

WEDGE

The Official Newspaper of the South Wedge Since 1982
South Wedge Planning Committee, publisher

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Nathaniel Rochester statue on South Avenue (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Defaced, Erased, Should Statue be Replaced?

Nancy O'Donnell

Early on June 18 David Kramer, editor of *Talker of the Town* online magazine, was biking past Nathaniel Square Park. The statue of city founder Nathaniel Rochester had been defaced, his bronze hands painted red and the word "Shame" written on his forehead. Getting closer, Kramer read the words "white supremacist" behind the seated figure. He later learned the political statement had occurred two days earlier, but no one had reported it. Within hours, the media was filming the site. Sculptor Pepsy Ketavong was interviewed. In the ensuing days, Rochester's reputation was even more blood splattered as news articles detailed his history as an enslaver and trader of men, women and children.

Now a question faces the South Wedge community and the City of Rochester. In a new era of racial and social awakening, what should be done with the statue?

The South Wedge Planning Committee, sponsor of the WEDGE Newspaper, was instrumental in getting the statue placed in the park. Several years of community participation led to the installation in a pocket park on South Avenue and Alexander Street. SWEEP, the South Wedge Environmental Enhancement Project, worked on a plan. They were joined by SWPC, landscape artist Dudley Breed Jr., Eastman Kodak, the Greater Rochester

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Jess Kamens' Porch Portrait Documentary pg. 8



Dawn Nagel with David, Lorelei, Scarlette, Vivienne ©Jess Kamens

South Wedge Farmers Market Expands on Gregory St.

Joan Brandenburg



Market Volunteer Calli Monna ready to welcome you!

The South Wedge Farmers Market and Community Marketplace continues to enjoy renewed energy and participation in its new location at 357 Gregory Street.

"We are so grateful to the members of the Odd Fellows Lodge who have invited our market to share space with them each Thursday from 4 to 7 pm," said SWPC Executive Director Glynis Valenti. "We see new shoppers and new vendors each week."

As the South Wedge community continues to find a level of comfort in the COVID-19 era, both vendors and visitors are observing social distancing protocols and wear masks for personal protection and the protection of others. A portable hand washing station is located at the SWPC information table and hand sanitizers are available throughout the marketplace.

Even in these difficult times, people need to get out, and if not embrace, than at least see their neighbors. The

Market continues to be a 6 ft. apart opportunity for everyone to touch base, catch up, share neighborhood news and to combat feelings of isolation.

Returning this year is the very popular Lost Woods Breads and Flint Maple. Vetter's Beef, Fox and Fern Flowers and Herbs, Bright Urban Greens, Easy Fritters and Stir Crazy Kettle Korn are all new along with several other vendors and artists. Ludwig Pickles has expanded their product line to include some delicious combinations great for morning egg bakes or to be slathered on your hots or hamburgers. Anyone who spent any time in local Catholic Schools will want to visit with the Sisters of Mercy to share memories and stories. While there, check out the variety of "Heavenly Jams" made by the Sisters. Amazing!

Entertainment at a distance is part of the market experience. Each week Emily Goole, Kerry Regan, Bob Jordan and Cindi Rittenhouse rotate their schedule to share their talents. Shop-



Stir Crazy Kettle Korn To Go



Sisters of Mercy Heavenly Jams

pers gratefully drop a little quiet money in a jar or instrument case as a gesture of gratitude for the gift of music.

Vendors are still welcome. Weekly vendor rates are just \$10.00. Artists and Crafters can get a booth for \$5.00 per week. Community Organizations can drop off their information to be shared with the public at the SWPC information table or set up their own information table at no cost. For more information, email: info@swpc.org or call (585) 256-1740.

The South Wedge Farmers Market and Community Marketplace is hosted by the South Wedge Planning Committee and is held each week as part of its community outreach program.

City Council Updates -Mary Lupien

Defunding the Police

Last month, Rochester City Council voted to approve the City's budget in an 8 to 1 vote. I voted against the budget because I don't believe it made a commitment to a significant reallocation of resources to invest in the community institutions, programs and supports that build up individuals and ultimately build strong and safe communities.

I'm sure you have heard the mantra "Defund the Police." I want to dig into what it means, and why we should do it.

Defund the police does NOT mean "no police." However, it does mean making a meaningful reallocation of funding from the police budget in order to reinvest those dollars into housing, education, transportation, mental health, job training, small businesses, worker co-operatives and more. It means investing in the communities of color that have been systematically disinvested by institutionally racist government policies of our past and by today's market forces.

Numerous studies and scholarly articles show the direct connection between poverty and crime. People commit crimes when they don't have what they need to thrive, whether that be physically or emotionally. I can tell which of my 8th graders from last year are more likely to end up involved in the justice system - the same ones who suffered great traumas or struggled with learning disabilities and didn't have the supports they needed.

Most everyone agrees on the need for police reform. But reform alone will not bring about the kind of transformation that is being demanded. The opposition to police defunding mainly comes from those who worry that reducing the police budget would mean an increase in gun violence and other violent crime.

However, when faced with the statistics of the types and number of crimes committed in Rochester, they don't seem to support the need for 728 sworn officers, 500 of whom are in the Patrol Division.

Akron, OH has the same population, similar demographics and poverty as Rochester, yet they have 300 fewer of-



City Councilmember Mary Lupien

ficers than we do. Austin, TX has a population of 1 million people, five times that of our own, yet they have only 1800 officers which puts Rochester at 2.5 times the number of sworn officers per capita. Albuquerque, NM has a population of 500k and 836 sworn officers. Both cities have comparable rates of poverty and non-white populations.

Additionally, when our 311 system was implemented decades ago, it diverted hundreds if not thousands of non-emergency calls from the police, but the number of officers was never reduced to reflect the reduction in call volume.

You might be surprised to learn that only 7% of the crimes committed in Rochester are of a violent nature. Some 86% of the crimes committed are misdemeanors. The most common of these are minor crimes such as theft, threatening physical harm, DUI, traffic violations, drug possession for personal use and disturbing the peace. However, the largest share of these types of crimes is

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SBDC SUNY Geneseo

Mission Statement

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

Articles in this paper do not reflect the view and/or opinions of the South Wedge Planning Committee.

Please send story ideas or news to WEDGE Newspaper Editor Nancy O'Donnell, 224 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620 email nodonnell@swpc.org. Advertising deadlines and rates are available online at www.swpc.org or call 585.256.1740, ext. 4 or 585.978.9638.

Before recycling the Wedge, please share with others.

Buy a Wedge Card to show your neighborhood pride and get discounts when you shop local businesses. You'll also get the *Wedge Newspaper* mailed to your home!

To sign up, complete "Get the Wedge" below, visit the SWPC office at 224 Mt. Hope Avenue or the South Wedge Farmers Market (in season). Contact Glynis Valenti, gvalenti@swpc.com, 256-1740, ext. 2. Are you a business owner interested in participating in the Wedge Card discount program? Let us know!

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Buy an ad for Oct. Nov. online issue. Call 256.1740, ext. 4 or 978.9638. Deadline Sept. 14ish

Get the Wedge!

For 36 years, *The Wedge Newspaper* has chronicled the lives and times of the vibrant South Wedge neighborhood and beyond. Please consider subscribing. You'll get the newspaper delivered to your home & a Wedge card, too. Fill out the form and send a check or money order to the address below.

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Please mail form along with your payment to: 224 Mount Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620.

Join SWPC in Community Building

The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC) invites you to join us in making a difference in southeast Rochester. Join our board of directors or serve on a committee.

Founded in 1978, SWPC acts as a conduit for federal or state repair grants that help keep people in their aging homes.

SWPC works in a myriad of ways to build community through the annual South Wedge Farmers Market (June-

September), South Wedge Victory Gardens on Hamilton and Cypress Streets and *The WEDGE Newspaper* that publishes six issues each year.

Your time, talent and passion can help us to continue SWPC's work. If interested, please call 256-1740 or e-mail gvalenti@swpc.org or board chair Frank Logan at flogan@rochester.rr.com.

South Wedge Planning Committee

Meetings are held at 224 Mount Hope Avenue, The community is invited to attend all meetings.

SWPC Board Wed. TBD

contact: flogan@rochester.rr.com

Community Engagement (Neighbors & Block Clubs)
gvalenti@swpc.org
Wed. TBD

South Wedge Victory Gardens
Mon. 6 p.m., TBD
scott.wagner.ny@gmail.com

The WEDGE Newspaper

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The WEDGE Newspaper, a not-for-profit newspaper, is published by the South Wedge Planning Committee, a community development organization. Its mission is to provide accurate coverage of community news. Printed bimonthly (February, April, June, August, October and December), The WEDGE has a readership of 13,500. It is distributed to over 140 locations (businesses, retail shops, libraries, restaurants and other drop-off points in the Southeast and Greater Rochester area and suburbs. Online issue (www.swpc.org).

Print distribution has been suspended during the pandemic. Read us online at www.swpc.org.

