

HNA REPORTER

HELDERBERG NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

ACADEMY STATION, P.O. BOX 8841, ALBANY, NY 12208

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Next HNA Membership Meeting:

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2007

7:00-9:00 pm

Sage Colleges, Campus Center, Room 224

**Guest speaker: Marsha Penrose,
Executive Director, The Next Step**

School 19 Closes and Renovations Begin

In June, students and their families, teachers and other staff bid a temporary farewell to School 19. Students will be relocated for the 2007-08 and half of the 2008-09 school years while the building undergoes extensive renovations as part of the original 2001 voter approved facilities plan. School 19 will become a three-deep school and be expanded to include a cafeteria and gym.

For the 2007-08 school year, students in grades 1-5 will attend the former Montessori Magnet School at 75 Park Ave. Students in grade 6 will attend one of the district's middle schools. Kindergarten classes will be located at Eagle Point Elementary School, 1044 Western Ave.

For the 2008-09 school year students in Kindergarten and grades 2-5 will attend school at the former Montessori Magnet School. Students who entered kindergarten at Eagle Point in 2007-08 will continue at that same location for first grade in the Fall of 2008 to limit the number of transitions from building to building these younger students must make. Students who are in 6th grade will move on to middle school in September 2008.

School 19 will be unified as a K-5 school in January, 2009 in its newly renovated building at 369 New Scotland Ave.

There will be an improved traffic flow with school buses entering Maplewood and exiting Glenwood through the courtyard in the rear, thus eliminating any buses in front of school. The cut out in the front could then be used by parents picking up their students.

Please visit the school district website at www.albanyschools.org for more information about the comprehensive facilities project.

Cathy Fahey

The annual **National Night Out** will be held this year on Tuesday, August 7. Urge your neighbors to "Take a Bite Out of Crime" by holding a block party, ice cream social, or some other event to bring everyone together. Call the Albany Police Community Services Unit, 447-8763, to learn more, and to register your event.

The Helderberg Neighborhood Association meets on the third Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September and November. Meetings are held from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Junior College of Albany, Campus Center. Remaining 2007 dates: 9/19 (Picnic), 11/21.

HNA Reporter is published every other month. Deadlines for articles or ads are : 8/27; and 11/1. Ads and articles may be mailed to HNA, Academy Station. P.O. Box 8841, Albany, NY 12208 or e-mailed to hna@hnaalbany.com.. HNA Editors reserve the right to accept, reject or edit articles for content and space considerations.

A portion of the printing of this newsletter has been provided as a public service by David Phaff, Associate Broker at RealtyUSA.

DEAR NEIGHBORS:

School is out, the gardens are in, and the picnic/pool/BBQ season is well under way. The weather has been good and hopefully you are all making the most of it.

The only thing that doesn't seem to change with the seasons is the furious pace of activity in our neighborhood. The Library branch at School 19 has closed (though many fond memories remain), the plans for the new branch library and the rehabilitation of School 19 are underway, new businesses are preparing to offer their wares along the commercial corridor, and our existing businesses are enjoying the benefits of the season.

While the urge to remain home, relax in our yards, or go on a day trip rather than attend this month's meeting might be powerful, there are some important issues that would benefit by your attendance and input. Our speaker this month is the Executive Director of an organization called "The Next Step." It is a treatment program for women recovering from alcohol addiction and has an excellent record of success at helping their clients re-integrate into regular day-to-day life. They are seeking to purchase the home on the corner of Cardinal and New Scotland Ave. (formerly a dentist office, then SuzyYoga Studio) and develop it as a residential facility for 14 clients. This proposal has been the source of some controversy and in the interest of open communication, I invited their Director to come and speak with our organization. While we all have our views and are entitled to them, I would ask that you come to the meeting with an open mind. Ultimately, it is you, the membership, who will decide what stance, if any, our group should take on the proposal so let's make our decision an informed one.

Craig Waltz, Chair

New Law Regarding Hazardous Garbage on Private Property

On May 21, 2007, the Common Council expanded the ability of the Dept. of General Services to deal with garbage on private property identified as a health or safety risk to the general public. Under new standards, DGS will have the authority to assess (by trained supervisors) whether a health or safety violation exists, and, if so, remove the garbage from the private property without the need for a prior notice of violation. Waste materials that would be deemed a health or safety violation include: raw trash, raw meat, feces, deceased animals, hazardous waste materials and excessive trash likely to attract rodents, wildlife, birds or insects.

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Plans for Walgreens on Holland Avenue Move Forward

The plans for constructing a Walgreens drugstore on Holland Avenue on the vacant lot next to McDonalds have begun moving forward again. The developer succeeded in getting a zoning variance allowing him to put up a much larger building than would be permitted under existing zoning. An umbrella group, Citizens for Responsible Zoning (CRZ), brought a suit to revoke the variance, but lost the case. CRZ plans to appeal, but in the meantime, the developer is preparing to break ground.

