

THE WEDGE

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

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South Wedge Repair Cafe is ready to help with what needs fixing. Above is Brighton resident Dorothy Paige's recently thrifted tapestry in need of a pick-me-up. Story and photos by Hailie Higgins on pg. 3.

\$3 Mil Grant Near Doubles ROC City Skatepark

Glynis Valenti

Since opening in 2020, the ROC City Skate Park has given enthusiasts a dedicated place to hone their skills. With a \$3 million grant awarded on January 11 by the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS), the park will be nearly doubling its size and add restrooms, event space, skating area, and other improvements and the City of Rochester is looking for community input.

Details and access to the survey are at <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/roccityskatepark> and the QR code printed with this article, but there are three options under consideration. The fourth and final option incorporating this public input will be designed by New Line Skateparks and Stantec, who designed ROC City. The City of Rochester has

extended the community survey deadline to February 12, 2023.

All three options include restrooms and a 3,000 square foot plaza/staging area at the south side of the park next to the Genesee River Trail. All three options utilize the space under the Frederick Douglass/Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge, so there are height and digging restrictions.

Option 1 extends the flow of the original skate park into quarter pipe pockets, rollers, and a meandering banked edge for different lines. Next to the Genesee River Trail, a simple tech section will include rails, ledges, manual pads, and small stair sets.

Option 2 extends the flow of the original park into banked and quarter pipe hips,

a volcano, and ledge. This simple tech station adjacent to the Genesee River Trail will include rails, ledges, banked hips, and a 10-stair feature.

Option 3 creates a flow zone "ditch" extending from the original park that includes rails, curbs, and manual pads. A more advanced tech station next to the trail will feature manual pads, flat gaps, rails, stairs sets, and tech islands.

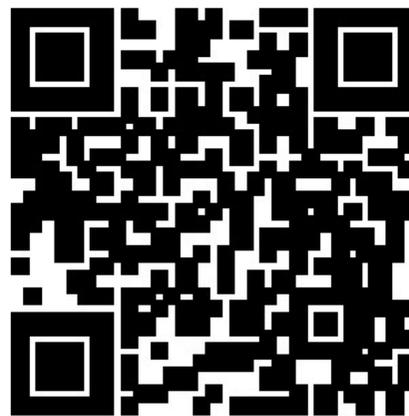
The Phase Two and Three construction will add 11,200 square feet to the existing 14,300 square foot park. The first phase was awarded \$1 million by New York State through the ROC the Riverway initiative and through an agreement with the New York State Department of Transportation.

PROPOSED SKATEPARK PHASE 2 - OPTION 1



ROC THE RIVERWAY BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE | ROC CITY SKATEPARK | Stantec | NEWLINE SKATEPARKS

You can access the ROC Skate Park Survey using the QR code below.



Pop in for South Wedge Farmers Market Pop-Ups

Chad Flint, market manager

South Wedge Market is excited to offer 3 pop-ups in the beginning of 2023. We will be hosting a Valentine's Day (2/9), Easter (4/6), and Mother's Day (5/11) pop-up at Odd Fellows Lodge (357 Gregory Street) from 4:30-6:30 pm each night. You can expect a great mix of vendors each night filling Odd Fellows as well as a few setting up outside. Freddie's Wood Fired Pizza plans to attend all 3 of the pop-ups, so we'll have dinner taken care of for you each night after you stop by to shop! We're getting ready for the 2023 outdoor season as well, opening night is set for Thursday, June 15 from 4-7pm, and we are eagerly waiting for the season to start. If you are interested in applying, please contact us or visit our website. As we begin preparations for the 2023 season, we are hoping to add a few market volunteers to help with setup, tear down, and possibly operating a market table during the market that would be stocked with items not covered by the vendors at the market. If you are interested in helping out the market, please reach out to us. The Market is also hoping to offer the ability to order ahead of your visit and pick up your pre-packed box this season if you are in a rush. We are also looking at adding a "Community Market Share" similar to CSAs that are offered by many local farmers. We feel that both will help the market continue to grow and better serve the community. Details on both will be coming in the next few months, so stay tuned to our website and social media channels. Follow the market on social media (@SouthWedgeFarmersMarket) or on the web (swfm.org) to keep up to date on which vendors will be at the market each week. If you are interested in helping out with the market as a volunteer, please contact chadflint33@gmail.com

Yummmmmmm!
Shop the South Wedge Farmers Pop Up Markets and take Freddie's Wood Fired Pizza home with you.



