

In this week's issue

The Year in Pictures

The images that shaped our communities in 2010
See Pages 14-15

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THE Spotlight

Serving Bethlehem, New Scotland & Guilderland

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Local woman brings life to art

Heidi Weinman's creative tendencies started when she was just a girl on a Glenmont farm. The artist will show her work at the Perfect Blend at the Four Corners in Delmar in January. See Page 13.



Putting beginners on ice

The Albany Figure Skating Club offers one of the only two competitive synchronized skating programs in the area. This January, they are hosting a Learn to Skate program. See Page 16.



The Year in Sports

The stories and pictures that shaped 2010. See Page 28.

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Year In Review 2010

Every year, *The Spotlight* takes a look at the stories that shaped our communities. Here is a run-down of the top stories of the first half of 2010. The second half will appear in the Jan. 5 edition.

By CHARLES WIFF
wiffc@spotlightnews.com

January

• Bethlehem Supervisor Sam Messina is sworn in to his first term on New Year's day in front of a standing-room-only crowd at Town Hall. Days later, he selects John Smolinsky as his deputy supervisor.

• In a surprising move, The Normanside County Club in Delmar closes its restaurant for the winter as a cost-cutting measure. A representative said the move to close through March was made after members had "voted with their wallets." Later on, the club decides to outsource its restaurant operations to Panza's of Saratoga Springs, under Chef Anand "AJ" Jayapal.

• A Jan. 5 fire on Park Avenue displaces a Guilderland family from its home. Later that month, Pure Elements Organic Salon raises \$750 to benefit the Skipper family. Fire officials say the fire was caused by improperly disposed of ashes from a wood burning stove.

• Guilderland Councilman Warren Redlich begins shopping a run for the office of governor. The Republican says he would not seek endorsement by GOP leaders, and criticizes his party's support of Rick Lazio, then the forerunner for the party line.

• Daniel McCoy is elected as chairman of the Albany County Legislature, taking over for Charles Houghtaling, who had held the position since 1994. McCoy represents southwest segments of the City of Albany and portions of North Bethlehem and Slingerlands.

• The Guilderland Town Board gets off to a rocky start when councilmen Mark Grimm and Warren Redlich rail against the appointment of Richard Sherwood to town attorney and Paul Caputo as a member of the Planning Board. Both appointments pass 3-2.

• Albany County completes a purchase of a 9-mile stretch

of land from Canadian Pacific Roadway that is to eventually become the county's Rail Trail. The \$700,000 purchase cost is only a portion of the project's \$7.8 million price tag, though, and at the close of the year the county is still looking for grants to build the trail at no cost to taxpayers.

• The story breaks locally that Delmar resident and former UN weapons inspector William Scott Ritter was arrested in Pennsylvania in November on charges he showed himself masturbating on a Web camera to someone he thought was a 15-year-old girl, but in reality was a police officer, according to police in the Barrett Township Police Department. Ritter had two sex sting run-ins with police in 2001, but charges were either dismissed or never filed.

• Yoga instruction studio Breathing Room opens its doors at the Four Corners in Delmar. Sisters and Delmar residents Mikko Cook and Krista Spohr offer uniquely targeted classes in yoga and energy healing for beginners and experts alike.

• The Bethlehem Town Board ponders the composition of the Planning Board with two vacancies existing on the seven-member board. The decision is eventually made to fill those two seats with Thomas Coffey and Steve Rice rather than shrink the entity, but not before a contentious meeting that sees public infighting between the newly-minted supervisor and the Town Board.

• The Bethlehem Town Board approves a series of liaison positions between board members and town departments, over the protests of Supervisor Sam Messina. The supervisor argues the program is not needed and votes against it, and also accuses board members of blindsiding him with the topic.

• Bethlehem Supervisor Sam Messina delivers the annual State of the Town address just days into his first term. He says "seeds of success" have been planted by

YIR Page 8

Can you hear them now?

Verizon to get public hearing on Jan. 12 in hopes to provide FiOS to town

ANDREW BEAM
beama@spotlightnews.com

Town of Bethlehem residents may soon have another choice when it comes to television providers, if a bid by Verizon Wireless to bring its FiOS network to town is successful.

A company representative made a presentation to the Town Board on Wednesday, Dec. 22. The town has been in negotia-

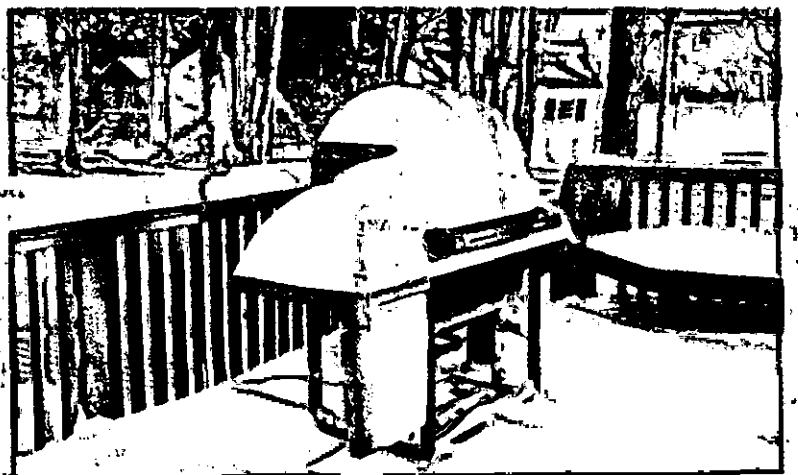
tions with Verizon since July, and residents will have a chance to voice their opinions on the plan at a public hearing on Jan. 12.

FiOS bundles together phone, Internet and television service over a fiber optic delivery system, and Verizon has been building up such a network in Bethlehem.

Link Janis, business labor for

Verizon Page 18

Distant memories



A grill in a Glenmont backyard sits under seven inches of snow on Monday, Dec. 27. See page 3 for more on how the area was affected.
Tom Heffernan Sr./Spotlight

High density monopine model chosen

Bethlehem Planning Board votes to table ESCO's tower application

ANDREW BEAM
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To have more branches or not to have more branches?

That was the question the Town of Bethlehem's Planning Board was faced with on the evening of Tuesday, Dec. 21, regarding ESCO Towers' cell phone tower application at 75 Van Dyke Road. The tower would eventually hold equipment for AT&T and Verizon.

The board heard from Thor Holbek, owner of the Holbek Group, which is being retained by ESCO to construct the mono-

pine design. Holbek requested an extension on the site review plan to Jan. 18, and also provided the board with Holbek's vision of how the monopine would look.

The main cusp of Tuesday's debate was over the density of the display meant to conceal the towers. The monopine is a cell phone tower disguised as a tree, and Hobeck said that if the project were set to have higher or medium density that it would not make much a difference.

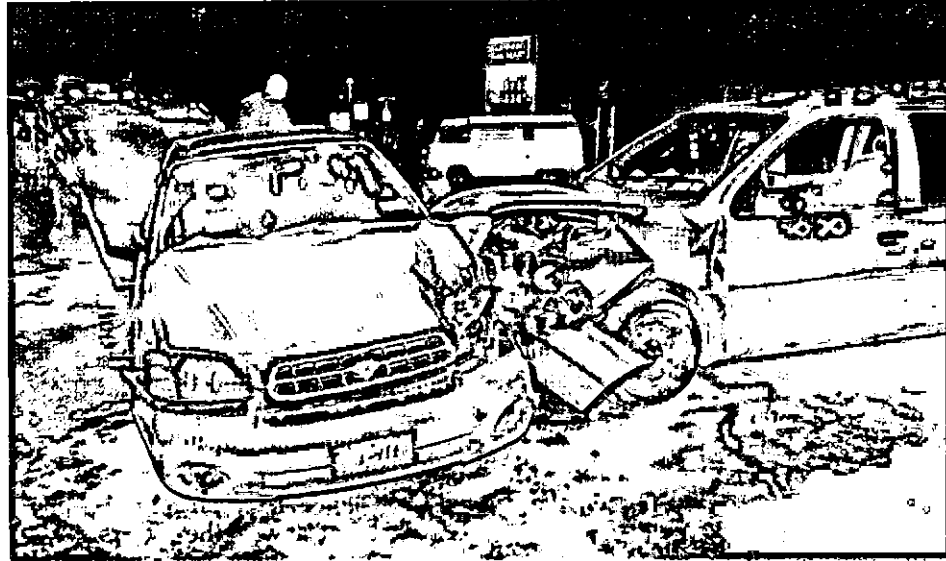
"Basically, it's just a few more branches filling it in with some light coming through," he said. "It makes a fuller tree."

The difference between the two, Holbeck said, would be 70 branches in on a high density tree and 58 branches on a medium density tree. The density has

Model Page 18

Police Blotter

Personal injury accident in Glenmont



A personal-injury crash happened on Thursday, Dec. 23, about 6 p.m., at the intersection of Route 9W and Feura Bush Road in Glenmont. Both drivers were taken to area hospitals with non life-threatening injuries.

Tom Heffernan Sr./Spotlight

Slingerlands woman arrested for DWI, possession of marijuana

The Bethlehem Police Department on Monday, Dec. 20, arrested Georgianna Smith, 65, of 654 Elm Ave., Slingerlands, and charged her with DWI, unlawful possession of marijuana and following too closely.

Police at about 5:26 p.m. responded to a personal injury motor vehicle accident near the intersection of Delaware Avenue and Minnowbrook Avenue in Delmar. Upon arriving they found Smith, who had been operating a 2008 Toyota Yaris, to have the odor of alcohol on her breath, slurred speech and impaired motor function, according to arrest reports. She was placed under the care of EMS and transported to Albany Medical Center

for medical treatment. A field breath test was allegedly positive for alcohol, police said.

At Albany Medical Center, Smith agreed to submit to a blood test and when her jacket was removed to have blood drawn, police allegedly observed a bag of a green, leafy substance inside an open pocket. The bag contained 16.4 grams of marijuana, according to police.

Smith was released on her own recognizance and given a court date of Tuesday, Jan. 4. Police said the case is still open and more charges are possible pending the results of the blood test.

Ravena man arrested for DWI
The Bethlehem Police

Department on Saturday, Dec. 18, arrested Keith J. Tambasco, 25, of 14 Albright Court, Ravena, and charged him with DWI and failure to keep right.

Police at about 3:36 a.m. observed Tambasco's 2003 Mitsubishi Eclipse crossing the double yellow line on Kenwood Avenue in Delmar, according to arrest reports. Police said Tambasco had the odor of alcohol on his breath and watery, glassy, bloodshot eyes. He allegedly failed sobriety tests and was placed in custody. He allegedly refused to take a breath test at the police station.

Tambasco was released to his sister and given a court date of Tuesday, Jan. 18.

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Bryant Asset awards Generation Grant to two area organizations

Last June, Bryant Asset Protection, Inc announced that it would begin awarding quarterly grants of up to \$1,000 to local community residents or groups that are providing a positive benefit in the local area.

The Charles and Carole Bryant Generation Grants are named for the parents of Mark and Jeffrey Bryant who run the Slingerlands insurance and financial services firm.

The first such \$1,000 award was made last September to the Delmar women's health group- To Life!

Bryant Asset Protection has granted a joint second award in the series to two local groups with disparate missions, but nonetheless, "We found both of these groups highly deserving. They both provide service to the community that is in keeping with the spirit of love and giving that defines this season," said Bryant Asset Protection's co-owner Jeff Bryant.

The winner of one \$500 grant is the Bethlehem Community Christmas Dinner, hosted each year by the First United Methodist Church in Delmar. This organization provides a hot Christmas meal and holiday fellowship to more than 100 greater Bethlehem residents who otherwise may be alone on Christmas.

"The award from Bryant Asset Protection was timely and much appreciated by



A Generation Grant of \$500 from Bryant Asset Protection has been awarded to Peppertree Rescue, Inc. Peppertree is an Albany-based nonprofit dog rescue service that finds homes for shelter dogs of suitable temperament.

our group. It will support the purchase of food and other necessities to make this a happy holiday for those who will join us this year," said Arthur Copeland who chairs the Bethlehem Christmas Dinner.

A second grant of \$500 has been awarded to Peppertree Rescue, Inc. Peppertree is an Albany-based nonprofit dog rescue service that finds homes for shelter dogs of suitable temperament. Peppertree also provides critical education to dog owners and potential adopters about the value of adopting older dogs or dogs who have suffered hardship or trauma. Much of Peppertree's budget is devoted to restoring such dogs to a healthy, adoptable condition. The nation's economy has resulted in

a sharp increase in the number of pets surrendered to local shelters because owners can no longer provide for them.

"The Christmas season offers people warmth and companionship. Our choice of Peppertree Rescue will allow adopted dogs and the families who give them love a year-round holiday experience," said Mark Bryant. "We have a soft spot for dogs in our agency and we know that both dogs and people will benefit from this grant."

The next Charles and Carole Bryant Generation Grant will be made in March, 2011. Those interested in nominating a local group or individual can do so on the Bryant Asset Protection website, www.bryantasset.com.



Despite this accident on Route 144, Bethlehem officials dealt with all six inches of the season's first significant snowfall with relatively few incidents.

Tom Heffernan Sr./Spotlight

Town deals with first major snowfall

Old Man Winter may have been slow to arrive in the Capital District, but a season of relatively fair weather ended in the evening on Sunday, Dec. 26, with snow continuing through the night into Monday.

Much of the region saw accumulations of over six inches of snow, with some areas being hit harder than others. Area commuters found going slow on Monday morning.

Conditions were worsened by high winds, which blew the white stuff back onto roads behind snow plows.

Still, officials in the Town of Bethlehem said the storm turned out better than with 2009's first snowfall, which

fell quickly in the early morning hours, giving crews little time to work before rush hour.

This year, town Highway Department workers were out at around 8 p.m. Sunday salting and sanding roads, and plows made the rounds throughout the day Monday.

"I think this first big storm was handled very well," said Supervisor Sam Messina. "I think they did a good job. I did not hear anything negative coming in to me or the police."

The year's first snow may have come later than usual in the year, but Messina estimated a lack of winter work for Highway Department

crews won't mean much of a surplus in the budget. The fall leaf cleanup required more labor than usual, in part because heavy rains meant crews couldn't vacuum up leaves. They instead collected them by hand in many cases, which was time consuming.

Still, mild winters can only mean more money stays in the coffers.

"I think we're in pretty good shape, given that we only had one snowfall," Messina said.

Forecasters weren't expecting the snowfall to stick around for the long haul. Predictions called for temperatures to rise above freezing over the weekend.

—Charles Wiff

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Winter storm safety tips from The American Red Cross

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain.

The American Red Cross Of Northeastern New York Region wants everyone to be prepared when winter storms are upon us. Use the list below to be prepared for storms this season.

