



December 2005 Published by The Stockade Association www.historicstockade.com Vol. 47 No. 4

"Childhood Remembered"

December at the Schenectady County Historical Society



1834 Yates Doll House

This holiday season, start a new tradition, or continue one, with the child (or child at heart) in your life by visiting The Schenectady County Historical Society. Enjoy the new exhibit, "Childhood Remembered" throughout the month of December. You can see antique dolls from several eras, the 1834 Yates doll house, a quaint child's carriage from the Ellis family, and many toys from the collection.

And, as an added treat, on **Saturday, December 10, at 2:00 PM**, Stockade neighbor, Marilyn Sassi, will be highlighting the Society's special toy collection with her presentation, "The History of Toys in America from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." Marilyn is a past curator of the Schenectady Historical Society and is the present curator of the Van Alstyne Homestead

in Canajoharie. She has worked with antiques for over twenty years and was involved in continuing education instruction at Union College and HVCC. At **1:30 PM**, enjoy some holiday goodies amidst the beautiful decorations created by the Hugh Plat Garden Club. You can view the exhibit and take a tour of The Society at 32 Washington Avenue, Mondays through Fridays, 1:00 to 5:00 PM and Saturdays, 10 AM to 4 PM. 374-0263.

Holiday High Tech Finds Lawrence

LED (light emitting diode) lights have been adapted for Christmas lights. Most of the lights on the trees at the Indian are LED lights. They are of the same family of "bulbs" as many traffic lights and rear end car lights. The big difference is they are of a very low wattage. For example, a standard set of 50 miniature tree lights uses about 20 watts and a standard set of 60 miniature LED lights uses under 5 watts. This enables one to use more lights but less electric. The 1795 Cafe graciously donates our electricity so this is a consideration. Thank you, Rob. There is more - the bulbs are almost unbreakable withstanding up to 250 pounds of pressure and remarkably generate no heat at all so they do not dry out trees helping them to last longer. And lastly, one can pass them on to the grand children. The life of the bulbs is at least 25,000 hours.

- Peter Rumora

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Stockade Dates

Stockade Association
General Meeting

Thursday, January 12, 7:30 pm
32 Washington Avenue

Schenectady County Historical Society

January
Spy
Deadline

Dec. 15

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For the Beauty & Safety of the Season

- To help illuminate the beauty of the
- Stockade and for the safety of evening
- strollers, please keep your porch lights on.
- Candles in the windows will give an added
- warm glow to our long winter nights.

- - - Around and About the Stockade - - -

Stockade Churches for Christmas Services & Events

First Presbyterian Church, 209 Union St., 374-4546, see ad page 6

First Reformed Church, 8 N. Church St, 377-2201 see ad page 6

Sat., Dec. 3, 8 PM "**Holiday Music Through the Ages**" by the Mohawk Valley Chorus and Kids Chorus. Tickets at the door \$11 general; \$8 seniors, students. Children under 12 admitted free with an adult.

St. George's Church 30 N. Ferry St., 374-3163, see ad page 4

Holy Cross Church 18 North College St., 372-3381

Schenectady Civic Players presents "Go Back For Murder"

Dec, 9, 10, 11 & 14-18, 12 South Church St. \$12. 382-2081

Evenings, 8:00 PM; Sunday Matinees, 2:30 PM

Moon and River Cafe, 115 S. Ferry St. 382-1938 4 - 11 pm

Vegetarian Fare & Dessert. Paradise! For full schedule of events, call or stop in.

Sun., Dec. 4, A Festival for Peace, 1-10 pm, music, poetry, lectures, food all day.

Mon., Dec. 5 Story Tellers, Open Mic, 7-9 PM

Tues., Dec. 6 String Dusters - Holiday Bluegrass Party

Tues. Dec. 20 Stockade folkwoman, Catherine Norr

Mon., Dec. 26, Historic Schenectady Discussion Group. 7 PM

Sat., Dec. 31 New Years Eve Party

Events at the Open Door Bookstore 128 Jay St. 346-2719

• **Sat., Dec. 3**, 1:30-3:00 Jane Yolen & Mark Teague signing **How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?**

Schenectady County Community College

78 Washington Ave. 381-1250

Mon., Dec. 5, 7:30 PM, SCCC Chorus and Vocal Chamber Ensemble, Auditorium. Free/open to public.

Wed., Dec. 7, 7:30 PM, SCCC Jazz & Percussion Ensembles, Auditorium. Free/open to public.

Mon., Dec. 12, 7:30 PM, Woodwind Chamber Ensembles, Lally-Mohawk Room, Elston Hall. Free/open to public.



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Neighborhood News

Bob Briber, Secretary

Stockade website: www.historicstockade.com.