City of Rochester Update

City Can Play a Crucial Role in Fighting Climate Change Impacts

Mary Lupien



Mary Lupien serves as Vice President of the Rochester City Council and represent the city's East District

The climate crisis is a pressing issue that requires immediate action, and cities like Rochester can play a crucial role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting residents from the impacts of climate change. In order to address the climate crisis locally, Rochester must take a comprehensive and community-driven approach that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities who have been disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.

Rochester has an opportunity to lead the way in addressing the climate crisis locally by taking a comprehensive, community-driven approach. This includes harnessing offshore wind, banning gas hookups for new construction, adopting a minimum energy standard, prioritizing funding for rehabbing aging housing stock and investing in the electrification of vehicle fleets and heating/cooling systems. These actions will not only help to reduce emissions and protect residents from the impacts of climate change but also create jobs, stimulate economic growth and improve public health outcomes.

Harnessing Offshore Wind

Wind power is a clean and renewable energy source that has the potential to generate significant amounts of electricity while reducing dependence on fossil fuels. The development of Lake Ontario wind would also create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Ending New Gas Hookups

Banning gas hookups for new construction would encourage the use of cleaner and more efficient electric heating/cooling systems like heat pumps, improving indoor air quality and reducing emissions. Electrifying heating/cooling systems city wide is the key to decarbonizing the building sector.

Adopting Minimum Energy Standard

A minimum energy standard for residential and commercial properties would require new construction and major renovations to meet certain energy efficiency standards, which would help to reduce energy consumption and emissions. The city can also prioritize funding for rehabbing aging housing stock, to improve energy efficiency

and make homes more comfortable for residents.

Increasing Fleet Electrification & Public Transportation

Investing in the electrification of Rochester's vehicle fleets reduces not just carbon emissions but also its bottom line. Maintenance and operation of electric vehicles is much more cost effective. The city should also add to the existing charging infrastructure throughout the city to provide the infrastructure needed for its own fleets but also residents who are rapidly transitioning from gas to EVs. The city can also work with businesses to encourage the use of public transportation further reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Increasing Environmental Resilience

Expanding green infrastructure such as rain gardens, green roofs, and permeable pavements can help to reduce the impacts of extreme weather events and improve overall community resilience and Improving emergency management will help our residents prepare for and respond to natural disasters and other emergencies.

Addressing the climate crisis requires a comprehensive and holistic approach and requires collaboration, coordination, and advocacy with our partners in government, community-based organizations, labor unions, and residents to achieve these goals. It's time for Rochester to take bold action and lead the way in addressing the climate crisis.



Cheesy Eddies, 5% off
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Happy Earth Tea , 10% off
696 South Avenue

Equal=Grounds, 10% off
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Hedonist Artisan

-Little Button Craft, 10% off
658 South Avenue

Chocolates & Ice Cream, 10% off
674 South Avenue

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487 Monroe Avenue

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, June, August, October and December, The WEDGE has a readership of 13,500. Originally a print publication, it publishes electronically at www.swpc.org in Spring 2020, and is today posted to multiple outlets and listservs. It also provides a hard copy to members. Please send story ideas or news to the WEDGE, 224 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620 or email thewedge@swpc.org. Advertising deadlines and rates are available online at www.swpc.org or call 585.256.1740, ext. 4.

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

Get the Wedge!

For 37 years, The Wedge Newspaper has chronicled the lives and times of the vibrant South Wedge neighborhood and beyond. Please consider becoming a WEDGE supporter. You'll get the issue or printed and emailed to your home and a WEDGE card, too.

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SWPC 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.

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Joe DiDonato, Cheryl Stevens

Staff

Glynis Valenti, executive director
Chad Flint, market manager

South Wedge Planning Committee Meetings

The community is invited to attend all SWPC meetings held at 224 Mount Hope Ave. (Hamilton St. entrance).

Feb./Mar. Calendar SWPC Board Wed. 6 p.m.

Feb. 15, March 10
For info, email
flogan@rochester.rr.com

Community Engagement (Neighbors & Block Clubs)

Wed. 5:30 p.m. Feb. 22, March 24
For info, email
gvalenti@swpc.org

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. It works in a myriad of ways to build community through the annual South Wedge Farmers Market, 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.

The WEDGE Wants You!
Do you have a story you want to tell?
A photo you want to share?
We want to hear from you.
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South Wedge Repair Cafe

Hailie Higgins



Georgia Carney, Mission deacon and SWRC founder, uses a handheld sewing machine. machine to help teach people how to make their own sewing repairs.

