

WEDGE

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

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South Wedge Farmers Market Moves Indoors

The 2021 South Wedge Farmers Market has moved indoors for the fall/winter season. The market is still located in the Odd Fellows Lodge at 357 Gregory Street, but we are now inside so everyone can stay a little warmer as the weather outside grows cold. You will still find many great local vendors when you come to the market on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month through December 16. We're also exploring the possibility of holding more indoor market dates in 2022.

If you are looking for local gifts for family or friends this holiday season, the Market welcomed several vendors each week who have a variety of great items that would make fantastic gifts including jewelry and knitted caps. You will also find excellent baked goods, fresh local,

Chad Flint, Market Manager

and other items you normally find at the market every week.

Planning has already begun for the 2022 warm weather season (which will remain at our new home on Gregory Street). We are hoping to add a second produce vendor for the 2022 season as well as having a full-time honey vendor, micro greens, and hopefully even more local vendors selling a variety of different items each week.



We're always looking for volunteers to help out with many different tasks on Market nights. If you are interested in joining the team, even if it is not every week, reach out to Chad at chadflint33@gmail.com or call 585.259.2968.

Above all, please help us out by stopping by the market as often as you can, say hi, and pick up a great item or two to give as a gift, or to enjoy yourself.



South Wedge Farmers Market vendors are bringing their best. You'll find jams, sauces, mustard, pastries, English toffee and more.



SOUTH WEDGE FARMERS MARKET

Indoor Market
 Odd Fellows Lodge
 357 Gregory Street
 4 to 6:30pm
Oct 14th and 28th
Nov 4th and 18th
Dec 2nd and 16th

Check @southwedgefarmersmarket or www.swfm.org for more info!



New Mayor Shares his South Wedge Roots

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

Mayor-elect Malik Evans is beyond busy, but he finds the time to talk to the WEDGE Newspaper. Located in the South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC)'s office, the newspaper is only a block away from Evans' childhood home on Hamilton Street.

Keeping it simple, the WEDGE asked nine questions: what Evans sees as the three biggest city issues, three qualities he has that will help him govern and how he'll address three complaints people have voiced about the city government.

Evans puts "public safety" issues at the top of the list.

"We can't do anything without addressing the high level of violence,"

said Evans noting that violence has plagued Rochester for a long time. "Let me give you an example. On election day in 1994 a man was murdered in the 19th Ward and on election day 2021 a 15-year-old was killed. It's a big challenge. If people don't feel safe, businesses won't stay in the city. Police and the community have to work together."

"Economic opportunity is extremely important. It leads to empowerment," said Evans. This second issue has a lot of interconnected issues the new mayor said he will address: "jobs and home ownership and small businesses."

His choice of Issue #3 is not a big surprise. The South Wedge booster

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Somewhere in the South Wedge



Tom Williams, owner of Time for Wine and Spirits on South Avenue, is used to just about anything. He didn't blink an eye when a Sith warrior recently walked into his shop. In fact, he gave the man's space travel to buy wine a thumb's up.

Williams is all in when it comes to the South Wedge neighborhood. He keeps a change jar on his counter that he donates to St. Joseph House of Hospitality.

Now in cold weather season, he's asking people to become "Souper Heros," by dropping off cans of soup for St. Joe's (pull top only please).

Stop by and check out his diverse selection of wine and spirits which includes organic and French wines. 661 South Avenue, 585.413.3826.

COME SEE US AT
 It's A **WONDERFUL** Life
 In the South Wedge Neighborhood

FAMILY FRIENDLY HOLIDAY SHOPPING FOR THE UNIQUE BUYER!
DECEMBER 4TH - 11AM-4PM
 AT STAR ALLEY PARK, ODD FELLOWS LODGE, PRINTROC
 WITH OTHER EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

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Opinion Solutions Exist for Rochester's Spike in Violence

Mary Lupien
Councilmember, East District



Rochester is experiencing a frightening spike in violence since the beginning of the pandemic, with homicide numbers not seen in Rochester for decades. The city has now surpassed its previous total of 70 and by December 1 had reached 78 murders.

I share your concern with the violence in our community. It is unacceptable. I want all to know that the City is working with Advance Peace which is dedicated to ending cyclical and retaliatory gun violence in urban neighborhood by investing in the development, health, and wellbeing of those at the center of this crisis.

We know that about 1% of the population commits 90% of the shootings and that they are the most disconnected from community and institutions in our society. It's critical that we have a method of engaging with these young men and putting them on a better path. Advance Peace is very successful showing an 80% decrease in gun violence with their participants.

While Advance Peace works with those most involved in violence, Pathways to Peace and our recently created Office of Neighborhood Safety which resources and supports existing local anti-violence initiatives are addressing the folks at all stages in the cycle to interrupt and prevent violence.

At the same time, we've been hearing a lot from our local law enforcement about concerns around bail reform and the Black Lives Matter movement and its relationship to the violence. However, data both locally and nationally doesn't support those claims. Data shows that defendants were released less often without bail for gun crimes and that shooting incidents fell between the launch of Bail Reform and the beginning of the pandemic when they started to rise sharply. Additionally, shootings were on a steady decline from August 2020 to March 2021 and the protests that September had no impact on this decline.

It's important that we, as a community, are clear on the root causes of violence

so that we can effectively advocate for and support lasting efforts to cure the violence in our community.

The Truth about Bail Reform

- Data shows that defendants were released without bail for gun crimes at a higher rate before bail reform was passed, and that rate actually fell after bail reform was enacted.

- It is true that New York state is among a few other states with bail reform, yet the entire country is seeing spikes in crime.

- Between January 2020 when bail reform was enacted and March shootings actually decreased to far below average levels after the pandemic hit Rochester.

A recent interview on CBS TV, "During Questioning In Albany, NYPD Commissioner Shea Backtracks On Bail Reform Law As Big Reason For Gun Violence, gives more information on this issue. (<https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2021/10/14/bail-reform-nypd-commissioner-dermot-shea-assembly-hearing/>)

The Truth about Black Lives Matter & Defund the Police Movements

- The RPD have not been defunded. Though their budget appeared to be decreased, it was due to unfilled (but allotted) positions and moving animal and victim's services to another

continues on pg. 8



Cheesy Eddies, 5% off
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Little Button Craft, 10% off
658 South Avenue

Equal=Grounds, 10% off
750 South Avenue

Mark's Texas Hots
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10% reg menu item
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Chocolates & Ice Cream,
10% off
674 South Avenue

Stuart's Spices, 10% off
\$10 or more
754 S. Clinton Avenue,

Happy Earth Tea Bar, 10% off
696 South Avenue

The WEDGE Newspaper

Editor Nancy O'Donnell Hale
thewedge@swpc.org
585.256.7640, ext. 4

Writers

Joshua Bauroth, Marianne Benjamin,
Matt Corona, Stew Epstein, Chad Flint,
Patti Giglio, Mike Henry,
Mary Lupien, Michele H. Martell,
Nancy O'Donnell Hale, Glynis Valenti

Photographers

Patti Giglio, Josh Jacobs
Nancy O'Donnell Hale
Jeruta Savilla, Glynis Valenti

Copy editor

Anne Logan

CONTACT

E-mail staff, type first initial,
last name@swpc.org
South Wedge Planning Committee
224 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, NY 14620
585.256.1740, ext. 4

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Glynis Valenti, executive director
Nancy O'Donnell Hale, writer/editor
Chad Flint, market manager

Consultants

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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 or letters 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, 224 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620 email thewedge@swpc.org. Advertising deadlines and rates are available online at www.swpc.org or call 585.256.1740, ext. 4.

