



February 2012 Published by The Stockade Association historicstockade.com Vol. 53 No. 6

Stockade Oral History Project

- Susannah Hand

As some of you may know, I have been involved in an ongoing project to collect oral histories from long-time Stockade residents. We all know that our neighborhood has a rich story recorded in the history books, but as I've come to realize there is an even richer story to tell. That story exists in the memories of our neighbors, those who have spent most of all of their lives here. The neighborhood, seen through their eyes, becomes a vibrant and evolving place. We all have our own favorite thing about the Stockade, that "something special" that made us want to call this place home. As I listen to stories of the past and the Stockade of previous decades comes alive in my mind's eye, I marvel at the way things have changed over the years. I also marvel at the fact, that despite the evolution of the neighborhood (for better or for worse), that "something special" remains, always, a constant.

The goal of the project is to compile these stories in a documentary film, so that they will live on to inform future generations. There is more work to do before we reach that point, so in the meantime I will share one memory every month here in *The Spy*.

On September 20, 1959, the Stockade hosted a royal visitor. In 1959, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands was still only Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands. In 1609, Henry Hudson was hired by the Dutch East India Company to find an easterly passage to Asia. He set off from Amsterdam to

do so, but because of ice blockages, his eastward venture was halted. He turned westward instead and eventually found himself in North America - and in the river that would eventually bear his name. 1959 marked the 350th anniversary of this historic voyage, and Princess Beatrix was invited to attend the celebration as an honored guest. The Dutch roots run deep here in the Stockade and so our neighborhood was one of the stops on the tour for the Dutch princess. As the article in the September 14, 1959 edition of the *Schenectady Gazette* reports, Giles van der Bogert would be her tour guide. (the article can be viewed online.)

Jim Schmitt and Werner Feibes remember the day of the tour well. Jim and Werner have been residents of the Stockade for over 50 years and we owe our designation as New York's first historic district to them. There was much anticipation in the neighborhood on September 20, 1959 as residents waited to get a glimpse of Princess Beatrix touring the Stockade in a convertible with the top down. Jim and Werner remember standing on a balcony to get the best view of the princess as she drove by their residence on North Ferry Street. Giles was indeed her tour guide and when asked about Beatrix's reactions to her tour of the Dutch-settled Stockade, Giles quoted the princess. She said, "It reminds me so much of home!"

If you know someone who has stories to tell of the "Stockade Past" please contact Susannah Hand at susannah_hand@hotmail.com.

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Colonial Festival Dinner Saturday, February 4, 2012 6-9pm

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General ticket - \$50 Patrons - \$75, \$100, \$150

- A Victorian Valentines Stockade Meet and Greet - Thurs., Feb. 9 see page 3
- Neighborhood Safety/Watch Meeting - Tues., Feb. 28 see page 7
- List of Stockade Events - please see page 11

For 2012 Full Trash Collection Schedule cityofscheneectady.com/garbage.htm

• • • • •
• Mar. Spy Deadline •
• February 15 •
• • • • •

Neighborhood News Stockade website: www.historicstockade.com

The Stockade Association Board met on Jan. 5, 2012 at the Stockade Inn

Sylvie Briber presented an update on The Spy. In order to trim expenses, the recent editions of The Spy have been just eight pages. Sylvie is encouraging volunteer writers to contribute new articles with new ideas.

President Mary D'Alessandro announced that this year the Sidewalk Sale will be on June 9.

Mary reported that the City has tested the soil in Riverside Park for possible contaminants resulting from the recent floods. The City reports that the soil is OK. However, the Board has additional questions about the testing process and additional concerns about the safety of the soil. Valerie Ackerman agreed to investigate this further. Mary

also announced that the City will be grading the park to address ruts and debris left in the wake of the flood.

David Lowry reported that he and Rob Gavel are coordinating this year's garden tour. They are proposing a theme of a Victorian Tea Party - more details to follow.

Susannah Hand reported that the oral history project is proceeding very well. Most recently Association Founders James Schmitt and Werner Feibes were filmed and interviewed. More long time residents will be scheduled soon.

Mary announced that the new "Key to the City" program is working very well. This new initiative is a partnership between the City and Key Bank. The program provides special home appraisal criteria, renovation incentives and low mortgage closing costs.

The Stockade Association Membership 2011 - 2012

The Stockade has been described as "a national treasure, enjoyed by thousands of visitors from across America and the world for more than a half century. At the same time, The Stockade Association has continued to preserve this Historic District and quality of life for its caretakers, and provide protection and improvement of the properties within its boundaries.

