who appreciate gardens," said Priestley, who counts among her clients the Edward Harris House, a Claude Bragdon beauty in the Park Avenue area.

"It was named one of the most romantic B&B in America," said Priestley.

269-9550, www.lolgardensign.com.



Pacho Lane (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Enthoscope Films and Video

Filmmaker Pacho Lane fell in love with the Spanish language and culture during a high school trip. Later he joined the Peace Corp--his was the first group to report for training--

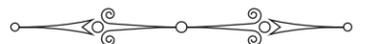
and served as a community organizer in Colombia. He studied the Totonac Indians in Mexico, taught at Mexico University in Cuernavaca, and became "copadres" with many Mexican natives. Today he divides his time between his basement studio near Highland Park and Mexico.

As a filmmaker, he's filmed documentaries in Afghanistan and documented the art of tattooing. "Lots of young tattoo artists watch it to see old style tattooing," said Lane.

Closer to home, he's made short films. One about Western New York history, "Along the Erie Canal," is moderated by Tom Grasso, President of the State Canal Society, who visits locks throughout the system. "Carousel Menagerie" records carousels "of yesteryear and the people who preserve their heritage today" and includes the Dentzel Menagerie Carousel in Rochester.

Lane is currently working on his magnum opus: a film about the Mexico "Voladores," or the flyers who perform "one of the oldest rituals in the world." (It involves flying upside down hundreds of feet in the air from a wooden pole.)

P.O. Box 92353, Rochester, NY 14692, 585-442-5274, www.docfilm.com. ♦



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By Nancy O'Donnell

SWPC Welcomes Summer Staff

Victoria Walsh joined the SWPC staff to help Allison Clark make Wedgestock 2009 bigger and better. She currently studies Business Administration, French and Spanish at SUNY Geneseo.

"My finance professor, Bob Boyd, announced the internship, and I immediately applied," said Walsh. "I like the [Wedge's] sense of community. It's similar to Brighton, but more eclectic."

Open Face Sandwich has become a Wedge favorite. "I love anything with goat cheese, and they make a sandwich that is so good!"

Along with discovering Wedge haute cuisine, Walsh is learning Wedgestock essentials: "You've got to plan way ahead. You've got to network a lot. It's really helpful to talk to the people who did earlier organizing. And get their advice!"

The multi-talented 21-year-old Walsh is also an accomplished jazz singer. While in Brighton High School, Walsh sang with the school's a capella group *The Crazy Pitches*. In college, she volunteered her singing talent to the Geneseo Jazz Band. "I've been singing for 2 1/2 years," said Walsh. "I'd love to sing professionally."

Plan B for Walsh? "I'd like to find a job with a steady salary for about five years, give or take a year, and then establish a real estate firm."



Intern Victoria Walsh (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Graphic design intern Ashley Radonski, 22, is working on the *Wedge* Newspaper layout and providing fresh new design ideas for SWPC projects. Radonski graduated from RIT's NTID (National Technical Institute for the Deaf) with a major in Arts and Imaging Studies.

"My future plans are to reach the ultimate dream of being a motivational deaf speaker and landscape designer," writes Radonski. "I like to put my hands on a lot of things, to put my artistic skills in use."

Radonski is currently debating further RIT studies or a degree in Landscape Design and Architecture at the University of Washington's College of Built Environments in Seattle.

Meanwhile Radonski finds it "awesome" to be working in the South Wedge: "I enjoy getting tea from Boulder Coffee."

"I hope to offer my artistic skills to help SWPC help keep the South Wedge a diverse and sustainable village," said Radonski. "It's important to have SWPC help maintain the South Wedge as the wonderful com-

munity it is to live, work and visit."

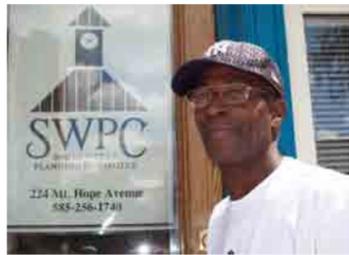


Intern Ashley Radonski (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Damon Barnard, 19, is a graduate of Greece Olympia High School. He is volunteering this summer as an apprentice gardener for the South Wedge Victory Garden, watering, weeding and mowing. Barnard is planning on a career in landscape gardening.



Volunteer Damon Barnard (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Phinis "Butch" Horton (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Phinis "Butch" Horton Celebrates Two Years at SWPC

Somehow Butch Horton's photo never made it into the paper when he joined SWPC as Facilities Manager. So to celebrate his second anniversary, Horton stopped to talk to the *Wedge* (and get his picture in the paper).