The city has urged the developer to upgrade the lighting, add ornamental fencing, and scale back the size of the sign to help the building fit into the streetscape. The developer agreed to improve lighting and fencing, and, after much prodding from neighborhood residents, downsized the sign.

Susan VanDeventer

Healthy Neighborhoods Program

Albany County Health Department and Cornell Cooperative Extension are sponsoring the Healthy Neighborhoods Program, targeting homes in Cohoes, Watervliet, and parts of the City of Albany in the following zip codes: 12202, 12206, **12208**, 12209 and 12210. The program provides free educational information on asthma, indoor air quality, lead prevention, tobacco prevention and asthma.

Homes that were built before 1978 may have paint with high levels of lead (called lead-based paint). Lead from paint, chips and dust can pose serious health hazards if not taken care of properly. It has been estimated



that 3.7% of children in Albany County have higher than normal levels of lead in their bodies. Exposure to lead over time can result in learning disabilities, speech delays, kidney damage, hearing loss, anemia, high blood pressure, digestive problems, and harm to a fetus.

Under this program, trained Risk Assessors will come to your home to do an environmental inspection, both inside and outside. Sign up for an inspection, and you will receive free household cleaning products and informational items for your family. Contact Nancy Lerner at Cornell Cooperative Extension at 765-3521 to schedule an appointment.

Debra Schramek

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Two Retire from Albany Police Department

HNA sends its best wishes to Sgt. Fred Aliberti and Officer Kathi Rissberger of the Albany Police Department, both of whom recently retired after 20 years on the force. Both had a regular presence at HNA meetings over the past few years, keeping us informed of quality of life issues and crime statistics for our neighborhood. They will be missed.

Help Wanted

HNA Reporter deliverers are needed for South Main (45 houses), Pinewood (121 houses), Fleetwood (115) or Hackett (28). Commitment is one hour, six times a year. Call 482-2775 ext 2 to volunteer.

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NEIGHBORS IN THE NEWS

HNA Resident Authors Book and Joins Albany Public Library Board

It's been a good run for Dennis Gaffney from Lawnridge Avenue.

First, he was elected as a trustee to the library board, finishing first among 17 candidates. His term starts in July and he will serve for five years. Secondly, he received the 2006 William Meredith Library Advocate of the Year Award by the Upper Hudson Library System. Dennis was honored for the campaign he led with Common Council member Cathy Fahey to educate Albany citizens about the wisdom of a \$29.1 million bond to build five new or renovated branch libraries in the city. The bond passed by a 2-1 majority in February.

Dennis's first priority is to make sure the city gets excellent facilities on-time and on-budget, including the planned new branch on New Scotland Avenue. If you have questions or suggestions about the libraries you can reach him at dgaffney@nycap.rr.com or at 482-9813.

Last but not least, Dennis' first book, *Teachers United, The Rise of New York State United Teachers*, was published by SUNY Press this spring. The book chronicles how New York's teachers, once hopelessly divided and underpaid, organized over the last half-century to lift themselves into the middle class and become a formidable progressive force in education and New York politics. The book is available through [sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu) at the following URL-<http://www.sunypress.edu/details.asp?id=61492>.

Kathy Ray

Bookmobile Schedule for New Scotland Ave.

The New Scotland Library threw a farewell party on June 1, to say goodbye to its loyal neighborhood customers. The new library will move from School 19, which is being renovated, to the open lot next to the firehouse, with a planned opening date in 2010.

Beginning in July, the Albany Public Library will expand hours at both the Pine Hills and Delaware Branch Libraries to minimize the inconvenience of the closing of the New Scotland Branch. Until the new library opens, residents can visit the Bookmobile, which will be parked at 369 New Scotland Ave. (School 19) during the following times in July:

Tuesdays, 10:30am - 12:00 pm
Fridays, 12:30pm - 2:00 pm

Library Holds Workshops

Main Branch: Intro to e-mail—Wed. 7/25/07, 2-3:30 pm. Call 427-4303 to register.

Pine Hills Branch: Skateboarding Program (videos)—Mon. 7/30, 4 pm

Delaware Branch: Delaware Dogs—meet service dogs and ask questions of a professional dog trainer. Tues., 7/31, 5-6 pm

Grove Avenue Resident Publishes Astrology Cookbook

Maija Dambis Collins, a former refugee from Latvia, retired from a long career teaching English, has recently published *Dining by the Stars, An Astrology Cookbook* (Author House, 2007). According to Maija, she was "...one of the few English teachers not planning to write a book upon retirement but to open an astrology consultant service (www.maihelett.homestead.com) - writing snuck up on me!" She started writing about her old homeland and of her adventures in the United States in the 60's. Once she caught the writing bug, she combined her loves of writing and astrology with the culinary arts when she met some renown young chefs vacationing in her old homeland, resulting in *Dining by the Stars*. In the book, each zodiac sign is classified, and recipes featuring the dominant foods and condiments associated with that sign are listed.

