The Landmark Society House Tour Explores Highland Neighborhood

By Nancy O’Donnell

The Landmark Society of Western New York, one of the oldest and most respected organizations of historic preservation groups in the nation, is holding its 38th annual House and Garden Tour in the Highland Park neighborhood June 7 and 8.

The neighborhood, formerly called Ellwanger Barry, was discovered by Barry in 1920 by Dr. Barry, was discovered by Barry. The neighborhood for- merly called Ellwanger Barry was a leisurely drive through the area, with the last September. Gregory Rosinsky, a Landmark Society neighborhood rep- rresentative, joined the ride along.

“…we were just blown over by the possibilities,” said Tammy Chmiel, a Landmark Society president’s volunteer co-ordinator. “We found tons and tons of lovely houses, architecturally intact, well cared for.”

Twelve houses circa 1920s were chosen for this year’s tour.

For the first time the tour will move beyond single family residences to include condos. Chmiel was es- pecially excited about two condos in the historic Spanish tile roofed Ellwanger Barry School at Linden and Meigs Streets.

“The condos have large skylights,” said Chmiel. “One condo was part of the school’s library and had a room that was called “The Boy Bench” that was in the owner’s kitchen.”

Lamberton Conservatory in Highland Park serves as the Soci- ety’s tour headquarters. Parking will be available on the street and at School #12 on the days of the tour. “The school will be asking for donations that benefit the school,” said Chmiel.

The Landmark Society Statue Unveiling Slated for May 17

By Allison Clark

Sculptor Pepy Kettavong will unveil his statue of city founder Colonel Nathaniel Rochester in Nathaniel Square on Saturday, May 17th at 2 p.m. Sharing in the community celebration are Mayor Bob Duffy, State Assembly member Susan John, State Sena- tor Joel Robach, former mayor Bill Johnson, local developers, busi- ness owners, community leaders and residents.

Kettavong’s Rochester sits eying the corners of a revitalized South Avenue and Alexander Street. The figure suggests a man sitting in reflection contemplating his life and is not meant to dominate its surroundings, but rather welcomes passersby into the everyday activities of the space. The sculpture invites tactual and contempla- tive engagement. Millstones spread out nearby welcome visitors to become a part of the sculpture and experience the South Wedge Urban Village.

In other words, people become the sculpture. Due to its design, the space draws together neigh- bors of diverse backgrounds and integrates art into everyday neighborhood life.

The South Wedge Environ- mental Enhancement Project (SWEP), headed by Cheryl Sverris, worked for the last seven years to transform the once blighted corner.

In 2001, SWPC joined with landscape artist Dudley Breden Jr., Eastman Kodak, the Greater Rochester Arts & Cultural Coun- cil, and NiSIN Sector 6 for a design charrette that plotted a park on the corner.

Redefining Healthy Choices: A Farmers’ Market Manifesto – Part One

By Chris Hartmann

For too long we have looked at the health of our food choices from a reductionist standpoint – weigh- ing the nutrient value, the calorie count, the organic status, the level of trans fats, and other personal- ited areas of concern. Undoubt- edly health consequences are associated with these choices, but we need to expand the con- text we use in this decision-mak- ing process. In order to truly make healthy choices for ourselves and our commu- nities, we must stop isolating food from the South Wedge Farmers’ Market food system in which it is produced, shop- ping from the social, political, and economic activity that it is, and eating from the interactive, artistic, and sensual experience that it creates.

Nothing is more critical to our health than what we consume. We are what we eat. Good, whole foods free of harmful chemicals, dense with nutrients and representative of the basic food groups are the foundation of good health for all people. Eating fresh, local foods grown in ecologically sound ways offers these direct health benefits. Equally important are the indirect health benefits of supporting a food system that dramatically re- duces harmful air, water, and soil pollution in our surrounding envi- ronments issues that have signifi- cant public health consequences. Directly tying the health of the ecosystems created through the production of food with the health value we associate with food gives us the perspective through which we can truly make healthy choices about what we eat.

Read more in the next Wedge.

New Life for Older Homes

CHDO Program Rehabs 11 Nelson St

By George Lorson and Eilleen Thomas

Eleven Nelson St., a small two- story house in the heart of Swil- burg, was rehabilitated by the South Wedge (Planning Committee) (SWPC) this winter using funds from the Community Housing De- velopment Organization (CHDO) Program. The sparkling new kitchen and bath, beautiful oak floors and distinctive space make it a wonderful home for a first-time buyer.

The CHDO Program is admin- istered by the Greater Rochester Housing Partnership, in coopera- tion with the City of Rochester.