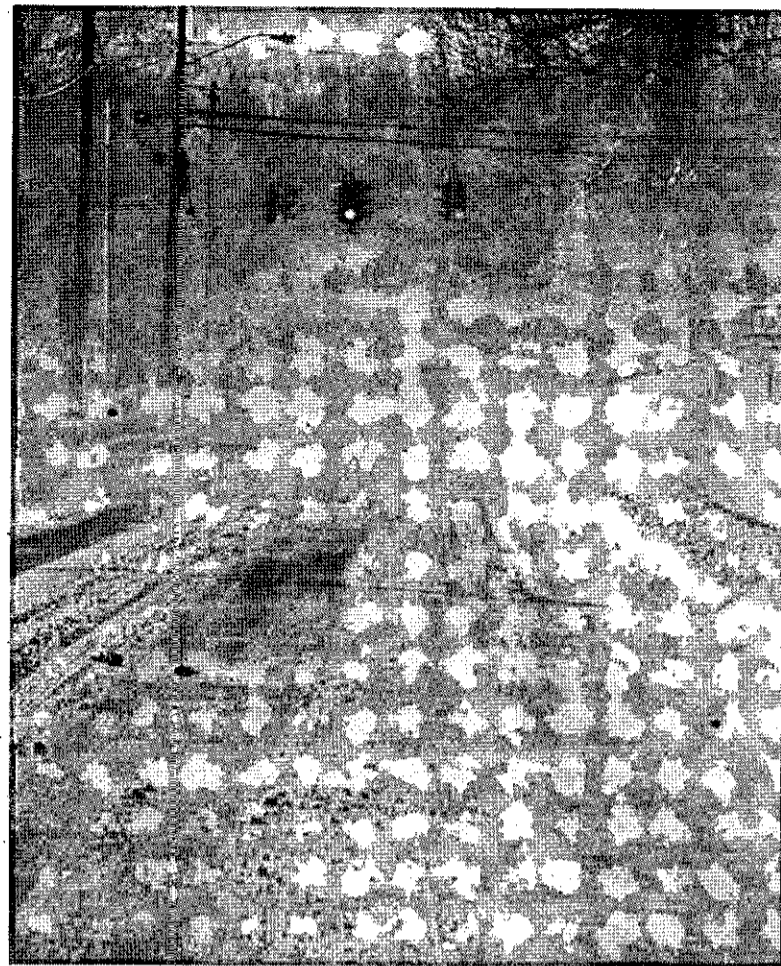
- Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing, wear mittens and a hat (preferably one that covers your ears).
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Minimize travel. If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.
- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Winterize your vehicle

and keep the gas tank full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.

- Insulate your home by installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic from the inside to keep cold air out.
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside during winter weather. Move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.
- Running water, even at a trickle, helps prevent pipes from freezing.
- Water-at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day.
- Go to a designated public shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold.
- Avoid driving when conditions include sleet, freezing rain or drizzle, snow or dense fog.
- Before tackling strenuous tasks in cold temperatures, consider your physical condition, the weather factors and the nature of the task.
- Protect yourself from

frostbite and hypothermia by wearing warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in several layers. Stay indoors, if possible.

- Help people who require special assistance such as elderly people living alone, people with disabilities and children.
- Flashlight — Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Extra batteries
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Extra cash
- All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside and kept clear.



Let your family know you're safe

If your community experiences a severe winter storm, or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through RedCross.org to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call 1-866-GET-INFO to register yourself and your family.

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community.

Photo by Tom Heffernan Sr.

About the American Red Cross: The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members

and their families.

The Red Cross is a charitable organization - not a government agency - and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit www.redcrossnyny.org.

Got views?

Spotlight Newspapers welcomes letters from readers on subjects of local and regional interest. Letters are subject to editing and should be contained to 500 words.

All letters must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Spotlight Newspapers reserves the right to limit the number of letters published from a single author.

Submissions can be e-mailed to news@spotlightnews.com, faxed to 439-0609, or mailed to Spotlight, P.O. Box 100, Delmar 12054.

The deadline for all letters is noon Friday prior to publication.

Spotlight Newspapers also welcomes longer opinion pieces for the Point of View section.

For information on submitting a Point of View, e-mail news@spotlightnews.com or call 439-4949, ext. 416.

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By Matt Zalen



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'Mind'-blowing success

BH-BL graduate co-writes blockbuster hit

By ALYSSA JUNG
jung@spotlightnews.com

Burnt Hills has gone Hollywood, kind of. Brent Simons, a '93 graduate of Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School, is co-author of "Megamind," the 3D animated superhero comedy film starring the voices of Will Ferrell, Tina Fey, Jonah Hill, Brad Pitt and David Cross. He said seeing one of his screenplays make it onto the big screen is literally a dream come true.

"It's been absolutely amazing. Since I was a kid, something I've always dreamed about was writing a story and seeing it up on screen," said Simons.

Simons and his writing partner Alan J. Schoolcraft racked up "astronomical" phone bills creating "Megamind," writing it coasts apart with Simons based in California and Schoolcraft in New York, while both were working minimum wage jobs.

"Megamind" wasn't an instant hit, not immediately selling when Simons and Schoolcraft put it out to the film scene in 2003. What it did do, though, was put them on the map. The script was what Simons calls their calling card.

"It opened the doors for us. It got us an agent, got us screenwriting assignments where the producers come to you with an idea," said Simons.

On his fifth wedding anniversary, his life changed again.

"I got a call out of the blue that Ben Stiller and Dreamworks Animation wanted to make [our screenplay] into a movie," said Simons. "From there, it was another four year process because animation take so long."

The film was originally written to be a live action movie, but Simons said not much about the script was adapted to fit animation. Throughout the entire process, Simons was kept in the loop.

"Pretty much what we wrote initially is up on screen. It was great because they kept us involved the entire time and we did work very closely with the artists going back and forth to see what works," said Simons.

Will Ferrell lends his voice to the character Megamind, which Simons said is ironically special.

"We had originally written the character Megamind with Will Ferrell in mind because we were big fans of his ... we pictured him the entire time," said Simons. "So in we'd be in voiceover sessions giving each other that sort of 'holy crap' look that he was actually the one."

The rest of the cast being an all star line up thrilled them even more.

"We're huge comedy geeks, so it was like having the dream team of funny people in your movie," said Simons.

The movie is about a villain who accidentally defeats his hero



BH-BL grad Brent Simons, far right, attended the premiere of "Megamind" in Hollywood with his wife, Bonita, and his writing partner, Alan J. Schoolcraft.

Submitted photo

and then doesn't know what to do with his life, so he creates a new hero that becomes an even worse villain than he ever was.

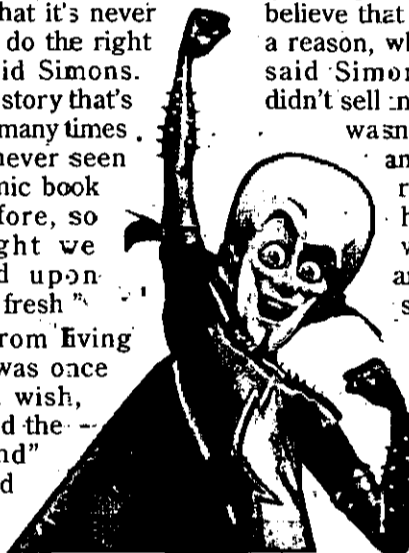
"It hit us that we had a story about redemption ... that idea that it's never too late to do the right thing," said Simons. "It's an old story that's been done many times, but we'd never seen it with comic book villain before, so we thought we happened upon something fresh."

Aside from living out what was once a childish wish, Simons said the "Megamind" whirlwind has taught him a valuable

lesson.

"In this business, you realize it's really about timing and it is very much right place at the right time. I feel like you have to be optimistic about it and believe that things happen for a reason, when they happen," said Simons. "So while it didn't sell initially, it obviously wasn't the right time and I think it's also a rare case. You hear horror stories of writing something and something else shows up on screen, but we couldn't be happier with the final product."

Simons credits two people from his past with encouraging him to pursue a



©DreamWorks

passion that in high school, was untapped.

"My youth group leader Dan Matthews got me into comedy. I was a very shy kid and he realized I was really funny and encouraged me to get out in front of people ... I fell in love with sketch comedy," said Simons. "Christine Gangemi taught a film class in my high school and that was at a time where I first started seeing films as more than entertainment, as an art form. [She] encouraged me to pursue it on my own and look at it a different way."

"Megamind" might be his first script to make it into theaters, but he's hopeful it won't be his last. And if some of his past and present projects are any indication, he seems to have a good chance.

"We got some screenwriting assignments for films that weren't ultimately made, like a redo of the film 'Small Soldiers' for Dreamworks and we have a television project in the works right now," said Simons. "We wrote a movie for Ellen Degeneres and Warner Brothers ... another animated one. It's called 'The Dog Show' and it hasn't been green lit for production but it's been announced in the trades. It's another case of meeting somebody you're a huge fan of and it's just really a kick."

"Megamind" was distributed by Paramount Pictures and released in Digital 3D, IMAX 3D and 2D theaters on Nov. 5, grossing more than \$46 million in its opening weekend.

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Matters of Opinion in The Spotlight

The editorial that never was

For the past few years, The Spotlight has written, in conjunction with our annual Year in Review feature, two editorials: "The year that never was" for the last week of the year, and "The year we'd like to see" for the first week of the New Year.

In the past, we've used the last editorial of the year to highlight some of the more unsavory or less than flattering bits of news we've had the opportunity to cover the previous 51 weeks.

Editorial

This year, we're doing something different — we're highlighting some of the more positive stories we've been fortunate to cover, in the hopes that there will be more to come.

Despite the economy or because of it, we saw a lot of unity in 2010 in the communities we cover. We saw a community rally around the Skipper family, who lost their Guilderland home in a fire early in the year. We witnessed a wave of support from the Guilderland community and throughout the Capital District when Rachel Rodino, a 7-year-old Guilderland girl who struggled with Huntington's disease, finally succumbed to the disease.

We also saw Students and teachers at Altamont Elementary School organize a fundraiser to benefit Convoy of Hope, a relief organization working in Haiti in the aftermath of the January earthquake.

In April, a record 707 people finish the 22nd Delmar Dash, a 5-mile run winding through the streets of the hamlet.

Throughout the year, we saw communities protest and take action when their public parks and libraries were threatened with budget cuts.

There is a saying about the media that "if it bleeds it leads." But be assured that The Spotlight doesn't delight in bad news or endeavor to sensationalize it.

We are a community newspaper — your community newspaper — and though we are bound by objectivity to not judge the news we report, we are prejudiced by humanity to appreciate the more positive stories we have the privilege to cover.

Now is the time to find student aid money for college

Gather your paperwork; Apply online

By NANCY OWEN

The writer is a media relations officer for ACT.

January is nearly here and that means it's time to apply for college financial aid for the upcoming school year. High school seniors across the country can use downtime during the holiday break to take the first step toward financing their education.

Students who plan to attend college during the 2011-2012 school year can apply online through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) website as early as possible starting Jan. 1, 2011. To save time, the U.S. Department of Education recommends students first:

- Gather the documents they need.
- Print a FAFSA on the Web Worksheet.
- Apply for a PIN (personal identification number).
- Check their eligibility for federal student aid.
- Note important deadlines.

Federal financial aid is available for students attending two- or four-year public or private colleges, as well as career or trade schools. The aid is intended to cover school expenses such as tuition,

room and board, books, other supplies, and transportation. Most students receive aid based upon their financial need. Individual colleges and universities award financial aid for their students on a first come, first served basis.

Point of View

Students can also receive financial aid in the form of grants, loans or work study. Grants include Pell Grants and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. Loans include Federal Stafford Loans (made to students) and PLUS loans (made to parents).

There are also direct loans, Perkins Loans, and the Federal Family Education Loan. Work-study programs provide jobs, usually on campus, so students can help pay for educational expenses.

To find out about federal financial aid programs and

your rights and responsibilities under these programs, read "Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid" from the Department of Education. You also can request a free paper copy by contacting the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-4-FED-AID. The guide is available in English and Spanish. The FAFSA website is <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/index.htm>.

Founded in 1959, ACT is a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Iowa City, Iowa and dedicated to helping people achieve education and workplace success. ACT provides a broad array of assessments, research, information, and program management solutions in the areas of education and workforce development. Each year, ACT serves millions of people—nationally and internationally—in middle and high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies.

Visit www.act.org for more information.

Clarification

In the story "Hughes files suit, seeks clean record" in Dec. 22 edition of *The Spotlight*, it was stated a lawsuit filed by Selkirk resident John A. Robinson alleged Officer Christopher Hughes had stuck his stocking feet in Robinson's face while he was awaiting arraignment at the Bethlehem Police Station. Robinson made this specific statement himself in an interview with *The Spotlight*. The lawsuit itself says the following: "Hughes suddenly took off his shoes and began to physically assault Robinson with his stocking feet injuring him while he was helplessly handcuffed to this table located in the middle of the main room of the BPD [Bethlehem Police Department]." *The Spotlight* regrets any confusion.

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Weekly poll

This weeks question:

Do you make New Year's resolutions?

Log on to www.spotlightnews.com to cast your vote.

Last week's poll results:

Question: "Do you give to Salvation Army bell ringers?"

- Yes. We all need a little help.: 61%
- No. I can't afford to.: 22%
- I gave at the office.: 16%

The mission of Community Media Group LLC is to be a vibrant, trustworthy and indispensable source of news connecting and strengthening our readers in the unique communities we serve. We adhere to a philosophy that high-quality community newspapers, specialty publications and online products will build value for our readers, clients, shareholders and employees.

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Winter is for grown-up readers at V'ville Library

While summer is for kid readers, winter is for grownup readers - who are all invited to join the Winter Reading Club for adults! You won't be asked to do macramé, cartooning or science projects, because there are no meetings involved.

In fact, if you have a computer, it can all be done online. All you need to do is cozy up with a good book and tell us about it.

Share your thoughts - good or bad - about whatever you are reading and you become eligible to win books and library bags donated by the Friends of the Library for weekly prize drawings. At the end of February, we'll put all the names back in the pot and draw a Grand Prize winner! It only takes one book to win!



online, go to the library website and click on Winter Reading Club. If you aren't computer savvy, ask for a card to fill out at the library. Fiction and non-fiction reviews are welcome.

And, remember, if we don't have the book you want at VPL, we can get it for you!

Mini book sale

Another source for some (cheap!) reads while you are doing your winter hibernating is the FOL mini-book sale now going on in the main reading room. Books are displayed on the table behind the reference desk and are replenished daily.

from January 8 - 16. You can clear those fines off your card and your conscience by returning whatever you can locate that is overdue. Start looking now!

Library closed New Year's Day

The library is closing at 1 p.m. on December 31 and remains closed on New Year's Day.

Visit the library website at www.voorheesvillelibrary.org

Barbara Vink

All library programming is free (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. Voorheesville Public Library is located at 51 School Road, Voorheesville.

For information, call 765-2791 or visit www.voorheesvillelibrary.org.