Swillburg Shout-out

Mike Henry



Welcome to Swillburg (Photo by David Fergusson)

This being the September WEDGE issue let's remember that September is a time to commemorate the saving of Swillburg from an expressway in 1975. Swillburger Joyce Nakada created an informative video on the history; you'll find it on youtube with a "Swillburg," search. This twelve year event of community menacing gave birth to what I call the "Spirit of Swillburg." When people have commented how active our neighborhood association is, I've speculated that it had to be extra activated sixty years ago to preserve our community and that the momentum of community spirit continues. And so today, currently, despite ongoing social restrictions, the Swillburg Neighborhood Association (SNA) is active in a number of community projects. These are collaborations with various outside agencies. Really cool is the new Welcome to Swillburg sign that greets northbound traffic on South Clinton Avenue, at Field Street. Neighbors Dave and Brady Fergusson installed this, quite nicely, I think. Purchase of the sign was made possible by funds from the Rochester Area Community Foundation. Neighbor Sharon Price worked with Image360 to have it printed. Another cool project--the SNA is recently engaged with the South East Area Coalition and the City of Rochester to bring playful (painted) sidewalks to Swillburg. The idea is to make walking inviting with attractive images featuring historic and neighborhood motifs. The SNA steering committee has identified some themes specific to Swillburg,

pigs, of course, a logo central to our image. Other ideas include references to famous musicians Cab Calloway and his sister Blanche, both of whom spent their early childhood in Swillburg. Locations for these artistic panels might be Sycamore and Field Street and in our Otto Henderberg Park. Yet another project, the South Clinton Merchants Association (SCMA) is installing a street bench with a pig design. This bench is fabricated and just awaiting installation. The SCMA consulted us, the SNA as to a preferred location and we've chosen the site by the Highland Diner, where a bench currently sits. We're truly grateful to the SCMA for allowing us to contribute financially and collaborate on this community generating idea. Neighborhood gardening continues thanks to JoAnne O'Neil and Dave Fergusson and Kelley Marianno. JoAnne organizes the gardens at School 35 while Dave oversees the plots on Nelson Street. Kelley and I have been working at the Bloom Garden at Field and Monroe. Kelley also keeps planters along Field Street going along with other neighbor volunteers. This week the steering committee will meet via Zoom to discuss the fate of our annual Harvest Dinner among a considerable list of other items. Please consult the SNA website and also Facebook page to keep abreast of happenings. It's good to consider that despite pandemic restrictions the Spirit of Swillburg remains healthy and allows us to honor the efforts of those who saved Swillburg. Happy 9/17/75 Day to all!



The Boys of Swillburg--first row (kneeling); Charlie Keller, Denny Schied, Tom O'Connell Second row (standing): Tom Keller, Steve Fraiser, Gary White, Mike Bauman, Billy Bauman 3rd row (sitting on stoop): Peter Bauman, Rich Sundberg, Wayne Pratt 4th row (standing on stoop) Joey Keller, Mark McCollough, Tim Fishbaugh (Photo courtesy of Tom O'Connell)

Growing up Swillburg -- When Softball was King

Tom O'Connell

Swillburg is a popular Rochester neighborhood these days. Looking back, it was a great place for a kid to grow up in the 70's. The neighborhood was surrounded by parks as well. Cobbs Hill, Pinnacle Hill and Highland Park provided fun and adventures for all. Two factors come to mind when I think back--big families were very common, and we had a City Rec Center year-round at #35 School. So, you hardly had to leave the neighborhood for friends and activities. I remember the Playground was staffed by excellent and "very patient" Rec leaders. They were good to us and knew us about as good as our parents did. The City Rec would sponsor trips to Red Wing games, Niagara Falls, Letchworth Park, etc. Who can forget the portable open top water tanker they used to send around as a traveling swimming pool? I think they even spon-

sored a camp out one time, although, I think that activity was NOT repeated. If you were not at the playground, then you were most likely at Carl's Grocery on the corner of Field St. and Asbury. That was where we would discuss the affairs of the day and plans for tomorrow--our own kangaroo court. Carl Keller, the owner and father of several members of the crew, can best be compared to "Doc" from the Soda Shop in West Side Story. He would listen to us, joke with us, offer sage advice when needed and on occasion yell at us and kick us out, but we loved him and he us. That was our circle of life in Swillburg in the 70's. In 70s Swillburg you always had a place to hang out with your friends. We didn't have smart phones or video games, about the best we could do was foosball and bumper pool, and of course, sports.

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SWPC sends a special thank you!
Matthews & Fields Lumber: donation of lumber and materials for repairing/reconstructing Victory Garden plots
Joshua Bauroth, Monroe County Legislator: donation of 200 face masks and hand sanitizer to SW Farmers Market and SWPC
Genesee Co-op Federal Credit Union: small business assistance grant from Federal Home Loan Bank
Farm Credit East: grant for South Wedge Farmers Market

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Save on Money and the Planet

Rylea Ehrhardt



ASTRAL POWER

The WEDGE Newspaper has teamed up with Astral Power to encourage readers to save money on their electric bill and help save the planet in the process.

Community organizations like the South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC) serve the South Wedge neighborhood of Rochester. SWPC sponsors the WEDGE Newspaper, the Victory Gardens, the South Wedge Farmers Market, DIY Home Repair training for homeowners, and helps connect city residents to state resources and grants for energy efficient home improvement through various state programs.

Community solar is a state program that enables anyone – from homeowners or renters, to businesses or nonprofits – in the utility's service area to subscribe to a share of a local solar farm. Once enrolled, customers receive credits that reduce their monthly bill. There are no fees to enroll, to be a subscriber, or to cancel, which means that customers can take advantage of the program with no risk. As an added bonus, subscribers are guaranteed to save 10% on their monthly electric bill once they begin receiving solar energy credits.

Astral Power's bottom line is providing access to locally produced, clean energy from solar farms to households at a lower cost than their utility. By handling everything from initial enrollment to billing and support, Astral Power guaran-

tees savings on its customers' utility bills without any hassle.

For each new subscriber, Astral Power has pledged to donate \$100 to the South Wedge Planning Committee. The SWPC is dedicated to bringing our community together and to making the South Wedge a beautiful and engaging place for us to live. Astral Power is proud to support organizations like the South Wedge Planning Committee.

It takes five minutes to enroll in community solar!

1. Visit our secure site at <https://www.astralpower.com/#signup>
2. Provide basic information for enrollment
3. Under the dropdown menu asking--"How did you hear about us?"--be sure to select "Community Partner Referral"
4. Enter "SWPC" in the box labeled "Community Partner"
5. Provide your utility account so that Astral Power can view your electricity usage and size out your portion of a solar farm.
6. Complete your enrollment and submit!

For any questions regarding community solar, enrollment, or community partnership, please contact SWPC's liaison with Astral Power: Rylea Ehrhardt (585) 402-9313, Rylea.Ehrhardt@AstralPower.com.



Good City Soil Project founder Chris Widmaier and gardener Jennifer J. Jones

Good City Soil Project Giveaway Ends

Nancy O'Donnell

Through much of the summer Chris Widmaier, founder of Green Collar Collaboration LLC, has been travelling all around town, a Johnny Appleseed of sorts, giving great soil away. In June he reached out to the South Wedge Planning Committee, who welcomed an opportunity to build community publicized the event. Soon a huge five yards of soil from Bristols Gardens Center landed in the parking lot, ready to be scooped up.

Members of the South Wedge Victory Garden along with other city residents came with bags and bins and dug in. Council member Mary Lupian stopped by. RCS D School of the Arts teacher Jennifer J. Jones collected soil for her garden and for several other family members who are making Rochester more sustainable.

"At home I've been building raised boxes for my mother who is having hip surgery," said Jones, who teaches middle school in the Family and Computer Sciences.

Widmaier partners with organizations, businesses, governments and individuals to create programs that lead to "a hopeful future through ecological engagement, systems thinking, and collective action." He works with Ben Harrigan, founder of Thoughtful Growth, which grows nutrient-dense food on an 1/8 acre urban farm in the City Of Rochester. (The pair give garden tours, teach workshops, and consult on-site for folks building gardens.)

"The Green Collar Collaboration brings projects and programs to build a sustain-

able and hopeful future," said Widmaier who gave away basil and kale plants to anyone who wanted one during the event. By giving away better soil [and through garden building], we'll have healthy people and build community."

On his Facebook page, Widmaier described his citywide giveaway: "Since we began just a month ago, the response has been breathtaking. Almost one hundred gardeners from across the city have participated in the project. We have distributed over a dozen cubic yards of soil to the folks that need it. The work of the Good City Soil Project has empowered and educated first time gardeners, connected neighbors to each other, and of course provided healthy soil to community members who are volunteering their time and talents to their neighbors. We couldn't be more pleased."

"Through this project we set out to learn out a little bit more about what it means to meet each other's needs by sharing in a spirit of reciprocity and altruism," writes Widmaier. "In a very short time we have been inspired by the resources people have been willing to commit to the project. Our community is truly abundant in its willingness to help others."

The project was launched with an initial investment from the founders and friends. After the final giveaway on July 25, Widmaier described their goal of raising \$800 to cover expenses.

To contribute to the project, visit <http://goodcitysoilproject.com/>

Somewhere in the Wedge



Photo by Becca Webb

Think Small!

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The Love of Animals

Michele H. Martell

"I looked around at all the animals suffering in the world. I saw the abuse, the neglect, the pain. I looked up to Heaven and said, 'Why? Why don't you do something to help the animals?' The reply came back. 'I did do something. I created YOU!'" - Anonymous

How can we help?! There are so many things that we can do. Look around!

There are many, many loving animals in need of homes that are in sanctuaries and shelters. When you save them, you are saving a life. Even if you are not able to provide a "forever" home, foster programs would be forever grateful for your participation. After all, when you foster, you are saving two lives - the life of the animal you foster, plus you free up space in a shelter for another animal in need (which I learned from the amazing Verona Street Animal Society). How about volunteering? Any act of love can make a world of difference for an animal. If time is not an option, financial and material donations can make a difference as well.

When shopping, look for product labels that read "No animal testing," "humane," "vegetarian-fed," "free-range," "cruelty-free," etc. We can make choices each day that may not seem like much on an individual basis; yet, when we each make a conscious effort, the results are cumulative in saving animals from needless suffering. Not to mention, it sends a clear message to producers that kindness is what we are desiring from our products. This is one reason why I am so proud to be a part of Mary Kay Cosmetics; cruelty-free- supporting animals, women and children.