Have a torn skirt? What about a busted lamp? Never fear, the South Wedge's Repair Cafe can help.

The South Wedge Repair Cafe (SWRC) meets every other Saturday in the basement of the South Wedge Mission—the church that SWRC founder and Deacon Georgia Carney attends—to help with fixing and teach others to make their own repairs.

The Repair Cafe is an international grassroots movement that brings people together to fix their broken things, for free. Whether it's mending clothes, fixing electronics or putting the legs back on a table, Repair Cafes around the world serve as completely free spaces that connect those in need of repairs with those who have the know-how to do them.

In August of 2021, Carney said she got the idea to open one in the South Wedge shortly after she heard about them for the first time.

"We started fairly quietly during the pandemic and look forward to

becoming more well-known in the neighborhood and beyond," she said.

Carney specializes in clothing-related repairs. Armed with a handheld Singer sewing machine, she said she prides herself on teaching customers how to make repairs themselves, teaching autonomy as she fixes clothes and fabrics.

She pointed to the importance of not only repairing but learning the skills to fix your stuff on your own. Whether the motive is living a more sustainable lifestyle, saving money, or just having an excuse to chat, all are welcome.

A Repair Cafe is also a great place for "introverts to do ministry," that is, to give one's time, talents, or resources to help another, Carney added.

Other volunteers include Alan Kaminsky and Iain Marcuson, who help with mechanical and electrical issues, respectively.

"[The SWRC is] a way to give new life to older products and to respect the effort that went into their creation," said Marcuson.

While not everything will get saved from the dumpster, many items do get a chance at a second life. And, more importantly, it gives consumers the confidence to try and tackle new projects that would otherwise seem too intimidating.

"Many of the repairs I have done require little more than a screwdriver and a commodity off-the-shelf replacement part," said Marcuson. "There is no exotic knowledge needed for a lot of jobs."

For Brighton resident Dorothy Paige, the SWRC has been a lifesaver. Armed with a topless table and a tapestry in need of a pick-me-up, she said that she's a regular visitor of the SWRC.

"It's the only one in town," she said. While Carney said that the group may send a customer away to purchase specific materials, the volunteers do have a small set of tools to get people started. And the volunteers even provide light refreshments!

To get to the SWRC, enter on Caroline Street (the side door with the bright stained glass) and go downstairs

to the basement. The space serves many purposes, and the walls have collected a variety of crafts, games, activities, folding tables, and other miscellaneous supplies throughout the years, tidied up under labels for each organization that shares the space.

On the first and third Saturday of each month, that organization is the SWRC. Meet them there any time between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. For questions, reach out to swmrepaircafe@gmail.com or text 585-478-1817. 125 Caroline Street, Rochester.



Alan Kaminsky fixing the top of a table at the Repair Cafe at 125 Caroline Street



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Business Buzz Nancy O'Donnell Hale

Diamond Professional Cleaning



(l-r) Patrick Bomyea and Joey Flanagan

Joey Flanagan and Patrick Bomyea are open for business. The partners are already busy with “residential deep clean and upkeep” and at the same time building their website and business.

They’ve been growing their regular customer base which ranges from a family expecting a new baby in the home in a few months to the owners of the historic Whitehall Manor in Brockport.

Designed by J. Foster Warner, of George Eastman House fame, the mansion holds 9 bedrooms and 7 bathrooms, 2 marble fireplaces and hardwood floors throughout.

Flanagan and Bomyea clean it all. They’ve also become friends with its owners (which explains the “thank you” glass of champagne after cleaning the mansion.)

Along with residential cleaning, the duo also works on whole house clean outs.

To book a visit, email koolwhale42@yahoo.com or call 585.953.1304.



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Love is in the Air at Happy Earth Tea



Happy Earth Tea owner Niraj Lama is always posting love letters to the South Wedge community who has wholeheartedly embraced his business. On a recent post, Lama writes, “The South Wedge neighborhood has been an amazing place for us! The people are warm and welcoming. The other small businesses collaborate to support each other.”

Lama goes on to praise the historic building he rents that comes with “peaceful yoga vibes remaining from our TRU Yoga neighbor.” But then he writes, “Over the years we’ve seen love blossom, babies, joining our tea family and much laughter...”

Wait. What?

Love matches at the tea bar? I stopped in for a takeout of his delectable chai and some Red Fern’s sweet and savory nuts. The inside looks the same. Today the bar was packed. He did add another table for two. Hmmm.