As head of Facilities, Horton "takes care of" 111-113 Hamilton St. (SWPC's rental property), Star Alley, Nathaniel Rochester Square Park and SWPC headquarters at 224 Mt. Hope Avenue.

Horton, a Chicago native, attended the University of Wisconsin at Madison where he graduated with a degree in Business Administration. He's a 25-year resident of the South Wedge and now lives at the newly refurbished Hamilton on Mt. Hope Avenue.

Southeast Neighborhood Service Center (NSC) Sends Scam Alert

The NSC has been receiving reports of a scam artist in our neighborhood since early June and warns residents to not give money to strangers with "hard luck stories." The scam artist is described as 5'8"-5'10", petite frame, medium black skin. He sometime uses the name "Greg-

ory Smith"; he dresses neatly and carries a cell phone and briefcase. He often approaches woman alone at home, on the street, or in parking lots.

A crime prevention bulletin suggests offering to call 911 for any strangers in trouble if they come to your door. Report suspicious activity to police immediately. Trust your instincts. If it feels "wrong" to you, it probably is. If approached by a scam artist, call 911 or send an e-mail to safety_committee@umhn.com

Time to Look for Rebates on New Furnaces, Water Heaters

Eileen Thomas, SWPC Coordinator, reports that if you're thinking of installing an energy efficient heating system in your home, now might be an ideal time to do it.

As of July 1, RG&E and New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) are offering rebates to qualified natural gas customers who install high-efficiency furnaces, boiler systems and indirect water heaters. Programmable thermostats and duct sealing may also be eligible for rebates.

To receive a rebate, both the equipment and the customer must meet certain program requirements. The customer must have an RG&E or NYSEG account and have the equipment installed on or after July 1. Eligible equipment must meet strict energy efficiency standards and be installed by certified contractors on or after July 1, 2009.

Both homeowners and landlords are eligible. Details are available on RG&E's website (www.rge.com) and NYSEG's website (www.nyseg.com). Applications for the rebate program are available from RG&E's customer service offices and from certified contractors.

St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center Needs Paper Towels

Deb Swift, St. Joe's Director of Operations, put a call out to community supporters: "Every summer, we reach an Emergency Status with something (remember a few years ago it was toilet paper?). Well, now it's paper towels. If you are able to pick up some extras and drop them off at the Center (417 South Avenue), it would be greatly appreciated."

Free Movies for Kids at Highland Bowl

Kid-friendly movies in the Highland Bowl are planned for August courtesy of Monroe County State Senator Joseph Robach, Advanced AV Solutions and other movie-night sponsors. Pack a picnic and the kids for *The Goonies* (Aug. 6) and *Kung Fu Panda* (Aug. 13).

Free Summer Food Program for Kids

The City of Rochester Kids Summer Food Program runs through August 28 citywide.

Local sites include South Avenue Community Center, 999 South Ave., 428-0615, (Breakfast and Lunch 6/29-8/21, M-F, 9-10 a.m., 12-1 p.m.); Field Street Recreation, 194 Field Street, 428-7362, (Lunch only M-F, 12-1 p.m.); Monroe YMCA, 797 Monroe Ave., 271-5320, (Breakfast and Lunch, M-F, 9-10 a.m., 12-1 p.m.)

Gregory Street Block Club Holds Family Fun Night

About 25 neighbors enjoyed perfect weather at Marie Daley Park on June 22 reports local historian and writer Rose O'Keefe.

The gathering was hosted by the Gregory Street Block Club.

Adults and children played bocci, tag, jump rope, and created chalk drawings.

"Much thanks to Allison Clark at SWPC for providing juice boxes, water and snacks," said O'Keefe. "And thanks to all who came out to meet, greet and play together."



Fun was the evening's business for Rose O'Keefe and kids. (Photo by Suzanne Meadows)

Swillburg Plans Autumn Festivites

In September, "Swillburg Rocks the Park" free concert series runs every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at Otto Henderberg Park. Local bands and local fun. Refreshments will be available at the Swillburg tent.

Tenth Annual Street of Sales

The sale is set for August 8 and 9, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Streets include Ashland, Bond, Gregory, Hamilon, and Whalen and Averill Avenue.

The Hamilton Launches 2009 School Supply Drive

The Hamilton Tenant Association, 185 Mt. Hope Avenue, is collecting school supplies for children in the high rise. Donate book bags, paper, pencils, crayons, glue sticks, and rullers. For more information, call Yvonne Williams at 262-2508.