CHDO houses are acquired by the City through tax foreclosures or from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The City or HUD deeds these houses to the Partnership, which in turn contracts with CHDO-cer- tified organizations like SWPC to do the construction.

For 11 Nelson Street, SWPC developed a detailed list of the work needed to be done. SWPC Real Estate Development Coordi- nator George Lorson supervised the construction provided by CAM Development, a certified lead abatement contractor.

Most of construction and rehabilitation is partially un- derwritten by the Partnership’s CHDO funding. The remaining cost is paid by the homeowner’s down payment and mortgage. Buyers must have a minimum $18,500 down payment. They also must meet with a bank and pre- qualify for a mortgage that is at least as large as what they need to buy the CHDO home. CHDO house mortgages typically are in the $60,000 – $80,000 range.

Houses in the CHDO Program are available for sale to first-time homebuyers who meet federal income guidelines. Buyers who meet that requirement and are pre-qualified for a mortgage may also be eligible for up to $6,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance through the City’s home ownership program.

One unique feature of the CHDO Program is that rehab- ilitated homes are offered to City teachers, police officers and firefighters in the first week of sale. If not sold in the first two weeks, the house is made available to all other qualified buyers.
by MacClurg Vivian

The Highland-Eastside Police Community Interaction Committee (PCIC) meets monthly to bring together neighborhood group representatives and organizations in the City’s Southeast with Rochester Police Department Eastside personnel to discuss crime and quality-of-life issues. Under the leadership of Eastside Commander Mark Case, the PCIC added a problem-solving process to its monthly agenda. The committee report from the February 13 meeting, held at the Rochester Police Department Eastside Division office on North Clinton Avenue, follows.

Crime. Commander Case and Lieutenant Churnetski gave an overview of crime in the last 45 days; with more coming throughout 2008 and in the next 2-3 years. Graffiti has been a big problem in the Southeast, including the NET office, which was tagged; however, CPO Steve Edgett was in the office and caught five teens in the act. This is not gang tagging. It is important to report graffiti as soon as possible. Call 428-5990 to get on a removal list. For tagging in progress, call 911.

Feet on the street. The police department continues to recognize in order to move more people, i.e., “feet to the street” into patrol.

Problem-Solving. Lieutenant Churnetski then led the committee in another brainstorming session, to identify an action plan to help solve one of many problems PCIC identified in December 2007—not knowing the officers who patrol our community. Several strategies were created and will be implemented in the coming months: assigning officers to neighborhood National Night Out events; an open invitation to neighborhood meetings to officers on duty; community leaders invited to police roll calls; delivering neighborhood newsletters to the Eastside Office, featuring an officer of the month in community newsletters; scheduling ride-alongs and reactivating the new officer orientation program.

The South Wedge has three citizen representatives on the PCIC: MacClurg Vivian and Scott Hewitt from the Hickory Nuts and Allison Clark from SWPC.

MacClurg Vivian, a Wedge resident, serves as PCIC Secretary.  

CORRECTION

The telephone number for Mac’s En Place Market was incorrectly listed in the last issue. The correct telephone number is (585) 325-4100.

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Goodbye Brian
Brian Pincelli, SWPC Marketing Coordinator for Real Estate Sales and Marketing Department, recently left for a new job with the City of Syracuse Economic Development Department. He will be working as an Economic Development Specialist at Brownfield project manager working with the NYS DEC, the EPA, and several city departments to investigate and remediate Brownfields in the City of Syracuse. He will also be managing the Restore New York program for the City of Syracuse.

Pincelli greatly contributed to building a better South Wedge Urban Village. He was in charge of real estate sales and marketing for SWPC working with local developers, property owners, and SWPC staff to attract and help locate new businesses in the Wedge. Brian also worked closely with the local business associations.

Pincelli earned his Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Design and his Masters in Urban Planning from the School of Architecture and Planning at the University at Buffalo.

Welcome New SWPC Assistance
Matt Cadrette recently joined SWPC as an administrative assistant in March to help staff with advertising, storywriting, organizing and a whole range of other do’s to promote its mission.

Matt Cadrette hails from Miami, FL and currently resides in Farmington, NY. He graduated with a degree in English from Valencia College in Orlando, FL. When Matt’s not at the SWPC, he can be seen performing with Rochester’s longest running improv troupe, Nuts and Bolts Comedy Improv (nutsandboltsimprov.com) or at home, sleeping, but Matt says, “leave him alone when he’s doing that.”