Your support of The Stockade Association by becoming a member greatly helps in furthering its mission. Membership for voting members is \$15 per person, \$20 per household. Businesses and non-residents can join as non-voting members. Simply complete this form and mail with your remittance to the address indicated below.

Name(s) Include all members with household membership:

Address City Zip

Home Phone Business e-mail Date

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

Art Show Membership Riverside Park Walkabout Neighborhood Watch
Garden Group Neighborhood Celebrations Sidewalk Sale The Stockade Spy Government Affairs

Stockade Association Membership

September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012. \$15 per person, \$20 per household. \$

"Friend of the Stockade" (non-voting) If you would like to become a "Friend" and support the efforts of the Stockade, your contributions are very welcome. \$

The Stockade Spy newspaper is hand delivered to the neighborhood monthly, September through May. If you would like to have it mailed to you or a friend, it is \$10 per year. Please note the name and address below.

Name of recipient \$

Address of recipient

Name of sender

Please make all checks payable to "The Stockade Association" Total Amount enclosed \$

and mail to: Stockade Association Treasurer
Suite 100
32 Washington Avenue
Schenectady, NY 12305

Have the Winter Blues?

Think Red!

A Victorian Valentines

Don't miss our next

Stockade Meet and Greet

**Come to meet and share
a little love and laughter
with your neighbors**

Thursday, February 9th

**Van Dyck Restaurant
6:30-8:30 pm**

Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Hendrick Meese Vrooman

Thursday, February 9 2:00pm Schenectady County Historical Society

Join us as we celebrate the life and legacy of Hendrick Meese Vrooman, a Dutch settler who came to Schenectady in 1664 and was ultimately killed in the 1690 Massacre. Vrooman was the father of Adam and Jan Vrooman, who came with their father from Holland and many of whose descendants still live in the Schenectady and Schoharie County area.

A letter written by Vrooman in 1664, along with many other letters, were seized by the English from Dutch ships during the 17th century Anglo-Dutch wars. These seized letters were recently discovered in the archives in Kew, England. In Vrooman's letter, he comments on the changing rule in the colonies from Dutch to English, and describes his life in Schenectady: "It has been a good summer there. Very fine corn has grown there and the cultivation was good and the land still pleases me. At snechtendeel (Schenectady and the surrounding area) the land is

more beautiful than I have ever seen in Holland."

The Dutch national television station KRO will be filming this event for its program "Brieven Boven Water" (roughly translated as "Surfacing Letters"). The program attempts to make contact with living descendants of people who wrote the seized letters.

Descendants of Hendrick Meese Vrooman are especially encouraged to attend this event; the Grem-Doolittle Library staff and volunteers can help trace lineages back to the Vroomans. Please contact the Librarian for assistance.

For more information, please contact Melissa Tacke, Librarian, 518-374-0263, option 3 or by email at librarian@schist.org.

Cost: \$5

Free for Schenectady County Historical Society Members

The History & Restoration of 43 Washington

- Nick Plowman

Introduction

My name is Nick Plowman and I am thirteen years old with James Plowman Construction. We are restoring the building at 43 Washington Avenue. Over the years we have uncovered many artifacts and hidden treasures. I have researched a lot about the building and every month I will be writing about each and every special thing we found. I hope you enjoy my column.



Chapter 10 - Dutch Framing

In Chapter 7, I wrote about how they separated the rooms in 43 Washington Avenue for apartments. This month I'm talking about the Dutch framing. During the demolition of 43 Washington Avenue, we found Dutch framing. The Dutch framing was added in the early 1800's. It is located in the south side on the front rooms on the second and third floor. While we were working we found roman numerals on the bottom of the studs! The roman numerals were there to mark where the studs that were supposed to set on the horizontal beam. When the Dutch were framing, they would take a measurement, then, bring it down to cut it at ground level. Then, when they would come back up to the room, it would fit perfectly. Also, in 43 Washington, there is this kind of wood called lath. Lath is used to cover the wood studs so plaster can be applied. The earliest kind of lath is called accordion lath. It was a part of the Dutch framing in 43 Washington. The way they would make accordion lath is they would take a long log and cut it into slabs, then pull the slabs apart, producing these long flat rough edged sticks of wood. They then would take the accordion lath and apply it to the framing. Then it was ready for plaster. That was how Dutch framing worked. I hope everyone enjoyed my article this month. I look forward to writing more!