Submit a review

To submit a review

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Fine Free Nine runs

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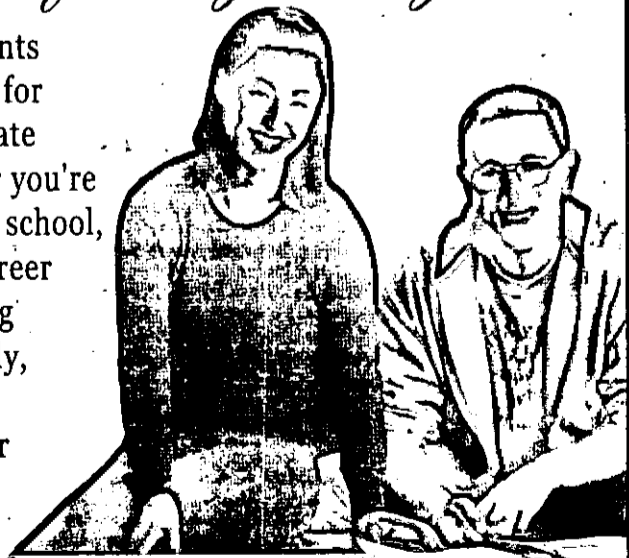
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Coats for vets



The law firm of Tully Rinckey this year purchased winter coats for all 28 residents of the Albany Housing Coalition Inc.'s Veterans Housing and Services, a non-profit organization that provides housing, employment and case management services to local veterans. The firm's Founding Partner, Mathew B. Tully, on Thursday, Dec. 23, delivered the coats to the "The Vet House" wrapped in red ribbons and personalized for each veteran resident. "We are grateful to the folks at Tully Rinckey for their generosity and caring spirit. We welcome them to our team of local community supporters. Together, we will end the disgrace of veteran's homelessness," said Joseph Sluszka, Albany Housing Coalition Inc.'s Executive Director, in a statement.

Submitted photos

HUDSON RIVER COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION OFFERS ONLINE DEFENSIVE DRIVING COURSE

Hudson River Community Credit Union is now offering an online defensive driving course.

Members and non-members may register for the online class at www.hrccu.org for only \$25.00 with a credit card (VISA®, MasterCard, American Express, Discover)

A portion of the registration fee will be donated to **HRCCU's Annual Credit Union Care for Kids Campaign** to benefit area hospital pediatric programs.

Successful completion of this 6 hour course fulfills the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) approved Point and Insurance Reduction Program qualifications which provides a 10% reduction for three years of the motorist's liability, no-fault and collision insurance premiums.

There is no final exam and you will receive a certificate of completion by the American Safety Council to present to your insurance provider. The council will also contact New York DMV to have the course entered on any participants' driving records and it will automatically reduce up to four active points.

HRCCU GR8 2B Young Members ages 16 to 25 who are a part of the First Time Auto Loan Buyers Program will receive a complimentary online defensive driving course voucher.

Hudson River Community Credit Union's mission is to improve the well-being of members and their families by providing quality financial services with the best overall value.



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The credit union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative owned and governed by its members.

YIR

(From Page 1)

previous administrations and speaks of his desire to implement many of the plans the town already has in place.

- The Guilderland Town Board appoints Ken Brownell as chairman of the town's Zoning Review Committee.

- The Town of Guilderland declares a Western Avenue junkyard to be illegal under a 1998 local law and begins the process of forcing the owner to clean the property up or hire a contractor to do it at the owner's expense. At the same time, the Town Board orders a Carmen Road property owner to clean up his land as well.

February

- Guilderland Councilman Warren Redlich formally announces his bid for the governor's office and picks Libertarian Party stalwart Eric Sundwall as his campaign manager.

- Protests mount over Gov. David Paterson's 2010 budget proposal, including with area libraries, who say their state funding has been slashed year after year to a fraction of its former level.

- The search for a new Guilderland Central School District superintendent gets underway in earnest. Superintendent John McGuire previously announced he would be leaving in July. The school

board eventually hires Marie Wiles in July.

- A new law goes into effect requiring the presence of carbon monoxide detectors in homes and apartments statewide. "Amanda's Law" is named after a 16-year-old Western New Yorker who succumbed to carbon monoxide poisoning while sleeping over at a friend's house. Firefighters, lawmakers and even landlords praise the law.

- The 6th annual Concerns of Police Survivors Blue Friday fundraiser sets up across the Capital District, including at the parking lot of the Regency Hotel on Route 9W, where members of the Bethlehem Police Department are stationed. Blue Friday is a way to recognize local officers, along with the 140 to 160 officers nationwide who are killed in the line of duty each year.

- Police investigating a Delmar house fire that occurred in December of 2009 say they're unable to interview a key witness. Police say the mother of 15-year-old Keenan Sanchez, who was allegedly in the basement when a fire broke out that consumed the family's house, refuses to let investigators conduct an interview with him.

- Students and teachers at Altamont Elementary School organize a fundraiser to benefit Convoy of Hope, a relief organization working in Haiti in the aftermath of the January earthquake. Trisha Zigrosser and her third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students create "mandalas" to be sold in a silent auction at Guilderland Public Library.

February

The Guilderland Chamber of Commerce and the American Cancer Society holds Guilderland's first ever Relay For Life event at the Guilderland YMCA.

- The Town of Guilderland donates 191 acres of land to the Pine Bush Preserve Commission. Shortly thereafter, the Pine Bush Preserve's Discovery Center receives the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold rating, reserved for environmentally friendly buildings.

- Albany County joins over two dozen other counties in offering a prescription drug discount card for residents through a program run by Pro-Act, Inc. Discounts range from 10 to 20 percent on name brand medicines and from 20 to 70 percent on generics, and all residents are eligible to use the card.

- The Bethlehem Soccer Club pitches preliminary designs for an indoor facility at its Soccerplex fields on Wemple Road. The preliminary plan calls for the building to hold three large regulation sized fields, one slightly smaller field and offices. The club hopes to largely fundraise for construction money and not raise participation fees.

- A developer planning to build a condominium project in North Bethlehem drops a Stewart's Station from its design after neighbors register their disapproval in local media and at

town meetings. The commercial element at the Blessings Corner project is replaced with more condo units.

- The Guilderland Chamber of Commerce and the American Cancer Society holds Guilderland's first ever Relay For Life event at the Guilderland YMCA.

- Gov. David Paterson's budget office announces a list of state parks and recreation areas that could face closure under the 2010 budget, including John Boyd Thacher State Park, which officials say would save \$225,000 if shuttered. The announcement sparks an immediate public protest, which centers locally around Thacher.

- Despite a rainy summer, a Town of Bethlehem report finds town recreational facilities still fared well during the warm weather season. Though revenues were down, so were expenditures, making for a relatively successful year.

- The state Department of Environmental Conservation declares the former site of Roxy Cleaners on Delaware Avenue a superfund site, due to elevated levels of harmful chemicals associated with the dry cleaning process found at the site. The owner of Best Cleaners, which occupies the location now, says

his business does not use any of the chemicals in question and the DEC confirms Roxy is being treated as the source of the contamination.

- The Bethlehem Central School District renegotiates its contract with its principals union to cut the annual salary rate increase in half. The new document calls for a 2.5 percent annual salary increase for the unit's 14 members, down from 5 percent, and other concessions that altogether are expected to save the district \$30,000.

- The Bethlehem Planning Board approves a change to The Eddy Village at Beverwyck's expansion plan that calls for 24 beds of "greenhouse style" nursing home care at its North Bethlehem facility. A 2006 plan had included a larger expansion, but the new project should make for a more home-like environment for residents.

- A night of heavy snow causes traffic woes across the Capital District, but in the Hilltowns even more of the white stuff means barn and home roofs collapsing, resulting in the deaths of four cattle.

- The Saratoga Shoe Depot on Delaware Avenue in Delmar closes its doors. Owner Frank Panza decides to consolidate his inventory at his Saratoga Springs store.

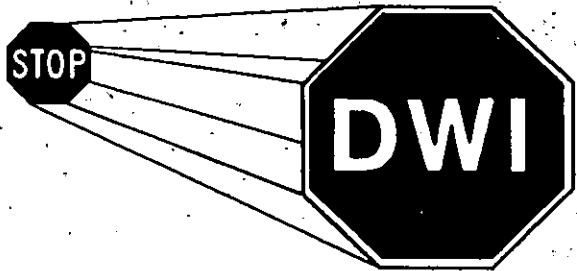
March

- The Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce at its 25th annual Silver Awards Dinner honors

March Page 9

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March

(From Page 8)

Delmar Florist owner Barbara Ostroff and Glenmont Car Wash owner Dennis O'Shaughnessy, Sr. as Business Persons of the Year. Keith Bennett, owner of Security Supply Corp., also receives the Lifetime Achievement Award and Lois Vadney is recognized with the Citizen of the Year Award.

• The Bethlehem Planning Board approves a rezone of an area off of Fischer Boulevard in Slingerlands for the 83-building residential development Phillipin Kill Manor, after about seven years of planning.

• The Bethlehem Central school board starts its budget workshops aimed at cutting the budget, and gets its first dose of public pushback on a proposal to close the middle school pool. The district eventually decides to keep the pool open but tweaks the fee structure for outside group use. In the coming weeks the board examines athletics, clubs, lunch prices and transportation for ways to save money.

• The election season gets underway, with Timothy L. Carney, a real estate agent and former candidate for president of the Albany Common Council, announcing he will challenge Sen. Neil Breslin D-Delmar, in the Democratic primary for the 46th Senate District. Luke Martland, formerly assistant counsel to the governor, announces his own candidacy for the seat shortly thereafter.

• The Guilderland Central School District prepares a budget that shaves about \$4 million in spending in the face of declining state aid. Twenty-two teaching positions and five administrator positions are part of the cuts.

• Longtime town employee and the veritable founder of the Town of Bethlehem Senior Services Department Karen Pelletier leaves Town Hall

with 32 years of service behind her. Current and former town leaders honor her at a Town Board meeting.

• Developer Boswell Engineering brings before the Town of Bethlehem plans to build a massive development of apartments, homes and commercial space in Glenmont. Wemple Corners is envisioned as a walkable "new urbanism" development, but there has not been much movement on the project since the initial presentation.

• A Public Employee Relations Board arbitrator finds Bethlehem Police Officer Christopher Hughes not guilty of disciplinary charges leveled against him by the department in June of 2009. Hughes, after being brought up on the charges, went to the media with information about the now-infamous recording of Chief Louis Corsi uttering a racial slur during a telephone call. Hughes continues to draw a salary under a medical leave that could possibly last until he reaches retirement age.

• A state appellate court upholds Christopher Porco's 2006 murder conviction. Porco continues serving his two consecutive sentences of 25 years to life in prison for killing his father and attacking his mother with an axe in their Delmar home in 2004.

• Albany county, city and Town of Bethlehem emergency services converge on the Normanskill to retrieve a fly fisherman who has become stranded in the middle of the river. The Albany resident benefits from a quick response and is rescued safely.

• Area police bust two men at a Troy home for allegedly selling heroin, and say the duo had been conducting their operation out of a home on Hanover Drive in Bethlehem prior to moving to Troy. A SWAT team raid allegedly discovers a heroin mill used to process and distribute heroin in the Troy raid.

April

The Town of Bethlehem secures \$291,000 in grants from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for solar panel installation in Elm Avenue Park and the hiring of an energy management employee.

• Albany County Executive Michael Breslin paints a gloomy fiscal picture during his State of the County address, saying next year's budget deficit could balloon to \$35 million and sales tax receipts would continue to drop.

• The controversial size cap law in New Scotland fails to pass, despite having a 3-2 majority of the Town Board's votes. A protest petition signed by a majority of the businesses in the commercial zone means a supermajority will be required to pass the measure. A developer's plan to build a Target store in the town had sparked the move towards the cap, which would limit the size of any commercial entity in town. Some worried such a restriction would limit existing business owners, or keep out enterprises the town wanted.

• An Albany County Sheriff's Officer deputy shoots and kills an illegal immigrant near Albany International Airport in the first time in recent memory a deputy has used a firearm in the line of duty. Police say Marcus DeJesus Alvarez threw a chunk of concrete at Deputy Vincent Igoe and then charged at the officer, who shot him twice in the torso. Igoe had approached Alvarez after seeing him walking alone on a dark road during his patrol. An investigation by the District Attorney's office later finds the officer's actions to have been warranted.

• The Guilderland Town Board approves the master plan for the Hamlet of Guilderland Center. The completion of the master plan develops a framework to guide future development in the hamlet, and marks the completion of all the

master plans suggested in the town's comprehensive plan.

• The Town of Bethlehem taps former and new 20/20 Advisory Committee members to form an implementation committee.

• Bethlehem Chief Water Treatment Plant Operator Richard Sayward is awarded the 2009 Management Innovation Award by the Capital Branch of the American Public Works Association, in large part due to his work to find about \$300,000 in savings by improving the town's water treatment operations.

• Albany County legislators send a letter to town leaders in the area warning the county may look to reduce the sales tax distribution to towns in the face of mounting budget troubles. Municipal leaders are quick to criticize the idea.

• Voters in the Westmere Fire District approve borrowing \$5.27 million to build a new firehouse. Construction is planned for 2011.

April

• The United State census effort kicks off nationwide. Local and national leaders encourage the return of a 10-question form, the shortest and simplest one sent out since 1790, according to census officials.

• Ground is broken on a \$13.5 million project to rebuild Fuller Road in the Town of Guilderland.

• A contingent of 43 BC students spend nine days in China on the district's first overseas field trip since a moratorium was imposed in 2001. The group visits the famous terra cotta

soldier army near Xian and the Great Wall near Beijing, and also the modern city of Shanghai, where China's financial district is located.

• Bethlehem police arrest a department dispatcher for allegedly pointing a handgun at his ex-girlfriend. Eric Kerr is suspended with pay for months until the case against him is dismissed in November, with prosecutors saying they were unable to secure witness testimony.

• The Town of Bethlehem secures \$291,000 in grants from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for solar panel installation in Elm Avenue Park and the hiring of an energy management employee.

• Local DEC wildlife pathologist and outspoken environmental proponent Ward Stone says his research indicates stone dust emitted by the Lafarge cement plant in Ravena poses a threat to nearby residents and the environment. Stone says he found high concentrations of calcium around the plant.

• A record 707 people finish the 22nd Delmar Dash, a 5-mile run winding through the streets of the hamlet.

• Rachel Rodino, a 7-year-old Guilderland girl whose struggle with Huntington's disease rallied the community, finally succumbs to the disease. Rachel and her father, Rick, had both been diagnosed with Huntington's disease, a rare, degenerative neurological disorder. The family's story had prompted a tremendous outpouring of support from the community.

• Word that a Chipotle Mexican Grill restaurant will be arriving in Stuyvesant Plaza irks at least one neighboring eatery. The owner of Peaches says the chain is not in tune with the character of the plaza and will aggravate an already existing parking problem.

□ April Page 12

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Melinda Schwoegler, DVM

My veterinarian has special training in exotic animals, is this the same as a specialist?

Not necessarily. A true veterinary specialist is a veterinarian who has completed four year of veterinary school, one year of internship after veterinary school and a 2-3 year residency in a subspecialty such as cardiology, neurology, internal medicine, surgery, exotic animals, etc. Specialists tend to work at referral medical hospitals. In this area there are several of these practices such as Upstate Veterinary Specialists in Latham and Veterinary Specialties Referral Center in Pattersonville. These veterinarians are the equivalent of your personal doctor recommending you go see a specialist for a certain problem.

In contrast, general practice veterinarians enter practice after completing veterinary school and passing the board exam. Some veterinarians elect to complete one year internships after veterinary school in preparation for general practice. The intern veterinarian works with veterinary specialists to further the intern's knowledge in internal medicine, surgery and critical care. General practitioners work at local veterinary hospitals.