Before recycling the Wedge, please share with others.

South Wedge Planning Committee

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

SWPC Board Wed. 6 p.m. ~ Dec. & Jan. TBD

contact: flogan@rochester.rr.com

Community Engagement
(Neighbors & Block Clubs)

Wed. Dec. & Jan. TBD 5:30 p.m.
gvalenti@swpc.org

South Wedge Victory Gardens
TBD

scott.wagner.ny@gmail.com

Letter to the Editor

De Tocqueville Got it Right

Stew Epstein



Stew Epstein

This quote below says it all for me. "I see an immense crowd of similar and equal men who spin restlessly around themselves, seeking vulgar little pleasures to fill their souls. Living apart, each is like a foreigner to the fate of others. His children and friends are for him the entire human race. As for his fellow citizens, he is next to them but does not see them, he touches them but does not feel them. He exists only in and for himself, alone. And though he may still have a family, he no longer has a country."--Alexis de Tocqueville

De Tocqueville's quote sums up what a Buddhist believes. It sums up what a New Age Spirituality person believes. It captures why so many women hate all of us men. It says a lot about what the sociological concepts of "Alienation" and "Estrangement" are all about and what they attribute most of our social problems to--our self-absorbed and uncaring and over-inflated egos.

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If you have an opinion you want to share, please send to thewedge@swpc.org.

Swillburg Has Reason to Shout Out

Mike Henry

The Swillburg Neighborhood Association (SNA) has had another busy quarter with lots of collaboration on various projects. The highlight (for me, lol) was a culinary class via Zoom on November 4th with about twelve local households.

The class was conducted by instructor Vicki Finnifrock from Stuart Spices on South Clinton Avenue.

Vicki created the menu and packets of necessary spices which participants received in advance with recipes. She led us through the creation of our entrée --chicken or tofu Garam Masala with roasted chickpeas as our appetizer.

Wishing to expand my vegetarian repertoire I was delighted to find these and other recipes within my culinary skill set and very appetizing!

In addition to cooking instructions, we also received information on the spices we used. Lots of thanks to Vicki and also to Judy Hay who arranged this event. And thanks to everyone whose participation made it all the more special.

On October 21st, approximately 25 neighbors gathered via Zoom for our sixth Annual Fall Gathering. We were joined by Goodman Section, RPD Captain Jason Elwood who shared local crime statistics that again indicated that Swillburg is a quiet part of the Goodman Section.

During the event Judy Hay displayed our neighborhood swag including coffee mugs, Swillburg burgundy tee-shirts, waterproof lawn blankets and other new items including hoodies and Christmas ornaments.

She emphasized that swag sales help to finance neighborhood projects. Special thanks to neighbor Stephanie Jakas who conducted a number of raffle drawings. Several participants won soup baskets, assembled by neighbor Ward Pedde, made possible by a \$200 gift certificate from Wegmans solicited by neighbor JoAnne O'Neill.



Swillburg Labyrinth Garden on Henrietta Street Pappert Pl. Photo by Josh Jacobs

The highlight of the evening was a virtual presentation of a Swillburg Plaque of Appreciation to neighbor Marsden Fox. Marsden created the Labyrinth Garden on Henrietta St. across from Rooney's and has maintained this almost single handedly over the past fifteen or more years. This past summer the Labyrinth Garden featured vivid colors, as it usually does, throughout the whole season given the large variety of flowers Marsden has long cultivated.

Before closing, here's a cool event we held a Holiday Pop-Up sale of Swillburg Swag at Otto Henderberg Park on November 20. Besides offering all Swillburg swag--this was a great chance to buy holiday gifts!-- a professional photographer was available to take family portraits in front of the gazebo festooned with holiday decor.

This event was conceived by neighbor Josh Jacobs who has gone beyond the call of duty to make our marketing efforts successful.

To learn more (or to shop online) please go to Swillburg.com. We at the SNA wish you a most joyous holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Mr. Inside/Mr. Outside
Felton Culbreth
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January 21ish**

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--Pope Pius XII



661 South Ave, Suite D, Rochester, NY 14620

TEL | 413-3826

EMAIL | timeforwinespirits@gmail.com

Hanukkah Sameach!



Join SWPC in Community Building

The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC) invites you to join 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 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.

Sometimes older adults need extra help handling their finances.

LIFESPAN'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEERS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.



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lifespanrochester.org



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For an appointment:

Call 585-245-5429

or email Norm Karsten at karsten@geneseo.edu



THE WEDGE ANNUAL



Thymes Frasier Fir fragrance will delight anyone on your gift list. This classic pine fragrance is available in a variety of products including hand cream, diffusers, candles and hand soap.

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THE PEOPLE'S PANTRY

Formerly named the Calvary St. Andrews Food Pantry on Averill Avenue, The People's Pantry had to move when a developer bought the property. Now located at 555 Avenue D, in the back half of the Lincoln Library, the pantry will still deliver says Executive Director Jay Rowe. Give a gift of food for the holidays to people you don't know. For more information, call 585-325-4950.



HAPPY EARTH TEA BAR

More space. More nirvana. Visit Happy Earth Tea Bar's new local at 696 South Avenue. The bar is a destination for fine organic teas sourced directly from around the world, tea wares or gifts. 245.0242.

SHAYLA J'S DESSERT BAR & BISTRO

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SOUTH WEDGE BARBER

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THE PETIX TEAM

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ST. JOSEPH HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

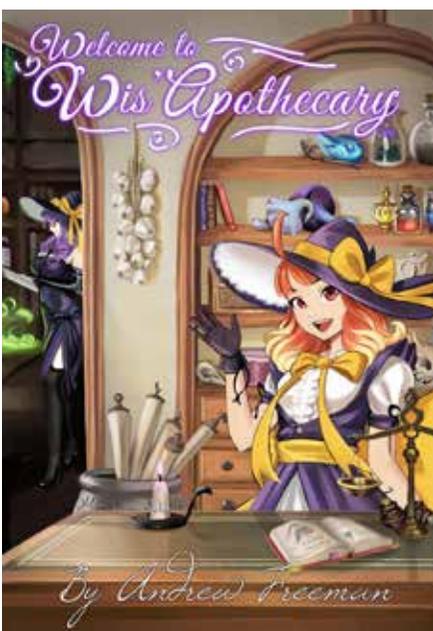
Donate in a friend's name and buy a meal for the hungry. 402 South Avenue, 232.3262.

WIZARD PIZZA

Detroit style pizza, wings, salads and speciality. Check Facebook for menu. 760 S. Clinton Ave., 565-4557.

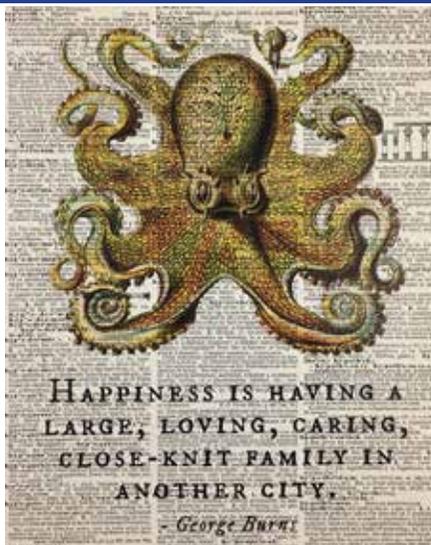
PLAYHOUSE SWILLBURGER

Bar, games, great food (vegetarian options, too!) 820 South Clinton 442-2442.