Minutes

Stockade Association General Meeting

November 10, 2005

Schenectady County Historical Society

President Joe Fava called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm and introduced **Mayor Brian Stratton who outlined the City 2006 budget and reflected on Schenectady's recent progress.**

The Mayor did so rapidly and thoroughly, working with a PowerPoint presentation. He said that when he assumed the Mayor's role, the City had the lowest credit rating in the state and it was not clear if it could meet payroll. The City was using capital funds to pay day-to-day expenses and faced a number of other, devastating problems. As Mayor, the City took action on different fronts:

- Sold the parking garage;
- Cooperated with the County so that both City and County vehicles are serviced in the County garage, and sold more than 130 vehicles at auction so that now we have a much better operating, insured and inspected fleet;
- Collected unpaid taxes;
- Instituted a waste collection fee which affects both the many non-profit organizations in the City as well as private homes and businesses, and generates almost \$3 million;
- Cut expenses in sewer repair and attorney legal fees;
- Petitioned for and won a substantial increase in unrestricted state aid.

With these and other efforts, the City cut the amount we need to borrow by more than \$12 million. We are working with Moody's to improve our credit rating and thus lower the cost of borrowing.

He then described a number of new departures in the business and cultural scene in Schenectady, noting that the Villaltalia on Broadway had just opened

its doors today. He said the YMCA, planned for a renamed and rebuilt Big N plaza, will be the largest in the Capital District and will break ground next year. The City plans to rebuild Erie Blvd. from Rte. 890 to the Big N area. Frank Gilmore's firm is working with others to develop the area between East Front St. and the River, which will also bring in a marina. He described many other new efforts as well.

He invited questions from the audience which he, Carl Olsen, and Karen Johnson answered. Among them was a question about the **strip of land at the end of Riverside Park** which separates the Park from the Union boathouse. Ownership, it was reported, is still being contested through legal channels. Jennifer Wells asked about **widening the Riverside Park path**, Carl Olsen said it is a walking, not a bike path. Police cars do use it, and they're thinking of widening it. He also said, to applause, that they plan to keep the riverbank clear of weeds. Annetta August asked about an **anchor retail store along State St**; the Mayor said there are retail outlets that are interested, but he can't at this moment announce specific plans. The City Council has adopted a capital budget to purchase new 4-wheel drive and snowplow vehicles and street sweepers. **The goal is to sweep the City's streets every week, after garbage pickup, as well as to improve snow plowing.** Lyn Gordon complimented Carl Olsen, saying she never had to wait more than 48 hours for his office to provide requested help.

Karen Johnson, also using projected photographs, then showed photos and described the **reconstruction at Proctor's**. Things are going "incredibly fast," she said. Soon we'll have a stage big enough to get all the new Broadway shows and with that and a 60 foot high IWERKS ("IMAX"-type) screen and other kid-friendly facilities, we'll draw thousands of people to the City. (Even without expanding, Proctor's is the

(Continued on page 5)



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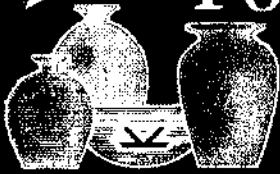


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(Neighborhood News continued from page 3)

7th largest tourist attraction in the Capital District.) Among the other noteworthy features, Proctor's is building a \$7 million heating plant that will make it much less expensive for others to build in the immediate area. The first entertainment in the new space will be **"The Nutcracker,"** on December 3, followed by **"Chicago,"** and a February residency of **"Phantom of the Opera."**

With about 40 people present, Joe Fava then turned the meeting to Association business. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Bob Preville - who has replaced Lyn Gordon as Treasurer - gave the Treasurer's report. Expenses since the last meeting have exceeded income by about \$1000, but the Association has about \$32 thousand in reserves. Lyn gave a report about the **Walkabout**, indicating we had about 3000 people visiting the houses or attending the Waterfront Faire and that the three cooperating organizations will realize more than \$4700 each.

Peter Rumora spoke about the **holiday candle-lighting ceremony**, scheduled for November 27 at 5:00 PM, followed by a gathering at the Great Hall at St. George's. He invited all present to bring finger foods and cookies to the Great Hall after 3 PM.

Diane DeMeo described the forthcoming fourth annual **"Kerst Kermis" Holiday Craft Fair** to be held at both the VanDyck and the Stockade Inn on November 27 from 11 to 5 PM. Lunch at the VanDyck will cost \$12.40 and brunch at the Stockade Inn, \$23.50. Either (or a separate donation of \$2) will allow unlimited shopping at either location. Joe said the Board wants to make these events into a nice Stockade Christmas celebration, and asked for suggestions.

Lyn Gordon has resigned the **Treasurer's** position, and because the bylaws do not make provisions for replacing officers, Joe asked for approval of a previously discussed bylaw amendment, adding a new Section 4 to Article V Vacancies: **"Following a recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Board of Directors shall fill a vacancy in any office, except the office of President, by majority vote. The**

person elected by the Board shall hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term." The amendment was approved unanimously. Joe also announced that since Deb Douglas had resigned, Bob Briber had reassumed the role of Secretary; that Mary D'Alessandro had replaced Connie Colangelo, who had resigned; and that Eli Taub had resigned from the Board.

