Opportunity
Experience
Ideas

This issue:
- Featured Organization: Pine Hollow Arboretum
- Intergenerational Relationships: Transformation Through Connection
- Your Smartphone, Your New Healthcare Partner
- Barriers to Aging in Place
- The Capital District Transportation Committee’s New Visions Plan: Addressing the Needs of Senior Citizens and an Aging Population
- Personal Essay: The Guy from Cohoes and the Businesswoman
- Guest Column: The College of St. Rose as Albany Neighbor
## Table of Contents

### Issue No. 2 • Vol. 6 • July 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Publisher's Corner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Editor's Column</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Featured Organization: Pine Hollow Arboretum</td>
<td>By Alan Casline and Paul Winkeller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pine Hollow Arboretum board members interview Dr. John Abbuhl, founder of the arboretum, which is open to the public. Dr. Abbuhl tells us how the arboretum was started and his techniques for managing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Intergenerational Relationships: Transformation Through Connection</td>
<td>By Crystal Dea Moore, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This article highlights the transformation that occurs through interpersonal connection. Professor Moore tells us about an intergenerational project in which her students conducted oral histories with elders that focused on the impact of war across the life span.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Your Smartphone, Your New Healthcare Partner</td>
<td>By William J. Foley, Ph.D., P.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>William J. Foley uses fictional characters to identify the growing value of and reliance on smartphones and the use of health apps for seniors with various medical conditions. Health apps are evolving for use on smartphones integrated with sensors attached to the phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Barriers to Aging in Place</td>
<td>By Kendra Jenkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Sandman Fellowship at Albany Law School allows a law student to do in-depth research on societal issues. Kendra Jenkins used the fellowship to do research on barriers to aging in place. She shares her three recommendations to overcome the barriers to aging in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The Capital District Transportation Committee’s New Visions Plan: Addressing the Needs of Senior Citizens and an Aging Population</td>
<td>By Chris O’Neill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Visions is the planning process our regional transportation planning committee maintains to engage local communities in planning transportation projects and guide the expenditure of federal transportation funds. Chris O’Neill points out the priorities of walkable communities, complete streets, high quality transit options, urban reinvestment, and land use planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The Guy from Cohoes and the Businesswoman</td>
<td>Personal Essay by Andrew Bottum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andrew Bottum shares his poignant story and feelings about a woman who was very special to him and whose life sadly ended in tragedy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The College of St. Rose as Albany Neighbor</td>
<td>Guest Column by R. Mark Sullivan, Ed.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Sullivan, outgoing president of The College of St. Rose, describes how the vision of a campus that both clearly identifies itself as an institution of higher learning and blends with its urban setting has been realized in Albany.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Dynamics of Aging and Our Communities

Publisher
Richard Iannello, Executive Director
Albany Guardian Society
14 Corporate Woods Blvd.
Albany, NY 12211
www.albanyguardiansociety.org
director@albanyguardiansociety.org
(518) 434-2140

Editor
Paul M. Bray
126 South Swan Street
Albany, NY 12210
pmbray@aol.com
(518) 472-1772

CCQ Advisory Board
William J. Foley, Ph.D., P.E.
Philip McCallion, Ph.D.
Vera Prosper, Ph.D.

Albany Guardian Society
Board of Directors
Joyce J. Bagyi
Nancy R. Barhydt, Dr. PH, RN
Wendy Brandow
Judith Bresler
Robert A. Cerrone, CPA
Thomas P. Connolly, Esq.
Grace G. Jorgensen, M.D.
Bradley R. Konopaske, CFP®
Margaret Z. Reed, Esq.

Richard Iannello, Executive Director
Susanne A. Kenneally, Executive Assistant

Mission Statement
CCQ is an electronic and print public policy quarterly dedicated to looking at the aging segment of our society and region as it redefines itself and intersects with a wide cross section of demographic, social, cultural and economic features of society. In this light, we will consider subjects such as city and town planning, environmental advocacy, economic development, housing, work force, education, mobility, regionalism, governance, marketing, recreation, health care, social services, creativity, demographics, emerging technologies and the roles of nonprofit organizations. Our audience is public and private decision makers and all others seeking to understand a changing society. We will offer concise, thoughtful and interesting articles. Comments, including letters to the editor and recommendations from our readers, are welcome.
Please Pass the Popcorn

This publication is just one of the ways we try to reach out and communicate with you. Our other publications and our community forums are what come to mind when people think of Albany Guardian Society. But, we’ve probably reached our largest audiences with our television work. In 2002, partnering with WMHT Educational Television, we co-produced *It's An Age Thing!* and amazingly, American Public Television still offers this 13-part series to public television stations across the country. In 2007, we followed-up with *It's An Age Thing: Our Communities* and our work on that series started us off in the direction I’d like to share with you.

At the end of taping our 2007 series, we were approached by many organizations that had appeared in episodes, asking if we could provide them with some of the unused footage. If you have ever been on a videotaping session, you know that much more is recorded than ever will be used thus allowing editors maximum flexibility as they assemble stories from a sea of video clips. The television station never releases unused footage, nor do we. However, it seemed wasteful to have good information remain on the cutting room floor. We decided to take unused footage and supplement it with additional taping to create eight to ten-minute video stories for organizations in our region. We produced these video stories for the USS Slater, The Capital District Community Gardens’ Veggie Mobile, and Peppertree Rescue. We had begun a new product line without realizing it.

In 2011, we produced two additional stories that have been well-received by the public. The first video story that year described an intergenerational yard clean-up program operated by the Oneida County Office for the Aging. It was a terrific story that illustrated how programming for young citizens can provide great benefit to the older residents of the community and promote positive interactions that have tangible results.

The second story we produced was a gas pumping program in Albion, New York. Located in Orleans County, this program was formed by a group of citizens who had nothing more than the idea of how they could help older members of their community as they pumped gas at the local gas station. The story beautifully illustrated how the program quickly became something more than pumping gas. The men who volunteered to do this were so committed that one of them drove ninety miles round trip each day just to continue participating. The seniors who came to the gas station became acquainted with the volunteers, and likewise, the volunteer gas pumpers started to develop friendships with the seniors. That’s it, there is nothing more than the fact that a group of people decided to help their fellow citizens by pumping gas. This program is perfect in its simplicity and we were able to capture it nicely in our video story.

Upon previewing these stories at the 2011 Aging Concerns Unite Us Conference in Albany, I was approached by Tom Briggs, the director of the Office for the Aging in Delaware County, and Tom suggested that we consider doing a story about a camp that they operate for seniors in Delaware
County. I was reluctant at first, but upon a more in-depth review, I decided that it would make an interesting story. I didn’t know how interesting it would be and with a classic sense of timing, selected the weekend that Hurricane Irene struck Upstate New York. While our taping was cut short due to the storm, we were able to spend almost two full days with the seniors at Camp Shankitunk. It’s a fun story of how these individuals return to a rustic, rural camp setting.

We also had an opportunity to assemble a wonderful story about the Caroline “Lily” Lobozzo Aging Resource Center located within the Maplewood YMCA in Rochester, New York. Ann Marie Cook and her incredible staff at Lifespan saw an opportunity to create a senior center that works for today’s seniors but also will remain inviting and relevant to tomorrow’s seniors, all while helping to revitalize an inner-city YMCA. By collaborating with the local United Way, the city of Rochester, Monroe County, and the YMCA, they developed an incredible program—with features such as a Mather’s Café-like food court, educational classes, and an exercise agenda—that is unparalleled in its scope.

