

FEBRUARY 2016

# CLIFTON PARK

AN EXCLUSIVE MONTHLY PUBLICATION  
FOR RESIDENTS

# Neighbors

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in (a Green) Place with  
*Karen Totino*



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Cover photo by Niki Rossi Photography



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### MAGAZINE DEADLINES

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

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**ON THE COVER**  
Karen Totino

## Hello CLIFTON PARK RESIDENTS

It's National Heart Month and no, I'm not going to offer you some old tired phrase about love and Valentine's Day. I'm going to offer you a challenge – a challenge that is good both for your heart and soul – Dance. Just once, go out and really dance.

Have you ever watched a child?

Every move they make is instinctual and pure. Most of the time, they're not even conscious of what they're doing. They just move when it seems right. Sometimes it may get them into trouble, but usually, it's just what the body is meant to do.

Stand back and watch a child when a song comes on. If it has a good beat, no matter what s/he is doing, the child will likely start bouncing, swaying, or bopping his/her head. He may not be graceful. She may not win the mirror ball trophy on *Dancing With the Stars*, but they are dancing. Children dance for the pleasure of dancing. They're dancing because it feels good. It feels right. It expresses a joy. It's a visual representation of the music that's invading their bodies. They don't care if anyone is watching them – judging them. They just dance. And usually, they laugh.

I always get such delight out of watching my daughter dance. It's so cute and innocent – two things we do not usually get to see in the "Real World." It's a nice break from the usual guarded behavior we consistently live with.

Most adults are the complete opposite of my daughter, which is sad because there's no reason for it. How unfortunate that we now live in such a cynical world that we are so caught up in the requirements of life, we can no longer just *experience* life itself. How sad that we have lost the ability to tap into that child inside of us and once again experience life through fresh eyes. Even if for just one song, we should step in the middle of the floor – leave our cares, our worries, our stress, our age on the edge – and *dance*. Feel nothing but the music, the joy, the movement, the freedom... and just dance.

Dance like a child. No cares. No weight on your shoulders. Doesn't matter what you're wearing. Just close your eyes, feel the music, and *laugh*.

I've always said we can learn a lot from children. They are much wiser than we often give them credit for. There's a lot to be said for instinct, we just have been conditioned to shut that off. Perhaps we should pay attention to our smaller peers. Tap back into that instinct, and, even if for only the 3 minutes of one song, just dance. How our life may change.

Dance like a child and see how the world, and your heart, will brighten!



*Jenna Caputo*

CONTENT COORDINATOR

### IMPORTANT TOWN PHONE NUMBERS

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Town Board Members.....371-6651  
Animal Control Officer.....371-6756  
Town Attorney *Tom McCarthy*.....371-6651  
Assessor *Walter Smead*.....371-6460  
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*Steve Myers*.....371-6702  
Building & Grounds Director  
*Mike Handerman*.....371-6651  
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*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 Spanish Neighborhood

By John L. Scherer, Clifton Park Historian

Par Del Rio, Guadalupe, Casablanca, Cordoba, Almeria, Ciudad, and Sevilla are all place names one might expect to find in Spain, South America, Mexico, California or perhaps the southwest United States. However, these are all street names in our own Clifton Knolls, and there are at least 15 other Spanish street names located in this development created in the 1960s by Robert Van Patten.

I often wondered why our town had this Spanish influence. Were there a number of Spanish families that lived in this area, or was Mr. Van Patten merely interested in Spanish culture? Fortunately, in 1996, long time Clifton Park resident, Frank Townley, was able to solve this mystery.

Frank and his wife, Fran, had lived on Vischer Ferry Road for much of their lives, in several different houses. In fact, at one time they owned the Gifford Farm, now located across Vischer Ferry Road from Sumerlin Estates, which they sold to Walter Gifford in 1955. They can remember a very different Clifton Park, when there were over twenty dairy farms within four miles of their home, and no housing developments.

It was in the 1950s that Robert Van Patten began to acquire the land that would become Clifton Knolls. This land originally consisted of four farms. The section on the south side of Clifton Park Center Road was the Heath Peck farm. The farmhouse still stands on the north side of Clifton Park Center Road, across from Beechwood Drive.

