

MARCH 2015

# CLIFTON PARK

AN EXCLUSIVE MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR RESIDENTS

# Living



## The Mazzone Family Recipe

Sean Willcoxon, Angelo Mazzone,  
Matt Mazzone, Mark Delos



Best Version Media

Cover photo by Mark Morand, Mainframe Photography



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## COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback? New ideas? We would be happy to hear from you! Please contact Jenna Caputo at jcaputo@bestversionmedia.com for information on how to submit ideas, articles, updates, reminders, events, high-resolution photos and more. We will do our best to include as much community information as we can within our space limitations.

## MAGAZINE DEADLINES

Please submit your content by the 10th of each month.

Clifton Park Living will usually arrive in your mailbox within the first week of every month. Dates may vary depending on the post office.

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## Dear CLIFTON PARK Residents,

It's March. That means that Saint Patrick's Day is just around the corner. I have a love hate relationship with this holiday. All of my life I have been stereotyped as being 100% Irish because I have red hair and my last name is Riley. However, I've never felt that I could identify myself as being fully Irish. But if I wasn't Irish, what was I? I got my first hint after I discovered that my father had been nicknamed "Riley the Frenchman" by his co-workers, who found out he grew up in a household where everyone spoke French. So, was I Irish and French? What about my mother's side?

To solve this lifelong curiosity of mine, I recently did a DNA test through Ancestry.com to get to the bottom of my heritage once and for all. Well, it turns out that my DNA confirmed I'm Irish and French, but it also revealed that's hardly the full story of where I come from! According to the records, I am 100% European and when you break it down further, I am 49% from the region of Ireland and Great Britain (this includes Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England). I am 25% Eastern European (this includes the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Russia, Hungary and Poland). I am also 11% Scandinavian (including the countries of Sweden, Norway, Denmark) as well as 6% from Italy and Greece, 5% from the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and 4% from Western Europe (Belgium, France, Germany). I've always had a hunch that I wasn't fully Irish but it was startling to discover that I had such a broad range of nationalities and ethnic groups in my make-up!

The most interesting thing I learned was that my DNA wasn't a complete 50% split between my mother and father's DNA. This made me laugh. I have always felt more like my mother, and the DNA actually confirmed this! Did you ever grow up thinking you were more like your mom or dad? Perhaps the answer to that lies deep in your DNA and can be explained scientifically!

Where do you come from? If you grew up thinking you were from a certain nationality just because of your surname, it might be a total surprise for you to learn the full story of your ancestors. If you discover something startling while researching your own lineage let me know the results – I would love to share some of your stories with our readers.

In the end, I'm happy to know I do have some of the luck of the Irish in me after all and now on Saint Patrick's Day I can happily play along. Cheers!

*Jessie Riley*  
PUBLISHER



Photo by Mark Morand, Mainframe  
Photography



*What does your family tree  
look like?*

## IMPORTANT TOWN PHONE NUMBERS

Town Supervisor *Phil Barrett*.....371-6651  
Town Board Members.....371-6651  
Animal Control Officer.....371-6756  
Town Attorney *Tom McCarthy*.....371-6651  
Assessor *Walter Smead*.....371-6460  
Building & Development Director  
*Steve Myers*.....371-6702  
Building & Grounds Director  
*Mike Handershan*.....371-6651  
Town Clerk *Pat O'Donnell*.....371-6681

Town Court, 5 Municipal Plaza.....371-6668  
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*Barb McHugh*.....371-6651  
Town Comptroller *Mark Heggen*.....371-6651  
Storm Water Management Technician  
*Scott Reese*.....371-6054  
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*Dahn Bull*.....371-6651  
Highway Superintendent  
*Rick Kukuk*.....371-7310

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*Myla Kramer*.....371-6667  
Planning Director *John Scavo*.....371-6054  
Receiver of Taxes *Lorraine Varley*.....371-5720  
Director of Safety and Security  
*Lou Pasquarel*.....348-7311  
Town Security Officers.....369-6651  
Sewer Director *Mike O'Brien*.....348-7313  
Transfer Station Supervisor  
*Jeff Vedder*.....371-6669

If the person you wish to reach is not on the list above, please call 371-6651 to speak to a receptionist who will direct your call to the appropriate individual or department. The Town's office buildings are open from Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm, excluding holidays. The Town Clerk's Office is open until 7pm every Thursday. The Building and Parks and Recreation Departments are open at 8am Monday through Friday.



# Clifton Park's Molding Sand Industry

By John L. Scherer

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many household items were made of cast iron. Stoves, sad irons, doorstops, decorative wall brackets, garden furniture, umbrella stands and even architectural elements were all made of cast iron. The molds to create these goods were made from sand mined in Clifton Park. Clifton Park's molding sand was the finest available. It was mined from virtually every area of town, from Jonesville to Vischer Ferry.

