This issue:

- Featured Organization: Washington Park Conservancy
- NORCs: Reinvention of How to Meet the Needs of Seniors
- New York’s First Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Underway in Albany
- New York State’s Perspective on NORCs
- Death by Taxes—Are Seniors in New York Being Taxed to Death?
- Digging Up Father
- Cohoes . . . A Community in Transformation for Generations to Follow
Table of Contents

Issue No. 2 • Vol. 4 • July 2010

01. Publisher’s Corner

03. Editor’s Column

05. Featured Organization
Washington Park Conservancy: Albany’s Washington Park—Pastoral Landscape
By Andrea J. Lazarski
Albany’s Washington Park has long been the city’s landmark park and pleasure ground for residents and visitors alike. The Washington Park Conservancy is a group of volunteers who have advocated and contributed to the ongoing preservation and maintenance of this landmark park. Preservationist Andrea Lazarski writes about the park’s history, its natural beauty, and the park’s features.

08. NORCs: Reinvention of How to Meet the Needs of Seniors
By Fredda Vladeck
The emergence of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) as a means to meet the needs of those who want to age in their own community is told by Fredda Vladeck. NORCs are age-integrated communities that draw on the resources of a community and neighbors of the elderly to enrich the seniors’ lives and serve their needs to meet the challenges of aging in place.

11. New York’s First Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Underway in Albany
By Miriam Adler, LCSW
Miriam Adler describes the process, including three years of planning, conditions, and lessons learned, in the establishment of the first Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community in Albany. She considers NNORCs to be “a combination of concept and programming” and helps the reader understand both elements.

14. New York State’s Perspective on NORCs
By Cynthia M. Marshall, MSW
New York is a state with visionaries and leaders according to Cyndy Marshall. She describes the forward thinking that led to the community initiative known as NORCs and points to their prospects for future application in the state assisted by the NYS Office for the Aging.

18. Death by Taxes—Are Seniors in New York Being Taxed to Death?
By David S. Liebschutz
Increasing real property taxes are both a burden on elderly home owners on a fixed income and an impetus to move to lower tax states. Public policy expert David Liebschutz analyzes the property tax situation in New York State, compares us with some other states, and brings us up to date on how our government leaders are trying to relieve the tax burden on the elderly.

21. Digging Up Father
Personal Essay by Arlene Mernit Sampson
An increasing number of local residents like Arlene Sampson are writing memoir pieces. Our guest column is a memoir piece about an unusual effort to reunite at the Saratoga National Cemetery her father and mother who died in different places and at different times.

Guest Column by Cohoes Mayor John T. McDonald, III
The City of Cohoes, “Spindle City,” is a historic two river (Hudson and Mohawk) city that started in the 19th century as a company town. The Harmony Mills, its major mill, is a National Historic Landmark. Mayor McDonald is spearheading a transformation from an old mill city to an up-and-coming bedroom community, and he tells the story of this transformation in his column.
The Dynamics of Aging and Our Communities

Publisher
Richard Iannello, Executive Director
Albany Guardian Society
12 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
Joan Dacher, Ph.D.
William Foley, Ph.D.
Philip McCallion, Ph.D.
Mark Patten
Vera Prosper, Ph.D.

Albany Guardian Society
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.
Robert L. Leslie, III
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.

ALBANY GUARDIAN SOCIETY
12 Corporate Woods Blvd. • Albany, NY 12211
Phone: (518) 434-2140
NORCS, NYSOFA, NYAHSA, AARP . . . Huh?

Yes, I am having fun with the title of this column, but it certainly seems like someone is working overtime to invent acronyms describing programs, people, places, or organizations. Forgive us for adding to the cacophony. Also, be grateful we didn’t include AGS (Albany Guardian Society) or CCQ (Capital Commons Quarterly) because these are initialisms and not acronyms. Enough, already!

This issue of CCQ deals with themes and ideas I love to talk about. Some of the best exercises I perform are mental gymnastics as I begin to seriously contemplate a life of retirement or perhaps something less than full-time employment. Should I stay in New York State or move to a less costly, more climate-friendly state? A few years ago at my fortieth class reunion, I reacquainted myself with a number of classmates who have left this state. None expressed any regret over their decision to move and most cited a heavy tax burden as being the final straw. You’ll enjoy David Liebschutz’s article on this subject.

I have served on New York State’s Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities Council for a few years and have come to admire this program. Albany Guardian Society produced a forum on Neighborhood NORCs a few years ago and Miriam Adler from Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York did a great job describing what NORCs are and told us how the Albany Neighborhood NORC was started. I’ve been carrying around a mental note reminding myself that we should ask Miriam to write an article for CCQ.

Last fall, I was in Denver attending the annual Grantmakers In Aging conference and found myself sitting next to Fredda Vladek. I have known Fredda for a while, but this was the first opportunity I had to chat with her about her landmark work in the area of NORCs; I expanded my mental note to include Fredda with Miriam. As Albany Guardian Society continues to promote Community Empowerment, we frequently interact with Cyndy Marshall from the New York State Office for the Aging. Cyndy is an expert on the subject of NORCs and we decided to tap her expertise as well. These three contributors have provided us with a look at NORCs from three very different, yet important, perspectives.

We have frequently stated in this publication that as communities recognize that their populations are aging, we are witnessing adaptations of existing programs along with creation of new ways of delivering services that will hopefully reduce costs to society and, perhaps more importantly, allow people to age in place. After reading these articles, I think you’ll share my admiration for NORCs, and I can check-off that mental note I’ve been carrying around.

This issue contains a guest column by Cohoes Mayor John McDonald. I always enjoy learning what’s happening in Cohoes because Cohoes is the reason my wife and I live in the Capital Region. In late 1986, I was hired by The Eddy to be the first executive director of the Capital
Region Geriatric Center, later renamed The Eddy Cohoes Rehabilitation Center. Some of you may recall that Cohoes Memorial Hospital closed in 1986, and it was The Eddy’s intent to reinvent that campus which contained both Cohoes Memorial Hospital and the Mary and Alice Ford Nursing Home. Our team worked closely with the City of Cohoes (Ron Canestrari was Mayor at that time) to reopen the campus as a state-of-the-art geriatric rehabilitation center in 1989. A few years ago, The Eddy decided that this campus in Cohoes would make an excellent site for the first Green House® nursing homes in New York State. In the April 2010 issue of CCQ, we featured an article by Angela Yu that described the Eddy Village Green project that opened in 2009.

