# The Volunteer

STRONGER TOGETHER Ballston Spa

## The Newsletter of the BSBPA

February 2021

Ellen Mottola, Editor info@ballston.org

www.ballston.org

Volunteers working to make Ballston Spa a great place to live, shop, dine, stroll & stay.

Ballston Spa Business & Professional ASSOCIATION

BALLSTON SPA • NEW YORK'S FIRST FAIR TRADE TOWN



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| **Stacy Simmons** | **Sandy Hassfurter** | **Kelly Ostrander** | **Christine Kernochan** | **Kathi Leigh** |
| *garden with Stacy* | *Berkshire Hathaway Home Services* | *Contour Mortgage Corp.* | *Saratoga National Bank* | *Ballston Area Comm. Ctr.* |


### The COVID Beat goes on...

Although there are optimistic signs for later this year as vaccination access and coordination improve, we are still not out of the woods at this point. With that in mind, here are updates on some of our regularly scheduled events:

### Chocolate Fest Canceled for 2021

Traditionally, Ballston Spa's Chocolate Fest would be held during February's First Friday. This year, it was tentatively planned to try to organize a day long event on February 13. After much consideration, out of an abundance of caution, and after looking into various alternative ways to run the event, it was determined that it could not be done effectively to make it successful for both our downtown merchants and chocolate chefs as well as visitors. We are really disappointed because Chocolate Fest has grown to become a popular mid-winter event. We do look forward to being back in full swing in February 2022. Thank you for your understanding. This doesn't mean that treating someone to a special Valentine's Day is out of the question! Ballston Spa's downtown shops hold a treasure of perfect Valentine's gifts. Jewelry, artisan created goods, home décor, candles, lotions, wines and spirits, antiques, spa treatments—the list goes on. Romantic dinners, either dine in or take out, are here to be savored.

### First Friday Pause

First Fridays in Ballston Spa is taking a pause for the winter months. We look forward to resuming in Spring/Summer 2021 when conditions hopefully are more amenable for people to gather both outdoors and indoors. It also gives us the opportunity to re-imagine First Fridays to better enhance our downtown businesses, restaurants and museums , as well as strengthen our community outreach. Stay tuned!

### Annual Meeting & Community Mixer

March is the end of the BSBPA's fiscal year, typically the time to hold our Annual Meeting and Community Mixer where the BSBPA celebrates the past year and looks forward to what is ahead, introduces new board members and officers and honors those stepping off the board. It also gives our members a chance to mingle and network. Unfortunately, in-person "mingling" is still just a dream at this point. We are hoping to move this event to a mid-summer outdoor affair. In the meantime, the Annual Report will still be compiled and available in March.

### Networking Breakfasts

It's tempting to just say "see above". Until we can safely gather in-person and highlight our members by having them host at their locations, which is the whole point of our networking breakfasts, plans are to continue to keep them on hold until... "see above". We really do miss these get-togethers and can't wait until we can return to those chatty, informative mornings.

There is nothing left to say except that this too will pass eventually. In the meantime, we will try to keep you informed and engaged. Stay safe and healthy!

# Member Items

**Renewing members this month: Ballston Smiles; Burlingame Orthodontics; HMS Agency, Inc.; JDC Dance Center; Jumper Bean Day Care; Lansing Enterprises; Medbery Inn; Paper Dragon Farms; Ribbon Café; Saratoga's Community Federal Credit Union; Spa City Builders, LLC; Spa City Swingers; The Ripe Tomato; Village Photo, LLC; We Rock the Spectrum; Ballston Spa Gnosis Center; Michael Mendrick.** ***Thank you for your continued support!***

## From Our Members and Neighbors

Thank you to the following for their donations to the Adopt A Plot program: **Ballston Smiles.** You help to make our village more beautiful!

**Ballston Spa Rotary Club**
Somewhat of a quiet time for our club but we are keeping busy in the community. Many Rotarians have taken part in districtwide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training recently offered to us which was actually quite interesting. We were very proud to make our annual donation to the **First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa** Summer Lunch Program recently. This plays a huge part in providing local kids who normally would be receiving food at school with nutritious lunches over the summer months. This year has made it even more of a challenge and we are glad we can help them. One upcoming event that will be especially challenging this year is the *Spread the Love Food Drive*. In years past, we have relied on area businesses for food collection points as well as the Launching Pad plays at the school for additional food and monetary donations. These things will not be happening this year so we are working on other ways to solicit monies for this worthy cause to support our local food banks. If you have some ideas, let us know. Just contact any member**.**

**Community Emergency Corps**
The vaccine for treating COVID 19 is out there but it is still VERY hard to get. Saratoga County has been working extremely hard to get their fair share and the clinics have been a shining example of what all of our drills were preparing for these last 10 years. Hats off to **Saratoga County Public Health and OES** for helping out our community, especially the vulnerable seniors that otherwise might not have access to the vaccine. They are the ones that have been communicating with us the most about wanting to get shots. Hope everyone will be able to get theirs soon.