While these short videos have had good exposure at state and regional events, we’re going to work hard to make them available to broader audiences. We think that some of the more widely recognized social media outlets might be perfect venues for viewing these programs and we’ll be developing these opportunities this year.

We are also pleased to announce that Design for a Lifetime, our four-part television series on universal design homes, aired on WMHT in late May. We are hoping that there will be additional air dates this fall, and I hope you will have an opportunity to see these episodes. Dave Sadowsky, a local architect, is featured in each episode and Dave does an incredible job of helping viewers understand how even minor modifications to a person’s home can help that individual remain independent and age successfully in place for as long as possible.

Rick Ianello
Executive Director
Albany Guardian Society
Entrepreneurial Seniors

Not long ago I heard a piece on NPR about a formerly successful senior who was seeking a job and wasn’t considered apparently because of his age. Both this gentleman, at one time an elected state attorney general, and the society at large were losing out because of ageism.

An article in the January 8, 2012, New York Times had the title “Get a Midlife.” It was a reaction to the fact that many in the middle age cohort emphasize loss—“the end of fertility, decreased stamina, the absence of youth.” The writer, Patricia Cohen, pointed to recent research that accentuates the positives about middle age under the categories of personal growth, autonomy, supportive social relationships, self-regard, control of one’s life, and sense of purpose.

The senior cohort has an even higher emphasis on loss added to impending doom, but it is reasonable and useful to emphasize the positives of later life.

The Harvard Business Review blog network highlighted the positives in a Marc Freedman article entitled “Why Older Entrepreneurs Have an Edge.” Freedman pointed to research by the Kauffman Foundation “which shows that for eleven of the fifteen years between 1996 and 2010, Americans between the ages of fifty-five and sixty-four had the highest rate of entrepreneurial activity of any age group.” Freedman’s article notes that seniors, or “encore entrepreneurs,” often want to meet community needs or solve social problems at the same time.

Elaine Santore, cofounder of Umbrella in Schenectady, is one of the encore entrepreneurs mentioned in the article. Umbrella provides “handypeople,” most over age fifty, who do low-cost home repairs for older adults needing help to maintain their homes.

Other research “shows that creativity and innovation spike for many in later life.” A public television documentary on the renowned architect I. M. Pei told of his return in his mid-eighties to the “garden” city of Suzhou near his family home city in China to design a signature museum in the heart of Suzhou.

Pei’s museum was able to capture both the unique aesthetic and geologic qualities of Suzhou and also integrate elements of modernism to better bring light into the museum galleries. The program on Pei highlighted the architect’s ability to overcome bureaucratic opposition to some elements of his building through persistent debate with local authorities. The result is a museum that is a real work of art. A Chinese commentator said that Chinese artists often do their best work in their later years.

I am not writing about entrepreneurial seniors to place a guilt trip on seniors who look forward to their retirement or senior years as a time for rest, relaxation, travel, or other enjoyment. Rather it is
a message to younger generations to help them recognize that many seniors are a dynamic civic and economic force that benefits communities and society as a whole.

**Highlights of this Issue**

This issue highlights many of the diverse attributes of this region. An interview with the unique gentleman, Dr. John Abbuhl, who created and continues to care for the Pine Hollow Arboretum in Slingerlands, should encourage many visits to this beautiful arboretum that is open to the public.

Dr. Crystal Dea Moore from Skidmore College shares with us an intergenerational project connecting young people with seniors for the benefit and enrichment of both age groups.

Students at RPI are inventing apps that will allow seniors, through their smart phones, to monitor their health amongst other tech inventions that will greatly increase our ability to manage our health. Beginning with fictional characters with particular health problems, Dr. William J. Foley comprehensively describes the dynamic world of tech development.

Law students like Kendra Jenkins, who graduates from Albany Law School this year, has been busily working with the benefit of the Sandman Fellowship to recommend reforms to Medicaid so that seniors can age at home.

Our regional transportation planners have been busy preparing for our transportation future that, as planner Chris O’Neill tells us, will address the needs of the elderly as well as overall foster a quality region.

Andrew Bottum is one of many in our region who enjoys and benefits from telling his story through personal essays. We continue to feature a personal essay in each issue.

Finally, this issue features outgoing president of The College of St. Rose, Mark Sullivan, who for sixteen years led the college to be a strong partner with the college’s home city of Albany and its residents.

---

Paul M. Bray is an Albany attorney who is a lecturer, a columnist, and founding President of the Albany Roundtable civic lunch forum. His e-mail address is pmbray@aol.com.
Pine Hollow Arboretum: An Interview with Pine Hollow Arboretum’s John Abbuhl

By Alan Casline and Paul Winkeller

The Pine Hollow Arboretum is located at 16 Maple Avenue in Slingerlands, New York, on twenty-five acres of natural succession Eastern White Pine forest that grew following the abandonment of the land from farming. In 1966, Dr. John Abbuhl started landscaping the grounds using an interesting and unique complex of trees and other plants.

The establishment of plantings within Pine Hollow’s ecological system was designed to conserve the natural environment. John’s work led to the development of Pine Hollow Arboretum, which was incorporated as a non-profit educational organization in 2007. A biological resource, the land will be preserved for the benefit of members, community, town, watershed, and bio-region. Twelve ponds have been created and over 3,250 plantings. There is an area for Russia and Siberia, a Chinese strip, an Oriental glade, a Japanese hill, and a Western corner and glade. There is a fir trail and a magnolia field and grove. Another grouping is specifically related to the soil type tolerated—the All Purpose Swamp. European and Southern plantings are overlapped.

Pine Hollow Arboretum Board Members Alan Casline and Paul Winkeller caught up with John one late April day this spring and conducted the following interview:

Alan: John, the last time I saw you, you were out in your garage with about thirty boxes containing trees. This is the time of the year when Pine Hollow Arboretum is added to?

John: Yes, the fun part is the winter because you look through catalogs. You plan what you want to get for the spring—that’s the fun part. Then when the order comes in, the work begins. It starts with opening the box and pulling out the staples. Most of Pine Hollow’s material is ordered in gallon containers and there would usually be four containers to a box. Sometimes, when something is only available in a larger size, you pay extra shipping and it arrives in a five gallon container in one box.

Alan: Are you looking at expanding any particular areas of the arboretum and adding to any parts of the collection?
**John:** When you come across something that you don’t have, it takes your interest—as long as it would be viable in this climate under our conditions. Sometimes you try things that are marginal to see if they will make it. I’ve discovered that many plants listed as even Zone 7, to say nothing about Zone 6, survive perfectly well here in Zone 5. What that means is no one really knows the exact proper Zoning of that particular plant. There are some plants that are found with great genetic diversity—some will die in Zone 6 and others will live in Zone 5.

**Paul:** Do you have plans to share your collection?

**John:** One of our ideas is to focus on the material that is reproducible from our trees and other plants, germinating seeds that represent our own material. If a species of fir or spruce was noted to be reproducing, then those seedlings would be distributed. It would be nice to have a small greenhouse to try and germinate material.

**Alan:** When you started, it seemed you had a real affinity for flowering trees.

**John:** We have a significant collection of magnolias and we are sprinkled with crabapples. We have an unusual semi-native crabapple—I say that because these particular crabapples are probably seedlings from crabapples planted in the area. They have become native and reproduce in wet clay soil, which is unusual for apples. Apples like well-drained, gravelly soil. Here we have a species that does well, germinates, and reproduces in the wet, producing white flowers, generally, and either red or yellow fruit.