The love of animals is divine. Can you imagine a more genuine love that is similar to the love of a young child? That is the beauty of animals which may also be a curse to them. They will never grow up; they are dependent upon us for protection, nourishment and love. And what they give back to us is pure, unadulterated, selfless love. It is sad to see when their trust in humans results in their being abused, abandoned, harmed. The fact that their communication is not in human terms does not make their experience, feelings, emotions, any less real than our own. Observe the love of an animal mother for her baby... cows, pigs, goats, dogs, cats, birds, all animals. The love of animals is real and is one of the most purist love you can experience.

When I recently lost my sweet rescue beagle Gabe to a fast-moving cancer, my heart fell apart. Not to mention I saw the heartbreak of his surviving twin Gabby and the sadness of my human children who had the love of Gabe in their lives for 7 years. Sweet Gabe, rescued from a high-kill Southern shelter, was undoubtedly abused. And he had the most beautiful soul. The love of an animal extends far beyond into the lives and memories of everyone they touch. On his last day on this earth, I asked Gabe to please show us a sign he was well.

Two days before my precious Gabe passed, my son's beautiful school, St. Kateri School, had a remarkable car parade for all the graduating 5th-graders and gave them each a silver star-shaped balloon. After Gabe passed on May 23rd, my kids attached some of Gabe's fur and some Holy Water and sent the balloon into the sky with a prayer. On July 6th, I called my son to say that I had just made an appointment to introduce a rescue dog to Gabby as a potential friend (but never a replacement brother) to possibly help her with her loneliness, to get some



This picture was taken the day of the memorable Saint Kateri School car parade in May. I didn't realize I had this picture with Gabe until July.

of her sparkle back. My son and daughter said they were busy at that moment watching "Gabe's balloon" wafting down from the sky - the balloon they had freed into the heavens after our Gabe passed. I incredulously asked what were they talking about? You see, they were at their dad's, about five miles away. The balloon landed within a few feet of them



as we spoke. It was unmistakably "The Balloon" because it had numbers on it, although a little beat up, as in the second picture below. This balloon had travelled for a little over a month about five miles, across the Bay & several neighborhoods, just to land in front of my children. I Believe, and We Love You, Gabe, and Thank You for this sign. Love never dies and that includes the love for animals.

"When a man has pity on all living creatures then only is he noble." Buddha.

*Please note, sending a balloon into the sky is not encouraged due to the potential ramifications to animals & all wildlife. We are grateful that this balloon was safely and divinely returned to us.



Michele H. Martell (Photo by Sarah Jeruta Salvilla)

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Stems for Change Uses Beauty for Social Justice

Molly McDonald, a resident of the Highland Park neighborhood, began a fundraising initiative in June to support Black-led organizations and racial justice-related causes. Every Tuesday, she posts one-day fundraising challenges on the Stems for Change Facebook page. When you donate, you can send Stems for Change a message to nominate someone you care about in Rochester to receive a doorstep flower delivery the following day. All flowers come from Molly's cut flower garden and from the farm at Equicenter. We hope you will participate! This is meant to be community-building and uplifting for all, and to provide a way for our community to come together as one to make a difference!



Molly delivering

Nativity Prep Academy Opens for Fall 2020

Nativity Preparatory Academy, a local tuition-free privately-operated urban middle school for students in Grades 5-8, is planning to resume in-person classroom instruction starting on September 9, pending a state decision expected next week. A high-quality remote option will be available to families who wish to continue at home learning.

Through the help of generous donors, Nativity provides full-tuition scholarships for all students. Based on a nationally renowned educational model, Nativity



is entering its 12th year of providing a Catholic middle school education for underserved City of Rochester youth.

To learn more, visit www.nativityrochester.org.

Defunding the Police

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petit larceny, or stealing of another person's property, generally less than \$50.

A worse statistic to state is the rate at which crimes are solved. Overall, police solve only 29% of crimes (though for fatal shootings they have a very high rate of resolutions), casting doubt on the effectiveness of the department. For example: Larceny solve rates are only 10% and non-fatal shootings 20%.

We have tasked our police officers with an impossible job which is to solve all of society's ills. From neighborly disputes and desperate parents who can't get their kids to go to school to mental health crises and homelessness. There are many types of calls in which, even police themselves will admit, they are not well suited to respond and frankly would prefer not to.

Many time police escalate situations by their deficient conflict and de-escalation skills and even sometimes a situation worsens by their mere presence. Other calls, such as property crimes already committed don't require an officer with a gun in order to handle the situation appropriately.

In other cities community organiza-

tions or even city employees respond or co-respond with police to these types of situations which reduces the need for as many patrol officers and most importantly improves the outcomes for those who could be arrested, hurt or even killed due to a situation that is needlessly escalated.

There is a paradigm shift occurring where many in this community, around the country and even around the world are daring to imagine a new way of ensuring our neighborhoods are safe.

When I ran to represent the East District, I promised to focus on creating stable, quality, affordable housing; police accountability and expanded public transportation.

Through shifting funding and responsibilities from the police department to community reinvestment, I can follow through on that promise and we can decrease the incidents of police violence, increase investment in affordable housing and our transportation infrastructure all at the same time and we can take big steps towards creating true public safety and eliminating racial disparities in Rochester

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**We are all in this together
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Our Plague Masks: to Love or to Hate?

David Howard Day

So essential, so reviled: the face mask and our mandate to wear one.

For years, as students and faculty traipsed by my office at a Community College, they would often stop to notice the large collection of masks from various world cultures hanging on my walls, souvenirs of various research trips. Indeed, people in my profession of anthropology have, since the days of Franz Boas and Claude Levi-Strauss, been intrigued by the universality of face coverings and studied them as objects and technologies relating to identity, personhood and transformation.

In general masks reveal, conceal or protect. Ancient Egyptian embalmers wore a jackal-headed mask; the *Kwa'kwak'awa* of the Pacific Northwest don transformational masks in their dance-dramas, as do the Balinese in depicting Rangda, the devil-witch, demon-queen. Every year American children sport an endless variety of Halloween masks.

In health and medical fields, surgical masks and shields protect doctors, just as thermo-plastic masks hold radiation patients still during procedures. Initiation rites across the world use revered masks to imitate ancestral and nature spirits, and many of these on display in our museums.

Think, too, of welders with their unwieldy metal masks, of Darth Vader, of firefighters, baseball catchers, hockey goalies, and even the Fraternal Order of Odd Fellows. And then there's Mardi Gras, and the Venetian masked ball with the half-face Capitano, or Renaissance masks held to the face with a handle.

Given the vast array of face-coverings throughout the world, I've found it worthwhile to examine what I call seven "moments" in the life-history of a mask; the making of a mask, (there are often taboos), the actual wearing of it, our encounter with the mask (in a ritual performance), the removal of one's mask, exchanging, selling of the mask, displaying (is context lost?), and the destroying of a mask.

And, in our pandemic times, we have found the most fraught of these seven "moments" to be the actual wearing phase. Indeed, as fears of contagion have spread across the globe, Americans in particular seem to be the most, er...should we say, resistant to being told to wear them.

Front-line workers and women who



Masks bottom row: left to right: Guatemala and Venetian half-mask Harlequin Top row: vintage McGreggor Catcher's mask and Angola Chokwe mask showing scarifications (Photo by David Howard Day)

may be applying certain skin-care products, report an acne like rash, called maskne, from requisite layers of masks. (Who knew?) The President, with his empathy deficit, sees wearing a mask as unmanly. I mean, How simple can it be, when out in public to wrap the two strings around your ears?

But, it's part of our American nature to be contrarian; we're not especially interested in the recondite studies of the origins of the Covid-19 virus, (except as politicians have been quick to assign blame to China). But we should be gratified that the enemy is not in some spooky miasma (believed as the cause of the bubonic plague in the Middle Ages), dangerous atoms, or divine retribution, but the casual spread of airborne droplets, which can be reduced

by the simple act of donning a mask.

Plague masks as part of the PPE kit, emerged after 1910 during the great Manchurian plague. Since then, Chinese people have been habituated to wearing face masks and the practice has become, according to medical anthropologist Christos Lynteris, "a kind of PR tool for proclaiming of China's position as a modern scientific nation."

So, make it easy on yourself; masks seem to be here to stay. If you want to be style-forward, lavish beaucoup bucks on a Gucci mask, shop on Etsy, or slip on one of the free ones sent out by the City of Rochester. Just lent to be the city with your inner fashionista while doing your bit for public safety. Is it really so different from the tribal dancer in Burkina Faso who wears a mask to ward off evil?

But where did that leave the 65+ students who require speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy?

Using multiple media platforms, the staff's seven therapists and special education providers work with more than five dozen children and their families to deliver cutting edge, fun and translatable therapy sessions for the students.

As a result, teachers and therapists created tailored at-home activities with platforms like Zoom and Class Dojo.

Teachers and therapists also created learning bags that aid in their sessions for each child. For those families for whom access to technology was limited, RCN made Chromebooks available.

And the students? Amira, age 4, has been enjoying the challenge of this new endeavor. Her mom, Emily, says, "Amira loves her teletherapy sessions...she looks forward to doing activities and I can see that doing sessions over video chat has helped her development."

For more information, contact Jeff Hoffman/Shelly Kordish jhoffman@rcn4kids.org / skordish@rcn4kids.org



SENSC & RPD Community Updates

Janet Collinge

"We're Here for You!"

While the doors may be temporarily closed at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center, the working, caring, service and commitment to the community of the staff and Rochester Police Department continues.

