Two Neighborhoods Offer Distinct Character

By Bob Boyd

Part of the livable charm of the South Wedge is in its variety—its people, businesses and architecture. Our neighborhood associations add to the vitality. Featured this issue are Swillburg and the Highland Park Neighborhood Association.

What is a neighborhood?

In the last issue we celebrated the many City Living awards the neighborhood and our businesses earned. We talked about our shared experience and the people who make our neighborhoods special.

HERE’S MY DEFINITION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD:

- Vicinity: a surrounding or nearby region
- A section of a city that has distinctive characteristics.
- The relationships established by linking around a social media post.
- A geographically localized community with a larger city
- The people who live and work in a defined area

In this issue, I would like to highlight the Swillburg Neighborhood Association and the Highland Park Neighborhood Association which meet all of the definitions of neighborhoods. They also have an active group of neighbors who work to make the “neighborhood” better!

The Swillburg Neighborhood

The Swillburg Neighborhood is a cozy, active triangular-shaped 20-block community bordered by Field Street, South Clinton Avenue, Meigs Street, and I-490. The neighborhood’s name dates back to the 19th Century, when George Goebel ran one of the city’s most prominent pig farms and collected garbage for swill for their feed.

Among the patchwork of neighborhoods that give our area such a distinctive and desirable character, the Highland Park Neighborhood is prominent. Formerly known as the Ellwanger & Barry Neighborhood, this ecletic, family-friendly area of over 1500 households stretches from the west side of South Clinton Avenue to the north side of Highland Avenue down the east side of South Avenue to Gregory Street.

The Highland Park Neighborhood has deep historical roots. The original name of the neighborhood came from George Ellwanger and Patrick Barry who started a nursery in the early 1840’s that grew into the largest business of its kind in the world. They started selling off portions of the nursery’s land for housing in the 1870’s. In 1888, Ellwanger and Barry contributed to the City a tract of land that became Highland Park, designed by Frederick Olmsted, and is today a world class arboretum and home to the annual Lilac Festival.

The Highland Park Neighborhood Association is a vibrant group of residents with a long history of involvement in their community. In the 1960s, it helped prevent the 390 Expressway from destroying the neighborhood. It worked with Highland Hospital to create a neighborhood friendly design for the physician office building and other projects in the 1980’s. It helped create a network of trees for our urban forest in the wake of the ice storm, and played a major role in preventing an inappropriate development of South Avenue.

In September 2007, the Highland Park Neighborhood Association sponsored its first annual “taste of the Neighborhood” taste of the City Living awards the neighborhood and our businesses earned. We talked about our shared experience and the people who make our neighborhoods special.

What will happen to me if I run out of money?

-- A reverse mortgage or Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM). The HECM concept was developed by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with the assistance of the American Association of Retired People (AARP). HECMs are insured by the FHA. You could compare a HECM to your house, and the bank pays a long-term lump sum of money.

With a HECM, you hold the title to your house, and the bank pays you a HECM to your house, and the bank pays a long-term lump sum of money.

Any Questions About Starting a New Business?

How do I put together a solid business plan?

How will my current finances impact my business plans?

Will I need financing?

What are the best sources of assistance?

Contact SWPC’s Business Advising Program

- Free of charge
- Available to potential, new and established businesses
- Business plan counseling
- Financial review and recommendations

Experienced consultants:

George Gotcsik, business plan counseling
For an appointment, call 256-1740 ext. 103 or 106

All articles are written for this issue by Bob Boyd, director of The Wedge. If you would like to contact Bob, please call 256-1740, ext. 103 or 106.
Neighbors Council to Present Six New ‘Knowledge Co-Op’ Workshops

Rollin’ Your Own Sushi

Friday, February 8th
6:00-8:00 p.m. ($15)
Friday, February 29th
6:00-8:00 p.m. ($20)

Learn the basics of using hand tools from the hammer to the wood plane. Basic tools and techniques will be covered, and participants will work on a project from beginning to end. This co-op is hosted by former college and high school industrial arts teacher, local craftsman and South Wedge Planning Committee board member, David Halter.

159 Caroline St. Limited to five participants. Sign up early!

Beaujolais Wine Tasting
Saturday, March 8th
7:00-8:30 p.m. ($20)

This wine tasting will focus on Beaujolais, the fruity “bistro” wine of France most notably known as “Beaujolais nouveau” and will feature several Beaujolais wines from different French villages. This co-op will be held at the South Wedge Planning Committee offices and is hosted by amateur sommelier, Bob Boyd.

Power Tools 101
Saturday, March 29th
4:00-6:00 p.m. ($20)

Learn the basics of using power tools from table saws to belt sanders. Basic tools and techniques will be covered. This co-op is hosted by former college and high school industrial arts teacher, local craftsman and South Wedge Planning Committee board member, David Halter.

159 Caroline St. Limited to five individuals. Sign up early!

Satellite Neighborhood
continued from page 1

Today, the neighborhood is home to dedicated, caring residents. Many maintain a variety of community gardens to make the area a beautiful place!

