

Neighbors

Winter
2012

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A NEWSPAPER FOR AND ABOUT ALBANY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

Save Our Post Offices! Underperformance isn't the only criteria for closure.

In an effort to cut \$20 billion in costs by 2015, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has proposed closing more than 3,700 post offices and about 250 mail-processing facilities around the country. Last year, as part of this effort, the USPS closed branch offices in the City of Albany serving the Delaware Avenue, North Albany and Pine Hills neighborhoods. This year they are considering closure of Academy Station on upper New Scotland Avenue and the offices located in the Capitol Building and the Empire State Plaza near the Corning Tower.

Albany Postmaster Joe Finan and other USPS officials held two meetings during the afternoon of Wednesday, December 14 at the Albany Public Library to accept public comment from patrons of the Capitol and ESP stations on the proposed closings. Following the meetings, Albany Common Council Member Richard Conti pointed out that "... the USPS doesn't have a good handle on finances of individual Post Offices or lines of services, and decisions aren't being made solely on [profit and loss] factors or community impacts."

If these facilities are closed, the only remaining customer service postal facilities in the City of Albany will be the Fort Orange branch on Central Avenue at Partridge Street and the Hudson Avenue branch below South Pearl Street.

With short notice and inconvenient scheduling, many neighborhood residents were unable to attend either of the meetings in December and, on several occasions, postal customers were told that the official "Optional Comment Forms" were unavailable.

In an effort to ensure that as many people as possible can weigh in on this important decision, we are making our own copy of the Optional Comment Form available to our readers (see page 4). Please take a moment to fill it out and return it to the station of your choice, or mail it to the address on the form. The Comment Period as been extended to Thursday, March 15, 2012.

And be sure to visit your neighborhood post office to buy stamps or send a package rather than driving to that suburban branch!

Complete and mail the form by March 15, 2012. See page 4.



Turns 40 Economic Challenges Lie Ahead

Maude Baum, aside from being the driving artistic force behind eba's past, present and future, is nothing if not pragmatic. Since founding eba in 1973 as an artists' collective, she has fostered the organization into a multifaceted arts association that contributes substantially to the efforts of the artistic community in the Capital Region. No

small feat, since eba is now in the midst of dealing with yet another economic recession — one that has caused the organization to place the building at 351 Hudson Avenue, its home since 1977 — on the market.

As Baum reflects, "In 1977 this was a very affordable building for us. The utilities were 'nothing.' Gas and electric was nothing. We had a large staff who shared in taking care of the building:

cleaning, repairing, and painting. And if it needed electrical work, for example, we were always able to find someone who did it for us for free. In fact, Herm Ungerma rewired most of this building for us when we bought it because it wasn't up to code."

But that was when eba had a paid staff of 12; now it is down to 2 fulltime and one part-time position. Plus, the day-today upkeep and utility expenses for the building

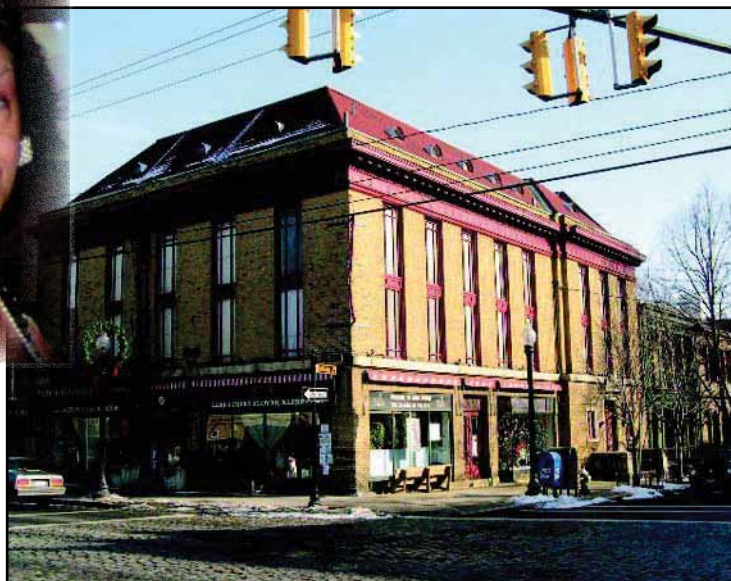
are now prohibitive for this organization. "The dollars currently being spent on the building should really be channeled back into programs," said Baum. And here her pragmatic side is evident: "We need to focus on our mission, not the building. I don't think that allowing our organization to continue in a facility that no longer is doing what it was doing for us years ago makes any sense. Instead, it makes more sense to take the resources allocated to this facility and put them back into programming. We can teach anywhere. We just need a space that doesn't have a cement floor. And there are hundreds of them in the Capital Region. And, we can perform in any of the 70 performance facilities in the area."

In point of fact, that's what eba began as: an organization that operated without walls, a group of artists that would perform or teach wherever — at the University, local churches, etc.

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Maude Baum and eba have called 351 Hudson Avenue home since 1977.



Real Estate Update

By Ellen Picotte

The 2011 real estate market throughout the City of Albany was similar in the number of sales of single family properties to the 2010 market; however, overall average values decreased from \$175,200 in 2010 to \$164,000 in 2011. In our own historic neighborhoods — Center Square, Hudson/Park, Mansion, Park South and Washington Park — the number of sales of single family and two-family homes was also very similar to 2010, although values decreased by a lesser amount.

Looking at the number of sales for the two years: in 2011, there were 27 sales of single family properties within the five historic downtown Albany neighborhoods, three sales more than 2010, (although seven sales less than 2009). Seven of these sales represented condominiums, as compared with ten such sales in 2010. The average sales price for one-to-three-bedroom condos was \$115,900, down from \$123,600 in 2010 and \$123,000 in 2009. All but one of the condo sales in 2011 took place in either Center Square or Hudson/Park, with a low price of \$68,000 for a one bedroom condo at 399 State Street and a high of \$164,000 for a two bedroom, two and a half bath unit on Eagle Street. The average marketing time for condominiums was 81 days, up from 58 days in 2010.

Of the 20 townhouse sales, five represented the newly constructed townhouses on Jay Street. The average sales

price of these five units was \$344,000. Of the remaining fifteen townhouse sales, seven were strictly one-family homes and eight included a two story homeowner's unit with an apartment. The average sales price of single family homes without an apartment was \$166,300 down significantly from \$227,500 in 2010 and \$219,000 in 2009.

The sales prices of homes without an income apartment ranged between a low of \$125,000 on Jefferson Street to a high of \$350,900 on Chestnut Street. Sales of properties that included a homeowner's unit with an income apartment averaged \$251,300, down from \$293,200 in 2010 but higher than the \$247,100 in 2009. The lowest priced sale was \$98,000 on Irving Street and the highest was \$445,000 on State Street. The average marketing time for single family homes was 102 days

(exclusive of the five new-construction homes), down from 159 days in 2010 but up from the 80 days in 2009.

Ten two family homes sold in 2011, two of those sales included buildings that featured two-story duplexes. The average sales price of the duplexes was \$205,000. Of the eight remaining sales, six were routine mortgage transactions, while two were bank-owned transactions. Average sales price of the routine transactions was \$136,200 with a low of \$21,700 on Dana Avenue and a high of \$355,000 for the newly renovated New Orleans-

continued page 4

The general buzz in the real estate industry indicates a consensus that the market will improve in 2012.

Neighborhood

NEWS & NOTES

Capital Neighbors 2012

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Thanks!
Thanks!

Parking Permit Update

Councilman Richard Conti hopes to present the Parking Permit Ordinance to the Common Council for a vote in early February. Once passed, planning for implementation will follow. That phase will include final space designations and signage and development of public information and outreach tools, etc. It is expected that the system will be in place by July 2012. (See related parking commentary on page 5.)

Center Square

The Center Square Association's meeting schedule for the next few months is as follows: February 16, March 15 and April 19. All meetings take place on the third Thursday of the month and start at 7 pm. We meet at the Westminster Presbyterian Church on State Street; to enter use the rear entrance at 85 hestnut Street.