Processing of handicapped parking and business permits continues to be a large part of the service center's interaction with the community.

A new outside drop box provides expedited service for the community. It now stands outside of the Service Center at 320 North Goodman Street, in the Village Gate parking lot near the smokestack.

Updated Information on Obtaining and Renewing Handicap Permits

To obtain a handicap permit: an applicant must live in the city of Rochester, have a valid Government identification with current address and a completed doctor approved and signed DMV Handicap application. If New York State or current address identification is not available, a copy of a piece of recent U.S. mail will be necessary to prove residency.

Applicants who do not live in the city of Rochester must apply for a handicap permit and parking waiver in the municipality in which they live.

Temporary permits are valid for a period of six months and require a new doctor's certificate. Permanent permits must be renewed and do not require a doctor's certificate if permit was issued in New York State.

Handicapped permits may be submitted for processing through the Southeast Service Center's drop box.

This information may be found on the city's website at <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/handicapparking>.

Person-to-person assistance is available by appointment only at the Southeast Service Center via phone call or Zoom meeting Monday through Friday from 10 am - 3 pm.

Contact the service center at 585-428-7640 for an appointment or additional questions.

Updated Information on Renewing Business Permits

Businesses will receive a renewal application thirty (30) to sixty (60) days prior to the month in which your business permit will expire. If you do not receive a renewal, please contact the Southeast Service Center at 585-428-7640.

Carefully read and review your renewal document. If all information on the application remains the same or if there is only a change in address or phone number or persons listed, please make any necessary changes and return to your NSC office via Drop off box or US Mail. The US Mail address for the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center is: Southeast Neighborhood Service Center, 320 North Goodman Street, Suite 209, Rochester, NY 14607.

Applications must be submitted a minimum of thirty (30) days before expiration of your current Business Permit. Once received and if there are no issues identified, your Business Permit will be granted and mailed to you. If the City finds cause for concern, you will be notified within thirty (30) days.

Zoom and phone assistance with business permits may also be obtained by appointment by calling 585-428-7640. Appointment hours are Monday-Friday 10 am-3 pm.

Rochester Childfirst Network's Teletherapy Program Addresses Children's Unique Needs

When COVID-19 shut down schools, Rochester Childfirst Network was in a unique position – as a provider of child-care, it was considered to be essential, but as an organization dedicated to the health and well-being of children, leaders decided to switch to a distance-learning educational platform as the situation evolved.

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Sam Patch's Last Big Jump

Patti Giglio

Since the country's birth, Americans have always been obsessed with daredevils, sideshow freaks and circuses. Today, we push the envelope in order to get a thrill. In the 19th century they pushed their envelope farther than they had ever done before, and as long as someone was willing to perform, the crowds were guaranteed to come.

The first American daredevil was the "Yankee Leaper," otherwise known as Sam Patch. Patch was born in 1799 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, which was where he performed his first jump.

When he was a young boy, in a time before child labor laws, he worked at Slater Mill as a mule spinner, driving the mules at the mill to turn the stone that ground the grain.

Patch and his friends would swim in the water of the mill race, and he often jumped from the mill dam. Then the friends jumped off a bridge into the Blackstone River. Each tried to outdo and impress the others. Patch looked for higher perches to dive from, and few boys were brave enough to leap from the heights that he did. What started out as boyhood antics, soon began drawing crowds of people. He continued his daring jumps with the height of each growing higher and higher.

Patch moved to Paterson, New Jersey and again found work at a local mill. He was then around twenty-seven years old, and he had not grown out of his penchant for leaping from high places into the turbulent waters below. He set his sights on a new, and his highest platform, to date. When it was announced that a bridge was being built across the Passaic River, Patch vowed to make it his next feat. People in Paterson and the surrounding areas enjoyed watching the construction of the bridge, and Patch used that to his advantage. He walked out on to a perch wearing only his underwear and a shirt, then he jumped. The spectators were shocked, and entertained, by what they had just saw. The eighty-foot leap earned him the nickname "Patch the New Jersey Jumper."

He set his sight on bigger targets and two years later Patch found himself standing above the churning currents of the American Falls at Niagara Falls. On October 7, 1829 he stood on a platform built on Goat Island. The Colonial Advocate reported this account of his jump.

He walked out clad in white, and with great deliberation put his hands close to his side and jumped from the platform into the midst of that vast gulf of foaming waters. Emerge he did, surviving a jump

continues on pg. 11



Kitzou and zinnias in the South Wedge



Michele H. Martell (Photo by Sarah Jeruta Salvilla)

For more information, visit the City's website at: <https://www.city-ofrochester.gov/businesspermit/>

Update from the RPD

Lieutenant Robert J. Wilson, of Central's Community Affairs Bureau

Lieut. Wilson reports that the NSCs have continued to handle citizen complaints, with most of the follow-up being done by phone or email for safety reasons. A speed trailer has been deployed. RPD has visited corner stores to make sure they were not selling masks received from the City. Nuisance is still being done, but in-person RPD meetings are on hold.

In-person meetings have been replaced by Zoom meetings.

"For those with access to a laptop, personal computer, tablet or cell phone, this has been a nice way to connect and to address concerns for the communities we serve," said Lieut. Wilson.

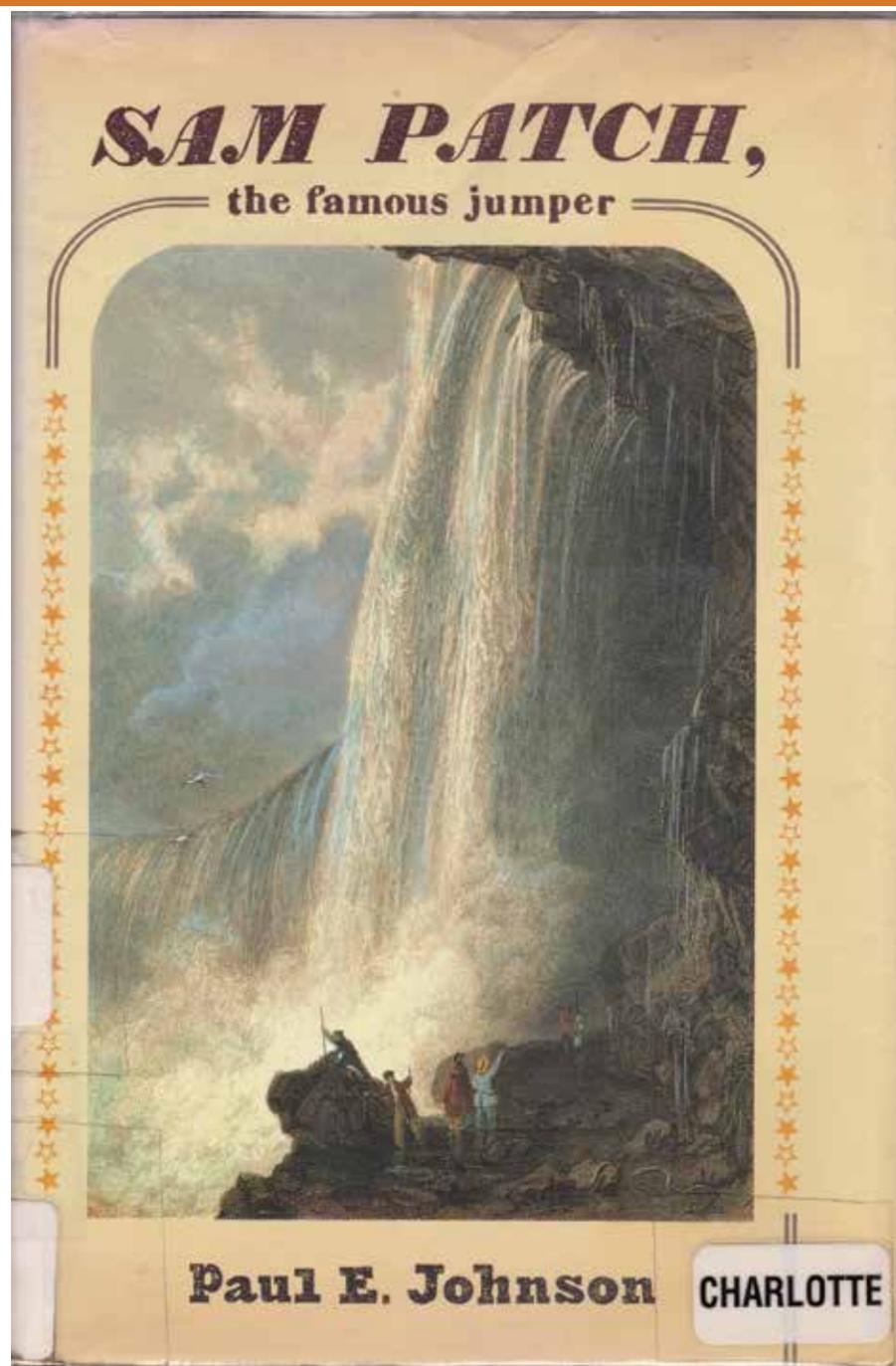
"Recently, the RPD lost one of our own due to a bicycling accident, while he was off-duty. This was tragic to our family. I hope everyone is wearing their bike helmet and following all the rules of the road, to keep safe on their end."

While both SENS Administrator Nancy Johns-Price and Lieutenant Wilson miss the person-to-person contact and look forward to Plexiglassed reopening, they stressed the creativity and resilience of the community.

"The strength and resiliency I have seen among the RPD and community during the COVID-19 pandemic is the ability to adjust to the problem as it unfolds. Societal changes had to happen quickly and did. I am proud of the way most people abided by the guidelines to slow the spread."