The charming, narrow streets and natural mixture of homes and businesses offer the feel of a village with the conveniences of urban living. Businesses such as the 1930’s Highland Park Diner, upscale Roomey’s Restaurant, and the authentic India House provide diverse dining opportunities. The neighborhood is centrally located in Rochester.

The neighborhood association in Swillburg is very active. Each year, the group organizes many events including National Night Out, Carnival, Swillburg, Rock the Park (musical Tuesdays in September), Swillburg Spectacular and a Holiday Light Decorating Contest.

The neighborhood association keeps neighbors informed by a quarterly newsletter called “The New Yorker” and a web site www.swellburg.com.

In 2007 the Swillburg Neighborhood Association completed a new gazebo and a light pole mosaic project at Otto Henderberg Park. The organization has been very successful in making Swillburg a unique place to live with neighbors who know each other and have fun at the many events! The organization has become very proactive as opposed to being reactive!

The neighborhood leadership team includes David Chappius, Matthew Perdue, Dennis O’Brien and Alex Cerone.

Pay your bill your way!

We offer you a variety of ways to pay your bill.

1. For EasyPay: easy-online payment at swillburg.org

2. For EasyPay: electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments

Please send all payments to:
Swellburg Neighborhood Association
159 Caroline St.
Rochester, NY 14605
Attn: Fees and Assessments

We accept checks, money orders, Mastercard, Visa and American Express. Wire transfers and cash are not accepted.

Our Mission Statement
SWAC strives to make the South Wedge, encourages a full range of housing opportunities, to provide a diverse, historically significant, and commercially viable urban village.

Ad Deadline for Next Issue
February 22!
Gina Wells said with a laugh, “He made me see that it was a pretty big deal.” The Rochester native is the new young adult and children’s librarian at the Highland Branch. She started October 22.

A graduate of Empire State College and the University of Buffalo, Gina is a certified teaching librarian and library media specialist. She now lives in Irondequoit.

She’s enjoying the people she meets. “This is a great community,” says Gina. “Everyone is so welcoming. The kids are great. They ‘let me in’ rather easily. They have so much to share, and they’re not afraid to do so.” They’re wonderful.

She often takes materials home to check them out with her kids. “I have three boys of my own, 15, 12, and 7. They help me identify with the population. They’re a really good source for what’s popular.”

Currently what’s cool is ‘Manga’, or Japanese graphic novels. “My 12-year-old loves ‘Manga’. My older son isn’t too keen on sharing, and they’re not afraid to miss.”

Tyson International Foods, 435 South Ave. near Comfort Street. Mon.-Sat. 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Closed Sun.

When Michel Tyson and her partner, Natasha Chatmon, wanted to open a business, they had two main criteria: it had to be needed and affordable. Noticing a lack of grocery stores in the area, they decided on food.

Tyson International Foods opened December 6. It offers subs, salads, and pastas, with homemade soups and chili every day. The store offers grocery items and deli meats as well as food-to-go. One popular item is the pizza logo, about the size of an eggoplant, filled with mozzarella and pepperoni.

Michel values how the menu is evolving, how she encourages customers to ask if they want something they don’t see on the menu. “We try to customize (our product) for the customer’s needs,” she says.

Two new items added recently are the Crispy Chicken Club, a BLT club made with breaded chicken; and the Buffalo Chicken Wraps, made with boneless chicken and Buffalo-style wing sauce.

Both owners are Rochester natives. Michel started in the military, worked in retail for a while, then managed food services for Park Hope Nursing Home and Canisius College.

Natasha’s career in food service includes work at Hewlett Packard and at B&I delicatessen. “I’ve always loved the South Wedge,” says Michel. “The people are very friendly and very welcoming.”

They give us a lot of support,” agrees Natasha. “We get a lot of attention from other businesses on the avenue.”

As their ad states, “Big changes include on the horizon.” River Park Commons is getting ready for a major renovation and rebuilding, and Cindy Smith said they can’t wait to see it happen. “We’re starting to do really good things around here,” said Cindy, who took over as apartment manager in August. “We’re excited.”

The plans call for the apartments to be completely updated, with new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, and carpeting. Rehab could start as early as this spring. The new office is to be located in front of the building. “I just think it will be so much better,” said Cindy.

Another renovation will be a new camera system. “We’re trying to keep it a drug-free place for people,” Cindy affirmed. “It’s for the safety of our tenants.”

The tenants have been pretty happy with what we’ve been able to do so far. “Our tenants have been pretty happy with what we’ve been able to do so far,” said Alex.

Abu-mohammad says he enjoys the South Wedge. “That’s what you’ve got to do!”’ Gina said good-bye to his wife and children to come back to Rochester and work the family business. He took over from brother Alex as manager of the 999 Market in May.

“I’ve always loved the South Wedge,” says Abu-Mohammad. “Not a lot of work was being done.”