What’s up with that story? I’ve never seen love blossom here. Where’s the proof? What’s the story?

“You have to stay longer,” Niraj replied and pointed to a man holding a one-year-old girl in his lap.

While he made my tea, he remarked that this is a bar where a meet up comes without “bleary eyes and regrets.”

Undoubtedly, Lama is right. Two hours drinking tea in conversation with a fellow tea lover might leave a person a little wired, but never hungover.

Who knew that love could brew at the tea bar while Lama’s back is turned as he measures out the tea leaves and pours the water?

Stop in for a cup of tea. And if you’re looking for love, you may want to stay awhile.

696 South Avenue, Rochester, NY.

Women of Color NYC Celebrates Black History Month & Galentine’s Day



Shayla's J Dessert Bar & Bistro

Shayla Johnson, of the renown South Wedge Shayla J’s Dessert Bar & Bistro, is getting ready for the big red day on Feb. 14th. Her café adjoins the Women of Color New York fashion center on the corner of Hamilton Street and South Avenue. Their special event begins on Saturday, Feb. 11 at 10 a.m.

Meanwhile Shayla J’s is filling up her space with sweet delectables. Look for chocolate dipped strawberries along with her banana puddings which now number up to 53 flavors.

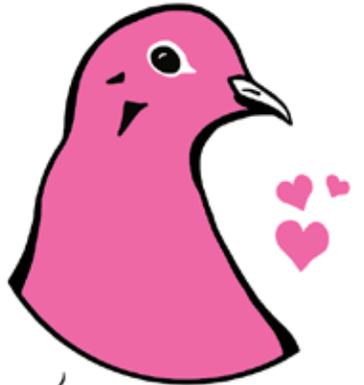
“I plan to be the Baskin Robbins of banana pudding,” said Shayla. WOCNY, 539 South Avenue

Galentine’s Day at WOCNY
Saturday, February 11th 10-4 pm
Head Wrapping Demonstration
10 am-2pm

Along with special Galentine’s Day events, WOCNY celebrates Black History month with African apparel including three-piece sets (skirt, head wrap and handbag).

Check out their women’s wear, wellness and beauty products from Light My Candle Co., Nubian Nurturance, Conversation Pieces, Bae’s Bags Boutique, Weight Sister, Ivolve Me Wellness, Goddess Glow Botanicals, Beauty by Olivia Travis and Charlie Style New York. 539 South Avenue.

Love Birds



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Hedonist Artisan Chocolate 2023 Valentine’s Day Artist Chris Charles

Chris Charles, local letterpress printer, graphic designer and owner of Moon Rabbit Press, is this year’s Valentine’s Day designer at Hedonist Artisan Chocolates. Her collection, “Love Birds,” features different bird images.

Charles started Moon Rabbit Press in 2010. Her work focuses on fine art linocut & letterpress prints, which often “feature bold colors and a healthy sense of humor.” She earned a BFA in painting at Montserrat College of Art. She sells her work at festivals and art galleries and teaches printmaking at the Flower City Arts Center.

The NY Times acclaimed Dark Chocolate Salted Caramels are sold in 10 and 20 piece boxes.

Year of the Rabbit

Michele H. Martell

Happy New Lunar Year and welcome to the Year of the Rabbit, or to be specific, the Year of the Water Rabbit. We may know about it through placemats in Chinese restaurants, but I learned a great deal more reading about it on MSN.com. I'm always intrigued by anything that delves into spiritual and celestial realms, interspersed with some sensible rationale, so I started reading about it.

I learned that this year's Lunar New Year begins January 22 and ends on February 10, 2024. The event, celebrated largely in Asia each year, honors the 2nd moon following the winter solstice in December. In addition to 12 different animals, the Chinese Zodiac assigns an element to each year, and this year's element is water. The Water Rabbit occurs every 60 years.

According to the MSN website, the rabbit is considered the luckiest of all zodiac signs in the Chinese culture and is one of the strongest. Known to be a very social being, the rabbit's traits include cleverness and speed, while still gentle, kind, and calm. The rabbit is also considered creative, organized and stylish. Next, to the Chinese calendar, water symbolizes flexibility and letting go of control. Interestingly, these two together, the rabbit and water, can indicate a slower, more serene year, and the combination encourages us to let go of control and rigidity.

