

HNA REPORTER

HELDERBERG NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

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8th ANNUAL PICNIC
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007
6:00 pm—Dusk
Rain or Shine

Field next to Firehouse on New Scotland Ave.
Bring lawn chairs and a dish to share

LIBRARY MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 6:00 pm
St. Teresa's Social Center, Hollywood Avenue
Meet the architects and exchange ideas on preliminary library concepts.

DEAR NEIGHBORS:

Summer is done, school is in, the days are getting shorter, the nights a bit cooler, and our annual rite of Autumn, the HNA Neighborhood Picnic is fast upon us. Plans are underway for the event which will again be held next to the firehouse at the site of our future Neighborhood Branch Library. I hope that you will all come out to meet and get to know your neighbors. After all, that is what this event is all about.

This year, the change of seasons is bringing change to some of our younger neighbors—students at School 19 – and our library patrons—who are currently displaced while work commences on the rehabilitation of the school. Our neighbor and Library Board of Trustees member Dennis Gaffney has set up a meeting between Library Representatives, their new architect, and HNA to open a dialogue regarding the design of the new library branch. The meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, October 11, 6:00 pm, at St. Teresa's Social Center on Hollywood Avenue**. It is important that our neighborhood continue to have a large, vocal presence at any discussion of the plans and any proposed modifications to the design supported by HNA over the past two years.

Library representatives will be at the picnic, so come out and let them know how you feel about the proposed branch. See you at the picnic!

Craig Waltz, Chair

8th Annual HNA Picnic to be held September 19

Join us for the 8th annual neighborhood picnic, this year scheduled for Wednesday, September 19 at 6:00 pm. (Rain or shine). We will gather for the last time in the field next to the firehouse on New Scotland Avenue for an evening of food, fun and friendship.

Hot dogs, burgers, pizza and soda will be provided by HNA, with financial support from many of the businesses on New Scotland Avenue. There will be door prizes and a 50-50 raffle. There will also be an opportunity to join or renew your membership in HNA. Stop by the information table as you arrive at the picnic to pick up your raffle ticket and learn more about our neighborhood and our association.

Continued on page 2

NEW SCOTLAND LIBRARY BRANCH

I wanted to share the latest on the plans for our New Scotland library: The Albany library has contracted with an architect to do the design work for the two new building projects, New Scotland and Arbor Hill. The firm that was selected, Kevin Hom and Andrew Goldman Architects (H+G), is a New York City firm with impressive experience designing public buildings, including public libraries around the country.

As requested at the last HNA meeting, the library will host a meeting for New Scotland residents to introduce H+G and to exchange ideas on preliminary library concepts. The meeting will be held at St. Teresa's Social Center on the corner of Hollywood and New Scotland at 6:00 pm on Thursday, October 11. Tim Burke, the Interim Library Director, and Board members will also attend to provide a project update and answer any other questions regarding the project.

I want to reassure you that the basic decisions we negotiated as a neighborhood prior to the referendum have been clearly communicated to H+G. We will still get our own neighborhood library that will be built on the open lot next to the New Scotland fire station and on the adjacent lot, where a house now stands. No more than the agreed upon \$4 million will be spent on the library; it will be no larger than the previously specified 9,450 square feet. The library will still include rooms for community meetings that will be accessible when the library is closed, a young adult room, and expanded children's space.

Library administrators and the Library Board have also communicated to the architect other features of the preliminary pre-referendum design, such as limited parking, the importance of preserving as many of the walnut trees as possible, and an interest in maintaining some open space on the property. With these issues in mind, the project architect, Kevin Hom, will draw upon his significant design experience to design the best libraries possible - inside and out - for our neighborhood and for Arbor Hill/West Hill.

Continued on page 2

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. The last meeting of 2007 is November 21.

HNA Reporter is published every other month. Deadline for articles or ads for the November-December newsletter is October 30. 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.

Library, continued from page 1

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Some people have asked me: Why was a new architect hired? Here's the story:

Collins & Scoville was hired as the pre-referendum architect. Following the overwhelming passage of the \$29 million library bond referendum in February, the Library Board decided to award Collins & Scoville with the design work for the three renovation projects (Pine Hills, Howe and Delaware). However, they wanted to ensure a diversity of design and cast a wider net for architects with library experience and made the decision to conduct an open and national search for the design team to work on the two new libraries. Many qualified firms, including Collins & Scoville, expressed interest in the projects, but H+G was the unanimous choice of the selection committee, which consisted of board members, library administrators, and staff from the Dormitory Authority who is serving as the Library's project manager.

If you have any questions, please call me (482-9813) or the Interim Library Director Tim Burke (427-4379). We look forward to seeing you at St. Teresa's.

Dennis Gaffney
Trustee, Albany Library Board

Picnic, continued from page 1

Some of the Albany Police officers who regularly attend our neighborhood meetings hope to be there, and maybe even a police horse or two. And we will have guest "cooks" flipping those burgers.

If you wish to bring a food item to share, be sure to label your container, or use disposable ones and bring a serving spoon. **Due to the prevalence of food allergies, please list the ingredients in your food item.** Bring lawn chairs or a blanket for sitting on the ground. The picnic will end at dusk to allow time for cleanup.

To avoid running out of food before everyone eats, the Board would like to request that our guests go through the food line only once.

An event this large requires many hands. People are needed to help set up the food tables and grills, staff the information tables, sell 50-50 raffle tickets, and help with clean-up. If you'd like to volunteer, call 482-2775, or send an e-mail to hna@hnaalbany.com to get your assignment.

Finally, be sure to thank the businesses who donated food items, raffle gifts or financial support to our picnic. A list of donors will be available at the information table and in the next issue of the *HNA Reporter*.