WELCOME TO WIS' APOTHECARY

The debut novel of South Wedge author and journalist Andrew Freeman, this light fantasy is a collection of short stories about the misadventures of a witch's apprentice, who helps her teacher run a magical apothecary. Find it at Hipocampo Children's Books, or request a copy by emailing agfree6@gmail.com.



Recycled dictionary prints mounted on wood boards. Many styles and colors available in store and on our website, great gifts! \$20 ea.

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Founded by Connie Marple in 2021, Women of Color New York is a collaborative of 10 independent minority women-owned businesses under one roof. Fashion, beauty, wellness, art and self-care, and the best banana pudding in the city are featured at WOCNY. Located at 539 South Avenue across from Historic HouseParts. Gift Certificates available. (585) 623-8180, www.womenofcolornewyork.com Open Monday through Saturday 10-5pm.

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CHARLIE STYLE NEW YORK

A women's fashion boutique located in Women of Color New York, Charlie Style New York features fashions from coats to shoes and everything in-between. Whether shopping for yourself or those women on your holiday gift list, Charlie Style New York should be the first stop you make this holiday season. Gift Certificates available. 539 South Avenue in the heart of the South Wedge. Hours: Monday through Saturday 10-5pm. 623.8180, www.charliestylenewyork.com.



FOMO

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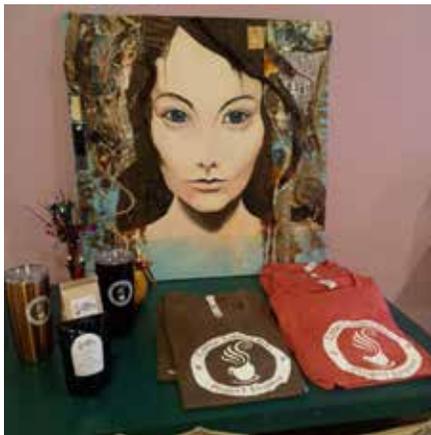
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TOASTED BEAR TAVERN

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LIN'S GARDEN

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Shop Small!

Life Skills 101 - Let it Flow

Michele H. Martell

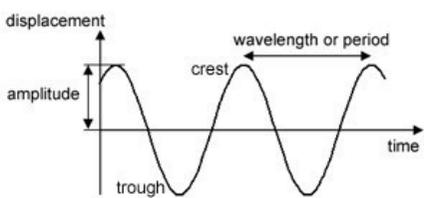
Let it flow. Doesn't that sound like such a calm way of being? It does speak of serenity; however, there is more power in the act of flow than may initially meet the eye. The title of this article may resound of passivity; but hear me out.

As living beings, we all want things to go our way. It is just our nature. Every person I know is busy, life is hectic, and we all have our own stuff going on. Some of us are better at accepting that things just don't go our way and easily move on. Others, such as myself, have a harder time at letting go, and it's a work-in-progress to not just let go, but to flow, which is my goal each day.

In whatever I do, I put in the sincere effort and can tend to expect that things will go as I desire because hey, I genuinely tried. It can be a natural human expectation that if we do everything right, then the results will be positive, correct? And then when they don't turn out the way we strived for, it can be disappointing. Does this resonate for anyone?

While contemplating this article, I began to think about how this dilemma can apply to everyone in all walks of life. I think about teachers and the work they put into students who continue to struggle, musicians when the right note and verse just can't be achieved, construction workers when the project opens up another can of worms – you get the idea. But these discouraging moments are transitory; eventually things will change, as they always do.

I initially was tempted to title this article "Let It Go" as memories of Elsa in "Frozen" replayed in my head. However, I decided that the word "flow" is more powerful. If you think about the energy of ocean waves, how they come tumbling down mightily,



then gracefully and peacefully flow back to the stillness and calmness of the ocean. Flow involves allowing the power to come back serenely.

Each morning as I awake, I give thanks for another day, that I have the health to arise from my own bed, and then I play something positive on YouTube as I prepare for the new day. Recently I listened to a video by Joel Osteen, titled "Abiding not Striving."

His words really struck a chord with me. Yes, work hard, do your best, don't just sit back and wait passively. But once you do your best, let God work through you (The Universe, your Higher Power, Spirit, whatever works for you).

The point was to have faith – faith that it will all work as the way it's meant to; just do your part. That person who walked away, that job that didn't work out, that betrayal, that loss and grief: there's a bigger reason. I love Joel's encouragement to keep abiding and do your best; but don't become too fixated on striving for the outcome. In other words, don't become too attached to the results, just keep going while abiding that it will all be ok. It brought me back to the simple advice I've given to my kids over the years when they've expressed worry over an upcoming test or project: that they just do their best and let God do the rest.

It is important to speak up for yourself, do what you need to do to take care of yourself and your responsibilities, those who depend upon you, your boundaries. Then let the negative energy flow back out of your life, just like the ocean crashes in its journey, just to move back out to stillness and tranquility, to gather more flow and capacity.

Flow allows a bigger power to work through you. It is a strong intention, to ask for that flow and to trust in it. Life is not easy. To rely on a purposeful flow is a way of living. It is decisive, and it is faith in something much bigger than each of us; an act of assertive surrender, that once we've done everything possible to do things in a good way, that our lives and those we care about will be positively impacted. Flow is sparkling faith; it is riding the wave of life.

I came across this amazing post from Everything...It's All F***in' Waves Dude! | by Roger Taylor | Medium that described a conversation with a surfer buddy: "Everything is a wave. Everything we experience and go through in life is a wave... If people realized that all their experiences, the good times and the sh**, were just waves, they wouldn't f***in' freak out so much when they lose a job or someone close to them dies. They'd just use that downward momentum to nail the bottom turn when they hit the trough and ride it back up. And here is the key dude," he paused for emphasis and spoke even slower, "surfing allowed me to be taught by the grand builder that the trough is a f***ing blessing, not just the crest, right dude! Not only that, we surf the troughs and love them, we surf the crests and love them, but most times we are in-between the crest and trough, cruisin, just loving the in-between dude, I mean, wow, the in-between, that is where we live, right!"

I love this wisdom captured by Roger Taylor from an aware Florida surfer dude who was never named.

"How will you let it flow and ride your wave this promising, new day? When you see a wave, it is actually a picture of Love, Life, Laughter and Loneliness, well... Everything."



Michele H. Martell
(Photo by Sarah Jeruta Savilla)



Dr. Susan Friedman

Highland Hospital Launches Dept. of Lifestyle Medicine

Marianne Benjamin

Highland Hospital's Department of Lifestyle Medicine invites people to make healthier changes to ensure a healthier future. "Lifestyle Medicine centers around whole food, plant-predominant dietary lifestyle, regular physical activity, restorative sleep, stress management, avoidance of risky substances, and positive social connection as a primary therapeutic modality for treatment and reversal of chronic disease," said Susan M. Friedman, M.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Friedman is a Highland geriatrician and internist, and University of Rochester Professor of Medicine and now serving as director of Lifestyle Medicine. "When I started my career as a geriatrician 25 years ago, I was basically seeing patients in their 80s and 90s with multiple health and cognitive issues," she said. "But as time went on, I noticed that more and more younger people were presenting with chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease. I came to the realization that lifestyle made a big difference in health and well-being."

She started studying the work of researchers who were finding that those who adopted plant-based diets were having longer, healthier lives. "The plant-based diet is ideal for a healthy life," she said. "But it doesn't have to be all or nothing. Patients who add more vegetables and fruits and cut down on processed foods and animal products are clearly showing better results in testing and they feel better."