Johns-Price echoes this sentiment, adding, "Rochester is strong and people prove it every day. They brush themselves off and get up to face another day. The strength has been to do things differently, finding different methods to get things accomplished."

Janet Collinge is the Community Engagement Flower City AmeriCorps Member for 2020 at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center.



Jaslynn is a Registered Nurse and has worked in the Observation Unit for 4 years.

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Jess Kamens' Quarantine Porch Portrait Documentary

Nancy O'Donnell

In the pandemic's earliest days, and "in the heat of the quarantine," South Wedge photographer Jess Kamens began studying the photos people were taking around the world.

"I was seeing tons of photos from China and Italy," said Kamens. "They were all empty areas, beautiful piazzas, some iconic places like the Eiffel Tower, all empty of people. It didn't really capture what's really important—people."

One night Kamens was unable to sleep. "I was thinking, 'I don't have a lot of money. My business is being closed. How can I give to others if I don't have money? Now everyone is at home, their own safe place. I can give them a picture.'"

Her website—Jess Kamens Photography - showcases her talent for being the move, making people look their best in the middle of the big events in their lives. She also helps brand businesses and offers workshops, which involves meeting with lots of people. In one section of her website, he's memorializes her one travels from Inis Oirr, Ireland to Berlin, Germany to Angkor Wat, Cambodia and everywhere in between.

Within a few days [other photographer] were doing similar projects Kamens said. "Take a bunch of creatives with a hurdle, and they'll come up with the same solution."

Now staying in place at home with Lila, her five-year-old daughter, a bout of insomnia gave her the idea to just ask people to come out of the house and be present for this one quick moment when the U.S. had stopped moving. Quarantine Porch Portrait Documentary Series was born.

Kamens began strategizing on how to safely begin the series while social distancing.

"I have a lung condition, and so I didn't want to put myself at risk or put anyone else at risk," Kamens said. "I wanted to tell people's stories while capturing the moment. What were people feeling? What kind of stress were they under? People lost their jobs. Some still worked full time [at home] with three kids pulling at them. It's chaos. What are they feeling?"

She rang three people she knew on the street, posted sign-up sheets on her website and soon families and individuals began contacting her. With three days her Facebook account was logging 20-30 responses her day she said. And others told other people who wanted in.

Ultimately, Kamens received some 800 requests, and by the end, some 400 portraits were created.

A friend Jane Weinberg helped her by compiling a list. Kamens plugged in the addresses in her phone, got the 300 mm camera she borrowed from Canon, put Lila in the back seat with toys and treats and headed out.

She'd pull up in her car, beep, park, and at some 30 feet or more from her subjects, she'd start clicking. No posing,



Joe Di Fiore and Julia Carmel Dippel of The Little Flower Community and family © Jess Kamens



Kamaria Dorsey-Curtis with family and friends © Jess Kamens



Anna Vos, owner of Anna Parade, and family © Jess Kamens



Keri Trouerbach, family and friends © Jess Kamens



Niraj Lama, owner of New Leaf Tea Bar, and family © Jess Kamens

no requirements, no charge, she encouraged all of her subjects to come as they were.

"I never felt so good about anything," said Kamens. "I don't have a lot of money to donate, so I focused on bringing joy."

Everyone was thrilled at the thought of being part of quarantine documentary, but when she arrived at some homes, it wasn't all smiles. Some of her subjects shared the difficulty of quarantine as she took the photos. Others e-mailed her later to tell her how important it was to remember. Some were willing to give their names; others wanted anonymity.

"There was a whole range of people. Some got full paychecks [during the stay-in-place orders]; others lost food stamps or their homes. Some were in extreme poverty; some were in multi-million dollar homes."

One portrait was of a mother and her kids who were kicked out of her house. She was standing in front of a friend's house," added Kamens. "I'd expect one person at a house, and fifteen people would come out. Another was two moms, ten kids and two dogs."

Once back in her car, Kamens filled "sheets and sheets and sheets of paper" recording their stories. Later, she would contact them, and ask if she could use their words.

The project continued with the huge job of cataloging. "I hired my assistant to sort and label, and I began writing. There are some amazing stories; some were really sad. One person to me, 'I can't tell you what it meant to me. We lost our grandmother to COVID.' Another was using the photo to announce her pregnancy, but soon after she lost the child. One family said, 'it was the best thing that happened to them in a month.'"

Now Kamens has begun completing her pandemic documentary. She's contacted publishers. She's looked at self-publishing a "small, locally-themed book," but she knows that would involve crowd funding.

"I look at the work and I'm so tired, but I'm starting the texts," Kamens explained. "I'm a visual storyteller, and I know [the text] needs to flow. I want it to be the book that a three or four-year-old child will have when they're 60. Even they weren't in the book, they can think that was my neighbor." She's noted that while many of the stories early on were all "confusion and panic," she came around long enough to later hear stories filled with "a lot of love and how [families] got really close."

In the end, love remains the most important part of any creative work, close up or 50 feet away.

See more of Kamens's "Quarantine Porch Portrait" series at jessrk.com/porch.



Marilyn Rosche © Jess Kamens

**We are in this together
Let's work together. Stay safe!
Wear a mask in public!**

Planetary Messengers

Aeolea Wendy Burwell and Peter Doughty

Welcome back to our series focused on the ancient art-science of astrology. We hope to spark the interest of a wide range of readers, from those who might know their Sun signs to others who know nothing about astrology and yet notice events going on in their lives, and the world at large, and wonder. We offer a look into the current celestial weather in hopes that readers will be able to use the energies for the highest and best possible outcomes.

We are obviously in a time of great change and disruption of patterns. Astrologers have been watching and anticipating great events at this time for many years. While few predicted a world wide pandemic related to the current celestial configurations, it has been widely acknowledged that governments, monetary systems and more would break down. It is clear that things will not return to "normal" despite most everyone's desire and need to do so. Our collective task, should we choose to take it on, is to envision and work toward new, more equitable systems going forward. Knowing the current astrological energetic impulses can greatly assist us.

Everything we are currently experiencing is setting the stage for negotiating the minefield of our cultural disintegration leading up to the 2020 elections and their aftermath. Fasten your seat belts: We're in for a bumpy ride. Our eventual destination however will be worth the ride.

A few words about the asteroid goddesses: Physically there is the asteroid belt in our solar system between the quicker moving personal planets (Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars) and the slower moving trans-personal planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto). Try an app like Sky View Lite to get a clear picture of this if you like.

Every developed culture since the Babylonians has used the lens of astrology to help understand life. They observed the Sun, Moon, five planets and constellations which they could see with the naked eye. One very well-known story is about the three Wise Men (Zoroastrian Astrologers) following a star! Starting in the 16th century, optical lenses were developed leading up to telescopes and later the discovery of the asteroid belt in 1801.

We are obviously in a time of great change and disruption of patterns...

Ceres (goddess of the harvest and nurturance) was the first object named at that time followed quickly by Pallas Athena (strategic warrior goddess). The names of the asteroids are primarily drawn from the mythological goddesses and the stories that predominated our very ancient history over 4,000 years ago. Early astrological perspectives have been dominated by the patriarchal understanding of the mythical gods, with Venus and the Moon alone reflecting the face of the feminine. As evidenced by the MeToo movement, AOC, Mary Trump and so many more women in leadership positions, we are experiencing a resurgence of the feminine wisdom within our cultures and hopefully within ourselves. This is reflected in the current planetary configurations.

We focus first on the Moon's cycle from New to Full and back again for each month. This is the fastest-moving cycle in our heavens and the most readily accessible in the sky to even the most casual observer. Since in astrological understanding, the Moon represents our emotions and how we respond to the ebb and flow of everyday life, it is also the most easily observed internally.

On Aug. 3rd the Full Moon in Aquarius promises to be heated, eventful and challenging. Not only are the energies of Saturn (limits), Pluto (deep transformation) and Jupiter (expansion) in Capricorn directly involved in a stressful exchange with communications master Mercury in Cancer, there are also several asteroid goddesses in the mix. They are Juno,

Vesta, Pallas, Eris and Black Moon Lilith! Keywords for these feminine energies include: steadfast, assertive, strong-willed and disruptive. We can all look for women to be prominent in the world news, speaking up for what is right in contrast to entrenched paternalistic systems and characters. One recent example is the line of women in Portland Or. forming a protective barrier against federal stormtroopers. Individuals with birthdays around Aug. 3 and Feb. 1 will experience these with the most direct impact.

The feminine energies continue making inroads on the New Moon in late Leo Aug. 18th. Venus (money and justice) will be sitting on the Cancer Sun in the US chart, again highlighting these areas within our country. In the current skies, Venus is also directly opposite Pallas (strategic warrior), invigorating an epochal overhaul of the inequities built into our government systems. We can expect continuing eruptions of long-simmering sentiments. Those born within a few days of Aug. 18 and Feb. 14 will register these energies particularly strongly. Since it is a time of new beginnings, they would be well advised to focus on them intentionally for the highest and best in their own lives by knowing which areas of their birth charts are being impacted.

The Pisces Full Moon on Sept. 2 continues with these themes as Venus (in Cancer) is exactly opposite the heavy hitters of Jupiter, Pluto, Saturn and Pallas (aka the Capricorn Cluster) as they continue to foment upheaval. Adding to the mix, Mars is apparently standing still (getting ready to retrograde) in volatile Aries and is challenging Venus. Domestic pleasures and individual pursuits are difficult to balance and are undermined by societal decay. Those born close to Sept. 2 and Mar. 1 will be directly impacted.