General practitioners from all training backgrounds are able and required to participate in continuing education courses. These are online or conference courses that provide entry level or additional training in a myriad of topics. General practitioners choose topics that interest them because it keeps practice fun and current. The numerous learning opportunities in veterinary medicine make it such a wonderful and enjoyable profession.

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Storytimes resume at RCS Library

Add stories, fun and laughter to your little ones' weekly routine this winter. The Library offers weekly story times for children from 6 months to pre-school age.

- Romp & Read offers stories, songs and games for toddlers. Tuesday: 10am; at the Selkirk Firehouse and Friday: 10:30am, at the Library.

- Positively Preschool presents stories and crafts for preschoolers on Thursdays: 10:30am, in the Library Annex.

- Library Babies enjoy fingerplay, rhymes and songs for babies, 6 months to 2 years. Friday: 9:30 am at the Library.

All Library programs are free and open to the public. No registration is required - please join us!

Holiday Hours

The library will be closed on December 31st, and Saturday, January 1st, the library will close for the New Year. The Library will re-open on Monday, January 3rd, at 10am. Happy New Year from the library staff.

Final Week Of Book Bag Sale

All good things must come to an end, and this week is the end of the sale.

RCS COMMUNITY LIBRARY

special \$5 pricing for the library's new canvas book bag. As good-looking as the last design and also made of sturdy canvas, this bag has the new library logo and a longer handle which makes it easy to carry. It's a steal - don't miss this chance!

Fun Fair For The Very Young On Jan. 11

Become part of a local tradition on January 11th by attending the 8th Annual Fun Fair for the Very Young. The RCS Community Library's Romp & Read Program and RCS Pre-K will host the event on the first day of Kindergarten registration, from 3-6pm at the Pieter B. Coeymans Elementary School. Join them for stories, easy crafts, harmlessly gooey activities, and deliciously nutritious snacks for young children. Parents are invited to talk to representatives of area Pre-Schools, RCS Pre-K and CPSE services, CHOICES, WIC and Child Health Plus. For more information, contact the library at 756-2053.

Acoustic Doorways 2011

The concert schedule for Winter and Spring 2011 is set, although locations have not been finalized. The season will span old-time Appalachian tunes, modern songwriting ala McKrell, jazz, and world music.

- Martha Gallagher, Sunday matinee, January 23: multi-genre Celtic harpist.

- Kevin McKrell, Friday evening February 11, the Train of Fools crew.

- Music Without Borders, Friday evening, March 25: Sharon Klein group and world music.

- John Kirk And Trish Miller, Friday evening, April 29, with Sarah Milonovich on fiddle.

The Library is offering business, individual and family sponsorships as it works toward making the series independent of grant funding. All donors receive program acknowledgement. Higher levels of donation also receive tickets to concerts. More detailed information is on the Library website, www.uhls.org/rcsl. Contact Judith Felsten, Library Director, for information at 756-2053 or rcsl@uhls.lib.ny.us



Ginger Morris, owner of Ginger's Dance to Fit and The Malta Ballet Co. for 25 years, recently released a fitness DVD called "Mom and Daughter Dance to Fitness" that combines simple dance techniques with stretching and cardio.

Submitted photo

Dance into fitness

Malta Ballet Co. owner releases DVD

By ALYSSA JUNG
junga@spotlightnews.com

"Families that work together, stay together — and grow healthier together," according to Ginger Morris.

Morris has owned Ginger's Dance to Fit and The Malta Ballet Co. in Malta for the past 25 years, and she recently released an instructional DVD called "Mom and Daughter Dance to Fitness" that propels the notion that improving fitness works best when done as a family.

"This DVD seeks to keep that close family bonding. There's an amount of trust too with doing this exercise program because you're relying on one another to do specific things with it. The family is growing together," said Morris.

Morris said she drew on her own experiences with her daughter, now 25, who appears in the video and has been dancing at

her studio since she was 2 years old.

"I've designed these programs basically for the big problem we're having with children and obesity in this day and age. I recognize the difficult times even in [my daughter's] life as a young dancer, she went through some times where she was having problems with being overweight and so forth, and we've always worked out together," said Morris. "What we're trying to do is get this special mother-daughter bonding or family bonding with this video."

Morris said fitness is more than just working out for a few minutes a day. It's about finding a balance between various aspects of life.

"It's teaching us to discipline our bodies and minds with health, proper nutrition and fitness as a lifestyle, so basically all this is working together," said Morris. "What we do is work on children and parents together doing meal plans, cooking together, planning everything together. That's

what we're trying to get across here that as a parent we're making the right decisions for them from an early age."

The DVD is instructional and features mother and daughters of all ages dancing together and doing a series of exercises. Morris said girls as young as 4 can handle the routines.

"It's a 45-minute tape so they can work out with Mom every day or every other day. We do warmups, but it's dance oriented, whereas when you're bending from your knees, we use dance terms. It's a little bit of dance, but it's very simple to do. Then we go into a little bit of cardio, a little bit of dancing, then a ballet barre segment and a cool-down period," said Morris. "For upper body, the moms are actually picking up the girls, so there is a lot of cute different little things they do in there."

The DVD is available by contacting Morris at the studio at 899-6664 or visiting the website, www.dancetofit.com.

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No phone calls, please.

Senior services offers tax prep

Beginning January 31 through to April 11, free tax preparation and e-mail filing will be provided Mondays and Saturdays at the Guilderland Library by the all-volunteer AARP Taxaide Program. Volunteers are trained and certified in cooperation with the IRS, and prepare personal Federal & NYS tax returns for taxpayers of all ages with low & moderate incomes. Appointments are necessary; a separate appointment is required for each taxpayer. Bring a copy of last year's return, all 2010 W-2's, 1099 statements, sold investments, purchase dates and cost basis with supporting documents if itemizing deductions. Taxaide volunteers can't do returns with rental incomes or returns requiring Schedule C (business returns with a net loss, inventory, employees, or expenses over \$5,000.) Both taxpayers must be present if filing a joint return, except in case of illness or infirmity.

Town of Guilderland SENIOR CALENDAR

For appointments, call 456-2400, ext. 7, starting Jan. 10.

GHS Musical
The Guilderland Players' next musical will be "Phantom of the Opera."

Senior Citizens' Night will be March 10 at 7 p.m., and tickets will be available, at a cost of \$5 each, in the Senior Office in late January.

Transportation service will be provided to this event.

Monday, Jan. 3
Scheduled Shopping
9:00 Aerobics
10:30 OsteoBusters
10:30 Sr. Fitness

1:30 OsteoBusters
Tuesday, Jan. 4
 9:00 OsteoBusters
 11:30 Luncheon Swedish Meatballs or Cold Plate
 12:30 Bingo/Games/Billard

Wednesday, Jan. 5
 Scheduled Shopping
 9:00 Line Dancing
 10:30 OsteoBuster
 10:30 Sr. Fitness
 1:00 Needlecraft
 1:30 OsteoBusters

Thursday, Jan. 6
 Scheduled Shopping
 9:00 Osteobusters
 1:00 Pinochle/Mahjongg

Friday, Jan. 7
 Scheduled Shopping
 10:00 Painting
 10:30 Bridge
 1:00 Quilting

Get familiar with Senior Services in New Year

Happy New Year to our readers and to the users of the Town of Bethlehem Senior Services! May 2011 bring you many blessings.



Town of Bethlehem

At this time of the year, it's good to review some of the services what we offer. We provide transportation to medical, dental, therapy and clinic appointments, grocery stores. Periodically, we go to shopping malls, restaurants, and a wide variety of social, recreational and cultural events. Many of our users are permanently unable to drive. Some are temporarily unable to drive due to an illness or injury, and some drive only within the town and therefore use us for trips to appointments that are farther away. Our trained outreach social workers provide consulting on aging issues, home-based services, alternative living arrangements, legal services, and referral to programs and services. We offer meals on wheels, a food pantry for those who are income eligible and financial assistance for heating and cooling needs. If you are over 60 and need help, or if you are a caregiver for someone over age 60, call the Senior office at 439-4955, ext 1176, to get started on the road to a more satisfactory situation.

Another service that is available to seniors is Community Caregivers. This group of volunteers provides services including transportation for appointments, shopping, banking, etc., respite time for caregivers, short term meal preparation, occasional light housekeeping, minor repairs and yard work, home visits and phone checks, assistance with paperwork and correspondence, referrals to various programs and services. Call 861-5181 to learn more about this organization.

We are always grateful for all who help us help the Seniors of our Town. One among many is the Delmar Progress Club. At each of their monthly

meetings, the women of the Progress Club take a collection for our Heating Fund which provides financial assistance for seniors temporarily unable to pay their heating bills. Thanks to all these generous women!

Program highlights

Note: The Town hall is closed on Friday, Dec. 31 for New Year's Day observed.

Bethlehem Senior Services is offering a Health and Wellness program on Fridays from Jan. 7 to March 25. The program is free and open to all. Reservations are not needed. Transportation for those over 60 can be arranged by calling 439-4955, ext 1176. See details below for the first session.

Tuesday, Jan. 4

Seniors in Motion A low level fun aerobic exercise class to music. Bethlehem Town Hall auditorium, 445 Delaware Ave., Delmar, 9-10 a.m. No registration is necessary. \$3 fee per class.

Wednesday, Jan. 5

Senior grocery shopping for residents of Elsmere, Delmar, Slingerlands, North Bethlehem and Marie Rose Manor. For reservations, call 439-5770.

Thursday, Jan. 6

Senior grocery

shopping for residents of Glenmont, Selkirk, and South Bethlehem. For reservations, call 439-5770.

Bethlehem Senior Citizens Club meets for an enjoyable afternoon of games and socializing at the Bethlehem Town Hall auditorium, 445 Delaware Ave., Delmar at 11:30 am - 3:30 pm. We play bridge, mah jongg, bingo and pinochle. All seniors are welcome. Bring a sandwich and join others for lunch if you wish.

Friday, Jan. 7

Health and Wellness Program: "Empowering Yourself to Wellness" Presenter: Nancy Michela, D.A., M.S., RN. Create a vision of wellness including greater self awareness, clear communication skills, life long learning and effective decision making. Come to the Town Hall Auditorium, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

Seniors in Motion A low level fun aerobic exercise class to music. Bethlehem Town Hall auditorium, 445 Delaware Ave., Delmar, 9-10 a.m. No registration is necessary. \$3 fee per class.

Senior grocery shopping for residents of Good Samaritan Senior Housing and Van Allen Senior Apartments. For reservations, call 439-5770.

For information on the above or a list of additional activities, call the Bethlehem Senior Services Office at 439-4955, #1176

Wilma DeLucco, Bethlehem Senior Projects, Inc. Board Member

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Ring out the old year with Scaredy Squirrel

Scaredy Squirrel is afraid of just about everything ... but not kids. That's why he's having a bit of a "Not-So-Rockin' Almost New Year's Eve Party" on Thursday, December 30, from 11 am to noon ("Happy Noon Year!"), and inviting children ages 4 to 8 to come join him for the festivities!

As kids know, Scaredy's nervous and upset and worried almost all the time. And he does not like to go out at night, which is why he INSISTED we do this shindig in broad daylight. So you can help Scaredy have a great time at this party. We'll read a Scaredy Squirrel book and take part in Scaredy activities. It's going to be fun!

All you have to do to come to the party is tell us you're coming! Call the Youth Services Department - at 456-2400 x 9 - or stop by the YS desk to sign up. But do it right now so you don't miss it.

Making a New Year's Resolution to Learn About Your Ancestors?

If genealogy is your passion, or if it's something you're just getting interested in, the Guilderland Public Library is holding a program on Thursday, December 30, at 7 pm. This presentation features a fascinating movie, "A Celebration of Family Life." No registration is required, just come on in and enjoy!

Teen Pizza Party Game Gala

It's cold out, and you're on winter break. What to do? Come to the Library from 6 pm to 8 pm on Thursday, December 30, to join your peers for group board-game play, and a card game or two. We have plenty!

Perhaps you got a new party game as a gift, and would like to play with other gamers in person? This is the place to do it. So come on in out of the cold. Game on. Oh, did we mention there's pizza and dessert?



Fill the Tree with Holiday Glee!

Your Giving Tree gift supports events such as the Notable Author Speakers Series, the Annual Summer Reading Club, Literary Garden Events, Family Fun-Days, and so many more.

These are events that people throughout the community rely upon, so your donation is a gift to yourself and the people of Guilderland.

Next time you're at the Library to pick up a book, or a DVD your family really wants, please stop by the Giving Tree and make a donation.

Giving Tree gifts are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The Guilderland Public Library is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Board of Trustees Meeting

The next **Trustee Board of Trustees** meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, January 13, 2011, in the Library's Helderberg Room. The Public is encouraged to attend.

Holiday Closings

The Library will close at 2 pm on Friday, December 31, and be closed all day Saturday, January 1, 2011, for the New Year's holiday. The Library will reopen at its regular time of 1 pm on Sunday, January 2. We wish everyone a Happy New Year!

—Mark Curiale

The Guilderland Public Library is located at 2228 Western Avenue, Guilderland. Call 456-2400 x 12 for more information, or visit the Library's website at www.guilpl.org. Become a Facebook Fan of the Library, follow the Library on Twitter (@GuilderlandLib), and listen to the Library's online radio station, Radio GPL. It all starts at guilpl.org.

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April

(From Page 9)

- Albany County Executive Michael Breslin appoints Freeman (Ted) Putney to fill a vacancy on the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council. A longtime Bethlehem resident, Putney says he's honored to have been selected, and that he will aim to secure the county's fair share of Greenway grant funding.

- Earth Day is celebrated locally by schools, businesses and everyday people. At Bethlehem Town Hall, plantings on the lawn are updated and replaced. At the Guilderland Public Library, a set of solar panels are dedicated.

- The Town of New Scotland discusses implementing term limits for Planning Board members, and also reforming the committee into a five-seat entity. A decision is not immediately reached, though.

- The New Scotland Town Board holds a special meeting at the town's highway department garage to discuss with employees issues regarding pay raises and the condition of the garage. Though leaders agree the facility should be replaced, the \$5 to \$7 million cost is an issue.

- The Bethlehem Zoning Board of Appeals grants variances to a proposal to build a Walgreen's pharmacy and doctor's offices at the site of the former CVS building at the corner of Elsmere Avenue and Delaware Avenue. That building is often bemoaned as an eyesore, but at year's end plans have not moved much farther forward.

- Three Bethlehem Central schools gain Energy Star certification. District officials say since launching an energy efficiency initiative in 2002, the district has avoided a cumulative \$1.5 million in utility payments.

- Guilderland Town Board member and candidate for governor Warren Redlich secures the Libertarian Party's nomination, guaranteeing him a spot on the general ballot come November.

- The Town of Guilderland expands its recycling program to include plastics in categories four through seven, allowing residents to recycle items like drinking cups, yogurt

containers, butter containers and prescription pill bottles.

- The Albany County Democratic Committee makes its endorsements for local elections, a list that includes Sen. Neil Breslin, D-Delmar. Controversy had preceded the endorsement when word leaked that the candidate review committee passed on recommending a candidate and instead deferred to the executive committee.