One of our guest speakers in the upcoming months will be an artist who has created a 30"x40" map of Center Square as it appeared when he lived in the neighborhood in 1973. He will bring the map with him to a future meeting and will briefly discuss the map and answer questions to the best of his ability. Be on the lookout for information about this trip down memory lane!

The Center Square Association's meetings are open to the public and we look forward to seeing you there!

Also, it's never too early to start thinking about this year's Hidden City Home and Garden Tour. The tour is a collaborative effort of the Center Square and Hudson Park Neighborhood Associations as well as Historic Albany Foundation. If you are interested in helping with the tour in any way, please send an email to info@centersquare.org.

Hudson/Park

The Hudson/Park Neighborhood Association (H/PNA) is holding its 2012 Winter Brunch on January 29 at eba (351 Hudson Avenue, corner of Lark Street). We look forward to seeing our neighbors at this free, widely attended neighborhood event. Mac Mowbray (gmm400@hotmail.com) is in charge of volunteers and potluck. If you haven't gotten in touch with him yet, reach out to him soon. Come join

us and see why Hudson/Park is known as a lively, friendly neighborhood. As always, our association meetings are the third Wednesday of the month at the First Israel AME Church at 381 Hamilton Street at 7 pm.

Hudson/Park is continuing to show its strength as a home for new businesses, and for transformative real estate development projects. In just the past few months, four new businesses have opened near the corner of Madison Avenue and Lark Street — the "New Lark Tavern," the Shogun, Lifestyles Vegetarian Juice Bar, Mr. Tikka Kebab and the Madison Corner Deli. At the same time, four major new real estate projects are getting started in Hudson/Park including: the renovation of the long vacant and decaying Jefferson Street Firehouse; the construction of a new three-story mixed commercial/residential building to replace the fire-damaged Tandoor Palace building on Madison Avenue and Lark Street; the long rumored 25 Delaware Avenue project (formerly the Senior Center); and, a new project to replace Planned Parenthood, our longtime and much missed neighbor at Hudson Avenue and Lark Street. We are very excited about this once in a blue moon combination of projects re-imagining four key points in our neighborhood, and we're pleased that even in the middle of the "Great Recession," our neighborhood continues to show why it is a desirable destination for new businesses as new neighbors.

We also want to remind everyone that the Annual House and Garden Tour in Hudson/Park and Center Square is coming in June. We look forward to seeing you all in our houses and gardens.

Remember that even if you don't live in Hudson/Park you can stay involved with our neighborhood by joining our email discussion group (groups.yahoo.com/group/hudson-park), visiting our Web page (www.hudsonpark.org), or reading and posting on (or friending) our Facebook site (www.facebook.com/pages/HudsonPark-Neighborhood-Association/288078007891787).

Mansion

Mansion Neighborhood Association will meet on Thursday, January 25, 6 pm at Gaspary's Restaurant on Madison Avenue. Presentations on the planned Capital South Campus Center at Eagle and Warren Streets will be made by representatives from the Albany Housing Authority, Trinity Alliance and Senior Services. The project and services to be provided will be discussed.

Park South

The Park South Neighborhood Association (PSNA) held a meeting on Wednesday, January 11 at which time Joe Nicola, President of Columbia Development, gave a presentation for a proposal to construct a one-story building that would hold three retail spaces at 12 New Scotland Avenue. The Park South Urban Renewal Plan (PSURP), on the other hand, designates

Support your neighborhood associations!

Center Square Association

P.O. Box 7134, Albany, NY 12224; 433-8011
e-mail: info@centersquare.org
Web site: www.centersquare.org
President, Kelly Bush, kbush.csa@gmail.com
Vice President, Ben Chi, bechi@bechi.org
Treasurer, Michael Bergan
Corresponding Secretary, vacant
Recording Secretary, vacant
Beautification Chair, Jennifer Quinn, jenniferq99@gmail.com
Communications Chair, Eric Hoppel, ehoppel@hotmail.com
Zoning and Codes Chair, Harold Rubin, hrchestnut@aol.com
CSA meets at 7 pm every 3rd Thursday of the month (except July, August and December), Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street.

Hudson/Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 2313 - ESP, Albany, NY 12220; 894-7641
e-mail: info@hudsonpark.org
Web site: www.hudsonpark.org
President, Richard Berkley, richberkley@yahoo.com
Vice President, Elizabeth Griffin
Secretary, Sherron Winkler, winkls67@yahoo.com
Treasurer, Richard Brash, rbrash7@verizon.net
H/PNA meets at 7 pm every 3rd Wednesday of the month (except July and August), Israel AME Church, 381 Hamilton Street.

Mansion Neighborhood Association

1½ Elm Street, Albany, NY 12202; 432-5981
e-mail: mansion2000@yahoo.com
Holly Katz, Chair, Board of Directors, hakatz@me.com
Worth Gretter, Public Relations Chair, wgretter@nycap.rr.com

Park South Neighborhood Association

271 Myrtle Avenue, Albany NY 12208; 505-6439
e-mail: aach2004@aol.com
Web site: www.psnalbanys.com
President, Andrew Harvey, aach2004@aol.com
Vice President, Earl Belcher, earlsb@aol.com
Treasurer, Peter Rinne
Corresponding Secretary, Julie Maynes, jfmaynes@gmail.com
Recording Secretary, Shirley Kelly-Parson, skellyparson@nycap.rr.com
PSNA meets periodically at 7 pm on a 4th Wednesday of the month at 139 Knox Street.

Washington Park Neighborhood Association

369½ State Street, Albany NY 12210; 426-0079
e-mail: wpna@standardweb.com
Web site: www.wpneighbors.org
President, Bill Pettit, bpettit@standardweb.com
First Vice President, Mic Lacey, MichaelAlacey@laceys.com
Second Vice President, Mary Stoll, mgs@nycap.rr.com
Secretary, Jackie Heitzman, gheitzman@nycap.rr.com
Treasurer, Sallie Livingston, Sally1511p@aol.com
WPNA meets at 7:30 pm every 2nd Wednesday of the month, First Presbyterian Church (Rose Room), State and Willett Streets.

that particular location as a "New Development: three-story, first floor retail, apartments above."

The city contends that the change from a three-story to a one-story building at this site is a minor change and does not need Common Council approval, which is required only to review

any substantive changes to the PSURP. Councilman Richard Conti is reviewing the matter.

(The above meeting constituted a change from PSNAs usual 4th Wednesday of the month meeting to accommodate the Columbia Development application before the Planning Board.)

SNUG has been saved ... for now. It's up to the entire community to make sure it endures.

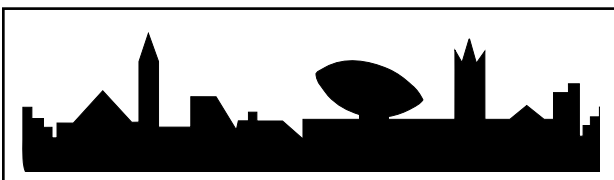
"SNUG has been saved" was the message at a high profile gathering of area clergy on January 13, and continued over the Martin Luther King Birthday weekend as organizers reached out to churches, businesses and community groups for financial support to supplement the \$300,000 in funding already pledged by the state and the city.

SNUG (guns spelled backwards) is a successful violence intervention and prevention initiative based upon the public health model developed by Chicago CeaseFire. The King weekend was chosen to mark its rescue because it coincides with the annual holiday that honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and remembers his "Principles of Non-Violence" and vision of a "Beloved Community." One of SNUG's goals, reflecting the values shared by Dr. King, is to change the cultural norms surrounding violence and to take collective responsibility for making positive social change. Faith leader

involvement is one of the five key components of the SNUG/CeaseFire model, and Albany SNUG has valued working in partnership with members of the faith community since it began operation here in October 2010. This followed a massive showing of community support late last year after it became clear state funding was threatened.

According to the Times Union, members of the Albany African-American Clergy United for Empowerment, which comprises some 50 faith communities, will take up special collections for SNUG. Bishop Hubbard, the leader of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, said his parishes will also take up collections for the program.

"I wholeheartedly endorse the efforts of SNUG," Hubbard said, adding: "I've seen the escalating violence taking place in our streets. This is a welcome antidote to this violence."