Whitehead Brothers was a large company that surface mined molding sand. Their headquarters was in New York City, but they had operations throughout New York State.

The Whitehead docks were located right on the Erie Canal at the foot of Van Vranken Road at the entrance to the present Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve. The canal freighters would line up here, each to be loaded with about two hundred and fifty tons of molding sand. A pair of horses driven by a man who rode behind them on a two wheel cart would pull each boat along the canal to destinations throughout the state.

When the Barge Canal opened in 1917, and the old Erie



Mr. Bell's sand team and men, Forts Ferry, c. 1890.

was closed, Whitehead Brothers established new docks on the Mohawk River just east of Ferry Drive in Vischer Ferry.

Jonesville and Elnora were also areas where molding sand was mined. Here it was loaded on railroad cars at the Elnora Station and delivered to factories around the State. Willard Dyer, for whom Dyer Road in Jonesville is named, was involved with shipping molding sand. Other Jonesville residents in the molding sand business were Frank Warner and a Mr. Fallthorp.

Martin Jewett lived on Ushers Road and owned the land that is now occupied by Country Knolls. This property was rich in molding sand, and in 1939, Jewett made a considerable profit from molding sand taken from his property and shipped from the Elnora Station.

Many Clifton Park residents were employed in the extraction of molding sand. This industry continued into the mid twentieth century, and aside from agriculture, was probably the most lucrative business in town. The next time you pick up something made of cast iron, you may very well wonder if it was molded in Clifton Park sand. ■

## COMMUNITY CORNER

### Freihofer's Run for Women Set to Launch Third Annual Training Challenge on March 23

Looking to get in shape after the long winter, or recommit to an old New Year's Resolution? Then dust off your sneakers and sign up for the 5th annual Freihofer's Run for Women Training Challenge that is set to launch on Monday, March 23 with three convenient times to fit any schedule.

Attracting 450 women last year ranging in age from 10-72, the Training Challenge is a 10-week program for runners of all abilities to prepare for the 37th annual Freihofer's Run for Women 5K on Saturday, May 30. The program follows an enhanced version of the well-known Couch to 5K Running Plan and includes novice, intermediate and advanced options, as well an introduction to sport walking.

Weekly sessions led by certified coaches and group team leaders will take place Mondays at The Crossings of Colonie and Saturdays at the Colonie Town Park.

For more information or to register for the Freihofer's Run for Women and the Training Challenge, visit [freihoferstrun.com](http://freihoferstrun.com). Training Challenge questions can also be directed to Patrick Lynskey at [plynkey@freihoferstrun.com](mailto:plynkey@freihoferstrun.com). ■



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# A Town Center for Exit 9

By Clifton Park Supervisor Phil Barrett

The Town Center Plan and associated zoning revisions proposed for the study area are the result of a multi-year process that included a great deal of public input and collaboration with partner organizations and consultants. Since 2000, the Exit 9 Commerce Area has experienced a transformational redevelopment of many empty buildings through tens of millions of dollars in new investment. The goals of the plan include sustaining the success of the Exit 9 Commerce Area, improving pedestrian access and improving the aesthetics of the area as well as traffic flow. One major goal of the Town Center Plan is already coming to fruition as new retail, hospitality and healthcare investments have diversified the economy of Clifton Park since the planning process began.

Every organization must continue to plan for the future and evolve to remain competitive and successful. We can be captive to inevitable changes in our respective environments, or we can plan for and embrace the future by positioning ourselves through extensive planning to be prepared to capitalize on the opportunities before us. The most opportune time to conduct a planning process for future success is when experiencing success currently. The Town

Center Plan and proposed zoning revisions will allow the Town to adjust to changing shopper habits and business cycles by offering additional flexibility in our code to attract unique opportunities. In 2000, our goal was to drastically change the fortunes of a declining Exit 9 Commerce Area. In 2015, our goal is to slowly and methodically diversify the economy of this same area through investment that will expand services and increase the value of Clifton Park.

We have the unique opportunity to develop the amenities of a Town Center, while continuing to offer diverse retail opportunities for shoppers. Clifton Park's past was based on a regional mall model, but our future can consist of a Town Center along with a unique, diversified Clifton Park Center Mall property, major retail centers and mixed-use properties.

Town leaders long ago identified specific areas for commercial development. The Exit 9 Commerce Area is the largest commercial center in Clifton Park and the future success of this area is extremely important to the taxpayers, Town and Shen Schools. ■



Clifton Park  
Supervisor Phil  
Barrett

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*Sean Willcoxon, Angelo Mazzone, Matt Mazzone, Mark Delos of Mazzone Hospitality.*

## COVER STORY

# The Mazzone Family Recipe

*By Andrew Mangini*

If you ask Mazzone Hospitality Owner Angelo Mazzone about his vast culinary empire, he'll tell you that the company wouldn't be where it is today without his family.