**Ballston Spa School District**
February News
2/10- Board of Education Meeting, virtual, 7:00 pm
2/15- President's Day Observance, District closed
2/16-19 -Mid-Winter Recess - No classes
Please visit www.bscsd.org for the latest news and/or event information.

Our sincere condolences to **Mark and Ed Hersh** and family on the passing of their mother, **Janet**, on January 19.

**Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council (EOC)** is proud to kick off 2021 by reintroducing itself as **LifeWorks Community Action**. "By becoming LifeWorks, we're honoring our mission and legacy of community action – neighbors helping neighbors," said Executive Director **Jo Anne Hume**. We've been mistaken as a government agency for too long and that's not the experience our neighbors have when they turn to us for help." Over the past 55 years, the nonprofit has helped thousands of neighbors each year overcome the challenges of poverty by providing food, early childhood education, energy services, maternal and childhood wellness, and immigrant services. Popular programs include The Pantry in Ballston Spa and The Kitchen in Saratoga Springs, as well as Head Start, WIC and Weatherization. LifeWorks also launched a universal intake on Jan. 11, which allows neighbors who are interested in receiving assistance from the agency to fill out one application to see which services they are qualified for rather than applying to each program separately. To learn more, visit LifeWorks' new website, lifeworksaction.org, or call 518-288-3206.

LifeWorks COMMUNITY ACTION
Help Starts Here.

News from **Adirondack Health Institute (AHI)-** The "open enrollment" for health insurance through the NYS of Health Marketplace has been extended for uninsured New Yorkers thru 3/31/21 for a qualified health plan. Health coverage will start 3/1/21 if enrolled by 2/15/21; enroll 2/16/21 – 3/15/21 and coverage will begin 4/1/21; enroll 3/16/21 – 3/31/21 and coverage will begin 5/1/21. AHI enrollment specialists continue to handle these free health insurance enrollment appointments by phone. As appointments are made, clients are made aware that they will receive a phone call from their enrollment specialist who will assist them in completing or updating their health insurance application or in providing education regarding coverage options available thru the NYS Marketplace. Interest-

# Member Items

ed individuals can contact us directly at 1-866-872-3740.

The **Ballston Spa Elks Lodge**, 10 Hamilton Street, will be having a Red Cross Blood Drive on Monday, February 15 from 1-6 pm. Appointment is necessary. Go to https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

If you are getting a head start on your spring cleaning, please keep **The Store at Rebuilding Together Saratoga County** in mind to donate gently-used furniture and household goods. And remember that the proceeds raised support their work to ensure that our neighbors in need have a safe, warm, and healthy place to call home! Please call **Terry** 518-587-3315 or email store@rtsaratoga.org with pictures.

The **2021 Village of Ballston Spa Community Art Program** theme this year is "Ballston Spa is Home". Some of the projects will include a banner program to honor the veterans and active service members living in our Village, "Ballston Spa is home to..." banner program that will explore the animals and insects that share this environment as illustrated by local children, the 4th Annual Ballston Spa Birdhouse Program with 340 birdhouses ready to be distributed, an Iron Springs gazebo display to tell a visual story of the history of Ballston Spa, a banner display on the chain link fencing surrounding the old Ricketts property to improve an eyesore in the northern gateway to the village and the annual Christmas/Holiday Community Arts Program. Participation in these programs is free to all. For more information on the programs and how to financially support them, contact the Village at 518 885-5711, or **Mark Blech**, 518 742 6355.