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If you are interested in working on future issues of Capital Neighbors, or would like to make comments or suggestions, contact Capital Neighbors at capitalneighbor@yahoo.com

eba from page 1

In was at RPI, that eba artists and programmers pioneered computer-generated art. They used the RPI mainframe to create programs to generate art that you can now buy off the shelf or get for free on the internet. eba was also involved in using the arts to create a sense of community. Questioned whether that has changed, Baum responds, "Not one bit. Never. We never veered from that. People would say, 'Oh, you have to have one focus.' But that's not what or who we are. We are about bringing the community in. Bringing different artists in; mixing them up and seeing what happens."

A few years after its founding, eba moved into a loft on the top floor of 285 Central Avenue — the former Tommy Sternfeld's Dance Studio. At that time, in 1975, there was a five foot hole in the roof that went down to the next floor, which had become home to numerous pigeons.

As eba grew, the opportunity to purchase 351 Hudson Avenue from the Daughters of the Eastern Star (see *Did you ever wonder ...* for a history of the building) presented itself. And Baum credits Albany Mayor Erastus Corning with helping to make that transaction possible. "Corning never gave us any direct money," Baum recalls. "But we received so many in-kind services from the city, and we might not have survived had he not done that. And, he wrote a letter that got us federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) assistance." The CETA support provided us with \$100,000 worth of assistance and was Corning's way of saying we want you to be here. But, in 1981, without any warning, those funds dried up, and most of the 1980s were a struggle to stay alive. Moreover, "when a recession hits," Baum added, "these kinds of organizations don't rebound as quickly as the economy does. We crash immediately and then it takes four years to get back to normal because people hang onto their money; they are afraid to spend it again."

The 1990s brought renewed life to the organization. Families were coming back into the city and had more expendable income. They took advantage of the variety of dance, health and spiritual opportunities that eba offered. People were responding to eba's mission of cultivating, promoting and developing an understanding of, and public interest in, the performing, visual and technological arts. And in its dedication to developing an understanding of the creative potential within each of us, sought to show the community how to integrate these unique aims into daily life.

Starting in the year 2000, "The bottom just fell out and it has been falling ever since," said Baum. It is important to note that eba is not a member of a national group. Thus, resources that other not-for-profits

garner from such affiliations — like marketing and administrative benefits — are not available to eba. Baum said that there has never been an attempt to fold the organization under an umbrella. As she puts it, "that probably reflected the 1960s mentality in us. We wanted to shake things up and still do!"

While other arts organizations have surrendered to the pressure of three recessions (including this current one), eba is adapting as it always has. Accordingly, selling the building is just one way of assuring that this vital resource can remain active in the community, albeit in a slightly different format. "Everything will continue as it has. We'll have classes in this community that people can walk to. Classes in Guilderland, classes in Schenectady and Troy. We'll be as we have been," says Baum. "I don't see that our mission will change, that our involvement in the community will change. We don't just say we are in the community, we live it. And I think that is something that makes us different!"

As to what the public can do to assure that eba remains a vital resource for the community, Baum said, "Be supportive of what we are still doing right now. Come and take a class, come to the concerts. Keep your eyes and ears open for potential funding opportunities

to help continue what we do until we sell the building. Support our arts in education program (we could use an educational volunteer to help organize our lesson plans!)" As one grandmother recently told Baum, "I remember when you did the solar system in my 7th grade class!" Baum still does the solar system for 7th graders. As she puts it, "Once you've been Venus and you have all the nuances of Venus, you never forget that you are going in the opposite direction from all the other planets!"

For more information contact eba at (518) 465-9916, email ebadance@eba-arts.org or visit www.eba-arts.org.

About the building:

The building is currently undergoing an extensive interior renovation/restoration as a result of water damage in the spring of 2011 due to those pesky Philadelphia gutters (which are part of the original construction) freezing and melting water into the walls. It should be completed by the end of January (see photos below). Overall, the building is in immaculate condition, in part because over the years eba has put \$500,000 into it. It has a new boiler, new roof, everything is up to code, and it is handicapped accessible. With a total of 13,500 square feet available, the facility includes: a 200 moveable-seat theater with a stage on the second floor; a 1,080 square foot studio, locker rooms with showers, offices, and a kitchen on the first floor. A costume shop and a caretaker's apartment occupies the fourth. A retail shop is at street level.

By Tony Opalka, Albany City Historian



"Why the eba building at 351 Hudson Avenue is often referred to as the Chapter House?"

The building eba purchased for its new and expanded headquarters and performance space in 1977 was constructed by the Albany Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, circa 1915, for use as its local headquarters.

It has been widely assumed by many that the Order of the Eastern Star is the "women's branch of the Masonic order," but this is not, in fact, true.

While like the origins of the Masons, its roots are not definitively known, it is thought to have started in France as early as 1703 as a branch solely for women. However, in its modern incarnation, started by Dr. Robert Morris, Poet Laureate of Masonry from 1850 until 1866, the order has admitted men as well as women.

According to the history posted on the Order's website, Morris never felt that Masonry should be open only to men, but rather should be available for the whole family; and that women should share with the Masonic Brotherhood the same inspiration that "prompts a man to noble deeds." But the laws of the Ancient Order stated that women were not eligible for its degrees. Accordingly, in 1850, Morris devised a system of the Eastern Star degrees and their symbolism, as

well as a corps of officers. Initially, he conferred the degrees on his wife and daughters, along with certain neighbors.

At the time the Chapter House was constructed, Albany claimed more than 24 lodges, chapters, councils, commanderies and orders of Masonic organizations. In addition, there was a Masonic Hall Association, Board of Relief, Burial Plot and Veterans Association. In the city directories of the period, each of these organizations listed around 16 members, but it isn't clear if these were presiding officers only, or the entire population of each group. The Order of the Eastern Star, which had been instituted in Albany in 1869, shared its Chapter House with the Fort Orange Star Chapter and the Ella Nicholson Chapter. Both men and women were listed, with titles of Matron, Patron, Secretary, Chaplain and Organist, among others.

From the very beginning, the large building housed a commercial establishment on busy Lark Street. At various times there was a grocery, tailor shop and, more recently, an antique store, a radio repair shop (see photo at left) and, today, the Lark Street Flower Market. Mrs. Munsen's School of Proper Dance held cotillions in the Eastern Star hall for many years. Proms and dances were also held there. Chuck Berry is said to have performed there, as well.

Although the Order of the Eastern Star no longer has a presence on Lark Street, it is still an active organization and maintains a headquarters in Washington, DC, the Red School in Mississippi where Morris founded the Order of the Eastern Star, and the Rob Morris Home, located in the Central LaGrange Historic District of LaGrange, Kentucky as well as Grand Chapters in many states. And, the Lark Street building still retains the plaque that says "Eastern Star Chapter House."

If you have a question for Tony, please email him at capitalneighbor@yahoo.com.



Work continues on the interior of 351 Hudson Avenue to repair water damage that occurred in the spring of 2011. It will be completed in the near future.



eba building in 1977.

Save Our Post Offices! Optional Comment Form

Following are comments I wish to make concerning the proposed discontinuance of the

CAPITOL STATION post office
(Docket: 1356958-12224)

EMPIRE STATE PLAZA post office
(Docket: 1362853-12210)

1. Effect on Your Postal Services. Describe any favorable or unfavorable effects you believe the proposal would have on the regularity of effectiveness of your postal services.

2. Effect on Your Community. Please describe any favorable or unfavorable effects that you believe the proposal would have on your community.

3. Other Comments. Please provide any other views or information that you believe the Postal Service should consider in deciding whether to adopt the proposal.

Name of Postal Customer

Signature of Postal Customer

Mailing Address

City, State and ZIP Code Date

**Hand Deliver or Mail by
Thursday, March 15, 2012**

Post Office Review Coordinator
ALBANY PFC
30 Karner Road
Albany, NY 12288-9992

NEW In the Neighborhood By Leslie Moran

Lorraine Cox and Peter Doelken Jay Street This regular feature continues to introduce new neighbors in our *Capital Neighbors* neighborhoods. Accordingly, in this issue, we meet newcomers to the Center Square neighborhood. If you are new to the neighborhood, or know someone who is, please write *Capital Neighbors* and tell us about our new neighbors.