It's hard to argue with him when he shares the company's background. From the early 1980s, when Angelo owned his first restaurant, Peggy's, in downtown Schenectady, family has played an important part in the success and growth of his company.

That growth brings us to where we are today with the recent unveiling of Mazzone Hospitality's new corporate headquarters in Clifton Park. The facility on Pierce Road is a beautiful, 25,000 square foot central hub that, for the first time, allows the company to consolidate its catering operations,

administrative offices and warehouse in the same building.

The new headquarters houses a catering kitchen, which will be used to prepare food for up to 300 events each year, as well as a dedicated bakery for wedding cakes, desserts and pastries. A state-of-the-art, 2,000 square foot show kitchen, which looks like the set of a Food Network cooking show, is one highlight of the property. The high-end kitchen will be used for cooking demonstrations, classes, and small private functions. Additionally, the building includes a 10,000 square foot catering storage warehouse and has allowed Mazzone to finally consolidate all of his top staff in one, central location.

"We take enormous pride in our

catering operation," Angelo said from his office in the new corporate headquarters.

Despite having six successful restaurants in Albany, Saratoga and Schenectady counties, catering has always been Mazzone's focus and he's tapped into his family members every step of the way.

One of those family members, Matt Mazzone, Angelo's son, is the Chief Financial Officer for Mazzone Hospitality. Like many others in the family, Matt started early. His first day on the job came during Easter brunch when he was just old enough to work and helped man the dishwashing machine. Later, he began working on the catering side of the business and eventually managed concession

operations at Saratoga Performing Arts Center.

Determined to forge his own path, Matt attended Siena College and began a career as a financial planner. It provided a perfect background for analyzing Mazzone Hospitality financials for his father. They'd chat often, and after one such meeting about a potential deal, Matt decided coming back to the family business made sense for both him and his dad. Since his return to the company nearly a decade ago, Matt has been instrumental in Mazzone Hospitality's smart, strategic growth.

Angelo's other son, Michael, found that by combining his organizational skills with abundant charisma, he had a talent for managing front of the house operations. Michael worked in several Mazzone Hospitality restaurants before pursuing his dream of becoming an opera singer in New York City.

Angelo's daughter, Kim Otis, also worked for the family business by helping to open the Inn at Glen Sanders Mansion, an expansion that occurred several years after the Mazzone family took over the Mansion on the bank of the Mohawk River in Scotia. Kim later left to become a professor at Schenectady County Community College in the Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism program, which has served as a pipeline for graduates to find employment with Mazzone Hospitality. Otis later helped launch the Casino and Gaming Management program at the school.

Beyond his immediate family, Angelo Mazzone has reached deep into his family tree while building his culinary empire. Early in his career, Mazzone owned a pizza shop, Papa Cicco's, in Schenectady, with his brother, Artie Mazzone. It was there that Mazzone's nephew, Sean Willcoxon, began his culinary career with an introduction to the long hours of the restaurant business.

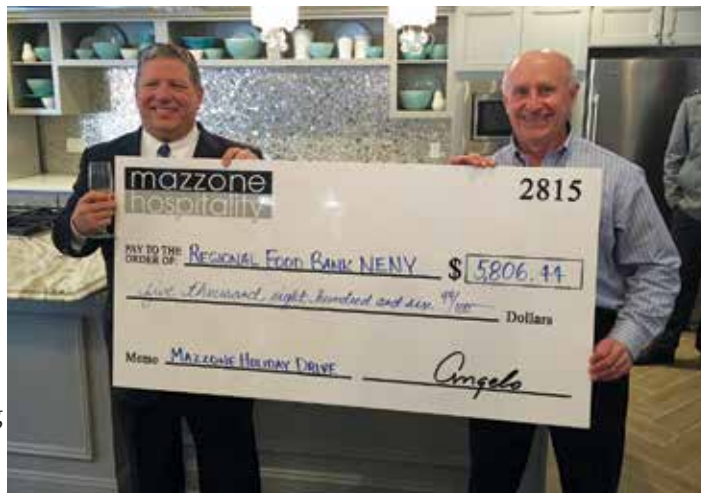
Angelo's sister, Maria Decker, Willcoxon's mother, asked if her son could start working with Angelo. After grumbling that he was too busy

to keep his eye on a kid, Mazzone relented and let Willcoxon live and work with him for a summer. On the first day, Mazzone woke Willcoxon at 8 a.m. and they headed to the kitchens for a long day of prepping for catering events. As usual, Angelo immersed himself in the busy work of the kitchen and didn't realize he left his young apprentice behind until he arrived home late at night and his wife asked, "Where's Sean?"

