

explore Oneonta

VOL. 1 NO. 3
FREE TO A GOOD HOME

PIANO GUITAR UKE
VOICE DRUMS
274 PLAY

NEELY

HOW NOT TO
COMMIT A MURDER
AUG 14 TO 22 274SHOW



BLAST FROM THE PAST

NEW DOC IN TOWN
SPEND BUCKS AT FOOD TRUCKS
CREATORS OF COLORFUL SPACES
SALUTE TO OUR SERVICEMEN
ARC ANGELS READY TO HELP
EVENT CELEBRATES WINNERS
OUR WISH LIST FOR CHRISTMAS



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THIS ISSUE OF EXPLORE ONEONTA
PUBLISHED SECOND QUARTER 2021

ONEONTA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

a non-profit 501(c)(6) organization

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FROM PRESIDENT GREGORY BROWN

What about that *June Fling*?!! We are so very thankful for everyone who played a role in its success: our dedicated volunteers; registered booth vendors (all 160 of them!), talented entertainers, and the cruisers of the motor vehicle kind. We are also grateful for our local merchants and the City of Oneonta, and our faithful police, fire, and street departments. We were overjoyed by the huge host of patrons who packed the streets for the 19th Annual festival. Our board is already making plans for 2022 as it will be the festival's 20th anniversary. We welcome individuals and groups who would like to get involved in its planning. Just give us a call!

Speaking of cruisers, the OBA regretfully canceled the *Cruise & Croon* event on Saturday, July 31, due to heavy rain and lightning. However, about 50 devoted cruisers showed up and downtown was buzzing. Hindsight being 20/20, our board has decided that future cruise-in events will be RAIN OR SHINE. That should avoid any last-minute scrambles due to weather. Our next one will be Saturday, October 30, 5-8 p.m., with live music by the Chapter V Band, food trucks, and more!

The OBA appreciates those who helped offset our production costs by advertising in this issue: The Servant Law Group (Edward Berry), Creekside Marketing LLC, WCRL Radio, St. Vincent's Blount, and City Councilor Robbie McAlpine. If you'd like to help by advertising, our 2021 rate card is available on our website at oneontabusinessassociation.com/explore.

The OBA's *Annual Membership Drive* will begin September 1. The force that drives any non-profit organization is its membership. They are the ones who are putting in the time, energy, and funding necessary for the association to exist. Through the organization's many projects and events, we hope that you witness your OBA busy at work and bringing our mission statement to life... *working together to sustain a dynamic, vital, and diverse community through marketing, events, tourism, economic development, and leadership*. If you're not a member, we'd love to have you join us!

Greg Brown
OBA President



Photo by Tyler Corvin | Capturing Corvin Photography

In the heart of downtown Oneonta sits the historic Neely Theatre. Many local residents drive past the building each and every day unaware of a small, volunteer-driven community theatre behind its doors.

From the 40s through the 70s, the Neely Theatre entertained the citizens of Oneonta and Blount County. Notable films, including “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” and “Gone with the Wind,” were featured there.

Most recently, the Neely Theatre is more recognizably known as the Neely School of Music and Arts and, while classes and music showcases have been joyfully filling the halls of the building for years now, the dream to bring the art of theatre and entertainment back was still alive.

The dream became reality when last year, the Covered Bridge Players, an

Oneonta theatre group, relocated and made its home within the walls of the Neely Theatre.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

“It all started during a brief talk over piano lessons,” shared Covered Bridge Players Vice President, Lee Alexander. “Deborah Keener knew we had outgrown our previous space and brought up the idea of a collaboration.” Keener has been the owner of the Neely Theatre and Neely School of Music and Arts since 2003.

“I honestly felt that this building was meant for so much more, and I knew welcoming the Covered Bridge Players into the theatre would be a catalyst for the next step!” Keener said.

And, boy, was she right.

The Covered Bridge Players’ first season at the theatre was a huge success with numerous sold-out shows and engaged audiences. And now, they are focusing on their bright future within the Neely.

“For us to be performing in a historic theatre is more than we could have hoped for,” Alexander said. “When we were looking for other spaces, we had high hopes of being in the downtown area, and for this opportunity to be given to us was a dream come true.”

The Neely Theatre still holds special memories for those who

continued on page 4



can remember it as it was many years ago.

“I’m the only one on the board old enough to remember the Neely when it was open,” says Covered Bridge Players board member Sharon Breaseale. “For people my age and older, we have great memories of small-town life and Saturdays spent at the theatre. To think that now, after all these years, we have brought theatre to our beloved Neely is beyond belief for me. Great things are truly happening in our wonderful town, and I’m so proud that CBP is part of it!”

What’s coming up for the Covered Bridge Players?