In new business, Gloria Kishton reported that another ballard has been knocked over again, and asked who owns the **Gateway**. The Mayor said the City owns it.

Sylvie Briber reported that 26 advertisers have paid money ahead for **"Patroon"** status in the **Spy** and urged that we show gratitude by patronizing the firms.

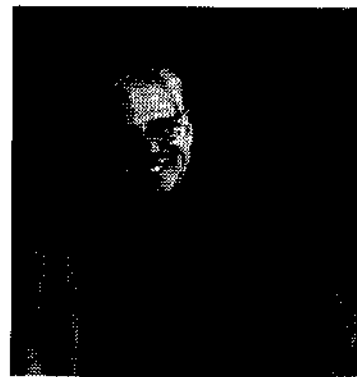
The discussion turned to **sidewalk repairs**, a priority need in the Stockade. The Mayor said the City has some \$18 million in paving and reconstruction needs including those in the Stockade. (Sidewalk repairs are expensive; even granite curbing costs \$40/foot). Carl Olsen said he would be very interested in helping the neighborhood and would like to know what in detail are the major areas needing repair. He urged that we create a subcommittee and evaluate problem areas. **Once we "scope" the problem, he said he would like to sit with us and figure out how to help.**

After two or three other questions, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

- Respectfully submitted by Bob Briber, secretary

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Cliff Gavitt Day at Boulevard Bowl Sunday, December 4

Long time Schenectady native and Stockade resident, Cliff Gavitt, has been battling cancer for the last couple of years. On Sunday, December 4, Cliff's friends will be holding Cliff Gavitt Day at Boulevard Bowl, in his honor, to raise money to help defray the costs associated with the various treatments that he has been enduring since his diagnosis.

Cliff is an avid bowler and onetime proprietor of Mt. Pleasant Lanes. Cliff Gavitt Day will include a bowling tournament, "Rock 'N Bowl," prizes and a lot of fun.

Sponsors are being sought in the form of items to be raffled off or monetary donations. Any little bit will help. Please contact Jim Buonome (357-4306) or Frank DePalma, Sr. (DePalma's Screen Printing, 374-0530.) To make a contribution, send it to Boulevard Bowl c/o Frank DePalma, 1315 Erie Boulevard, Schenectady, 12305. Anyone who wishes to bowl or enter a team can contact Jim or Frank or make a reservation through Mike Scaccia at Boulevard Bowl (374-4171). Donations are \$20 per bowler or \$80 per team.

Holiday Gift Idea!

Give a yearly subscription to the **Stockade Spy** as a holiday present! This is a great gift for anyone who grew up or lived here or just loves the Stockade! Only \$10 per year. See Membership form below.

- Tidings -

Farewell to:

• Deb and Jeremy Douglas of Cucumber Alley who are moving to Charlton. Deb was the Association's Recording Secretary.

Condolences to:

• The family of Donna Hunt of North Street who passed away recently after a long illness.

Corrections:

- Mary D. spells her name D'Alessandro
- Malcolm Willison wrote the poem, "Return to Illyria," in the Nov. *Spy*.

The names of all our paid up members will be printed in the January 2006 *Spy*. To make the list on time, please send in the form below by December 15, 2005 if you haven't already. Thank you for your support of *The Spy* and the neighborhood!

The Stockade Association Membership 2005- 2006

The Stockade Association has been carrying out its mission, "the protection and improvement of the properties" within its boundaries, for 48 years. Its objectives are to preserve the Historic District and the quality of life for its caretakers. The Association helps assure stability in a neighborhood that has been termed "a national treasure" and is enjoyed by visitors from all parts of America and abroad. Please support the Association and become a member by returning the coupon below.

Membership: October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006. \$15 per person, \$20 per household. \$_____

Name(s) _____ Address _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Business _____ e-mail _____

Please indicate if you would like to help with any of the following useful efforts:

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 Garden Group Neighborhood Celebrations Sidewalk Sale *The Stockade Spy* Government Affairs

The Stockade Spy is distributed to the neighborhood monthly, September through May.

If you are a non-resident and

- would like to be mailed *The Stockade Spy*, it is \$10 per year. \$_____
- would like to become a "Friend of the Stockade" (an associate membership) and support the efforts of the Stockade, your contributions are very welcome. \$_____

If you would like to give *The Stockade Spy* as a gift, it is \$10 per year. \$_____

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Please make check payable to "**The Stockade Association**" Total Amount enclosed \$_____
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2005-2006**

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Thurs., Dec. 8 Thurs., Dec. 22
Fri., Dec. 30

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Please Be A Good Neighbor:

- * **Avoid honking car horns**
- * **Do not park on sidewalks**
- * **Put trash out only at appropriate times**
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- **Remove emptied trash cantainers from streets ASAP**
- * **Help frail neighbors clean their front yards**
- * **Pick up dog poops (in plastic bags)**

Articles that appear in *The Stockade Spy* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Stockade Association Board of Directors.

The Stockade Spy

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