- Councilman Mark Hennessey posts to the Internet many of the Town Board's agenda attachments before a meeting, sparking a discussion about government transparency. A law standardizing the release of meeting information is passed later in the year.

- The Guilderland Central School District updates its website with features that make it more accessible to people with disabilities and allows schools to update their school-specific sites regularly.

May

- Delmar man William Costello dies after losing his footing while hiking in the Devil's Kitchen area of the Catskills. Police determine his death to be accidental.

- Stan and Mary Reich of Delmar team up to present a joint art show at the Broadway Art Center in Albany, with Mary's artistic quilts and Stan's sculptures on display.

- The Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce organizes the town's first Restaurant Week. 17 eateries offer \$20.10 meal deals.

- The Albany-based Park Playhouse, Inc., hires Delmar native Owen Smith as its new executive director. Smith got his start in Bethlehem High School's theater program and has Broadway production experience.

- CynderElla's sandwich shop closes its doors at the Four Corners, and a Subway franchise soon after begins preparations to occupy the space.

- Guilderland police arrest Thomas M. Fortune, a captain in the Stanford Heights Fire Department, and charge him with DWI after he allegedly responds to a fire while drunk.

- Local filmmaker Chris

May

Thacher Park closes its gates as part of state budget cuts, despite a strong public campaign to save it and other sites from closure. The overlook parking area remains open, but trails, pavilions and other facilities are shuttered.

Faulisi heads to the Cannes Film Festival in France with hopes of obtaining a deal to distribute his film, "A Proper Violence."

- The Voorheesville community holds a memorial ceremony for Clayton A. Bouton High School student Jerry Clark. Family and friends remember him for his kindness.

- A local law aimed at creating stormwater management districts in the Town of Guilderland is defeated in a split vote. The vote is the first time Supervisor Ken Runion, Councilmen Mark Grimm and Councilman Warren Redlich vote together to defeat a proposed law.

- Steve McLaughlin announces he'll stage a second run against Assemblyman Tim Gordon. In November, he becomes one of the only candidates locally to unseat an incumbent.

- The Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Town of Bethlehem host the first of what is to become a series of meetings between town leaders and businesses. The "Focus on Business Forums" serve as a dialogue as to what the town is doing development wise, and how the town can become more friendly to businesses.

- Thacher Park officially closes its gates as part of state budget cuts, despite a strong public campaign to save it and other sites from closure. The overlook parking area remains open, but trails, pavilions and other facilities are shuttered.

- Local advocate Michael Carey announces he will stage a run against Sen. Neil Breslin for a state senate seat. The head of the Jonathan Carey Foundation shops his candidacy to various local parties, but ends up forming his own Reform Party line on the November ballot.

- Bethlehem Central High School sophomore Chris Shaw receives national recognition in the Scholastic Art and Writing

Competition for his short story "Copper Sun," and travels to Carnegie Hall to accept his award.

- Voters in the Bethlehem Central School District approve by a comfortable margin an \$88.3 million spending plan for the 2010-11 school year. The budget is a 0.8 percent increase in spending from the previous year and carries a 3 percent tax levy increase. The district made numerous cuts to the budget, including eliminating 15 faculty and 10 various staff and administrative positions, eliminating field trip funding and a bevy of line items like clubs and technology upgrade budgets.

- Guilderland School District voters approve an \$87.4 million budget for the 2010-11 school year. The budget represents a 2.49 percent increase over the previous year's budget for an estimated 3.59 percent increase in the tax levy. The budget eliminates freshman sports and cuts 56 full-time equivalent positions, including 10 teaching, 24 teaching assistant, three supervisor, and 19 non-instructional positions.

- Members of the Bethlehem Town Board cry foul over Supervisor Sam Messina's decision to enter into a contract to provide Internet broadcast of Town Board meetings without consulting them. The board eventually votes to rescind the contract, but not before taking Messina to task for not making more effort to solicit their opinions. Messina maintains he has the authority and money in the supervisor's budget to sign the contract.

- The Spotlight announces it will be working with the Siena Research Institute in conducting a poll on the construction of cell towers in Delmar. The survey is bankrolled by Independent Towers LLC, but the paper and SRI are left to draft and administer it. Eventually, ESCO Towers sees its competing tower proposal gain tread before

the town Planning Board, and Independent withdraws its application.

- Town of Bethlehem leaders hold the first in a quarterly series of "Around Town Meetings" at Selkirk Fire House No. 1. Residents hear about sidewalks, sewers and the Selkirk Bypass project.

June

- Local artists gather at the Pine Hollow Arboretum in Slingerlands for a "Plein Air" event. The French practice of creating art in the open air is put into practice, with the results put on display at a showing in July.

- The Bethlehem Garden Club holds its 14th annual Garden Tour, with six local gardens being opened up to the public in the fundraiser.

- Ground is broken on a "greenhouse style" expansion to the Eddy Village at Beverwyck approved in February.

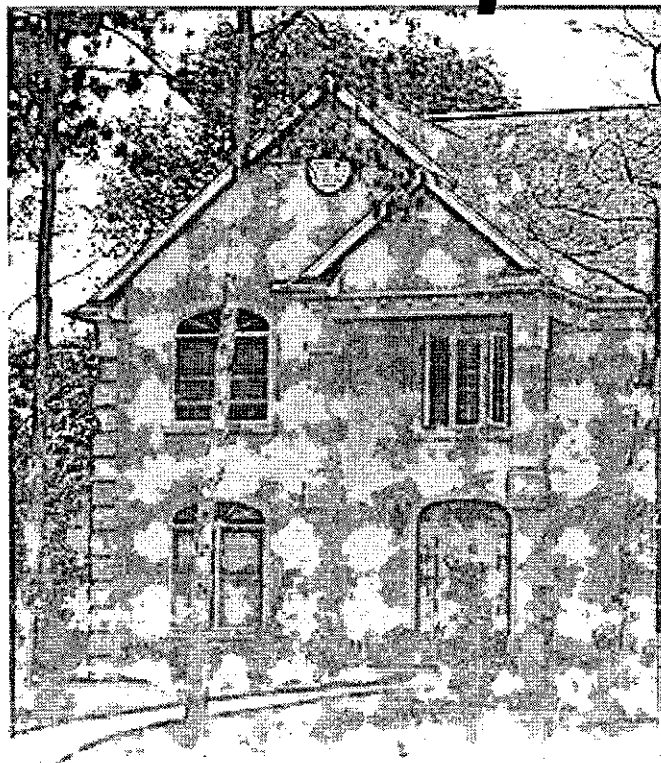
- Ex-Albany River Rat player Robert "Bobby" Hughes goes on trial for, and is eventually acquitted of, charges of sexual assault out of the Town of Bethlehem. Police had arrested Hughes on charges he had sex with a woman without her consent in his Delmar apartment after meeting her at My Place bar on Delaware Avenue in October of 2008. The trial features testimony from the defendant who, in stark contrast to his original statement to police, says the sex was consensual; a tearful but incomplete account of the evening from the victim; the revelation Bethlehem police detectives accepted an offer of free hockey tickets from Hughes early in the investigation; and discussion as to why the surveillance video from the bar was never secured, even though police requested it. In the end, a jury quickly clears Hughes of the charges.

- Lynwood Elementary Principal James Dillon retires after 17 years at the school.

- The Town of New Scotland closes a portion of Krunkill Road over concerns the road base could erode into the nearby river. For motorists who use the road as a thoroughfare, the closure means a potentially lengthy detour.

June Page 18

Spotlight on REAL ESTATE



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A life in art

Local artist draws inspiration from childhood in Capital District

By WILLIAM R. DEVOE
 devoew@spotlightnews.com

Heidi Weinman's creative tendencies started when she was just a girl. The Glenmont native, who now lives in Albany, said it was a combination of having artistic parents and a secluded childhood home that contributed to her becoming an artist herself.

"I started when I was very little," said Weinman. "We used to live on a farm in Glenmont and there weren't a lot of kids around to play with, so my mom used to give me art projects to do."

Weinman, a self-described folk artist who works in oils, will exhibit her work at the Perfect Blend Coffee Shop at the Four Corners in Delmar, beginning Jan. 4.

This isn't Weinman's first show. The Bethlehem Central High School graduate has had numerous successful shows over the past 15 years at many venues, galleries, coffee shops and group showings, including a feature at Austin Gallery in Austin, Texas. She won the New York State Museum's Children's Art Contest as a child and continued to study oil painting through the Knowledge Network Oil Painting course taught in Delmar.

"It took years to figure out, but I finally found a label for my work — it's folk art," said Weinman.

And it is truly steeped in the local community.

"I tend to paint very large leaves that are representative of the area," she said. "And then I'll look at one of my paintings and say, 'Oh, yeah, that's the tree that was on the farm where I grew up.'"

Weinman's art is derived from nature — in it you'll see a lot of vines, leaves, fish and other animals — and if you've ever driven past Davy Jones' Locker in Albany, chances are you've already seen her work.

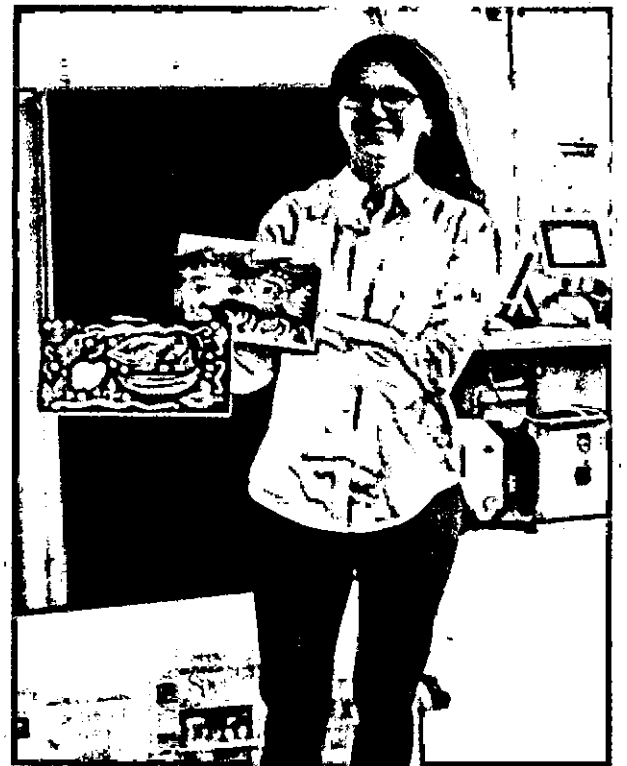
"I painted their garbage can with some wonderful fish," said Weinman. She said she got the inspiration from an exchange she witnessed as a child between her mother and grandmother.

"My mother had an old refrigerator," she said. "Her mother in law said she should paint it — so she painted fish all over it."

The artistic legacy Weinman's mother passed on to her is one Weinman hopes to pass on to those that admire, and possibly purchase, her work.

"I don't have any kids," she said, "so it's nice to know these paintings will be around after I'm gone. It's nice to know that something I've created is hanging on a wall, making someone happy."

Weinman's art will be on display at the Perfect Blend beginning Jan. 4 and paintings are available for purchase. For more information, contact the artist at 426-9181.



Local artist Heidi Weinman with some of her oil paintings. Her work will be on display at the Perfect Blend Coffee Shop at the Four Corners in Delmar, beginning Jan. 4. Her work is inspired by the places she grew up in and around the Capital District.

William R. DeVoe/Spotlight

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GOOD NOW THROUGH JANUARY 2, 2011

The Year in Pictures

Runners embark on the 22nd running of the Delmar Dash, held Sunday, April 11. Andrew Allstadt of Albany led a record 707 finishers. Organizers credited the huge turnout to the early onset of seasonable weather and a "runner's day." A set of kids' races saw nearly 200 entries.



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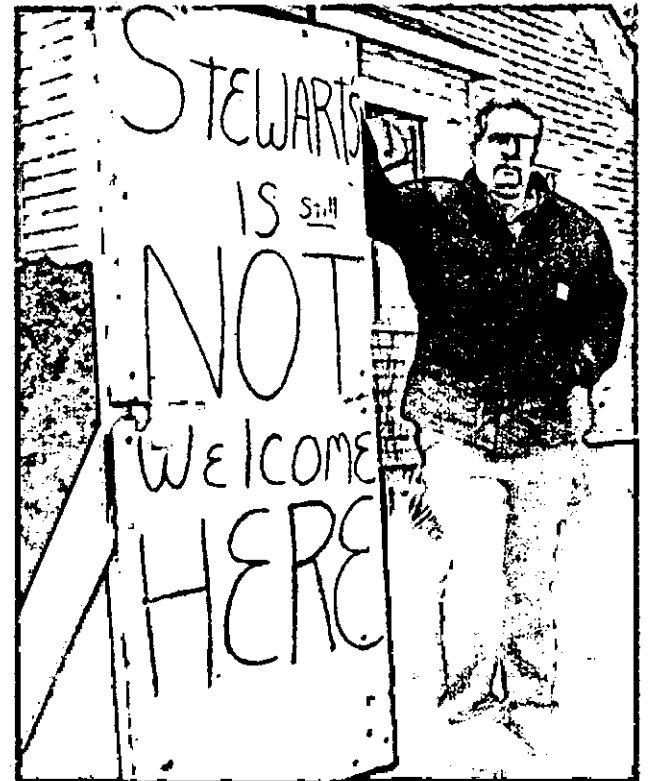
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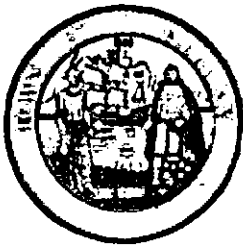
THE CAPITAL DISTRICT'S TALK RADIO



Jim Martley is one Blessing Road resident who opposed a development of condominiums and a Stewart's gas station on Russell Road. The store was eventually dropped from the proposal, and the condominiums were approved by the town.