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month (TDVAM). This is an issue that impacts everyone – not just teens, but their parents, teachers, friends and communities as well. **Wellspring** has information on how you can help get the word out. Go to https://www.loveisrespect.org/get-involved/tdvam/

The BSBPA has sent a letter to the **Saratoga County Board of Supervisors** in support of enacting a cap on third party delivery platform fees and commissions, in line with what Albany County has done. Currently, New York State requires strict in-person dining limitations. Because of this, many restaurants have adapted by including delivery options to their customers to make up for the lost income. Many restaurants did not have a delivery model in place prior to the pandemic and do not have the available staff to run it in-house, so they have turned to third party delivery platforms, such as Door Dash and GrubHub. While these platforms have helped to keep business going, it has increasingly been at a sharp cost to already struggling restaurants. We took the opportunity to ask our restaurant member businesses here in Ballston Spa who use these delivery platforms how it affects their bottom line, and just how much they are paying for the services. Several told us that fees are between 22-35% commission for delivery services, with additional fees for marketing. Albany County's legislation capped delivery fees at 15% with a 5% cap on marketing services. There is support in other counties, and even potentially on the state level, for this but we want to try to get some relief for our local restaurants sooner rather than later, if possible.

A reminder to business members--with the passage of the most recent stimulus package, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan applications have been reopened. Whether you have taken out a previous PPP loan or are looking to apply for the first time, you can learn more about them by visiting https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program

BSBPA Members: Are you up to date on your membership dues? Renewal invoices are sent on your anniversary month. Usually sent by regular mail, renewal invoices can also be sent to you via email, if you prefer. Many times, we find that members sometimes miss the renewals when they come and we will send a second (and, if necessary, third) reminder. After 90 days with no response, we have to inactivate membership, which means your member benefits, such as website listing, map guide directory listing, group advertising discounts and gift certificate participation and member benefit card discounts are no longer in effect. Income from membership dues helps us provide opportunities to our members, as well as continue to help fund the events and activities we offer the community. Please check to see if your membership dues are current. We endeavor to make sure all items are closed out before the end of our fiscal year on March 31. Payments can be made online on the Member Resource Center page at ballston.org (choose Renew Membership) or mail a check to BSBPA, PO Box 386, Ballston Spa, NY 12020. If you are not sure if you have an outstanding balance, please feel free to contact Ellen at ellen@ballston.org, 518 885-2772. Thank you for your continued support!

BSBPA Members: Do you have upcoming events or news that you would like to share in our next issue? Contact Ellen Mottola, info@ballston.org, 518 885-2772 or mail to BSBPA, PO Box 386, Ballston Spa, NY 12020. The deadline for the March 2021 issue is **February 23, 2021.** Promptness is always appreciated, questions answered with a smile!

# Association News

## Ballston Spa Farmers' Market

The 2021 Ballston Spa Farmers' Market, sponsored by the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association (BSBPA), will run from June 12 through September 30, 2021. The markets are held on Thursdays from 3-6 pm and Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm and will have a NEW LOCATION on the grounds of the historic Brookside Museum, 6 Charlton Street in the Village of Ballston Spa. The new location is an easy stroll from the market's previous location in Wiswall Park, with more available parking as well as proximity to Old Iron Spring Park and the Thursday evening summer concerts. The markets have been serving the local community since 2003. Our mission is to bring together producers and consumers and to promote locally created products. We are prepared to conduct the market in accordance with any continuing COVID-related guidelines that may still be in place, as directed by NYS Ag & Markets. We were able to successfully hold our full season in 2020 as an essential business under strict guidelines. The market is accepting vendors for the 2021 season. New and returning vendors can fill out and submit an application online at https://www.ballston.org/category/farmers-market/.

Vendors pay annual BSBPA business membership dues of $150 to participate in the market. If you are a returning vendor and already a BSBPA member, your dues renewal invoice will be sent to you on your anniversary month. If you are a new vendor, after you submit your application, you can make an online dues payment or mail a check to BSBPA, PO Box 386, Ballston Spa, NY 12020. If you have any questions, contact us at farmers-market@ballston.org or contact the BSBPA office at info@ballston.org, 518 885-2772.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2021 market!

## BSBPA Scholarship

The $500 BSBPA scholarship is awarded to a graduating Ballston Spa High School student who has demonstrated professionalism in his or her place of employment and responsibility in the school community. If you know a student who fits the bill, encourage them to apply for the scholarship. The application is available at the BSHS guidance office and is also accessible to download on our website, www.ballston.org. Scholarship applications can be submitted to BSHS or directly to the BSBPA via email or by mail and are due by April 1, 2021. Questions? Please contact us at info@ballston.org or 518 885-2772.

*BSBPA member businesses–if you have a BSHS senior working for you who fits the bill, encourage them to apply for the scholarship!*

The next BSBPA
Board of Directors Meeting
will be held Monday,
February 15, 2021
at 6:30 pm,
via Zoom.
You are welcome to attend.
Contact the BSBPA office
for more information.
Your input is welcome.