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**New Scotland Library Wins National Excellence Award from the
Young Adult Services Association of American Library Association**

Wednesday, July 18th, 2007

The New Scotland Branch of the Albany Public Library has won an "Excellence in Library Service to Young Adults" award for the innovative Skateboarding Discussion Group. The program was chosen as one of only five projects nationally to receive the award, presented by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA).

YALSA's Excellence Award Task Force selected 25 exemplary teen programs/services in all types of libraries. The top five programs received cash awards of \$1,000 each and the other twenty "best of the rest" applications received cash awards of \$250. All programs will be featured in the fifth edition of the YALSA publication, *Excellence in Library Service to Young Adults*, which will be available in Spring 2008.

The program was the brainchild of UAlbany graduate student Damon Vorce and was developed in collaboration with New Scotland Branch Librarian Melissa Wasilewski as part of Damon's internship with the Albany Public Library. 'Skate Program' was begun during the summer of 2006 and continued weekly at the New Scotland Branch Library until June of this year when the program

was moved to the Pine Hills Branch Library. Under Melissa's guidance the group continues to meet to watch skate videos, give media recommendations, and collaborate on projects using popular teen mediums such as YouTube, GoogleMaps, and MySpace. "This unique program brings teens and tweens into the library using their interest in skateboarding and the skateboarding culture as the hook," says Interim Library Director Timothy Burke.

The program effectively turns the potential problem of skateboarders hanging around outside the library, into an opportunity to demonstrate to young people that the library can be "cool," thereby increasing library use by teens.

In February of this year, Albany voters overwhelmingly approved a \$29.1 million bond act to relocate, renovate and build five libraries in the City of Albany. Designs for all five libraries include dedicated tween/teen spaces with computers and expanded young adult collections. To effectively plan and implement innovative teen programs for the new spaces, the Albany Public Library recently named Melissa Wasilewski Branch Librarian for Teen Services.

Tips to Prevent Home Burglary

Our neighborhood has been struck by periodic daytime burglaries, as have several other Albany neighborhoods this year. Burglars "case" the homes beforehand and don't seem to be stopped by alarm system signs. Here are some suggestions to keep your home safe, especially when you are not home:

- Close the blinds or shades, so no one can see what you have that's waiting to be stolen. (In summer, this helps keep your house cool, too.)
- Close and lock all ground floor windows and doors—and your garage door. It's amazing how many neighbors keep their garage doors open.
- Leave a radio or TV on low in the back of the house—it will give the impression that someone is home.
- Leave one or more lights on, or use timers in the bathroom, kitchen (windows are usually covered) or an upstairs bedroom. Change the locations of your lights periodically during the week.
- If you see people acting as if they are "casing the street" note their description and call the Albany Police (438-4000) immediately.
- The best burglary prevention is a DOG inside the house. Burglars don't like barking dogs!

The HNA neighborhood has had two rashes of

HNA Calls for Nominating Committee

All HNA Board seats are up for election at the January 2008 meeting. The current Board is looking for volunteers to form a nominations committee to seek Candidates for the following positions: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership and Communications. The committee will present the slate to the members at the November meeting. Prior to the vote in January, additional nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Anyone interested in joining the committee or running for a position should stop by the information table during HNA's picnic on September 19 to sign up. If you are unable to attend the picnic, leave a message at 482-2775.

daytime burglaries since March. When the police blanket the neighborhood, the burglars move to another area, until the police begin to patrol that area. It seems as though the pattern has been Delaware Avenue, then Whitehall to New Scotland, then Buckingham Pond area and back. So keep your eyes open, keep your windows and doors closed, and stay safe!

Charlotte Gray

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Anyone walking down Grove Avenue this summer has probably noticed a bevy of house repair activities with saws buzzing, hammers swinging and paint brushes gliding. This has particularly been the case with the houses at 83, 84 and 85 Grove, where Landmark Consulting has been working to return the exteriors of these three houses to their former appearance. Many think we're nuts spending countless summer hours on these old houses, but we do it because we recognize that these properties represent more than a mortgage payment and a roof to shelter our belongings and persons. They represent a period of westward expansion and development of planned residential neighborhoods for the families and professionals of the growing City of Albany at the turn of the last century. This period was marked by quality craftsmanship and the use of traditional materials intended to endure for at least 100 years. In fact these homes, which are standing as strong as the day they were built, and our neighborhood as a whole are approaching their "centennial" anniversaries. As such, our restoration efforts have intended to "celebrate" the history of these three houses and bring back the character and charm that they contributed to our community.



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

In the coming year, HNA will also be celebrating history as we research the development of our neighborhood a century ago and reveal the many house histories waiting to be told. (The first five streets were first shown on City Maps in 1908). Anyone interested in joining the **Neighborhood Centennial Celebration Committee** should contact me at 458-8942 or kcalvarez@landmarkconsulting.net. I will be chairing the committee and will be donating one or two days each month over the next year to research the development of our neighborhood and conduct a series of house histories. I will feature the information we find in the *HNA Reporter* and also on the website and HNACommunity@yahoo.com listserve. We are interested in gathering historic photos (1910-1960s), oral histories from our senior residents, and individual resident and house histories. By the 2008 Annual HNA Picnic, we hope to have plenty to show and tell from our research efforts.

Kimberly Konrad Alvarez
Landmark Consulting

Albany Offers Shared-Cost Tree Program

The City of Albany is taking orders for street trees through September 15, while supplies last. To request a tree planted in front of your house, call 434-2489 or go to the website: www.albanyny.org.

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HNA's membership year runs January to December. Join or renew during the September 19 picnic and your membership won't expire until December 31, 2008!

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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