The Covered Bridge Players’ next season, which ramps up in September, will mark their ninth overall since their inception in 2013. The non-profit theatre group consists of all-volunteer board members, actors, board operators, directors, backstage management, set designers, and more.

“We are proud to say that we’ve accomplished a lot with our group of volunteers,” Alexander said. “We all do this because we are passionate about bringing the art of theatre to Oneonta and the surrounding areas.”

Each season CBP performs at least five plays, and the first of their 2021-2022 Season is set to be incredibly special. *110 Stories*, by Sarah Tuft, recounts the stories told at Ground Zero during and after the 9/11 attacks.

September 11, 2021, marks the 20th anniversary of that fateful day, and the Covered Bridge Players’ Board of Directors believe this docu-play is a small way for their theatre to honor those who lost their lives and everyone that was affected then and now.



L to R: Mindy Egan, Zach Buse, Amy Nicole Singleton, Allison Pearman, Aletha Taylor, Lee Alexander, Betty Gowins, Ramona Brewer, & Sharon Breaseale.

“After we discovered this play, there was really no question that we needed to perform it,” says Covered Bridge Players President Allison Pearman. “It would be powerful no matter when it was performed, but to be performed on the 20th anniversary of the event is something so poignant.”

The show will run from September 10-19, with shows on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Tickets will go on sale soon. To be alerted, email coveredbridgeplayersal@gmail.com or like CBP on Facebook at The Covered Bridge Players at the Neely Theatre (@thecoveredbridgeplayers).

Prior to the start of their ninth season and coming up this month, the Covered Bridge Players are welcoming another theatre group into their space to perform. Evil Cheez Productions will perform *How NOT to Commit a Murder* at the Neely Theatre from August 14-22, with shows on Saturdays and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. This stage play was written by Alabama playwright, Wayne Miller. The courtroom comedy takes us to the court trial of Loretta Vandiver

whose execution of her crime was bad, but just wait until you see how she tries to exonerate herself! Purchase tickets now by calling 205-274-SHOW and leaving a voicemail with your name and a good callback number. Tickets are \$15.

The remainder of the 2021-2022 season’s shows will be announced in the fall, so stay tuned!

Want to join CBP?

The Covered Bridge Players are always looking for brand new local talent to join them! They have lots of opportunities for actors, directors, backstage management, light and sound technicians, costume designers, stage design and construction, and more! If you’d like to know more, email coveredbridgeplayersal@gmail.com.

 Amy Nicole Singleton

Credit: Cover and other photography of Covered Bridge Players by Jack Bains, Southern Exposure Photography

ARTISTS OF THE ART WALK

JANICE COOK

Creative expression began early in the life of Janice Cook. Janice shared, “Some of my earliest memories are drawings with my mother and siblings. In fact, as a fourth grader, I would sit under the trees and show some of my classmates how to draw people and trees. This love for art and teaching led me to Troy University and a degree in art education.” For over 35 years, she taught art in Jefferson County and painted 20 murals most of which are on the walls of interior school buildings. Several murals have been on exterior walls such as a large one at a dog park and another at the AEA building in Birmingham.

Janice continued, “When I read about the OBA Art Walk, I was immediately drawn to participate because I’ve grown to love Oneonta over the three years my sons have been attending the ARC.” She was assigned the first spot on the 1st Avenue end of the Art Walk. “My mural involves the letters spelling



this wonderful city of ONEONTA, including landmarks and events of interest and, most importantly, the people...because it is the wonderful people of Oneonta that make it so special.”

Janice’s mural spans the height of the Prickett building. She disclosed, “Scaffolding became key to completing the upper letters. Bill Hendrickson always managed to maneuver the set-up so the artists could finish on time. Also, as a teacher, I had several of my former students to come and paint with me so I tried to work them in on various scenes. Even my daughter,

Julie Aderhold, her son Josh and his girlfriend Abby Bailey painted grass and flowers to help complete the mural.”

Married for 49 years, Janice and husband Jim are parents to Julie, Jeremy, and twins Jordan and Jarrod. Their home is a cedar plank dwelling near the Blount County line. Janice shared, “Since retirement, I enjoy teaching art to special needs adults and nursing home residents. I also enjoy gardening and church activities and playing with my great granddaughter Alice.”

continued on page 6

MORGAN PLYLER ARTISTS OF THE ART WALK



Artist Morgan Plyler reminisced, “I’ve been an artist as long as I’ve been able to hold a crayon! I’ve always been one that really loves to draw and color when given the chance. I never received any formal art training other than a few school art camps as an elementary student. I come by everything naturally. My grandmother, to whom I dedicated my Artwalk mural, taught me about oil panting before she passed.”