Urban GreenSpace Conference Planned for September

The NBN "Urban GreenScapes: Rediscover Your Neighborhood" conference will be held on September 19, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Registration and light

breakfast begins the day with guest speakers and round table discussion related to green assets and ways to sustain them. Breakout sessions will include tours of park areas, arboretums, green-friendly homes and businesses, canoeing and biking. Lunches will be provided courtesy of the University of Rochester. (To learn more visit, www.nbnsector6.org).

"This is a free, family friendly conference," said David Chappius, chair of NBN Sector 6.

Music Fundraiser Held for Local Businessman

Dawn Hinkley wanted to help Flesh for Fantasy Tattoo owner Dane Thorsson when she learned he was facing a serious illness and hefty health care bills, so she turned to "Friends of Dane" in the music world and sorethumbradio.com for help.

On June 28, Hinkley fundraiser attracted seven heavy metal bands for a concert at the German House. The bands included: *If Tomorrow Fails*, *Minds Open Wide*, *Delta Ha*, *Divine Hysteria*, *Intelligent Gun men*, *Hack-burn*, *Velvee-teen fox*, *Night Gallery*, and special appearances by Kevin McConkey, and David Burger. Additional talent included: "belly dancers from *God-ess Hour*, on Monroe Ave." The event raised \$1,600.

"The South Wedge pulled together, and donated numerous items, to be raffled off in a silent auction," said Hinkley.

"Dane is grateful beyond words, and there is no way to repay all the generosity of his friends, family, and neighbors that pulled through to make this happen," Hinkley said.

Hinkley plans to hold more fundraisers to cover chemo treatments scheduled for August. To learn more, stop by *Flesh For Fantasy*, 656 South Ave., or call 271-0570/478-1980.

Several local businesses are

Local Businesses Aid Calvary St. Andrew's Playground

Several local businesses are working to make Calvary St. Andrew's Presbyterian Parish Playground a little safer.

According to Vera Mascaro, church member and "Padding the Playground" project organizer, the church recently learned that the playground surface needed six to nine inches of certified playground mulch to add to its "fall protection."

"There was no money in the budget, and the mulch is \$40 a yard," said Mascara adding that along with raising the money, the church would also have to dig a deeper surface and add timber to enclose the playground mulch.

Mascaro sent a letter to church members hoping that several individuals might contribute the funds for even one yard of mulch. After she raised the money, she next turned to

continued on page 9

SWPC and Farm Market join to make good food fun

by Nancy O'Donnell

The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC), The South Wedge Farmers Market (SWFM) and School #12 PTA are joining together to get students at the James P. Duffy School on South Avenue to eat their veggies. It helps families connect food production from farm to market to family to home cooking and consumption.

The new program, which expands the Market Bounty Program, will run Fridays from Sept. 18 - October 23.

"We want to stretch [the children's] taste buds," said PTA member Lori Bryce, who will be coordinating the program at the school with SWPC and SWFM. "It's going to provide a lot of kids with experience with the market and teach them to prepare local produce. The ultimate goal is a lifestyle change so that families will seek local markets, the public market, the South Wedge, and become more conscious of their food choices."

Earlier this year SWPC submitted a grant proposal to the Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF) to help "increase healthy eating practices" among local youth and increase families' access to fruits and vegetables at the South Wedge Farmers Market.

"Unfortunately, lots of kids eat food from the convenience store not even a full style grocery," said Bryce.

The plan is to conduct "taste tests" of fruits and vegetables on a weekly basis with students K-2. In the program's cooking section, children Grade 3-6 will learn kitchen skills in preparing healthy food.

SWFM is celebrating its third year of operations. Its goal to provide fresh, local foods has grown to be much more: "a wonderful social gathering spot; a positive way to support neighborhood revitalization; and an important effort of sustainability," wrote market founders Chris and Vicki Hartman in an e-mail to the *Wedge*.

On average 500-600 people attend the weekly market. "Shoppers at this year's market will find more vendors, more selection, broader price options, prepared foods, kids' activities, and many more special events. New products include milk, cheese, yogurt, fresh pasta, local honey, and many more options of local fruits and vegetables," said the Hartmans.

The Hartmans will help to coordinate the program as well as select and deliver food. Members of the School #12 PTA and teachers will help to run the program in the school.

The final recipes are not yet confirmed, but Bryce expects apples will be on the menu come fall. "We'll probably make applesauce," said Bryce. "They learn how it tastes fresh instead of coming out of little containers."

A Market Treasure Hunt is scheduled for August 20 at the market between 4-7 p.m. The Greater Rochester Health Foundation will participate. Every family who attends will receive \$5 in market tokens to buy fresh produce. Kids receive a healthy snack while they're having fun.