The rear portion of Walter Gifford's farm that adjoined the Heath Peck farm was included, as was Greenlea Farm, owned by Irving Peck. This farm bordered the Gifford



*The home of Vincent "Jimmy" Secada on Barney Road, c. 1940, now part of Clifton Knolls.*

Farm on the south along Vischer Ferry Road. Irving Peck's farmhouse still stands on the southeast corner of Greenlea Drive and Vischer Ferry Road.

The fourth farm, bordering the south side of the Heath Peck farm was owned by Vincent Secada, known by all as Jimmy. This farm was entered from the north side of Grooms Road,

just east of the stream that feeds the Stony Creek Reservoir.

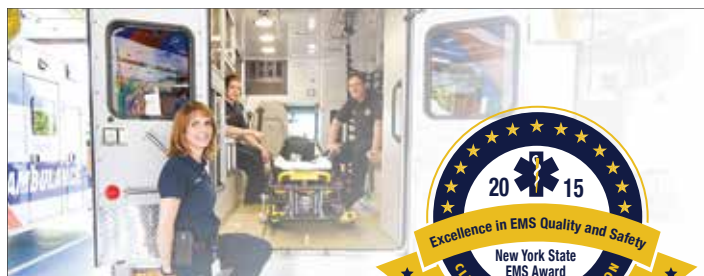
Secada was a native Spaniard. His mother, in fact, still lived in Spain. According to Frank Townley, he "had a swarthy complexion with pink cheeks, black hair, dark eyes and a husky build. He could grasp the neck of a 100 pound bag of grain and lift it with one hand, or pick up two calves at a time and put them in his truck." He greeted people with a hearty "Hallooow," and would grip your hand "till the tears came to your eyes."

Jimmy Secada raised veal calves, purchasing newborn male calves from local farmers for eight or ten dollars. His farmhouse and barn were small. The house had a kitchen and a dining room, which Jimmy used as a bedroom. According to Townley, the entire rest of the downstairs and upstairs of the house, including the stairway going upstairs, was empty in spring and summer and filled with baled hay in fall and winter. "It was a surprise to open the hall door and find stairway and rooms filled with baled hay."

Jimmy developed the ponds near the present Barney Road clubhouse. He stocked them with fish and rented one-day fishing permits to city folks who came out to spend the day. When he sold his land to Van Patten he insisted the ponds be preserved. We can probably assume that he also wanted some of the new streets named for places in his native homeland.

Robert Van Patten often provided a new home for the seller when he acquired property. He built houses for both Heath and Irving Peck, but Jimmy Secada, who remained a bachelor, had no use for such a fancy house. He did, however, agree to an apartment upstairs in the new Barney Road clubhouse built by Van Patten. Here he spent the rest of his life.

With the money Van Patten paid him, Secada traded his old beat-up pickup truck for a shiny new Cadillac sedan, with a license plate, "SECADA." Until his death a few years ago, he could be seen cautiously driving around town. His legacy is the ponds and street names of Clifton Knolls. ■



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# PRIDE Students of the Month

By Rebecca Carmen, Shenendehowa Central Schools

Shenendehowa High School and the Shen PRIDE Team continue to acknowledge the positive choices and behavior of our students by selecting the Shen PRIDE Students of the Month. As students demonstrate the characteristics of Shen PRIDE (Prepared, Respectful, Involved, Determined and Engaged) the high school faculty and staff acknowledge their positive behavior by presenting them with "Gotcha....Showing Shen PRIDE" tickets. The students then are entered into the student of the month drawing, where two students at each grade level are selected. Each month the student of the month recipients are presented with a certificate and gift card for a local business, and they are announced to the school community. The goal of Shen PRIDE is to continue to improve the overall school experience for all students by acknowledging positive behavior and character. ■



**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Shenendehowa PRIDE team will foster and promote a safe, positive and effective school environment that enhances student learning through teaching, encouraging and recognizing positive behavior.

10<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Maggie Nuss and Jackson Pilgram



9<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Piper Orr and Trent Jelenic



Shen PRIDE Students of the Month  
November 2015

12<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Joely Bleichert and Michael Collins



11<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Derek Bateman and Amber Ayotte



Shen PRIDE Students of the Month – November 2015

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## COVER STORY

By Karen Totino Photo by Niki Rossi Photography

# Discover How to Age in (a Green) Place with Karen Totino

As the world's population grows, aging in place policies are swiftly becoming a growing subject of discourse amongst an ever-increasing number of people. Both increased life expectancies and a rapidly expanding

population have contributed to the range of challenges that a person is likely to face as they near the end of their life. Fortunately, technology and innovation have already presented several solutions to the problem of

an increasingly elderly society, which has never before been observed on its current scale.