Willcoxon's work ethic made him impossible to forget after that first day. He was a quick study and soon proved he'd be an asset to the business. Today, Willcoxon is a Chief Operating Officer for hospitality and runs much of the catering business for his uncle.

While not a blood relative, Mark Delos feels like part of the family to Angelo Mazzone. They met in the late 1980s after a fire ravaged an entire block in downtown Schenectady and badly damaged Peggy's. Mazzone was scheduled to cater several events in the days after the blaze and reached out to Delos, a young chef in the area, desperate for a way to meet his obligations. They partnered to service the events and began a relationship that is now extending into its fourth decade.

Delos is currently the Chief Operating Officer for the culinary side of Mazzone Hospitality's catering business, but is more like a brother to Angelo than an employee. Delos has also served as a big brother to Matt



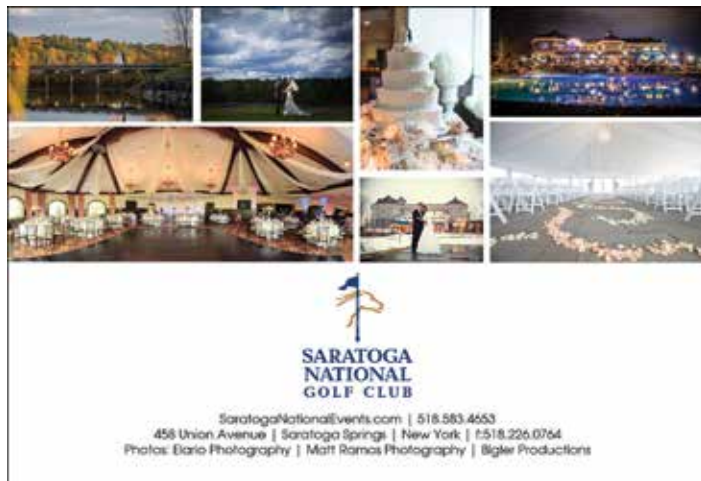
Outside the kitchen, Mazzone Hospitality has made a commitment to giving back to the community it calls home. Angelo Mazzone (left), Owner of Mazzone Hospitality, recently presented a check for \$5,806.44 to Mark Quandt (right), Executive Director of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York.

Mazzone and Willcoxon. If the two younger employees face a business dilemma, chances are Delos has faced a similar problem in the past and can provide a solution.

When Angelo Mazzone is able to escape the office and isn't checking in on one of the dozens of events they cater each weekend, he relishes time with family. The Mazzones, like many other Italian families, often have large Sunday dinners. The bi-weekly get-togethers rotate from home to home, and while the menu certainly varies, there is one long-standing rule.

"It must include red sauce and some sort of pasta," Mazzone said. "It's a family tradition." ■

Do you know a neighbor who has a story to share? Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at [jcaputo@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jcaputo@bestversionmedia.com).





# New Treatment for Asthma Patients

By Ellis Medicine

Asthma is characterized by episodes or “attacks” in which the airways from the mouth and nose to the lungs temporarily become narrow due to a tightening of muscles that surround the bronchial wall and the production of excess mucus. There are many things that trigger asthma attacks, including allergens such as pollen or mold, irritants such as cigarette smoke, exercise and the weather.

Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease that affects about 1 in 15 Americans (or about 20 million people in the U.S.), according to the Centers for Disease Control. The number of asthma cases has been on the rise since the early 1980s. Not only can asthma impact your daily life, it can be deadly if not controlled properly.

Ellis Medicine is proud to be the first hospital in the Capital Region to offer the bronchial thermoplasty procedure for patients with severe asthma.

Bronchial thermoplasty (BT) is an FDA approved treatment for asthma patients, over the age of 18, whose asthma is categorized as “severe persistent” and not well controlled. This clinically proven procedure has been shown to improve quality of life for patients.

In asthmatics, the smooth muscle in the airways is chronically swollen.

The bronchial thermoplasty opens the airways by reducing the amount of smooth muscle.