South Wedge Farmers Market runs from June to October at South Clinton and Alexander Street. The market also has a joint venture with Brighton Farmers Market to run the "Long Season Market" on the third Thursday of every month November through May. ♦

Shop Local: Hikari Asian Market

by Nancy O'Donnell

Hikari Manager May Zhang stopped by the SWPC office to say that a new Asian grocery store opens this summer in the old Kim Asia's Restaurant at South Clinton Ave. and Gregory Street. The store will carry packaged goods and kitchenware

(woks, china and rice cookers included). It will also have Monogram and keymaking service. Stop in and say hello!

699 South Clinton Avenue,
Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. 461-9983. ♦

SWPC to Rehab 4th Single Family Home

by George Lorson

The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC), in partnership with the Rochester Housing Development Fund Corporation and the City of Rochester, will begin the rehabilitation of their fourth single family home, to be sold to an income eligible first time homebuyer.

Over the last year, SWPC has developed three other properties: 11 Nelson Street, 354 Sawyer Street and 49 Westgate Terrace. The work at 95 Lark Street is the fourth rehabilitation project for SWPC.

The Lark Street property is a

1350 square foot, three-bedroom home. After rehab the house will have a new roof, electrical system, furnace, all new plumbing, cabinets and counters, bathroom, new windows, carpeting, new drywall and paint inside. The exterior will also be painted and a new blacktop driveway will be added. The selling price will be \$64,900.

For further information, contact George Lorson at SWPC, 256-1740 x 101. ♦

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SOUTH WEDGE

South Wedge Victory Garden

SWPC's "urban farm" seeded in June now flourishes on the vacant lot at 122 Hamilton Street. Diligent gardeners tended the bounty of vegetables and flowers through sun and rain.



The plot was a collaborative endeavor of Jonathan and Maren McCoy-Kyle and Karen Wrenn-Rahim. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Andrea Burman edged her vegetables with colorful flowers (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

"This has been a wonderful gardening experience--especially since I don't have a sunny spot at home to use for vegetables. I really enjoy seeing all the people who walk by and stop to look at the garden. It's such a pretty addition to our block, and it's getting a lot of attention and smiles."

--Marta Ruderman, proud owner of Plot #6



Knapp's Hypertufa gardens are... (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



A giant broccoli beams in the sun in gardener Jenni St. Pierre's plot. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



In June, Teddy Bradford, from Fairport Troop 208, completed his Eagle Scout Project by building a three-bin mulching system, a work table and a herb garden. He was joined by 20 other volunteers. The garden is now growing and producing vegetables to feed the gardeners! (Photo by Robert Boyd)



Paula Frumosa... (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

South Wedge Totems 2009

On June 18, BASWA (The Business Association of the South Wedge Area) celebrated South Wedge Totems 2009 with the arrival of eight new artist-designed bicycle racks. The totems illustrate a wide variety of themes from "a homage to the historical 2008 election of Barack Obama" to "a play on the South Wedge neighborhood's name" in the form of a huge chunk of steel cheese.

All photos © James Wolff, Historic Houseparts.



John Grieco with "Martini Man," Southview Towers, South Avenue



Patrick Doyle unveiling "Cosmic Bubble Wand," Tap & Mallet, Gregory Street



Wendy Rust with "Woody," Historic Houseparts, South Avenue



Tyler James Guay on top of "Trio," Nathaniel Square Corner, South Avenue.



Kevin Mentus with of "A Matter of Perspective," John Tex Mex, South Avenue.

ART AND GARDEN

“Gardens of Distinctions”

**Betsy Knapp of
South Ave.**



and turtle topiary



A well-placed mirror magnifies the beauty
(Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

**Chris Otero-Piersante and
Angelique Stevens
of Benton St.**



Benton Street waterfall built by Otero-Piersante
(Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)



Aflack and Daffy Peking-Duck
(Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)



Oakland Street Garden
(Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Alexandra Marris, Washburn Street Garden
(Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



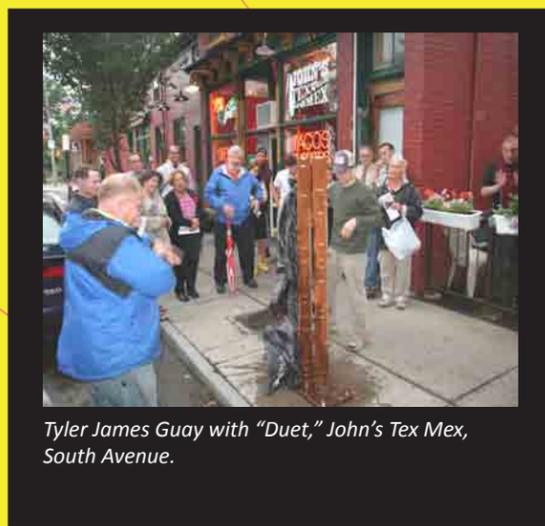
Carol & Paul Gardner, Reservoir Avenue
Garden (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