Aging in place is largely exactly what it sounds like. The Centers for Disease Control define the concept as "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently and comfortably, regardless of age, income or ability level." While for some in our society, such a near-end-of-life desire is a given, for many others there are barriers to remaining in your own home past a certain age. Increased average lifespans also mean that most people face the potential of not only outliving their savings, but also their ability to function independently. Giving up control over your own day-to-day activities can be challenging for anyone, and particularly so for those who do not have support systems in place to aid them through the transition.

An entire industry is evolving around the concept of aging in place, seeking through home remodeling, technology and managed care to make it easier for people to remain in their own homes for as long as reasonably possible. Most modern houses aren't constructed with aged individuals in mind, yet with a small number of modifications, accessibility can be dramatically improved. These additions can be as simple as improved lighting or non-skid flooring on stairwells. Other options can be more difficult to install, but often dramatically improve the quality of a living space for seniors. These can include extra support in a shower or bathroom, or an added light switch at both ends of a staircase. Ramps, walk-in showers, home elevators and stair lifts are all examples of potentially costly retrofits, yet they can have an immediate and lasting effect on a person's ability to age in their own home.

Outside of home improvements, a range of new career fields is developing around home aging. Karen





examples of how laws and policies can help foster and strengthen aging in place programs. Another model, the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), was created in the 1970s in an effort to support the needs of elderly citizens in local communities. Boasting 82 operational programs in 29 states, the PACE program provides services like therapy, counseling and chronic care needs in order to help individuals maintain their independence in the latter part of their lives. Though the

Totino, owner of Green Conscience, is both an occupational therapist and a Certified Aging in Place Specialist, and she is hardly alone in the field. Occupational therapists (particularly those who specialize in aging) are able to help develop strategies that will aid an elderly individual in remaining at home. By assessing the space properly and networking with contractors, these specialists are able to leverage their unique insights to pinpoint exactly the modifications required. While a single meeting with a therapist can often yield powerful results, an aging in place specialist can also be consulted over time, and will assist in evolving a strategy by focusing on low-cost adjustments at first, while gradually approaching more extensive individual needs.

In addition to local resources, a National Aging in Place Council (NAIPC) exists, with a stated goal of becoming an individual's primary resource for information regarding home aging during retirement years. NAIPC has an established network of experts from both the private and public sectors (as well as the non-profit world) who specialize

in assisting aging individuals. The organization's website, [ageinplace.org](http://ageinplace.org), represents a wealth of information regarding the topic, including directories of service providers who can be found at the local level, as well as a growing list of chapters spread across the country.

As the global population ages, their needs will only increase, and the desire for people to remain in their homes for as long as possible while they near the end of their life isn't going to go away. As the "Baby Boomer" generation reaches seniority over the next few decades, America is set to face a unique challenge that strikes families at a basic and core level. The population of the United States that is over age 60 is set to spike from 43,043,000 individuals in 2005 to 73,769,000 in 2020. This represents a staggering 71 percent increase. The need for aging in place services looks set to only grow in the coming years, and steps are already being taken to facilitate their management.

In December 2011, the AARP Policy Institute and the National Conference of State Legislatures released a report designed to give state governments

program aims to help people age in their homes, there are requirements to enroll, and seniors must live in a PACE service area in order to join.

With such a dramatic increase in senior citizen populations taking place all around us, nursing homes and other managed care environments are likely to be stretched to their individual limits of accommodation. One third of households in America are already home to an individual above the age of 60, and while some 90 percent of seniors report that they wish to remain in their homes during the final phase of their lives, this desire may not be realistic for many. For those who are capable of such an existence, however, aging in place programs can make all the difference, allowing them to maintain both their independence and dignity for as long as humanly possible. ■

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).

# Don't Let Heart Disease Sneak Up On You

By Ellis Medicine

One in three women die from heart disease, 10 times more than breast cancer, yet even though the risks can be reduced with diet and exercise, women often don't take proper steps to avoid heart disease. Are you aware of these 10 sneaky risk factors?



