

# CLIFTON PARK

AN EXCLUSIVE MONTHLY PUBLICATION  
FOR RESIDENTS

# Neighbors



Shen Adult  
Transition Program  
Helping to Ease Our  
Students Into the Workforce



Best Version Media  
Cover photo by Mark Bolles

# Dear CLIFTON PARK RESIDENTS

Love means many things to many people, from an interpersonal relationship (I love my mom) to pleasure (I loved that meal) to passion to a virtue representing kindness, compassion and affection. In this issue we wanted to share some of the "Love Stories" that we have found throughout Clifton Park.

Starting with our Feature Article on the Shenendehowa Adult Transition Program that exemplifies love as it teaches our young adults with different abilities everything they need to live independently. This education ranges from how to handle finances to civic responsibilities to career readiness. From the faculty to the students and the businesses that offer internships and careers to these folks, there is love all around and it's making a difference in a very big way - raising the percent of our disabled in the workforce from 21% nationwide to over 78% in this area.

We cover the Regional Food Bank, which was created as an act of love, helping to feed the hungry in Western NY. From the staff to the volunteers to the many businesses and individuals that donate to this incredible program, the love of their fellow man has allowed them to bring over 38,000 lbs of food per year to the hungry in this part of the state.

Then we introduce our content coordinator, Jenna Caputo, to you. She is love personified! Her love and passion shows through the incredible job she does, the attention to detail and her never ending ability to help those around her. While her family will always come first (as it should be), her passion for writing, learning, dancing, hiking and curling all show through her excellence in each of these areas. We couldn't bring you this publication without her and we LOVE her for all she is and does!

Last but not least we bring you a true story of romance from this area over 173 years ago, in which patience and passion overcame the odds and a true love story emerged.

I hope each one of you find the love in your lives and relish in it every day. Hug your kids, kiss your partner, work with passion and share a smile with those around you. Oh, and don't forget to show some love to our vendors who help to bring you this publication every month too!

*Barb*



BARB SCHRADER,  
PUBLISHER



JENNA CAPUTO,  
CONTENT  
COORDINATOR



MARK BOLLES,  
CONTRIBUTING  
PHOTOGRAPHER



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### PUBLICATION TEAM

**PUBLISHER** Barb Schrader

**CONTENT COORDINATOR** Jenna Caputo

**DESIGNER** Kelly Anderson

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER**  
SuperSourceMedia.com

### CONTRIBUTORS

Pete Bardunias, The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County  
Jenna Caputo, Silverpen Productions  
John L. Scherer, Clifton Park Town Historian  
Emma Huneck, Saratoga Arts  
Christine Matthews, The Brown School  
Willie Miranda, Miranda Insurance Agency  
Eddie Godino, Skidmore College

### ADVERTISING

**Contact:** Barb Schrader **Phone:** (518) 926-0727  
**Email:** bschrader@bestversionmedia.com

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**ON THE COVER**  
Shen Adult  
Transition  
Program



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# Auto Insurance You Can Trust & Afford

By Willie Miranda

We rely on our cars to get to work, school and the grocery store every day. So, it makes sense to have the best protection for the best price. **Contacting your insurance agent directly is the best way to get the best deal and coverage for your automobile.** In this day and age, when you can buy auto insurance online or by calling a 1-800 number, it is all the more important to have a **trusted**, local agent in your area to handle your insurance needs. Remember that sometimes "you get what you pay for." The cheapest option may not provide you or your family

and your car completely unprotected. Even if you have the liability required by law, you could find yourself owing the other people thousands of dollars, putting your money, home and property, not to mention your family, in danger of financial collapse.

We can help you save money on your auto insurance by combining your policies with one company, rating properly for the number of miles driven and reviewing all discounts available. It is also important to understand your policies and coverages. For example, when you rent a car, you will



be asked if you want to buy "coverage" from the rental car company. You DO NOT have to buy their insurance to legally drive the car. It is best to be prepared that your auto insurance policy may cover you when you rent a vehicle. Here at Miranda Insurance Agency, we pride ourselves on protecting you and your family with a thorough review of your

with the BEST PROTECTION. The truth is no insurance company has the lowest price for everyone.

There are six major types of coverage in an auto policy. Remember, all of these coverages have limits. These six include: Bodily Injury Liability, Property Damage Liability, Collision Coverage, Comprehensive Coverage, Medical Payments or Personal Injury Protection and Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist. By law, more than 40 states insist that drivers have car insurance. However, these laws are just for liability coverage, which only pays for medical expenses and damages to the cars of the other drivers if you cause the accident. The mandatory limits are very low and leave you

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Call 518-373-1458 or stop into our office, located at 1480 Route 9 in Clifton Park for more information! Miranda Insurance Agency was voted "Best Insurance Agency" in 2017, by Reader's Choice of the Community News.