John Archer with "The Big Cheese" in front of the
Advocacy Center, South Avenue



Christine & Paul Knoblauch
and family at Christine's
totem, "My Heart of Steel,"
Weider Hall, Gregory Street



Tyler James Guay with "Duet," John's Tex Mex,
South Avenue.



Robert Marvin with "Realized
Dreams" across from the Flag
Store, South Avenue

Public Cheers and Jeers Canalway Trail

by Nancy O'Donnell

A public information meeting for the Highland Park/Canalway Trail Project was held by trailbuilders Fishers Associates on July 1, 2009 at St. John's Meadows on (Elmwood Avenue). The project, described as "an emerald necklace" linking the Erie Canal, Highland Park and the Genesee River trails has up until now received support from the city, county and Town of Brighton.

While many of the attendees were looking for information, along with punch and cookies, emotions were high on both sides of what seemed like an issueless issue—a trail connecting the River and Canal.

Angry residents and bicyclists often interrupted the presentation given by Fisher Associates and DOT representatives.

Some residents railed against the trail on Highland Avenue (some argued that sections are plagued by accidents and narrowing the road to include bike lanes on both sides would be a disaster). Others criticized the planned crossing at the intersection of South Goodman and Elmwood, citing speeding drivers and the lack of a traffic light as handicaps. Others argued that they hadn't even heard of the project—in planning since 2004—before the meeting. Biking trail proponents were in a minority, but they were the most vocal in describing the trails' benefit to the community at large.

After the meeting, in a phone interview, bicyclist Rog-

er Janezic cited several reasons that adding "extra infrastructure to an established trail" will make for safer journeys for bicyclists, increase health benefits for users and enhance the area, showing visitors it's "a desirable place to live."

"You don't place bike trails in ugly, dangerous areas," said Janezic. "When childhood obesity levels are so extreme, it's another step in getting people out and about. It also brings people through our city neighborhoods, and shortens bike commutes to downtown."

The proposed 10-12 ft. wide trail with both on-road and off-road sections begins at the Erie Canal Brighton Meadows trail and travels alongside the Monroe State Development Center on Westfall Road, and crosses Elmwood Avenue at South Goodman Ave. It then moves through Highland Park and makes a left on Highland Avenue. At South the trail picks up at Robinson Drive and leads to Mt. Hope Avenue and then down to the River.

The project schedule given during the meeting lists "bid and award project" as taking place Oct.- Dec. 2009. Construction is slated to begin in spring 2010.

The project objectives, promoted by Fisher Associates, were not only to connect Highland Park with the Erie Canalway Trail and the Genesee Riverway trail, but to "provide safe pedestrian and bicycle route to Highland Park and enhance a regional trail system.

For more information, contact Roseann Schmid, Fishers Associates Project Manager at 334-1310, ext. 295. ♦



The new City of Rochester Southeast Quadrant Neighborhood Business Department (NBD) held a meet & greet to introduce staff members to the neighborhood. NBD merges the Departments of Economic Development, Community Development and the Neighborhood Service Centers. Among the dignitaries attending were City Deputy Mayor Patricia Malgieri, NBD Commissioner R. Carlos Carballeda and At Large Councilwoman Carolee Conklin. Staff (l-r) Diane Powell, Matt McCarthy, John McMahon, Peter Siegrist, Lieut. Jay Maitland, Julie Beckley, Kurt Martin, Suzanne, McSain, and Peter Saxe. Other staffers include: Tracy Dwyer, Carmen Verzillo, Karon Simoni, Louise Burgos, Maritza Mejas, Rick Rynski, Barbara Nichols and Capt. William Holtz. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Gardens of Distinction

continued from page 2

and two Adirondack chairs. A large round mirror hangs on her fence to allow even more interesting views of her beautiful gardens.

Knapp said she's a practical gardener who "tidies up an hour here, an hour there. In lots of ways, rock gardens take less time."

Knapp's talent with troughs is recognized around the country. Several are displayed in the New York Botanical Garden. In 2008, her garden was profiled in *Rochester Magazine*.