Nutrition is one part of a multi-faceted plan for better health. Another key part is physical activity done regularly from walking to cardio workouts.

Other pillars of Lifestyle Medicine include "social connectedness, mindfulness, restful sleep, stress reduction, and avoidance of detrimental habits like smoking."

Dr. Friedman developed an interest in Lifestyle Medicine about eight years ago. In 2016 she took a sabbatical to study Lifestyle Medicine and became board certified in 2017.

"It's been estimated that three quarters of chronic illness could be eliminated with better lifestyle habits," she said. "And the pandemic has been a particular time of stress for everyone. It's important for us to take the time to think about our health and make plans for positive changes that we can make to improve our health."

The goal is to maximize healthy aging. "Working toward healthy aging starts the day you are born," she said. "It's never too early or too late to make adjustments in your lifestyle to make a positive impact on your health."

Dr. Friedman has been working

Local Writer Spins Tale of Young Witch

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

Andrew Freeman, 28, may be an all-reality-news-all-the-time reporter at Spectrum News 1 Rochester, but in his spare time early this year he was happily embedded in the world of witchery.

Freeman's recently released *Wis' Apothecary*, a young adult, 267-page book. So, what's the book about? The blurb on Amazon reads "Magic exists to help people, or at least that's what young Isabel believes. As a witch's apprentice helping her renowned teacher run an apothecary, there's no shortage of people in need—from vampires to princesses to Hybrids. And though her desire to do good often lands her in trouble, can Isabel learn enough through her misadventures to not just grow as a witch, but as a person?"

Freeman began writing *W's Apothecary* in spring and finished in late summer this year.

"I started it in April. I felt like I hadn't seen the sun in six months. I went through a heartbreak and lots of changes," said Freeman. "I wanted to visit home, and I just started writing. I'd written my whole life, but I wouldn't finish [the piece]. I'd feel I was just getting creative energy out of my body. Then I started a story about a young witch, and I just kept writing it. I thought 'I have steam in this, and I'm

going to do it.' I'm going to push."

Freeman's book is structured in "11 short wholesome stories a young girl learning to become a witch." "It's light medieval fantasy in a fictional kingdom of Aramore. Isabel started her four-year apprenticeship at 13, and she's working to take a test. She is trying to help people, but she keeps getting into misadventures. She sticks her nose in places she shouldn't," Freeman added.

Along with great care in writing, Freeman took his time in hiring an illustrator for the book, scanning reddit for names.



Andrew Freeman, author of *Wis' Apothecary*

"I worked online with Eduardo Quiroga who lives in Mexico," Freeman said. "There was a bit of a language barrier. I'm from Texas, but I don't speak enough Spanish worth mentioning. He communicated in English or using an online translator."

Freeman moved to Rochester three years ago and is a frequent visitor to the South Wedge

"The South Wedge is such a great place. I love spending time there," said Freeman. I did a lot of editing at [Happy Earth] tea bar. I met Bob, my editor, there."

He returned to Happy Earth Tea bar for his book release recently and several of his coworkers were there.

"I joked that I always wanted to be an author in high school," Freeman said. "My mother told me she'd send me to college but not to be a writer."

So, Freeman graduated with a degree in Broadcasting from the University of North Texas. While he's keeping his day job, he's also said he's thinking is book may be the first of a series of tales about the young witch-to-be Isabel.

Wis' Apothecary is available at Hipocampo Children's Books on South Avenue, Hammer Girl Anime in Henrietta and on Amazon in print and Kindle.

Inventor Promotes Old Christmas Tradition

Patti Giglio

Rochester has been home to dozens of inventors and innovators, such as George Eastman, George Baldwin Selden, and Nick Tahou, just to name a few. We should add John Harry Stedman to that list. While we may identify the former three names, but Stedman may stump many of us.

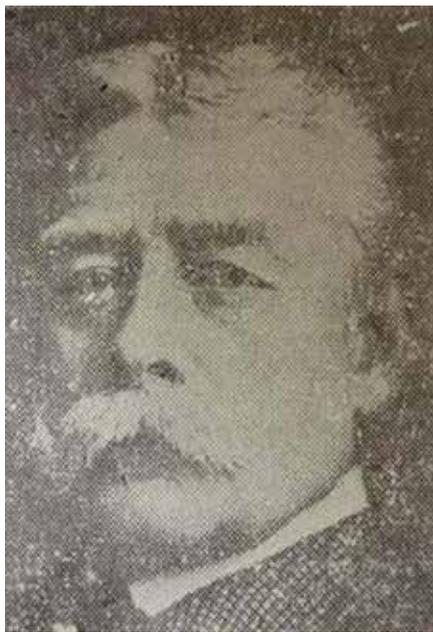
John Harry Stedman was responsible for a small item that most parents have known well for decades—the fuzzy pipe cleaner. Stedman patented the pipe cleaner in the early 1900s, and he also invented the early version of a streetcar transfer ticket.

However, these were not the reason behind Stedman’s lasting legacy. What he was most famous for was the revival of a Christmas holiday tradition, placing a lighted candle in home windows to welcome the Babe of Bethlehem.

Stedman was a well-respected member of the congregation at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church at East Avenue and Westminster Road. He was also a deeply religious man with a love for the true meaning of Christmas.

When he became bed-ridden with illness one December, nearly 500 parishioners from his church stood on the Stedman lawn and serenaded him with his favorite Christmas carols and hymns. In 1913, Stedman started a campaign to reintroduce the Christmas tradition of placing a lighted candle in the window on Christmas Eve to guide Baby Jesus to your house. The first year only a handful of houses followed his lead, but the next year over a thousand families participated by placing a candle in their window. Not believing that it was enough, Stedman took his campaign statewide with a letter to the *New York Times* editor on December 23, 1918.

To the Editor of the *New York Times*: May I remind you that a dear old tradition tells us that “a lighted candle set in the window on Christmas Eve will guide the Babe of Bethlehem to your home, that he may bring you happiness.” Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year, and we shall all enjoy it more for the peaceful interval between the preparation for the holiday and its celebration. We shall all be glad at home, too, when the sun goes down and the twilight falls, and every one of



John Harry Stedman

us can light a candle and place it in the window and know the joy of sending its kindly glow out into the darkness to guide the wandering feet of the Christ Child and to light a welcoming pathway for the Babe of Bethlehem to our home.

John Harry Stedman
Rochester, Dec. 20, 1918

In the letter, Stedman emphasized the importance of putting a candle in the window on Christmas Eve and soon windows in towns across the state and, eventually, the country has a candle glowing for the Babe of Bethlehem.

On a side note, during his work to resurrect this time-honored tradition, Stedman became close friends with a gentleman named Lemuel Jeffreys. The two had developed a strong friendship and made a pact that when one died, the survivor would place a candle on their grave on Christmas Eve. Jeffreys died in 1917. Stedman took that agreement seriously and placed the candle on his grave until he passed away on October 29, 1922.

After Stedman’s death, for nearly 40 years a small group of people paid homage to him by placing a lit candle on Stedman’s grave at Mt. Hope Cemetery on Christmas Eve. He would be proud that a tradition that he loved and believed in so dearly is practiced around the world to this day.

Patti Unvericht-Giglio’s books include *Ghosts and Hauntings of the Finger Lakes*, *Hidden History of the Finger Lakes*, *The Great Seaway Trail*; *History, Legends and Mysteries*, *Tales From These Old Bones* and *The Silver Lake Institute* are available at Barnes and Noble, independent bookstores and her Facebook shop @theseoldbonestalk.