This year can also make schedules more fluid, as Cathryn Moe told the



I decided to look up my own Chinese Zodiac sign (never mind the year!) and it is the Fire Goat. Fire Goats apparently have the soul of an artist, are loyal friends, sympathetic and sensitive, detail-oriented to a fault, stubborn, efficient, goal-oriented, and have a flair for drama but this is a good thing as it leads them to creativity and inspiration. It is recommended that Fire Goats work on a career overseas, which coincidentally, I have. The Chinese Horoscope says that although Fire Goats will have a lot of challenges while young--which I have--that they can expect a lot of comfort and peace during middle age.

Whether or not any zodiac predictions are plausible, I like these. The rabbit symbolizes peace, prosperity, and vigor in the Chinese Zodiac.

Can we expect a year of more peacefulness, flexibility, introspection and being more strategic and thoughtful with others? It would certainly be a welcome respite to our recent climate of unrest, war, and struggles across our globe. And the outer communal climate is often indicative of inner battles that lead to, and also are a result of, our current world. And on a personal level, if I can expect tranquility and contentment in my middle age, I'll take it.

What are you hoping to see this new Year of the Rabbit, and what are you wanting to let go of? Is it the impetuosity of last year's Tiger? Courage is a positive asset, which is a quality of the tiger. I like the idea of courage plus this year's theme of letting go of control while remaining intentional, tactical, kind, and agile. What you wish to let go of is just as important as what you strive to continue and add.

It is never too late to add good things to your life and to subtract what doesn't add to it. Each day is truly a new beginning and saying "this is just how I am" doesn't cut it. As long as we have a beating heart, there is always an opportunity to make positive changes. And the last faculty according to hospice workers is that of hearing; as long as you are able to hear, you can still make change - if only in your heart and mind.

Personally, I have spent a lot of time late-December and early-January journaling about what I want and what I don't want. There is no perfection, only progress.

What I've decided I want to add to my life in 2023 is increased kindness,

abundance, protection, expansion to both my external and internal life, with a continued focus on gentleness with my kids and animals, and my intelligence and soul. What I've decided to let go of is any scenario that involves harmful, duplicitous gossip of others. I used to think that just listening, vaulting and not letting it go anywhere was enough; that is not enough --if a friend knocks another who trusts in them -- not only will I not absorb such double-talk, but I will respond "not my business". Everything is energy, and I recognize that type of energy is harmful, energy begets energy; not to mention, if they're doing that with them, they're doing that with you and me. Life is too short to waste precious energy on harmful nonsense that serves no one's good. And energy expands upon your loved ones, your home, your environment, your future.

Do you want to make this a sparkling year for yourself, your loved ones, your future? Write it down. The power of the pen is so mighty! Even 5 minutes can make a difference. Happy gentle Rabbit Year, and you can make it your best year yet!

Interesting in learning more, visit "What To Know About Year Of The Rabbit 2023" at msn.com.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday, March 11, 12:30 p.m. Parade begins East & Alexander



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Michele H. Martell

Japan Times, if plans change quickly or if you find yourself wanting to cancel plans at the last minute. This year is said to be an opportunity to unwind and contemplate, with the caveat to think first before taking action on any problems.

Conversely, last year was Year of the Tiger. According to the Yahoo entertainment website, the tiger symbolizes rebelliousness, courage and competitiveness, as well as having a reputation for being short-tempered and always ready for a challenge, and persons born during the Year of the Tiger are known to be natural leaders but who are also potentially impetuous and arrogant.



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

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Frederick Douglass Library Promotes Local Artists

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

Frederick Douglass Library on South Avenue has always hung art on its walls, but when Evanna M. DiSalvo took over as branch manager she wanted to create a greater “connection to the community” and invited local artists to display their art.

The exhibits began last summer when artist Tim Mack was invited to display his work at the Library. His work has appeared around the South Wedge for several years, in Equal=Grounds Coffee House for one.

“I’d won one of his paintings at a raffle, so I reached out to him,” said DiSalvo. “I propped [his work] on bookshelves,” said DiSalvo.

In December, local artist Virginia M. Cassetta exhibited a striking gallery of graphic landscapes in bold colors. In January Mack’s whimsical drawings ranged from small sized and perfect for a child’s room “Ba Ba Black Sheep” to a large dramatic drawing of a woman.

Joining Mack’s work was paintings and sculptures of mixed media artist, Maia A’Brams Horvath. Her small figures are repurposed bottles, reminiscent of Matryoshkas, Russian wooden.