So while others might want their backyards *au natural*, Knapp feels otherwise. "Natural is the way you look in the morning when you get up," said Knapp, who prefers a more polished look for her back garden. To learn more about hypertufas, e-mail eeKnapp@rochester.rr.com. (Photos on page 7.)

Benton Street by Way of Beijing

Chris Otero-Piersante and Angelique Stevens' garden on Benton Street is a work in

progress—always. Over the last six years, along with expected plants and bushes, the couple has transformed their back garden: raised its elevation, added a waterfall edged in fieldstones, built ponds, an Asian gate and bridge and included two Peking Ducks ("Aflak and Daffy") and other feathered friends ("Scramble and Omlet") to the mix. (Sons Jeremiah and Noah take credit for the names).

When the couple, both MCC English professors, bought the 19th century farmhouse on Benton Street, their shady backyard was completely flat, pocked only with underground bees nests.

"There were some hostas and five huge black walnut trees," said Otero-Piersante. "They have these flowy leaves. In the dark, and with a summer breeze, they look very frond like."

Movement was an important element to this gardener. "Movement of the water, movement in the garden [namely, the fowl]."

Otero-Piersante had gardened for over 20 years, collecting plants and rocks along the

way. In one apartment yard, he fashioned a marsh garden filled with "day lilies, clematis and cattails."

"My life principle is to make things more beautiful than when I first encountered them," said Otero-Piersante.

He was confident his new neighborhood, the former Ellwanger Barry arboretum, would have good soil. With graph paper and pen, he mapped out his new garden.

While renovating, he puz-

Hamilton Touted as Conifer's 'Crown Jewel'

by Nancy O'Donnell

Sandy Gorie, marketing director of Conifer real estate development and management company, speaks only in superlatives when she describes the renovation of The Hamilton at 185 Mount Hope Avenue. "It's very exciting," said Gorie. "I told the chairman [Richard J. Crossed] that the Hamilton will be our new crown jewel."

The 202 apartment, affordable housing high rise is undergoing a dramatic renewal. Kitchens and bathrooms are being remodeled; new windows have been installed. Amenities include wall-to-wall carpeting, laundry facilities on each floor, a computer lab and exercise room.

The drab cinder block Soviet Union-era exterior is exploding with blocks of cobalt blue, beige and yellow. ([Visitwww.coniferliving.com/Portals/1/property.aspx?Id=41](http://www.coniferliving.com/Portals/1/property.aspx?Id=41) to get a sneak preview).

"The Hamilton [reflects] Rochester's love affair with art," said Gorie. "No other building [in the city] will have the personality of the Hamilton."

Planned landscape will be "top of the line" and complement the riverfront Gorie added.

Later this fall, Conifer will hold an open house for the public.

The construction is "ahead of schedule" and expected to be completed by the end of the year.

"The Wedge neighborhood will get a sneak preview before the open house," said Gorie.

The Hamilton is actively leasing and have a few apartments renovated and available to move in, some with a "spectacular river view" reported Gorie. Others are handicap accessible. ♦



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Community Builders

continued from page 4

her helpful husband **Anthony Mascaro** of Percon Electric, who agreed to do the manual work of digging up the old mulch and timbers and replacing them with new. Another local businessman, **Ronald Maier** of Kenron Industrial Air Conditioning is also helping by trimming overgrown tree branches and cleaning of the gutters.

"**Randy Page**, Branch Manager of Skyworks, is loaning us the equipment to dig and shovel the mulch," said Mascaro. The complete renovation will be completed in August.

Free Guided Highland Park Tours Planned

Neighborhood resident **Amy Priestley** will lead an tour through the Highland Park Botanic Garden and Arboretum including the Pinetum on August 29 at 1 p.m. The tour begins at Lamberton Conservator.

Taste of the Neighborhood Set for Sept. 20

The Third Annual Taste of The Neighborhood Celebration and Fundraiser will be held on Sunday September 20 at 3 p.m. at the Linden Street at Meigs Street Playground Park. Food, fellowship and music by **Bobby Henrie and The Goners**.

Autumn History Fair Planned for Calvary St. Andrew

Save the date! Plans are underway for a History Fair at Calvary St. Andrew's Parish, 68 Ashland St. on Saturday, Nov. 14. The community will hear a number of expert speakers on this year's theme "Heretics, History and Hallelujahs," along with vendors and hearty fall food for sale! The event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more details, contact Rose O'Keefe at rok@rochester.rr.com.

No. 49 Comfort St. - A "Moving" Story

continued from page 2

necting a new waste line could result in a collapse.

Financial viability required that the house be doubled in size, which was a difficult task on a very small city lot. Answer: put the first story of the new two-story house partially underground.