The 999 Market, at the corner of Gregory and South Clinton, is a miniature supermarket that sells many kinds of clothing—blue jeans, slacks, sweaters, and jackets, including camouflage jackets. Hot foods include breaded chicken, beef patties in biscuit crust, hot and cold subs, and pizza whole or sliced. The market also sells cold cuts by the pound, as well as fruit drinks, soda, sports drinks, and beer.

Staple grocery items are also available like oil, sugar, cereal, and six kinds of rice, necessities like toilet tissue and toothpaste, hair extensions and hair care products.

The new manager has ambitious plans for the store. He would like to remodel and open up some windows facing Gregory Street.

In Yemen, Abu-Mohammad attended school up to seventh grade. He started in the military, attended Jef- ferson School without Walls. She started in the medical field, then switched to property management. She joined Confer in September 2005.

With her previous experience in marketing Confer properties in Rochester and graduated from School without Walls. She started in the medical field, then switched to property management. She joined Confer in September 2005.

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Southeast Rochester Health and Safety Fair

Saturday June 14, 2008
Noon-4 pm
777 S. Clinton Avenue
in the parking lot

Featuring: local health and safety resources, community agencies, demonstrations, and children's activities.

Sponsored by:
Highland Family Medicine
Highland Hospital
Southeast Area Coalition
South Wedge Planning Committee
South Clinton Merchant's Association

Entertainment by
Kate Lee with No Strings Attached

By Allison Creak

Calling All Local Artists for Public Video Artwork

The Business Association of the South Wedge Area (BASWA) plans to commission sculptural artwork that will be placed over defunct parking meters along South Ave in the South Wedge neighborhood. BASWA was awarded a grant through the Arts Council to commission the sidewalk art project. These sculptures must also double as bicycle racks.

Some great designs have been submitted, but BASWA would like a few more. Tell artist friends to go to www.baswa.org to learn about this call for public art. The project deadline has been extended to February 15.

South Wedge History Club

Mike Keene will give a free viewing of "Visions: True stories of Spiritualism, Secret Societies and Murder," at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4 at the Highland Branch Library, 971 South Ave. This award-winning video documents the 19th-century stories of the Fox sisters, the disappearance of Capt. William Morgan and the shocking murder of William Lyman. The South Wedge History Club is free and open to the public. For information about the video, contact 1-800-648-8909. Contact Gale Lynch at 454-3295 for more information on this event, email roseokeefe.com or call 244-4558.

South Wedge Neighbors Council

The South Wedge Neighbors Council is a group of South Wedge residents committed to improving neighborhood safety and quality of life. On the first Wednesday of each month the Council meets to organize neighborhood activities and work to make the South Wedge a great place to live. It is a terrific way to get involved. The February Neighbors Council will meet February 6 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Equal Grounds Coffee on South Ave. and March 5 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Tap and Mallet Pub on 381 Gregory St. For more information, contact Gale Lynch at 454-3295.

Hickory NUTS Initiate a "Meet & Greet" for Hickory St. Landlords

Members of Hickory NUTS are inviting Hickory Street landlords who do not live in their properties to meet with permanent residents to discover ways to invest in and improve the neighborhood. The Meet & Greet will be held in the home of Jayne Morgan and Gary Loitsch at 25 Hickory St. on March 26 at 6 p.m. Investors will meet Hickory Street residents and learn about the progress being made on several local development projects, learn about BASWA and SWPC and enjoy a meal catered by local restaurants. Members of the Hickory NUTS plan on organizing a second "Meet and Greet" for all those investors who were unable to attend this first gathering. Call 461-4795, so that you can be a part of this positive event.

Free Mammogram Screenings

Highland Breast Imaging and Women’s Health Partnership offer free mammograms to women 40 or older who have little or no health insurance at the Breast Imaging Center of 500 Red Creek Dr., Suite 101.

The annual Valentines Screening Day will be held on Saturday, February 14 from 8 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Free parking and refreshments. Also enjoy a free 10-minute Reiki or chair massage session after your mammogram.

Call 461-3000 to make an appointment. Women who cannot make the screening day can be scheduled for a different day.

Foundation Invites Grant Applications

The Marie C. & Joseph C. Wilson Foundation announced local funding availability through their Rochester Small Grants program. Qualified 501(c)(3) organizations may apply for grants in the range of $1K to $25K throughout 2008. The grants are given to effective organizations that can impact positive change in the community.

Requests for capital projects also will not be considered. For more information and an on-line application form, go to the Foundation’s web site at www.mcjcwilsonfoundation.org or call 461-4696.

Jayne Morgan contributed to the column.

Tapping into Extra Income

continued from page 1

you! The money from a HECM can be taken as a lump sum, monthly payments, and/or used like a line of credit. You can use the money for home improvements, supplement your pension, buy a car and so on.

As an owner-occupant, you do not have to pay back a HECM if you no longer live there. The amount owed will depend on the size of the original HECM and how much of it you used. The FHA insures HECMs so that owners are not held liable if housing prices fall, or if total monthly payments exceed the original amount of the HECM.