“The sculpted bottles represented the holidays—Christmas, Kwanza and Hanukkah,” said A’Brams Horvath. She describes her work as “Klimt



Artist Maia A’Brams Horvath

inspired. One mixed media painting posted on her Facebook page combines paint, paper, canvas, cheese cloth and polymer clay. On one side of the canvas, a fey figure sits underneath huge mushrooms while on the left side clay mushrooms pop from the canvas.

A’Brams Horvath work can be found at Panache and the Purple Painted Lady in Palmyra, NY. She also sells

works found on her Facebook page and “commissions are welcomed, especially denim jackets, canvas sneakers and books,” said Horvath. It’s not complicated why DiSalvo started the art exhibits.

“I just love color. It brings a lot of interest to the library, and it’s free!”

She said library patrons have said how much they enjoyed the monthly displays. She always provides artist’s contact info if they’re interested in buying.

DiSalvo plans to exhibit new artists monthly. She even plans to install hardware on the walls that enable the art to move off the bookshelves and onto the walls. Tim Mack returns in February, along with artist Susan Carmen-Duffy.

To see more of work Maia Horvath, visit Maia’s Ethereal Creations on Instagram or Facebook page. Tim Mack’s work is available at his Black Cat Gallery at the Hungerford Building or email him at blackcatgallery@yahoo.com.

For purchase art in current exhibits, DiSalvo will provide contact info to the artists. To exhibit at the library, contact DiSalvo at (585) 428-8206.

971 South Avenue, Rochester.



Artist Tim Mack



Artist Virginia M. Cassetta

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Aroma Dulal creates art through henna (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell Hale)

Library’s Children’s Room Offers Special Events

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

On a gray January day, Aroma Dulal sat at a small table and carefully applied henna to the hands of lively, enthusiastic children and one equally eager WEDGE reporter in the Frederick Douglass Library Children’s Room. Dulal worked as a Summer Literacy aide at the Library while in high school. She’s now studying pre-med at St. John Fisher College, but she’s happy to come in for a special event.

Dulal, who emigrated here from Nepal, uses her phone to pick out a design and carefully swirls and dots with the rich mahogany-colored dye. The henna can last up to a week if the wearer is careful said Dulal.

“The kids love the henna programs,” said Children’s Room Librarian Jennifer Nesbitt, “We’re always excited when we offer them. “As a librarian, I like this program because it combines a really cool artistic experience with education on the cultural tradition of henna. It’s a win win!”

Nesbitt said they continue to work on new events for the Children Library. Currently, the events we repeat every month are the Anime Club and visits from the RocDogs and a beginner’s knitting program on Saturdays for children.

“Roc Dogs are volunteers that bring certified therapy dogs into libraries for kids to read to and visit with, said Nesbitt. “

South Wedge Life at 23

Olivia Alger

Yesterday my neighbor won the lottery. It was only a few hundred dollars, but it was exciting nonetheless (what are the chances of winning anything in the lottery at all? One in a million? One in three million?). So we went to Solera Wine Bar on South Avenue to celebrate.



Solera's Pinguino

It was Wednesday. We sat at the bar drinking house red out of a *pinguino*, a white ceramic jug shaped like a penguin. Outside, it was raining.

I settled back into my barstool and watched wine dribble from the penguin's perpetually open mouth as our neighbor filled the glasses.

My roommate and I are in our early twenties, and both of us are constantly learning new things. Some things I learned on Wednesday night, for example: Solera was the first wine bar in Rochester; the chances of winning the lottery, no matter how small the prize, are one in about 292 million; a *pinguino* is a classic Argentinian vessel for wine. The more I learn, the more I realize how little I actually know, and, in many ways, being this age feels like being a toddler. My emotions are extreme. I'm always hungry, cranky, or tired. The world is a bright, bewildering place.

Still, even brighter and more bewildering is the South Wedge. The two of us have lived in this neighborhood for seven or eight months now, on the second floor of a blue-painted duplex full of houseplants and second-hand furniture. We're putting down roots in a way we never did in our old neighborhood, both because we have the time and resources to do so and because there is so much opportunity for our roots to expand here. It feels like we're growing up. We take brisk walks around the block after work. We're experimenting

with cocktails and crossword puzzles. We're trying to shop local, drink local, and eat local. We're becoming red-wine loving young professionals.

Consider this article my introduction to a series of reflections on life in the South Wedge as a young person. While I'm unsure how this column will evolve as I continue to write it, as am I unsure how my relationship to this neighborhood will develop as I continue to live here, I'm excited about both of these opportunities. For the first time, I sincerely feel a part of the neighborhood in which I live.