Problem: the new rear entrance is now below grade. Answer: add excavation, terracing and a walk-in entrance to the new first level kitchen.

Problem: the former ground-level porch (now on the side of the house) is several feet in the air. Answer: rework access to the porch and use lattice work.

And perhaps one of the biggest problems: curb appeal. This non-descript house, with its side now facing front, needed a new look. Answer: major re-working of windows, siding realignment, and utilization of salvaged materials from other homes.

If you visit Historic Houseparts on South Ave, you will see a pictorial display of Wedge housing styles. This house is shown in the "Greek" category. I like to think of No. 49 as "Implied Greek."

Drive down Comfort St. between South Ave and Mt. Hope Ave and be your own judge. The house is now a part of the diversity of the Wedge, and I think our neighbors finally agree, it was a good move. ♦

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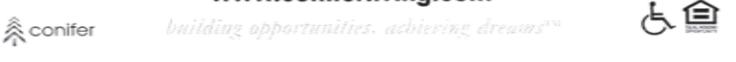


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If it Sounds too Good to be True...

by Eileen Thomas

When times are hard, incredible offers are everywhere. The people making those offers want to help you get more income and a better life. And the best part is, there is no risk and no cost (well, maybe just a little cost) to get amazing results.

All you have to do is... Stop. Remember what your mother told you about things that sound too good to be true?

Too often, a too-good-to-be-true offer is an illegal scam. Sometimes, they are technically legal but not very ethical. In all cases, the perpetrators deliberately target vulnerable people, especially seniors and people in financial difficulty from an illness or job loss.

One popular scam during this time of year is the "contractor" who shows up at your door, offering to seal your driveway, fix your roof or paint your house. The price is far lower than what your neighbor paid just a few weeks earlier. This sounds great to you, especially since money is tight.

All you have to do is pay him right now, preferably in cash, so he can go buy materials, pay his crew, fix his truck, etc. Don't be surprised when the contractor and your cash disappear, and no work (or very poor quality work) is done.

Reputable contractors do not go door-to-door asking you to hire them. They have insurance coverage and references you can check. Reputable contractors will give you a written estimate and time to think it over. They often belong to the Better Contractors Bureau. You can call to ask them questions. Their payment schedule doesn't

require you pay in cash on the spot.

Suppose you are a homeowner who missed one or two mortgage payments and you received a letter from your bank warning you about foreclosure. Soon after, you get a letter from a business that wants to help you. Their stationery letterhead features an American eagle with a shield on it, and their name has "Federal" in it. They must be a government-approved organization, right?

All you have to do is pay them a hefty fee, and they'll get you about a 15% reduction in your mortgage payment and stop the bank from foreclosing. This sounds great, so what's the problem?

The problem is, while the business is legal it isn't really looking out for your interests - it wants the fee you pay. Using symbols and language to imply that this is a government-approved service is done deliberately to create that impression and therefore mislead potential customers.

A number of well-known respected non-profits in Rochester provide the same services as these companies. They have trained, certified staff working on foreclosure prevention and predatory lending. They do this at NO COST to you and work entirely on your behalf. Their results are often better than what the paid service gets for you.

For example, a disabled senior homeowner recently came to SWPC for home repair assistance. The homeowner had a mortgage payment that used 66% of her monthly income; the

interest rate was more than 12%. And this was the mortgage that a private business (the one using an American eagle and "Federal" on its letterhead) negotiated for her after she paid them nearly \$1,000. To recoup that \$1,000 from the slight improvement in her mortgage payment would take more than six months.

SWPC referred the homeowner to the Foreclosure Prevention program at Marketview Heights Association. Staff there worked on the homeowner's behalf to secure a more reasonable payment and interest rate. The homeowner's mortgage payment is now just 30% of her income, and Marketview Heights Association didn't charge her a penny.

How can you avoid "too good to be true" scams? Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- If you didn't initiate the contact, don't give out any bank account, financial or personal information over the phone or on non-secure internet sites.
- Don't feel embarrassed to question what a stranger is telling you about an offer, no matter how nice (or how official) they seem to be.
- Never pay cash for a home repair. Never pay the entire bill at the beginning of the job.
- Learn to recognize when someone is trying to pressure you into a fast decision. Playing on concerns for your family is one tactic scammers might use to get you to make a quick decision.
- Trust your instincts. If a situation or an offer doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. ♦

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If you have concerns about paying your mortgage, you can call any of the following:

- Housing Council Housing Hotline: 546-3700
- Marketview Heights Association: 423-1540
- Pathstone 340-3324
- Urban League of Rochester: 325-6530

For Debt Counseling

- Consumer Credit Counseling of Rochester: 1-800-724-2227

Seniors and caregivers for seniors concerned about scams can call:

- Lifespan: 244-8400

Before hiring a contractor, you can call:

- Better Contractors' Bureau: 338-3600
- Better Business Bureau: 1-800-828-5000
- If you have internet access, you can join Angie's List, which requires a small membership fee. Ratings for hundreds of contractors are available for you to review on this site.