Birds of the Stockade

Many species of birds have different types of beaks that are adapted for the different types of food that they feed on, such as the heavy beak of the Northern Cardinal for cracking seeds and the Ruby Throated Hummingbird with a straight, slender beak for probing deep into flowers. Chimney Swifts and Tree Swallows have short, broad bills and wide gapes for engulfing insects in the air while in flight. Red-tail Hawks have hooked beaks for ripping prey. Did you know that some seabirds have tubular nostrils?

- James L Taft
AKA Captain Eagle Eyes



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Meet a Stockade Neighbor

- Susannah Hand
- Peter Delocis

Peter Delocis is a Stockade neighbor from North College Street. Here's what he had to say about living here:

I think there is something magic about the Stockade. I'm a logical person. I have trouble believing in the supernatural. Still . . .

I was looking for apartments one lovely summer afternoon, perusing the postings on the board stuck to the side of Arthur's Market (yes, this was a couple of years ago) when I heard someone say, "Peter, what are you doing here?"

It was my friend Linda, who'd lived in the Stockade for a while. She walked me around the neighborhood and we found the apartment I live in now. My landlord hadn't done any advertising. They just stuck a sign in the window, and we walked by and saw it and I leased it, eventually.

Though I rehearse and perform in Schenectady, I was worried about living here. Now I'm no stranger to urban living. I'd lived smack dab in the middle of downtown Troy for ten years until someone got stabbed in front of my doorstep. Really. As I was pouring bleach on the sidewalk to get rid of the bloodstains, I thought perhaps the suburbs weren't so bad after all.

Two years later, I was seriously reconsidering that idea. They say Colonie is close to everything. Sure. You just had to live in your car, that's all. Want to go to the library? Get in the car. Want to see a movie? Get in the car. Rehearsal? Car. Forget that quart of milk? Car! I had to

accept that whatever I wanted was near to where I was living, but where I was living wasn't where I wanted to be.

So the Stockade looked great by day, but I came back after dark to *really* check the place out

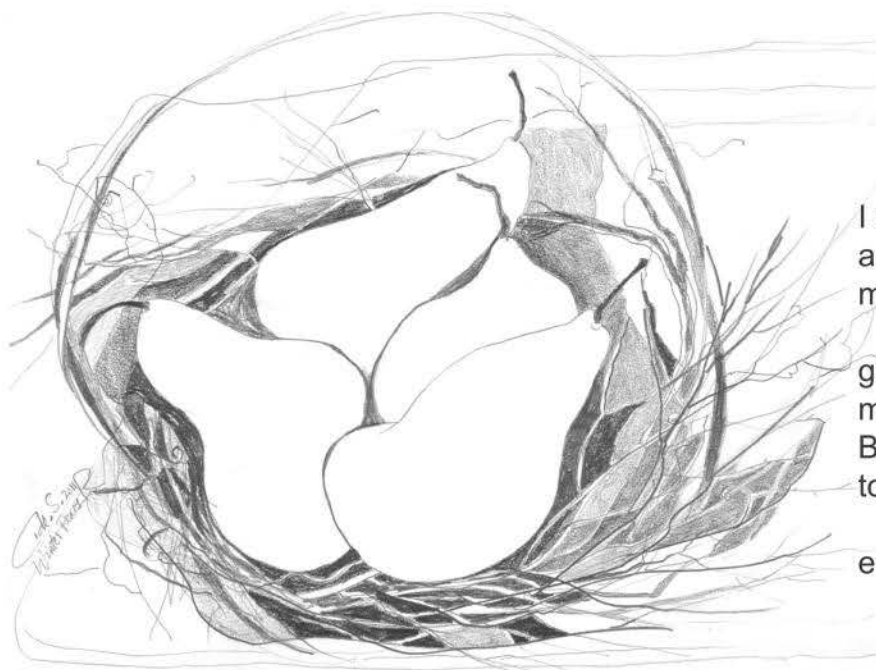
As I was standing on the corner of front of my building that night, a very nice lady with a walkie-talkie and a flashlight came up to me and wished me a pleasant good evening. You guessed it - Neighborhood Watch. We chatted about the neighborhood. I loved it. Magic.

I was lying in bed one Saturday morning a few weeks after I moved in and there seemed to be more voices than usual on the street outside my window. When I took a stroll down the block, I found it was the Stockade Art Show. When I went to Perecca's to get bread after that, there was a street festival in Little Italy. I walked over to SEFCU to use the ATM, and there was a Greek Festival - all on the same glorious Saturday.