Morgan was drawn to participate in the OBA’s mural project because it’s always been a dream of hers to paint a mural. “I had always wanted to have a piece of artwork that people could come take a photo in front of.” The Sweet Shoppe mural is her very first, but hopefully not her last. She shares, “I loved the experience. I struggled a bit with proportions and getting on and off the scaffolding to make sure everything was properly sized. Thank goodness for sidewalk chalk and painter’s tape!”

A native of Locust Fork, Morgan is the daughter of Dawn and David Plyler. She has a younger sister, Amelia, and little brother, Trent. When she is not busy painting, she can be found as manager at the Kind Kups coffee shop. “I love going and trying out other shops, but when I’m not drinking coffee, I’m at CrossFit in Oneonta.”

All 20 of the OBA’s commissioned murals are listed on the Alabama Mural Trail, a project of the University of Alabama’s Center for Economic Development (UACED).



The goal of the Alabama Mural Trail is to provide the state a sense of community, to drive economic impact, and to bring people together. By inventorying and promoting murals in all 67 of Alabama’s counties, UACED hopes to encourage both locals and tourists to find someplace new and discover the beautiful art Alabama has to offer.

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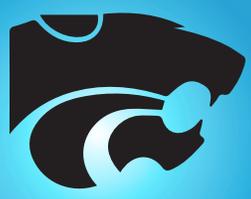
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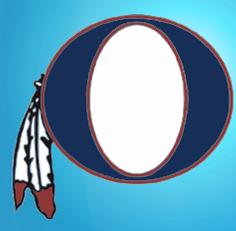
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FOOD TRUCKS IN O'TOWN

The street-side food business has been around since the 17th century when cramped living conditions led to many people not having the resources to cook their own meals. Vendors sold food from carts or street kitchens. This practice has continued throughout the world, especially in big cities. Research shows that there are now more than 24,000 food trucks, with revenues totaling about \$1 billion a year. They are popping up all over the country and becoming increasingly popular. Here's a few that you can find in and around Oneonta.



Sweetie's Place is owned by Bobo and Kimberly Benefield from Cleveland, Alabama. Due to many catering requests, they recently decided to expand their services by obtaining a mobile unit that is available for weddings and other events. They even feed the homeless. Kimberly shares, "Everything we do at the restaurant, we can do on our new food truck and then some. We have a very flexible menu and can honor special menu requests for events."

Unlike the restaurant, the food truck is not "pay what you please." At the restaurant, they have a hot bar with a variety of soul food on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays (pay what you please). Bobo explained, "Some patrons give a little, some give a lot to make up for the ones who can't pay anything. It's our way of giving back to the community and helping those less fortunate." Also, Rock Hill Coffee Company recently merged with Sweetie's Place "to continue to spread God's love all over Blount County." The restaurant is located at 110 2nd Avenue West and open Tuesday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Saturday, 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Hometown Bowls officially opened in September 2020 and is owned by Wil McKinney. He was working on a degree in education at Jacksonville State University



(JSU) when the pandemic hit, so he was forced to place his studies on hold. While the world was shut-down, he decided to take a chance and assemble a food truck. Wil shared, "I had so much support and help from my family and friends. I am so grateful for all the support from Oneonta City Schools and the City of Oneonta."

Wil first tested Hometown Bowls on campuses like JSU and UAB. He said, "I was amazed at how receptive people were to my healthy recipes, so I decided to test it in Oneonta." The recipes are all his own, except for the original Hometown Bowl that is very popular at JSU and out west. His menu includes lots of yummy food bowls that are chockful of healthy goodness, low in calories and high in protein, with a variety of fruit, granola, nuts, and local honey and topped with Nutella™ or peanut butter.

Wil now schedules time at different locations all over Blount and surrounding counties, but his favorite spot is Oneonta at Wallace State Community College or the new Pop Up Park on Hwy. 231/6th Street. He also

books special events, fundraisers, and promotions. His schedule varies but Hometown Bowls can be tracked on Facebook or you can call 205.559.4594.



In 2013, Misti and Antonio Campos bought **Sno Shack** at the urging of her mother. Misti had worked at Oneonta’s now defunct Dairy Queen as a teenager, and they wanted to have a place where folks can enjoy the frozen treats during the temperate months.

During the 2013 off-season, the Campos remodeled and opened up the inside to order where initially it



was the walk-up window only. They reopened in 2014, offering popsicles, ice cream, fruit water, and Mexican food items. All menu items are homemade with fresh ingredients created by Antonio. It is a tradition in his family to make ice cream for the public. In addition to the stationery Sno Shack, they now also own the Sno Shack trailer which is available for birthdays, family gatherings, and stops at the rec park. Last year, they also served their ice cream for a beach wedding.