Earlier this week, my car got stuck in a muddy rut at the end of our driveway, and two construction workers noticed and came over to help me out. I didn't get to thank them. If you're reading this, you two, thank you for your help. Enjoy the rest of your rainy January, South Wedge residents. I hope to see you soon.

Olivia Alger is a writer based in Rochester, NY. She is a graduate of the University of Rochester and currently works at OACES, the Office of Adult and Career Education Services.

Time to Discover & Rediscover the Shops in the South Wedge!

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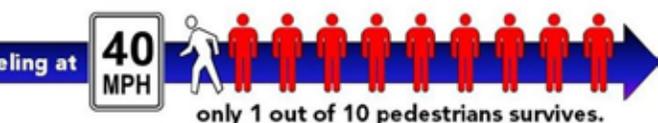
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The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC) invites you to join us in making a difference in southeast Rochester. Join our board of directors or serve on a committee. Founded in 1978, SWPC acts as a conduit for federal or state repair grants that help 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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417 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620

How Safe is Your Home?

Nancy O'Donnell Hale



The Rochester Police Department (RPD) offers area residents a Home Security Survey that can alert them to potential problems. RPD Lt. Robert Wilson outlined what officers will do when they conduct a survey.

"They check exteriors and look for any weak spots—adequate door locks, foliage that may obscure the front of the house," said Lt. Wilson. "We give the suggestions so at least [homeowners] know, so they can make changes even in the future. Cameras are good security if you can afford it. There are a number of companies, and some major companies can charge \$50 a month. But you can also install them yourselves. It's not difficult. I've installed my own at my home."

Answering no to the Home Security questions below may create security problems for you and your family. Homeowners can minimize their chances of becoming a victim of residential burglary or home evasion if they use several of the suggestions below.

1. Do exterior lights illuminate all entrances to your home?
2. Is shrubbery kept trimmed so a burglar can't hide near windows and

doors?

3. Are garage doors kept closed and locked?

4. Are exterior doors made of solid core construction (including any doors leading from the garage to the house?)

5. Is there a peephole viewer (180 degrees minimum) on the front door?

6. Are sliding glass doors secured with auxiliary locks or are they pinned? Are there screws in the track to prevent removal of doors?

7. Are exterior doors secured with a deadbolt lock (single or double cylinder) with a minimum one-inch throw?

8. Are windows secured with auxiliary keyed locks or pinned with a nail?

9. Do you report suspicious persons or activity in the neighborhood to the police immediately?

10. Are your doors locked at all times?

11. Do you have a record of your valuables including serial numbers, makes and models?

If you'd like to schedule a Home Security Survey, can request one by calling the Southeast Area Neighborhood Service Center at 585.428.7640.

Prevent Car Theft

Glynis Valenti

Lately the news and social media have daily stories of car break-ins and thefts. The Rochester Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff's Office have compiled a list of reminders and tips to keep your valuables safe.

- Be aware of the surroundings.

- Park in a well-lit area and look around for suspicious individuals.

- If you have a garage, park inside and lock the vehicle and garage doors.

- Get into the habit of placing valuables like laptops, cell phones, packages, wallets, and purses in the trunk or covered hatch of the vehicle, out of sight; if possible, do this as you get IN to the car before leaving for your next location. Possessions or cash on a visible console or seat is an invitation to break in.

- Do not keep your keys, driver's license, and registration in the vehicle. Thieves can use them to sell your car; 2. use them to impersonate you if stopped by the police;

- 3. use the keys to get into your house; 4. use the ID information for identity theft.

- When shopping, purchase small items first that can either remain with

you or be placed in the trunk/covered hatch. If the largest item doesn't fit in the trunk and would be visible from the outside, you should try to purchase it last.

- In your neighborhood or a parking lot, if you see one or more individuals looking into car windows or checking doors, report them to store security or call the police.

- If you see someone breaking a window or a suspicious person taking items from a vehicle, report him/her to the police.

In addition, Kia and Hyundai owners are most vulnerable to car theft thanks to a social media video. The car companies each have a stolen vehicle recovery system that can be enabled remotely. Models produced in 2016 or later, along with some earlier models are equipped with Kia Connect and Hyundai BlueLink, respectively.

Kia owners can check this link, <https://owners.kia.com/content/owners/en/kia-svr.html>, to see if their cars have the capability. Hyundai owners should contact a Hyundai dealer or check the Hyundai app for more information.