Some of the requirements to get a HECM include:

• You and any other owner(s) must be at least age 62.
• The home must be a one- to four-family house or condominium.
• You must meet with a HUD-approved counselor to review and discuss the HECM.
• You must pay certain fees and closing costs when the HECM is set up.

As Edith Link noted in her June 1, 2007 article in the Democrat and Chronicle, HECMs "can be a lifesaver for financially strapped seniors who want to remain in their homes." But she also cautioned readers to seek unbiased infromation from reliable sources.

mailing that many seniors received, entitled 2007 Senior Benefit Update, does not fall in that category. Nor do television infomercials about HECMs. If you want to learn more about Home Equity Conversion Mortgage discuss the HECM.

For an appointment call
279-4889

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197 South Avenue New York, NY 14607

by Allison Creak

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Tapping Into Extra Income
Lin's Garden on Mount Hope Offers Something for Everyone

Chinese Restaurant Now Offers Sushi Too

Story & photo by Mike Fleche

In today’s busy times, who can exist without Chinese take-out? Apparently not the customers of Lin’s Garden, who have pursued their favorite restaurant across the city to its new home in the South Wedge.

Vincent Lin opened his first restaurant on East Main Street in 2001. But he had his eye on a new spot, at the corner of Mount Hope and Gregory, a good location with better parking. He moved to 420 Mount Hope in February 2006.

The building, a former Kentucky Fried Chicken store that had been closed for years, was remodeled with the help of the City’s Department of Economic Development. A grand opening and ribbon-cutting with Mayor Duffy was held September 20, 2006.

Vincent’s customers followed him. Some, regulars for the past seven years, have become friends. “We always keep customers,” he says. “They tell family and friends; [they] bring more customers.”

A customer chimes in, “Freshest food I’ve had!” Throughout my visit, customers who popped in for their orders were eager to praise the food.

Vincent Lin was born in Fuchow, south China. He learned to cook traditional Chinese specialties while working at restaurants there. He arrived in New York City at age 20, and worked in “quality restaurants” for two or three years, adapting his craft for a more American taste. He also got experience in catering.

The menu he designed for Lin’s Garden is based on dishes he made in New York City, “the most popular items asked for by customers,” he says. Liu’s uses only vegetable oil in cooking, with no MSG.

Sushi was added to the menu six months ago. “This area has a lot of students,” Vincent says. “Young people like sushi.”

House specialties include Singapore Rice Noodles, a combination of shrimp, pork, vegetables and egg in a spicy curry sauce; and Amazing Chicken, a dish of chicken and vegetables with a sweet and spicy sauce; it has a “fancy taste,” Vincent says.

He says customers rave about his spicy sauce: “Very good spicy seasoning. Due to cold weather, a lot of people like [hot and] spicy seasoning.”

He hastens to add that Lin’s will make mild dishes too. “We flavor to the customer’s taste,” says Vincent. A menu of 25 lunch specials is available from 11-3 p.m., including Sesame Chicken, General Tso’s Chicken (a hot and spicy selection), and Shrimp with Lobster Sauce.

Lin’s has a lot of vegetarian customers. “We have so many choices!” Among them are steamed vegetarian dumplings; bean curd home style (fried tofu with mixed vegetables); and sauteed string bean, zucchini, and broccoli in garlic sauce. “All fresh vegetables,” Vincent adds.

Vincent says he’s grateful for the customers who have helped him prosper. “We thank you, all our customers, for your business,” he said. “We’ve been here seven years already. We welcome new and old customers to our store.”

Lin’s Garden, 420 Mount Hope Ave. at Gregory Street. Phone numbers: 232-8320, 464-8888. Fax: 232-8324. Hours: mon.-thurs. 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun. noon-10:30 p.m.
St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center:

St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center (SJNC) was established in 1993 as a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester to provide comprehensive health care, counseling, advocacy, literacy and GED. “The logo above the words, two figures standing close enough to create a heart, aptly describes its mission-to treat every person looking for help with respect and love.”

SJNC began planning a health center in 1990, and when a small house opposite St. Joseph House of Hospitality became available in 1991, the Sisters sprang into action. Over the course of two years, the Sisters, their families, and local volunteers rehabbed the house. When it opened, the first floor was clinic space and the second floor housed two of the sisters.

“Some 750 people came through the doors in its first year of operation. A staff of one full-time and one part-time was aided by only 24 volunteers. By 2007, the number of clients served reached 18,300 (3,500 individuals) served by 17 staff members and 200 volunteers.”

Today the Center now helps the working poor from “every zip code in Monroe, Livingston, Wayne, Ontario and Genesee counties,” said Director Christine Wagner, SSJ. “Being uninsured cuts across the county. Some 65%-75% [of the patients] are working uninsured. They’ve fallen into the chasm between affordability of private health care and the eligibility for public health care like Medicare and Medicaid.”

Because the Center receives no government funds, it depends on the kindness of strangers and friends. Currently over 50 health care professional and 25 counselors and social workers volunteer to treat patients. The Center’s largest support in recent years has come from the Daisy Marquis Foundation. An annual fundraiser is also held (see box at right) to help offset the cost of a lengthening list of needs.