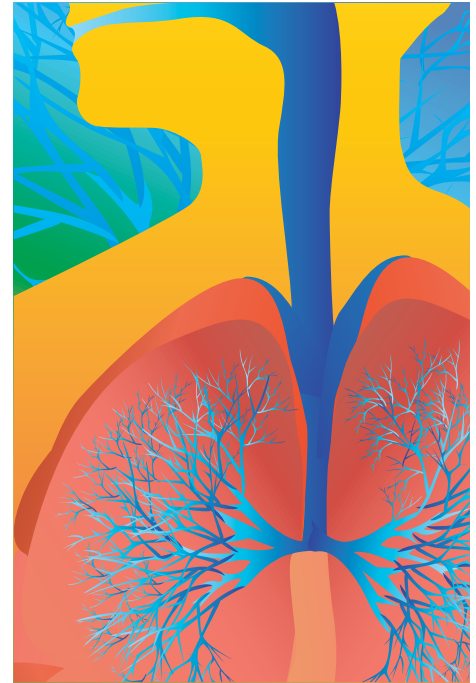
*Benefits of bronchial thermoplasty:*

- Quick return to normal activities
- Improved asthma control
- Less likely to suffer future asthma attacks
- Reduced visits to the emergency room
- Reduced hospitalization for respiratory symptoms
- Less missed days from work or school

“This outpatient procedure is performed under moderate sedation, and often takes less than an hour to complete,” explains Dr. Brian McDonald, a board certified pulmonologist who performed the first BT procedure at Ellis Medicine in 2013. “The procedure heats the lung’s airway walls, reducing some of the extra muscle present, allowing the airways to stay open and help the patient breathe better.”

David Giardono, of Schenectady, was the first patient to have the bronchial thermoplasty procedure at Ellis. “I’m looking forward to doing the activities I’ve had to avoid since being diagnosed with asthma a decade ago,” said Giardono.

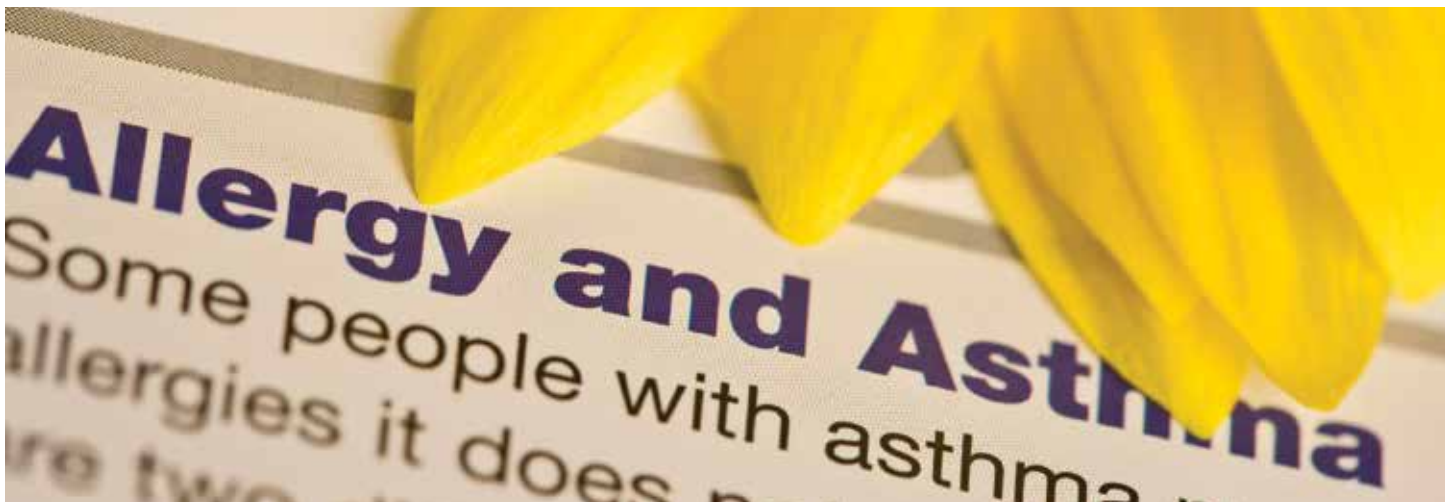
The procedure is performed with a long tube with a camera that navigates




the airways. It sends radio waves to heat and remove smooth muscle. The procedure is typically completed in three sessions and lasts about 35-40 minutes under general anesthesia.

“The procedure will enable people to live more actively,” said Dr. McDonald. “It offers hope for those who suffer from severe asthma.”