Christian Hartley Zwahlen arrived on February 18 at 12 a.m. his mother, SWPC Board Vice Chair Tanya Zwahlen reports. “He was the heavyweight champion of Highland Hospital, weighing in at 9 lbs., 5 oz. and measuring 22 inches. We plan to call him Hartley, after his paternal great grandfather and grandfather. P.S. We think he may have red hair.”

South Wedge Coffee Shop Aims For Carbon Neutral Footprint

By Nancy Sawyer Molina

The Coffee Connection, (formerly the Women’s Coffee Connection) provides fair trade coffee and specialty merchandise in the South Wedge, while supporting social and environmental causes on both local and global levels. The South Avenue shop recently began the process of becoming one of the first Carbon Neutral businesses in Rochester.

What does that mean? The coffee shop is attempting to offset its carbon use by a number of different environmental activities.

The first part of the process requires the shop to measure its carbon use. For example, the business is calculating the amount of carbon that it releases into the atmosphere by planting, growing, shipping, roasting, and brewing coffee. The second part requires the shop to plant trees and gardens to offset its total carbon use.

In operation since 2001, the coffee shop offers organic shade-grown coffee produced on a Peruvian cooperative using a sustainable agricultural method.

In house, the shop provides counseling and pre-employment training for women struggling to create new lives for themselves.

The Coffee Connection is located at 691 South Avenue. Visit them on the web.

Nancy Sawyer-Molina is founder and president of the Coffee Connection.
South Wedge History Club Plans a Busy Spring

Stanley Marshall will give a free slide show, Rochester Today, Rochester Yesterday: Pioneer Rochester (1789-1832) Monday, April 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Highland Branch Library, 971 South Ave. The South Wedge History Club is free and open to the public.

South Wedge Neighbors Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month around the neighborhood. Neighbors Council is a group of South Wedge residents committed to improving neighborhood safety and quality of life and organize neighborhood activities. Consider joining; it is a terrific way to get involved. Next meetings: May 7th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Equal Grounds Coffee house on South Ave. For more information contact Gale Lynch, 454-3295.

Wilson Foundation Invites Area Nonprofits

The Marie C. & Joseph C. Wilson Foundation is pleased to announce funding availability through its Rochester Small Grants program. Qualified 501(c)(3) organizations may apply for grants in the range of $1,000 - 9,250,000 throughout 2008. The grants are given to effective organizations that can impact positive change in the community.

Grants will not be made to individuals, partisan political organizations or to support lobbyists. Requests for capital projects also will not be considered. For more info, visit www.mcjwsonfoundation.org or call 461-4966.

Upcoming Knowledge Co-op EBAY Basics for Novices: Friday, April 11th from 6:00-8:00 pm Hosted by Robert Lauterbach. This co-op will be held at the SWPC offices.

Crafty Kids: Make a Homemade Art Critique by Kristine Fredrick, Saturday, April 26th from 9:00 – 11:00 am Learn to appreciate your favorite kids art and make an original piece of cray art. Location detail to come. To register: contact Allison Clark at aclark@swpc.org or call 256-1740 ext. 104. Sign up early – spots fill up fast!

The Police and Citizens Together Against Crime (PAC-TAC) helps residents to protect neighborhood streets on foot, to keep watch for potential criminal activity and interact with residents and merchants. PAC-TAC meets on the third Thursday of every month from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Walks begin at the Net office on South Clinton. For more information, contact Robert Lauterbach at rblauterbach@gmail.com.

Don’t let the Community Spirit Parade Pass You By

The Pride of the Community Spirit Parade will march on South Clinton Avenue on June 7th, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. If you or your community organizations are interested in creating a float to showcase your love for your community, contact Robert Lauterbach at rblauterbach@gmail.com or call 256-1740, ext 106 for more information.

The Rochester Civic Garden Needs You

The Rochester Civic Garden is looking for new gardeners to show off their 2008 Garden Tour on July 12 and would love to include a South Wedge home. Please contact Christine Froelich at regic@frontiernet.net or call 675-3519 for more information.

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“Save Money? With Allstate?”

By Allison Clark

Marie Dailey Park 1 Year Anniversary Celebration

Mark your calendars! A one year anniversary celebration of the construction of Marie Dailey Park playground is planned for June 14th. Everyone is encouraged to bring the family and a picnic. Come for a great day of community celebration! Children art projects and snacks provided. Gregory and Ashland Streets in the South Wedge.

The South Wedge Neighborhood Council meets on the first Wednesday evening of each month around the neighborhood. Neighbors Council is a group of South Wedge residents committed to improving neighborhood safety and quality of life and organize neighborhood activities. Consider joining; it is a terrific way to get involved. Next meetings: May 7th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Equal Grounds Coffee house on South Ave. For more information contact Gale Lynch, 454-3295.