“The people who come for services are in different spots,” said Wagner. “They’re living in a culture of poverty or close to poverty. It’s not just high cholesterol or filminess, stress or depression or other physical problems. Folks come in, and we look at their life in a holistic way. They don’t just leave with a pill, but with a plan of action for lives.”

The services provided may be housed in a small-scale operation—the Center now operates out of two houses joined by a central arch—hut it is broad in missions. They list of services include:

- Medical (except emergency)
- Mental health counseling
- Mental health counseling
- Family and friends helped the Sisters of St. Joseph to rehab the house (CLTNC - Photo courtesy of the SJNC)
- The two houses now connect with a walkway. (Photo courtesy of the SJNC)
In almost a decade of working as a Center counselor, Michael Boucher’s learned a great deal about the societal factors that contribute to his clients’ difficulties. “The complexity of people’s lives… the socially it’s like poverty, unemployment, racism, social inequality, homelessness, bankruptcy, bad credit, street violence, the ‘political’ impact on the mental health,” said Boucher, who provides much more than talk therapy. Often he provides a link to “mental assistance, transportation, a bus pass, Consumer Credit Counseling, free tax preparation.”

“I certainly have been changed tremendously by my work here,“ said Boucher. “I have a greater appreciation of what people are up against and the need for help.” In recognizing how many people have been “marginalized,” he still maintains he will eventually change. “As Martin Luther King said, the arc of the universe bends towards justice.”

Boucher completed undergraduate studies at Fairfield University in New Hampshire and earned a graduate degree in Social Work and Pastoral Ministry at Boston College. When he’s not doing service at the Center, he works at home raising his 12½-year-old twins, John and Kateri, while wife Lynne works as Director at the Center for Spirituality at Nazareth College.

Christine Wagner, S.S.J.
Executive Director

Christine Wagner wasn’t exactly sure what she wanted to do in life after graduating from Nazareth Academy. She studied at MCC and Brockport where she earned a B.A. in English. After a series of “get through jobs” she discovered a desire “to lead a life of mission,” and she joined the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1975.

In the eight years it takes to become a nun, Wagner taught baking and cooking at the School of the Holy Childhood, in New York City. In 1983, she became the project coordinator for the Center’s rehab.

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An Oasis of Care in the South Wedge

Michael Boucher, SNU, social worker

Deb Swift, Director of Operations

Deb Swift lives a life of commitment to community service. A native of Oneonta, N.Y., she came to Rochester in 1987 to study at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, she served as minister of music (she’s proficient in voice, piano, organ and guitar) and parish associate at Calvary St. Andrews Church. Swift was appointed as Associate Director at the South West Planning Committee (SWPC) and later at the Southern Area Coalition (SEAC) before joining the Center 2½ years ago.

“Some ministers are called to a parish. I was led by God to work in creating community, nurturing community,” said Swift. “I love my job,” said Swift. “It’s my ministry to oversee the 200 volunteers, the programs and the building. Every aspect of day-to-day operations is my responsibility. I fill in at the front desk. I throw on my jeans and shovel snow.”

Most important is her contact with the clients whose needs are many. Sometimes Swift is asked to respond in spiritual ways as a chaplain. “We don’t push religion,” said Swift. “Some patients are comfortable talking to sisters or social workers. All bases are covered. We have Jewish volunteers and Muslims and Catholics.”

“Each person who comes through the door is treated with dignity and respect. They know they are loved. We create a sense of safety,” Swift added.

The Center’s place in the South Wedge is important to Swift. “It’s important to have St. Joe’s here in the Wedge. So many people are in need. They’re not homeless; 65% are employed. They’re just like you and me. It’s important we minister to them right here’s

Lee Cocco, Marriage and Family Mental Health Worker

Buffalo native Lee Cocco came to social work after a first career in marketing and communications. After graduating from Syracuse University, she worked as a reporter in the Catskills before moving to Manhattan in search of a “more lucrative” job in corporate communications. Next, she moved upstate to take a marketing job at Nazareth College Art Center. After 12 years, she felt a calling to move from public to personal connections. “I felt a calling to move from public to personal connections. If I could make a difference,“ said Cocco.

While studying for her Masters in Mental Health and Counseling at St. John Fisher College, Cocco started as an intern at St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center. Soon she was asked to become the Program Coordinator, head of a pioneering program, ‘Women on the Move.’ The free program helps women, ages 30-50, to build a better life for themselves and their families in a variety of ways.

“These is goals to move women on to economic self-sufficiency,” said Cocco.

“One of our goals is to move women on to economic self-sufficiency,” said Cocco. “They are working two to three jobs, often paying below the poverty level.”

Cocco meets with 16 women one-on-one at least twice a month to discuss “concrete, measurable goals” such as moving from part-time to full-time employment, buying a new car or going back to school. She also joins them in special workshops on such topics as time management and budgeting. “The program offers much more than career counseling,” said Cocco.