Magic, I tell ya!

Peter is an actor and performer in the Improv group Mopco. They perform every Friday night at 8pm at Proctors Underground. This writer has seen the show twice and it's great fun. Peter would love to see you all there! (Mopco.org)

Have an interesting Stockade neighbor? Tell the Spy about him or her! Contact Susannah Hand at susannah.hand@hotmail.com or submit an article directly to The Spy, 377-0469.



WINTER PEARS

I wish your life
and mine as well
might ripen like winter pears.

growing into tenderness,
maturing without bitterness.
Before the time of bruises and withering
to be spent, enjoyed and savored

every season, every morsel.

A View from the River


- Chris Waldron

Given the recent calamity caused by Mother Nature, I thought it best to keep from commenting about the river for a few months. However, like the seasons, things have their inevitable change. After months of seeing the ugly brown of the still churning river bottom, there were signs of the return to its azure blue. The unusually mild winter has caused the river to flow more than usual, but there are signs of ice coating the surface. In past years, there have been ice fishers and even a few deer crossing the frozen river by now. With no January thaw necessary, the river seems finally to be entering its period of dormancy. It has been a turbulent year for those of us living along the river. Tropical storms, earthquakes, tornadoes and the tragic Saturday night drowning

of a Stockade visitor have taught us that Mother Nature is still in charge. Friends and fellow Stockaders could be seen lending a hand to those who needed their support, and life along the river has slowly returned to normal. A walk along Riverside Park has seen the piles of river silt slowly diminishing.

With the onset of winter, we can look to the hope of spring to bring a renewed sense of life to the river, which saw its season of boaters cut far too short. Hopefully, after the ice has cleared and the warm weather has returned, there will be a revival of life along the river. For now, things are pretty quiet. Stay tuned.

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 lost pets, snow, parking, etc.

1) Send a blank email to:
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- 2) When you get the confirmation email asking if you really want to join, just hit reply
- 3) Problems? Email: dalemiller33@hotmail.com
- 4) Please pass this info along to a friend/neighbor



From the Committee of Safety/Neighborhood Watch

- Valerie Ackerman

Happy news! The City has installed an additional "no turn on red" sign at the corner of Church and Union heading north, emphasizing the poor visibility to the left due to high hedges. We also hope it helps to serve as a deterrent for people who prefer to rush through our neighborhood to avoid the Erie and State corridors. Secondly, many residents are choosing to drive at speeds much lower than the upper limit to create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in our tourist-friendly home. You too can choose to set an example and s-l-o-w down.

On the other hand: Vandalism in the form of "tagging graffiti" continues throughout the neighborhood. A few young people have been caught in the act and chased off, but no arrests have been made. Please help to make our neighborhood less attractive for this vandalism by painting over or removing the tags as soon as possible. We have a quick response team ready to help eradicate the tags. Contact me for help.

Car burglaries continue. Our best defense is making sure there are no valuables, boxes, suitcases, etc. visible - these all attract opportunists looking for quick loot. Many other strategies have been suggested, but please check with your insurance company about your liability should you purposely leave the car unlocked to avoid

repeated broken windows - some policies will be voided under those circumstances.

Join the Neighborhood Watch at 7:00 on each fourth Tuesday (February 28) at St. George's Administration building.

- Valerie Mapstone Ackerman
MSW, MDiv Schenectady, NY
346-0535
vmackerman@gmail.com

~ Tidings ~



Our dear Otto, who writes *The Stockade Spy* column, "From the Mind of Otto," recently had emergency surgery. He is on the mend and we wish him a speedy recovery so that he can soon be back writing his column again!

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Stockade Safety!!!! Keep those porch lights on front and back for your safety and for nighttime walkers!

Samuel Fuller the "Master Builder of the Mohawk"

As we drive around we notice housing developments in our surrounding suburbs and the familiar names of major builders. As we walk around our Stockade neighborhood the name of one builder is connected to several of our structures.