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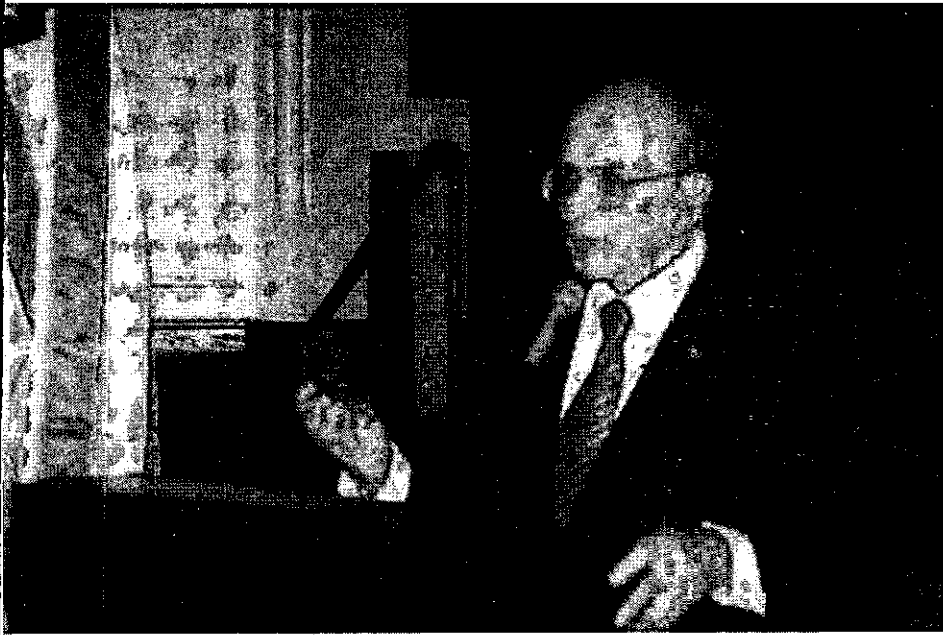
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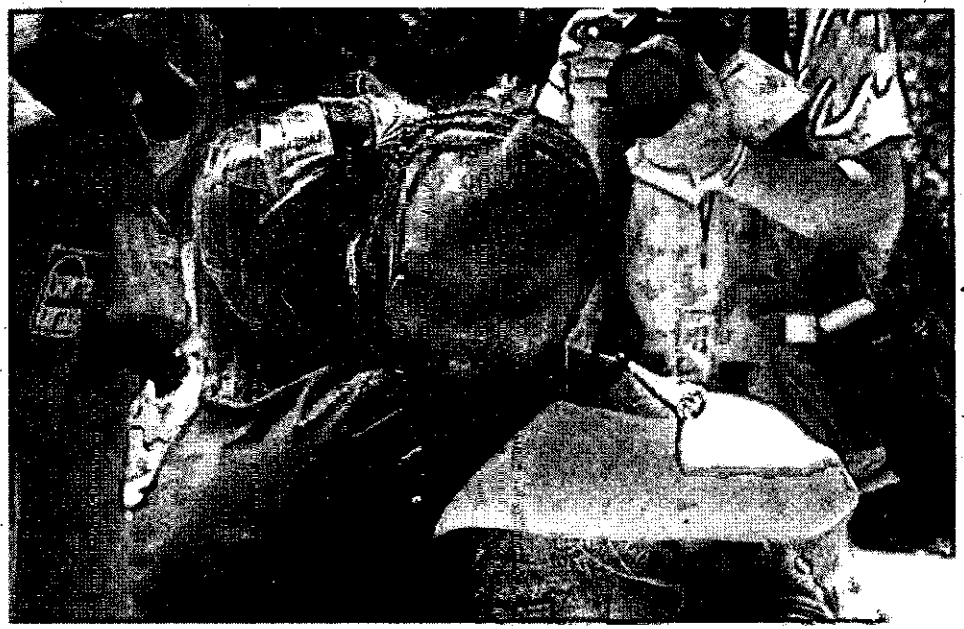


For more information, call the Albany Police Athletic League at (518) 435-0392 or the Times Union Source at (518) 446-4000 or visit www.albanycapitalholidaylights.com

The Year in Pictures



Supervisor Sam Messina holds a compass given to him by a friend at his swearing-in ceremony in January. He said the compass will serve as a reminder to guide the town in the right direction.



Delmar resident Sara Rosenblatt greets Natasha Dailey, 7, who came from Staten Island to spend two summer weeks with the Rosenblatts through part of the Fresh Air Fund. For hundreds of city children Fresh Air offers the only opportunity of a vacation away from the city.



Emergency workers plunge into the waters of the Normanskill in March to help an Albany man to shore. David Kelley had been testing out a new fly fishing rod when he found himself immobilized in the fast moving current. He signaled to a woman onshore, who dialed 911.



Bethlehem High School graduates 431 members of the Class of 2010 at the school's 76th commencement exercises at the SEFCU Arena at the University at Albany. Student speeches were given by Jacqueline Green, Lucas Dyer Martin and Spencer Herrmann. Board of Education President James Dering delivered the address.



Students at Eagle Elementary School celebrate the coming end of the school year with a Field Day. The second annual event saw the school's students playing sports and other games indoors and out, and also feasting on treats like popcorn and sno-cones.

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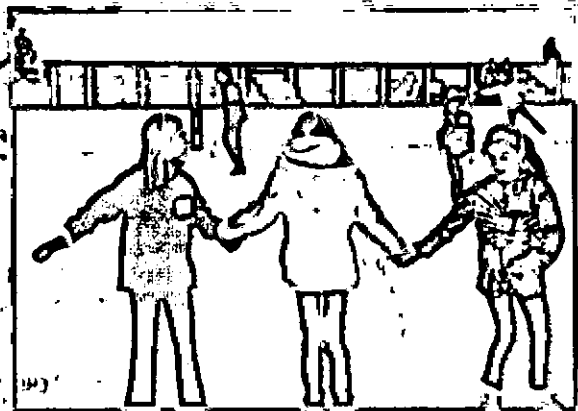
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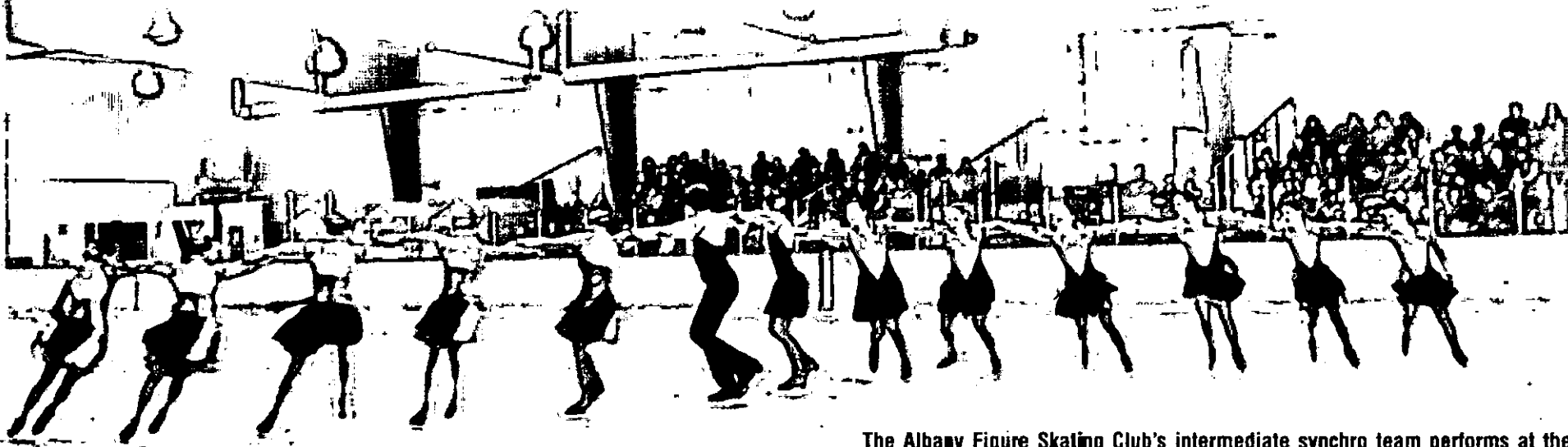
The Albany Figure Skating Club offers skaters of all ages a chance to get on the ice with other people who love to skate.



Albany Figure Skating Club members are recognized for passing the highest level figure skating tests. From left are Morgan Gillies, Adj White, Taylor Kennedy, Katie Howard, Emma Briceland, and Lukas Sotola.



The Albany Figure Skating Club's open juvenile synchronized skating team placed second at the Cape Cod Classic, earning the silver medal.



The Albany Figure Skating Club's intermediate synchro team performs at the club's Spring Ice Show at the Bethlehem YMCA in March.

Submitted photos

Putting beginners on ice

By JACQUELINE M. DOMIN
dominj@spotlightnews.com

Christina Lombardi fell in love with figure skating right away. Lukas Sotola was a harder sell.

Lombardi remembers going to Empire State Plaza to skate with her family when she was about 5. She strapped double-runner blades on her boots using Velcro strips and stepped on to the ice. From that point on, skating was one of her favorite things to do.

Sotola, meanwhile, remembers his mom telling him that she signed him up for skating lessons when he too was about 5.

"Basically, I burst into tears because I was afraid," he said.

On top of that, Sotola was lazy. He didn't like doing anything physical, he said. So for a while, skating was a chore.

But something funny happened. The more he skated,

the more Sotola enjoyed the same sensation on the ice that Lombardi did: *This is fun.*

Today, both are synchronized skaters with the Albany Figure Skating Club, which will host a Learn to Skate program Jan. 2 to Feb. 27 at the Albany Academy Field House, 117 Hackett Blvd., Albany. The hope is to turn other people on to the sport the way Lombardi and Sotola were.

Lombardi, in fact, took advantage of several local learn-to-skate programs when she was a kid. She eventually landed at Upstate Skate, which evolved into the Albany Figure Skating Club, based at the Bethlehem YMCA.

"It's so much fun to be with people who like to skate," she said. A Delmar resident who attends the Academy of the Holy Names, she added that one of the biggest benefits of belonging to the club has been making friends who are different ages and attend different schools.

She likes skating because it's something she can do by herself or with a group, she said.

programs in the area, Sotola's mom, Janet, said. That's one of the benefits of belonging to the club; she also cited the camaraderie, the opportunity for ice time and the chance to learn from others.

Private lessons, Janet Sotola noted, can be cost prohibitive. The learn-to-skate program is a "much more economical way" to get comfortable on the ice.

Slated to run on Sundays from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., the program is designed for beginning skaters of all ages and abilities, from preschool to adult. The club welcomes recreational, figure skaters and hockey skaters, and more advanced beginner figure skating instruction and a beginner synchronized skating program are available. Sessions will include both a group lesson and a practice session, provided by local skating coaches. Participants will have the chance to perform in the Albany Figure Skating Club's Spring Ice Show on March 6. For more information, contact Janet Sotola at 301-3947 or jsotola@nycap.rr.com.

For those who already know how to skate, the club is offering open freestyle ice this winter. Figure skaters can come to the YMCA, 900 Delaware Ave., on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. and Fridays from 4 to 6 p.m., beginning Thursday, Jan. 6, until Friday, March 11. For information and registration forms, call Tedi Coleman at 439-4244.

The club is also hosting a free SkateFest that will be held at the Albany Academy Field House on Wednesday, Dec. 29, from noon to 2 p.m. Participants can enjoy a free ice skating lesson with ice skating coaches, ice games, open skating, skating information, raffles, and a bake sale. There will also be a skating exhibition and demonstrations by local figure skaters and the Albany Figure Skating Club's synchronized skating teams, as well as an appearance by the Albany Devils' mascot, Devil Dawg.

For more information on any of the above programs, visit Albany Figure Skating Club's website at www.albanyfsc.org.

Given the chance, Sotola would probably practice six days a week, he said. Some weeks he's able to do that; other times he can get on the ice only twice a week. Either way, he spends about two hours skating at a time.

"It's fun, but it's a lot of hard work," he said. "You're not going to grow by leaps and bounds by doing a half-hour of practice a week."

Figure skating, he said, can be a very lonely sport. That's one of the reasons he likes synchronized skating, in which all of the members of a team perform a routine.

"I like the challenge of it," he said.



The Albany Figure Skating Club offers one of the only two competitive synchronized skating

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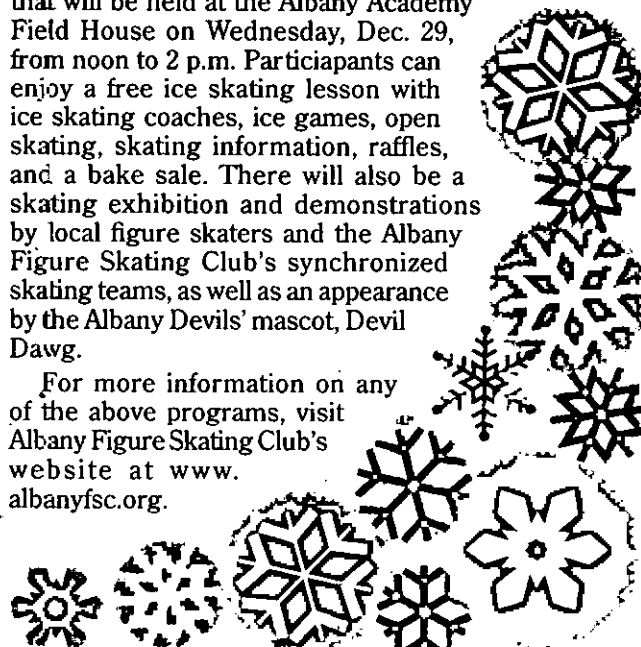



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Verizon

(From Page 1)

Verizon, said the new infrastructure the company has been building is impervious to moisture, meaning it would be able to weather large amounts of rainfall. Verizon's service would have 300 channels available on a "very advanced, robust network," he said.

"We've been building a fiber optic network that is 65 percent done," Janis said. "The fiber network is something we're very proud of and believe is beneficial."

Plans to bring the service to many other area communities have largely stalled, including in the City of Albany. Town Supervisor Sam Messina said the service could become available to residents as soon as February or March, and the town should move to make that possible.

"I realize that we don't want to make action here before the public hearing," he said. "But I feel there is a timeliness factor."

"It's the lowest second half of any period in the last four years. We're down in the area by almost \$200,000."

Comptroller Suzanne E. Traylor on the decrease in the mortgage tax share

Like Time Warner, Verizon would charge users a franchising fee that would come back to the town. Bethlehem doesn't expect to realize a great deal of new revenue by adding FiOS, but it's possible it could increase by some amount.

A plus for the town would be an Educational and Government Access Channel that the town would have access to. Messina said it's possible the channel could be used for broadcast of Town Board meetings or to advertise other town business.

"We don't exactly know how we're going to use that yet," he said. "What we're thinking is at the very least we'll have an option for broadcasting."

Board meetings are currently recorded and broadcast later on public access channel 18. The town has been seeking a

low-cost solution to offering more robust public access to its meetings, such as providing Webcasting and Internet archiving of meeting footage.

Also on Wednesday, Comptroller Suzanne Traylor also presented a 10-month interim financial update on 2010 and a prediction of the year-end results. There was some good news in that she reported an excess in revenue for the third quarter, which was totaled to be \$2,365,829, \$78,807 more than during the same period last year. There is currently \$37,232 more in sales tax revenue than all of 2009's.

But she also reported that there was a 2.6 percent drop in revenues for the second quarter, which she said was due to the economy.

"Cars and boats weren't purchased," she said. "That's probably what

caused that drop."

In other areas of the budget, the town took in \$498,303 in mortgage tax in the first half of 2010, which is \$22,757 more than during this same period in 2009. But Taylor also reported a 14.8 percent decrease in the mortgage tax share in Albany County.

"It's the lowest second half of any period in the last four years," she said. "We're down in the area by almost \$200,000."

The town did, however, receive \$144,000 in additional revenue from Time Warner Cable for previous "fee for fee" revenue that was not originally given to the town.

End of the year budget projections dated on Oct. 31, showed a \$881,892 surplus in the general fund was expected, which is more than \$300,000 greater than was budgeted for. Other funds will do better than expected, though.

Click it up!
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June

(From Page 12)

Slingerlands-based Bryant Asset Protection announces a series of \$1,000 grants to be doled out to causes in the surrounding communities, and begins to solicit ideas of where the money should go.