“There’s a difference in the way (clients are treated),” said Cocco. “They feel listened to and respected. It makes me feel great to work in a place with that kind of spirit and commitment. People want to be there.”

Lee Cocco photo by Mike Fleche.

Facts about the Center

Address:
417 South Avenue

Telephone number:
325-5260

Executive Director:
Christine Wagner

Hours:
Mon., Wed., Fri., 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Tues., Thurs., 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Fees:
$5.00 donation or in-kind services; special arrangements in advance for lab work; Medicare accepted.

Eligibility requirements:
Primary health care services (physical exams; mental health assessments; blood pressure checks; laboratory tests; prescriptions; immunizations; chiropractic care; podiatry, massage therapy; dental). Counseling and spirituality (personal and family; crisis; drug and alcohol evaluations and referrals for treatment). Advocacy services (food, clothing and shelter; Social Services issues).

Fees:

Accessibility:
On bus route; level entrance; elevator with controls accessible to wheelchair user and with raised letter or Braille markings; handicapped accessible restroom.

St. Joseph Neighrborhood Center Wish List

Everyday supplies, office furniture & equipment (paper shredder, bookcases and gently-used books for children and adults, bus passes, grocery gift cards, personal-size shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, and disposable razors. Also, brown lunch bags, toilet paper, storage bags. Items may be dropped off at St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center, 417 South Ave.

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PEACE

125 Caroline St. (corner of Mt. Vernon)
585-244-9206

Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages: 9 a.m.

Fellowship Dinners: Third Saturday of each month at 6 p.m.
Open to the community. All you can eat. Call 247-5699 to reserve a place.

Now Handicapped Accessible!
Mise En Place--New European-Style Market to Open on South Avenue

By Nancy O'Donnell

Kenneth “Casey” Holenbeck found just the right place in the Wedge for his new Euro-style grocery/deli. Mise En Place, in the former Green Grocers site at South and Gregory, opened February 1.

Mise en place (pronounced me-zahn-plahs), is a French phrase that literally means “set in place” or as the Culinary Institute of America translates it, “everything in place.”

Holenbeck plans to carry a wide range of foods in place when the shop opens. Along with the usual deli meats, macaroni salads, soups (vegetarian and carnivore) and sandwiches, the shop will feature a salad special of the week, homemade sausages, and “a nice arrangement of fresh fish that I’ll grill or sauté for takeout.” In a cozy side room, shoppers can eat in at a few table and chairs.

“My eventual goal is to have five to ten items on the menu for takeout. I’ll make them fresh and then replenish them throughout lunch,” said Holenbeck. “Fresh and local are important words to the new market owner. I’ll use local growers as much as possible.”

G Groceries basics—eggs, milk and cheese, et al—will be stocked.


Back in the U.S., he worked in Boston restaurant before returning to Rochester. “I bought a double family home on Gregory Street once I moved to the neighborhood. I always tried to hang around in it,” said Holenbeck, who now lives, works and plays in the Wedge with wife Paige and 14-month-old son Reece.

During this time, Holenbeck worked as a cook at 2 Vine, one of the city’s most respected and visited restaurants. “2 Vine was an incredible company and I’m going to miss it a lot. It was a very good experience. I hope I can imitate its quality and style,” he said.

As for his signature style? “I try not to specialize in one way [of cooking],” said Holenbeck. “I had a preference, it would be Italian bistro/fusion cuisine.”

The new Euro market will open in early February with a Grand Opening planned for later in the month.

Mise En Place, 682 South Avenue, 335-4160. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 8 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Graffiti Has Got to Go!

By Brian Pincelli

Graffiti has reached epidemic proportions along South Ave, South Clinton, and Monroe Ave. The City’s graffiti cleanup team called The Decifer Erasers met with more than 20 SWPC neighbors and supporters on January 7th in efforts to remove graffiti from public property. They hit the pavement and cleaned up as much as 20-30 ”tags” that day. To remove graffiti or tagging from private property the team needed a signed release form provided by the City of Rochester from property owners.

More PAC TAC Volunteers needed!

By Robert Latunich

You’ve probably seen a small group, wearing the familiar PAC TAC fluorescent vests, walking the streets helping to keep our neighborhood safe. The Rochester Police Department is looking for additional volunteers to participate in PAC TAC (Police and Citizens Together Against Crime). PAC TAC group is a wonderful program that helps you to get to know your neighbors and your neighborhood. While crime cannot continue to thrive in urban environments, even with more police involvement, PAC TAC becomes even more important.

On the third Thursday of every month, SWPC’s Neighbors Council sponsors a community PAC TAC two-hour walk (6:00 – 8:00 p.m.) in and around the South Wedge neighborhood. The goal is to get to know neighbors while walking through our neighborhood with a Rochester Police Department Crime Prevention Officer (CPO). In addition, these walks help increase the visibility of PAC TAC and send a message that South Wedge residents are actively engaged in fighting crime in our neighborhood. You don’t have to be trained to go on these walks, just have an interest in getting to know your neighbors and your neighborhood.