**Paul:** Wasn’t the arboretum started as an extension of landscaping?

**John:** I think few people would start with the idea they were going to make an arboretum. Pine Hollow Arboretum evolved. There are hobbyists who create arboretums. I am an example of that. The George Landis Arboretum is an example of that. The Garden in the Woods, outside of Boston, is an example of that. I didn’t start with the idea I was going to start an arboretum. I started to landscape my home. Then gradually over time I acquired more land—seven and one-half acres—and added that to the original fourteen. I realized I could add enough land and I had enough material so if I planted properly, it could wind up being an arboretum. It was not something that was designed as a five year plan—it was a lifetime plan. This is the forty-seventh growing season of Pine Hollow Arboretum plantings. I moved here in the spring of 1966. I remember a time in the 1970s when I definitely thought I could have an arboretum. It was probably prior to the fact and in the process of acquiring the additional land.

**Paul:** Pine Hollow Arboretum has an unusually high number of ponds.

**John:** When I moved here, there were no ponds, but we are in an area of glacial Lake Albany where the clay settled out. It meant that the lake was very still in this area. Fine particles of clay settled out—about one hundred feet thick. In areas like Albany’s and Guilderland’s Pine Bush, it was sand
that settled out—the water had a little more motion to it and only the larger particles made it to the ground. There are no natural rocks in Pine Hollow. This clay is wet and boggy in the spring, in a hollow—Pine Hollow. It is about thirty to fifty feet lower than the land surrounding it with drainage from a large uphill area. Wet areas in the spring would turn into concrete-hardened clay by August. Certain spots were ideal for excavating, landscaping hilly rises, and creating ponds. There was great care taken to building ponds and landscaping the earth and environment so that its form was natural.

Over the years we have put in twelve ponds, some of them are hardly real ponds, but they are areas with water. Most of them have been stocked with fish of various kinds. They seem to do well. We have nesting ducks, geese, and we are visited by the blue herons. Kingfishers go up and down the pond areas. The streams are seasonal—they dry up—they don’t run continually. Pine Hollow Stream all goes out as one stream under New Scotland Road. At the low point going out New Scotland, as you go past the Post Office on the right, in the bottom of the hollow just before you get to Pine Hollow Road, there is a culvert under the road. The water from Pine Hollow runs through and back past an area of new construction and ends at the Normanskill. We are in the Normanskill watershed.

Paul: Are there ebbs and flows of wildlife at Pine Hollow? In the last decade have you noticed any difference from earlier times?

John: In 1966, when the arboretum planting started, there were no deer. I saw the first deer in the middle of the 1970s. Before that my children would come around—they were in grade school, early high school—and they’d say, “Dad! There is a deer hanging in Mr. X’s garage!” The deer were being poached on a regular basis back in the 1960s and before. That kept the population under control. The predator was man. When that stopped, hunting was less prominent. In this area you can only hunt deer with bow and arrow. More deer are killed on the highways here than are killed by archers. The deer have learned to live in people’s backyards. We have resident deer that are so tame they will not run away from you. They will just stand there and watch you.

Alan: Which tree is your favorite?

John: Well, it is like your children, you don’t have a favorite. I have specialized in collecting fir trees, spruce trees, and deciduous conifers. Also there are trees that grow in more southerly locations that can also manage to grow here—such as papaws, persimmons, tulip trees, sweet gums, sourwood—different kinds of trees that classically grow only in the more southerly forest. I plant about a hundred trees every year; some years I’ve planted more. We are up to just over 3,250 plants. Now, they all have not lived, but that is the number of plantings that are recorded in our records. We have one of every
fir tree and spruce that we have been able to get our hands on and every deciduous conifer along with anything that sounds a little different. It would be hard to name something that might live in this climate that either the arboretum has or has been tried.

Alan: Biologists emphasize the idea of bio-diversity. With climate change happening, how do you see Pine Hollow Arboretum contributing to the world community in terms of a depository for bio-diversity?

John: We try to order things that are rare and endangered. An example would be “Virginia Birch” (Betula uber). It grows in the Smyth Valley in Virginia. There are only about seventeen specimens. One planted at Pine Hollow has grown to about twelve feet and now this spring we have another to plant. If we have something rare doing well and have only one, it is a good idea to have more than one. Of course, our philosophy is growing trees in a natural environment. What constitutes natural? It is when you can grow something to its normal proportions and where it can reproduce. One thing that gives us pleasure is to see trees that we planted able to reproduce in the environment in which we planted them. For instance, our Metasequoia are now reproducing.

We have maintained the natural flora here. When the farm land was abandoned, a pine forest grew and our pine forest is now undergoing the natural succession that a white pine forest does, being replaced by maple, hickory, elm, ash. There are White Walnuts (Butternuts) that are native trees. Maintaining a natural succession could be seen as an aid to bio-diversity. An arboretum is a storehouse of genetic material. How do you get an arboretum? There are six ways—college campuses, cemeteries, old estates, public parks, philanthropists who want an arboretum for their community, and last, the hobbyist or a combination of these ways. Many famous arboretums that started as estates are run by colleges or universities. They have a joint endeavor. One of the most famous public parks is the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, which is basically an arboretum.

Alan: This is a leading question. Can you tell me when would be a good day to come and visit Pine Hollow Arboretum?

John: Any day the weather is good enough is a good day, and if you live close by, you might even
walk around in bad weather. I tell people when things are blooming, if you don’t come every ten
days, you are going to miss something.

Pine Hollow Arboretum is open daily to visitors from dawn to dusk. Please call in advance for a
guided tour or if there are more than five people in your group. Parking is available at 16 Maple
Avenue, Slingerlands, New York, either in the driveway or on the front lawn (weather permitting).
You are welcome to tour the arboretum if not a member. Please consider becoming a member and
supporting the arboretum. For individuals with a disability or handicap, please call ahead. We can
be reached at (518) 439-6472. We hope to see you soon.

John Abbuhl, M.D., is a pediatrician and resident of Slingerlands. Alan Casline and Paul Winkeller are members of
Pine Hollow Arboretum’s board of directors.
Intergenerational Relationships: Transformation Through Connection

By Crystal Dea Moore, Ph.D.

Intergenerational connections provide a unique context for elders and youth to build mutually satisfying relationships, and research demonstrates positive outcomes for both participant groups. Unfortunately, age segregation is a hallmark of modern life (for example, age-segregated housing, education, and leisure settings), and informal opportunities to develop social networks that include non-kin from other generations are lacking.

“Developing a deep and personal connection with an older person who was initially a stranger opened their eyes to different cultures and ways of life, and interacting with an elder outside of their own families provided an opportunity for “unfiltered” and open dialogue.”

One solution is formal intergenerational programming. As a social work academic and gerontologist, I have long understood the value of such programming, and for several years have implemented low- or no-cost intergenerational projects. To learn about the impact of this intergenerational programming, I routinely interview project participants (both younger and older) about their experiences, and am invariably struck by the transformation that occurs through simple interpersonal connection.