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It Takes a Village to Teach Teens Boundaries

by Kristine Fredrick

Some people are afraid of teenagers. Other people find them amazing cocoon of future adults and consider it my privilege and obligation to interact with them. I can see what is scary enough. Teens test out everything, bad language, mean pranks, social boundaries, and even crime. They need supervision, and independence to test out their adult responsibility, ie and work skills, and growing knowledge base.

In our neighborhood we have many young teens who are home alone in the summer and after school days, testing their responsibility, until the parents come home. This is normal. It is not poor parenting. What happens when parents are away at work? Teens gather at one house or another, play video games, go to the rec center, ride bikes, take walks. That might get pretty boring after a week or two. We don’t have a summer camp or volunteer program for our kids here in the Highland Park neighborhood, so my teen neighbors played badminton for postmark with full payment. I send checks, made out to, Rose O’Keeffe, 217 Gregory St., Rochester, NY 14620-1321. 

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Coqui’s Journeys Bring Global Gifts to the Neighborhood

By Nancy O’Donnell

Jorge Yacila envisions a bright future for Coqui’s Journeys, his new gift shop, nestled in a cozy corner behind Cinema Theater, next to Muddy Waters Cafe.

He’s dubbed his new neighborhood, the “five corners” section of the South Wedge and he thinks the name should stick. “It’s a great way to make popular a multicultural area,” said Yacila noting the other shops and eateries on South Clinton. "A Chinese market, an Indian restaurant and store, a Japanese restaurant, Highland American Diner. It’s a good place to come to."

Yacila, who grew up in the Park Slope area of Brooklyn, was always attracted to things Latin American. “I had a passion since I was a kid for the arts and crafts of Peru and Mexico,” said Yacila, whose nickname as a child was “Coqui” (pronounced Co-key)

His love for art notwithstanding, Yacila turned to the sciences for a career, and moved to Rochester to work as an electrical engineer. Some years later, he decided to “find out what I wanted to be” and Yacila looked to family entrepreneurs in Trujillo, Peru for inspiration. One sold educational books imported from Spain. Another marketed scrap metal. A sister owned a gas station. Add to that, the M.A. in e-business he earned from the University of Phoenix and the City’s Developmental Office’s support, and he was ready for business.

Today his South Clinton Avenue gift shop spreads a cornucopia of gifts, fabrics, paintings and object d’art from around the globe. Peruvian sweaters, wooly Alpaca hats and soft scarves, and “Elf” chullos are artfully arranged. On a large center table strut bulls of all shapes and sizes. “Bulls are important symbols in Cuzco,” said Yacila. "Bulls are placed on the tops of every roof for luck, strength and good will.”

Nearby hang a series of paintings of Spanish angels including the “angel of abundance” along with watercolors of “a congregation of gossiping women.” Below the artwork, Yacila has assembled Inca kola drinks, jars of “very, very hot” chili, salsa, and black mint seasoning favored by Peruvian cooks.

In another room, Yacila points to art he admires by local potter Sarah Senour and photographer Joseph Sorrentino. Joining the Rochester creations are hand-carved chests in the Cuzco school of art and Pre-Columbian style Mochean vessels. Gifts and goods in stock also arrive from Guatemala and Paraguay, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

Coqui’s Journeys will add cultural events in the coming months. Look for information on weavers and other artisans demonstrations.

Coqui’s Journeys: Cultural Gifts, Novelties & Collectables from other lands, 975 S. Clinton Ave., 317-7170. Tues. 11:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Wed-Sat. 11-6 p.m., Sunday 12-4 p.m. Closed on Mondays ▲

Chamber Music Concert Series

Eastman School of Music faculty perform Spring Chamber Music Concerts at the Horace Ely House, a historic Cornhill landmark April 15 and May. For tickets call Dr. Ilan Levin at 501-6650. Ticket prices range from $6-$12.

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Rochester
New Life for Older Homes
continued from page 1

All CHDO houses have undergone lead-based paint abatement and have a Certificate of Occupancy. All structural problems and problems with things like roofs, furnaces, plumbing, and electrical work are repaired. Where needed, kitchens and bathrooms are rehabilitated, and hardwood floors are restored. All the rooms in the house are freshly painted.

“The Home Rochester/CHDO Program presents an unique opportunity for an income-qualified first-time homeowner to purchase a completely rehabilitated home,” said Lorson. “These homes will require little if any capital improvements over the next 15 years and special mortgage programs may be available to the income-qualified purchaser to make the home truly affordable.” ▲

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Live in the South Wedge
“Tool Tips”

By Ed Meyers, SWPC Tool Librarian

Hit hard with soaring energy costs and your home wasn’t

Take action and tame the heating and cooling bill monster right now.