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Cut Energy Costs in Homes & Businesses

by Robert Boyd and Nancy O'Donnell

Interested in improving energy efficiency in your home and business and saving money too? Local businesses and residents can do both by participating in two SWPC energy-reducing projects.

Would you like to reduce your electric bill?

The South Wedge Planning Committee, Inc. (SWPC) has joined with Energy Plus to offer residents of the South Wedge an opportunity to reduce their electric bills and help SWPC, too.

Individuals and small businesses can join this cooperative and enjoy savings on their individual bill. The cost for electricity will be lower than what you're paying today. As members of the "co-op", state and county taxes on electric bill delivery charges are eliminated and retail credits are returned to you each month. SWPC Energy Co-op members and SWPC each share in additional savings

that are based on the amount of electricity consumed. "This is a benefit SWPC provides to residents of the South Wedge," said Energy Plus Representative Chris Koch. "Rates are great and billing is through RG&E on just one bill. No fees to join or cancel, no fees of any kind make it risk free for SWPC Energy Coop members to try the program."

Koch said that "typical residential bill payers put \$100 to \$125 back into their pockets at the end of twelve months."

To join the SWPC Energy Cooperative, call Chris "the Energy Guy" at 585-750-5655 or e-mail him at ckoch1164@gmail.com and leave your name, address and phone number and identify yourself as a Wedge resident wanting to join the SWPC Energy Co-op.

Are you a small business?

SWPC, in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the

Small Business Development Center at the State University College at Geneseo (SBDC) is offering low cost energy reviews for small business owners interested in improving energy efficiency for their operations. Small businesses with an annual electric bill less than \$75,000 are eligible.

Along with energy reviews, businesses also receive support in securing financing for implementing energy improvements.

During the energy efficiency audits, NYSERDA reviews lighting fixtures and bulbs, HVAC systems, sensors, controls, insulation, windows and other items. In addition, NYSERDA and the SBDC will work

with businesses to implement the energy efficiency projects, secure financing or even to help them build "green" buildings and evaluate other renewable energy source such as solar and wind. They will also improve environmental performance (go "greener") and evaluate energy efficiency opportunities in other areas.

The cost for the audit is based on electric usage: clients using less than \$25,000 will pay \$150 (NYSERDA fee \$100, \$50 SBDC fee); clients using over \$25,000 will pay \$600 (NYSERDA fee \$400, \$200 SBDC fee). NYSERDA review fees are refunded if the business implements the recommended chang-

es. In many cases, implementing the changes will reduce utilities between 10%-50%.

The energy review also opens the door to potential financing opportunities for these energy improvements. The New York State Business Development Corp. (NYBDC), which is supported by a consortium of 135 New York State banks, will work with businesses to secure project implementation financing through SBBA 7A and other loan programs.

For more information, contact SWPC Executive Director Robert Boyd at 256-1740, ext. 102. ♦



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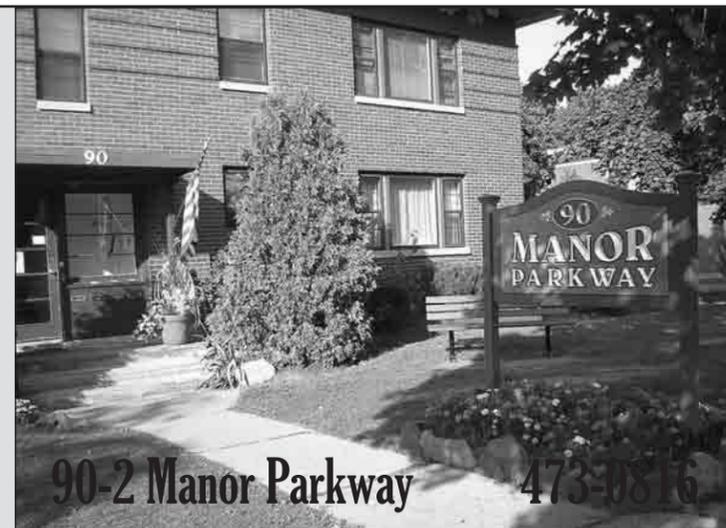
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