This past semester, nine of my students conducted oral histories with elders that focused on the impact of war across the life span, and the students indicated that the experience “went above and beyond initial expectations.” Developing a deep and personal connection with an older person who was initially a stranger opened their eyes to different cultures and ways of life, and interacting with an elder outside of their own families provided an opportunity for “unfiltered” and open dialogue. The students described the development of reciprocal friendships; one student said of her interviewee, “Charlie was interested in my own opinions—we found that we had common ground.” Another remarked that “Gail would ask about me, my family, where I was from—she wanted to learn about me. She was so interested that I wasn’t born here.” It is evident that these interviews were not one-way streets but give-and-take relationships.
These student-elder interactions were personally transformative, changing attitudes and confronting stereotypes. For students, perspectives on their own privilege were challenged. One commented, “I got out of my interviews an appreciation for life. A lot of kids our age don’t appreciate the things they have, and the more stories I hear, the more I appreciate what I have.” Another observed, “This made me realize the type of life you live compared to someone who has struggled and went through difficult things. Sometimes we complain about small things, but if you look at what people shared with us, those are really significant challenges.”

One elder, who did not have the opportunity to attend college herself, spoke about how meaningful it was that the student she worked with shared her thoughts on what it was like to be in college. She said, “I learned about her experiences, and she learned about mine. I had my strengths to share with her, of my life’s ups and downs. When she becomes a social worker, I think she will be able to understand someone who has struggled like I have.” Another elder’s initial thought that working with a younger student was “going to be difficult,” but over time, the student’s commitment and genuine interest in what she had to say shattered that stereotype.

Interestingly, these interviews with an unrelated elder helped the students to re-think the connections they have (or don’t have) with their own grandparents. One student shared, “I don’t really have grandparents—talking to [my elder] was like how other people have relationships with their grandparents. I would laugh with her, she would give me suggestions.” Another said, “This has made me more connected to my grandparents. I realized that up to this point, they only had a certain role in my life. When I started to ask them more questions, they opened up.”

“Our elder, who did not have the opportunity to attend college herself, spoke about how meaningful it was that the student she worked with shared her thoughts on what it was like to be in college.”

In addition to shifting perspectives on family connections, this experience also changed views on war. Not only were students struck by the unforgettable and harrowing experiences relayed by World War II veterans, they found stories of rationing, experiencing the bombings in London, and surviving
other events that could only be told by those who lived through the experience quite different from what they learned in the classroom. “What we learn in history books about war comes from the powerful elites, the political people who send the “common” people to fight. You never really hear from those who fought in combat. In classes, we talk about it very ideologically, ‘Should we have entered the war based on what this leader stood for?’ When we talk about it that way, it really sounds like a political game. There is so much more to war than that. There are the consequences to these political games. It is not a game—it’s people’s lives. These men are still affected.” And for the veterans who were interviewed by the students, they spoke of the “healing power of sharing.”

Given popular support yet lack of funding for such intergenerational programming, how can we provide the context for others to develop such relationships? My experience indicates that collaboration between organizations that tend to serve age-segregated populations can lead to meaningful elder-youth interactions. For example, community groups with an older membership can reach out to educational settings to develop low-cost programming. Youth organizations, such as scouting groups, can partner with residents of congregate senior housing to implement community service projects. In brainstorming with elders about ideas to promote intergenerational relationships, they pointed out that older people need to take more of a proactive role in developing these connections—waiting to be approached by youth won’t make connections happen.

Finally, we can all advocate and vote for public policy that supports intergenerational programs including innovative housing solutions for groups of elders, students, and families. Connecting with one another across generations leads to the realization that no matter our age, we find ourselves in life doing the best we can, connecting with and loving one another, and trying to make sense of it all. One of my students summed it up so well: “Hearing their stories and learning about their lives and how long they’ve lived, I learned that life isn’t that scary. We are going to figure it out. They figured it out, no matter all of the things they went through. We are going to go through things, too, and we are going to be OK with it as well.”

For more information on programming and policy regarding intergenerational relationships, visit Generations United at www.gu.org.

Crystal Dea Moore, Ph.D., is the John A. Hartford Faculty Scholar in Geriatric Social Work and Chair of the Social Work Department at Skidmore College.
Your Smartphone, Your New Healthcare Partner

By William J. Foley, Ph.D., P.E.

Ann Smith has lived thirty-two years along a suburban street, the last five without her husband who died after a three month stay in a nursing home. Despite her senior age, she was maintaining a very active lifestyle awaking each day well rested. During the course of normal daily activities both inside and outside of her home, the only way she would be identified aged mid-eighties would be if asked or she had to show her driver’s license. Over the last four weeks, however, Ann’s routine has changed. She awakens less rested and she has lost some of the energy in her step.

“Smartphones are an integral element, maybe even the foundation, for shifting consumers to the quarterback position of managing their healthcare information and conditions.”

George David has managed his fifteen-year-long battle with diabetes through medication, oral and injected, and through diet. Following the standard method of taking his blood glucose level through a pin prick and adjusting the medication dose accordingly, George is coping but feels there is a better way especially now that he is more involved, following his retirement, in the lives of his grandchildren who enjoy playing and eating out with their grandfather. George’s body is telling him that the stability of the blood glucose level he maintained through the predictability of his work life is not there given the almost always changing pace of keeping up with the grandchildren.

Mary Ellen loves the outdoors and incorporates some outdoor activity every day. But not all days in the great outdoors have the same experience for her. Some days seem wonderful while other days less so. Some days she feels renewed from the outdoors while others seem exhausting as she tries to catch her breath. Mary would love to know why, but it is hard to explain the situation to her physician in terms that show a pattern, a connection, that the disease model of medicine requires.

Ann, George, and Mary are fictional for this article. But like many in the community, they have concerns. Some concerns can be expressed, some are indescribable, and some are not recognized by them or the persons who surround them. In the case of Ann, the near future is not about who notices the change and can put it in measurable terms, but what. The answer in the very near term is likely to be her smartphone.
For George, it is not who advises him to adjust his intake of food and medication when his level of activity changes to achieve the balance required for health, but as for Ann, the answer in the very near future will be his smartphone. For Mary, the connection between her activities of the day, measured by date, time, and place and her experience from the activity will not be made by a who but by a what—her smartphone.

In a *New York Times* article on February 28, 2011, writer Sonia Kolesnikove-Jessup leads the article with the title “Do-It-Yourself Health Care with Smartphones” to reflect both the promise and impact that pocketsize computing and worldwide connectivity will have on personal health care.1 Smartphones are an integral element, maybe even the foundation, for shifting consumers to the quarterback position of managing their healthcare information and conditions.

**The Marketplace**

The role of the smartphone in the management and delivery of healthcare is so large that it has been given the name Mobile Health (mHealth) falling under the larger area of electronic health (eHealth).2 The World Health Organization defines Mobile Health (mHealth) as the provision of health services and information via mobile technologies such as mobile phones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs).