Follow her on Facebook for other interesting history tidbits and announcements.



Be a Souper Hero



If you’re serving spirits during the holidays AND you want to help those in need, stop by Time for Wine & Spirits. Owner Tom Williams is holding a canned soup drive for St. Joseph’s House of Hospitality on South Avenue.

“As we approach the winter season, St. Joe’s is looking for donations of canned soup, preferably with a pull-off lid, for distribution,” said Williams. “One can, two cans, three cans... anything can help.

Williams plans to continue the drive through the winter months (585)413-3826

Epstein

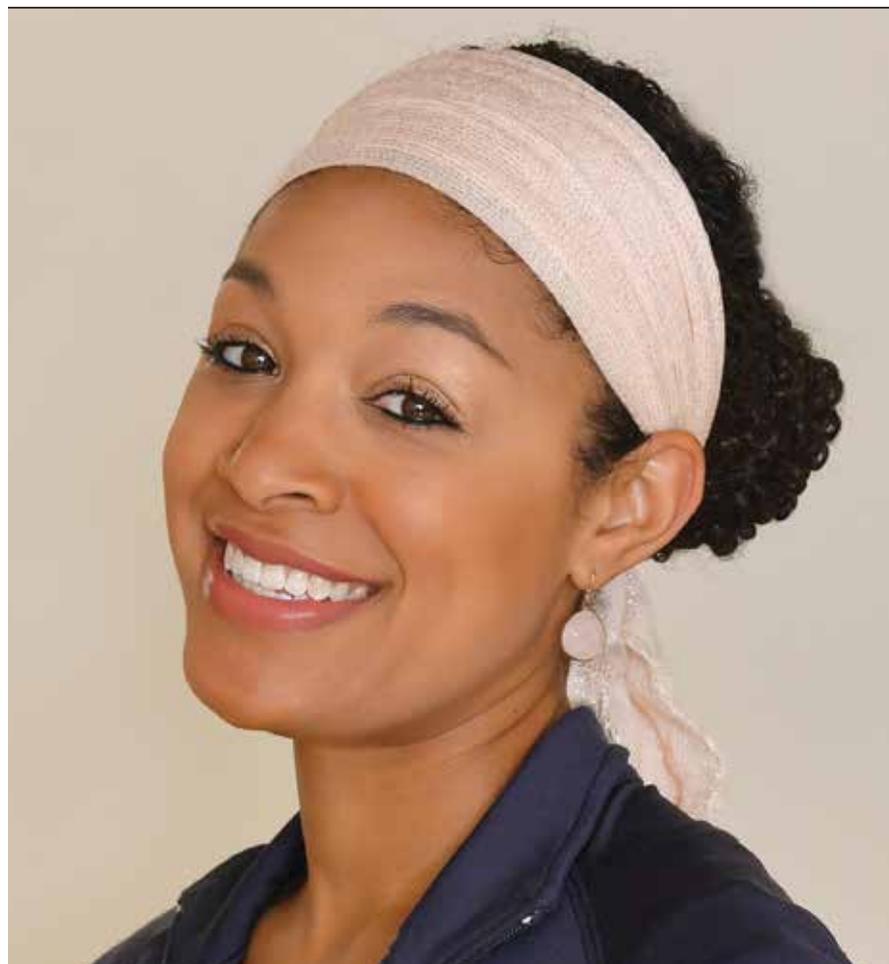
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It speaks to what French philosopher and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin meant when he writes that, “Almost all of humankind is at the spiritual, emotional, and mental level of a 12-year-old-child.”

And it describes today’s typical conservative-Republican. We are profoundly alienated and estranged from each other.

And we don’t see it and don’t want to see it and don’t care about it. We have become alienated and estranged from our best and most humane inner human qualities, and we don’t even know it or see it or care about it.

Have a Holly, Jolly Holiday!



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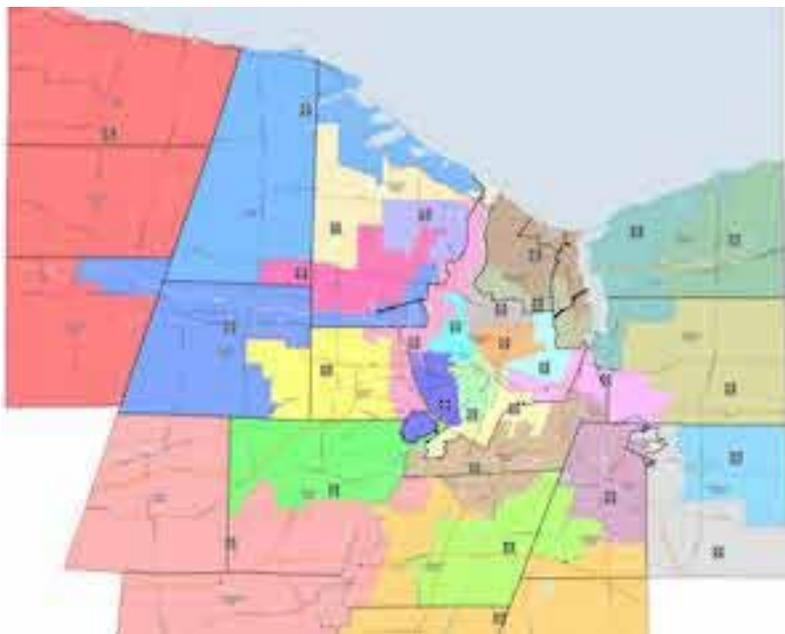
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Opinion

Important Information on Redistricting

**Josh Bauroth
Monroe Co. Legislator**



Every ten years the United States Census Bureau conducts a census that identifies changes in the number of people in the country, state and county since the previous census. As a result, the lines defining representative districts such as our County Legislature must be redrawn to ensure that each district has similar populations. The process is called redistricting and is extremely important to ensure fairness in our democracy so that everyone's vote is equal, and communities have accountable representatives. However, if lines are not drawn fairly or deliberately harm or benefit one political party, our democracy suffers and our representation in governance is fundamentally harmed. Fair redistricting matters.

State laws govern what are acceptable outcomes for this map drawing process. New York State law prohibits underrepresenting racial minorities or unnecessarily dividing "Communities of Interest" (such as neighborhoods).

Recently, Governor Hochul signed a state law that limits the variance in district populations to +/- 2.5% of the average population (it was +/- 5%). These laws are designed to restrain partisan practices such as gerrymandering that rely on crazily complex lines to split or "crack" communities in order to weaken their electoral voice within a District or to "pack" as many voters of the same type (party, race, or economic bracket) to minimize their electoral voice to only one district. Both packing and cracking are forms of voter suppression and allow

elected officials to ignore the voices of citizens they do not care to hear.

Local laws also govern the process by which these maps are drawn. In August 2022 County Executive Adam Bello proposed amending the Monroe County Charter to change the membership of the Redistricting Commission to make it less nakedly partisan by having eight Commissioners representing the cross-section of the community, but this was rejected by the County Legislature. Instead, the Monroe County Charter requires a Redistricting Commission composed of the President of the County Legislature, the Republican and Democratic Election Commissioners, one Republican, and one Democratic Legislator, to draw the new Monroe County Electoral Map.

Unfortunately, since the establishment of the Redistricting Commission in October, not a single working meeting of the Commission has been held to draw the new map or even discuss drawing the new map. Instead, as Majority Leader Brew stated during the October 13 public hearing, the maps are apparently to be drawn by political "operatives." If the majority--Joseph Carbone, Steve Brew, Lisa Nicolay--does not allow the Commission to do the actual work, then the actual map makers will be forever hidden.

