

HNA REPORTER

HELDERBERG NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

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Next HNA Membership Meeting:

WEDNESDAY, May 16, 2007

7:00-9:00 pm

Sage Colleges, Campus Center, Room 224

Guest speakers:

**Amy Vincent, Prevention Educator,
Albany County Crime Victim and
Sexual Violence Center**

DEAR NEIGHBORS:

May is upon us and summer is fast on its heels. Hopefully, by the time you read this, Spring Spree '07 will have been a fabulous success, Tulipfest will have been rain-free, and the chilly, wet days of early spring will be but a memory.

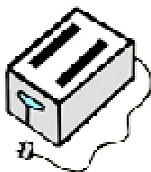
While enjoying warmer weather, please remember the following tips to keep the summer season enjoyable:

- 1) BBQ burgers - not yourselves! Before you fire up the gas grill, check the hoses for wear and leaks that could lead to explosive situations. If using charcoal, make certain that the grill is well back from the house and any overhanging canopy or flammable surface.
- 2) Let in the breeze but keep out the thieves - learn how to pin your windows. The Albany Police Department offers free assessments of your home's security and can supply you with many low-cost ideas to keep it safe.
- 3) Time to get the lawnmower out of the garage—just remember to lock the garage door when you are done. Summer brings out thieves in the night-and sometimes during the day-looking for easy items to steal.

Have a safe Summer! See you at the meeting!

Craig Waltz, Chair

HNA TO HOLD GARAGE SALE JUNE 2



Got items you no longer need? Think they could be treasures to others? Set out your gently used items on June 2, starting any time after 8 am, and sell, sell, sell! HNA member Grace Farrell will place an ad in the Times Union, and will hang posters

on New Scotland at the top of each street. No need to register—just set your table out in front of your house. All money earned is yours to keep.



Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Dates

Residents of Albany can take their hazardous waste to the Rapp Road Landfill from 4:00-7:00 pm on the following dates: 5/17, 6/7, 6/21, 8/2, 9/6, 10/4, 11/1 and 12/6. YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER by calling 1-800-494-CARE. To download the hazardous waste brochure, go to www.albanyny.org/government/departments/d_genserv14.asp.

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood



Tunefolk—Sue and Jim Mead

Trivia Treasure Hunt, face painting, family dancing, police horses, chalk art, the big purple bus, even sunshine—it was all there on New Scotland Avenue for families to enjoy.

Saturday, May 5 was the third annual Spring Spree, sponsored by HNA and supported by our business friends along New Scotland Ave. Mayor Jennings read a proclamation declaring May 5 as Helderberg and New Scotland/Woodlawn Spring Spree Day. Neighbors were treated to free pizza, thanks to Pasquale's and Gallo's, chocolate dipped fruit and Oreos, courtesy of Isn't It Sweet, and flowers from Henry F. Class and New Scotland Florist. Anyone craving something cool to eat received 50 cents off an ice cream cone.

The treasure hunt and raffle drew many participants who stopped to question merchants in search of the trivia quiz, hoping to win one of the many prizes donated by the local businesses, worth over \$600.

Thanks to the many volunteers who helped set up, paint faces, judge contests and staff information tables; to the many businesses that donated gifts and food; to Mayor Jennings and Police Chief Tuffey who kicked off the event; to Kathi Rissburger and the other police officers who provided safety information and brought the horses; to our musicians, Double Progression, TuneFolk, and Amy Biancolli; and to Albany Public Library's Big Purple Bus. And a BIG thanks to Dennis Gaffney for organizing another wonderful Spring Spree!



Mitchell Ringwald greets an Albany Police horse.

Debra Schramek and Susan VanDeventer

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 meeting dates: 7/18, 9/19 (Picnic), 11/21.

HNA Reporter is published every other month. Deadlines for articles or ads are : 6/25; 8/27; and 11/1. Ads and articles may be mailed to HNA, Academy Station, P.O. Box 8841, Albany, NY 12208. 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.

Burglaries Occur Around the Neighborhood

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There has been an increase in burglaries in the area over the past two months, encompassed by Delaware Avenue to Holland Avenue, over to New Scotland Avenue, continuing to Main, then South on S. Main to Whitehall Rd., to include all of the side streets south of Whitehall toward the Thruway. We have seen a few burglaries just outside of this area, too. Most of these burglaries are occurring during the day.

The method of entry includes entering through unlocked doors, damaging windows on doors to gain access to locks, and breaking basement windows. Jewelry and coins appear to be the most common items stolen.