In a 2011 study titled Mobile Health Market Report 2011 – 2016 by the European-based firm research2guidance, the U.S. market for mHealth was projected to grow from $718 million in 2011 to $1.3 billion in 2012 with seniors providing a foundation for increasing growth as the consumer base grows in four ways: increased numbers of seniors, higher market penetration of smartphones, increased number of apps available, and greater adoption of apps by providers and payors.3

In a 2010 survey of 1,000 cell phone users over the age of eighteen for the Pew Internet & American Life Project, Washington, DC, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International, 17 percent of users reported using their cell phone to lookup health or medical information and 9 percent reported having “apps” on their phones to help them maintain or track their health.4

The early phase of health apps was focused on providing input screens for health data, storage of data, and reports of data in the form of one page summaries such as health history and tables and graphs usually time stamped to show time based trends and changes. The evolution of the market has now progressed to use of smartphones integrated with sensors attached to the phone. Apple’s
iPhone store shows that 8 of the 38 app-enabled accessories (connected hardware) are health directed including blood glucose, continuous heart rate, and blood pressure monitors. All of these hardware accessories are mated to software that provides seamless connection between hardware and the iPhone and provide data interpretation as well as forwarding to health care practitioners, if directed, and advice on response to the data. For example, Entra Health System’s MyGlucoHealth software sends blood glucose level readings to a secure MyGlucoHealth portal, which provides instant advice to users on what to eat. In addition, the data can be posted to the user’s Microsoft Health Vault Personal Health Record (PHR).5

The power of apps is their independence, that is, one does not rely on other apps to function. This independence opens development of new apps to a worldwide base of software developers. This includes employees whose job is to develop and sell apps and to independent developers who build apps based on their own needs or to address a need of persons close to them. This open structure of software development has resulted in over 500,000 apps available for the iPhone. This open market approach results in both quantity and quality as software authors benchmark their efforts against the newest releases and respond with enhancements to distinguish their product from the others. While this silo approach extends to the software, the authors of health apps have recognized the need to coordinate the data of their app with health data of the patient by providing for electronic transmission of the data to the user’s health care provider, if requested. But more importantly, the authors have incorporated connections to the user’s Web-maintained Personal Health Record (PHR).

“In the sophomore engineering course, Introduction to Engineering Design, a seven person team developed a household robot that can be driven using a smartphone app without the robot in sight.”

The most prominent Web platform for the PHR is Microsoft’s Health Vault. Health Vault is designed as a central location to organize, store, and share health information forming an integrated or one point access to health data with a focus on patients with chronic illnesses. Health Vault requires the user to establish an account and to populate the account with descriptive health data. Health Vault has several options for updating health data. The user can be solely responsible for updating all information as events occur such as medication changes or the user can opt to have downloads or links to health data that is triggered by use of a cooperating health related provider or an equipment vendor whose equipment captures and stores data in electronic form. These providers or vendors are listed on Health Vault and the user opts to establish the link.6 As of February 2011, Health Vault integrates 170 health applications and the software development kit for the site had been downloaded over 30,000 times. The belief by professionals in the healthcare data field is that the real success of the PHR is only achieved when transaction level data is recorded in real time by health care providers.7
Research
With clarification by the FDA in 2011 of the approval process for app enabled health accessories for smartphones, hardware releases and reported research efforts and outcomes have risen rapidly. In October 2011, Mobisante, a Redmond, Washington, startup, released a device that converts a smartphone to a portable ultrasound for use by physicians and other health care providers substituting for a standard ultrasound machine that can cost up to $100,000.8

MIT’s Human Dynamics Laboratory invention of “reality mining, using data from mobile phones, electronic ID badges, or digital media to extract subtle patterns of human behavior based on how people interact or rhythms of interaction” has promise to identify the changes humans experience without noticing that can indicate underlying medical and mental issues without adding software or hardware to the smartphone.9 In April 2012 at the New Orleans meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting, researchers from Stanford University reported that in study of 31 seniors who were issued smartphones loaded with an app that targeted health behaviors such as increased walking, three-quarters of participants reported that the app tracked the behavior, and two-thirds reported that it increased motivation to make improvements.10

In response to the need to deliver high quality healthcare for the growing aging population, Worcester Polytechnic Institute established the Healthcare Delivery Institute to bring together faculty and students in engineering, science, and business on the problem. In fall 2011, NSF awarded $1.2 million for a four year project to develop a smartphone application to help people with diabetes and foot ulcers to better manage the disease.11 At Georgia Institute of Technology, the Human Factors and Aging Laboratory is working with the Healthcare Robotics Laboratory to answer three questions on the potential of robots to support the needs of older adults.12

1. Acceptance of robots by older adults and healthcare providers.
2. How exposure to a functioning robot impacts robot acceptance.
3. Tasks that robot assistance would be accepted.

Bringing smartphone based portable diagnostic tools to medical practice was the focus of two research projects. At MIT, a user of an app supported device, the Netra (Near-Eye Tool for Refractive Assessment), can prescribe the user’s own corrective lenses. The device requires the user to place a plastic lens over the smartphone screen and align lines on the screen using the arrow keys to determine the correction needed.13 Oral cancer screening using the smartphone is possible using Stanford’s Oscan. Developed by assistant bioengineering professor Manu Prakash, Ph.D., the pack of gum sized device, expected to cost just a few dollars, attaches to the smartphone’s built in camera and takes a high-resolution panoramic image of a person’s complete mouth cavity using blue light showing malignant cancer lesions as dark spots. The image is sent wirelessly to health workers for diagnosis anywhere in the world.14

Closer to Home
The open platform on the smartphone has spanned inquisitive work on healthcare apps at Rensselaer
Polytechnic Institute. In the sophomore engineering course, Introduction to Engineering Design, a seven person team developed a household robot that can be driven using a smartphone app without the robot in sight. The smartphone display shows what the robot sees using a camera on the robot. Using arrows on the screen and a speed setting with obstacle avoidance logic on the robot, the user can navigate the robot. Built as an early prototype in the span of seven weeks, the robot demonstrated the control a smartphone user can exercise over many assistive devices, if the device is configured to do so.

“These projects were all undertaken by persons age twenty-two and under. While the problems are important, it is the lure of the technology that makes it important to these developers.”

In the senior course, Inventor's Studio taught by Burt Swersey, a septuagenarian, four healthcare early prototype designs using smartphones and portable accessories were developed by four students over a three month period. The intellectual property potential for everyone qualifies them for patent protection so only a sparse description can be made at this time. One area was development of a low cost screening method for COPD that would allow clinical measurement of lung functioning before symptoms interfere with human activity, the current threshold for lung function testing given the cost and labor intensity of the test. A second area was a smartphone based full management system for asthma using personal and environmental triggers to minimize use of medical treatment advising the user of how to avoid situations where the user’s risk for an attack is elevated.

Using a game strategy to encourage adherence to updating a Personal Health Record (PHR) as well as compliance with medically advised care including prescription medications, was the topic of a third design. The fourth area uses the smartphone to see things in the environment that the user does not that increase risk for an adverse event if ignored. For example, if a person is at risk for falling when using stairs that are dimly lit, the smartphone would try to reduce the risk by advising the user of the increased risk, suggesting an alternative route if available, suggesting to the user to increase illumination if under user control, or coaching the user on pace and step pattern.

These projects were all undertaken by persons age twenty-two and under. While the problems are important, it is the lure of the technology that makes it important to these developers. Part of that lure is the magnitude of users that the smartphone makes available to an app that proves itself as useful and the speed at which that app can be adopted by users.

**Back to the Start**

For Ann, George, and Mary, what can the smartphone do? Using the reality mining approach of MIT, Ann’s subtle change can be noticed and quantified. Did the change occur in steps? Was it sudden? Which change is the biggest? Did one change cascade into another? Answers to these questions and many more would help Ann and the healthcare professionals understand what happened and how it can be managed.
For George, using an app supported accessory, his blood glucose level would be monitored almost continuously. Another app can be used to measure his food before he eats it and predict the impact on him and his glucose level. A third app is measuring his physical activity, and on that basis, adjusting the frequency of glucose measurement and knowing that on Tuesday he plays ball with his grandchildren, suggests a diet that supports this activity.