As things stand, the three majority members of the Redistricting Committee will eventually receive a new electoral map that will be voted upon by the Redistricting Commission for approval. If approved, a public hearing will be

Collaborating to Save the Planet

Matt Corona

The writing is on the wall. To avert climate catastrophe, we'll need a heat pump in every home. To help the South Wedge achieve this, volunteers from Color South Wedge Green are excited to be working with the HeatSmart Monroe campaign to conduct a special outreach push in the South Wedge.

The goal of this collaboration is to help make our homes more energy efficient and less dependent on fossil fuels, ultimately leading to a greener and cleaner South Wedge.

HeatSmart is an outreach and education campaign, run by the Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, based in the South Wedge, that provides unbiased guidance to individuals looking to electrify their homes.

HeatSmart will help people learn about the technologies, access grants and financing, and how to work with trusted contractors. By connecting our neighbors to the HeatSmart campaign, more homes in our neighborhood will be able to transition from dirty, harmful fossil fuels and lower their energy costs.

Taking these steps today will keep the South Wedge safe, affordable, and sustainable long into the future. Color South Wedge Green will be canvassing the neighborhood over the coming months to spread the word about heat pumps. If you'd like to join us, send an email to colorsouthwedgegreen@gmail.com, or visit <https://heatsmartflx.org> to get your home's transition to clean energy started.

Matt Corona works as HeatSmart Monroe Campaign Manager.

scheduled for public comment and the new electoral map will be presented to the Monroe County Legislature for approval. If the Legislature approves the new Electoral Map, it is then subject to a permissive referendum--meaning if enough petition signatures are submitted, the new Electoral map may ultimately be approved or rejected in the next general election (November 2022).

It is my hope that the Redistricting Commission will embrace transparency and do the work it has been charged to do. Anything less is simply detrimental to our democracy. *Josh Bauroth sits in the Monroe County Legislature District 24 and is a member of the 2021 Redistricting Commission.*

Lupien

Continued from page 1

department. The Patrol division is still allotted 347 officers. Patrol is down over 100 patrol officers-- not due to defunding but due to retirements, sick leave and administrative duty.

- The spike in shootings had already begun at the onset of the pandemic. Two months later the nation began experiencing protests in response to the murder of George Floyd.

- Rochester showed a steady decline in shootings beginning in July 2020, that lasted until March of 2021 even through the massive protests around the killing of Daniel Prude in September 2020. This September we had the same amount of shootings as last year.

In Rochester, we are still dealing with the fallout of a global pandemic which stripped away many of the supports families had and kept children out of school for a year. It created massive stress on parents as they had to figure out how to provide them as they stayed home. At the same time, we saw a sharp decline in mental health and increased addiction, but treatment was not available.

All this has had a profound effect on our society, and how could it not? Leading medical groups have declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health triggered by prolonged isolation, uncertainty and grief during the coronavirus pandemic.

Predictably, gang membership has skyrocketed as younger people seek belonging, purpose and financial means in this time of isolation and hardship. Some 99% of the shootings are interpersonal and one fight where someone couldn't control their anger can lead to multiple retaliatory shootings. These kids are fearless in pursuing retribution, and the threat of police does not deter them. Even a Federal Task Force over 60 days did little to reduce the shootings.

Solutions exist, but they are not easy. What is most effective is often the most difficult and takes time.

These are the kids who live with trauma, surrounded by violence in their neighborhoods, that our system has failed. They are not monsters. More children will be lost to violence if we don't address the severe social emotional needs they're experiencing right now and ensure their parents have the stability and resources to provide quality of life.

Lifestyle Medicine

Continued from page 6

closely with the Rochester Lifestyle Medicine Institute (RLMI) where she has served as Director of Clinical Studies and Board Vice Chair for several years to make services and programs available for the community.

The biggest reward for Dr. Friedman is helping patients delay and or reverse chronic conditions and helping some cut back or eliminate medications for diabetes, blood pressure, and cholesterol. "It's wonderful to hear patients tell me they have never felt this good and that adopting new lifestyle habits has been life changing," she said. "This why most of us went into medicine - to help people improve their health. Sometimes simple changes can be incredibly effective."

For more information or to make an appointment call the GAMA (Geriatric and Medicine Associates) clinic, located in the Physician Office Building at Highland at 341-6775. *Marianne Benjamin works in the Highland Hospital Public Relations.*

Neighbors Join Highland Hospital to Celebrate Highland Hospitals New Tower Scheduled to Be Completed in 2023



Highland neighborhood residents Roxanne Townsend, Bob Thompson, and Judy Lee Hay joined in the event.

Employees, physicians, volunteers and neighbors gathered at Highland Hospital on November 5 to make their mark on the hospital's future. All attending the celebration had a chance to sign a beam that will be installed as part of Highland's new tower project. The project, already underway, adds four levels plus a mechanical penthouse to the hospital's southeast wing.

Three of the floors will house a total of 58 patient rooms and one floor will house other clinical programs. It's part of the hospital's plan to provide private rooms for nearly all of its patients. The project is expected to be finished in the spring of 2023.



Mark Stauffer says medical marijuana is a healing herb

Rocblooms Offers Lights for In-Home Gardens Weed Gardens

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

Rocblooms wants medical marijuana readily available to people who need it, and owner Mark Stauffer is ready to help buds to blossom in Rochester homes.

His Monroe Avenue shop, newly opened in September, offers Quantum Board LED grow lights and tents, an expertise in design and building and consultations. (Stauffer has 30 years of horticultural knowledge to share). On one side of the shop, a foil tent and lights are on display. On its other side, artwork from local artist Ed Repard, contemporary designers among others line the wall. In the far back a few select pieces of antique furniture are for sale.

"I'm a firm believer in the use of cannabis in pain relief," Stauffer said. "I'm fully aware of its medical use for seizures, nerve pain and a lack of appetite for people during chemo. Edibles go through the liver into the bloodstream and definitely are more effective in pain relief. I've seen the relief it brings to people. It's a very benign drug. It's not for everybody like anything, but people who do find relief from pain should have every right to get that relief."

"I'm also hoping to remove the stigma around the use of marijuana including recreational use," Stauffer added. "So many people use it. It's silly that the state is slow walking [its use] and causing regular people to be criminalized."

Stauffer has opened his shop just at the right time. On Oct. 23, New York State's Office of Cannabis Management opened a 60-day public comment period on regulations that will allow for the home cultivation of medical cannabis. When the comment period closes on Dec. 23, everything points to the regulations on medical marijuana will become law. According to the state's website, "the regulations follow the requirements of Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act, allowing for up to three mature plants and three immature plants per person and a cap of six mature and six immature plants within any private residence." Marijuana grown for recreational use has a longer timeline. It may be closer to 2023 before NY state makes it legal.

While people can buy medicinal marijuana today with a doctor's prescription, it can cost up to \$400, and it's not covered by insurance Stauffer said.

That's where Stauffer comes in. He's studied marijuana—the flower, edibles, CBD, and tinctures.

"Smoking brings a quick reaction and

quick relief," explained Stauffer. "Edibles go through the liver and probably are more effective in pain relief."

He can explain the whole process in growing marijuana, the light and sleep time it needs and how to avoid losing a whole crop.

Rocblooms is Stauffer's first business in the city but not his first time in business. The Rochester native and School of the Arts graduate moved to NYC in the late 1990s and opened a historical restoration business, and he stayed until shortly after 9/11.

"It destroyed my business. People who lived in million-dollar apartments ran out to the Hamptons," said Stauffer who watched his work dry up.