The information from this article is based on the book, *Informed and Insured* by Willie Miranda. ■



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# The Regional Food Bank

By Eddie Godino

“Food insecurity” is defined by the US Department of Agriculture as a lack of access to enough food for all household members. Sadly, this affects more than 40 million people in the United States. Food is something many of us take for granted, not realizing that countless people around the world go hungry every day. Thankfully, we have organizations like the Regional Food Bank that work to reduce that number.

Started in June of 1982, the Regional Food Bank is still the only organization of its kind in northeastern New York. For the first seven years, the food pantry coordinators and anti-hunger advocates that made up the organization worked out of a commercial storage warehouse,

until finally upgrading to a new, 21,000 square-foot warehouse in 1989. However, the Regional Food Bank’s appetite for feeding those in need only continued to grow, and less than four years later, they upgraded once again – this time to a warehouse double the size. Around the same time, they opened a facility in the lower Hudson Valley to broaden their reach and help even more people put food in their bellies. Today, between the two Food Banks, more than 38 million pounds of food are distributed each year, and their service areas encompass more than 40% of New York State.

But all that food doesn’t just appear out of thin air. In order to meet the increasing demands, the Regional Food Bank partnered with the Patroon Land Foundation to develop a self-sustaining farm that provides a surplus of high quality vegetables. The farm has already grown over a million pounds of produce, and offers educational opportunities, such as internships, to students and volunteers. The Regional Food Bank also has a Backpack Program, which provides underprivileged children with nutritious, easily prepared food to eat when not in school. This program benefits over 6,500 children across 220 schools and continues to expand.

One of the Food Bank’s most popular events is their annual Mac-N-Cheese Bowl, held at Sienna College. Local restaurants bring their best mac-n-cheese to be judged by around 2,000 people, who vote for their favorites. The event occurs in March, but tickets go on sale in January (\$20 for adults and \$5 for kids aged 5-12.) All the proceeds benefit the organization and help put food in hungry bellies.



“[Our] mission is to alleviate hunger and prevent food waste,” said Director of Marketing and Communications Bethany Moxey, “by ensuring that all products available for donation reach the Food Bank and are distributed judiciously to our member agencies, practicing responsible stewardship, and actively participating in the community to increase awareness of hunger and poverty.”

You can help the Regional Food Bank accomplish their mission in a number of ways. “Because we are privately funded, we rely on the support of the community to do what we do,” said Moxey. “We are able to distribute four meals for every dollar we spend, so financial contributions of any size make a big impact!”

Want to help? Donate your time by organizing food drives or volunteering at the warehouse or the farm. Visit [www.regionalfoodbank.net](http://www.regionalfoodbank.net) to learn more and to find other ways you can support this mission. ■

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## COVER STORY

By Jenna Caputo | Photos by Super Source Media

Catching a bus; running to the store; cashing a paycheck; using the library – these are all things many of us take for granted, but for the students in the Shen Adult Transition Program, these activities are a major focus of their day.

Heather Green started the program 15 years ago when she began to receive more and more requests from parents for services for special needs students in the school district. Traditionally, services stop at the age of 18, but students have the opportunity to receive school-based support until age 21. Heather wanted to create a program that would address the needs of an 18-21 age group. So in 2003, Shenendehowa, in partnership with local service agencies, applied for a Model Schools Transition Grant through New York State. “The grant included many learning opportunities and partnership through Cornell and SUNY Buffalo,” explains Heather. “We were able to develop curriculum based on the Career Development and Occupational Studies Standards.” They have since developed such a successful program that many other schools often visit so they can replicate the process in their own districts.

The Adult Transition Program is designed to meet the unique needs of these older students with learning difficulties as they are about to transition to their young adult lives. It helps them to not only explore career opportunities, but to also

work on individualized independence goals. To assist students with the first goal of finding a job, this program provides many career exploration opportunities. Students work as interns, or sometimes as paid employees at various local businesses and service agencies. Some students work with the New York State Employment Training Program to receive compensation for their internship hours. They typically intern four days a week, working two to four hours per day. Each student has a job coach available to not only help support the student, but to also ensure maximum learning and to avoid creating unreasonable responsibility for the employer. These job coaches are trained through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, focusing on how to teach employability skills and soft skills while fostering independence at the job site.