A seasonal business, the Sno Shack is open daily from spring break through mid-November from 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. During the pandemic, Misti and Antonio were fortunate to be able to stay open. However, like many other businesses, they have since experienced difficulty in finding workers.

While Antonio works at the Sno Shack, Misti works for a local doctor. They have three children and three grandchildren. One of their granddaughters is at the Sno Shack every day and is referred to as the “Sno Shack Baby.” Find them at 1202 2nd Avenue East, Oneonta.

You can order from their menu for take- out. Their Sno Shack trailer is available for special events. They can be reached at 205.353.4247.



After being laid off from their catering jobs due to Covid-19, Saul and Beatrice Meza-Martinez took their small savings and purchased a food truck. It had always been Saul’s dream to have this type of business, and, at Beatrice’s urging, they fulfilled his dream. Together with their sons, Mauricio and Ricardo, they have built a successful family business.



Chinito’s is Spanish for curly hair, which was the nickname of their son Abraham who passed away in 2013. To honor his memory, his likeness can be seen on the outside of the trailer.

While Chinito’s offers many delicious tacos filled with a variety of different meats, the brisket (birria) is their specialty. In addition to tacos, they also offer traditional American tacos, nachos, crunch wraps, street corn, tortas, tamales, burritos, quesadillas, and on special order, pizzadilla. They hope to purchase a larger, fully equipped food truck in the future in order to expand their menu.

You’ll find Chinito’s in several locations throughout the week. They are in Oneonta on Thursday afternoon, all day Friday, and for lunch on Saturday, located in the parking lot on the left of 1st Avenue just before you reach Woodland Park. They are also available for special events and private parties. For information, call 205.643.7867.



Oneonta is blessed with other outdoor food offerings from the following vendors, several of which may be

continued on page 10

continued from page 9

found at the monthly **City Market** beside the Gazebo or at the **Pop Up Park**. Here's a list that's constantly growing:

- Bell's Stoked on Smoke BBQ**
- Brothers Q**
- Cajun Da' Geaux**
- Gloria's Tacos**
- Oneonta Candy Company**
- The Porch BBQ & Grill**
- Queenie's Weenie Wagon**
- Seafood Queens**
- Terri's Takeouts**
- Valor Bakery**
- Viet Home**

The City transformed the old swimming pool location at 110 6th Street South into a "pop up park," complete with seating and sail shades. Vendors can come and go as they please as long as they have a license to do business in Oneonta and a permit from the Alabama Health Department.

Inspired by Birmingham's Market at Pepper Place, Oneonta's City Market offers local farmers, specialty food vendors, and creators of artisanal items the opportunity do business with the community. For more information on these programs, contact City Hall at 205.274.2150.



 *Story Credits: Tara Murphree (Sweetie's Place & Hometown Bowls) with photographer River Murphree; Pat Clanton (Sno Shack) with photographer Al Clanton; and Deanna Johnson (Chinito's article and photographer).*

WHERE TO FIND EXPLORE ONEONTA

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFFORDABLE CARE OF ONEONTA BEAUTIFUL HEART DAY SPA CHOP SALON CHARLIE B'S RESTAURANT EXPRESS CARE CLINIC GRAPES & HOPS HERITAGE GOLF HICKS FLORAL DESIGNS & GIFTS HOMETOWN ORTHODONTICS J&M PHARMACY JW BAR & GRILLE LEGENDS OF ONEONTA LIMESTONE SPRINGS GOLF CLUB MAIN STREET URGENT CARE MILLER'S SODA SHOPPE MIO SOGNO RISTORANTE ONEONTA CITY HALL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONEONTA NUTRITION PINK PORCH MARKET SANCTUARY COFFEE SHOP SIMPLY STUNNING PAGEANT, PROM, & MORE THE SOUTHERN HABERDASHERY & PROVISIONS SHAPE 'N UP FITNESS CENTER ST. VINCENT'S BLOUNT ST. VINCENT'S PEDIATRICS SWAMPTAILS RESTAURANT SWEETIE'S PLACE TIN TOWN BREWING COMPANY TLC NURSING CENTER TOKE SUSHI & GRILL THE GYM VICTORY HEALTH VISION SOURCE |
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SP4 Joseph Michael Ragsdale

Chief Mate Ralph E. Johnson, Jr.

The OBA continues its series on those who valiantly served our country and for whom tributes are featured in our *Flags of Honor* lamppost banners in downtown Oneonta. These banners are proudly displayed at Memorial Day, July 4th, and Veterans Day holidays, and will transition to Christmas ones in mid-November. It's not too late to become a Flags of Honor sponsor! Visit oneontabusinessassociation.com/honor for details.