Begin to save on heating costs with water! Dry air evaporates moisture from our skin to cool body temperature. A grand feeling in summer but unwelcome in winter. Consider adding an automatic humidifier to your furnace system or purchase an inexpensive portable unit to maintain suggested moisture levels.

Next, keep the cold out. Experts say the average American home loses 10 and 50 percent of its energy through inadequate insulation and inefficient lights or appliances. Insulate, especially in attics and basements and replace those old drafty windows and also add weather-strip to the doors.

You heard about the new energy saving light bulbs but have you installed any?

A gap at the bottom of entrance doors allows clearing the floor or rug when it swings open or closed. This is another major source of heat loss. Years ago homemakers sewed cloth tubes and filled them with cracked corn to block the escape of heat at that location. Today’s ready made flexible door sweeps available at hardware stores allow free door movement while reducing escaping heat.

A setback thermostat can cut heating/cooling bills up to 10 percent per year by automatically reducing your thermostat 10 to 15 percent for eight hours per day. The setting should begin lowering the temp an hour before going to bed and raise it again an hour before getting up. The reverse applies for cooling systems in the summer.

Other tips include:

• Upgrade to an Energy Star rated efficient furnace or boiler and reduce heating bills by almost 30 percent
• Change your furnace/air conditioning filters for improved efficiency. Experts recommend a monthly filter change depending on your air conditions.
• Improve your water heaters efficiency by draining it every six months to remove mineral deposits and sediment. A faucet or other drain at the bottom of the heater serves this purpose.
• Turn down the water heater from the standard 120 degrees to 115 degrees; and you should save more than 10% on the water heating bill.
• Install water flow – restricting shower heads. You can cut hot water usage by up to 50% and not affect shower pressure.

For additional no charge professional help on other energy conservation questions, contact New York State Energy and Research Authority. Their toll free line is 1-866-NYSERDA.
SWPC Executive Director Bob Boyd turned his column over this month to a new resident for a student's view of the South Wedge

My name is Joshua Ganskop, and I don’t know a thing about writing for a newspaper. I am a student at Monroe Community College. I am not originally from the South Wedge; I actually moved here two months ago. I would like to take this time to thank everyone for the welcome cookies and cake; I ended up with a whopping none!:)

Anyway, my landlord is Bob Boyd and when I dropped off my rent this month, he asked me to write an article. So here goes...

To be honest, when I first got here, I was a little nervous. I mean, I grew up 30 minutes from the suburbs out in the country where there are more apple trees than people (yay, Wayne County). So, of course, when I would go anywhere and see graffiti it’s a little intimidating (unless it’s a pair of feet, my five-year-old niece can draw that). But, I would like to note here that that was only a first impression. After living here I recognize that the South Wedge has more to offer. My favorite part of living here is how close the Genesee River is. I don’t know how many people have realized, but if you walk along the river in the Genesee Gateway Park, you have an excellent view of the city. In addition to going for a walk, I have also gone to the Laundromat on South Avenue. It was there I had my first real encounter with some locals, and they were definitely real cool. While sitting there for like five hours, I had plenty of time to look around the walls, and there are some awesome paintings there. Now I don’t know much about art except you sound smart if you mention the word “brushstrokes,” but other than that I like Edvard Munch’s The Scream and those paintings on the wall are definitely on par.

After a few more days here I noticed that paintings on the walls in the Laundromat were just a bench note to the creativity of the community. I really like those murals that have been painted on the buildings in the neighborhood. The one that really sticks out in my mind is the building where South Avenue meets Mt. Hope Avenue (St. Joseph’s House of Hospitality), and it’s huge. Mad props (aka nice work) to the person(s) who created it. That takes a lot of talent that I unfortunately do not have. I guess I will just stick to writing—just kidding.

I’m sorry that I really haven’t experienced much more than that in the Wedge, but here is what is on my itinerary. This week I plan to take my girlfriend to Cheesy Ed-dies on South for a slice of cheesecake, next I plan to go to Mise En Place (which means “everything in place”) to pick up some spinach, and third, I plan on meeting some more people. I do my laundry once a month at that Laundromat, so I will be glad to talk.

I think I am now entering what is called a “closing,” so thank you if you are still reading this. I guess since my article may suck so bad, I will leave you with some words from Bob Marley to enrich the rest of your day: “Live the life you love, love the life you live.” And it’s not cool to tag on private property. PEACE.

Joshua Ganskop