"Samuel Fuller the "Master Builder of the Mohawk" first came to Schenectady in 1758 from New England to repair the fort and construct boats, wagons and barracks. His talents were readily apparent and the elite signed him up to build their stylish new residences. In 1761, he contracted to build John Duncan's country house, "The Hermitage" and the next year he was working on the mansion of Daniel Campbell that still stands on the northeast corner of State and Church Streets. He is also reputed to have constructed the dwellings of Tobias Ten Eyck (17 Front Street) and of John Glen (58 Washington Avenue). Before his death in 1773, he had not only built St. George's Church

and the Presbyterian Meeting House, but upriver had erected Johnson Hall for Sir William; a house for the interpreter Daniel Claus, a house for Captain (later General) Herkimer; the Indian Castle Church; Guy Park, a house for Sir William's nephew, Guy Johnson; the Fort Herkimer Church; and the courthouse in Johnstown, all of which, with the exception of John Duncan's mansion, the Presbyterian Meeting House, and the Daniel Claus house, still survive."

(Excerpted from Schenectady Genesis, volume 1, by Susan J. Staffa).

Who are the other builders that influenced the style of homes in the Stockade?

If you have some researched house or neighborhood history to share, please submit a 250 word document to Carol DeLaMarter cdelam533@aol.com. Currently looking for an Alco story which is currently in our news.



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I/We experienced damage to our primary residence/small business due to the aftermath of Hurricanes Irene and/or Lee. The items or needs for which we request assistance are not covered by insurance or any other resources or means of reimbursement.

I/We are committed to staying for a minimum of 1 year following completion.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

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____ We would be willing to share photos and video of our progress.

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“Radical Schenectady: The Industrial Workers of the World at G.E.”

Program at The Schenectady County Historical Society

Thursday, February 2

A special program will be presented at the Schenectady County Historical Society, 32 Washington Avenue, “Radical Schenectady: The Industrial Workers of the World at G.E.” by Dr. Gerald Zahavi on Thursday, February 2 at 6 pm. Dr. Zahavi is professor of History and Director of Documentary Studies Program at the University at Albany and also the Director of the Schenectady General Electric in the 20th Century Oral History and Documentation Project.

The cost is \$5 admission and free for Schenectady

County Historical Society members.

For more information, please contact Librarian Melissa Tacke at 518-374-0263, option 3 or by email at librarian@schist.org.

The Schenectady County Historical Society is wheelchair accessible, with off-street parking behind the building and overflow parking next door at the YWCA.



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-- The Stockade Scene --

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Opening Celebration

Wed., Feb. 1, 3pm
Stockade Building, 102. Free.

An Evening with Vocalist

Freddy Ingleton, Thurs., Feb. 9
7pm Taylor Auditorium, Free.

For full listings of all events

www.sunysccc.edu 381-1200

Stockade Events

February Meet & Greet	Feb. 9
Neighborhood Safety/Watch Mtg.	Feb. 28
Mar. General Membership Meeting	Mar. 8
Spring Clean-up Day	TBA
May General Membership Meeting	May 10
Sidewalk Sale	June 9
Secret Garden Tour	June 2012
Park Summer Picnic	July 24

"The Ives Have It"

at The Playhouse Jan. 27- 29 & Feb. 1- 5

Nine short comedies by David Ives will open on Friday, January 27. In "Words, Words, Words" will three monkeys with typewriters eventually create Hamlet? In "Mystery at Twickham Vicarage" Inspector Dexter attempts to find out who killed Jeremy Thumpington-Fiennes. A young man and woman meeting at a party learn that the first three minutes of conversation will determine the course of their relationship in "English Made Simple." Performances: January 27-29 and February 1-5, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, Wednesday and Thursday at 7:30pm and Sundays at 2:30pm. All tickets are \$15 at www.civicplayers.org or by calling 382-2081 or at Proctors Box Office.

BECKY'S NEW CAR by Steven Dietz will be presented on Sunday, February 12 at 2:30pm. The free staged reading is about Becky Foster, caught in middle age, middle management at work, and in a middling marriage. One night a millionaire stumbles into the car dealership where Becky works, and she is offered nothing short of a new life, and a devious and delightful romp down the road not taken.

Moon and River Cafe

115 S. Ferry St., 382-1938

Free Shows - Come have Dinner!