This story of evolutionary change in Cohoes is a perfect example of the dynamics of aging in our region. A small community hospital closes and is reopened as an innovative rehabilitation center for seniors. After many successful years serving thousands of seniors, the world of health care once again evolved, and today many nursing homes in the region are providing excellent rehabilitative services thus allowing the Cohoes campus, once again, to be reinvented. The City of Cohoes was receptive to change in the late 1980s, and recent activity demonstrates that it continues to be a shining example of a community respectful of its past but comfortable with change.

In the fall of 2008, Albany Guardian Society partnered with the New York State Office for the Aging, AARP, and the New York Association of Homes and Services for the Aging to produce a two-day conference on Empowering Communities for Successful Aging. More than 500 individuals participated in this event, but more importantly, a number of grassroots activities sprung up across New York State, many with grants from the New York State Office for the Aging. More recently, a Listserv on community empowerment activities is being maintained by an organization in Allegany County, and it is clear that if we are to effectively deal with increasing numbers of older citizens, many of us and the communities we reside in must become more involved in developing systems and programs that allow us to remain in our homes and to age with dignity.

This year Albany Guardian Society is once again teaming up with the New York State Office for the Aging, AARP, and the New York Association of Homes and Services for the Aging to offer Empowering Communities for Successful Aging conferences on July 27-28, 2010, in Albany, and on August 16-17, 2010, in Batavia. I was amazed at the creativity showcased at the 2008 program. There are many individuals and organizations that are tailoring their service delivery programs to build on their local strengths and abilities. It is reassuring to see how many people are working very hard to bring realistic solutions and meaningful change to their communities. If you wish to learn more about these upcoming events, please visit www.empoweringNYcommunities.org.

As you can see from what I have written about, the multitude of acronyms are a reflection of many innovative efforts that engage and make life better for seniors and for all in our immediate communities and across the state.

Rick Iannello
Executive Director, Albany Guardian Society
Editor’s View of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities

I first heard about Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) in a presentation in Westchester County by Andres Duany in the mid-1990s. Duany is the leader in the national movement called the New Urbanism, which seeks to end suburban sprawl and urban disinvestment. He believes in the pre-World War II communities where homes had porches, you could easily walk to the grocery and knew your neighbors, and cities were vital, active places. The automobile did not dominate life.

Duany said there are cities that have easily accessible features like good health, recreational, educational, and cultural facilities that are suitable and attractive for retirees. They had developed naturally and were populated by residents of all ages, unlike mono-retirement communities such as Sun City and the Villages, and he called them Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities or NORCs.

Instantly, I thought of my home city of Albany. It has two major hospitals, a university and colleges with many programs available to the public, good parks like Washington Park featured in this issue of CCQ, cultural and entertainment venues such as theaters and museums where retirees are welcome to be guides or ushers, and many walkable pre-World War II neighborhoods.

Why hasn’t Albany advertised these qualities to attract retirees to move to Albany? Then I realized the fly in the ointment, WINTER. Who would want to retire to a city with winter, especially Albany?

I recalled when the Albany Roundtable brought another New Urbanist, Shelly Poticha, to speak about transit-oriented development in California and Oregon where communities clustered around transit stations were being developed. When the time for questions came, a woman declared that transit development may be fine in the West Coast but not in Albany with its eight months of winter.

When the program ended a man approached me and said he moved to Albany from Buffalo where they have lots of winter. He said the residents of Buffalo not only accept winter, they find many ways to enjoy it. He could not understand why the same enjoyment of winter didn’t exist in Albany.

In the years since I heard Duany talk about NORCs, I have come to learn about NORCs in a programmatic way as an approach for delivery of services to a population of seniors who want to age in their home communities. Three writers in this issue offer the reader a thorough background on the subject of NORCs including how NORCs developed as “a programmatic response to the challenges to aging in place,” how a NNORC functions in a neighborhood in Albany, and how the New York State Office for the Aging plans to support the application of NORCS throughout the state.
The urbanist in me will always look at NORCs as an idea that celebrates the unique assets of cities. What enriches the lives of the aging, such as culture, parks, education, and good quality health care found in cities, enriches everyone’s life regardless of age.

But as I think you will see from the NORC articles in this issue, it is much better when problems for those of any age, whether they relate to health, education, or social welfare amongst many others, are addressed in the context of a healthy, dynamic community functioning as a community like the city of Cohoes, the subject of our guest column, or Albany with its NNORC.

Paul M. Bray is an Albany attorney who is a lecturer in planning at the University of Albany, a columnist and founding President of the Albany Roundtable civic lunch forum. He is also a member of the Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner’s Policy Office. His e-mail address is pmbray@aol.com.
Washington Park Conservancy: Albany’s Washington Park—Pastoral Landscape

By Andrea J. Lazarski

Washington Park was designed in 1870 by Bogart, Cuyler and Company in the naturalistic style of Olmsted and Vaux, emphasizing the “pastoral” and “picturesque” scenery. The initial plan called for a system of curvilinear carriage drives and pedestrian walkways that meandered across the site. Beaver Creek was dammed to create a lake that became a major focal point in the western section of the park. To stretch limited funds, structures were not part of the original plan for the park, rather the landscape was to have “ornamentation by shrubs, trees, flowers, roads, and walks, instead of the more artificial and costly architectural style of adornment.” Bogart and Cuyler incorporated many of the existing older trees, such as the elms that defined the former burial ground, to outline the croquet field. New plantings of diverse trees and shrubs were added to enhance the gentle topography.

“To demonstrate that the Conservancy did more than sponsor studies, sculptor Merlin Szosz was commissioned to design a cast iron bench unique to the park.”