If you decide to walk with a buddy at times other than the monthly walk, you will need PAC TAC training given by the Police Department as well as a background check. The training will include what you should look for and do in certain situations, and how to use the police radio. Call 428-7496 to sign up and get an application or stop by the NET Office. To find out if you or a family member are eligible for the red Cross/rG&e Senior Citizen energy Assistance Program can help neighborhood seniors who are faced with these kinds of important heating needs. The grants are one time only per heating season, and the maximum amount available per household is $200.

In order to qualify, you must be 60 years of age or older and live in the area served by rG&e. You don’t have to be a rG&e customer. There are also income limits that you must meet. You are not eligible if you already received (or qualify for) a Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) grant this winter.

If you decide to walk with a buddy at times other than the monthly walk, you will need PAC TAC training given by the Police Department as well as a background check. The training will include what you should look for and do in certain situations, and how to use the police radio. Call 428-7496 to sign up and get an application or stop by the NET Office. To find out if you or a family member are eligible for the Red Cross/RG&E Senior Citizen Energy Assistance Program, or want more information, call 428-7496 or visit the website at www.cityofrochester.gov/publicsafety/police/index.cfm?id=790.
Learn the Ropes

“Tool Tips”
By Ed Meyers,
SWPC Tool Librarian

Rope has a rich and long history. After early cave men learned to use stone tools, the next great discovery may have been lashing a piece of rope onto a wooden stick to make a stone axe or club. In spite of this very long history, the first book on knots wasn’t written until 1847 by a German man named Listing.

NATURAL FIBER ROPES and TWINES

Before the age of synthetic experimentation, natural hard fiber was used to make ropes.

MANILA ROPE—Considered one of the best ropes made, it is woven from a natural hard fiber called abaca and taken from a species of banana plant grown in the Philippines. This rope is still used for a good deal aboard ship and on shore. Synthetics have caused some decline in use.

SISAL--A whitish hard fiber from a natural hard fiber plant grown in India. It is one of the best ropes made, it is strong and has many industrial uses. It is made from a plant called agave.

COIR--A light weight, resilient rope made from the outer husks of coconuts. It is often woven into Manila and other rope lines to make them springy.

COTTON—Ropes and cords created from this material have certain disadvantages but still remain popular. Such a rope is not very strong, and is often braided instead of twisted which does not allow them to be spliced. Cotton rope is popular because it’s easy to handle, runs smooth over a pulley, and is less expensive than any other rope.

HEMP—This one is costly to manufacture because its price is compared to synthetics. JUTE—Jute rope and twine is not very strong but remains popular because it is soft and has many industrial uses. It is made from a plant called jute.

How to choose a good rope.

Strength and stress are important factors. It is wise to choose a rope five times stronger than the load it must support. This safety factor may seem excessive, but it is accepted by users and industry as a standard.

What you plan to use the rope for is also an important consideration. There are many hundreds of different knots/lashings, and almost as many variations. Visit the public library for information on knots and lashing applications and learn a valuable fun skill applied in daily life.

Go Green, Save Money with Solar Energy

By Brian Pincelli

What major improvement can you make to your home that will, without fail, pay for itself in 10-15 years? Updated kitchen cabinets and countertops? Probably not. New window? Not likely. How about a solar power system? Absolutely. Installing either a solar-electric or photovoltaic (PV) system, which capture light energy from the sun and convert it into energy for your home, will pay for itself—and then some, in as little as four years.

If a homeowner is interested in solar-electric panels, a lot of help is available. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) will pay, upfront, about 50% of the cost of a solar system. NY State offers a tax credit up to $5,000, and the federal government offers a tax credit of up to $2,000. You can also borrow money to pay for the other half. NYSDERA will buy down the interest rate by four percent! Net-metering allows you to sell back any excess electricity you produce at retail value, and solar systems are likely to increase the resale value of your home.

Some might say that the cost of these systems does not make economic sense when compared to investing in, say, a government bond, but government bonds don’t reduce the amount of green house gases and carbon monoxide in the atmosphere.

Don’t want those solar panels on your roof? Try using photovoltaic shingles, which serve as conventional shingles for weather protection while generating clean solar electricity for commercial and residential buildings. Companies like Uni-solar and OKSolar offer shingles that look like ordinary shingles and are as easy to install, but which turn your roof into a source of solar power.

Big construction companies in California like Lennar are now partnering with SunPower to offer new homes that have solar-power systems installed as a standard option, something that would be a real plus for you.

Solar roof-tile technology makes solar energy an affordable solution to reduce electricity costs.

Is it MY SPACE or UTube or South Wedge Community Space?

Visit www.SouthWedge.org and see how South Wedge people can interact with each other in the virtual world. The network is an instrument for connecting and empowering neighbors through open communication. It is yet to build community in the South Wedge.

Chat with neighbors, post pictures, upload videos, and communicate with people! You can ask questions and answer questions or get discussion going.

Look for apartments or offer apartments. The possibilities are limitless.