For Mary, you can fill in the blanks of how the smartphone can let her take charge again of her daily activities so she can enjoy today even more than yesterday. And if one app stops working for her, she will only have to wait a little while before a new, better one is available and in use by hundreds of thousands who will both praise and criticize at the same time leading a developer to seek a better one.

1. www.nytimes.com/2011/03/01/technology/01iht-srhealth01.html?pagewanted=all
10. Sandra Winter, PhD, Eric Hekler, PhD; Lauren Grieco, PhD; Frank Chen, PhD; Stephanie Pollitt, Kate Youngman, MA, and Abby C King, PhD. as reported in http://www.medicalsmartphones.com/2012/04/smartphone-apps-helping-older-adults.html)
12. www.psychology.gatech.edu/hfa/projects.html
14. New smartphone scans from Stanford could prevent needless oral cancer deaths by Kris Newby at med.stanford.edu/ism/2012/april/vodaphone-0417.html

William J. Foley, Ph.D., P.E., holds the title Lecturer in the Industrial and Systems Engineering Department at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute teaching engineering fundamentals courses including engineering design. He serves as an advisor to students taking courses in inventiveness and entrepreneurship. His research has included co-inventor roles in the recently retired RUG-II New York Medicaid nursing home patient classification system and the Medicare skilled nursing patient classification system. He sits on the Board of the newly created St. Peter’s Health Partners.
Barriers to Aging in Place

*By Kendra Jenkins*

Adequately caring for the elderly is becoming a growing societal challenge with each passing day, due largely to the retiring "Baby Boomer" population. The Edgar and Margaret Sandman Fellowship, awarded annually to an Albany Law School student, provides the recipient with financial and academic support to study a timely policy issue regarding aging for an entire year during law school. Throughout the year, the Fellow hosts two roundtable discussions with stakeholders, one at the beginning and one at the end, and conducts intensive research on the chosen topic, all of which culminates in an extensive report of the year's work. As the 2011 Sandman Fellow and soon to be young lawyer, I found the opportunity to recognize and study the legal issues for the “Baby Boomer” generation to be extremely beneficial.

“To address these barriers, my Sandman Report studied three possible reforms to the New York State Medicaid program that could improve the aging in place process.”

The topic for my Fellowship was “Barriers to Aging in Place.” “Aging in place” is the concept that as a person ages, he or she should have the ability to maintain freedom of choice about where to live during the later stages of life. For many of the elderly, the preferred choice is often to remain at home as long as possible rather than residing in a nursing home or other institutional facility. However, this is not always the easiest choice, especially for low-income individuals on Medicaid. As Albany Guardian Society has a special interest in how the desire of older adults to age in place can be met, it generously sponsored the 2011 Sandman Fellowship, and hosted my roundtable discussions this past year.

Medicaid recipients will likely face several regulatory and legal barriers that make it difficult, if not impossible, to remain at home. To address these barriers, my Sandman Report studied three possible reforms to the New York State Medicaid program that could improve the aging in place process. They included changes to the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP), changes to federal waiver programs, and increases in support to unpaid caregivers.

The Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program is a program through which Medicaid beneficiaries can receive home care by hiring, training, and scheduling their own attendants. The major reform suggested for CDPAP is abolishing the “stable medical condition” that is currently a requisite for enrolling in the program. Eradicating this requirement would increase the pool of eligible participants, thereby allowing more individuals to access home care.

Another suggested change is the consolidation of the current federal 1915(c) waiver programs. The federal government, through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), has often granted waivers of certain Medicaid state plan requirements in order to allow states to experiment
with innovative ways of delivering and paying for health care. The Social Security Act gives authority for four different types of waivers and demonstration projects available to a state, one of which is the 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services Waiver. This waiver allows states to provide long-term care in a community-based setting rather than an institution. Currently, each section 1915(c) waiver requires a participating state to demonstrate cost-effectiveness of home and community-based services when compared to a specific level of institutional care, which means that states have to create a separate program for each particular population that a waiver covers. However, there are similarities in management and administration between programs. Combining these waivers would increase efficiency, improve access to services, and allow for uniform rules and procedures.

“The Sandman Fellowship was an eye-opening experience.”

Finally, my Sandman Report studied the realm of unpaid caregivers and suggests increases in support for this population. In 2009, the economic value of unpaid caregivers was an estimated $450 billion. Unpaid caregiving produces burdens on the finances, health and quality of life of unpaid caregivers who do not receive enough support. The Sandman Report suggests further study of the policy suggestions that have been recommended by AARP including:

• implementing family-friendly workplace policies;
• improving the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA);
• expanding the National Family Caregiver Support Program;
• providing more funding to sustain adequate respite programs for family members;
• providing financial assistance for caregivers;
• expanding consumer-directed models of care.

The Sandman Fellowship was an eye-opening experience. It allowed me to discover shortcomings to our health care system, but also the efforts that are currently being exercised by our state government to improve health care for the elderly. It is my hope that my future endeavors will allow me the continued study of the complicated interplay between health and the law, and ultimately allow me to make a positive difference for all New Yorkers.

Kendra Jenkins is a student at Albany Law School and was a recipient of the Sandman Fellowship.
The Capital District Transportation Committee’s New Visions Plan: Addressing the Needs of Senior Citizens and an Aging Population

By Chris O’Neill

There is a growing awareness that transportation investments should strongly consider quality of life and livability impacts. The regional transportation plan for the Capital District is called New Visions for a Quality Region (www.cdtcmpo.org/rtp2035/2035.htm). Recognizing the role of transportation in fostering livable communities is one of the Plan’s central themes. The New Visions Plan strongly encourages walkable communities, complete streets, high quality transit options, urban reinvestment, and land use planning.

What makes a quality region?
The New Visions Plan asserts that a quality region considers health, the economy, and the environment within an overall framework of land use planning and transportation policies. Creating and sustaining a quality region in the Capital District is central to the direction of New Visions toward urban investment, concentrated development patterns, and smart economic growth. People agree that a quality region:

- Develops and sustains healthy urban, suburban, and rural communities that function interdependently and readily adapt to change
- Creates economic, educational, social, cultural and recreational opportunities
- Provides safe neighborhood environments and housing choices for all
- Protects sensitive environmental resources
- Fosters community identity and “a sense of place” in all parts of the region

Community quality of life and livability considerations clearly include the recognition of the importance of senior citizens in the communities of the Capital District. Transportation needs of senior citizens are recognized in the New Visions Plan.

“The concept of complete streets is supported in the Plan. This concept says that pedestrians and cyclists should have high quality access to streets.”

The New Visions Plan is the responsibility of the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). CDTC is the designated “Metropolitan Planning Organization” for the four counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, and Saratoga. CDTC has conducted extensive public outreach and dialogue and has found strong public support for the New Visions Plan. The Plan recognizes that transportation investments can have a direct impact on creating quality of life benefits, but in addition, transportation should be part of a larger vision for the region. CDTC has encouraged
community land use and transportation planning that supports making the entire region an attractive place to live and work. CDTC has called its plan “New Visions for a Quality Region” in order to recognize that the Plan strives to protect and improve quality of life for all of the region’s communities and residents.