Living in Charleston, South Carolina, Lorraine Cox and Peter Doelken were no strangers to the annual hurricane season. Even so, a hurricane wasn't exactly what they were expecting about a month after moving to Albany this past July. But their experience with such storms allowed them to take Irene — a tropical storm by the time it arrived in the Capital District — in stride.

"Wind and water," said Lorraine with a bit of a chuckle. Having grown up in Miami, she was even more experienced with the wrath such weather can bring. "I wondered why people hadn't trimmed their trees."

Peter, who moved to the U.S. from Germany in the mid-1990s, said despite its age, their new to them Albany house weathered the storm. Some windows needed to be replaced, but he noted they knew that when they bought the house.

A job opportunity brought the couple north from South Carolina. Peter is a critical care physician in the intensive care unit at Albany Medical Center and Lorraine, a nurse practitioner, works in palliative care, also at Albany Med. One of the things they like most about their relocation is the ease of getting to work. According to Lorraine their 30 minute commute in South Carolina had grown to 45 minutes. Now the commute is literally a walk in the park.

Lorraine researched the area, and the housing market in Albany. And working with a realtor, lined up houses for the couple to look at. They flew up in March and looked at nearly a dozen different houses. "The Jay Street house was the last one we looked at. And it wasn't even on my list," says Lorraine. "We made an offer and the next day it was done."

The ability to walk to work was one of the key things that drew Peter and Lorraine to downtown.

"We like living in the city," says Peter. "Everything is in walking distance."

Another plus is the sense of community, something they say wasn't true in the Charleston suburb they left.

"The neighbors are great," Lorraine says. "People are out on their stoops — they're interacting."

They also like the neighborhood shops and restaurants. Though, with their busy hospital schedules, they haven't had too much time to explore all the variety the area has to offer.

They also enjoy the outdoors and are looking forward to taking advantage of the wide array of activities available and easily accessible in the city and nearby. And they're looking forward to experiencing all the seasons the northeast offers — those other than a hurricane season, that is!

Real Estate *from page 1*

style home on Hudson Avenue. The average sales price of two family homes in 2010 was \$109,300 and, in 2009, \$75,400. The average sales price of the two bank owned/short sale properties was \$59,000. Average days on market for two-family properties in 2011 was 132 compared with 232 days in 2010 and 38 days on the market in 2009. Currently (as of January, 2012) there are three active listings for two-family properties with a marketing time of 476 days.

There were ten sales of multifamily properties in 2011, compared with 16 sales in 2010 and 11 sales in 2009. Five three family properties sold in 2011, two of which were bank-owned. The average sales price of the two bank-owned properties was \$59,500 while the average sales price of the three routine mortgage transactions was \$167,500. The average sales price of three-family properties that sold in 2010 was \$226,900 up from the 2009 average of \$221,600. The average sales price of two four-family properties that sold in 2011 was \$226,200, commensurate with \$225,000 in 2010 and higher than the \$183,000 of 2009. Three sales included buildings featuring six or more units. Overall, the average marketing time for

multifamily properties was 142 days, shorter than the 181 days in 2010 but up from 128 days in 2009. There are 20 multifamily properties on the market as of January 2012.

Finally, only one commercial, or mixed use parcel sold in 2011, 174.5 Madison Avenue which closed at \$84,000.

Inventory remains high and, as this is being written, there are 30 single-family homes, including condos, currently on the market in our neighborhoods with an average marketing time, thus far, of 220 days. Interest rates remain low, and buyers have many homes to choose from, although they are taking longer to make decisions. Investors are also taking advantage of rates and inventory, and are showing interest in multifamily properties that are either well maintained and show a strong history of net operating income, or are priced very low and need work.

The general buzz in the real estate industry indicates a consensus that the market will improve in 2012.

Ellen Picotte is a Hudson/Park resident and an Associate Broker with Prudential Manor Homes.

Townhouse & Condo Sales Averages			
Property Type	2009	2010	2011
Townhouse (Single-family)	\$219,000	\$227,500	\$166,300*
Townhouse (With Income apartment)	\$247,000	\$293,200	\$251,300
Condominiums (one to Three Bedrooms)	\$123,000	\$123,600	\$115,900

*This average does not include the five newly-constructed townhouses on Jay Street. the average sales price for those homes was \$344,000.

Why the commuters' dilemma is the neighborhood's opportunity.

Commentary by Tom McPheeters

Permit parking is close to becoming a reality in Albany, and most downtown residents will shed no tears for the commuters who will get stuck with either a much longer park-and-walk to work, or will have to (gasp!) actually pay for a parking space.

They should care, however, unless permit parking accompanies solutions to the commuters dilemma, it won't do much to actually reduce commuter traffic in downtown Albany, with all its attendant problems.

Traffic congestion is just one of those problems. Automobile traffic congestion also produces massive amounts of air pollutants and, consequently, Albany's lower-lying river wards periodically have severe ozone inversions. The resulting high incidence of childhood asthma in predominately poor, predominately minority downtown neighborhoods is not well recognized, but is a major community health issue.

Permit parking is an opportunity to create real and lasting benefits for all city residents, whether they drive or not. Those benefits will come when the city of Albany, employers and commuters finally come together to create a system that drastically reduces the number of automobiles entering and leaving the city every workday. It's not just a matter of reducing numbers of vehicles, but one of political and social will.

The primary culprit is the region's largest employer. With a few notable exceptions, the state provides more incentives to drive alone than to use mass transit or to car pool even though rates at state garages are well below market level for those who are lucky enough to get space. By all accounts, park-and-ride lots are inconvenient and hard to get

to outside of commuter hours. The state does almost nothing to encourage mass transit ridership and, even with the high cost of gas, many people opt out because buses lack the flexibility they need in their lives; i.e., parents can't get home in an emergency, people can't get to the dentist, etc.

There are exceptions: notably, the PEF unit at the state DEC building on Broadway has negotiated a separate agreement that gives employees access to reduced-price bus passes, guaranteed parking when they need access to a car, and a guaranteed ride home in case of emergency. And, DEC's PEF unit has documented the success of its plan very convincingly. Albany County made a similar deal with its employees when it eliminated the parking garage adjacent to 112 State Street. And the Downtown BID promotes similar arrangements with private employers.

But for the vast majority of state workers there is neither financial incentive nor even reasonable assistance to do the right thing. No one wants to give up a parking space and lose the flexibility of having a car nearby when it's truly needed, but state rules don't provide for that kind of flexibility. Moreover, bulk buying of Swiper passes is not provided at most state agencies because it's not in the union contracts.

In essence, it seems as if this situation is ossified, set in stone and beyond anybody's control. But it's not. Many cities have found solutions to their traffic congestion problems (truth be told, some much worse than ours), and all that is needed here is for people with similar interests to work together.

continued page 7

Wipe Out Graffiti It can be done!

After recent acts of vandalism in the vicinity of Dove Street, the following graffiti-related questions appeared on the Hudson/Park listserv:

- Can anyone call to report it, or does it have to be the owner of the building?
 - Which number do you call to have it removed or painted over?
- (If you're not a member of the listserv, which posts information of interest for many downtown neighbors, not just Hudson/Park, you may subscribe by sending an email to: Hudson-Park-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.)

According to an Albany Department of General Services spokesperson, reports of graffiti may be taken by DGS, but either the department or the citizen must also call the Albany Police Department to report and document the crime.

Graffiti removal is provided by the City of Albany's Department of General Services on a seasonal basis — from mid-May through the end of October — weather permitting. Individuals who find graffiti on their property *must first try and remove it themselves.*

Motsenbocker's Lift Off Spray Paint Graffiti Remover is available at Home Depot and will safely and effectively remove oil-based paint, permanent marker and urethane from any hard, soft or porous surface. This remover is biodegradable and low-VOC for environmental friendliness and safety. *(This does not constitute a product endorsement — use this product at your own risk.)*

If that fails, the city may be able to help. Any individual (not necessarily the property owner) who wishes to report graffiti or request its removal from a structure may call the Department of General Services at 434-CITY (2489).

Anyone witnessing an act of vandalism in progress should call the Albany Police Department at 518-438-4000 immediately.