In the hours the students are not working, they are using the time to practice independence and their individualized goals. “One student may have a goal to obtain a driver’s license, while another student may have a goal to budget her paycheck. Students are motivated to work to be as independent as possible,” explains Heather. “In the classroom, students learn what they need to know to live independently or in the least restrictive environment. This includes personal finance, civic responsibility, cooking, career-readiness skills, travel, shopping and much more.”



the program wanting to learn to work and earn a paycheck. Some of them will graduate to work within the community with supported employment. Some will attend a local college experience program and some will move on to a local “without walls” day program, working with the adult centers like LifeSong, Inc., Saratoga Bridges, Wildwood, Living Resources and the Independent Living Centers.

“Our goal is to assist students and families with all of their choices,” says Heather. “In the past few years, we have had some wonderful success stories. We have a strong relationship with Panera Bread. They currently employ five of our former students and have two current

The students practice taking a CDTA bus, visit the town library to learn how to use the computers, shop at the mall, go to the YMCA – many places just to get used to being outside in the community. They learn to budget their own paychecks for things like groceries, driving lessons and their end of the year school trip. They are also involved in the Bountiful Backpack program at Shen. Working with a job coach in the backpack distribution center on the Shen campus, they master critical skills like warehousing, menu planning, sorting, counting, delivery, customer service and teamwork. The backpacks are filled with breakfast and lunch items as well as a milk & egg card from Stewarts, and then they are sent home with school age students each Friday. The program’s students have been responsible for packing 300 backpacks and counting!

The center currently houses 20 students of varying levels of independence and abilities. All of the students came to

interns. We have also developed a new relationship with Coburg Village. One of our students was just hired part time and another student interns at the village.”

Other participating businesses include: Tractor Supply; Smashburger; Peregrin Memory Care; Shen Elementary & Middle Schools, Prime Restaurant; Kidz Corner Daycare; ABC Nursery School; ACE Hardware; McDonalds; Plaza Laundromat; Hannaford; Price Chopper; Spare Time Bowling; Walgreens; Blaze Pizza; Friendly’s; Walmart; Marshalls; Salvation Army and Hoffman’s Car Wash. The local businesses have been very supportive and Heather hopes to keep adding to the list of opportunities for her students. They are currently trying to obtain more connections within the big corporations in our area to help the students learn office skills as well, but have found this to be a frustrating process since many of these

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companies can't take on interns without the approval from their corporate leadership.

However, the program continues to grow with the tremendous support they have received both from the school and community. As the program blossomed over the years, Kristi Drinkwater joined the team as a part-time instructor as well and has established a work program within the high school for juniors and seniors. Ten years ago, they moved offsite, and this year they will move again to a new location in Clifton Park Center.

Heather says the Shenendehowa Administration has been wonderfully supportive of the program and all its components from the beginning, taking care of the cost of transportation, job coaching and space. This continuous support has allowed students to not only explore their skills, but to find out what excites them. Current student, J Cadrette, was able to do this when he began interning for Shen's Public Information Office, covering Shen news and sports through tweets and blogging. "When I got the job, I was excited," says J. "I feel like I am starting something great for people after me."

Each year the students also prepare for field trips, especially for their big trip to Washington, DC. They work together to plan the trip, picking the sites they want to see and learning why these sites are significant. They also prepare their trip budget, transportation and they work with maps as well as the other responsibilities included with planning a big trip.

The program has been an outstanding success. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nationally, only 20.78% of working age people with disabilities were in the labor force, with only 19% of them actually working (*BLS Employment Situation, Table A-6, December 2018*). However, Shen's students have different statistics. "In the 15 years we have collected data, the students exiting our program average 73% employment rate at graduation and 68% employment rate two years after graduation," says Heather.

They often share their resources and documents with other local school systems so those districts can implement a similar program as well, helping all the students in the Capital Region with learning difficulties as they transition into the workforce. Businesses are benefitting as much as the students; Heather



has seen it every day. "People with different abilities can prove to be the hardest working and most loyal employees," she says.

*If you are interested in volunteering with the students to help with the backpacks, or if you have a business and would like to participate with the intern program, contact Heather or Kristi at [greeheat@shenet.org](mailto:greeheat@shenet.org) or [drinkris@shenet.org](mailto:drinkris@shenet.org).* ■

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).