Construction continues on a renovated and expanded Richards House on South Ave. Veterans Outreach broke ground in Feb. 2022 and work began soon after on the \$7 million dollar project. Once completed it will include new space for the confidential counselling and therapy programs. The new Richard House adds 15 beds and features an elevator to aid older or disabled vets. Most important, the guests will gain privacy in single or double dorms with their own bathrooms. The previous structure layout was built on 4-6 man bays. Kitchen and laundry is also enhanced. To learn more or to donate, visit vocsafehaven.org. To learn more about multi-year support pledges, contact Joan Brandenburg, director of advancement, at 595.295.7821 or joan.brandenburg@voc.org.

South Wedge Social Justice Activist Recognized by THC NYC

Nancy O'Donnell Hale

South Wedge social justice advocate and Brooklyn born Jasmin Reggler began her work for the community when she has moved to Rochester. She founded and ran the Rochester Free Store in the basement of the South Wedge Mission on Caroline Street. The Free Store offered free clothing and home goods for those in need. In 2012 Reggler began working as House Coordinator and Board Treasurer at St. Joseph House of Hospitality, Catholic Worker community that provides offers meals and aid to those in need. She also worked as an organizer for the Rochester City-Wide Tenants Union.

In 2020 she applied for a position working with newly elected City Council member Mary Lupien. She had already been working as Lupien's Legislative Aide, going to meet and greets with City Department heads, attending council meetings. When she failed a drug test for THC, the job offer was withdrawn.

Reggler saw a basic injustice in the testing; she'd proven her talent and ability in the months she worked for Lupien.

In an article in a Jan. 2020 City Newspaper, Reggler argued that she was a "casual weekend smoker" and noted that Council members are not required to be tested for drugs. In addition, then Mayor Lovely Warren herself had come out in support of cannabis legalization.

By May 2020 the City Council approved legislation that removed THC from pre-employment drug screening while it continues to test for heroin, cocaine and methamphetamines. Some city jobs do require THC testing).

Over the years Reggler's worked with the Drug Policy Alliance, a New York City based group founded in 2000 whose principal goal is to end the American "War



Social activist Jasmine Reggler

on Drugs" [which] aggressively targets Black, Latinx, Indigenous, people of color, and people experiencing poverty."

In Dec. 2022, Reggler received an all-expense paid trip to NYC for a film interview by THC NYC. Her interview that highlights in work in overturning the City of Rochester's THC test policy will be part of a permanent exhibit at the House of Cannabis in NYC. The new museum is described as "the first-ever immersive destination exploring cannabis culture through multi-sensory, transportive experience.

Reggler's work at St. Joe's has changed over the years. Originally, the house had overnight guests and served meals inside she said. Since the pandemic the House only serves bag lunches 11:30-12:15 p.m. during the week. They serve hot meal take out on Friday and Sat. She welcomes donations of lunch food and snacks 9-12 p.m. 402 South Avenue. For more info, email jreggler@saintjoeshouse.org, (585) 232-3262.

Think Spring



Stuart's Spices Chicken Wing Cupcakes or veggie alternative

That's right, Buffalo-Style chicken wing cupcakes. A little sweet, a little savory, the best of both worlds. Plus, they're fun to talk about and eat! Make it easy on yourself by snagging your favorite Buffalo sauce.

You will need the following: Two boxes of cornbread mix, prepared to make 12 cupcakes, cooled to room temperature. It's recommended that you use cupcake liners, to make them easier to handle and eat.

Ingredients:

Two packets of instant mashed potato mix, prepared and cooled down. Try adding our Garlic Party seasoning to the potatoes as you mix for an extra burst of flavor

One dozen boneless chicken tender bites, baked or air-fried, and then tossed in the Buffalo-style wing sauce of your choice.

Two boxes of cornbread mix, prepared to make 12 cupcakes, cooled to room temperature. It's recommended that you



use cupcake liners, to make them easier to handle and eat.

Next with a wooden spoon, poke a hole in each cornbread cupcake. Fill a sandwich bag halfway full with your mashed potato frosting. Seal the bag and then cut one of the corners off so that you can use it as a piping bag, then pipe the mashed potatoes into each hole, and then in a swirl on top. Top each cupcake with a boneless wing bite, and you've got yourself a centerpiece for game day!

Pssst - meatless alternatives work super well with this recipe! Try your favorite as a tasty Buffalo bite atop your cupcakes.