You can help wipe out graffiti in our neighborhood!

1. **Report It:** Call DGS at 434-CITY (2489) or APD at 438-4000.
2. **Document It:** Take a picture of the graffiti before you attempt to remove it. Photographs will assist law enforcement in their investigation.
3. **Remove It:** Remove graffiti promptly and completely. The presence of graffiti sends a signal that a neighborhood is unsafe or unstable.

By Mac Mowbray



The Parts Warehouse is located at:
89 Lexington Avenue,
465-2987

Hours:
Wednesday–Friday
noon–5 pm
Saturday
9 am–5 pm

Break out of the winter doldrums with a visit to the Warehouse!

Things proceed apace at the Historic Albany Parts Warehouse.

Accordingly, we'll get right to the current buzz by trying to brighten your life. We have some nice chandeliers and ceiling fixtures: a couple are really quite elegant, great for the dining room of your older home. And, we have a few 1920s era floor lamps (a good cleaning, rewiring and a new shade would make these babies as good as new). Completing this part of our regular warehouse tour, we have some nice porch lights and some matched pairs of interior wall sconces. Here, then, are a few more items that we hope will help furnish your home on a budget:

- a cedar chest that could use refinishing but is otherwise in good shape;
- a collection of stoves: coal, wood, gas and oil — take your pick;
- a pair of andirons for your fireplace;
- a medallion for your ceiling;
- a mirror;
- a bedstead;
- assorted chairs;
- a small (maybe 3rd grade) school desk;
- a small oak commode; and
- a Boston-style rocker with a cane seat that needs re-caning.

Still inside the house we have an unusually large selection of doors of all configurations, everything from one to nine panels. Also, we still have a good number of Victorian-era entry doors (quite a few are pairs). And, we still have some nice French-style doors, for both indoor and outdoor use. We also have a small selection of cork flooring, probably enough for a closet or a small vestibule.

In the miscellaneous department we have: wooden upper kitchen cabinets, some steel kitchen cabinets, a foot locker and a steamer trunk, a number of single-panel solid wood exterior shutters (1920s, no louvers), a small set of interior steps, and tons of assorted interior woodwork including some built-in dining room cabinet doors and drawers. Albany County Court House locks are still available (very good quality solid brass).

We still have lots of cement tiles for interior use as well as some slabs of Brown Tennessee Marble: two pieces that are 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick and 70" by 41" and two other pieces that are 1" thick and 79" by 61".

Most of our bathroom sinks are being sold at reasonable prices, including some nice pedestal ones. Other toilets and sinks are available in unusual colors for your vintage bath. For a house with a modern bath, we have an elegant Capuzzi set, consisting of a toilet, bidet and sink. Must be seen to believe!

Call for Donations: Currently we have a shortage of claw foot bath tubs — one of our biggest sellers. If you have one or know of someone who does and would like to donate it, please let them know that as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation we offer tax credits for donations.

So, come to see us: Historic Albany Foundation Parts Warehouse at 89 Lexington Avenue, Albany. With the mild winter we are experiencing (so far) the sky's the limit when it comes to restoring or decorating your old house.



John Carson, Historic Albany Foundation Warehouse Manager, will be leaving at the end of January. "We will truly miss John as part of the team here at Historic Albany. Our customers will miss him, too—for his expertise, great skills and knowing just what to do with their restoration projects. We wish John the best of luck in his new endeavors and yes, we are looking for a new Warehouse Manager," said Susan Holland, Executive Director. People interested in applying for the job can visit the website www.historic-albany.org for further information.



PLEASE VISIT US!
Wednesday–Friday, noon–5 pm;
Saturday, 9 am–5 pm



This is just a small sampling of arts and cultural events happening in and around our neighborhood this season. Please contact the sponsoring organization for more information and complete schedules.

Capital Happenings

Compiled by Colleen Ryan

Albany County Historical Association

Ten Broeck Mansion, 9 Ten Broeck Place; 436-9826; www.tenbroeckmansion.org Even though the Ten Broeck Mansion won't resume tours until May, did you know you can rent the mansion? If you're planning a wedding, reception, cocktail party, holiday gathering, picnic or other special event, why not consider one of the Capital Region's gems? The historic Ten Broeck Mansion and its grounds are available at a nominal fee. Simply call the main office of the Albany County Historical Association for details, pricing and availability.

Albany Institute of History & Art

125 Washington Avenue; 463-4478; www.albanyinstitute.org

- Member Monday – Highlights of the Photography Collection, 2/6, noon. Use your lunch break to join Curator of History & Material Culture W. Douglas McCombs for an exclusive sneak peek at the Institute's collection. Go behind the scenes with curators for a special view of the museum's rarest objects. Please sign up at the Albany Institute's front desk or call (518) 463-4478 during regular museum hours. Space is limited to 10 members per session. Must be an Albany Institute member to participate.
- Vacation Art Break – Three Days of Hands-On Learning, 2/21-23. Explore collage through a variety of art mediums including fiber, assemblage, printmaking and sculpture. Using works of art on display in the galleries as inspiration, students will create dynamic two-dimensional and three-dimensional mixed media projects. Day 1: Printmaking on Fabric Collage; Day 2: Weaving and Recycled Materials Wall Hanging/Relief; Day 3: Assemblage/Sculpture. Register for one day, or all three for a sequential learning experience. Times: 9 am-noon (6-8 years old); 1-4 pm (9-13 years old).

Albany Roundtable Civic Luncheon Series

www.albanyroundtable.com;

www.albanyroundtable.blogspot.com

The Albany Roundtable's luncheon meetings are held at the historic University Club, 141 Washington

Avenue at Dove Street. Reservations for the Wednesday luncheons are required by the previous Monday and can be made by calling 518-431-1440 (through the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce) or by e-mail at albanyroundtable@yahoo.com. The luncheon is open to the public and the cost is \$15. The University Club serves a hot and cold buffet from noon to 1 pm, with the program commencing at 12:30 pm.

- Bob Belber, General Manager, Times Union Center, 2/8
- Upcoming lunches 3/14, 4/11

Albany Public Library

161 Washington Ave., 427-4300
www.albanypubliclibrary.org

- Friends of APL Book Review (each Tuesday, noon-1:15 pm)
- Free income tax filing assistance (on Wednesdays during the tax filing season). AARP tax-aide and IRS VITA volunteers will be providing free income tax assistance for low and middle-income taxpayers (household income limit of \$49,000). To make an appointment, call the Main Library Reference Department at (518) 427-4303.

Capital Rep

111 North Pearl Street; 445-SHOW;
www.capitalrep.org

- The Sisters Rosensweig, 1/24-2/19. "The laughter is all but continuous," wrote The New Yorker. This delightful Tony-nominated play by Wendy Wasserstein, which won the 1993 Outer Critics Circle award for Best Broadway Play, follows three disparate Jewish sisters from Brooklyn as they reunite in London for the birthday of Sara, the eldest. Over the course of a chaotic weekend, the sisters come to terms with their differences – as well as their love for one another. The Sisters Rosensweig is a heart-warming comic portrait of a complex family from one of America's best playwrights, the late Pulitzer Prize-winner Wendy Wasserstein.
- Black Pearl Sings! 3/9-4/7. This regional premiere by Frank Higgins tells the story of Susannah, a song collector for the Library of Congress, who travels the country seeking little-known melodies. When she encounters Pearl in a Texas prison, she discovers dozens of musical treasures rooted in the African tradition. Pearl must decide whether to give away her ancestors' songs for a chance at her own freedom. Music unites strangers in a powerful story that illuminates America's racial divisions and the attempts of two women to bridge them.

eba Center for Dance & Fitness

351 Hudson Avenue; 459-9916;
www.eba-arts.org

- Benefit Cabaret & Silent Auction, 3/3, 7 pm. A little naughty, but very nice. Company performing artists, musicians and special neighborhood guests will bring their own sassy flair to the cabaret. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and wine tasting, performance starts at 8 pm. An evening not to be missed! Call for tickets.