February Events:

Every Sunday - 7:30pm Open Mic
Mon. & Tues. 2/6 & 2/7 8pm Bluegrass Fest
Wed. 2/8 8pm Snook Sisters - oldies
Thurs. 2/9 8pm Amy Collins - amazing singer
Fri. 2/10 8pm John & Eric - top guitarists
Mon. 2/3 7pm Ukulele Nite
Thurs. 2/16 8pm Running the River - oldies

Fri. February 17 6pm

Reception

for

world famous animal artist
and Stockade Resident

Carl Buell

(brother of Bill Buell)

Introducing John F. Gearing
The Colonial Schenectady Project, Inc.
Author Completing "Schenectady Genesis, Vol II"

February 5, 2012, 11:15 am

Rededication Sunday Forum
Following 10:00 am Workshop Service
Assembly Hall, First Reformed Church
8 North Church Street 377-2201

Schenectady County Historical Society

32 Washington Ave.

374-0263 www.schist.org

Exhibit: "Highlights from the Mynderse Collection"

Programs:

"Radical Schenectady: The Industrial Workers of the World at G.E." Thurs., Feb. 2 6pm. See page 10

"Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Hendrick Meese Vrooman," Thurs., Feb. 9, 2pm. See page 3

"Loyalists in Schenectady," presented by John Gearing, Sat., February 11., 2pm.

"Great Graves of Upstate New York," Presented by Chuck Dimperio, Saturday, February 25, 2pm

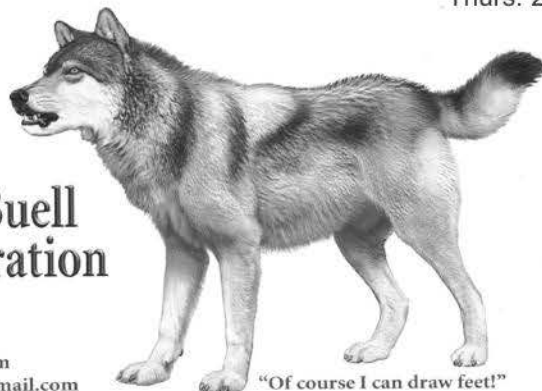
Franchere Ed. Center, Rotterdam Junction

Exhibit: "Light on New Netherland"

Program

"If Portraits Could Speak - the Stories They'd Tell," presented by Alden (Joe) Dolittle, Tues., Feb. 7, 7pm

**Carl Buell
Illustration**



carlbuell.com
carlbuell@gmail.com

"Of course I can draw feet!"

Stockade Association
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2011-2012

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 382-0157

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- Daily Gazette
- Daniel C. Ertel CPA, P.C.
- Family Tire and Auto Service Centers
- First Presbyterian Church
- First Reformed Church
- Joe Fava, Realty USA
- Killeen Restoration Company, LLC
- Northwind Service
- Open Door Bookstore and Gift Gallery
- Parcel Post Plus
- Pinhead Susan's Irish Pub
- St. George's Episcopal Church
- Schenectady Civic Players
- Schenectady County Community College
- Stockade Inn
- Studio 232
- The English Garden Bed & Breakfast
- The Van Dyck Restaurant & Lounge
- Witecki Law Offices

Didn't Get a Spy?????
 Current and back issues of *The Spy* can be found on The Association's website www.historicstockade.com - click on Spy.

Also, you can usually pick up a copy of the *Stockade Spy* at: The Stockade Home Market; The Stockade Inn, Slick's, S. Ferry and Liberty Streets, The Van Dyck at 237 Union Street.

Or call our delivery guy, Sam Boese at 986-5486 or Sylvie Briber at 377-0469.

Please Be A Good Neighbor:

For safety, keep your front and back porch lights on.

- **Avoid honking car horns.**
- **Do not park on sidewalks.**
- **Put trash out only at appropriate times**
 (Please tell new neighbors to check back page of *The Spy* for trash pick-up dates)
- **Remove emptied trash containers ASAP**
- **Help frail neighbors clean their front yards**
- **Pick up dog poops (in plastic bags)**
- * **NO OPEN FIRES ARE PERMITTED**

Please report any wrongdoings to police immediately.

Important Numbers

- **Emergency 911**
- **Non-emergencies 382-5263, 382-5264**
- **Stockade Neighborhood Watch Officer - Lt. Thomas Harrigan call non-emergency # and request him**
- **Police Emergency 382-5200**
- **Trash Not Picked up**
Solid waste - 386-2225
hotline 382-5144
Code Enforcement -382-5050
- **Waste Collection Schedule & Recycling 382-5144 7:30-4**
- **Animal Control Voicemail 382-5200 ext. 5655**

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James D. J. Schmitt

Designer
Werner L. Feibes

First Editor
Barrie C. Covert

February Waste Collection Dates

Thursdays - Feb. 2 9 16
Friday - Feb. 24

Waste Collection starts at 6:15 AM. Please put waste on the curb only **after 2 PM** the day before. To help keep our neighborhood beautiful, please remove trash cans ASAP from the street when emptied. For full trash schedule: website - cityofscheneectady.com/garbage.htm