Under the leadership of park Superintendent William Egerton, new structures were added and the original circulation system was completed in the 92-acre park. He introduced dense boundary plantings of trees and shrubs to screen out the surrounding streets and buildings. These naturalistic plantings of lilacs, honeysuckle, and other flowering shrubs on the park perimeter added to the gardenesque treatment of the landscape. Formal gardens included a Tropical garden near Willett and Lancaster Streets, a Flower garden around the King Memorial Fountain, and an Aquatic Garden at the eastern end of the lake.

The buildings that were constructed included a refectory, drinking fountain shelter, two rustic log shelters, croquet shelter, a lake house, and an elliptical arched...
footbridge spanning the lake. Over time these structures fell into disrepair with only the bridge surviving today. The original lake house was replaced in 1929 with a Spanish Revival style building designed by J. Russell White.

By the 1970s, a century after Washington Park’s creation, this major urban space suffered from a lack of capital investment, inappropriate plantings, a weed-choked lake, and contemporary intrusions such as cobra head street lights, crime, and minimal maintenance. Albany’s former crown jewel had become tarnished and a space avoided by residents.

The Washington Park Conservancy (WPC) was founded in 1985 as an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of the park’s historic landscape and the lake house.

In 1989, the Conservancy commissioned Patricia O’Donnell to prepare a Historical Landscape Report Preservation Plan and Management Proposal to understand the design and development of Washington Park. The report documents the original landscape plan, identifies extant features, and makes recommendations for future improvements. The historic landscape report, supplemented by additional studies on original plant materials such as the Vegetation Renewal and Management Guidelines, guides much of the work done in the park.

The WPC was determined to change public perception of the park and engage city officials in a dialogue on appropriate improvements to the park. To demonstrate that the Conservancy did more than sponsor studies, sculptor Merlin Szosz was commissioned to design a cast iron bench unique to the park. The WPC sought contributions from the community and the city to manufacture the handsome cast iron benches. The WPC worked with the city to select locations that had the greatest visual impact—around the lake and along the “mall” (allee). The City of Albany also provided the labor and materials to install the benches, resurfaced the mall, and began to replant a new generation of disease-resistant elm trees.
The WPC continued its commitment over the next two decades by initiating a range of studies and projects that addressed specific problems in the park. Included in the list of accomplishments are:

- Restoration of the Moses Statue;
- Working with Niagara Mohawk and the City of Albany to install appropriate historic light fixtures;
- Improving drainage by reinstating original swales with Belgian block;
- Completing a water quality study on the lake with the Fresh Water Institute;
- Developing landscape and planting recommendations for the lake edge;
- A Study of the Lake House funded by the New York State Council on the Arts;
- Working with the Commissioner of General Services and community groups on improving pedestrian access to the park by adding crosswalks and crushed gravel pathways;
- Designation by the American Society of Landscape Architects as one of the 100 most historically significant parks in the United States.

The WPC has consistently recognized the importance of working with the City of Albany. The WPC has no staff but has relied upon the expertise of members of the board and community to accomplish tasks as diverse as grant writing, design review, design assistance, materials research, and project planning. By supplementing the limited professional services of city government, the WPC has been able to garner support for restoring the landscape features and the built environment. The WPC faces numerous challenges in convincing the city that preservation/restoration is the best approach for the park.

Today, the park attracts people of all ages to enjoy its natural beauty and events. It hosts the annual Tulip Festival, Summer Theater, Summer Concerts, a Latin Festival, Holiday Lights in the Park, and numerous community fundraising events. This tremendous popularity as a venue for regional and community events required both restraint and balance to ensure that the park is not destroyed by over-use. In recent meetings with the Mayor and city departments that oversee the park, it has been acknowledged that there is a need to create a Master Plan. The Mayor will appoint a citizens’ committee to guide the development of a Master Plan.

In the past decade, the WPC has sponsored numerous fundraising events to generate revenue to implement projects. To ensure that the park will always have an additional funding stream, the Washington Park Conservancy established an endowment with the Community Foundation of the Greater Capital Region.

---

Andrea J. Lazarski has worked for the State Commission on the Restoration of the Capitol since 1988. Prior to moving to Albany, she was the Administrator of the Kansas City, Missouri, Landmarks Commission and a former City Planner with Ithaca, New York. She has been a board member of many not-for-profits including Washington Park Conservancy, Historic Albany Foundation, and the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District.
NORCs: Reinvention of How to Meet the Needs of Seniors

By Fredda Vladeck

A quiet revolution is taking place across the country to change what it means to grow old in one’s community. The traditional service delivery programs, developed in a different era for an older adult population far less numerous or diverse than today’s, were designed to react to a client’s problems, usually at a point of crisis, using eligibility requirements based on deficits, and delivered one hip-fracture-at-a-time, disconnected from the very communities in which older adults live.

Today, we know that place matters—that a community can both positively and/or negatively influence the aging experience—and that we must start at the community level to redesign programs and services that are flexible and proactive, responsive to the heterogeneity of a community’s older adult population, and reflect local aspirations and conditions. A one-size-fits-all menu of services is no longer sufficient to meet the complex and interacting challenges to growing old in one’s community.

A number of community change efforts are underway in New York including the World Health Organization’s Age-friendly Cities Initiative; AARP’s Livable Communities; the AdvantAge Initiative; Villages; the New York State Office for the Aging’s (NYSOFA) Community Empowerment projects; and the Administration on Aging’s (AoA) Community Innovations for Aging in Place national demonstration grants. The first community change effort was New York State’s pioneering Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) program model, which began with the establishment of the first NORC program in 1986. Subsequently, state legislation was enacted in 1995 and 2006 to fund NORC Supportive Service Programs (NORC-SSPs) in housing developments and Neighborhood NORC programs (NNORCs).