As this issue goes to press, Joe Ragsdale would have just turned 74 years old.

Joseph Michael Ragsdale was born to Otto B. and Willie Jay Fore Ragsdale on August 1, 1947, in Blount County, Alabama. Mrs. Ragsdale had little way to know that she had just given birth to a genius as per the United States Army IQ test given him about 20 years into his life.



JOE'S GRADUATION PHOTO

The teachers at Oneonta did not need an IQ test to realize Joe's exceptional abilities. He was double promoted, not a common occurrence, and then took extra course work which enabled him to graduate a year early with the Class of 1964 at 16 years old. He is fondly remembered by classmates from the Class of 1965.

Joe had been preparing to pay his way through college with the cattle he owned and cared for. He quickly enrolled at Georgia Tech where his focus was Math and Science. When his cattle money could no longer cover his expenses, Joe did the logical thing and enrolled at Jacksonville State University (JSU). While there, he worked as a teaching assistant. Years later, recognizing the Ragsdale name, the professor he assisted confided to his sister, Carol Ragsdale Knight, that Joe actually taught his courses for him.

Florida State University (FSU) and a Master's Degree in Math and Physics was Joe's next educational challenge. As he was almost finished with his work, he realized that he was soon to be drafted and decided to enlist in the Army. Deployment to Vietnam came on June 22, 1968. Yes, in four years Joe had completed his undergraduate degree and had almost completed his master's degree from FSU.



JOE AT JSU

Just before leaving for Vietnam, Joe drew up a will and stated that any money awarded—should he be killed in service—was to pay for college expenses for his younger siblings. There was enough to help his younger brother Steve finish college at JSU and to send his baby sister Carol there. Ahead of his time, Joe felt strongly about higher education for women. Carol reports that Joe told their mother, "The success of our family will come from educating the females."

The U.S. Army realized how exceptional Joe was. He quickly earned the rank of Specialist Four with a specialty in Armor Crewman. Joe was attached to B Battery, 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery, 4th Infantry Division.

The traumatic circumstances which resulted in the end of Joe's life had been planned against as dangers were realized. Unfortunately, in war, two opposing sides are planning and, in this circumstance, careful safety

planning was not enough. Joe tried hard to survive but ultimately on November 18, 1969, in the Pleiku Province of South Vietnam, his struggles ended.

Commendations include the Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge, Marksmanship Badge, National Defense Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Army Presidential Unit Citation, Vietnam Gallantry Cross, and the Army Good Conduct Medal. When visiting the Vietnam War Memorial, you'll find Joe's name on Panel 16-W, Line 93.

How much do so many who knew Joe personally—and I who now know of him—wish that the end of this article spoke of Joe's return to civilian life. I would have shared how he finished his master's work and then earned a business and teaching degree as he had planned, according to his brother Steve. There would be paragraphs about his long and happy marriage, and the successes of his children and grandchildren. Carol reports that family was always the most important thing and that he surely wanted to create his own.

I choose to believe that each and every person Joe touched with his drive, determination, and passion for life carries Joe Ragsdale into our futures here on earth.



Ralph E. Johnson, Jr., was born on March 15, 1922. He started as a deck hand with the Merchant Marines when he was just 17 in 1939. He spent the summer between his junior and senior years of high school aboard the tanker La Placentia. The tanker carried oil to various ports along the Pacific Coast including Vancouver, British Columbia; Nome, Alaska; and Hawaii. After graduating, Johnson continued his love of the sea on 15 more voyages, both coast-wide and foreign. Ralph advanced quickly through the ranks. He went from Deck Cadet to Deck Apprentice, Ordinary Seaman,



Photo by Patti Williams

Able Seaman, 3rd Mate, 2nd Mate to Chief Mate at the age of 22. Being Chief Mate would have been quite a responsibility for a 22 year old. There were times he would be at sea for 13 months.

Johnson was trained in war time procedures by the U.S. Coast Guard while the United States was engaged in World War II. Ralph was on the S.S. Montebello for three voyages between December 1940 and August 1941. This ship was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine on October 17, 1942. He was also on the S.S. Gurney E. Newlin from May 1942 until August 1942. This ship was destroyed by a German u-boat on October 17, 1942. These tankers, and the many others Johnson made voyages on, were carrying fuel and/or oil to war zones and our Allies. The Merchant Marines supplied 90% of the fuel used by bombers, tanks, Jeeps, and ships during the war. This cargo made them prime targets of the enemy.

The Merchant Marines were not considered veterans until 1988. By then sadly, most of the Mariners that served during World War II had either passed or were beyond the age to enjoy the many benefits of being a veteran.