New Visions principles follow four themes:

- Preserve and manage the existing investment in the region’s transportation system.
- Develop the region’s potential to grow into a uniquely attractive, vibrant, and diverse metropolitan area.
- Link transportation and land use planning to meet the Plan’s goals for urban investment, concentrated development patterns, and smart economic growth.
- Plan and build for all modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, cars, and trucks.

Walkable Communities

Making communities walkable is essential for making our communities livable for senior citizens. The New Visions Plan emphasizes the importance of incorporating pedestrian and bicycle planning into transportation projects. This should include not only public investments in highways and streets, but also as part of required roadway improvements funded by private developers as part of development project approval. CDTC has funded the construction of sidewalks and bike-hike trails in many Capital District locations and requires integration of pedestrian and bicycle concerns into CDTC planning studies, which are carried out with local community and New York State Department of Transportation partners.

The concept of complete streets is supported in the Plan. This concept says that pedestrians and cyclists should have high quality access to streets. There should be high quality sidewalks and crosswalks and pedestrian signals, and streets should be designed to make it safe and comfortable for pedestrians to cross the street. Where streets pass through communities, the automobile should not be given priority over pedestrians and cyclists; all users should have quality access. Streets are an important part of the community. Landscaping, raised medians, trees, and other amenities can make streets more attractive. These principles apply in urban communities, suburban communities, and rural communities.

Transit

High quality transit service is vital to making our region livable for senior citizens. Transit is strongly supported in the New Visions Plan. Transit service provides mobility options for those who do not have access to a car, including some senior citizens. It also provides options for all citizens, and CDTC views transit investments as a tool for making our communities more attractive and encouraging economic development. Transit supports urban vitality and smart regional growth.
The New Visions Plan strongly supports Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) transit programs. CDTA provides STAR service, special fare policies, and 100 percent accessible transit buses. CDTA’s special transit by request (STAR) service is designed for use by any Capital District resident unable to utilize CDTA’s fixed route bus service because of a disability. The Plan also supports several special transit programs including the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program, the New Freedom Program, and the Section 5310 Elderly Individuals with Disabilities Program. The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the Capital District provides for coordination among these transit programs (www.cdtcmpo.org/rtcc/coord11.pdf).

In April 2011, CDTA initiated a new high quality service in the Route 5 corridor called “BusPlus.” BusPlus is a service that incorporates many of the attractive features of light rail, without the high cost and right of way requirements of light rail. Features of BusPlus include premium bus stations requiring fewer stops; queue jumpers for buses; and signal priority for buses. The BusPlus service has been a huge success, with transit ridership in the first year increasing by over 25 percent (www.cdta.org/iride_projects_detail.php?id=7).

Land Use Planning
The Plan recognizes that the population is aging and that the mobility expectations of this next generation of senior citizens will be higher than its earlier counterparts. In addition to walkability and transit investments, some of the plan’s action items address this by recommending improved signage and sign reflectivity and improved sight distances, particularly at intersections. Other action items address mobility concerns of both the elderly and mobility disabled populations.

The Plan calls for locating human service agencies, senior housing, assisted living, and nursing homes in places that are easily served by transit. The plan also calls for coordination of human service agency transportation and for regional mobility management. The New Visions Plan encourages “smart growth” and concentrated development. Locating new development in urban centers and along transit corridors will provide more opportunities for senior citizens to travel by walking and transit, as well as by shorter driving trips.

Chris O’Neill is a Principal Transportation Planner for the Capital District Transportation Committee, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties.
The Guy from Cohoes and the Businesswoman

By Andrew Bottum

As I head into my middle fifties, mortality becomes a more and more prevalent topic in my life. I just recently lost my last two uncles on my mother’s side of the family, and my father is probably in the last months of his life. Although these are hard, sad times, they aren’t unexpected, which adds a bit of perspective to it all. It’s when death comes unexpectedly with cruel and random indifference that it can be hard to accept.

“You taught me how to have fun again.”

Diva deLoayza, age forty, was hit by a car while biking on the morning of May 30, 2007. She never regained consciousness and lay in a coma until she died a week later on the night of June 6 from severe head trauma. Diva was a fashion designer with her own trauma, but also her own line of clothing. She was an entrepreneur who owned four clothing boutiques. Lastly, she was a lovely, brave, funny, artistic, stubborn young lady. She was my wife.

Though still married, we were separated at the time of her accident. The following is an ad-lib of the eulogy I gave at a ceremony celebrating her life and mourning her death.

My name is Andrew Bottum. I grew up in Cohoes, New York, and I’m fifty-four years old. I first laid eyes on Diva at a Twelve-Step meeting. It was the Tuesday 4:30 Promises meeting in Westmere, New York. I hadn’t been to that particular meeting in seven or eight years and I just popped in one day in May.

She was sitting across from me, she looked quite stunning. I guess she’d been working out and playing a lot of tennis. It being late spring, she was sporting a rich dark tan. I remember thinking that this particular meeting had gotten immensely better in my absence. She was dressed in a tennis outfit, which scared me a little. We all know that beautiful women in tennis outfits don’t go out with guys from Cohoes. But, oh, the possibilities, if they did.
The following week was no surprise. I found myself back at the meeting in Westmere, at 4:30 on Tuesday. After the meeting, I was standing outside and, as fate would have it, she came out and it was just us in the parking lot—no one around to “cramp my style.” She was wearing a shirt that said “Queen B” and as she walked by, I very coolly stuttered, “Are you the Queen Bee?”

“It’s from my business” she said over her shoulder as she brushed by me. As she drove out of the lot without a backward glance I remember thinking, “I think she likes me.” Well, eventually she did and we became an item.

There’s a joke in this particular fellowship that goes “How can you tell when two members of our fellowship are on their second date? There’s a moving van in one of their driveways.” Diva and I were no exception to the rule and, ignoring all red flags, we were on our blissful way. You guys all know the rest of that story so I want to tell you some things you may or may not know.

Diva had a real big heart. She would prefer to be known as a tough little businesswoman, but she was a softie. As she laid in Albany Med in a coma, I heard stories from people who came from all over the country. They told of how she helped them out when they were out of work or how she was there for them in a time of real need. They all loved her dearly.

She had a wonderful inner child. She and I connected on a goofy, childlike humor level. We could spend huge chunks of time laughing ourselves silly. She loved all that was corny and tacky. She could really appreciate the twisted beauty of a Velvet Elvis painting. She even loved Liberace for God’s sake. Although she gave the impression that she liked to go “top shelf,” her all-time favorite meal was a burger and fries.

She suffered from Lupus. The effect that it had on her was like that of arthritis. Nights that it was bad would leave her whimpering in her sleep. On those nights I’d lie there and my heart would just break for her.

I’d like to end with something I wrote for her:

Diva, you broke my heart, twice. I thought I knew pain when we split up. It was nothing compared to the pain of when you left us all. But broken hearts heal bringing insight, gratitude, and peace. I guess I’m on the way to healing. I know it will be slow, but I know I’ll get there. Until then I want to thank you for what you’ve taught me.

You taught me courage. The way you looked into the teeth of your Lupus every day and soldiered on was a thing to behold. You taught me the futility of anger and resentment. As I sat there in the hospital and held your little hand, I knew in my very being that the only thing that matters in my life is that I act in a loving manner to all I may encounter.
You taught me how to have fun again. I will always remember you driving that big Mercury Mountaineer in mid-town Manhattan. You could barely see over the steering wheel, which explained all the orange traffic cones dragging beneath us. I remember how hard we laughed when we figured out what all the noise was.