The term NORC is a demographic descriptor that indicates a housing development, neighborhood, or community that was not originally built for seniors but is now home to a large concentration of adults sixty years of age and older. NORCs were originally limited to apartment buildings or housing complexes and now can include a group of dwellings in a geographically defined neighborhood. One cannot get a NORC, build a NORC, or develop a NORC. NORCs are found. They evolve over time as a result of one of three factors: the aging in place of people who have lived in a community from a young age and remained; the out-migration of the younger generations in search of better opportunities; or the in-migration of retirees to communities with desirable features and supports.

“A one-size-fits-all menu of services is no longer sufficient to meet the complex and interacting challenges to growing old in one’s community.”
Regardless of how they have evolved, NORCs are, by definition, age-integrated communities. Each community is distinct, with its own history, demographic make-up, physical features, infrastructure, ways of operating and communicating, formal and informal leaders, culture and ethos, and so on. For example, some of New York’s NORCs were built right after the war for returning vets who now make up a large majority of the residents in two-story garden apartment complexes or single-family homeowner suburban neighborhoods. Other NORCs can be found in large urban multi-family public housing developments that are home to diverse populations of low-income American and foreign-born residents. The fixed menu of home delivered meals, home care, senior centers, case management, and a limited transportation program may help some individuals, but it does nothing to help communities and their residents harness their resources and find solutions that can help mitigate the challenges to aging in place.

A NORC program (NORC-SSP or NNORC) is a programmatic response to the challenges to aging in place in NORCs. The presence of so many NORCs in New York provided the opportunity to start at the community level to re-think service delivery programs that are responsive to each community’s distinct challenges and draw on its assets to improve the aging experience for all older adults in a community. Programs work at both the individual level (linking to and coordinating existing services and developing new services as gaps are identified or population shifts occur) and the community level (engaging a broad range of community stakeholders to come together) to address needs and find community solutions to their common challenges.

“The presence of so many NORCs in New York provided the opportunity to start at the community level to re-think service delivery programs that are responsive to each community’s distinct challenges and draw on its assets to improve the aging experience for all older adults in a community.”

New York State’s NORC programs are structured as public-private financial partnerships between housing developments or neighborhood organizations, the residents, health and social service providers, and other community stakeholders (including businesses, elected officials, cultural and religious organizations, etc.). Located on-site in NORCs, programs are staffed by social workers, nurses, and volunteer residents working together with the community partners to (1) maximize the health and well-being of all older adults.
adults; (2) foster social connectivity within the community; and (3) empower older adults to assume roles in a community beyond that of “client.” It is up to each community to identify the specific challenges and, then, how best it will meet these goals.

“One cannot get a NORC, build a NORC, or develop a NORC. NORCs are found.”

NORC programs are complex endeavors that challenge providers to work in new and different ways. Providers must work in partnership with a mix of “unlikely” partners. They must be able to forego the role of all-knowing professional to allow the perspectives and knowledge of older adults to help inform the shape and design of what the program does. They must accept a blurring of the boundaries between client and resident partner who can have numerous roles in the course of a day. And, providers must be accountable to the community from which they derive their mandate, some of their revenue, and their in-kind support.

New York’s experience with the 54 NORC programs in operation with New York State and/or New York City funding suggests that overcoming such challenges can be done. Public agencies, human services delivery providers, and communities can come together to create programs that can make a positive and palpable difference in communities and in the lives of the older adults living in them.

More information about developing and managing effective NORC programs can be found on NYSOFA’s Website or at www.norcblueprint.org.

Fredda Vladeck is a social worker and the director of the United Hospital Fund’s Aging In Place Initiative, which focuses on advancing new service delivery models that address the critical issues presented by the growing number of people who are aging in place in their communities.
New York’s First Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Underway in Albany

By Miriam Adler, LCSW

The formal birth of the Albany Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NNORC), the first upstate NORC, was in January of 2006. However, the community planning and coordination that led to receiving a New York State Office for the Aging grant began three years prior to that.

The Albany NNORC is located in a part of Albany that is home to modest one- and two-family homes, some small apartment units, and a few apartment complexes. The largely residential area is home to the two major hospitals in Albany, a number of educational institutions, both pre- and post-high school, and an impressive number of Catholic churches and synagogues. The largest Greek Orthodox church is also located in this area along with a smaller number of Protestant churches.

It was apparent in the early planning stages that the area that became the Albany NNORC was densely populated with older adults who had lived in the area many years. With the abundance of religious institutions, it was also apparent that connections to religious institutions played a major role in the life of the community. Albany itself has a long and rich history of religious institutions playing a major role in providing a wide range of social services. A sense of community had developed over the years and the vestiges remained.

“Aging in place initiatives must recognize the existing institutions and structure, since the concept is to enhance and revitalize what has worked for many years.”

How organization proceeded

Using the naturally occurring structure of the community, Jewish Family Services of NENY convened a group representing the religious communities, service providers, and the University at Albany. The group embraced the faith-rich aspects of the community and became an interfaith Consortium and the founding partners that ultimately applied for the New York State Grant in 2006.

This Consortium met because of shared concerns about the needs of the older adults aging in place in this neighborhood. Over the three years, the Consortium studied the nature of this community, its diversity, commonalities, needs, and resources. The density of the population was confirmed
through census data and, in fact, found to be the densest senior area in the city. Through surveys and other fact gathering mechanisms, the needs of the seniors were documented. It was hoped that the Consortium would be able to look for potential funding to establish a program to meet unmet needs and enhance the quality of life for the aging residents in the defined neighborhood area. When New York State legislation for NORCs and NNORCs became available, the Consortium was well-positioned to apply successfully for funding.

The NNORC has been operational for four years and is now into the fifth year. The NNORC legislation provides a model for program development. Since the Albany NNORC was created with an interfaith partnership, the initial emphasis was placed on using the strong religious structures and ties within the community to introduce NNORC. Aging in place initiatives must recognize the existing institutions and structure, since the concept is to enhance and revitalize what has worked for many years. If a community had not been cohesive and comfortable, the residents would not have stayed in such large numbers to age in place.

“NNORC is a combination of concept and programming.”

One of the main things the Consortium learned in the surveys of residents was that aging seniors desired to remain in their homes, in their neighborhood. While home ownership sometimes became burdensome, seniors wished to have assistance in staying in their homes. They did not see health or economic issues as reasons to leave the neighborhood unless the situation was extreme.