He also felt the impact of the event on him emotionally. "I watched the second plane hit the tower from my workshop in Long Island City," said Stauffer. "I found [office] papers in my backyard in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. You could smell burning flesh for weeks."

When his mother, Carlene Woodward, a Highland Park resident needed help selling her rental properties, he was ready to leave New York City. He helped her renovate her properties, and when he picked up "high end carpentry jobs," he decided to stay.

He continued to work in renovations until he fell off a roof and shattered the bones in his leg

"No one has been legitimately allowed to study cannabis," he said, adding that with legalization will come the funding for more research and discoveries.

By the end of the year, if the state does what it's expected to do, at-home growers can buy their seeds online and the necessary light for growing them for as little as \$80. While Stauffer sells tents, he said an empty closet can also work for small grows.

Rocblooms' lights are composed of hundreds of Samsung diodes with dimmers that can deliver 100-660 watts of photons of light with the flip of a switch. Another light is a bar light with 720 nm far-red diodes to increase

Continues on page 11

Mayor-Elect Evans

continues from page 1

wants to bring back stronger neighborhoods and NBNs (Neighbors Building Neighborhoods) groups. "There were lots of neighborhood organizations 20 years ago, block clubs and charettes," said Evans. "Neighborhoods were involved and helped to decrease violence. I want to empower partnerships again. Neighborhoods can bring youth opportunities, put [kids] to work and away from negative behaviors."

When he takes office, Evan will draw on the "three Fs" that he followed his entire life, from the South Wedge neighborhood to the University of Rochester, to the School Board and now to the Mayor's office.

"Family, faith and friends have guided me throughout my life," said Evans. "We need collaboration, bridge building and not just on paper. We have to find common ground not a battleground. A big guiding principle, which may sound murky, is caring. I will always ask how this or that decision will impact our citizens. I won't be distracted by side issues, one tent issues. I see a broader picture, not how 200 people will be impacted, but 200,000."

Evans is aware of residents' criticism of Rochester's city government—the lack of transparency in City Hall, the horrors of racial equity and child poverty, the large tax breaks given to developers to build luxury apartments and the scarcity of affordable housing. Lastly, City Hall's use of six-figure consultants whose reports' seem to lead nowhere.

"We have a long way to go with equity across the board," said Evans. "We need to empower small organizations, strengthen neighborhoods." He agrees there's a "perception" that big developers are treated differently, and he returns to the concept that "neighborhoods have been so eroded."

"We have to increase income, job training, working with companies on real work force development," Evans added. "Rents are up, but not like in D.C. Income has not kept pace."

When it comes to consultant reports, Evans is ready to stop the flow.

"We have so many reports. I have a desk stacked with reports," said Evans. "Reports on vacancies and housing overall. Race reports. Reports on poverty. When we do these reports, we should know how to implement the suggestions.

We don't want any more reports."

Evans' tone softens when he remembers growing up in the South Wedge—attending School #12, climbing "Big Bertha," the hill behind the school, hanging out in the pocket park on South and Alexander and shooting baskets at the former Gateway Plaza on Mt. Hope Avenue. It was a different South Wedge when he lived here.

"I remember catching tadpoles in the Lily Pond," said Evans. He remembers winters when people would ice skate on it. "I want to restore it to its former glory," he said after learning it's now a round circle of weeds.

His father Rev. Lawrance Lee Evans, Sr. was a strong neighborhood presence with his wife Gwendolyn. He founded the First Community Interfaith Institute, an educational, spiritual, and cultural organization that tutored children, taught Black history, encouraged social activism and promoted a philosophy of "Doology."

The Institute's website defines the philosophy, developed by Rev. Evans when he was a teenager, as "positive action in your community or organization is valued more than just complaining."

Evans' activism was greatly influenced by his father. At 16, he helped to create the City/County Youth Council now called Youth Voice/One Vision since 2001. When he graduated from University of Rochester, he worked at ESL as a banker. He won a seat on the city's School Board, becoming its president from 2008-2013.

Today the Mayor-elect lives with his wife Shawanda and two sons, Cameron and Carter, only a couple miles away in the Cobbs Hill neighborhood.

But, when he speaks of the childhood, his voice emphasizes the special love he still holds for the South Wedge.

"The South Wedge has a lot of opportunities," said Evans. "It has a hot housing market, but I'd like to see if there's a place for more green spaces. Green space is part of its charm. And the Children's Pavilion. I would love to see that return."

When he learns about SWPC plans to hold South-by-South Wedge, a new community festival next summer, he's more than enthusiastic.

"That would be excellent!" Evans said. He doesn't know his new schedule, but he said he'll definitely mark it on his calendar.

The WEDGE Wants You!
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WEDGE Editor Steps Down Glynis Valenti

Nancy O'Donnell was very familiar with the South Wedge when she was hired to work at The WEDGE Newspaper 15 years ago. She and her four siblings grew up in the neighborhood and attended Saint Boniface School through the eighth grade. After graduating from Monroe High School and St. John Fisher College, O'Donnell moved to Ohio and, later, Washington, DC. She returned in 2004 and purchased a house on Benton Street. Even as a little girl, O'Donnell says reading and writing were passions. She began reading one book each month, and at 12 years old, she penned a

"werewolf western" until irreconcilable logistical flaws in the plot (will a horse let a werewolf get on the saddle?) made her put it aside. Years later she discovered community newspapers when she started writing for *The Takoma Voice* and *Montgomery Journal* newspaper on the outskirts of Washington, DC. "I came to love neighborhood newspapers," O'Donnell recounts. "They are the community--written, edited, delivered by the community. We said *The Takoma Voice* was where people could have their photos in the paper for something nice. It's

gratifying that people read them." Some of her memorable stories reflect their communities: a "whimsical column" called "Talk of the Town," an article in *The Takoma Voice* about the difference between French and American chocolate; a WEDGE article on Frederick Douglass's house on Hamilton St. rumored to be haunted; and covering this neighborhood's annual Halloween pub crawls.

During her tenure as WEDGE Editor, O'Donnell kept her focus on building neighborhood community, promoting the small businesses here, and making the South Wedge "weirder." "This place has its own ethos," she explains. "It's progressive. In my neighborhood a friend visiting from D.C. counted ten 'Black Lives Matter' signs. There's a difference here. I moved here for that reason."

When asked about changes in the South Wedge through the years, O'Donnell recalls a time when the community came together opposing a chain drug store wanting to locate in the Wedge.

"I'm grateful that [the drug store] didn't happen and that more local businesses started coming in," she says. "But it doesn't feel like the sense of community is as strong now. We have great businesses, but I would like to see block clubs come back."

More disturbing to O'Donnell are the shifts in journalism over the past 20 years.

"It's appalling that a group of people with an agenda of lies could undermine a profession--an industry--by arguing with facts," notes O'Donnell. "Thanks to social media, there are people out there who believe that John Kennedy Jr. is going to resurrect and become the new vice president for a restored administration. The name-calling is also ridiculous. People are almost proud to be undereducated and won't



Polkatholic Nancy O'Donnell at the WEDGE office (Photo by Glynis Valenti)

even look at a newspaper with a differing opinion.

"I would love to talk to a journalism professor to find out what they're re-teaching now. There are all of these 'reporters' on the streets with their phones. They can do great work or great damage."

Along with writing and editing at the WEDGE, O'Donnell teaches English composition as an adjunct professor at both Monroe Community College and Nazareth College and is a freelance writer.

Reading newspapers and books and viewing other media provides her inspiration.