The Egg

473-1845; www.theegg.org

- American Roots & Branches Series, Carolina Chocolate Drops, 1/29, 7:30 pm, \$29.50. Original members of the Carolina Chocolate Drops Dom Flemons and Rhiannon Giddens are joined by multi-instrumentalist Hubby Jenkins and cellist Leyla McCalla to perform American string band music for the 21st century.
- Laughs Against L&L, 2/17, 7:30 pm, \$20. A comedy show to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Featuring: Andy Ennaco, Sharon Dyer, Carlisle Carey, Brett Eidman, Russ Davignon, Shawn Gillie (of Fly 92.3), Benita Zahn (of WNYT), Sandy Beach, Jaye McBride, Matt Kelly, Greg Aidala (winner of Albany, NY's favorite comedian by the *Times Union* since 2007), Michael Raive, Frank Gentile, Jennifer McMullen, and Ava Kaye Levy. Hosted and produced by Luke Donovan, winner of the Capital Region Last Comic Standing competition.

First Friday – many locations

Upstate Artists Guild, 247 Lark Street; 426-3501;
www.upstateartistsguild.org;

- The Call of the Wild, UAG Gallery Show, 2/3-24. The UAG presents The Call of the Wild, featuring artwork with or inspired by animals.
- Fatal Abstraction 2, UAG Gallery Show, 2/2-23. The UAG presents Fatal Abstraction 2, featuring abstract art in all media.
- K-12, UAG Gallery Show, 4/6-27. The UAG presents K-12, featuring Capital Area student work.

WAMC Performing Arts Studio

339 Central Avenue; 1-800-323-9262;
www.wamcarts.org

- Willie Nile, 2/18, 8 pm, \$23. Willie Nile is a songwriters' songwriter and his live performances are legendary. He has toured across the U.S. opening for The Who at the personal request of the band and sang with Bruce Springsteen at Giants Stadium. The *New York Times* called Willie "one of the most gifted singer-songwriters to emerge from the New York scene in years."



Albany Common Council Member
RICHARD S. CONTI
151 Chestnut St., Albany, NY 12210
(t) 518-436-8546 / rc6thward@aol.com

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SENIOR AND KIDS NIGHT
SENIORS 20% OFF
KIDS EAT FOR \$1.50 (ONE CHILD PER ADULT)
(WITH DINNER ENTREE PURCHASE)

THURSDAY
BUY A BOTTLE OF WINE
GET A FREE APPETIZER

Susan I. Holland EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
89 Lexington Avenue Albany, New York 12206 518 465-0876 sholland@historic-albany.org

From Music to Toys to Wine Tastings

There's a whole lot going on at the University Club in February.

Ella Unplugged – A Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald

Tuesday, February 7
Dubbed "The First Lady of Song," Ella Fitzgerald was the most popular female jazz singer in the United States for more than half a century. In her lifetime, she won 13 Grammy awards and sold more than 40 million albums. Vocalist Perley Rousseau and pianist Sonny Daye will present the tribute and will be joined by special guest bassist Lou Pappas, a former member of the United States Military Academy Band in West Point, NY. Pappas now serves as adjunct faculty at Vassar College. The trio will highlight music

from Ella Fitzgerald's Great American Songbook recordings as well as selections from her Pablo Records albums with jazz guitarist Joe Pass.

The cabaret feeling of the University Club's Grille Room will provide an intimate setting for this concert of vocals with piano and bass, including anecdotes from Ella's life, from her Apollo Theatre debut at age 16 to her retirement

Time & Location:
6-8 pm; University Club of Albany, 141 Washington Avenue (at Dove Street)

Cost: \$10 per person, cash or check made payable to University Club of Albany Foundation.

Reservations:
Required and may be made by calling the

Club at 518-463-1151. The University Club of Albany Foundation, Inc. is presenting this event. One need not be a member of the University Club to attend.

Valentine's Day Play Date for Grownups

Tuesday, February 14

This Valentine's Day revisit the toys and games of your childhood with a guided tour of "Kid Stuff" at the Albany Institute, then proceed across the street to the University Club for drinks, games or dinner – or all of the above! The festivities will begin at 5:30 pm at the Albany Institute for a one-hour guided tour of Kid Stuff: Great Toys from Our Childhood. From Slinky®s and Woolly Willy®s to Lionel® Trains and Barbie™ Dolls, Kid Stuff takes visitors back to the age of tailfins and vinyl records with more than 40 toys from decades past. See vintage toys with original packaging and promotional materials, and play with LEGO® blocks, Twister®, Mr. Potato Head®,

and more. The exhibit closes on March 4 so don't miss it.

At 6:30 pm, cross the street to the University Club and find a partner to play some of the games featured in the exhibit, have a drink or order dinner from the a la carte menu. Hors d'oeuvres and a complimentary glass of wine are provided.

Time & Location:
5:30 pm beginning at the Albany Institute at 125 Washington Avenue with reception to follow at the University Club of Albany

Cost: \$15 per person and includes admission to the Albany Institute. Show your admission sticker and enjoy hors d'oeuvres and a complimentary glass of wine at the University Club.

Reservations:
Required and may be made by calling the Club at 518-463-1151. The University Club of Albany Foundation, Inc. is presenting this event. One need not be a member of the University Club to attend.

Leap Day Wine Tasting

Wednesday, February 29

Leap Year occurs only once every four years. Accordingly, on February 19th the University Club will celebrate this extra day with a festive sampling of wines with names appropriate to the occasion such as Stump Jump, Frog's Leap, and Rabbit Ridge along with a savory hot and cold hors d'oeuvres buffet. The reception will conclude with an exciting raffle for a bottle of Stag's Leap Wine Cellars Cabernet Cask 23, 1987. This highly collectible bottle, donated by an anonymous benefactor, boasts a Robert Parker 91 rating and an estimated auction price of \$360-\$400.

Tasting notes find "a huge aroma of coffee, fruitcake, cassis, oriental spices, toasty new oak, herbs, and black fruits that is profound. In the mouth, there is an almost endless sensation of voluptuous, velvety fruit, as well as an opulence that borders on decadence." Raffle tickets

will be available for \$2 each, 3 for \$5, or 7 for \$10.

Time & Location:
6-8 pm; University Club of Albany, 141 Washington Avenue (at Dove Street)

Cost: \$29 per person, cash or check made payable to University Club of Albany Foundation.

Reservations:
Required and may be made by calling the Club at 518-463-1151. The University Club of Albany Foundation, Inc. is presenting this event. One need not be a member of the University Club to attend.

The University Club Foundation, a 501c3 corporation, was formed to recognize and maintain the unique historic and architectural significance of the University Club building and property, its historic neighborhood and the city of Albany, where it has been located since its inception in 1901

Parking from page 5

Topping that list are the state worker unions, CSEA and PEF. This may not be what people want to hear after the bitter 20-year battle to get our current state permit parking legislation passed. But the unions respond to the pocketbook issues of their members and a more rational transit system is very much on their minds.


The key to developing such a system is better use of existing parking so that people who need it can use it. Time to ditch the antiquated seniority system of parking in favor of benefits and incentives that will make it more attractive for most people to ride the bus or car pool. Thus, parking should be reserved for those who have a legitimate need for their car during the day, or who are willing to pay extra for the convenience. The same incentives negotiated by the DEC PEF unit to ensure that mass transit users can have a parking place when they need it or get home quickly in an emergency could be instituted regionally at modest cost. Studies show that financial concerns are the number one factor when it comes to commuting, so if parking costs are more realistic, many people will opt in favor of cheaper alternatives.

Those benefits and incentives are already available, thoroughly tested and quite cost-effective. The Capital District Transportation Committee, the regional planning body for transit planning and funding, has been promoting commuter solutions for years. For example, all state employees could get a pretax transit benefit that they could spend any way they choose. If the OGS parking garages were priced at (or anywhere near) market rate, employees would have a realistic choice to make between driving alone (at \$3.50 a gallon) and parking, or car pooling van pooling, or mass transit.

Our other partner is CDTA, whose ridership and bottom line also suffer as a result of this dysfunctional system. Permit parking will probably push some commuters to mass transit, but it's doubtful if it will have that much impact without the other policy initiatives that change the economic equation for commuters. The way the permit parking boundaries are set up, free neighborhood parking will still be available within walking distance for many people.