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# Welcome to the Neighborhood

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

Smiles were everywhere as the **Lincoln Rug Gallery** (1683 Route 9 (St. John's Plaza), Halfmoon, 518-888-1744) opened its doors with a fun, multigenerational family event. Owner Shiv Hari and his family were proud to showcase the rugs, throw pillows, bath mats, towels and bedsheets available for sale at the new store. Owners of homes with hardwood floors are encouraged to come in and see how an area rug can help add to the design of room spaces and absorb noise, thus greatly enhancing the living experience. Senator Jim Tedisco, Halfmoon Town Councilwoman Daphne Jordan and Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh were on hand for the festivities.



With all the business expansion going on in Clifton Park, it's no surprise that the CSSC held two ribbon cuttings right next door to each other in the new Town Plaza last autumn: **Property Pro Realty Group, Inc** (800 Route 146, Ste 320, 518-500-4PRO) provides full service real estate sales & property management for the region, while **Edward Jones – Louis Dahoda** (800 Route 146, Ste 315, 518-371-0740) offers investments and services to help reach financial goals including retirement, education, estate considerations and asset protection. A large joint party was held, with representatives from area businesses in attendance including landlord DCG Development, Senator Jim Tedisco, Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh and the staff and volunteers of the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County.



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

## Saratoga Arts

Contributed by Emma Huneck, Saratoga Arts

### At The Library...

On display at the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library from January 29 - February 25 are photographs by Sean Walmsley and abstract paintings by Ossie Jon-Nwakalo. Both exhibitions are located on the second floor of the library and should not be missed!

### At The Gallery...

Visit The Arts Center Gallery at Saratoga Arts to view **High School All Stars**, featuring artwork from high school artists attending schools in Saratoga, Fulton and Montgomery counties. The exhibit will be on display through February 9.

All are invited to join us on Saturday, February 16 from 6-8pm for the Opening Reception of **Uncovered: Works by Diane Golden, Jae Schalekamp and Emily Vallee**. The exhibit will be on display from February 16 - March 23. Join to meet the artists, view their impressive artwork and enjoy craft beer and light refreshments from Druthers Brewing Company.

### Kids' Camps...

Do you have a little artist or actor at home that is hoping to get creative during their February and April breaks? Sign them up for art or theater camp at Saratoga Arts! Half and full day camps are available for kids ages 5-12. Campers will act, paint, draw, sculpt and more, and will end the week with an art show or play for parents and friends! Visit [www.saratoga-arts.org/education/artcamps](http://www.saratoga-arts.org/education/artcamps) for more information. ■



# Jenna Caputo

Contributed by Silverpen Productions, LLC



Photo by Louis Torres Photography

All of the articles in **Clifton Park Neighbors** are arranged by our Content Coordinator, Jenna Caputo. In addition to writing our feature stories and working behind the scenes to put together all our community content, Jenna is also a local business owner. You've read her stories; now meet the woman behind the computer!

company blog. We work in both print and digital mediums and offer a fully customized and flexible experience for businesses on a per project basis so they can maximize their budgets and pay for only the services they really need. It's a system that truly works with all budgets!

## Where are you from originally?

Latham, NY

## What did you like to do growing up?

Read & write, play the piano, sing, theater, and later curled in the youth league at Schenectady Curling Club.

## Wait – Curling? Like the thing with the brooms on the Olympics?

Yes! My friends from Canada got me into it and it was so much fun! Everyone should try it!! ☺

## What services do you offer?

All forms of business & publication services including content strategy, blogs, websites, brochures, mailers, articles, newsletters, press releases, social media, training materials, copyediting, scripts, creative works, etc.

## How did you get into that business?

I've forever been a writer at heart, even from a very young age. After graduating, I joined the workforce for a little while, but I've always been an entrepreneur and wanted to go off on my own and build something I could be proud of while still being able to take care of my family. I quickly realized there was a real need in our area for affordable content services for local businesses. Many of our small community businesses cannot afford a full marketing experience from the larger marketing agencies, and with the new algorithms and "guidelines" from Google, they are suffering because of it. As a small business owner, I know how many hats an entrepreneur needs to wear and unfortunately, we just can't do it all ourselves. I wanted to provide a service that would help businesses to still have an edge with the "big boys" while easing some of these writing-related tasks that many find daunting, allowing them to still present their business in the most professional manner possible. So I created Silverpen Productions with flexibility in mind from the start. A business can come to me

## Tell us about your business, Silverpen Productions.

Silverpen Productions offers customized content, as well as design and marketing services for businesses, publications or individuals. We have a bank of experienced professionals to provide whatever services a business may need – from content strategy to creating promotional or internal materials to editing existing materials or even running a



Jenna with bestselling author Jodi Picoult. Photo by Silverpen Productions

with a specific budget and we will figure out how to make it work using only the services they really need.