If you or someone you love has asthma, talk with your doctor about a referral to Ellis Medicine’s Asthma Education Program. If you would like more information, please call 518-347-LUNG (5864). ■





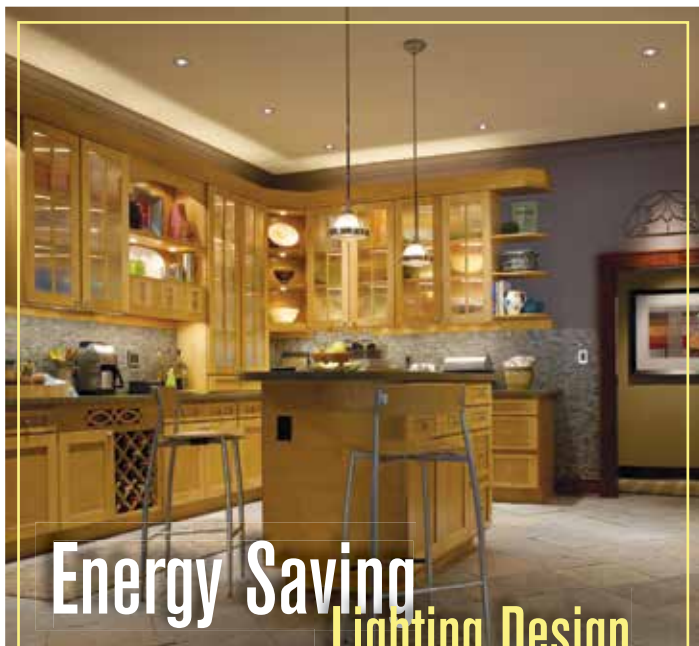


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## Clifton Park Saves Lives



Join Clifton Park Halfmoon Emergency Corp (CPHMEMS) for an important event and help a special Saratoga County community member. Reese Johnson is a vivacious and strong spirited 14-year-old Ballston Spa resident who needs the help of her community.

After a diagnosis and treatment for Ewings Sarcoma, a rare but aggressive childhood cancer, she was recently diagnosis with Leukemia. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy, and the next step will be a bone marrow transplant.

The community of Clifton Park, CPHMEMS and Be The Match are teaming up for "Clifton Park Saves Lives," a donor screening and registry to help find a bone marrow match for Reese, or other children and adults in need of a life-saving transplant.

Please join us on Sunday, March 15 from 1pm-4pm at Clifton Park Halfmoon Emergency Corps at 15 Crossing Blvd. in Clifton Park. The event will include the simple donor registration process of filling out a few medical forms and an effortless and painless mouth swab. Donors should be between the ages of 18-44. The whole process takes only fifteen minutes. For more information, please visit: [www.bethematchfoundation.org/goto/CliftonPark](http://www.bethematchfoundation.org/goto/CliftonPark). You can also reach out to Leah Ferrone at 518-371-3880, ex. 120 or via email at [lferrone@cpmhem.org](mailto:lferrone@cpmhem.org). ■

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# An Array of New Sustainable Flooring Options

By Dustin Wicksell

A number of sustainable flooring options exist, whether you prefer hardwood, cork or even woolen carpeting. Like many other naturally sourced

products, sustainable flooring provides a number of unique advantages.

One of the more common options for sustainable flooring is bamboo. A fast-growing grass, bamboo can be fashioned into a flooring that is actually twice as hard as oak. Bamboo is available either as a solid wood, engineered or as a strand woven flooring, which is produced under intense pressure. Composed of interwoven and glued strands of bamboo fiber, this third option provides an extremely strong, durable floor.

Another attractive option for sustainable flooring is reclaimed lumber. This provides a unique aesthetic for each floor, as the harvested wood has aged in singular ways during its prior usage. Taken from bleachers, resawn timbers and antiquarian



*Reclaimed wood floor*



*Cork flooring in Apollo Brown*

structures, a variety of hardwoods can be repurposed. Douglas Fir, Yellow Pine, Longleaf Fir, Yellow Pine, Longleaf Heart Pine and Southern Pine are just a few of the species of wood that can be recycled for flooring.

For those seeking a patterned or tile floor, cork can provide an interesting option. Quite possibly the greenest flooring of all, cork is manufactured from the bark of the cork oak tree. Only the bark is harvested, in a process that allows the tree to continue to thrive. This bark replenishes itself each decade, making cork an eminently renewable resource.

Cork can be greatly compressed while retaining its shape, giving rise to a subtle cushioning effect underfoot. It also exhibits numerous beneficial properties for heat retention, sound insulation and fire-resistance. Due to a unique and natural wax, it possesses allergenic properties as well.

Renewable carpeting is most often produced from wool and natural fibers. Wool's inherent resistance to flammability allows this carpeting to be manufactured in a highly non-toxic fashion. Employing wool fiber, particularly untreated and undyed, greatly reduces indoor pollutant levels, while its natural structure inhibits retention of dirt and allergens.