The Bethlehem Central School District polls its students on how they feel about their schools. The results are positive and reflect a slight increase in satisfaction from a similar poll conducted a few years prior. Safety on the school bus, hallways and bathrooms is singled out for room for improvement, as is forging tighter relationships between staff and students.

The results of a Spotlight-Siena Research Institute survey on cell towers show nearly all Bethlehem residents use a cell phone and most are in favor of a new tower being built in Delmar, but when it comes to specifics on the issue of where it should be built their opinions are less certain.

Capital Development Group brings forward new plans for Hamden Woods, a South Delmar condominium project, opting instead for twin homes. The slumping condo market is cited as the reason for the change.

The Town of Bethlehem authorizes repairs to be made to the lights at the town's tennis courts at the Elm Avenue Park, which had been malfunctioning all season. The town researched solar power options but determined that would be too costly. Making the repairs is pegged as a \$13,000 project.

Albany County is not named as the recipient of a Department of Energy grant that would have covered the remaining cost of constructing the Rail Trail. The county

continues to look for money to finance the project.

The Bethlehem Town Board OKs a rezoning of the land where a developer wants to build the Blessings Corner condominium project. Developer Russell Road Partners heads to the Planning Board for a site plan review on the 52 condominium project.

June The results of a Spotlight-Siena Research Institute survey on cell towers show most Bethlehem residents are in favor of a new tower being built in Delmar.

Inner-city children begin arriving in the Capital District for the yearly Fresh Air program, when host families invite youth into their homes for a few days or weeks. For many, it's the only chance at a vacation away from New York City.

The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York opens its new barn at the Patroon Land Farm in Voorheesville. The farm is run by volunteer labor and donates fresh, locally-grown produce to the food bank.

Members of the Bethlehem Town Board have an unusual discussion on what to do with several donations that had been received for specific projects in town, including Webcasts of meeting and fixing the tennis court lights. Some think the money should be kept, while others feel it's unfair to take anonymous donations on a political issue because it could be interpreted as a show of support.

See the Jan. 5 edition of The Spotlight for the stories that shaped the second half of 2010.

Model

(From Page 1)

implications for the developer, as each one of the specially designed branches can cost about \$500.

The height of the tower will be 131 feet, so

Holbeck said they would build the branches a foot higher. Board members were curious as to what kind of maintenance would be required for the monopine. Holbeck said he provides a 10-year warranty on the structure and a one-year warranty on the bristles.

"If there is bad weather and a branch breaks off, I will stand by my product and replace that branch," said Holbeck.

Board Chairman George Leveille polled the rest of the board members to see their preference as to whether they would like to build for medium density or

high density. While most of the board said they didn't mind either one, a majority enjoyed the higher density model, saying it did a better job of concealing the tower.

The site plan will be reviewed on Jan. 18, where a discussion of special use agreements will take place.

IN BRIEF

Band coming to Old Songs

The Andrew and Noah

Band will perform at Old Songs in Voorheesville on Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8 pm.

Andrew and Noah

VanNorstrand grew up making music together. Now in their early twenties, in the fall of 2009 they


formed the Andrew & Noah Band with Rachel Bell on accordion, Kevin Dorsey on bass, Dana Billings on drums and Noah's wife, Kailyn Wright, singing harmony vocals. The recent addition of Chris Miller has added saxophone and dobro to the mix as well.

The concert will be held at 37 South Main St., Voorheesville. Tickets are \$20 and may be reserved by calling Old Songs at 765-2815 or visiting www.oldsongs.org.

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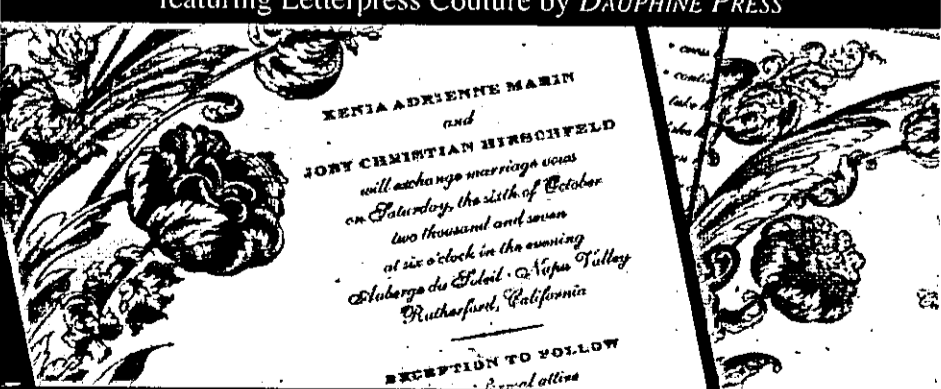
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Your Community in The Spotlight

Old Songs lists concerts

The Old Songs concert series will host the following acts from January to May:

Saturday, Jan. 15, 8 p.m.: The Andrew & Noah Band - old-time, bluegrass and Celtic fusion

Saturday, Jan. 29, 8 p.m.: Old Songs Sampler Concert - featuring St Regis Stringband, Robin O'Herin, Fairview Avenue, George Robinson, Ruth Pelham, Cavanaugh & Kavanaugh. A benefit for the 2011 Old Songs Festival.

Saturday, Feb. 12, 8 p.m.: John Whelan, Donna Hébert and the Irish-French Connection - Irish button accordion player and French Canadian fiddling pro join forces with band mates.

Friday, March 11, 8 p.m.: James Keelaghan - Juno award-winning singer/songwriter

Saturday, March 19, 8 p.m.: Sharon Katz with Wendy Khethiwe Quick - South African guitarist and singer with backup singer and dancer

Friday, April 1, 8 p.m.: Gordon Bok - songs from Maine on guitar and cellamba

Thursday, April 7, 8 p.m.: Archie Fisher and Garnet Rogers - Scottish songsmith and Canadian singer/songwriter reunite

Friday, April 29, 8 p.m.: Patrick Ball - Celtic harpist and storyteller

Saturday, May 14, 8 p.m.: Colleen Cleveland and Elizabeth LaPrelle - traditional ballads from the Adirondacks and Appalachia

Five Rivers plans weasel program

Five Rivers Environmental Education Center will hold a program on the natural history of weasels Saturday, Jan. 22, at 10 a.m.

Five Rivers naturalists will conduct an indoor overview of the weasel family, then lead participants afield to study the habits, habitats and prey of weasel species that can be found at Five Rivers such as otter, fisher and mink.

The program is open to the public free of charge. Participants are urged

to dress for outdoor winter activity. If there is deep snow, snowshoes will be provided to those interested for the field foray.

Call the center at 475-0291 by Thursday, Jan. 20, for more information.

Q.U.I.L.T. to hold monthly meeting

Q.U.I.L.T. Inc. will meet on Friday, Jan. 14, at Delmar Reformed Church, 386 Delaware Ave., Delmar.

The meeting starts at 9:45 a.m.; doors open at 9:15 a.m. Sue Pritt will give a lecture, "Graph Paper and Quilts." A \$5 visitor donation is requested.

For information, call 439-1194 or visit www.quiltinc.org.

Old Songs to hold participatory events

Old Songs will hold the following participatory events from January to May:

Acoustic Open Mic: First Wednesday of month, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 5, Feb. 2, March 2, April 6, May 4). Sign up to play for 15 minutes. MC: Kate Blain. \$3.

Irish Slow Session: Second Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9, April 13, May 11). Play traditional Irish with others at a reasonable tempo. \$3.

Drum Circle: Third Monday of month, 7 p.m. (Jan. 17, Feb. 21, March 21, April 18, May 16). Learn and play West African rhythms. Rotating instructors. \$15.

Sunday Four Poetry: Fourth Sunday of month, 3 p.m. (Jan. 23, Feb. 27, March 27, April 24, May 22). Poetry open mic with featured poets.

For more information, call 469-0202.

Girl Scouts to snowshoe

Five Rivers Environmental Education Center will host a snowshoe outing for Girl Scouts on Saturday, Jan. 22, at 2 p.m.

Five Rivers naturalists will demonstrate basic snowshoeing technique

indoors, then lead snowshoers along center trails in search of tracks, chewed cones, dens and other signs of winter wildlife.

The program is open to Girl Scouts of any age and is free of charge. Scouts must be accompanied by a parent and/or Scout leader. Participants are urged to dress for outdoor winter activity.

Space is limited. Call the center at 475-0291 by Thursday, Jan. 20, to register or for more information.

Electricians seek recruits

The Tri-City Electricians Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee IBEW Local Union # 236, are recruiting 60 electrician apprentices.

Applications can be obtained online at www.tricityjatc.org. Applicants can visit the Local Union # 236 at 428 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, for assistance completing on-line applications, and they can use the computer at the office if they don't have access to one.

All applicants:

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Must be at least a high school graduate, or have a general equivalency diploma (GED), with one year of algebra with passing grade.
- Must live within the union's geographic jurisdiction (13 surrounding counties) - Albany, Schenectady, Saratoga, Schoharie, Rensselaer, Montgomery, Warren, Hamilton, Washington, Fulton, Columbia, a small portion of Otsego (Townships: Decatur, Worcester, East and South Worcester), and a portion of Greene County (north of Route 23A).

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• Must take and obtain a score of 4 or higher using the electrical trade's aptitude test.

• Must be able to read and understand English and hear and understand verbal instructions and warnings given in English.

• Must be able and willing to get to and from work at various job sites with the geographical

Here we go a-wassailing



Tech Valley High School students Lian Henderson, left, from the Guilderland Central School District, and Ashley Ankenman, of Greenville, sing modified Christmas carols through the halls of Tech Valley High school on Wednesday, Dec. 22. The students and their classmates rewrote the lyrics of popular carols to have a scientific theme as part of a joint English-science class assignment.

Submitted photo

jurisdiction of Local Union # 236 and donate

• Must be able to attend all related classroom training as required to complete apprenticeship program.

• Must be able to climb and work from ladders and scaffolds of various lengths and heights.

• Must be able to crawl, and work in confined spaces such as attics, manholes, and crawl spaces.

For further information, call the Local Union # 236 at 785-5167.

Pine Bush plans programs

The Albany Pine Bush has several programs planned for January and February. Sign up by calling 456-0655 or visit www.albanypinebush.org and click on "Calendar Events."

• KIDS Holiday Bird Count, Sunday Jan. 2, 10 a.m. to noon

Learn how to use binoculars and what birds are living in the preserve in winter. The program will start inside with a brief introduction to birds, bird counts and binoculars. Participants will move outside in small family

groups to tally the birds around the Discovery Center and finish up with a hot cup of cocoa and the final tally for the day. Binoculars provided.

Location: Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, 195 New Karner Road

Fee: \$3 per person/\$5 per family/children under 5 free. Registration is required.

• First Friday Hike: Winter Wildlife, Friday, Jan. 7, noon to 1 p.m.

Find out where the animals go when snow falls and cold winds blow.

Location: Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, 195 New Karner Road

Fee: Free. Registration is required.

• Snowshoe Adventure, Saturday Jan. 8, 10:30 a.m. to noon

Take a 1.5-mile hike on snowshoes. Explore the frozen landscape of the pine barrens and gain a basic introduction to snowshoeing. Snowshoes will be provided.

Location: Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, 195 New Karner Road

Fee: \$3 per person/\$5 per family/children under 5 free. Registration is required.

FUUSA to host interfaith dialogue

The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany (FUUSA), Emerson Community Hall, 405 Washington Ave (corner of Washington and Robin Street), Albany, will host a series titled "Interfaith Dialog: Etiquette and Rules of the Road when Faiths Collide," on Tuesdays, Jan. 11 to Feb. 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

This free program will work with excerpts from the book "When Faiths Collide" by Martin Marty, on-line resources and other materials to look at suggested etiquette for interfaith dialog, pluralism and tolerance in world religions, pluralism in America, when dialog does and does not work, the role of the media, and other issues. Materials for the class will be copied and distributed, so you do not need to buy any books. The emphasis will be on class discussion. Materials will also be posted on www.fuusainterfaithdialog.wordpress.com, which will also be the site for on-line discussions that anyone can join. The class will be facilitated by Robb Smith, Executive Director, Interfaith Impact of NYS.

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7	4	1	6	9	5	3	2	8
5	2	9	1	3	8	4	7	6
6	8	3	4	7	2	5	1	9
1	5	7	8	2	3	9	6	4
8	9	2	7	6	4	1	3	5
3	6	4	5	1	9	2	8	7
9	1	5	3	8	6	7	4	2
4	3	6	2	5	7	8	9	1
2	7	8	9	4	1	6	5	3

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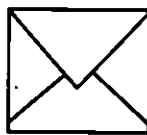
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Group that empowers girls seeks mentors

I Am I Can will pair high schoolers with women in their community

By ALYSSA JUNG
jung@spotlightnews.com

When Avon Scherff first announced the concept for her foundation, I Am I Can in June, that's all it really was — a concept. After crafting I Am I Can part-time while running Scherff Insurance Agency, Inc. in Clifton Park full-time, the organization that seeks to empower girls throughout high school and help them establish a plan for after graduation, is another step closer to being up and running.

The foundation had its official launch in early November with an event at Saratoga National Golf Club that raised around \$5,000. It was meant to get the name out there and

hopefully generate some interest throughout the community, both among young girls who could benefit from it and local women who want to help them thrive.

"I've had women from that, reach out to us interested in being community directors or an advocate to work with the girls mentoring, and also some women who just want to be available to volunteer," said Scherff.

I Am I Can already has seven board members but Scherff hopes to find up to four more. A board member would be responsible for attending a monthly board meeting and assisting on the administrative arm of the organization. That could mean finding women to be involved or helping with events and fundraising.

The foundation also needs community

"The mentor will be there to listen, guide and support them. Talk about plans, college visits maybe."

— Avon Scherff, I Am I Can

directors, who will basically be a spokesperson in various communities. Scherff is shooting to have a community director in every school district in the Capital Region, eventually.

"I can't physically be out speaking to everyone, so the plan is these directors would share the mission of the organization and develop their team in that community, so finding mentors and doing outreach to get girls to participate in the

program," said Scherff.

I Am I Can is in need of advocates, too, who will serve as mentors for interested girls.

"If a particular girl wants to be involved I'll pair her off with a woman in that community and they would spend time together, get to know each other, it would be their support person during high school," said Scherff.

The mission of the foundation is to steer girls through their high school years and help them develop a post-graduation plan. That could be college or an alternative.

"It's great to encourage college but it could be something else like cosmetology, trade school, a branch of the military," said Scherff. "The mentor will be there to listen, guide and support them. Talk about plans, college visits maybe."

Girls in the program will have access to more than just mentoring. They might participate in group activities that foster teamwork and relationship building as well.

Her biggest challenge has been handling everything alone and still fulfilling her duties as owner of her company.

"The push is to get women involved in all these roles," said Scherff.

For more information or to learn how to get involved as a volunteer, community director, advocate or board member, visit www.iamicanachieve.org or contact Scherff at avon@scherrffinsurance.com or 688-3010.

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Spotlight Newspapers also welcomes longer opinion pieces for the Point of View section.

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Guilderland's Kelly Camardo, left, scores one of her four goals during the Lady Dutch's 18-10 victory over Shaker in the Section II Division I finals. It was Guilderland's fourth consecutive Sectional title.