**What is your background/training?**

I majored in English with a concentration in Creative Writing at Skidmore College, studying under some incredible, Pulitzer Prize and award-winning mentors. I completed an internship in screenwriting at 20th Century Fox in Hollywood, then experienced the editing field with companies like McGraw-Hill Publishing and Pearson Prentice Hall before focusing my experience locally in the Capital District.

**What is your favorite part about your work?**

Variety! I get to meet so many interesting people and I love being an involved part of the community.

**You have so many facets to your background. What genre do you most enjoy writing?**

My true love still resides with creative writing. I love creating new stories and worlds for people to lose themselves in. I especially enjoy writing for children and young adults. That said, I have yet to find something I have not enjoyed. It's always so fun and interesting to learn about all the talented people in our area and it also provides much more satisfaction than I would have expected creating copy for various businesses. To be able to take a business' mission and put that purpose to words has been an exciting and fulfilling challenge every day!

**What do you enjoy most about coordinating for Clifton Park Neighbors?**

The people! I have learned so many fascinating stories about our community.

**What is one thing about you/your work that most people would not know?**

I'm also a ballroom dancer. I began my dance career with a swing dance class in college and instantly fell in love! I joined the ballroom dance team and have been performing, teaching, and most importantly, learning, ever since. I also work with many wedding couples helping them to prepare for the big dance. It's so humbling and gratifying to be in a position to help people achieve a specific vision for their special day!

**Where do you teach?**

I am based at the Saratoga Savoy Center of Dance in Saratoga, but I am also often out in the community teaching workshops, private lessons and community events.

**What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I still am an avid reader and try to learn something new

whenever I can. Of course I love to dance, but most importantly, I try to squeak out every last second possible with my family. Family always comes first!

**What do you love to do in the Capital District?**

Attend all the wonderful theater venues and enjoy the fantastic restaurants our area offers! I also love to go out with my husband, daughter, and dog whenever possible to walk the many beautiful trails around. It is my way of resetting for the week ahead.



Photo by Silverpen Productions

**Do you have a mantra or favorite quote?**

Many! But for this month I'm focusing on the words of Audrey Hepburn – "Nothing is impossible. The word itself says, 'I'm possible.'"

**Any advice for aspiring writers?**

Read and write as much as possible. Start a blog, reach out to other writers, try to get at least one internship in your field. Also gain experience in marketing and/or business. Even if you go into a creative field, these are skills that you'll still need and they will make you much more appealing to publishers and employers.

Write whatever is in your heart. It may not sell right away, but the important thing is to keep trying because eventually something will click. It's a hard field with a lot of possibilities, so the only way to find your own niche is to just keep experimenting and learning as much as you can along the way. You never reach a point of "knowing it all." There's always room for improvement!

For more information about Silverpen Productions, visit [www.silverpenproductions.com](http://www.silverpenproductions.com). Follow Jenna on FB, Insta & Twitter at @jennacapbooks or @silverpenp. ■



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Friday, Feb 1

### 6TH ANNUAL BALLSTON SPA CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

@Various Locations, Downtown Ballston Spa, NY

As part of the monthly Family Friendly First Friday Events, Downtown Ballston Spa is excited to present the 6th Annual Ballston Spa Chocolate Fest.

*Time: 6:00-9:00pm*

*Cost: FREE*

## Friday, Feb 1

### CANDLELIGHT SKI AND SNOWSHOE

@Saratoga Spa State Park - Polaris Pavilion, 19 Roosevelt Drive Saratoga Springs

Families are invited to enjoy an evening at Saratoga Spa State Park's Candlelight Ski and Snowshoe fundraiser event. In addition to a candlelit loop, the park will be offering a bonfire and hot drinks. If there is no snow, a candlelit walking path will be offered. Inclement weather or poor trail conditions will cancel this event. Food will be donated to the Franklin Community Center Food Pantry.

*Time: 6:00-8:30pm*

*Cost: Two canned food items*

## Friday, Feb 1-Sunday, Feb 3

### AGATHA CHRISTIE'S "THE STRANGER"

@Riggi Theater at the National Museum of Dance, Saratoga Springs  
iTheatre Saratoga is proud to present Agatha Christie's "The Stranger," a thrilling play that confronts feminine vulnerability and the trope of "love at first sight."