You may see an increased police presence in these neighborhoods, in the form of marked police vehicles, officers on horses, and officers on bikes. There are also detectives and plainclothes officers patrolling in unmarked units. Community Services Officers are also out, advising residents about the burglaries and offering prevention tips. Since this heightened presence, the burglaries have dropped off, but residents still need to exercise some basic burglary prevention tips.

We are urging residents to call the police when they see anyone suspicious in their neighborhoods. It could be someone going door to door selling a product/service or looking for someone at a particular address; or even someone sitting in a parked car, or walking or riding a bike. Trust your instinct - if something doesn't look right, call the police.

Officer Kathi Rissberger

2007 Plant Swap 2007 a Success

Nice people, nice plants. Again! On Saturday, April 28, gardeners brought many old favorites and some of their unusual varieties to swap with their neighbors: several types of iris, hosta and lilies, jacob's ladder, babysbreath, yellow loosestrife, artemisia, phlox, forget-me-nots, a mock-orange tree, astilbe, poppies, lupine, sedum, raspberries, herbs and more. For many of us, these plants originated from friends and family, so swapping them is a way of continuing a tradition of giving. Stories and tips were also exchanged. The new gardeners who joined the group this year got a great start! Thanks to all for their generosity. See you next year.

Wondering Why Some New Scotland Planters Look So Good?

Also on Saturday, April 28, volunteer neighborhood gardeners devoted four hours of their time to place granite cobblestone blocks around each tree planter between Quail and Ontario Streets. Once again these planters have neat, uniform borders. The store owners were thrilled with the result! We were lucky to have Judy Stacey, Albany City Gardener, to affably coordinate the delivery of the materials and to provide us with the knowledgeable help of Bernardo, one of her staff gardeners. Commissioner Bill Bruce made it possible for us to obtain all materials from the city, and Judy will be providing us with annuals to dress up the planters. Thanks to Adam Hagues, Steve Shashok, Susan VanDeventer, Onnolee Smith, Amy Whitman, Chris Ringwald, Cinzia Cera, Carolyn Boldiston and Kathy Ray for their time and efforts.

Kathy Ray

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Highlights from the 2007 Assessment Roll

The recent rise in real estate prices in our area is showing up in the latest city assessment roll. Thanks to our own city council member, Jim Sano, who converted the 7,410-page document the city makes available to residents to a spreadsheet format, it is possible to crunch the numbers and compare values across streets and types of residences. Table 1 shows the average value and square footage for streets running through the Helderberg neighborhood by number of bedrooms. (Keep in mind that some of the data in the table are from houses on parts of those streets that stretch beyond the HNA boundaries.) The data show that the average 3-bedroom home in our area is valued at \$197,000, but values vary quite a bit by street. Generally speaking, values per square foot are lower for bigger houses. Table 2 shows that on the streets running through our neighborhood, single-

family homes tend to have much higher assessed values per square foot than two-family homes.

Keep in mind that higher valuations do not necessarily result in higher taxes. The change in taxes owed depends in part on how your valuation changes with respect to everyone else's. Even if your home appreciates a lot, your taxes could actually decrease if the overall tax levy does not rise much and your home's value is increasing more slowly than the average in the city. On the other hand, if your home's value rises more quickly than most, you will likely see an increase in your tax bills.

If you would like to do your own assessment number crunching, e-mail Jim Sano for a copy of the spreadsheet at: JSano15@aol.com.

Table 1. Average Size and Assessed Value of Houses on Helderberg Neighborhood Streets by Number of Bedrooms (Includes One-, Two-, and Three-Family Residential Properties with Two to Four Total Bedrooms)