The Virgo New Moon on Sept. 17 also features warrior Mars (still in Aries, retrograde) challenging the planetary signature of these historic times. Demonstrations and rallies are likely to not only be continuing but also increasing in intensity. Any new campaigns launched after early Sept. are unlikely to succeed because of Mars' apparent backward motion. This includes any military incursions around the world. Especially affected will be those with birthdays around Oct. 20 and April 17. Look for Mars to show itself shining bright and red in the eastern evening sky after sunset.

As August begins, communicative Mer-



Pallas Athena

cury is in a stressful relationship with the slow movers in Capricorn as it finishes its lengthy tour of Cancer. This will be visible to even the casual observer as more heated conflict between opposing viewpoints as ideas heat up even more. The winged messenger will quickly move through Leo and Virgo. Then in the third week of Sept. in Libra, it will again enter into contention with the dominant energies of Mars and the Capricorn Cluster (Pluto, Jupiter and Saturn) in yet another wave of heated rhetorical exchange.

The contentiousness of these times is intense on the collective as well as personal levels. We may soon be faced with increased disruption of distribution of goods and food, as well as housing emergencies that bring both together in stressful ways. We are faced with urgent choices. The polarities are strongly aligning behind divisiveness and conspiracy theories on the one hand versus science, equalities and fair mindedness on the other. Which will you choose??

The authors welcome the chance to help you understand all the potential of these energies in relation to your personal chart.

A - Z Astrology - Aeolea Wendy Burwell and Peter Doughty at zoidion@protonmail.com.



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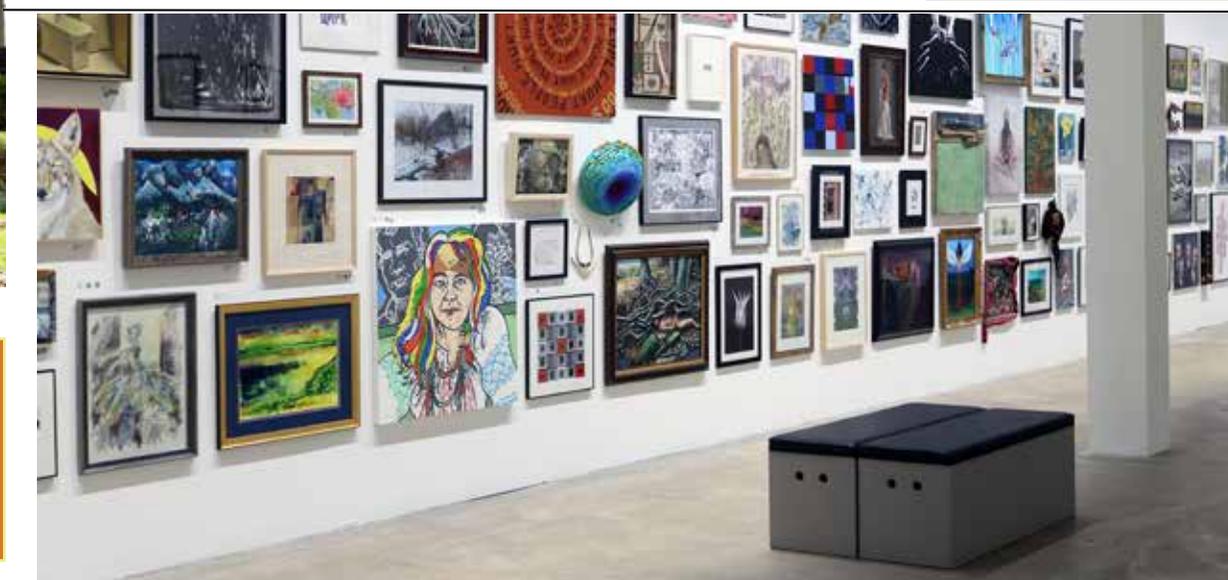
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From the South Wedge to Borgne, Haiti

The *Pen ak Pwason* Program of St. Joseph's House serves up food & community

Sarah Brownell

Imagine that you are getting older and not able to work. Maybe you've developed some disabilities due to the hard work you've done throughout your lifetime. You have no pension. There is no social security in your country. Your children have died or moved away or are unable to help care for you. Now imagine that you are hungry. Who might you call on for help? The church gives out some rice sometimes when they have a donation. It's enough to last a few meals—but to cook it you need charcoal or wood, a pot, and ideally some oil and salt. So mostly you must depend on the kindness of your neighbors. You roam the edges of the market asking for change and hope a kind visitor will bestow a gift. Unfortunately, your neighbors are also quite poor. Most families in rural Haiti subsist on less than one or two dollars a day and are highly vulnerable to any setback. Perhaps a few hundred people in the Commune of Borgne, Haiti subsist mainly by seeking alms in the street or visiting neighbors they know to be generous at supper time.

When my husband Kevin and I lived in Haiti from 2006-2010, we were visited each morning by one who became our friend—Guerre. She came early while the roosters were still crowing. When the downstairs neighbors opened the gate to fetch water, she found her way up to our bedroom door—which really was just a curtain-calling softly in the door for my husband. We would roll out of bed and start making coffee. It took me about an hour to light the charcoal and brew some coffee with our coffee sock which was sort of like a large re-usable tea bag. Guerre would sit with us waiting for the coffee. But as much in need as Guerre was, she also had a lot to offer. She had been a masseuse for a wealthy



Sarah Burnell and Guerre in Haiti 2012

family from our area whose daughter married President-for-Life Baby Doc Duvalier. She often came with herbs and oils to work her magic on our aches and pains. She cured my husband's bad ankle. She also loved to dance and sing, sometimes humming her own tune or dancing to some music only she could hear. And when she held you in an embrace and looked directly at you, her eyes held such loving kindness that you'd swear you were looking into the eyes of God.

In March 2008, an "un-natural" disaster occurred—a sudden and rapid rise in food prices. Within a month, the price of rice had more than doubled, and corn and wheat prices skyrocketed. The Food and Agricultural Organization called it a "Food Price Crisis." They reported, "There was enough food to feed the world in 2008, but the poor could no lon-

ger afford it." The dozens of people like Guerre who lived in our town came to their neighbor's house for leftovers and found nothing. There were riots and people ate dirt cookies to ease hunger pains. The Prime Minister lost his job. Someone had to take the blame despite the fact that the causes of the crisis were more directly associated with the actions of the "Developed World" such as droughts related to global climate change, US pension funds switching investments from the crashing stock market into the commodities market, and the US decision to grow more corn to make ethanol to fuel cars rather than feed people.

By October 2008, it was clear that the food crisis was not going to completely disappear. We turned to St. Joseph's House of Hospitality on South Ave for help. Before moving to Haiti around 2006, my husband and I were workers at St. Joseph's House, helping to run the overnight shelter and soup kitchen. It was St. Joe's that supported us on our initial trips to Borgne where we worked on environmental and public health projects with the non-profits Haiti Outreach *Pwoje Espwa* and Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods, the second an organization which we helped found. While I worked away on my water and sanitation projects, Kevin sought to help the most vulnerable. He organized a contingent of local volunteers from the Scouts of Haiti, the Wesleyan Church, and the Brainstorming Technology Center to repair a building that everyone called the "Poor House." It had been built by the St. Martin DePorres Society years ago and had fallen into disrepair. The volunteers, including some visiting students from SUNY Geneseo, carried cement (purchased with help from St. Joe's), gravel, sand and water while a mason and carpenter volunteered their skills to repair the building. The Scouts referred to this activity as a "Bon Aksyon" or a "Good Action." Kevin proposed to St.

continues on pg. 11



Poor House before



Poor House after

Joe's that they develop a program to help the most vulnerable people in Borgne, the elderly and disabled through the food crisis. In October 2008, we initially fed 25 people twice a week. Then we expanded to 50 guests, and in 2016, to 100, covering a large portion of the need. The project became known as The *Pen ak Pwason* (Loaves and Fishes) program for the elderly and disabled.

One difference about *Pen ak Pwason* from many other food programs is that we purchase local food. Imported rice and corn are cheaper than locally grown varieties, but if we bought the imported rice, we would continue to drive local farmers out of business. Our per meal costs are higher when we buy local (about \$2/meal), but the money goes to work at least two times in the community—once to feed people, and another time to support a farmer's family with their needs for education, health care and other items. We only buy imported items if we can't find a local version.

Since the beginning we have had an amazing director, Somane Agustama. Somane had also been a supporter of Guerre, sharing her dinner with Guerre each day after our breakfast. It is really Somane who directs the spirit of the program. When you talk to her, you can see how much she loves each and everyone one of the guests. Many call her "mother" despite the fact that she is 20 years their junior. Somane does the food planning and purchasing and travels to regional markets to buy Haitian grown corn and rice. *Pen ak Pwason* also provides other things besides food—laundry soap is distributed monthly and sometimes an international visitor drops off some clothing they don't want to take home. But most importantly, the program provides a sense of community, a sense of belonging for those who have been pushed aside by society because they are no longer economically valuable. For the 10th anniversary we made *Pen ak Pwason* t-shirts. Uniforms are very popular in Haiti and most groups have, at very least, matching t-shirts. It is important not only to be fed, but also to be a valued part of something, to be part of a tradition, part of a country, part of a community. Our guests wear the T-shirts proudly and show up meti-

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Rochester statue

Arts & Cultural Council and NBN Sector 6 in a design that included the city founder. Kettavong was commissioned to create the bronze statue, and he enlisted SWPC board member Dave Halter as his model. In Kettavong's vision, Rochester would be seated, "Reflecting" as the statue was ultimately named, on his life.