*Time: 7:30pm Friday & Saturday, 2pm Sunday*

*Cost: \$25 for adults, \$15 for students*

## Friday, Feb 1-Sun, Feb 10

### SARANAC LAKE WINTER FESTIVAL

@Saranac Lake

The 2019 celebration will feature a Prehistoric Park theme! Don't miss the Ice Palace! It comes complete with thrones and a temporary king and queen: two local residents, who are honored for their contribution to the community.

## Saturday, Feb 2 and Friday, Feb 15

### BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP

@Saratoga Hospital, Saratoga Springs

If you are a breastfeeding mother, you'll feel right at home in this support group, where other moms going through the same experience come to share their struggles and offer guidance and advice. Grandmothers and siblings up to age 5 are also welcome to attend.

*Time: 10-11:30am*

*Cost: FREE*

## Saturday, Feb 2

### CHOWDERFEST 2019

@Saratoga Springs

Warm up with some chowder samples from local restaurants in downtown Saratoga Springs.

*Time: 11am-4pm*

*Cost: \$1 per sample*

## Saturday, Feb 2

### BALLOON GAL JENNY

@Clifton Park-Halfmoon Town

Library, Children's Activity Room  
No registration required, just stop in. Not safe for babies. Celebrate Take Your Child to the Library Day with a fun balloon animal created just for you! One per child, please!

*Time: 10:30-11:30am*

*Cost: FREE*

## Sunday, Feb 3

### ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW

@Shenendehowa High School East, Clifton Park

The Southern Saratoga County Woman's Club will hold their Annual Antique Show with 60 quality dealers.

Club Women will serve refreshments all day. Proceeds go to Scholarships to Shenendehowa students. For further information please call Maryellen at 518-371-5507.

*Time: 9am-4pm*

*Cost: Donation of \$3;*

*Children under 12 FREE*

## Monday, Feb 4, Feb 11, Feb 18, & Feb 25

### OPEN MIC NIGHT

@Caffe Lena, Saratoga Springs

Come watch or perform at Caffe Lena Open Mics every Monday night. Sign up is first come, first serve!

*Time: 7pm sign-up, 7:30pm performances start*

*Cost: FREE, but donations to the non-profit are appreciated*

## Monday, Feb 4

### PRE-K NATURE DISCOVERY HOUR

@Camp Saratoga, Ganesvoort

This monthly program uses children's love of nature to teach simple concepts. Caters to 3-6 year olds. Parents are expected to attend.

*Time: 10:30-11:30am*

*Cost: FREE*

## Thursday, Feb 7, Feb 14, Feb 21, & Feb 28

### CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION CLASSES

@Saratoga Hospital, Saratoga Springs

Taking place over four consecutive Thursday evenings, this four-part class series aims to educate parents on the processes of pregnancy, labor and delivery. Please register by calling 518-580-2450 or register online at [saratogahospital.org/](http://saratogahospital.org/) classes.

*Time: 7pm-9pm*

*Cost: \$75*

**Friday, Feb 8–Sunday, Feb 10**  
SARATOGA FROZEN SPRINGS  
CLASSIC – POND HOCKEY  
TOURNAMENT

@Saratoga Spa State Park,  
Saratoga Springs  
Come see three straight days  
of hockey, with additional  
entertainment in between games.  
Time: TBD  
Cost: TBD

**Saturday, Feb 9**

CLIFTON PARK 2019  
ANNUAL WINTERFEST  
@Various Locations, Clifton Park  
Join your neighbors for a fun day of  
winter activities. The Clifton Park Best  
Soup Contest and the Clifton Park  
Idol Singing Competition, Clifton Park  
Community Chorus, Face Painting  
& More.  
Time: 11am–4pm  
Cost: FREE

**Saturday, Feb 9**  
REPAIR CAFE

@Saratoga Springs Public Library,  
49 Henry Street, Saratoga Springs  
A free community event with the  
goal of repairing broken objects to  
extend their life, keeping things  
out of landfills and fostering an  
appreciation for the art of repairing  
things. Bring what you can carry  
(limit of 2 items), and let a repair  
coach help you fix it.  
Please note: you are welcome to  
actively participate in fixing your  
item and you must remain present  
during the repairs.  
Time: 12:00- 3:00pm  
Cost: FREE