Ralph celebrated his 99th birthday this year surrounded by his wife of 72 years, Charlya, and his sons Ralph III, Jan, and Jay Johnson.



The touching article on Joseph Michael Ragsdale was written by Deb Talley, while Deanna Johnson proudly penned the one about her father-in-law. Photos of Joe Ragsdale were furnished by his sister, Carol Ragsdale Knight.

Photo by Janice Shell

Photo on Right: Ralph enjoyed a recent event held to honor veterans in Blount County.

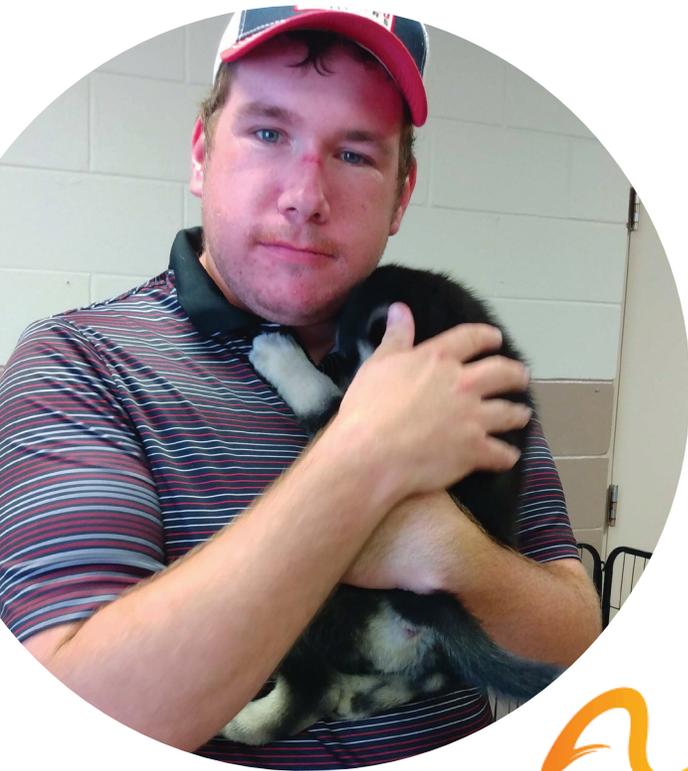
Photo Below: Ralph always enjoys riding in the Blount County Veterans Day parade and waving to the crowd.

ARC ANGELS STAND READY TO HELP

The Arc of Central Alabama located in Blount County works to serve those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our mission is to offer a variety of services and activities that allow our individuals to live the most independent and sufficient life possible. Our goal is to give the opportunity for each person to reach their fullest potential.

Over the last several years many changes have been made for those with disabilities. Rather than joining activities specifically designed for those with limitations, our program will spread its wings and integrate into the community on a regular basis. Our program will be called “Community Experience.”

There is little to do in the life of a challenged adult after high school. Many parents are still working and/or older. Their social life is little to none unless going out with the family. The Arc would like to kickstart the Community Experience Program in Blount County. We are looking for individuals, schools, businesses, and the like to include some of our population into your activities.



We have had the privilege to be granted the permission to use the Shell station in Snead and Hope House in Oneonta for conducting work assessments over the years. We extend a big thank you to these businesses. We also look forward to new ventures with Oneonta Public Library and the Community Garden, Blount Arts Council, and Blount County Animal Adoption Center. They all have extended their hands to include us in some of their programming and classes.

Experience the joy of fellowship, friendship, laughter, and love. Some people do not see the commonalities we all share, some never take the time. We are not all created to be the same. Our differences is what makes us unique. We are, however, all special. The inclusion of those with disabilities will not only enhance the lives of those with disabilities but enlighten and broaden the minds of others.

If you find the opportunity to involve some of us, please reach out. The Arc has people with a variety of interests and talents. Help make Blount County a better place. Let us include all members of society to work together as one.

Please feel free to contact Day Program Director, Jennifer Perkins, at 205.625.3552, ext. 202.



THERE'S A NEW DOC IN TOWN...

Gramercy is a small town in Louisiana on the Mississippi River in the St. James Parish. Real estate there looks much like real estate in Oneonta. About 84% of the population owns their home and the crime rate is very low. Community schools have an above



average rating for their population of 3,306 people. So, when our young family practice doctor Jeremy Dornier (pronounced *Dorn yea*), reported feeling right at home with Ascension/St. Vincent's Blount, many comparisons to the Oneonta area were quickly evident.

Jeremy grew up in a family of two parents and three children where education and positive life experiences were major focuses in their home. During high school Jeremy was not sure what he wanted to do for his vocation in life. Jeremy loved and excelled in science courses, participated in football and baseball, and was a star swimmer. Considering there were many scientific-industrial career choices nearby, Jeremy even took welding to better his position if he chose to remain local to Gramercy after high school.