Street	2 Bedrooms			3 Bedrooms			4 Bedrooms		
	Avg. Sq. Ft	Avg. Assessed Value	Avg. \$ per Sq. Ft	Avg. Sq. Ft	Avg. Assessed Value	Avg. \$ per Sq. Ft	Avg. Sq. Ft	Avg. Assessed Value	Avg. \$ per Sq. Ft
Academy	1090	\$181,700	\$166	1,620	\$202,291	\$125	1,854	\$227,620	\$123
Cardinal	1,259	\$181,700	\$144	1,499	\$200,315	\$134	1,718	\$209,841	\$122
Fleetwood	1,105	\$177,259	\$160	1,479	\$199,839	\$135	1,684	\$206,427	\$123
Forest	983	\$155,850	\$159	1,264	\$174,324	\$138	1,549	\$174,550	\$113
Glendale	969	\$157,583	\$163	1,445	\$177,207	\$123	1,825	\$190,567	\$104
Grove	1,216	\$126,560	\$104	1,416	\$161,809	\$114	1,939	\$184,175	\$95
Hackett	1,343	\$196,781	\$147	1,575	\$201,748	\$128	1,985	\$223,407	\$113
Harris	1,259	\$179,340	\$142	1,438	\$196,232	\$136	1,786	\$203,195	\$114
Helderberg	1,179	\$169,400	\$144	974	\$155,800	\$160	2,616	\$255,400	\$98
Hollywood	1,153	\$169,667	\$147	1,389	\$193,498	\$139	1,916	\$200,113	\$104
Lawnridge	1,143	\$177,025	\$155	1,440	\$184,329	\$128	1,800	\$202,769	\$113
New Scotland	1,431	\$194,291	\$136	1,681	\$210,898	\$125	2,283	\$263,545	\$115
Pinewood	1,024	\$174,700	\$171	1,497	\$186,706	\$125	1,943	\$199,800	\$103
Prospect Terr	1090	\$181,700	\$166	1,724	\$223,678	\$130	2,363	\$293,440	\$124
Ramsey	1,076	\$171,457	\$159	1,657	\$206,524	\$125	1,764	\$203,433	\$115
S Main	1,587	\$201,773	\$127	1,781	\$233,105	\$131	2,052	\$260,494	\$127
Sycamore	1,270	\$167,360	\$132	1,392	\$186,811	\$134	1,757	\$206,124	\$117
Van Schoick	1,172	\$169,530	\$145	1,517	\$202,124	\$133	1,696	\$208,100	\$123
Overall(Streets Listed)	1,251	\$178,497	\$143	1,531	\$197,390	\$129	1,923	\$223,335	\$116

Note: Excludes a couple of properties with listed assessed values over \$12 million.

Table 2. Average Assessed Value and Size by Number of Units for Residential Properties on Streets Running through the Helderberg Neighborhood (Streets Listed in Table 1)

	Single Family	Two-Family	Three-Family	Overall
Number of Buildings	1,398	256	23	1,677
Avg. Assessed Value	\$202,442	\$211,523	\$224,652	\$204,133
Avg. Sq. Ft. Living Space	1,587	2,447	2,503	1,731
Avg. \$ per Sq. Ft.	\$128	\$86	\$90	\$118

Note: Omits a few properties with assessments over \$12 million.

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Parsons Child and Family Center Hosts 75th annual Lawn Festival



Parsons Child and Family Center Lawn Festival will hold the 75th annual Lawn Festival at the Center on 60 Academy Road on Wednesday June 13, from 6-8 pm. Entrance to the event is free, and booth games, activities, and food are either free or a nominal charge.

This tradition has been going on since 1932 and provides an evening of affordable fun for children and families involved with Parsons, as well as friends and neighbors in the community.

An anticipated 1,200 guests will enjoy festival attractions, including hayrides, miniature golf, petting zoo, carnival games, live music, entertainment, food, and much more. Enjoy family fun right in your neighborhood! If you would like to volunteer for the event, please contact Donna Vancavage at (518) 426-2704.

School Vote Scheduled for May 15

On May 15, voters will decide on the Albany City School District's \$189,535,737 budget, representing a 6.89% tax increase and an 11.57% spending increase. If approved, the 2007-8 budget proposes funding: smaller classes, continued full-day kindergartens and pre-K, after school programs, increased security and continued reconstruction of Hackett Middle School.

In addition to the school budget, voters will also choose four trustees for the Albany Library Board.

Voters in the 7th Ward will vote at the Delaware Community School (formerly School 18) on Bertha Street. Voters in the 9th ward vote at School 10 on New Scotland Ave. Polls are open from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Do You Have Time to Make a Difference?

The Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center will hold an open house on Wednesday, May 30, 5:00-8:00 pm, at 112 State Street, Room 1100. Anyone interested in learning about the services offered to victims of crime, or who would like to inquire about the many volunteer opportunities available, are invited to tour the center, explore crime prevention techniques, and learn how volunteer hotline counselors and court advocates make a difference. Call 447-7100 for information.

Landmark Consulting Restoration Planning and Architectural Services

Landmark Consulting is a husband and wife team which specializes in restoration & architectural services for historic buildings. (This means homes built in the first half of the 20th century, too!) Jack Alvarez is a NYS registered architect, and Kimberly Konrad Alvarez is a historic preservation planner and architectural historian. Together they help owners of old homes research their properties, develop a restoration plan for their home, design renovations or additions, determine appropriate paint schemes, & assist in finding qualified contractors that have the skills for working on old homes.

Landmark Consulting is happy to offer 25% off typical consulting fees for Helderberg Neighborhood residents.

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

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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