**Saturday, Feb 9–  
Sunday, Feb 10**

BALLSFEST LATE NIGHT  
PAJAMA PARTY  
@The Adelphi Hotel, Saratoga Springs  
Ballsfest is a non-profit organization  
that aims to lift the spirits of those  
affected by cancer. This event will  
feature games, music, refreshments

and more. Pajama attire is strongly  
encouraged!  
Time: 9pm–1am

**Friday, Feb 15 -  
Monday, Feb 18**  
22ND ANNUAL GREAT  
BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

@Your Backyard  
The Great Backyard Bird Count  
(GBBC) is a fun, free and easy event  
that engages bird watchers of all ages  
in counting birds to create a real-  
time snapshot of bird population.  
Participants are asked to count birds  
for as little as 15 min on one or more  
days and report their sightings online  
at [Birdcount.org](http://Birdcount.org)

**Sunday, Feb 17**

HORSE DRAWN SLEIGH RIDES  
@Lapland Lake Nordic Vacation  
Center, Northville  
Take a half hour sleigh ride along the  
scenic Lapland Lake. Purchase tickets  
at <https://laplandlake.ltibooking.com>  
Time: 1–4pm  
Cost: FREE for kids under 4,  
\$15 ages 4-14, \$25 ages 15+

**Monday, Feb 18–  
Wednesday, Feb 20**  
WINTER WILDERNESS  
ADVENTURE CAMP

@Ndakinna Educational Center  
This three day program is packed  
with indoor and outdoor activities.  
There are multiple programs  
catering to a wide range of age  
groups. Make sure to bring lunch!  
Visit <https://www.ndakinnacenter.org/events>  
for more information  
Time: 9am–4pm  
Cost: Prices vary by program

**Wednesday, Feb 20**

MAD HATTER TEA PARTY  
@Clifton Park-Halfmoon Town  
Library, Program Room A-B  
For children in grades K-3 and an  
adult. Please include all the names of  
people attending in the notes field.  
A Mad Hatter Tea Party to celebrate

the winter break. Games, crafts and  
general silliness are to be expected.  
Dress as a Wonderland character or  
simply to impress. Register by 2/18.  
This program involves food. Please  
contact Youth Services with food  
allergy questions.  
Time: 1:45-3:15pm | Cost: FREE

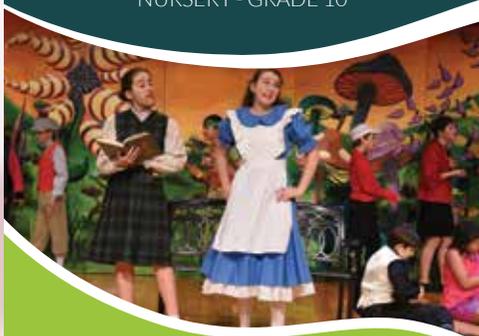
**Tuesday, Feb 26 -  
Wednesday, Feb 27**  
INFANT CARE CLASSES

@Saratoga Hospital, Saratoga Springs  
Taking place over two consecutive  
evenings, this class teaches new  
parents about a variety of care topics  
and tactics. Car seat safety training  
will be provided by a nationally-  
certified Child Passenger Safety  
Instructor. To register, please call  
518-580-2450 or register online at  
[saratogahospital.org/classes](http://saratogahospital.org/classes).  
Time: 6–9pm | Cost: \$40

**Wednesday, Feb 27**

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP  
@Saratoga Hospital, Saratoga Springs  
Led by Pierre Zimmerman, M.S., this  
support group provides a safe place  
for those suffering from cancer to  
explore the many issues that arise with  
such an affliction.  
Time: 12–1pm | Cost: FREE

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# A Local Valentine From the Past

By John L. Scherer, Clifton Park Town Historian

A hand-made valentine with a hand-written message was treasured by its local recipient, and survives today in the Town History Collection. It is addressed to Mr. Sebastian Cragier of Vischer Ferry, and is dated Valentine's Day, 1846:

*Vischers Ferry, Feb. 14, 1846*

*To Mr. Sebastian Cragere*

*I had my fortune, you must know,  
Told on the cards some nights ago;*

*And what the woman said to me  
I think I should repeat to thee.*

*She said that I should soon receive  
A letter which would pleasure give.*

*Which letter she assured me, too,  
A man would send of a fair hue.*

*A man what name I know I know of none  
Except my friend, that's you, a hue.*

*But I forgot, oh precious thing  
She said the man had bought a ring.*

*A ring--from this I understand  
The gentleman will seek my hand.*

*Well, sir, I have it unto you  
To tell me if the news be true.*

*Now is it true you have in mind  
To take me for your valentine?*



*Sebastian Cragier of Vischer Ferry and his son, Tunis, c. 1870. Sebastian was the recipient of the Valentine from Catherine Fellows, and later married her in 1860. Tunis was born the following year.*

This valentine was sent by Catherine Fellows, the 16-year-old daughter of Laurence and Sarah Fellows. She lived with her parents

and five brothers on Riverview Road just east of Vischer Ferry. Across the road from Catherine lived her sweetheart, Sebastian Cragier. Sebastian, at age 24, was eight years older than Catherine.