If you're looking to change or upgrade the floor underneath your feet, there are a number of solid reasons to choose a sustainable option. Fortunately for us, we live in a time when those options aren't in short supply! ■



*Strand-woven bamboo honey flooring*

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# Welcome to the Neighborhood



Saratoga Springs Supervisor Matthew Veitch (center) is sworn in as the Chairman of the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors on January 3 before

County Court Judge James Murphy, as colleagues, friends and family look on. Under this traditional form of government, a local supervisor is elected by his/her peers to serve as Board Chair for a period of one year. Although rare, some serve an additional term if voted in a second time. Veitch succeeds Paul Sausville of Malta, who served as 2014 Chair. Board of Supervisors meetings are open to the public and occur each month at the Saratoga County office complex, 40 McMaster St, Ballston Spa. Photo courtesy Saratoga Springs Mayor Joanne Yepsen.

*The Chamber Spotlight is sponsored by Mangino Buick GMC, a family owned and operated business for over 36 years, now celebrating almost one year in their new state of the art Buick GMC facility on Saratoga Road in Ballston Spa.*



Changing of the guard: Wendy Wilms of Cengage Learning (2nd from left) is passing the baton to Jenifer Marten of Ballston Spa National Bank (orange

blazer) as chair of the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County's Women in Business Committee. This dynamic committee, assisted by CSSC Member Services Manager Liz Roggenbuck, provides opportunities to develop personal and professional skills through networking, education and providing strategies for success. 2015 marks the 10th anniversary of their signature program, Baskets of Hope, which supports Wellspring (formerly Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services of Saratoga County) by providing essential care items for women and children who seek refuge from domestic violence. This photo was taken at the annual Women in Business luncheon in October.

Meet other business neighbors at [www.southernsaratoga.org](http://www.southernsaratoga.org).



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## Saturday, Mar. 7

### IRISH SODA BREAD COMPETITION

@Irish American Heritage Museum, Albany

The amateur Irish soda bread baking competition involves three categories: traditional white flour Irish soda bread, traditional wheaten (brown) flour Irish soda bread and family, not strictly traditional (FNST) Irish soda bread.

Time: 10am-3pm | 518-427-1916

## Saturday, Mar. 7 through Sunday, Mar. 8

### ADIRONDACK SPORTS & FITNESS SUMMER EXPO

@Saratoga City Center, Saratoga Springs  
Features everything you need for running, cycling, triathlon, paddling, hiking, healthy living and travel, with 125 exhibitors, great sales on gear (even ski gear!), plus clothing and footwear, paddling demos, seminars and clinics, 25-foot rock climbing wall and fun family activities!

Time: Saturday, 10am-5pm; Sunday, 10am-4pm  
Cost: FREE

## Saturday, Mar. 12, 19, 26

### CROSS COUNTRY SKI LESSONS

@Shenendehowa Adult Community Center, Clifton Park

Beginner Cross Country Ski Lessons program. Classes are offered as snow conditions allow. All ages and families are welcome. Pre-registration is required. Registration for the program is at the Office of Parks, Recreation and Community Affairs at Town Hall.

Time: 6:30pm- 8pm  
Cost: \$12 per person per session

## Friday, Mar. 13

### A PRE-ST. PATRICK'S DAY CONCERT WITH THE MCKRELLS

@Spa Little Theater, Saratoga Springs  
Continuing the tradition of hosting The McKrells for a fun night of music! This festive Irish evening will showcase musical entertainment suitable for all ages. Seating is General Admission.

Time: 7pm | Cost: \$15

## Saturday, Mar. 14

### BALLSTON SPA FILM FESTIVAL

@Ballston Spa High School Auditorium  
"Marty McFly just broke the time barrier. He's only got one week to get it fixed."

Come back and see Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd and the time-machine DeLorean on the big screen! "1.21 gigawatts! 1.21 gigawatts. Great Scott!"

Time: 6:45pm-9pm | Cost: FREE | 518-441-4236

## Tuesday, Mar. 17

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY FAMILY CELEBRATION

@Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, Clifton Park

All ages are welcome! Meet a leprechaun and participate in a sing-along with performer and educator, Diane Payette. IRISH SODA BREAD!! (Registration is NOT required.)

Time: 6:30pm-8pm | Cost: FREE

## Friday, Mar. 20

### JOEY THOMAS BIG BAND DIAMOND DANCE

@Saratoga Music Hall, Saratoga Springs, NY  
Enjoy hours of live music, dance demonstrations, DJ'd music between sets, art exhibits, discounts on dance lessons, the elegance of the historic Saratoga Music Hall and a free beginner dance lesson at 7:30pm.

Time: 7:30pm-11pm | Cost: \$15

## Saturday, Mar. 21 until Sunday, Mar. 29

### MAPLE WEEKEND

@Sugar Oak Farms, Malta

Come join us in our cozy sugarhouse as we continue the tradition of making maple

syrup. All days will feature interactive tours of our sugaring operation. We will also be having sawmill demonstrations once a day. Visitors will be able to see tapped trees, each with a different collection method. All of our products will be for sale, and there will

be free maple coffee. As always, Maple Weekend at Sugar Oak Farms will be a fun time for the entire family!