## 10 SNEAKY RISK FACTORS OF HEART DISEASE

- **HOT TEMPER:** Uncontrolled stress and anger can cause heart attacks and strokes. Practice meditation, time management and relaxing exercise, such as yoga, to manage your stress.
- **BAD GENES:** Even if you do everything right in terms of diet, exercise and mental health, a family history of heart disease can override your hard work and dedication. Conditions such as high blood pressure and heart disease are hereditary. If heart disease runs in your family, visit your doctor to see what you can do about it.
- **SMOKING:** Everyone knows that smoking cigarettes and cigars can lead to lung cancer, but what some people don't know is that it also puts you at two times the risk of having a heart attack than nonsmokers. The sooner you quit, the better off you'll be.
- **DRINKING:** If you think that heavy alcohol consumption only puts your liver at risk, think again. It can also cause an increase in blood pressure and triglyceride levels, which increases your risk for heart disease. Drink in moderation to lessen your risk.
- **DIABETES:** Most people think of blood sugar levels and kidney disease when they hear the word diabetes, but did you know that it can also lead to heart disease? Unmanaged diabetes can cause heart damage, heart attacks and even death. Control your diabetes with proper diet and exercise, and medication prescribed by your doctor.
- **SURPRISE PARTIES:** If you know anyone with a heart condition, it's not a good idea to throw a surprise party. The shock could cause a heart attack and send the honoree to the hospital.
- **WATCHING TV:** Did you know that even if you exercise regularly, sitting for hours at a time can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke? Try to limit the amount of time you sit watching TV each night, and if you sit at work all day, try to break it up by going for walks and standing throughout the day.
- **HOLDING GRUDGES:** Have you ever heard the saying that not forgiving others only hurts yourself? Not only does it affect you emotionally, but holding onto hostility can actually cause heart disease. Talk to your doctor to get help letting go and being the happiest version of yourself.
- **SNORING:** While snoring can be an annoyance to your spouse, it can also be a sign of a much more serious condition: obstructive sleep apnea. If you have obstructive sleep apnea, it can cause your blood pressure to rise, which increases your risk of damaged blood vessels, heart attack and stroke. If your snoring prevents you from getting a good night's sleep, talk to your doctor.
- **SKIPPING FLOSSING:** Our dentists always tell us to floss to prevent gum disease, but did you know that there may be a link between gum disease and heart disease? Take the extra minute to floss daily. Your gums — and heart — may thank you.

The good news is that heart disease can often be prevented or treated if detected early. Preventive heart screening, like that offered at the Neil and Jane Golub Breast & Heart Health Center at Ellis Medicine's Bellevue Woman's Center, includes an evaluation of personal risk factors, consultation on results from the risk assessment and referrals to specialists such as cardiologists, nutritionists or a diabetes educator if necessary. Don't let heart disease sneak up on you. Make an appointment today for a heart screening that can help you understand your risk for heart disease and take the first steps towards a healthier life.

Call 518-243-3333 today to make an appointment. ■



# Meatloaf with Black-Eyed Peas

By the American Heart Association

It's winter, and the time we most crave comfort food. Here are two classic recipes made healthy for your heart from the American Heart Association.

Serves 6 322 Calories 138mg Sodium

## INGREDIENTS

1 small onion, finely chopped  
1 medium bell pepper, any color, finely chopped  
1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil or vegetable oil  
2 cloves minced, fresh garlic OR 1 tsp. jarred, minced garlic  
2 tbsp. fat-free milk  
1/3 cup quick-cooking oats  
1.5 lb. extra-lean, fat-free ground turkey (95% or 99% lean) (can substitute extra lean ground beef or pork)  
2 eggs, beaten  
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard

9 oz. canned, no-salt-added tomato sauce, divided use  
1/4 tsp. black pepper  
1 tsp. dried parsley  
1 tsp. cider vinegar  
Non-stick cooking spray  
Black-eyed Peas

## DIRECTIONS - Meatloaf

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place onions and bell pepper in a glass 9x5 loaf pan, drizzle with oil and toss to coat.
3. Cover loaf pan with a plate and microwave on high for 3 minutes. (Note: if you are using a metal loaf pan DO NOT put in the microwave!) Allow vegetables to cool slightly.
4. In a medium bowl, combine vegetables, minced garlic, milk, oats, turkey meat, eggs, mustard,

2 tablespoons of tomato sauce, pepper and parsley – mix well with hands.