The statue was unveiled in May 2008 in a landscaped park packed with city notables (Mayor Bob Duffy and former Mayor Bill Johnson), state assembly and city council members, business owners and neighbors and then SWPC Board Chair Bob Boyd. Many knew of his history as an enslaver of ten men, women and children who came with him from Maryland to Dansville in 1810, but the story his ancestors told was that he came up north to free them. But, he freed only two, and one he kept as an indentured servant for a few more years.

The sordid story of his work as trader and enslaver of humans lives was chronicled in a City Paper article by Ron Netsky in 2004: "he brought slaves with him and continued to own and profit from them until New York State no longer permitted him to do so." (Slavery was outlawed in New York State on July 4, 1827. Additional evidence shows he continued to own human beings until that day. Either they were hired out to make him money or they worked for his relatives.)

The City's Defacer Eraser department had the statue cleaned within days and the discussion continues.

A group of E.L. Towers neighbors gathered while the statue still outlined his crimes.



Vena Price

"I'm a Christian," said Vena Price. "We need to come together as a nation. God wants us to love, and this love needs to be great. We're not doing what we're supposed to be doing. God is angry." Syracuse "Bam" Gallishaw has lived

ulously washed and prepared for dinner. Somane is assisted by two other excellent cooks, Marceline, and Marivierge. Together they often bring food to those who are homebound; they visit the sick; they attend the guests' funerals; they are family to those who do not have any.

During summer 2017, Samantha Huselstein, a recent graduate from Mechanical Engineering program at the Rochester Institute of Technology, spent the summer in Borgne as part of her work with St. Joseph's House. Along with Somane's son Jamessy Augustama (also a natural engineer) she helped get a tap from the public water supply installed. The public water is rather unpredictable, so they built a water storage system to guarantee supply. Finally, they developed a proposal to switch from our charcoal-based cook stove which has been deteriorating to a propane based stove. They argued that switching would be better for the environment—fewer trees downed to make charcoal in an already deforested country. It would be better for the health of our cooks—less smoke inhalation, eye irritation, and risk of burns. It would be better from an economic standpoint—the shortage of trees has made charcoal quite expensive. Despite the higher initial cost of a propane

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in the South Wedge for some twenty-two years. He was here "when they put [the statue] up" and he'll



Syracuse "Bam" Gallishaw

be here when they take it down. "I say have it removed. It's insulting to the people," said Gallishaw. "That's not unity. We knew that he was a slave owner, but he had freed them. I read it all, but as I read more, I thought this is disgusting. Once you do learn the history you see he ran all types of slaves."

Gallishaw had some ideas for who should replace Nathaniel Rochester, but the one that would be most "South Wedge." "Bob Marley! Let's get a statue of Bob Marley," he said laughing.

Most recently South Wedge Planning Committee Chair Frank Logan sent a letter to the Mayor Lovely Warren that said the nonprofit had re-examined the placement of Rochester's statue: "In light of the new awareness and community efforts brought about by Black Lives Matter and other anti-racists movements."

"Looking through the more enlightened lens of 2020... we are of the consensus that it is appropriate to have the statue removed from the location and the park renamed," writes Logan.

Logan polled the former board members who worked to get the statue installed and they all agreed it needed to go.

Meanwhile, Nathaniel Rochester's statue remains in the small park on South Avenue, unmarked by paint though still marked by infamy.

stove, Sam calculated that within a year the program would be saving money. In honor of our 10th anniversary, Sam fundraised enough for the stove, the 10th anniversary t-shirts designed by Jamesy, and chicken legs for the anniversary dinner in early October.

Last summer in 2019, two more St. Joseph's House workers visited Borgne—Richmond Futch and James Murphy. Here in Rochester, Richmond also runs Revelation Rochester Arts Center where he provides free workshops for vulnerable populations. He wanted to share the joy of painting with youth in Haiti, and he planned an amazing workshop for teen artists. Richmond brought the supplies and gave them some initial inspiration. Then he set the kids loose on the materials. They taped paper after paper to walls and covered them with beautiful scenes and inspirational messages until the sun set and they couldn't see well enough to work anymore. Richmond and James also

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Sam Patch

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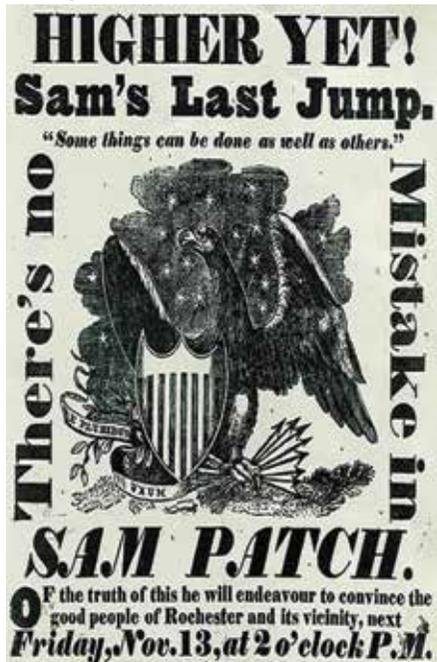
that no one had lived through before. The *Buffalo Republican* newspaper shared the story with their subscribers for the few that had not witnessed it: "The jump of Patch is the greatest feat of the kind ever effected by man. He may now challenge the universe for a competitor." No one dared to match Patch's jump. Ten days later he jumped again but from a platform set even higher, a dizzying 125 feet. The crowd was not disappointed.

Never satisfied and always looking for the next thrill, Patch and his new pet black bear headed east to Rochester. Advertisements in the Rochester papers set the date and time for his jump, November 6, 1829 at 2 pm. The ad also stated that his bear would be joining him in the jump. Before a crowd of 8,000 spectators, on a platform 97 feet above the Genesee River at High Falls, Patch pushed his bear off and then followed him into the water. Another successful performance. Even though the crowd was huge, the payoff was not. For the sole reason to make more money, he decided to repeat the jump a week later.

Posters and advertisements for his second jump on November 13th were displayed all over the city. It promised that it would much larger feat and "Sam's Last Jump!," certainly meaning at press time that is was his last jump of the season. The platform was raised to 125 feet. Before he made his jump, he gave a speech to the crowd. His final words follow: "Napoleon was a great man and a great general. He conquered nations, but he couldn't jump the Genesee Falls ." And with that he pushed his bear off the platform and then Patch followed.

What happened next was unclear, some say that something went wrong with the jump, while others say that Sam Patch was drunk when he left the platform. Did he hit the rocks that jutted out from the gorge wall on the way down or did he just hit the water too hard? What everyone can agree on is that Sam Patch did indeed leave the platform and plummet the 125 feet to the river below. The crowd held their breath for what seemed like an eternity of waiting, the bear climbed out of the water, but Patch never resurfaced. His advertisement proved to be prophetic, it truly turned out to be "Sam's Last Jump." November 13, 1829; was a Friday perhaps his luck had simply run out. The *New York City Saturday Evening Post* on November 14, 1829, gave Sam Patch a glowing review:

"The now distinguished name of Sam Patch, which erst had never been pronounced out of the little town of Paterson, is rapidly running the honorable circle of newspaper eulogy, from Maine to Georgia. Wherever Sam goes, he meets with welcome! The good people of every town anticipate his arrival, and not a man, woman, or child, are content, till they hear from his lips that there is no mistake."



When the paper hit the streets on the morning of the 14th, Sam Patch was dead. Its author nor the newspaper had no idea of the fate of Sam Patch at press time.

A few months later, his body was found frozen in the ice downstream at Charlotte near the shore of Lake Ontario. He was buried in Charlotte Cemetery on River Street without the pomp and circumstance that was fitting a famous entertainer.

On his grave a wooden marker was placed that read these five words, "Sam Patch – Such is Fame." After 187 years, the wooden marker is now gone as is the exact location of this exciting man's final resting place. According to an April 1925 obituary Mrs. Mary Ann Davis, who passed away at 95 years old, was the last living person who knew where Patch rests. With that his grave is lost to history.

A stone memorializing Sam Patch was later erected in the mid-20th century by the students at Charlotte High School, though it does sit over the place in the cemetery where his body was placed.



Sam Patch Memorial at Charlotte Cemetery on River Street in Rochester (Photo - Patti Giglio)

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417 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620

South Wedge Victory Garden Bucket Brigade Fights Hunger

Cassandra Kelly

If you were lucky, on Saturday, June 20 you witnessed a peculiar one-of-a-kind parade on Hamilton Street: a community Garden Bucket Brigade.

A dozen volunteers from the South Wedge Victory Gardens hauled buckets of garden soil using bikes, wheelbarrows, carts, and wagons. It was dirty work for a good deed!

The soil supplied by the Good City Soil Project, in conjunction with the South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC), was added to raised beds and containers to grow produce for neighbors in need. Members of the South Wedge Victory Gardens at Hamilton & Cypress Streets will work collectively all season to help make healthy food available to those who lack access. The organic vegetables will be donated to the South Wedge Food Program, a neighborhood charitable food distribution initiative.

COVID-19 has put many Rochester families at risk for food insecurity. Appeals to the South Wedge Food Pantry have increased from 300 per month to 300 per week. We spoke to its director and learned that there is a significant need for fresh produce. The food project has its own community garden, but the increased need far outweighs what a single garden can grow.

Having community gardeners grow extra to give back is the brainchild of Heidi Riegel. Due to the COVID-19 NY Pause, several plots couldn't get needed repairs prior to the belated reopening of the garden in late May. That meant the plots couldn't be allocated to gardeners who applied to garden this season, leaving beds vacant and prone to weeds. Heidi wanted to find a way to clean up the gardens and give back a bit of the joy and bounty to her neigh-



South Wedge Victory Bucket Brigade volunteers (l-r) Jermaine Lanos and Avril Little

hors that she received from gardening. Unfortunately, most of the damaged raised beds couldn't hold soil, and funds were not available for lumber to rebuild. Then the garden managers stumbled on a novel idea during a City-wide Zoom meeting for gardeners: large, food grade buckets could be adapted to accommodate most vegetables, including peppers and tomatoes. Buckets could create a container garden within these damaged, raised beds. But where to find enough of them to make a difference? That required the collaboration and generosity of several local businesses and individuals.