Finally, I thank you for letting me see the broken little girl in you. The one you would sometimes hide behind the glamorous, confident businesswoman. I thank you for trusting me like that.

You always told me that I was your best friend and you knew I’d always be there for you. I’m still your best friend and I’m still here for you. The time has come now though to let you go.

So I let you go with love. I let you go with dignity. I let you go with forgiveness; forgiveness for you and forgiveness for me in our fragile, human condition.

Andrew Bottum lives in Albany. Sometimes he sits and writes, sometimes he sits and thinks, and sometimes he just sits. With apologies to Satchel Paige.
The College of St. Rose as Albany Neighbor

By R. Mark Sullivan, Ed.D.

There are American college campuses so intermingled with the cities they are located in as to be indistinguishable from them. There are others notable by the walls that separate them from their surroundings. In sixteen years as president of a college in the heart of New York’s capital city, I have always envisioned a campus that both clearly identifies itself as an institution of higher learning and blends with its urban setting.

Simply put, we at The College of Saint Rose thrive by living and working in a city and by contributing our resources and talents to that city. At Saint Rose, nearly 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students are earning degrees to prepare them for the world. And while they are here they engage in that world. This is achieved in part by inviting our Albany neighbors, young and old, to attend our many cultural events and to take advantage of our services and programs, largely offered for little or no cost.

In that spirit we hope that our buildings, landscaping, and sidewalks provide a welcome mat to the public. When we built the Thelma P. Lally School of Education in 2003, for example, the challenge was to create a center of learning that recognized our stature as one of the great educators of teachers, counselors, and clinicians in the Northeast, while also building in space for the range of community services our students and faculty provide. We also had a mandate to respect the visual appeal of the historic architecture along Madison Avenue.

The result is a 56,000 square-foot structure at 1009 Madison Avenue where Albany families bring their children for pre-school and, later, individual literacy support. Our Joy S. Emery Educational & Clinical Services Center, located on the ground floor, also offers therapy to individuals of all ages with speech and hearing disorders and those who wish to improve communication skills affected by brain injury, autism, or stuttering. Rather than design the space to resemble a health care facility, the clinic features lounges, bay windows, and courtyards that make it feel more like a home. We hear over and over from clients who say they have rarely felt so comfortable.

“Simply put, we at The College of Saint Rose thrive by living and working in a city and by contributing our resources and talents to that city.”

We hear this as well from the hundreds of families who take part in Friday Knights, our monthly recreation program, based in the Science Center, for children with autism. If you can imagine a college academic building opened up entirely to children ranging from early grades to high school, learning everything from yoga to American war history, this is it. A community of parents has grown up around Friday Knights, as they meet to discuss resources and their strategies for optimizing their
children’s potential. A new Friday Knights addition teaches swimming to children on the autism spectrum, instruction parents often cannot find elsewhere.

Saint Rose swimming lessons open to all young people have been a Capital Region fixture for many years. The small-group low-cost classes are taught Monday nights by Saint Rose students as one way to fulfill their physical education requirement and gain the certification needed for summer lifeguarding jobs. Now we see an influx of adults coming to learn or improve their swimming proficiency. They are not turned away!

Across campus, the four-year-old Massry Center for the Arts is also a laboratory of learning for students and an important showcase for the public. Nearly every weekend, world-class performances in jazz, classical, or contemporary music unfold in our intimate, acoustically superior Kathleen McManus Picotte Recital Hall. A full calendar of art exhibits by leading contemporary figures is also presented throughout the academic year in our Esther Massry Gallery. The Massry Center welcomes neighbors to performances by students, faculty musicians, many free of charge, and our Premiere Performances series of superstars in the music world.

The College’s importance as a cultural hub is rising in the subscriptions that are sold, the growing number of familiar faces, and in the crowds filling local restaurants after the shows.

Our academic life is enriched by our neighbors in Pine Hills and the surrounding city. Saint Rose allows men and woman age sixty-two and over to audit courses free of charge on a space-available basis. We have older learners in our midst who have audited enough courses to all-but-officially fulfill degree requirements.

We also have far too many lectures, readings, and academic forums to name here but they are nearly all open to the public. Among these are the Frequency North literary series of cutting-edge literary figures, our Vickery Ethics lectures and discussions, and many addresses at our Hubbard Interfaith Sanctuary.
Finally, we take part in a scholarly examination of our community, including the needs of the elderly. Our Institute for Community Research and Training engages faculty members from across the disciplines in research that focuses on the social, behavioral, and health concerns. Their findings are being used to improve services in Albany and throughout Upstate New York.

Our neighborhood has sidewalks that link the Pine Hills library branch, Price Chopper supermarket, and Washington Park. It passes right through our campus. It is our wish that our neighbors, please, come by, stroll our gardens, enjoy our concerts, and grow with our students.

“We also had a mandate to respect the visual appeal of the historic architecture along Madison Avenue.”

---

R. Mark Sullivan, Ed.D., who earned his doctorate in education from Harvard University, is the outgoing president of The College of Saint Rose. He served for sixteen years.
All editorial content and graphics of CCQ-Albany Guardian Society are protected by U.S. copyright and international treaties and may not be copied without the express prior written permission of CCQ, which reserves all rights, including the right to deny a request for copying content of CCQ. Use of any of CCQ's editorial content and graphics online for any purpose without written permission is strictly prohibited.

The materials from CCQ are available for informational and non-commercial uses, provided that the content and/or graphics are not modified in any way, that all copyright and other notices on any material are retained and that prior written permission is granted by CCQ. Permission to use CCQ content is granted on a case-by-case basis. CCQ welcomes requests. Please direct your inquiries to director@albanyguardiansociety.org.

Copyright 2012 by Albany Guardian Society. CCQ is a trademark of Albany Guardian Society.

IMAGES: Each issue of CCQ will use images of architecture and natural features that make the Capital Region special. The cover has an image of: a historic building at 714 Madison Avenue, Albany, New York, circa 1883, that received the Historic Albany Foundation's Preservation Initiative Award for Tower Rehabilitation and Stewardship in 2011; a photo of a Magnolia from the Pine Hollow Arboretum; and the 18th century Johnson Map. This issue of CCQ uses images from Pine Hollow Arboretum in Slingerlands, New York.

CREDITS: The cover photograph of historic 714 Madison Avenue is by Cara Macri, courtesy of the Historic Albany Foundation. The cover photograph of a Magnolia and all other photographs throughout the issue are from the Pine Hollow Arboretum. The photograph titled Autumn Walk with John Abbuhl is by Alan Casline. The other photographs throughout the issue were taken by John Abbuhl and Alan Casline.

This and past issues of CCQ are available in pdf format on www.albanyguardiansociety.org.
Our Mission

Albany Guardian Society continues to seek opportunities to improve the quality of life for seniors as we carry out our Mission.

• The mission of Albany Guardian Society is to engage in a broad spectrum of endeavors that will improve the quality of life for seniors.
• We will devote funding to develop and support services for seniors.
• We will create an environment that will maintain the growth of creative and innovative ideas.
• We will fund the exchange of information to enable interested parties to learn how to create a better standard of living for our elders.
• We will attract additional resources to increase the impact we can make as we remain mindful of our mission to serve the elderly.