SWPC Board member Ben Munson launched the website to bring residents, businesses and community leaders together to form “a more cohesive community” and have a lot of fun too.”

So sign up and help to build community!
rev. Judy lee Hay

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to the historic averill avenue CSA
Parish as assistant pastor in 1973.
After seven years, she became the
first woman in the US to be named
a Senior Pastor of a Presbyterian
church.

It wasn’t long before rev. Hay
became involved in the larger
community. She was co-founder
and fIrst Executive Director of the
South Wedge Planning Committee.
She worked with the neighborhood
to address problems such as sub-
standard housing, the exodus of
businesses from the area, and the
general deterioration of the South
Wedge.

Her activism in the community
and her outstanding ability to net-
work continues today. With other
supportive churches, she sends
youth groups and work teams to
help refurbish homes, gardens,
and yards for those in need. rev.
Hay has also been known to pitch
in with a rake or paint brush dur-
ing these projects. Her devotion
to the health of the South Wedge
makes her a beloved figure in the
community.

rev. Hay has been instrumental
in developing, supporting, and pro-
moting outreach programs, such as
a busy food cupboard, a preschool
and family center, stewardship
maintaining a neighborhood park,
the Heifer Project, the Dominican
Republic Health Project. In part-
nership with the city government,
she helps to maintain the cleanli-
ness of the neighborhood streets.

rev. Hay uses every opportu-
nity to help the congregation to be
accepting of everyone, regardless
of age, race, gender, sexual ori-
tection, or economic status. Her
inclusive call, “Wherever you are
on your spiritual journey, you are
welcome at the table of the Lord,”
addresses her continued teaching
of what being a Christian should
mean to us.

rev. Hay is often asked to men-
tor seminarians as part of their
educational preparation. In her
years as pastor, she has taught doz-
enes of prospective ministers.

In addition, to working on
countless Presbytery boards, rev.
Hay has served the Presbyterian
Church of the USA as commis-
sioner to the General Assembly and
field staff for the office of Congrega-
tional Transformation for Church
Growth and Ministry Support. She
speaks at national, regional,
and local conferences, sharing her
knowledge about urban ministry
and church transformation.

Rev. Judy Lee Hay

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Shoring Up Schuler House; The Graffiti Issue

The constant warm and cold weather trends of the past few winters have taken its toll on Schuler House at 224 Mt. Hope Avenue, home of the South Wedge Planning Committee. On December 28, 2007 the corbelling on the northwest side of the building buckled and gave way. We secured the area and needed to remove weakened bricks for safety reasons. We removed an area of brick almost 20 feet by 4 feet. The long-term repairs will be costly. Right now we are working on getting estimates and figuring out how we will be able to pay for them. Any suggestions?

At the same time our 15-year-old copier died and is beyond repair. We are actively looking for a replacement. Graffiti has become a major issue in the Wedge. The problem has escalated and is part of a citywide increase. Those who “do graffiti” fall into a few broad categories – gang related, artistic and “taggers.” The majority of graffiti observed in the Wedge has been done by “taggers.” The individuals doing this destruction need to be identified, arrested and prosecuted. If you see someone defacing property, you should record a description, note if he/she gets in a car (and license number), call 911 and take a picture with your cell phone.

Research shows that if graffiti is removed quickly it discourages people from engaging in the destruction. SWPC is organizing volunteers to remove public graffiti and help with other graffiti. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me at 256-1740 Ext 102.

The Wedge Newspaper will be printing full-color ads and photos in our April issue. Call now to save space!

The Wedge first appeared in 1982, and now prints 7000 copies per issue and is mailed to every household in the South Wedge and distributed to over 100 retail drop points in the Greater Rochester area. In addition, the Wedge is available online at www.swpc.org.

The Wedge is dedicated to fulfilling SWPC’s mission to “build community in the South Wedge, encourage a full range of housing opportunities, and promote a diverse, historically significant and commercially viable urban village.”

The Wedge is published six issues a year: February/March, April/May, June/July, October/November and December/January.

Ad Sizes  B&W  Color
Full Page (9.5” x 15”)  $765  $1025
1/2 Page (9.5” x 7.5”)  $382  $512
1/4 Page (4.75” x 7.5” or 9.5” x 3.75”)  $192  $257
1/8 Page (4” x 2.75”)  $ 99  N/A
1/16 Page (business card size):  $ 36  N/A

Receive 20% off with a full year contract!

Send your completed ad via e-mail to mfleche@swpc.org in .jpg or .pdf format.

*Design fee: Ads already designed, sent in the above formats and sized to exact dimensions do not incur additional charges. To create or resize ads, a design fee will be charged. Fee is a one-time charge (unless ad is redesigned), and will depend upon size of ad, use of graphics, etc. The Wedge employs a professional designer to create advertising.

If you want us to design your ad, please notify us as soon as possible. Call Mike at 256-1740 ext. 5, or write to mfleche@swpc.org.

Deadlines for next issue: New orders: Feb. 22 | Completed artwork: March 3