5. Spray loaf pan with cooking spray. Shape meat mixture into loaf and place in loaf pan.
6. In the medium bowl, mix remainder of tomato sauce and cider vinegar, pour over loaf.
7. Bake for 50-60 minutes until internal thermometer reads 165° for poultry and 160° for beef or pork. Let stand for 5-10 minutes and slice.

## Black-eyed peas

1. Heat (un-drained) in microwave-safe covered dish on high for 5 minutes, or until warm.

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# Apple Bread Pudding

By the American Heart Association

Serves 4 131 Calories 154mg Sodium

## INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray	1 tsp. cinnamon
1 whole egg PLUS 1 egg white	½ tsp. cloves or allspice
1 cup skim milk	6 slices light, whole-grain or
2 tbsp. brown sugar, blended	multigrain bread, cubed
1 tsp. vanilla extract	3 medium apples, cored, cut
	into ½ inch cubes

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spray 9x9 baking dish with cooking spray.
3. In large bowl, whisk together egg, egg white, milk, sugar blend, vanilla, cinnamon and cloves.
4. Add bread and apple cubes. Add fruit or nuts if desired. Mix well.
5. Pour mixture into prepared baking dish and bake in preheated oven for 40-45 minutes.

## OPTIONAL

½ cup of any of the following: raisins, dried cranberries, fresh or dried blueberries, chopped walnuts, pecans or almonds



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# Welcome to the Neighborhood

By Pete Bardunias, President/CEO, the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County



Dominick Figliomeni came to the United States from Italy in 1997. Despite knowing little English, he quickly learned the opportunities afforded by American entrepreneurship, and 18 years later owns three area barber shops in Clifton Park, Halfmoon and Loudonville (and speaks the language very well too!). The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County (CSSC) celebrated the new ownership at Classico Barbershop in Halfmoon (1521 Route 9, 518-371-3332), his latest location, on November 6 by fittingly cutting the ribbon right across the barber chairs, joined by several customers! Pictured are (R-L) Chamber of Southern Saratoga County President/CEO Pete Bardunias; Albany residents Jeremy and Nora Khachadourian; Demetrius Londis; Kate Gardiner; Donna Connor, On the Go Concierge; Nick Kayser; Waterford resident Chris Sager; Assemblyman Jim Tedisco; Jeanie and Dominick Figliomeni of Classico Barber Shop; Hazleton, PA resident Mike Ghetty; Sandy Hassfurter, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services.

Each year for the past 15 years, Vince Laurenzo and his family have brought Santa's Playland to Quick Response Restoration on Route 9 in Clifton Park ([www.qrrestore.com](http://www.qrrestore.com)). To celebrate this milestone anniversary, Chamber of Southern Saratoga County (CSSC) staff and Ambassadors joined the Quick Response crew and a visitor from the North Pole for the ribbon cutting (L-R): CSSC volunteer Ambassador Aaron Ditch, Southern Saratoga YMCA; Kim Dittmer; Anthony Laurenzo; Mechanicville Mayor Dennis Baker; Robert Serafini; Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer; Noelle Long; Beth Silvestri, Fastsigns of Saratoga; Pete Bardunias, President/CEO, the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County.



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### ESYO'S ANNUAL PLAYATHON

@Crossgates Mall, Albany

Come hear - and see - the breadth and depth of ESYO as every ESYO group entertains shoppers at Crossgates Mall. Features: All ESYO ensembles playing at specific times throughout the day, auctions to win the conductor's baton and lead an orchestra, and a musical petting zoo - courtesy of John Keal Music, where the young (and not-so-young) can try out a variety of instruments.

Time: 10:30am-6:30pm | Cost: FREE

## Saturday, February 6

### CHOWDERFEST 2016

@Downtown Saratoga

Stroll through downtown Saratoga and purchase a \$1 cup of chowder from as many participating establishments as you'd like! Some restaurants will be offering classic varieties, while some may be serving original, unique concoctions. After you've tried them, vote for your favorite to be awarded in multiple categories!

Time: 11am-4pm | Cost: \$1 per cup

## Saturday, February 6

### CLIFTON PARK 2016 WINTERFEST

@Clifton Park

Join your friends and neighbors during this day of fun and excitement in and out of the cold! There will be local competitions, winter activities and family fun, including: "Taste of Clifton Park" best soup contest; Clifton Park Idol singing competition; Clifton Park Community Chorus performance; Face painting and more! See [www.cliftonpark.com/winter/winter-festival.cfm](http://www.cliftonpark.com/winter/winter-festival.cfm) for event details.