## COVID-19 Resources and Information:

We continue to monitor the latest guidance, along with the additional resource sharing help of our partners at the Saratoga County and Capital Region Chambers and Saratoga Prosperity Partnership, particularly as we get updated information about vaccinations and changing state guidelines.

Please continue to follow safe practices, wear masks, and observe the measures that our local businesses, restaurants and services must implement so that they can safely stay open and serve you. There is optimism with the vaccines that we may see some semblance of more normalcy later in 2021, but only if we continue to be vigilant now.

# Association News

## BSBPA Board News

**New Board member:** We are pleased to welcome **Mackenzie Frederick** as a new member of the BSBPA board of directors. Mackenzie is a State Farm Insurance agent, located in Malta and has been a Ballston Spa village resident since 2010. She is a small business owner but she also has experience in corporate team leading, fundraising and chamber of commerce committee work. She and her husband Josh (who is also a BSBPA resident member) have renovated properties in the village and Josh has been involved in development projects with local municipalities. Mackenzie brings a love for the village, along with impressive organizational skills and energy. We are fortunate to have her as a board member and we know she'll jump right into the action.

**Board Nominations:** We are looking for nominations for board member positions. Prospective nominees should be BSBPA members in good standing. Particularly needed are representatives from the downtown business district: retail and restaurant members and commercial property owners. With our ongoing collaboration with the SCPP and the village on Ballston Spa's economic development plan , it is crucial to have those voices at the table. If you or someone you know is interested in giving back to the community by joining this busy group, please contact Bernadette VanDeinse.

### Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association

**2020-21 Officers**

Stacy Simmons, President (garden with Stacy) stacy@ballston.org
Sandy Hassfurter, Vice President (Berkshire Hathaway Home Services) sandy@ballston.org
Kelly Ostrander, Vice President (Contour Mortgage Corp.) kelly@ballston.org
Christine Kernochan, Treasurer (Saratoga National Bank) christine@ballston.org
Kathi Leigh, Secretary (Ballston Area Community Center) kathi@ballston.org

**2020-21 Board of Directors**

Jason Armer (Armer Funeral Home, Inc.) jason@ballston.org
Michelle Burlingame (Burlingame Orthodontics) michelle@ballston.org
Donna Dardaris (Resident) donna@ballston.org
Tracy DeRagon (Resident) tracy@ballston.org
Mackenzie Frederick (Mackenzie Frederick State Farm) mackenzie@ballston.org
Liz Kormos (Kormos & Company) liz@ballston.org
Donna Martin (Village Photo, LLC) donnam@ballston.org
Lisa McCoy (Saratoga's Community Federal Credit Union) lisam@ballston.org
Nora Osuchowski (Ballston Area Rec. Commission) nora@ballston.org
Chris Sorell (Lockettes The Salon) chris@ballston.org
Nate Thompson (Hope Church) nate@ballston.org
Ashley Tyler (Jumper Bean Day Care) ashley@ballston.org
Bernadette VanDeinse (Resident) bernadette@ballston.org
Dave Womer (Adirondack Cabling & Security) dave@ballston.org

**Executive Administrator for the Association**

Ellen Mottola ellen@ballston.org; info@ballston.org;

## Marketing

**Group ads-**In addition to the 2021 Map Guide ad opportunity (see page 6), The marketing committee sent out an advance notice last month for *Saratoga/Capital Region Living Magazine*. The magazine will be featuring a spotlight story on Ballston Spa in the February edition and they offered special discounts for BSBPA member business ads to accompany the feature. The magazine has a reach of approximately 94,500 readers and placement in 500 locations in 11 counties.

**Directory boards and trash can panels-**As we get closer to spring, we'll be looking to update and add new signs to the directory boards around the village. There will also be trash can panel advertising spots open in several locations. These are effective and inexpensive options to advertise to visitors to our walkable village. Typically the advance notices for these go out in March so keep an eye out for them.

**BSBPA Merchandise**

Find our signature Ballston Spa Skyline apparel, vintage baseball caps, mugs and B Spa stickers at the following retail outlets: O'Brien Pharmacy, A Bead Just So and Ballston Spa Public Library.