Using the strength of the community’s religious and other institutions, NNORC staff reached out to clergy, neighborhood associations, schools, hospitals, and businesses to spread the word about NNORC programs. Working with trusted institutions and groups helped to move the senior residents to acceptance of the NNORC project. Outreach and education continue to be important elements of NNORC. To date, NNORC has over 400 members, which speaks to the awareness of NNORC and acceptance of the program as part of the community fiber.

NNORC is a combination of concept and programming. Surveys conducted each of the years NNORC has been operational have been consistent in demonstrating that the importance of NNORC for residents is beyond providing health or wellness programs, although we know that this age group is prone to chronic illnesses. NNORC recognizes that aging in place means chronic illnesses impact one’s ability to perform tasks of daily living.

The process of aging in place means that neighbors die and move or don’t come out of their homes to socialize as much. Activities that NNORC sponsors provide an easier access to socialization, which in turn prevents some of the alienation and depression that can lead to increased illness.
NNORC means that there is someone who can objectively listen to a problem and help to solve or ameliorate it by providing a service or referring to a service. NNORC means that the seniors aging in place have an advocate to arrange for access to the city authorities about taxes, fixing sidewalks, safety, and all those other things they once had the energy and ability to do. NNORC means that there is trust that someone who comes to a home to repair something will be honest. NNORC means that seniors are not an alien group in a neighborhood, but they have history, wisdom, and caring to share with younger generations through intergenerational programming. NNORC means that belonging to something outside of your own home creates a sense of community, which will be there when it is needed.

NNORC services provide a structure and vehicle for a community, to share and build, and provide an environment in which residents once again care about and for each other. NNORC is helping the senior community to age in their home and neighborhood with dignity.

“NNORC means that seniors are not an alien group in a neighborhood, but they have history, wisdom, and caring to share with younger generations through intergenerational programming.”

Miriam Adler is a licensed clinical social worker and has worked with Russian resettlement; individual, family and group counseling; community organizations; and senior adult services. She worked with Jewish Family Service agencies in Cleveland and Detroit and the Community Agency for Senior Citizens in New York City. Since 2007, she has been Executive Director of Jewish Family Services of NENY, a non-sectarian social service agency. Miriam is the Albany NNORC Project Director.
President Johnson’s description of the ideal American city and its communities, set forth over forty years ago, still rings true today. Community residents of all ages, ethnicities, religions, and cultures—then as now—want respect, safety, and a sense of belonging. While our former President likely never heard the term “naturally occurring retirement community” (coined in the mid-1980s), I believe he would have strongly embraced this community building concept which reflects his vision of neighborhoods that are welcoming and satisfying for all residents.

In New York State, we are fortunate to have visionaries and leaders who work tirelessly to implement community initiatives that endeavor to fit the description above. We count among these individuals those who champion naturally occurring retirement communities (NORCs) projects as a vehicle for creating communities where older residents can successfully age in place.

Fredda Vladeck (see previous article) is one of these champions. When she was a social worker with St. Vincent’s Hospital in Manhattan in the 1980s, she observed many older residents of the nearby Penn South Co-op (a 2,800+ unit cooperative developed by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union) coming into the emergency room with preventable problems such as poor management of diabetes and injuries from falls. Fredda approached David Smith, chairman of the Board at Penn South, and they, along with others at Penn South, designed a program to respond to residents’ needs focusing on prevention and on tapping the natural connections within the Penn South community.

In the process, these forward-thinking individuals designed the first NORC supportive services program in the United States and built into that design many of the principles that make NORCs so unique to this day. Key among these guiding principles are: 1) having older adults as a partner and actively involving them in planning and overseeing services; 2) developing partnerships within the community to create an understanding of and support for aging in place; 3) integrating into one program the health and human services that are often separate in other models—thereby addressing the needs of older individuals in a more holistic manner; and 4) building linkages between people that facilitate neighbor-to-neighbor contacts when program staff are unavailable during evenings and weekends.
Other champions of NORCs in New York include UJA-Federation of New York, an early funder of NORC projects in New York City, and the Coordinating Council of Cooperatives (CCE), a council of housing cooperatives. UJA-Federation and CCE saw the potential of NORCs when the first projects were still in their infancy and these organizations, along with residents involved with NORCs, advocated within State and City government in the 1990s for funding and legislative support for the expansion of this concept.²

“These ideas and actions are redesigning communities to become the warm and satisfying neighborhoods of which President Johnson spoke so many years ago.”

The elected officials who heard that call and, in turn, became supporters of NORC programs also deserve recognition. Elected officials in New York City provided funding to expand NORCs using City funding. In 1995, the New York State Assembly championed the NORCs movement leading to statutory creation of the Naturally Occurring Retirement Community Supportive Services Program (NORC-SSP). The NORC-SSP projects, set forth in the Elder Law,³ are targeted to an apartment building or complex which:

• Was built with government assistance;
• Was not built as senior housing;
• Does not restrict admissions solely to older individuals;
• Has 50 percent of the units with an elderly occupant or in which 2,500 residents are elderly; and,
• Has a majority of those older residents who are low or moderate income.
Ten years later, in 2005, the NORC legislation was expanded to include programs for neighborhoods of single family homes or low-rise apartment buildings that have become densely populated with older individuals "aging in the community." This expansion was championed by the New York State Senate and has become known as Neighborhood NORC (NNORC) projects. The NNORCs are targeted to:

- A geographically defined neighborhood with not more than 2,000 older persons;
- A neighborhood in which older adults reside in at least 40 percent of the units;
- An area that has low-rise buildings of six stories or less and single and multi-family homes;
- Buildings that were not built as senior housing; and,
- Housing that does not restrict admissions solely to older individuals.

In State Fiscal Year 2009-10, there were 20 NORC-SSPs and 17 NNORCs funded through the New York State Office for the Aging. Total funding was $4,054,000. Projects are located in New York City and Long Island as well as Albany, Monroe, and Rensselaer Counties.