## Saturday, February 6

### CLIFTON PARK IDOL CONTEST

@Clifton Park Winterfest

If you think you have what it takes to wow the judges and win over the audience, enter to sing today! A total of 30 Clifton Park residents, in 2 age categories, will be chosen to compete for the title on February 6th. You must be between the ages of 6 and 17, live within the boundaries of the town of Clifton Park and must pre-register at Town Hall or through the mail. The form will include three song choices and a notice of parental consent. Contact the Town of Clifton Park for more information.

## Saturday, February 6

### BORROWED LIGHT: SELECTIONS FROM THE JACK SHEAR COLLECTION OPENING RECEPTION

@Tang Museum & Art Gallery, Saratoga

*Borrowed Light: Selections from the Jack Shear Collection* runs 2/6-8/14. The exhibition will celebrate the major gift of over 500 photographs donated to the Tang by photographer, curator and collector Jack Shear, and will feature a selection of works chosen by Dayton Director Ian Berry in collaboration with Shear.

Time: Opening reception 6:00pm

## Saturday, February 6

### THE 19TH ANNUAL BARTENDERS' BALL - "FIRE & ICE"

@Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga  
One of the most exciting social events of the year, and a highlight of the winter social calendar in Saratoga County! This year, proceeds will support Wellspring, formerly Domestic Violence and Rape

Crisis (DVRC). Dress to impress in a cool white, an ice blue, or a fiery red! The evening will feature dinner, gambling tables provided by the Lions Club of Saratoga, and dancing to the live music by the Audiotars.

Time: 6:30pm-12am | Cost: \$60 per person, tables of 10 encouraged

## Sunday, February 7

### WILTON WILDLIFE WINTERFEST

@Wilton Wildlife Preserve, Saratoga

Join us outside for a day of snowy fun! Snowshoes and Cross Country Skis will be available for rental from the Information Cabin in Parking Lot #1. Rentals are \$5 per pair for use during the event for nonmembers and free for members. After stepping out on the trails, there will be a bonfire at the old Scout Camp's Council Fire Circle where participants can warm up by the bonfire with hot cocoa and s'mores. No registration is necessary.

Time: 10am-2pm | Cost: FREE

## Monday, February 8

### PJ STORYTIME

@Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, Clifton Park

Join library staff on Monday evenings for a quiet story time for working parents to spend with their children. Children, ages 2-6, along with their families are encouraged to wear their pajamas. This is a drop-in program; no registration is needed. The program will take place Mondays at 6:15pm, January 11 through February 29 in the Children's Library upstairs. No session will take place January 18 or February 15.

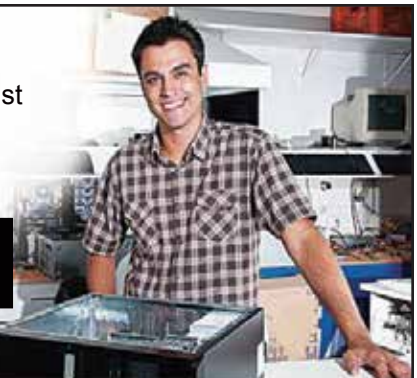
Time: 6:15pm | Cost: FREE



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## Friday-Sunday, February 12-14

### SARATOGA FROZEN SPRINGS CLASSIC POND HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

@Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga  
60 teams will compete in 4-on-4 round-robin style games all weekend long, kicking off at 6pm on Friday! Games are played in two periods of 20 minutes each on four separate ice rinks.  
*Time: Starts 8am | Cost: \$375 per team or \$100 per person for 1-3 players*

## Friday-Sunday, February 12-14

### THE FLURRY FESTIVAL

@Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga  
Don't miss the 29th Annual Flurry Festival and shake off the winter blues! It's time to dance, sing, jam and more at The Flurry Festival! The Flurry festival is sponsored by the DanceFlurry Organization. The Flurry is well known as the best winter weekend ever for dancers and music lovers of all ages!  
*Time: Varies by event | Cost: Varies*  
[www.flurryfestival.org](http://www.flurryfestival.org)