Maija donated a copy of her book to the New Scotland Library in gratitude for the technical assistance she received from librarian Melissa Wasilewski. She also donated a copy to HNA to raffle off during the 2007 Spring Spree. Watch for the November Redbook Magazine sweepstakes by Jane Ubell of Celebrity Goodies, Inc. when Maija's book will be one of the goodies for readers.

To learn more about the book or to order it, go to www.diningbythestars.com

New Scotland Mobile Station Now Has Ice Cream



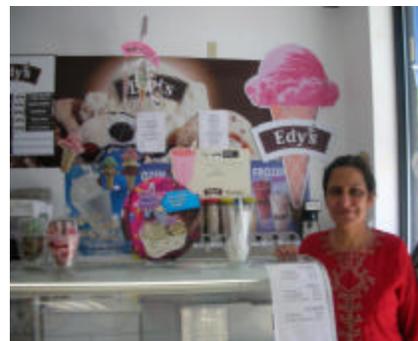
The Mobile Station at 247 New Scotland Avenue now has a new Edy's ice cream shop. Stop by anytime between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., seven days a week. They have cones, shakes, sundaes

and even fat free, no sugar ice cream.

The owner of the Mobile Station, Keyvan, has done a wonderful job renovating the Station and providing a light, airy restaurant for us to enjoy our Subway sandwiches and dessert.

Cyra Nealon

Gurpreet Sidhu, owner-manager of the Subway shop, reminds us that they have \$3.99 specials every day.



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New Businesses Open in Neighborhood

Hilton Garden Inn

Although it actually opened two months ago, the 129 room Hilton Garden Inn at Albany Medical Center held its ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, June 27. Members of the business and local community were invited to tour the facilities and had the opportunity to participate in a silent auction to raise money for a echocardiography machine for the Children’s Hospital. The hotel is connected to the indoor walkway that crosses New Scotland, to allow easy access to the hospital for the families of patients.

The hotel is open to other guests as well, including visitors to the nearby campuses that make up University Heights. Rooms start at \$169 on weekdays, and have such amenities as high-speed internet connections, king-size beds and specially made mattresses. On the first floor is Starbucks, KeyBank and The Recovery Room Sports Bar. There is also a small restaurant, The Great American Grill, on the second floor.

The hotel is located at 62 New Scotland Avenue. For more information go to albanymedicalcenter.stayhgi.com. For reservations call 1-877-STAYHGI.



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MidTown Tap & Tea Room

A new restaurant has opened in the space formerly occupied by Avenue A, which has moved to Delaware Avenue. The MidTown Tap & Tea Room serves appetizers (called Tapas), soup and salads. The salads make a nice, light meal, while the tapas include an intriguing mix of flavorful dishes, including wild mushrooms in a parsley sauce, mussels with chorizo, a cheese board, and many others. The wine list offers something for every palate. Beers include an eclectic selection of micro brews and imported brews. Over 100 herbal and infused teas are available.

The atmosphere at the Tap & Tea Room is relaxed. The restaurant has expanded and now has a second bar on the New Scotland Avenue side of the L-shaped space. A baby grand piano tucked in a corner in the back provides live music.

It’s a great place to relax with friends after work. Owner Nancy Kupec seems to have found a recipe for success.

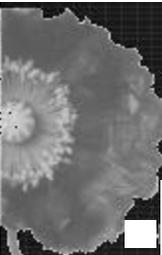
Midtown Tap & Tea Room is located at 289 New Scotland Avenue, 435-0202. Parking is available behind the restaurant, on Avenue A.

Susan VanDeventer



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HNA thanks David Phaff of RealtyUSA for his assistance in financing the cost of the HNA Reporter.

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HNA’s membership year runs January to December. Your dues help support the cost of this newsletter and several free events throughout the year. Time to renew your membership!

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

- Household: \$ 5.00
- Business: \$10.00
- Associate: \$10.00

Each household membership has one vote. Business members will receive one free ad in the HNA Reporter, and will have voting rights. Associate Members (not living within our boundaries) will have the HNA Reporter mailed to them.

Please enroll me as a member of the Helderberg Neighborhood Association. Enclosed is a check, made out to HNA, in the amount of \$_____ for a _____ membership. (Checks may be mailed to: HNA, Academy Station, P.O. Box 8841, Albany, NY 12208 OR brought to the next HNA meeting. Date mailed: _____

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