The accomplishments of these programs are well-documented (see article by Miriam Adler and the NORC Health Indicator Project conducted by the United Hospital Fund: www.uhfnyc.org/initiatives/aging-in-place/health-indicators) and provide a framework for concerned individuals, both within and outside State government, to encourage and expand "aging in place" models. There are now many models that have received positive attention, including the Beacon Hill Village model originating in Boston, Massachusetts. It makes sense that community-based projects in which older adults use their knowledge and experience to identify what will make the community more aging friendly will be better tailored than "top down" projects. It also makes sense that projects will be more successful when they are built upon the premise that no one faction in the community (be it government, business, faith-based groups, or the elderly) can do
as much on its own to facilitate aging in place as they all can by working together. These ideas and actions are redesigning communities to become the warm and satisfying neighborhoods of which President Johnson spoke so many years ago.

If you are interested in learning more about developing a NORC or other aging in place models, visit the Empowering Communities for Successful Aging Website at www.aging.ny.gov/EmpoweringCommunities/index.cfm. This Website has materials and information on aging in place, aging in the community as well as “community empowerment” as a strategy to facilitate local action to develop a livable community plan and/or implement replicable models that foster aging in the community. Community empowerment and aging in the community are a priority of Director Michael Burgess and the New York State Office for the Aging and are supported by Governor Paterson.

Further, materials developed by the United Hospital Fund—a strong supporter of NORCs and aging in place—are most helpful. The NORCs Blueprint is especially useful and is available at: www.norcblueprint.org. To request a copy of “A Good Place to Grow Old: New York’s Model for NORC Supportive Service Programs,” please contact the Publications Program, United Hospital Fund, 350 Fifth Avenue, 23rd Floor, New York, NY 10118-2399.

There are also many Web-based resources and articles on NORCs that may be accessed through the Internet by searching for NORCs, aging in place, and similar topics.

1 “Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities—An Interview with Fredda Vladeck,” DESIGNER/builder, (January/February 2008), page 44.
2 “Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities—An Interview with Fredda Vladeck,” page 47.
3 Title 1, Section 209 of the NYS Elder Law.

Cynthia M. Marshall, MSW, is Director of the Bureau of Community Improvement Initiatives at the New York State Office for the Aging.
Death by Taxes—Are Seniors in New York Being Taxed to Death?

By David S. Liebschutz

According to a recent report by the Tax Foundation in Washington, DC, New York’s state and local tax burden per capita in 2007 was $6,419 or about 11.7 percent of total state income. These figures compare to national averages of $4,238 and 9.7%. While Connecticut and New Jersey have similar tax burden profiles to New York (all are in the top three depending on the indicator), the tax burden in Florida and Arizona, two warm weather retirement havens, is well below the national average (Florida is ranked 47th in tax burden as a percentage of state income and Arizona is 41st). So should we all pack up and move south before we are killed by taxes?

Like most public policy issues, the answer to this is more complicated than it would seem to be on its face. Despite the “Great Recession’s” impact on state and local budgets in New York, we still get a level of government service that is higher than in most parts of the country. Furthermore, although we pay more in taxes, New Yorkers, on average, also earned almost 25 percent more per capita than the average nationally ($55,032 vs. $44,254). Thus, the argument goes that though the tax burden is higher here, we get both more for our money and can afford more. While these are theoretically interesting rebuttals to unhappiness over the high level of taxes we must pay, are they enough to satisfy our unease over the level of taxes, particularly for those on fixed incomes who see more and more of their nest eggs being taken away by taxes?

Furthermore, there are a couple of other questions we must ask to frame this issue better relative to its impact on older New Yorkers. First, is the issue of tax burden a recent phenomenon or has it really gotten worse in recent years? Second, how large is the tax burden for seniors? Despite an increase in inflation of roughly 200 percent since 1980 (i.e., prices have roughly doubled since the early 1980s), local property taxes in Albany County have risen nearly 500 percent from 1980 ($111 million) to 2005 ($538 million), despite largely flat population growth. Total state and local taxes have risen even more, from $12.7 billion in 1980 to $134 billion in 2007.

Across the state, all local taxes have gone up even faster than state taxes reflecting a shift of responsibility from the state to the localities, largely driven by increases in Medicaid and education costs. It should be noted that New York is one of a few states where counties
must contribute to financing Medicaid costs. In many counties in New York, all of the revenues from the local property tax are used just to pay for the county share of the Medicaid program. The tax burden on the elderly is hard to measure with any precision. Even with programs like the STAR property tax abatement program instituted in the 1990s by Governor Pataki, the increasing local tax burden, largely fueled by increases in the property tax, seems to have a disproportionately harsh impact on the elderly who may be on fixed incomes and yet have a house the value of which has grown over the course of their many years living there.

The conservative Empire Center for Public Policy has said that one of the consequences of this relatively high tax burden is the outflow of people from New York, a high tax state, to the abovementioned low tax states like Florida and Arizona. According to the Empire Center, from 2000 to 2008, in both absolute and relative terms, New York experienced the nation’s largest loss of residents to other states—a net domestic migration outflow of over 1.5 million, or 8 percent of its population at the start of the decade. The report notes that “nearly 60 percent of the New York out-migrants moved to southern states—with Florida alone drawing nearly one-third of the total. Thirty percent moved to the neighboring states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. New York State’s net domestic migration loss during this decade is the continuation of a longer-term trend. During the 1990s, New York lost 1.7 million people to other states.”

“Across the state, all local taxes have gone up even faster than state taxes reflecting a shift of responsibility from the state to the localities, largely driven by increases in Medicaid and education costs.”

So if the high tax burden on New Yorkers is forcing people to leave the state, what is there to be done if people want to spend their “golden years” in New York? Short of wholesale budget reform for local and state government, which is the subject for another article, there are some things that can be done in the short-term to reduce the high tax burden on seniors and others on fixed incomes.