518-288-8653

## Saturday, Mar. 28

### IT'S YOUR STORY, DISCOVER IT!

@Albany Heritage Area Visitors Center  
Learn how to uncover YOUR story at this free family-friendly event. Discover helpful tips on how to start your family genealogical research and share in a celebration of Albany's history and heritage. Participants include the New York State Archives; Albany County Hall of Records; Albany County Historical Association; Crailo State Historic Site; Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York; Historic Cherry Hill; International Center of the Capital Region.

Time: 10am-2pm | Cost: FREE | 518-434-0405

## Mondays or Thursdays

### YMCA DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

@Southern Saratoga YMCA, Clifton Park  
Let us help you lose 7% of your body weight and increase your physical activity through our yearlong Lifestyle Change program in a supportive environment led by a trained Lifestyle Coach. Two programs available. Program fee is \$35.75 per month and includes a family membership to the Capital District YMCA. MVP Medicare Advantage members can participate in this program at no cost! Must register by March 19th.

Time: Mondays 9:15-10:15am OR Thursdays 6:30-7:30pm | Cost: \$35.75 per month  
Contact Gina LaViolette at 371-2139, ext. 5540 to register.



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Artwork by Paul Weil

## Love Sequence

Paul Weil is an artist from the UK who works in watercolors and pen on paper and takes his inspiration from stained glass windows recognizing the sacred symbolism embedded in the colors and designs of this art form. He is particularly interested in the juxtaposition of color, line and form. ■



Artwork by Laura R. Weil

## Buddha with Tree Energy

Laura R. Weil is primarily a watercolor painter but also utilizes various mixed media. She has been interested in the arts since she can remember and has studied various disciplines. While traveling around Europe and the U.S., Laura would often come home with more art pieces in her suitcases than clothes. The six works in this show offer a glimpse of some of her travels. The things that inspire Laura often involve travel, energy, extreme emotions, color and texture. ■

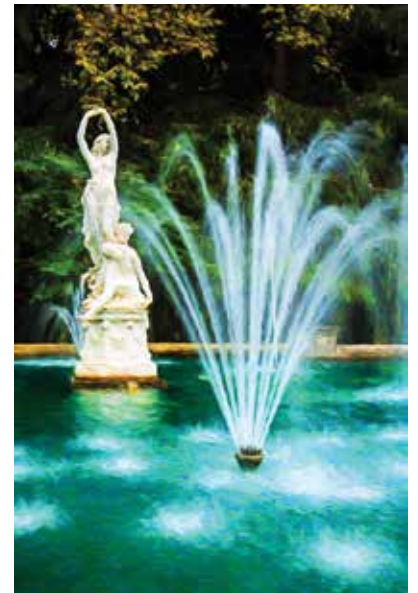


Photo by Dave Bennett

## Catching a Moment

Photography for me has always been about catching the precise moments in life. It may be the peak of the action, a quick glance, just the right touch of light on a building or landscape. When you do catch it, you know it may never look exactly the same ever again. There are so many once in a lifetime images, especially with people. The camera saves it and I become part of life's history. ■

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# Staging Expertise to Swiftly Sell Your Home

By Michele Bell, Associate Real Estate Broker & Staging Expert

Putting your house on the market? Before the "For Sale" sign goes up, give your property the ultimate spring-cleaning. When it comes to showcasing your home for sale, there's no such thing as a house that's too clean.

Appearances count, especially when you're trying to sell a home. Even though housing industry experts predict this spring will be a seller's market, it's important to grab every advantage when you're trying to sell your home. Staging — decorating a house to appeal to the broadest possible range of buyers — can make the difference between a quick sale or a long, painful linger on the market.

Before your first showing, review each room for grime and clutter, including the garage, basement or attic, as there are multiple steps to a

polished look. And beware of the too corny maneuver: apples baking in the oven are definitely out; the aromas of essentials oils, however, are in.

You get one first impression. My advice to clients is to rent a storage pod and not only clean out closets (buyers need to visualize where their stuff will go) but also remove everything from the garage (dust and sweep it too). You might be able to de-clutter for cash: recycling used electronics can earn cash. Bathroom(s) and kitchen must be spotless. A recent success where clients followed my spit-shine clean regime sold in just 12 days (with two back-up offers) after a thorough cleaning and de-cluttering. Dusty doesn't sell — at least not for a good amount of money.

Consider avoiding highly scented cleaning products. They suggest that

there is something to cover up, noting that many people are sensitive to synthetic fragrances found in common household cleaning and air freshening products.

What are you waiting for? Contact me today and ask me to offer you suggestions on how your home could be spruced up and updated for that spring real estate market! ■



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