Up to now, CDTC has had trouble getting heard in the corridors of power. Curiously, several years ago when these ideas were presented to the Spitzer Administration, it was the state employee unions that were eager to come to the table and the state that was not interested.

The onset of permit parking, along with the Cuomo Administration's need to bolster its fragile relations with the unions, could open some doors that have previously been closed. It's an opportunity that our city officials and our neighborhood associations, as well as the state and its employee unions, would be wise not to pass up.



DOMINICK CALSOLARO

City of Albany
Council Member 1st Ward
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Business Guide

Antiques/Art/Collectibles/ Framing/Jewelry/Upholstery

28 Dove St. Limited, 28 Dove St., 432-1648. Antiques and collectibles.

Advocacy Center Art & Crafts Gallery, 247 Lark St.

Alacrity Frame Workshop & Gallery, 215 Lark St., 915-1956, www.alacrityframeshop.com.

ALPRO Antique & Lighting, 227 Lark St., 434-3363. Chandeliers/lamps, rewired/repared, houseware polishing.

National Upholstery, 231 Lark St., 434-1458. Upholstery and gift shop; locally produced textile crafts.

The End of the Day, 221 Lark St., 434-3236. Antiques and specialty tea shop.

Treasure Chest, 295 Hamilton St., 449-7119. Thrift store. M-F 11 am-6 pm; Sat 10 am-4 pm.

Arts/Entertainment

eba Center for Dance & Fitness, 351 Hudson Ave., 465-9916. info@eba-arts.org.

Automotive/Appliances

Beaver Body & Paint, 9 Garden Alley, 463-7044. Since 1937.

Capitol Tech Auto Repair, 169 Jefferson St., 432-7781. ASE certified, foreign/domestic.

Dunbrook Mobil, 442 Madison Ave., 434-6324. Full service.

Miller's Corner Garage, 170 Madison Ave., 426-8329.

Beauty/Hair Salons

Absolute Hair, 305 Hamilton St., 432-4925.

Crews, 295 Hamilton St., 448-7360. Hair salon.

DeeVa Nails, 132 Madison Ave.

Elan Hair Studio, 309 Hamilton St., 427-7777.

Hair Werks, 173 S. Pearl St.

Headlines Ltd., 248 Lark St., 434-0299. Haircutting salon.

Hudson Hair Studio, 298 Hudson Ave., 445-9644.

Jonathan's of Atlanta Hair Design, 177 S. Pearl St., 449-4153.

Mahogany, 109 Green St., 465-8018.

Perfect Cut, 299 Lark St., 434-3277.

Spring Break Tanning, 454 Madison Ave., 433-0595.

Stancil's Barber Shop, 114 Madison Ave., 463-6111. Specializing in Afro hair processing.

Super DX, Inc., 189 S. Pearl St.

Svengali Studio and Spa Virgo, 225 Lark St., 462-0560. Full service salon and spa.

The 3-Star Barber Shop, 193 S. Pearl St.

Townsend & Company Hair Salon, 153 S. Swan St., 449-1535.

Bed & Breakfast

Angel's Cafe and B&B, 96 Madison Ave., 426-4104, www.angelsbedandbreakfast.com. Unique urban inn.

Mansion Hill Inn, 115 Philip St. at Park Ave., 465-2038. An urban inn and restaurant.

State Street Mansion, 281 State St., 462-6780.

Serving continental breakfast.

The State House, 393 State St., 427-6063. Casually elegant private accommodations.

Beer/Liquor/Convenience Stores

Capital Wine, 348 Lark St., 689-0160. International selection of premium wines.

Diana Discount Wine & Liquor, 67 Grand St., 449-3840.

Empire News, 10 Delaware Ave., 462-1543.

Imperial InstaMart, 191 Lark St., 462-1260.

Lark News & Grocery, 252 Lark St., 465-5800.

N&H Grocery, 218 Lark St., 436-0484.

Terry's News, 302 Lark St., 432-0331.

Tom's MiniMart, 165 Madison Ave., 426-1217

Books

Dove & Hudson Old Books, 296 Hudson Ave., 432-4518. Used books and publishers' overstocks.

Churches

Cathedral of All Saints, 62 S. Swan St., 465-1342, fax 465-1346, e-mail swaneif@msn.com.

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Corner of Eagle St. and Madison Ave., 463-4447. All are welcome.

First Lutheran Church, 181 Western Ave., 463-1326; www.firstlutheranalbany.org. Oldest Lutheran Congregation in North America.

The Focus Churches:

• **Emmanuel Baptist**, 275 State St., 465-5161.

• **First Presby.**, 362 State St., 449-7332.

• **Israel A.M.E.**, 381 Hamilton St., 463-8779.

• **Trinity Methodist**, 235 Lark St., 463-1293.

• **Westminster Presby.**, 262 State St., 436-8544.

Metropolitan Community Church, 275 State St.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 475 State St., 463-0571, www.Luther95.net/SPELCA-ANYI>

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 107 State Street., 434-3502.

Wilborn Temple, 121 Jay St., 465-7561.

Clothing

Capital Kidzwear, 204 Washington Ave., 462-2791. Affordable children's apparel and accessories.

DAval's Clothiers, Inc., 153 South Pearl St., 221-1405. "Rebirth of Style." Off-site consultations.

Shining Star, 244 Lark St., 465-5520. Contemporary clothing, gifts, incense club.

The Waldorf Tuxedo Company, Lark/Lancaster Sts., 449-5011. Formal wear sales and rentals.

Unique Blends, 116 Madison Ave., 432-7495.

Dry Cleaning/ Laundromats/Tailors

Dan's Cleaners, 284 Lark St., 465-7519.

Quality dry cleaning.

Dove St. Laundromat, Corner Dove and Lancaster Sts. Self-service.

In-Towne Laundry, 14 Delaware Ave., 462-9313. Drop-off service available.

Mansion Hill Laundromat, 167 Madison Ave.

Rocco's, 220 Lark St., 426-4843. Laundromat.

Speed-Wash, 451 Madison Ave. Do-it-yourself Laundromat.

The Laundromat, 21 New Scotland Ave., 462-0656.

Flowers

Lark St. Flower Market, 262 Lark St., 427-9466.

"We push petals."

Dental/Medical

Bert Isen, 16 Delaware Ave., 434-4408. Chiropractic services for children and adults; accept most insurance.

Abdul Khan, 25 Dove St., 463-0522. Dentist

Not-for-Profit Organizations/ Public Service

Albany Area Housing Opportunities,

246 Hudson Ave., 434-8584.

Albany Center Gallery, 39 Columbia St., 462-4775, www.albanycentergalleries.org.

Exhibiting regional contemporary art.

Albany Damien Center, 12 S. Lake Ave., 449-7119. Drop-in community center for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Call for event calendar.

Boys & Girls Club, 19 Delaware Ave., 462-5528.

Neil Breslin, NYS Senate, 455-2225.

Capital District Association of Rental Property Owners (CDARPO), PO Box 11097, Albany 12211-0097, rmcraw@dasn.org, 588-6588. Educational and networking for property owners with a focus on community involvement.

Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council, 332 Hudson Ave., 462-6138.

Children's Defense Fund, 247 Lark St.

Dominick Calsolaro, Council Member, 463-3356.

Richard Conti, Council Member, 436-8546.

Christopher Higgins, County Legislator, 320,8580.

Carolyn McLaughlin, Council Member, 462-1458.

Environmental Advocates, 353 Hamilton St., 462-5526.

Equinox Community Services, Inc., 95 Central Ave., tel 434-6135, fax 434-4502.

Historic Albany Foundation/Historic Albany Parts Warehouse, 83-89 Lexington Ave., 465-2987.

Housing Works, 247 Lark St. Housing for homeless people living with AIDS/HIV.

Lark Street Neighborhood District Management Association, 245 Lark St., 434-3861. *The Heart of Albany.*

Maternal Infant Network of the Capital Region, 307 Hamilton St., 426-1153.

Jack McEneny, NYS Assembly, 455-4178.

New York Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, 353 Hamilton St., 426-8246.

NYS Association of Black & Puerto Rican Legislators, 174 S. Swan St., 427-8363.

Nutrition Consortium, 235 Lark St., 463-1293.