"Beauty is my religion," notes O'Donnell, a lover of poetry, nature, and art. Her interest is always piqued when there is "some element of humor" that makes her laugh. O'Donnell wrote an article for *The Takoma Voice* about a set of dentures left on a coin-operated newspaper box: "They were just sitting there. Someone finally took them into the bank next door for safe-keeping. I kept going back to see if anyone had claimed them after the story appeared in the paper."

Will she continue her reading and writing passions after January 1, when she leaves The WEDGE Newspaper? "Yes," O'Donnell smiles, "For as long as I'm alive."



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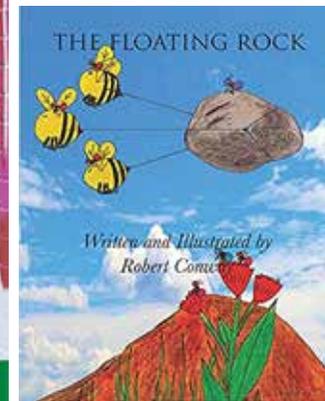
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Local Writer's Political Fable



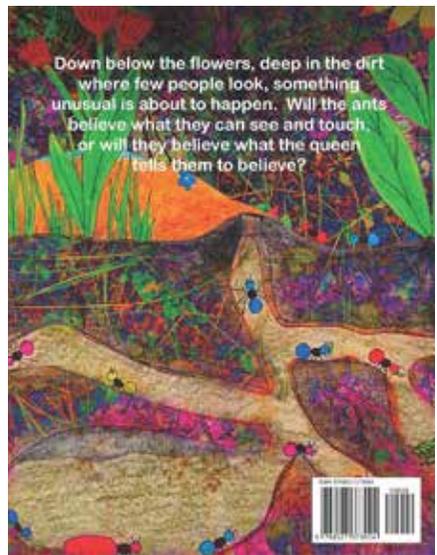
"Down below the flowers, deep in the dirt where few people look, something unusual is about to happen. Will the ants believe what they see and touch, or will they believe what the queen tells them to believe?"

Dr. Robert Conway, a local optometrist and MCC graduate, wrote and illustrated, *The Floating Rock*, a children's book for all ages now available on Amazon, paperback or kindle.

"The majority of the self-publishing process was done during the first 3 months of the Covid-19 pandemic, when our optometric office was closed," said Dr. Conway. "It's a children's book, but also a political fable of sorts."

Dr. Conway says he'd like the book to be read by "a national audience before the midterm elections."

In the meantime, he's been sending copies out to national



news program hosts with the hope that the book will capture their attention. "I sent one to Rachel Maddow at CNBC, and I'd like Anderson Cooper to see it for his son Wyatt."

Dr. Conway also has his eye on Big Bird from Sesame Street. "Recently, Big Bird had difficulty with the letters C, P, A and C. If Big Bird could read this story to his friends, perhaps these letters would learn how to get along better with the rest of the alphabet."

The book has been receiving praise for both the illustrations and "the spirit of the story--a story about understanding, empathy and truth."

GIFT GUIDE



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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.

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Rocblooms *continued from page 9*



growth during the night period, newly discovered by peer-reviewed research. "Older technology was terribly inefficient, and lights didn't have a long-life span because of all the heat," explained Stauffer. "New lights can last five years or more. There's a big difference with QB lights. They're efficient and high quality." Stauffer doesn't worry about shipping delays. He found a manufacturer, and he's all stocked up. Light prices range from \$70-\$90 single boards for small grows all the way up to 440-watt lights for \$290 and 660-watt lights for \$380. "Keep it simple is a good adage," said Stauffer outlining the simple steps to get a small growth--seeds, soil, lights, a timer and time (3 1/2-4 months of growth plus 2-3 week curing time). However, climate control is important, and a crop can be lost to "extremes of temperature." "It's easy to ruin your hard work," said Stauffer who is also happy to explain the process of "decarboxylation" necessary to produce edibles. While the state moves through the process of legalization, issues remain. Social justice considerations mean

clarifying who gets a license to sell--big companies like Constellation Brands, who have invested money since 2017 or small indie local businesses? An online article in New Cannabis Ventures in May 2020 was headlined, "Constellation Brands Injects \$245 Million Into Canopy Growth..." [Canopy is described as a diversified cannabis company]. A Constellation Brands spokesman was quoted as saying, "While global legalization of cannabis is still in its infancy, we continue to believe the long-term opportunity in this evolving market is substantial. Canopy is best positioned to win in the emerging cannabis space, and we are confident in the strategic direction of the company under David Klein and his team." "Research is just beginning," said Stauffer. "When it becomes legal, you'll probably see research being done at the U of R." Until then, Stauffer's one-man operation is open for business. 1476 Monroe Avenue, 888.954.5319. On Facebook 585 cannabonoid lovers. Hours: Thursday 1 p.m. - 3p.m. and Friday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. or by appointment.

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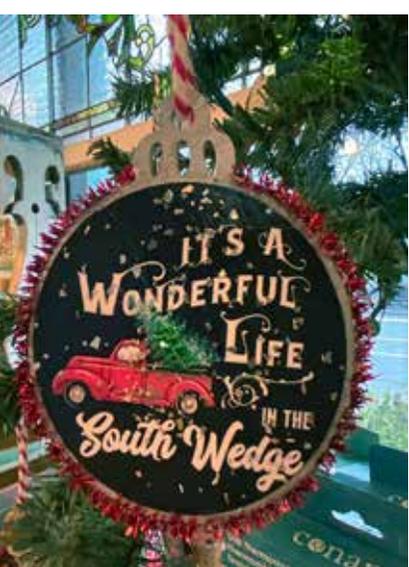
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A YEAR IN THE WEDGE 2021



South Wedge ornament at Historic Houseparts says it all. (Photos by Chris Jones)



Community Engagement Holiday Party 2020 l-r SWPC executive director Glynis Valenti, Jayne Morgan (Queen of Hickory Nuts), Judy Bennett, SWPC Chair Frank Logan, Lisa Reagan and Joe Elliott, St. Joseph Neighborhood Center (Photos by Nancy O'Donnell)



South Wedge Farmers Market Mascot Barnaby Flint poses with corn (Photo by Chad Flint)



British born Colin Coffey gets a reminder of London outside his South Ave. business, Renewing Massage. (Photos by Michael Brundage)



Tree hugger appears on Linden Street courtesy of Leah Brewer



South Avenue gets a new business--FOMO (Forever Modern) with gently used lux brands (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



Halloween South Wedge style always includes a new artist/ Hedonist Artisan Chocolate collab (Adam Francey) and Alexander St. resident inflates with abandon.



Brick & Ivy restaurant opens on South Clinton Avenue (Photo courtesy of Brick & Ivy)



South Wedge Victory Gardens always bloom



Editor Nancy O'Donnell in newly expanded Happy Earth Tea on South Avenue (Photo by Niraj Lama)



Rob Marvin's inventive way of gardening brightens Alexander Street (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)



As Black Lives Matter signs multiply in South Wedge front yards, a Highland Park family makes a permanent mural (Photo by Dave Nelson)

As I finish the last page of the last issue of the WEDGE Newspaper, I can say that it's been a happy 15 years telling stories about the people and places in the South Wedge. I hope that this paper will keep the same ethos that I've worked to promote--diversity, inclusion, and anything even remotely weird. I believe that the South Wedge truly is the best neighborhood in the city for so many reasons. I'm confident that the newspaper's new editor--Patti Giglio--is as excited as I was when I first began in 2006.

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Patti Giglio, new WEDGE Editor