Scholarships sent him to Louisiana State University (LSU) where he followed a pre-med curriculum and thoroughly became "one of those other Tigers" in the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

Next came medical school in New Orleans where he did rotations at a hospital in Bogalusa, Louisiana, performing many varied duties that helped formulate his decision to become a family practitioner.

Moving to the Birmingham area facilitated his wife's medical training at the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB). As his job search began, Jeremy learned about the practices of Dr. Smith and Dr. Wilson in Oneonta and soon thereafter joined them.

Now, almost a year later, Doctor Dornier reports enjoying his working relationships, as well as the relationships he is developing with his variety of patients. Board-certified in Family Medicine, he provides compassionate and professional primary care to patients of all ages.

Dr. Dornier has a special interest in endoscopy and musculoskeletal medicine. He is committed to improving the health of his patients and their families by providing patient-centered primary care.

Deer hunting is a long-time hobby and Jeremy wants to try turkey hunting. He likes fishing and has a younger brother who is a competitive fisherman back in Gramercy and sometimes competes at Lake Guntersville .

At home , Jeremy grows a tiny garden and tinkers with woodworking projects. Both he and his wife both enjoy hiking with out-of-town friends who visit.

No interview is ever complete without the Auburn/Alabama question. Jeremy replied, "I am an LSU fan and graduate. When the Iron Bowl is played, I have no dog in the fight, unless a win or loss will help LSU's position. However, I do enjoy watching the Iron Bowl and I love the SEC and talking about the SEC."

Well played, Dr. Dornier.

Dr. Dornier is available at St. Vincent's Primary Care Oneonta, 150 Gilbreath Drive, Suite 201. Phone 205.274.8198.



SL

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PAINT THE TOWN PHASE 2:

STUDENTS MURAL PROJECT

The Oneonta Business Association, a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization, continues its pursuit of color, vibrancy, community development, and artistic creativity using murals in Oneonta, Alabama.

In 2020, in partnership with Benjamin Moore, the OBA successfully created the Paint the Town project, transforming a derelict walkway connecting 2nd Avenue to 1st Avenue into a thriving tourist hot spot! With the introduction of 17 murals, Oneonta gave voice to local folk artists and art aficionados alike creating a photographic mecca for young and old. These murals are in addition to the Angels in Oneonta (Angel Wings), Welcome to Oneonta, and United We Stand flag murals in other areas of the City.

Supporting the arts while creating an attractive environment that contributes to community development and tourism has been a passion project of the OBA since the inception of our Angel Wings Mural and the Art Walk. Currently, Oneonta proudly boasts 20 murals registered with the Alabama Murals Trail through the University of Alabama. These murals tell the story of our community, encourage locals and tourists to discover new places and learn about the beautiful art our town has to offer.

With the repaving of the parking lot at Oneonta City Schools, OHS seniors will not be able to creatively paint their parking spaces. Recognizing the importance of artistic expression for students, the OBA began working to allow seniors that same imaginative opportunity by painting murals in the alley of the 300-block downtown.

With the support of our Mayor, Council, Oneonta City Schools, and the City of Oneonta Mural Review Committee, this project will be overseen by OBA board members, professional muralists, and volunteers.

Different than parking spaces, these murals give students a chance to create works of art that will be lasting! We are encouraging our seniors to “think outside the box” to design artwork that will let them put thoughts into art but would also be fun to have their picture made with!

The OBA will facilitate submissions of all artworks for the City’s approval process for each design. Our goal is to create permanent artwork that has the potential to again be registered with the Alabama Murals Trail. Guidelines for the murals are available. Concepts are due by September 30, 2021; however, earlier submissions are welcome!

For more information or to help support this project, please contact Lisa Wester at 205.966.8346 or email lisaswester@icloud.com or visit oneontabusinessassociation.com/studentart.



COUNCILMAN MCALPINE HONORS OFFER



L TO R: Councilman Robbie McAlpine and Daniel Smith (City School Superintendent) with OFFER officers Sharon Breaseale (Secretary), Merri Crow (President), and Jessica Cannon (Vice President).

On August 3, 2021, City Councilman Robbie McAlpine presented a plaque to the Oneonta Foundation For Educational Resources (OFFER) to recognize and honor their efforts to encourage quality educational opportunities and creative teaching, while enriching student learning. The non-profit organization depends on various avenues of income to fund their efforts, including the current campaign to acquire an official Oneonta Redskins license plate. At least 1,000 commitments must be received in order to achieve this goal. Redskin fans can “pre-commit” by registering for the tags for a fee of \$50. You will not receive your tag until the minimum number has been reached. To reserve your tag, please visit www.redskintag.com.