Most notable are two recommendations suggested by the New York State Commission on Property Tax Relief, which presented its findings to Governor David Paterson in June 2008. The first recommendation of the Commission would be for a “property tax cap” that would limit the annual growth in property tax levies to four percent or 120 percent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is less.

The second would be to reform the STAR property tax relief program to become a “circuit breaker” program which would base payments to school districts relative to individual taxpayers based upon their income and ability to pay and would be a much more equitable way of reducing an individual’s property tax burden. Unfortunately, the STAR circuit breaker would have an additional cost for the state and is unlikely to be part of the budget, at least in the short-term.
In sum, New York is in many ways still the Empire State and has much in the way of natural and man-made resources to recommend it to people of all ages. Yet, the combination of relatively high taxes and cold weather is causing people to continue to seek the same resources in other places. While we can’t do much about the weather, we should continue to try to do whatever is possible to reduce the relatively high burden of taxes on the elderly.

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
5 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Quarterly Summary of State and Local Tax Revenue (July 1980).
7 Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2007 Census of Governments, State and Local Taxes.
8 For example, in 2009 Albany County spent about $62 million in its Medicaid budget and collected about $65 million in property taxes.
9 Empire Center for New York State Policy, Empire State Exodus, The Mass Migration of New Yorkers to Other States, October 27, 2009.
10 Ibid.

David S. Liebschutz is Director of Strategic Planning and Analysis at the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) and a Public Service Professor (University at Albany).
Digging Up Father

By Arlene Merit Sampson

The young Chinese man, who answered the door that Veteran’s Day in 2004, was expecting us. We must have been a curious sight as we stood before the Flushing row house that was my childhood home. The picture we presented—a man, a woman, and two grown sons shifting nervously as they gripped a variety of garden tools—spoke of the mission we came to carry out.

The fact that my father’s ashes had been buried in the backyard more than twenty years before was not known to the Asian family who bought the house from my mother when she moved upstate. Fortunately, though they spoke little English, I had been able to converse via email with their grown son who had secured his parent’s permission for my sacred pursuit.

It was this young man who escorted us through the foreign, yet familiar basement to the backyard beyond. He met my apologies for this intrusion with assurances that the circumstances were not so different from those of his own cultural traditions. He acknowledged that this was something I had to do.

Daddy died suddenly in 1982 and no plans were made for his burial. Two possibilities were quickly ruled out: His family plot in a Jewish cemetery on Long Island which required both husband and wife to be of the same faith (Mom was Catholic), and a nearby military cemetery which would have been my mother’s first choice had it not been full. Daddy was a veteran of World War II.

When the time came at the funeral home to decide the disposition of my father’s ashes, Mom simply took them home, where they were first placed in the hall closet. Anxiously, I pressed my mother over the next few weeks about what she was going to do with them. Always pragmatic, she finally told me she had buried them—in our own backyard.
Once the Flushing house was sold, and my mother’s move upstate grew closer, I became increasingly concerned about what would happen to Dad. Could one pay respects, I wondered, without a house key? On my last visit home before the move, I came prepared with a shovel. It was November, and if Dad was going to come out of the ground, it would have to be now. I gathered my courage and asked Mom directly, “What do you want to do with Dad?”

She answered without hesitation: “What do you mean? He’s staying right here!” And “right here” is where he stayed for the next fifteen years. It was not until Mom’s death in 2003 that I seriously began thinking about relocating my father. A veteran of World War II herself, Mom was also eligible for burial in a military cemetery—and had, in fact, been buried in one close to my home. As I looked at her grave marker one day, I wondered if it would ever be possible to bring Dad there as well.

The backyard in Flushing that morning seemed smaller than I remembered, fenced in chain links on three sides and made smaller still by a recently erected garden shed. The tools we brought with us included several shovels, a pick, a spade and a coffee can—the latter suggested by a friend and undertaker who wanted me to be prepared for any situation.

As we carefully poked and prodded the earth, our hopes were raised with each new probe. But as I knelt on the ground, my hands exploring the dirt around me, I slowly realized that I would, indeed, need that coffee can.

Instead of the urn or cardboard box I had imagined we might discover, we found only roots and rocks. It was not exactly what I had hoped for, but I had come too far to give up. I scooped up some of the ground around me, packed it into the coffee can, and announced to my family that our work was just about done.

The following Monday, I brought my parcel to our undertaker who repackaged its special contents. My father’s burial ceremony took place on December 27, 2004, in the Saratoga National Cemetery, where he now rests next to my mother.

Arlene Mernit Sampson is the arts in education and grants specialist for Questar III, the Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene Counties Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). She grew up in Flushing and now resides in Troy.
Guest Column

Cohoes . . . A Community in Transformation for Generations to Follow

By Mayor John T. McDonald, III

The City of Cohoes, located at the convergence of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers and also three counties (Albany, Rensselaer, and Saratoga), has been undergoing a transformation that one would like to believe will lead to a more sustainable community in the future. This city, rich in history and magnificent buildings, was once home to over 30 knitting mills, hence the nickname “Spindle City.” Although not old enough to appreciate the hustle and bustle of the late 1800s and early 1900s, I imagine the city was the place where immigrants first sought freedom from other countries and an opportunity to work and start or raise a family.

“In the last 10 years we have focused on transforming our community from this old industrial mill town to an up-and-coming bedroom community.”

Over the years as the “Venice-like” power canals came to be closed due to the closure of the many mills, the City of Cohoes continued to struggle. One by one these magnificent buildings, that at times employed the majority of the then 22,000 plus members of the community (population today estimated at 15,500), started to deteriorate and eventually succumbed to demolition or what Cohoes became known for in the 1970s through 1990s—fires.

In the last 10 years we have focused on transforming our community from this old industrial mill town to an up-and-coming bedroom community. Interestingly enough, although economists will state that residential services cost more to provide than commercial or industrial services, it is the insurgence of these new Cohoesiers that is adding to the character of our community, and it could not have come at a better time.