## Monday, February 15

### ANIMAL TRACKING AT CONGRESS PARK

@Saratoga Springs Public Library, Saratoga  
Bring your child outside for an afternoon of outdoor exploration! Participants will meet in the Crawshaw Story Room to receive animal footprint identification cards and loaner snowshoes, courtesy of Wilton Wildlife. We will then walk as a group to Congress Park, put on our snowshoes and look for animal tracks. This program is limited to 20 families, or when the snowshoes run out, so register early! Pre-registration is required by calling the Library at (518) 584-7860 option 3. Children must be accompanied by a parent or a caregiver.  
*Time: 11am-12:30pm | Cost: FREE*

## Friday-Sunday, February 19-21

### TIMES UNION HOME EXPO

@Times Union Center & Empire State Plaza, Albany  
Browse through two buildings of home, garden and food with over 400 booths to shop and compare. Discover new products, helpful tips, latest trends, fresh ideas and great deals! The Home Expo will have a wide variety of attractions for everyone to enjoy.  
*Time: Varies | Cost: \$5-\$14, Children under 14 FREE when accompanied by an adult*

## Saturday, February 20

### BEETHOVEN FESTIVAL

@Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, Troy  
This performance of the Albany Symphony Orchestra features the Piano students of Emanuel Ax: Orion Weiss, Dong Hyek Lim, Niko Namoradze, George Li, and Louis Schwizgebel. Pieces include: The Complete Piano Concertos of Beethoven (Saturday: Concertos 1,2,3) (Sunday: Concertos 4,5)  
*Time: 7:30pm | Cost: \$19-\$60*

## Sunday, February 21

### MOONLIGHT SNOWSHOE DINNER

@The DZ Farm, Galway  
Begin with a meet and greet around a blazing bonfire before embracing winter and the beauty of nature on a moonlight snowshoe tour of the picturesque trails that wind throughout The DZ Farm property. Upon your return, gather in the farmhouse and warm yourself by a roaring fire as a DZ Restaurants chef prepares a memorable dinner to fill your plates and your hearts. (Snowshoes not available for rental.) Tickets can be purchased at 583-1142.  
*Time: 5pm*  
*Cost: \$65 per person (includes tax & tip)*

## Monday-Sunday, February 22-28

### SCHENECTADY RESTAURANT WEEK

@Participating Restaurants, Schenectady  
Enjoy special fixed-price menus for \$25 at a wide variety of restaurants. Choose from among a delicious selection of appetizers, entrees and desserts.  
*Time: 5pm | Cost: \$25 per person*

## Friday, February 26

### SARATOGA HOME & LIFESTYLE SHOW

@Saratoga Springs City Center, Saratoga  
Features 120 exhibitors, great prizes and special events by community partners. A variety of home and lifestyle businesses will exhibit in categories such as home improvement; landscaping and gardens; décor and fine finishes; heating and plumbing; appliances and grills; and many more.  
Special events include: Wine Tasting; Cooking Demos; Kids day - Children under 17 get in free all day Sunday and can enjoy JoJo's Face Painting and Balloon Gal Jenny; Great Hourly Door Prizes, Big Prize of a complete exterior house wash; & Grand Prize of a large flat-screen TV.

*Time: Varies | Cost: \$6 adults, \$1 kids 5-12, FREE kids under 5*

## Saturday, February 27

### WHEN PUPPETS FALL IN LOVE

@The Genius Plaza, Clifton Park  
A wonderful story about a puppet that was searching for a Valentine gift for his wife. After a long search (and still no gift) he finally realized that the biggest gift is THE LOVE and how much you try for the other person (as he shaped a big heart in all his path while looking for the gift). Combines a delightful mix of zany puppetry and live interaction that is enjoyed by all. A great show for pre-school age children but all children are welcome to attend.  
*Time: 10-11am | Cost: FREE - Registration required - 280-9550*

## Saturday, February 27

### BILINGUAL PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

@The Genius Plaza, Clifton Park  
From the very first day of preschool, the Genius Plaza is sparking the flame of success even in our youngest students through creative and individualized learning experiences in every classroom. Give your child the gift of bilingualism in a fun and interactive environment. Our mission is to shape lifelong learners to think and speak in different languages and apply their knowledge anywhere in the world.  
*Time: 11am-1pm | Cost: FREE*



# Planning for the Inevitable Can Be a Relief For Many

By Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge



Kathleen Lowes Sanvidge,  
Townley & Wheeler  
Funeral Home

Are You Dying to See Me? Well, PLEASE DON'T.