Wegmans had the perfect buckets in their bakeries and sub shops. JoAnne

O'Neill from Wegmans corporate office, herself a manager of a community garden, arranged to collect and sanitize 50 buckets from local stores.

Matthews and Fields Lumber donated boards to begin repairing the garden plots. Generous donations from Garden Co-manager Scott Wagner and SWPC Executive Director Glynis Valenti paid for the hundreds of pounds of soil necessary to fill the buckets.

Garden members worked together to collect the supplies for the project. The garden managers drilled drainage holes into the buckets and coordinated the donation of more than one-hundred seedlings. Teams of volunteers at

Hamilton and Cypress planted 50 tomato and pepper plants in the buckets, along with 10 beds of kale, collards, eggplant, squash, herbs, greens, and beans.

From now through September, the gardeners will lovingly water, weed, and tend the plants until each crop is ready for harvesting.

The first batch of kale was delivered in mid-July, and as each crop ripens, gardeners look forward to bringing it over to Ashland Street — quite literally walking local, organic farm-to-table food from neighbor to neighbor in the South Wedge. So be sure to watch for the next Garden parade



South Wedge Victory Bucket Brigade on the march on Hamilton Street



Back and forth, gardeners moved buckets of good soil from SWPC office to Hamilton St.

Gardeners from both Cypress and Hamilton Street worked together in the hot June sun.



South Wedge Victory Bucket Brigade volunteers heresa Paige and Kathy Lewis



Photos by Cassandra Kelly



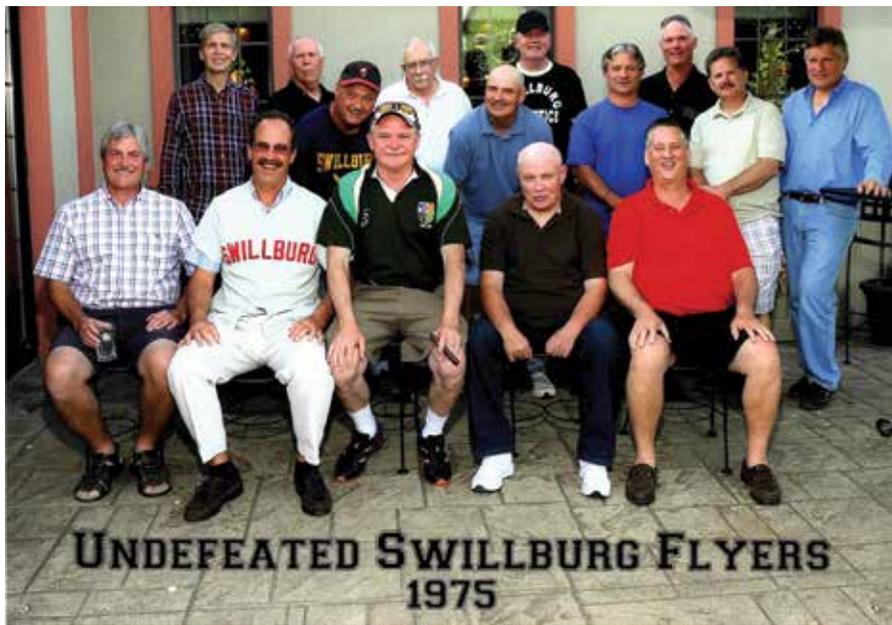
Boys of Swillburg

continued from pg. 1

The focus was always sports. We had organized leagues in Softball (boys and girls), then Football in the fall and Basketball and Floor Hockey in the winter, then back to Softball in the spring. We loved all sports – but Softball was King.

We had exceptional softball tournaments at #35 School with teams from Swillburg and other Southside neighborhoods. It was a high level of play. We honed our skills against older players and by the time we were in high school, we were playing in Men's leagues around town. Our first organized team in high school was the Swillburg Athletics. We collected donations from local South Clinton Ave. merchants to pay the entry fee, buy equipment and uniforms. We wore our Swillburg Athletic jackets proudly to East High that year.

Swillburg produced a lot of good teams and players back then. Rochester was a hotbed for softball in the 70's - 80's. Several of our players and partners from South Avenue, played on teams that



1st row (l-r) sitting: Skip Schey, Billy Bauman, Tom O'Connell, Charlie Keller, Mike Bauman
Second row – standing: Pete Tennenbaum, Bill Conge, Dave Bauman, Dan Collins, Junior Twist, Mike Quinn, Bobby Hartman, Jimmy Marr, Bill Kastner, Pete Bauman

won National Tournaments in Kentucky and Las Vegas. We had many great teams and players. Teams like Carl's Choppers,

TY Electric, Fireside and the team highlighted here, the 1975 Swillburg Flyers.

We played in a very competitive Sunday Night Cobbs Hill league and went

undefeated. It was just one of those years when every player had a good year at the same time. As the season went on and our success continued, we had bigger and bigger crowds attending our games from the neighborhood. Cobbs Hill was like a home game for us. By the last few games, the opposing teams must have been wondering what the heck was going on with our fan base...but like I said, softball was King.

In 2018, the Swillburg Flyers were inducted into the Rochester Adult Recreation Association Hall of Fame. We had a reunion party, and all were honored that our team was remembered and recognized.

The Swillburg Girl's Softball League is to be honored at next year's Hall of Fame event and deservedly so. Swillburg's Softball Flag will continue to fly high. Quite a few of the players from that era are still playing ball in the Adult (Senior) Leagues. The rest have to be satisfied with getting together once in a while and reminisce about the glory days of Swillburg, friends and softball.

**12th Anniversary
Banquet Program**

**ADULT RECREATION
ASSOCIATION**

ROCHESTER, NY

Sunday, April 15, 2018

Haiti continued from pg. 11
spent time with Pen ak Pwason, sharing meals with the guests to symbolize the solidarity between Borgne and Rochester despite the many miles between us.

Pen ak Pwason's food program isn't just about food, it's about community. Local farmers save some of their harvest to sell to Somane. Young people from the Wesleyan Church volunteer to help with cooking and clean up. Two years ago, one of the guests, Ocius Valcy, asked for a guitar. One was donated, so I brought it last summer. We all had tears in our eyes as he played his first song, accompanied by his daughter's singing. Now he plays music for everyone while they are eating lunch. We want our guests to feel part of something special. We want them to feel part of a beloved community that values them just as

they are, with no need to cower or beg. We want them to feel sustained by the fruits of their beautiful land, harvested by the hands of their community's farmers, and served with a helping of love.

Over the years, the program has endured hard times and times of abundance. When we couldn't afford rent, Somane used her home as a location for serving lunch. More than once, donations have come just in the nick of time to keep the program going. We have never missed more than a meal or two. When the first COVID-19 cases were diagnosed in Borgne, Somane, Marceline and Marivierge switched to delivering food to as many guests as possible. But a lot still come to eat, and our space is very small. Luckily, the sewing program of Friends of Borgne, a Honeoye Falls-based group that promotes

An article that appeared in Rochester Area Sports Life, August 20-26, 1975

ROCHESTER AREA SPORTS LIFE **AUGUST 20-26, 1975**

SWILLBURG FLYERS UNDEFEATED

It's like one big block party. Every member of the Swillburg Flyers Softball Team is a neighborhood boy from that stretch of South Clinton between Field Street to Meigs Street.

Not only is that a remarkable fact, but they also pulled together to earn an undefeated season this year. "They've really got spirit," said Don Alleson of Braiman's Sports World. Swillburg Flyers play in the Braiman's Sunday League and this is where they hold their 11-0 undefeated record.

This is their second year in the Braiman's League. Two years ago, the Flyers won the playoffs and the championships.

In their six years together as a team, each member that outgrew the team was replaced by a new neighborhood member. The current members have been playing together since they were ten and eleven.

Swillburg Flyers' Team Roster includes: Mike Bauman, Clem Collins, Chris Gorman, Pete, Bill and Nate Bauman, Bob Hartman, Tom O'Connell, Jim Maar, Bill Conge, Bob Webster, Charlie Keller, Junior Twist and Bill Kastner.

education in Borgne, provided masks for all 100 or our guests. So far none of them have fallen victim to coronavirus.

Masks for Pen ak Pwason were also sewn by the Fondasyon Dauphin sewing program.

Hunger is increasing again. The country has been in a political crisis for much of the last year, prior to the pandemic. School was barely in session, roads were blocked and people were prevented from travelling or working. Now with the pandemic, relatives in the US who used to send home some remittances have lost their jobs, or worse, their health. Many Haitians live in New York City and Miami which have been particularly hard hit. So now, each day more people wait outside the door of Pen ak Pwason looking for leftovers. Somane, Marceline and Marivierge hope that the mira-

cle of Pen ak Pwason will hold and that there will always be enough to share.

If you'd like to help support Pen ak Pwason, you can find us on Facebook as "Pen ak Pwason Program of St. Joseph's House." There you can set up a one time or monthly automatic donation through paypal. You can also donate by check to Pen ak Pwason, PO Box 16760 Greece, NY 14612-9998. Email penakpwason@gmail.com with any questions!

Sarah Brownell and her husband Kevin Foes are former workers at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality on South Ave. Sarah is now a Senior Lecturer for the Kate Gleason College of Engineering at the Rochester Institute of Technology and often brings her students to Haiti to work on projects.