One of the more storied examples of this change is none other than The Lofts at Harmony Mills. This several hundred thousand square foot complex left for dead by many in the past has been transformed into beautiful SoHo-type loft-style apartments that command beautiful views and accommodations. The Lofts have drawn new residents into our community from not only around the area but also around the state and country as well. A majority of residents are either tied to the new development in the Capital Region (i.e., Global Foundries, Sematech, GE, etc.) or just as importantly, baby-boomers who are downsizing from their suburban ranch houses or colonials to more manageable and lifestyle-driven living conditions. Amenities such as indoor parking and access to major interstates play a role in location, and just as importantly, access to a viable downtown plays a role in our revitalization as well.

In addition to The Lofts at Harmony Mills, we have been fortunate to attract additional single
family homes, condominiums, and apartments along our Hudson River waterfront. Water does attract in so many ways, but it is recreation that I believe is a major component as well. Along our waterfront on the Hudson River, we are fortunate to have access to Peebles Island State Park, which is nestled between Cohoes and the Town of Waterford. This year and next, the City of Cohoes will connect a trail from the Green Island Rail Bridge north of Silhouette Eye Glass in Green Island north along Delaware Avenue across Route 470 to Peebles Island. The ability to connect the City of Albany to Peebles Island and the Champlain Canal is exciting to many and underscores why Cohoes is at the center of much of the new development in the area.

This publication’s last issue highlighted the Eddy Village Green Houses®, which are a first of their kind in New York State. Cohoes is proud to be home to this cutting edge state of the art long term care residence (note – no longer “facility” in many ways). The Eddy Green Houses® represent yet another paradigm shift in how long term care is provided and more importantly, the outcomes that lead to improved quality of life. We are fortunate to have Northeast Health, an industry leader, as a partner in our community.

“Cohoes is proud to be home to this cutting edge state of the art long term care residence (note – no longer “facility” in many ways).“

Another positive outcome of our transformation is what is happening in our downtown business district. Those who grew up in Cohoes in the early to mid-1900s remember a hustling and bustling downtown. With little or no access to cars and thousands more people in the City, it comes as no surprise that downtown would be busy. As suburban flight ascended throughout the late 1900s, downtown Cohoes, just like many other Upstate New York downtowns, became vacant.
With the help of state grant assistance and a solid downtown redevelopment plan focused on Historic Preservation with an emphasis on small business, downtown Cohoes is making a comeback one storefront at a time. We have made it clear that Wal-Mart is not what we need in downtown Cohoes. Instead, the need for unique and niche stores on the ground floor, with upper floor offices or residential units, is what Cohoes has needed and fortunately has succeeded in attracting to our downtown. In addition to the several new businesses we have attracted to Cohoes, we have also brought back what I believe is sometimes lost in the distant suburban settings—socialization. We are blessed to have long-standing businesses in our downtown mixed with our new friends, and it is heartwarming to see the friendships and teamwork shared amongst our business owners. Many of our businesses are owner-occupied and managed day in and day out, supporting our nonprofits and leagues and providing that personal service that sometimes is lost in our society.

Yes, Cohoes is an old city that, although incorporated in 1869, is in the midst of a renaissance. Please feel free to join us as we continue our efforts. For more information, join us at www.ci.cohoes.ny.us.
Moses Fountain in Washington Park

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 2010 by Albany Guardian Society. CCQ is a trademark of Albany Guardian Society.

IMAGES. Each issue of CCQ uses images of people, architecture, artifacts and natural features that make the Capital Region special. The cover of the July 2010 issue has images of the Mall in Albany's Washington Park, the National Landmark Harmony Mill in Cohoes and the 18th century Johnson Map. This issue highlights Albany's Washington Park inspired by the urban parks of Frederick Law Olmsted and built in his style under the supervision of John Bogart, an Albany native son, and John Yapp Culyer who served early in their careers as assistant engineers in Central Park and were closely involved in the construction of Olmsted's second important public landscape, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York.

CREDITS. The photographs of Albany's Washington Park are courtesy of the Washington Park Conservancy. The picture of people using the Albany Bench in Washington Park is from the Times Union and the painting of the bridge of the Washington Park Lake is by Albany resident Bill Pettit. The picture of Harmony Mills in Cohoes is courtesy of the city of Cohoes. This and past issues of CCQ are available in pdf format on www.albanyguardiansociety.org.
Organizations and their web sites that may be of interest to CCQ readers

Albany County Department for Aging
www.albanycounty.com/departments/aging

Albany Roundtable
www.albanyroundtable.com

American Library Council
www.lff.org/about

Capital District Regional Planning Commission
www.cdrpc.org

Center for Economic Growth
www.ceg.org

Civic Ventures
www.civicventures.org

Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region
www.cfgcr.org

Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Buffalo Branch
www.newyorkfed.org/aboutthefed/buffalo_branch.html

Fulton County Office for the Aging
www.fcofa.org

Generations United
www.gu.org

Global Action on Aging
www.globalaging.org

Government Law Center at Albany Law School
www.albanylaw.edu/sub.php?navigation_id=668

Grantmakers in Aging
www.giaging.org

Greene County Office for the Aging
www.greenegovernment.com/department/aging/index.htm

New York State Office for the Aging
www.aging.state.ny.us

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
www.usm.maine.edu/olli/national

Rensselaer County Department for the Aging
www.rensco.com/departments_family_services.asp

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
www.rpi.edu

Rockefeller Institute
www.rockinst.org

Sage Colleges
www.sage.edu

Saratoga County Office for the Aging
www.co.saratoga.ny.us/aiindex.html

Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services
www.schenectadycounty.com

Scholars County Office for the Aging
www.schohariecounty-ny.gov/COUNTYWebSite/OfficefortheAging/ofaservices.jsp

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
www.scaany.org

Town of Colonie
www.colonie.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Aging Initiative
http://epa.gov/aging

University Albany School of Public Health
www.albany.edu/sph

University Albany School of Social Welfare
www.albany.edu/ssw

United Way of the Greater Capital Region
www.unitedwaygcr.org

Warren County Office for the Aging
www.co.warren.ny.us/ofa

Washington County Office for the Aging
www.co.washington.ny.us/Departments/OFa/ofa1.htm

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.