Finally, in 1860 love triumphed and Catherine's fortune came true. She and Sebastian were married at the Amity Reformed Church on July 16, 1860, just over one month after her father's death. Catherine was now 30 years old and Sebastian was 38. It was 14 years after the valentine prediction.

Sebastian and Catherine lived in the Cragier farmhouse, on Riverview Road, where their first and only child, Tunis, was born in 1861. Alas, marital bliss was short lived. Catherine died on July 18, 1866, just two days after her sixth wedding anniversary. She was only 36 years old.

Sebastian would never remarry. He died at the ripe old age of 77 on September 23, 1899. All the principals of this story are at rest now in the cemetery on the hill in back of the Amity Reformed Church in Vischer Ferry. Sebastian Cragier must have truly treasured his valentine from Catherine Fellows as he preserved it during his lifetime so that we might enjoy this Valentine Day story today.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY! ■



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# Kaveeya Ramkobair Flourishes Both In and Outside the Classroom

By Christine Matthews

Now in her second year at Brown School, seventh grader Kaveeya Ramkobair said she's thoroughly enjoying it so far. "What I find unique about Brown school are the classes, which are small compared to other middle schools, making it, in my opinion, easier to learn because the teachers are more accessible to help everyone in class," said Ramkobair.



In terms of coursework, Kaveeya likes both math and science equally. "I love having challenging questions in math and figuring out the problems. In science, I love doing labs and learning facts I never knew before."

"Kaveeya comes to class every day with a smile and puts forth her best effort. She shows a genuine interest in learning and participates with enthusiasm. She is a

kind and caring friend and student, always quick to ask how you are doing and listen attentively," said Kaveeya's Spanish teacher, Colleen Bosco. "Kaveeya is never shy to give a compliment, though she's humble to accept them herself. It has been a genuine pleasure teaching her and getting to know her as a person, and I have no doubt she has a bright future ahead."

Outside of school Kaveeya enjoys playing tennis and the piano. She started tennis three years ago at Sportime in Rotterdam, NY. She said she likes it because it keeps her active, and it's a sport that she'll be able to play throughout her life.

"Music had a calming effect on me according to my parents," said Ramkobair. "As such, they decided to enroll me in piano classes, I really enjoy and look forward to participating in these classes every week."

During the 2018 holiday season, Kaveeya performed in *The Magic of Christmas* at the Palace Theater in Albany for the second year in a row. She's been taking music classes at The Music Studio since she was five years old. For *The Magic of Christmas*, Kaveeya participated in the opening song - "Joy to the World" - and played an instrument called the soprano metallophone on two other songs with The Music Studio Kids and the Albany Symphony.

"I really enjoyed it; it has become an event that I look forward to participating in, especially during that time of the year," said Ramkobair. ■



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Town Supervisor <i>Phil Barrett</i> .....518-371-6651	Town Clerk <i>Pat O'Donnell</i> .....518-371-6681	Planning Director <i>John Scavo</i> .....518-371-6054
Town Board Members.....518-371-6651	Town Court, 5 Municipal Plaza .....518-371-6668	Receiver of Taxes <i>Rose Savallo</i> .....518-371-5720
Animal Control Officer .....518-371-6756	Storm Water Management Technician	Director of Safety and Security
Town Attorney <i>Tom McCarthy</i> .....518-371-6651	<i>Scott Reese</i> .....518-371-6054	<i>Lou Pasquarel</i> .....518-348-7311
Assessor <i>Walter Smead</i> .....518-371-6460	Director of Communications & Tech	Town Security Officers .....518-369-6651
Building & Development Director	<i>Mathew Andrus</i> .....518-371-6651	Sewer Director <i>Mike O'Brien</i> .....518-348-7313
<i>Steve Myers</i> .....518-371-6702	Highway Superintendent <i>Dahn Bull</i> .....518-371-7310	Transfer Station Supervisor
Building & Grounds Director	Parks and Recreation Director	<i>Jeff Vedder</i> .....518-371-6669
<i>Dan Clemens</i> .....518-371-6651	<i>Myla Kramer</i> .....518-371-6667	

If the person you wish to reach is not on the list above, please call 518-371-6651 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.



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