Year

(From Page 28)

The Dutchmen's run was fueled in part by first baseman Matt Zanotta, who set a Section II record by belting 18 home runs during the season. But it was also fueled by pitching, as Vinny Tamburello won several games during the postseason to bring Guilderland to the brink of a state title.

The Niskayuna boys' and Guilderland girls' lacrosse teams continued their dominance over Section II. Niskayuna won its sixth consecutive Sectional championship by beating Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake 14-4 in the Class B final, while Guilderland defeated Shaker 18-10 for the girls' Division I championship - its fourth in a row.

Niskayuna's girls team extended its own championship streak to four years after beating Queensbury 18-6 in the Division II finals.

Meanwhile, Shen ended a six-year championship drought in boys lacrosse when it edged Bethlehem 6-5 in overtime for the Class A crown. The Eagles - who were making their first-ever appearance in a Sectional final - led 5-4 until Brandon Connors scored late in the fourth quarter and added the game winner in overtime.

In softball news, Colonie rebounded from

a tough regular season to win the Class AA Sectional title with a 4-3 victory over Bethlehem in the finals. The Lady Raiders entered the playoffs as the No. 9 seed, but they maneuvered through the field thanks to the pitching of Casey Rowland and some timely hitting.

Smith and Plante turned their attention from the sprints to the hurdles during the outdoor track season and won more state titles. Smith finished first in the 100-meter high hurdles

with a time of 13.82 seconds, while Plante claimed the 400-meter intermediate hurdles championship with a time of 59.76 seconds.

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake's Otis Ubriaco also earned a state title during the outdoor season. Ubriaco won the boys 3,200-meter race with a time of 9:04.75 - two-hundredths of a second ahead of Greene's Chad Noelle.

The second half of the 2010 Year in Review will appear next week.

Robert Goo/Spotlight

Memories

(From Page 28)

The program Buonaguro inherited was nowhere near what it had been (how could it be once Alex Franklin, Edwin Ubiles and Ronald Moore graduated?), and it showed in the Saints' 2-6 start. Wins over Florida Atlantic and Georgia Tech may have righted the ship for now, but there is still the matter of facing all those MAAC teams that would like to kick Siena while it's perceived to be down. Time will tell.

Women's college soccer in Albany County generated some excitement in 2010. The College of Saint Rose was ranked No. 1 among NCAA Division II teams for most of the season until the Golden Knights lost in the national semifinal for the third straight year, and Siena was ranked in the NCAA Division I poll after winning its first 12 games. The Saints wound up winning the MAAC title and making the NCAA Tournament.

And in Section II soccer alumni news, Guilderland High School graduate Jon Busch resurrected his pro career with San Jose and helped the Earthquakes reach the Major League Soccer playoff semifinals. The team that dumped him, the Chicago Fire, didn't make the playoffs. Poetic justice.

More Section II athletics alumni news: Saratoga Central Catholic graduate Tim Stauffer made his case to be part of San Diego's starting rotation with a strong final month to the 2010 Padres' season. Stauffer won four of his six starts in September and October to finish the season with a 6-5 record and a 1.85 earned run average. A great finish to a season that started with Stauffer as a middle reliever and was sidetracked in May due to an appendectomy.

Schenectady High School's Casper Wells likewise made a case for himself to

be included in the Detroit Tigers' lineup in 2011 after a good run this past season. The outfielder batted .344 in September to finish his first major league season with a .323 batting average with four home runs and 17 RBI.

Let's not forget Ballston Spa's Trevor Marsicano. The young speedskater went to his first Winter Olympics and brought home a silver medal from Vancouver when he and his United States teammates placed second in the team pursuit competition. If he stays healthy and keeps performing well on the international circuit, we might see him in Sochi, Russia, in 2014.

The Tri-City ValleyCats went from the New York-Penn League basement to the penthouse over the course of one crazy 2010 season. After a slow start that left them nine games below .500 in July, the ValleyCats went on a tear to win the Stedler Division title and the league championship in a three-game series against the Brooklyn Cyclones.

Coincidentally, the ValleyCats made the biggest save of the year in June when they announced they were adopting Rowdy the River Rat into their family of mascots. Now, people who were fond of the hockey-playing rodent could go across the Hudson River to Troy and say hello to Rowdy while he led a late-inning rally.

Finally, aficionados of 19th-century baseball (and there aren't a lot of them) witnessed the second-annual meeting between the Bethlehem Braves and the traveling New York Mutuals on the Fourth of July. The quirky rules made for a fun afternoon of watching people in wool-replica uniforms run around on a hot day, even if the game itself wasn't entirely competitive (the Mutuals won 18-8). Hopefully, there will be another game next summer.

That's it for my Year in Review. I will return you to your regularly-scheduled column next week.

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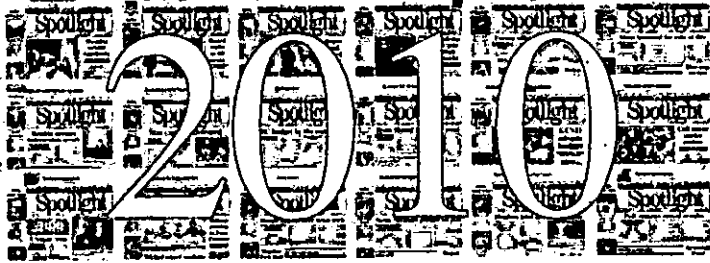
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Sports in the Spotlight

The Year in Sports



By ROB JONAS
jonasr@spotlightnews.com

A lot happened during the first six months of the 2010 sports year in Section II. Here's a sample of the stories that impacted the local sports world.

Winter

- The Christian Brothers Academy basketball team made school history when it won its first state Class AA title in mid March.

After winning their sixth Section II championship in the last eight years, the Brothers defeated Cicero-North Syracuse in the regionals and Newburgh Free Academy in the semifinals to reach the final against Long Island champion Half Hollow Hills West.

HHHW had New York State's Mr. Basketball, Tobias Harris, on its roster, but that didn't faze CBA. The Brothers broke the game open with a 9-0 run in the third quarter on their way to a 71-53 victory.

"We're glad we're the first guys to put that [state championship] banner up on the wall," said Galal Cancer, who led CBA in the finals with 19 points and 11 rebounds.

- The Shenendehowa girls basketball and Saratoga Springs hockey teams reached the state finals in their respective sports.

Shen got past Section V champion Fairport in the state Class AA semifinals and had a 28-18 halftime lead on Sachem East in the finals, but the Plainswomen ran out of gas as Sachem East came back for a 50-44 victory.

"You've got to tip your hat [to Sachem East]," said Shen coach Ken Strube. "They made the shots when they had to."

Saratoga became the first Section II Division I team to reach the state finals in several years when it defeated Section V's Pittsford 4-3 in the semifinals. But the Blue Streaks' good fortune ended in the finals against West Genesee (Section III), as the Wildcats prevailed 3-0.

- The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake boys basketball team proved that a slow start doesn't always lead to disaster.

The Spartans finished below .500 during the regular season, but they proved to be a tough out in the playoffs. They defeated Lansingburgh 55-49 in the Section II Class A finals and got past Section X's Massena before losing to eventual state champion Jamesville-DeWitt in the regional final.

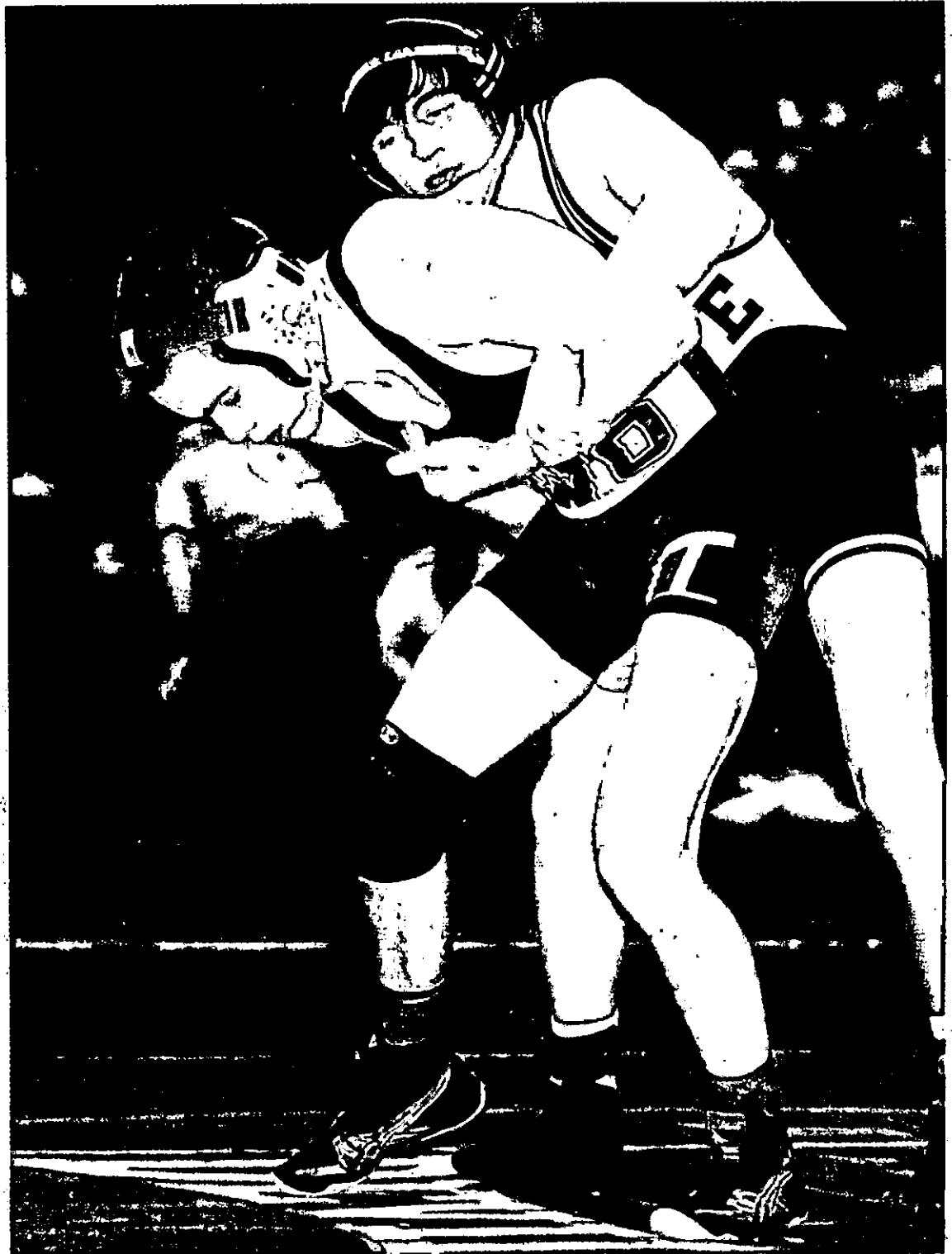
"They went out there and believed [they could win]," said BH-BL coach George Dudas.

- Sprinters Madalayne Smith (Saratoga) and Kyle Plante (Colonie) made their marks at the state indoor track and field championships.

Smith won the 55-meter dash with a time of 7.11 seconds; while Plante claimed the 300 dash championship with a time of 38.94 seconds. Shen's 3,200-meter girls relay team also took home a state title by posting a winning time of 9:17.78.

- Section II had a pair of state champion wrestlers in Amsterdam's Giuseppe Lanzi and Duanesburg's Nick Gwiazdowski. Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake's Zeal McGrew reached the state finals at 285 pounds before losing to Johnson City's Lance Moore 7-1.

- The Colonie girls bowling team edged Middle Country (Section XI) by 47 pins to win the state title in February.



Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk's Andy Lyman tries to pull off an escape during an early-round bout at the state wrestling championships at Albany's Times Union Center in late February.

Rob Jonas/Spotlight

Stephanie Buckley led the Lady Raiders with a six-game series of 1,229 pins. Section II won the intersectional team championship in girls bowling with a score of 6,043 pins.

Colonie's boys bowling team placed second to North

Rockland with a score of 6,213 pins. Matt Olson rolled a six-game series of 1,421 to lead the Garnet Raiders.

Spring

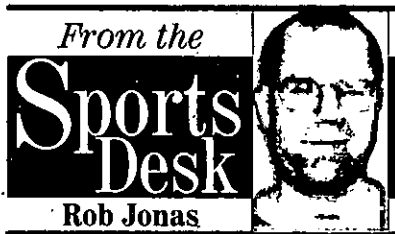
- The Guilderland baseball

team emerged out of a highly-competitive Suburban Council field to win the Section II Class AA title and reach the state finals, where it lost to Lindenhurst (Section XI).

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Some fond (and not-so-fond) memories of 2010

Just when you think the Siena College men's basketball team is doomed to a losing season, the Saints beat Georgia Tech. Now, I don't know what to think - other than that Paul Hewitt might want to start looking for a new place to coach after he gets fired in Atlanta. OK, moving on...



Rob Jonas

TO THE YEAR IN REVIEW!

Yep, it's that time of year when sports columnists like myself take a fond look back at all the athletes and teams that made 2010 so special. So first, let me get this out of the way:

- Tiger Woods went 0-for-the-year and got divorced.
- Brett Favre came back and got hammered so badly that he started talking re-re-retirement after the first month of the NFL season.
- Cam Newton is a great college football player, but his father should not be allowed to talk to another college official.

- John Wooden died, leaving a hole in UCLA's soul.
- Tom Brady has long hair now, which somehow bothers football fans.
- The New Orleans Saints won the Super Bowl in February, and everyone cheered.
- The Los Angeles Lakers won the NBA title, and everyone shrugged.
- The Chicago Blackhawks won their first Stanley Cup in nearly five decades, and nobody outside of Chicago cared.
- The San Francisco Giants won the World Series for the first time since ticking everyone in New York City off by moving west.
- The New York Yankees didn't win the World Series and didn't get Cliff Lee or Carl Crawford, so 2010 was a total failure for them and their fans.

That's it for all the national sports observations. Now, on to the local scene:

- Albany lost its "rat-itude" when Walter Robb sold the River Rats to the owners of the Charlotte Checkers so that the Carolina Hurricanes could move their AHL affiliate closer to their Raleigh home base.

And what did Albany get in return? A bunch of Devils bearing gifts of a new high-definition video scoreboard

and fancy ribbon message boards for the Times Union Center. That's about all they have offered thus far, since the team itself has been rather mediocre - kind of like the parent club in New Jersey.

- The region came close to losing the summer racing card at Saratoga Race Course when the New York Racing Association threatened to shut down unless it received a loan from the state government. The state listened and granted NYRA a \$25 million loan, which kept Belmont and Saratoga running through the summer and fall.

Unfortunately, the state couldn't find the money to keep the Empire State Games going after this past summer's games in Buffalo. Lake Placid stepped in to fund the 2011 Empire State Winter Games, but the summer games have been discontinued. That is a blow to amateur athletes of all ages across New York who looked forward to the Olympic-styled competition every year.

- Siena won its third straight Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference title, but the Saints couldn't recapture their NCAA Tournament magic and bowed out in the first round to Purdue. Then Fran McCaffery left for Iowa, leaving the program in assistant coach Mitch Buonaguro's hands.

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