ROBBIE MCALPINE
ONEONTA CITY COUNCIL
PLACE 3



SATURDAY
OCT 16
6-9PM



Nominations for Awards Now Open • Deadline is September 1, 2021
Tickets \$40



oneontabusinessassociation.com



The Oneonta Business Association annually honors individuals, organizations, and businesses for their significant role in driving Oneonta's business community, tourism, and economic growth. Nominees set the standards for excellence, innovation, and community involvement. These awards provide exposure for your business or organization, recognize your success, and celebrate your achievements among the community.

Winners will be announced at our Annual Awards Celebration, "BBQ BRAVO," on Saturday, October 16, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. The OBA will be teaming with Tin Town Brewing Company, Bell's Stoked on Smoke BBQ, Red Diamond's SweetRide, and the "80ators" tribute band on the 300 block of 1st Avenue East for a great celebration under the stars.

OBA members are invited to enter nominations for the *Edwards-Shaddix Citizen of the Year*, *Business of the Year*, *Emerging Business of the Year*, *Organization of the Year*, and *Volunteer of the Year*. Nominations and entry forms are due by September 1, 2021.

In addition, Oneonta High School seniors are invited to apply for a scholarship by submitting an essay and supporting documents as to community involvement for the *VolunTeen of the Year*. Forms are available at the school office or oneontabusinessassociation.com/awards. Deadline is September 15, 2021.



THE OBA'S CHRISTMAS WISH LIST*

FRI, NOV 26

A Movie with Santa
4 pm • Free for Kids
Covered Bridge Players
at the Neely Theatre

Move Over, Rudolph!
Christmas Creatures Parade
5:00 pm, Library to Gazebo
Register free online!

Community Christmas Tree Lighting & Celebration
5-8 pm (Countdown at 6 pm)
Gazebo Green. Horse-Drawn Carriages, Polar Express Train Ride, Santa Claus, Beautifully Decorated Christmas Trees, Holiday Music, Festive Firetruck Cruise, Character Costumers, Food Trucks, Free Hot Chocolate, & SNOW!
Trees Displayed thru Jan. 1.

THURS - SUN, DEC 2-5

A Christmas Carol
Presented by the Community Arts Council of Blount County
6801 2nd Ave W, Oneonta
blountcountyarts.com

THURS, DEC 2 & 9

Thursday Night Lights
5-8 pm • Downtown Oneonta
Experience the spirit of the season while you shop for that perfect gift. Restaurants will be open so bring the entire family and make an evening of it. Jingle through downtown in a horse-drawn carriage. Don't be surprised if Santa shows up, too!

FRI, DEC 3

Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus
6-8 pm • St. Vincent's Blount
Share your Christmas wishes with Santa and pose for a free pic with him and the missus!

FRI & SAT, DEC 3-4

FRI & SAT, DEC 17-18

A Live Nativity Experience
6-8 pm • Angel Wings Mural
Experience the Christmas story come to life with costumed characters and live animals.

TUES, DEC 7

Blount Co. Christmas Parade
7 pm • Downtown Oneonta
blountoneontachamber.org

THURS, DEC 16

Holiday Sip & Stroll
Presented by the Oneonta Downtown District, 5-8 pm
Participating merchants will stay open until 8 p.m. and will offer a unique shopping experience, including seasonal sips and snacks. Participating restaurants will offer festive drink specials, too! So eat, drink, shop, be merry, and get your stroll on downtown during the Third Thursday Sip & Stroll.

THURS, DEC 16

Christmas Awards Ceremony
6 pm • Downtown Oneonta
The winners of the tree decorating, holiday decorating, and Griswold Tour will be announced. OHS Band Auxiliary will perform. Santa will be there, too!

SAT, DEC 18

Santa's Coming to Town
Starts at 8 am • Presented by the Oneonta Fire & Rescue Service. Firefighters will escort Mr. & Mrs. Santa and The Grinch around to visit neighborhoods and meet children.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED NOW

- Sign-up to decorate and/or sponsor a Christmas tree. Decorating days are Nov 21-25. Non-profits welcome; we will get you a sponsor.
- Decorate your storefront by Dec 1 to make Oneonta shine all over!
- Participate in our Griswold Goodwill Tour of Homes!
- Enlist your furry friends in the Christmas Creatures Parade!
- Help decorate the City! Sign-up to volunteer!

*pending funding

oneontabusinessassociation.com/christmas

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- Psychiatry
- Pulmonology
- Radiology
- Sleep Medicine
- Urology
- Wound Care



Ascension St. Vincent's Blount

150 Gilbreath Drive, Oneonta, AL 35121
stvhs.com/blount

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