Let's talk about pre-planning a funeral. Let's talk about pre-planning YOUR funeral. Although death is an inevitable part of life, sometimes it is precisely that which we avoid. I am here to talk to you face to face (or phone to phone) before you leave this earthly dwelling. Pre-arranging your funeral might sound complex and frightening, but to the contrary, most clients find the meeting very informative and meaningful, leaving them with a sense of relief. It is in my nature to carefully assist people when they are making plans regarding their death arrangements, and I can proudly say that most will proclaim, "That was much easier than we thought it would be," when it is all over.

Pre-arranging has been known to alleviate the burden that family members experience while having to make difficult decisions during a time of heightened stress.



Just think about it – while we are alive, we like to make personal and specific selections regarding life's major events such as birthday parties, graduations, weddings and vacations. We try to spare those we love from harm or hurt by doing things to

make their lives easier. We plan for retirement and try to save our money to relieve any financial burdens for our families. It only makes sense to consider a pre-arrangement just one more of life's important events to organize.

I consider it a must. Surely, it would be easy to turn our heads and just leave it up to whoever is around to make these decisions – or maybe

not. Have you ever considered the legal ramifications and problems that might arise if your next of kin do not agree on plans for your final disposition? Plan on hanging around for awhile so that a judge can decide? What if your dear daughter has you dressed in a puce outfit that you wouldn't be caught dead in? Why leave it up to your spouse to choose your casket? You never accepted such advice before! Whether you are imminently dying and know it or dying – but not quite yet, I applaud you for taking the steps to make your desires known. It will undoubtedly help your family emotionally and financially because there is less pressure to make quick decisions.

Schedule a time to meet with me, and this way you can explore all of the options regarding your disposition. Your file will be set up with the vital information that will be helpful upon your demise. You will also have a chance to review and discuss the funeral home's General Price List and to make selections pertaining to your religious beliefs and customs. If you choose to at this time, you may also make selections regarding caskets, urns, jewelry, vaults, memorial cards, etc. Many times during these pre-arrangement conferences, families are surprised to learn how much they are in control of the cost associated with the funeral, which Townley and Wheeler will make suitable to any budget. There are also many types of personalized services that can be talked about during the conference such as floral tributes, music, liturgy, memorial contributions, clothing choices, hair and makeup application, and much more. Basically, I will give you many options pertaining to the type of service that you prefer, and the choices are up to you. ■

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# Blindsided

By Mary Beth Printsky

*Blindsided.*

*In the early morning hours, on a dark and rainy day on the 9th of June 2014, I was blindsided.*

*My husband passed suddenly, a few short hours after telling me his last words in response to mine, "I love you, too."*

*I died with him that day.*

*BOOM!*

*In an instant, without a whisper, he was gone.*

*My lover, my partner, my sidekick vanished from me.*

*I didn't sign up for him to die at 56.*

*Who dies at 56?*

*Not the guy who just bought, unbeknownst to me, another brand new set of golf clubs.*

*Somebody else's lover that I did not know could pass.*

*Not my lover.*

*Not the guy whom I fell for when I never really met anyone to fall for or over.*

*That guy.*

*Mark.*

*He was vibrant, passionate, brilliant, stubborn, funny, childlike, non judgmental and a far better person than I could ever hope to be.*

*I never said he could leave. I would have protested his untimely exit.*

*I cannot say that I am happy about today on what would have been our 25th wedding anniversary.*

*Mark and I had plans.*

*When he died, I was just starting to plan our 25th Anniversary vacation trip to Italy (he wasn't overly enthused about it as he just loved to sit and read on a beach in Mexico) and as a compromise, a second shorter trip to Cancun, Mexico.*

*Done.*

*Everybody's going to be happy.*

*Trips bathed in Margaritas and Prosecco.*

*Fun and sun.*

*We had plans, hopes, and dreams.*

*Who doesn't?*

*Everything dashed in an instant.*

*You won't get the loss until you live the loss.*

*It is just impossible to go there before and "prepare". Nobody wants to prepare for the loss of someone they love.*

*It's impossible to do.*

*I beg you, don't go there until you have no choice.*

*In the meantime, LIVE YOUR LIFE.*

*Take chances, follow a rainbow, dance in the rain, travel the world, eat and drink something new, make love with abandon, make time to be alive.*

*Do me one small favor?*

*Think of us when you do. ■*

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