Senior Services of Albany, 25 Delaware Ave., 465-3322.

Resource Center, Inc., 291 Hudson Ave., 463-9242 or 800-811-1175. NYS advocate on mental health services.

South End Improvement Corp., 38 Catherine St., 436-8777. Grant assistance for home repairs.

Upstate Artists Guild, 247 Lark St., 426-3501, www.upstateartistsguild.or

Professional Services

Association of Architects, 235 Lark St., 449-3334.

Becker & Becker, 21 Wilbur St., 462-5814. Attorneys and counselors at law.

Brownstone Graphics, 303 Hudson Ave., 434-8707. Graphic design.

Frank A. Catalano, 154 Madison Ave., 432-5810. Attorney at law.

Capital Education Network, 132 S. Swan St., 434-0876. Financial consulting.

Center for Body/Mind Awareness, 4 Central Ave, 463-5145.

Center Square Counseling Services, 245 Lark St., 465-9700.

Hamel Realty, 291 Hudson Ave., 434-3591.

Hounds on the Hudson, 210-1708. Dog walking and pet care.

Key Bank of New York, Lark St. & Washington Ave. 463-1228; 135 S. Pearl St., 453-1637.

Lewis Oliver, Jr., Esq., 156 Madison Ave., 463-7962.

Math Tutoring, Christina Blais, 148 Lancaster St., 427-6284. From fractions to Course A and GED.

Metroland, 419 Madison Ave., 463-2500. Alternative news weekly.

New York International Real Estate Corp., 138 Green St., 434-1481, nyirec@aol.com. Property management and brokerage.

NYS Association of Architects/American Institute of Architects, 235 Lark St., 465-3191.

NYS Chiropractic Association, 245 Lark St., 455-8817.

Pastures Village Chiropractic, 111 Green St., 436-8053.

oen services, 248 Lark St., 221-8968. Computer repair, diagnostics, setup, and tune up. oenservices@gmail.com

Picasso Digital, 463-3396. Document scanning, print/copy, photography, Web page design.

Plaza Office Center, Corner of S. Swan St and Hudson Ave., 465-3995. Office rental, voice mail, fax, copying, typing services.

Randall E. Kehoe, 127 Madison Ave., 465-2211. Attorneys at law.

Robin's Nest Construction & Renovation, 9 Bleeker Place, 449-2935. Custom carpentry, tile, furniture, doors/windows/trim and more.

Keller Williams, 869-2222 x212. Eileen Carroll Rosen, licensed sales associate.

The Center for Nia and Yoga, 4 Central Ave., 364-5145, www.nia-yoga.com.

Specialty Shops

99 Cents and More, 141 S. Pearl St., 436-7618.

Cottage Herb Farm Shop, 311 State St., 465-1130. Herbs, spices, rare teas and gifts.

Elissa Halloran Designs, 225 Lark St., 432-7090. Funky designs for the body and the home.

Joanna Hetman, Jewelry Artist, 211 Lark St., 434-3829.

Lark Street Tattoo, 274 Lark St., 432-1905. Custom tattooing in all styles.

Little Moon, 467 Madison Ave., 434-6018. Tibetan gift shop.

Romeo's Gifts, 299 Lark St., 434-4014. Beauty and style made affordable.

Simple Gifts, 20 Elm St. 465-0582.

Viva Lark Vegas, 273 Lark St. 434-4907. Professional body piercing.

Sports

The Downtube, 466 Madison Ave., 434-1711.

Bicycles for the entire family.

Seasons Skate Shop, 211 Lark St., 729-2685.

Skating equipment and supplies.

Universal Martial Arts & Fitness Center, 116 Madison Ave., 427-6308.

Dining Guide:

Albany Coffee Shop, 222 Lark St., 465-9029. Sam's home cooking, featuring breakfast and lunch.

Amazing Wok, 267 Lark St., 434-3946. Chinese take-out food. **Angelo's Submarine**, 133 Madison Ave., 463-1357. Submarine sandwiches.

Angel's Café and B&B, 96 Madison Ave., 426-4104. Breakfast/luncheon. **Ben & Jerry's**, 250 Lark St., 463-7182. Ice cream cakes for all occasions. **Bombers Burrito Bar**, 258 Lark St., 463-9636. Serving enormous burritos, tacos, quesadillas and chili. **Bongiorno's Restaurant**,

23 Dove St., 462-9176. Veal is the house specialty. **Bonobo**, 174 Madison Ave., coffee and espresso. **Café Capriccio**, 49 Grand St., 465-0439.

Northern Italian. **Caffe Vero**, 260 Lark Street, Italian Espresso Bar. **Café Hollywood**, 275 Lark St., 472-9043. Albany's fun and funky video bar.

Café 217, 12½ Delaware Ave., 462-0050. Visit www.cafe217.com. **Capital Mart**, 9 New Scotland Ave., 465-4310. **Casa Oaxaca**, 54 Philip St.,

433-7240. Mexican café. **Cheesecake Machismo**, 293 Hamilton St., 427-7019, 429-9012. **Crisan**, 197 Lark St., 445-2727. Bakery and edible

art gallery. **Debbie's Kitchen**, 456 Madison Ave., 463-3829. Unique sandwiches, soups and baked goods. **DeJohn's Restaurant and Pub**,

288 Lark St., 465-5275. **Dino's Pizza**, 420 Madison Ave., 396-3466. **Dunkin Donuts**, Corner Lark St. and Madison Ave., 436-5297. Donuts

and coffee. **Elda's On Lark**, 207 Lark St., 449-3532. **El Loco Mexican Café**, 465 Madison Ave., 436-1855. Traditional Mexican specialties. **El**

Mariachi, 289 Hamilton St., 432-7580; 144 Washington Ave., 465-2568. Fine Mexican/Spanish cuisine. **Flo's Lark Tavern**, 453 Madison Ave.

Golden Dragon, 145 Madison Ave., 433-8057. Chinese take-out. **Grand St. Imports**, 77 Grand St., 465-8465. Fresh meats, produce

and groceries. **Hoda Deli**, 130 Madison Ave. **Hill Street Café**, 180 Madison Ave., 462-3544. A sports bar with great food. **Hot Dog**

Heaven, 216 Lark St., 465-3837. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. **I Love NY Pizza**, 15 New Scotland Ave., 218-5041. **Justin's**,

301 Lark St., 436-7008. Extraordinary food, jazz and art. 512-5116. **Kinnaree**, 193 Lark St. 813-4944. Thai and asian cuisine. **Lark**

Street Deli & Catering, 196 Lark St., 436-9396. Specialty sandwiches. **Legends Sports Bar**, 288 Lark St., 275-4900. Big screen TVs

with pub fare. **Lifestyles Vegetarian Juice Bar**, 420 Madison Ave., 788-5247. **Lil' Buddha**, 274 Lark St., 443-0029. Small plates,

organic, veggie/vegan friendly, tea. **Lombardo's Restaurant**, 119-121 Madison Ave., 462-9180. Fine Italian food. **Mamoun's Mideast**

Café, 206 Washington Ave., 434-3901. Mediterranean cuisine. **Maria's Spanish Food**, 185½ Lark St., 472-9429. **McGuire's**, 353

State St., 463-2100. Fine Dining. **Metro Mini Mart**, 165 Madison Ave., 449-1491. Groceries, deli and ATM. **Mr. Tikka Kebab**, 450

Madison Ave., 472-8080. Indian. **New Image Deli**, 179 S. Pearl St., 463-5439. **Oh Bar**, 304 Lark St., 463-9004. An alternative

neighborhood bar. American cuisine. **Panera Bread**, 50 New Scotland Ave., 443-0480. **Price Chopper Supermarket**, 40 Delaware

Ave., 465-2603. Open 24 hours. **Quintessence**, 11 New Scotland Ave., 434-8186. **Red's Park Place**, 560 Madison Ave., 432-3221. .

Ramona's, 290 Lark St., 449-2010. Open 7 days, breakfast and lunch. **Romeo's Pizza**, 187 Lark St., 449-9000. **Simply Fish**, 147

S. Pearl St., 396-3474. **Soho Pizza**, 269 Lark St., 449-1111. Greenwich Village style brick oven pizza