Ballston Spa Business & Professional ASSOCIATION
Serving Our Community Since 1983 • ballston.org
fb.com/BSBPA @BSBPA
Bsbpa #Livebspa

# Association News

## 2021 Ballston Spa Map Guide

We are getting underway with production of our 2021-22 Ballston Spa Map and Visitor Guide, now in its 16th year. An advance notice was emailed to all business and non-profit members on January 26. We love Ballston Spa, and what better way to showcase our wonderfully vibrant village's shops, restaurants and services! ALL BSBPA business and non-profit members in good standing will be listed on the directory page as part of your member benefits. Our 2021 Schedule of Events, historical points of interest and Farmers' Market vendors for 2021 are also included in the guide. We will print ten thousand (10,000) copies to be placed in high traffic areas including the Saratoga Visitors Center and Urban Cultural Center, Saratoga County Chamber kiosk in downtown Saratoga Springs, Northway Exit 9 Rest Area, Empire State Plaza Visitor Center, Chamber of Southern Saratoga County offices, Proctor's Theater, Albany International Airport, area Amtrak stations, museums in Ballston Spa and Saratoga, as well as over 2 dozen hotels and motels from Schenectady to Clifton Park to Saratoga Springs and shops around the region. Map guides are available for any of our members to have in their establishments and the plastic map guide holders on the directory signs throughout the downtown area are stocked all year long. The Map Guide also has been used by local real estate companies for relocation packets. Advertising opportunities for member businesses and organizations are available on a first come, first serve basis. The Map Guide is one of our greatest marketing tools throughout the year, not only for the tourist season, but for new and current residents in the area, and has proved successful in attracting visitors to our village and for advertising local businesses. This is an ideal opportunity for new and returning members to get their business "on the map" for a very reasonable cost!

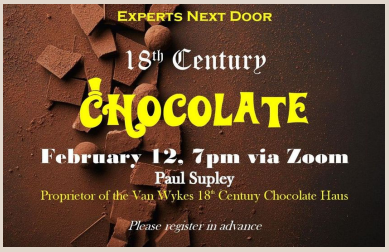
Go to https://www.ballston.org/2021/01/27/2021-ballston-spa-map-guide-2/ for more information on ad sizes, pricing and online payment option. (***All back and inside cover ads have already been filled).*** Please note that all ads must be camera ready—we do not design ads for the guide. If you require this service, we encourage you to refer to our website for a list of BSBPA member graphic designers. If you had an ad in the previous Map Guide that you would like to re-use, it will already be on file–just let us know. Remember, your BSBPA membership dues need to be current in order to take advantage of this opportunity. Your promptness with ad payment is greatly appreciated. For more information or to submit your ad, please contact the BSBPA office info@ballston.org or 518 885-2772. We would like to have all ads by March 1, 2021.

**Economic Development Plan:** The BSBPA is working with the Village of Ballston Spa and Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership to start implementing some of the New Wave Communities action items, as part of Ballston Spa's Economic Development Plan. This includes, among other things

- Assessing and identifying opportunities for potential public improvement projects by looking at existing sites and spaces.
- Identifying opportunities for growth and diversity of businesses in the downtown district
- Engaging with downtown merchants about sharing and coordinating best business practices, communicating needs, identifying effective merchandising strategies
- Creating and enhancing the quality of life character of the village by engaging with businesses, residents and non-profit groups, including promoting and supporting community activities and gatherings
- Developing an overarching branding/marketing campaign for the village

Yes, that's a lot of terrain to cover, and it will take some time to put it all together, which is why it will require "a village" to see it succeed. If there is something here that piques your interest, please read the full plan and matrix on our website and do let us know (email me here) if you want to jump on board with a particular piece. We will also be soliciting some of you directly for your help and input. If you are interested in being involved in these efforts, contact the BSBPA office, info@ballston.org, 518 885-2772.

# #LiveBSpa




Join the Saratoga County Historical Society at Brookside Museum and Paul Supley for the eighth event in our virtual Expert Next Door Series for a fascinating presentation including an invitation to make your own chocolate libation during the event. This virtual event will take place Friday, February 12 at 7pm. Tickets are free for current members, $5 each for Non-members, and all are welcome. Register at https://brooksidemuseum.org/ through February 11.

### Saratoga Chowder Tour 2021

***Presented by Discover Saratoga and DeCrescente Distributing Company***

This is a week-long event, starting Saturday, January 30 through Saturday, February 6. Patrons can enjoy a cup or bowl of chowder along with lunch or dinner and their favorite beverage at participating Saratoga County restaurants. Participating restaurants will also have pints and quarts of chowder to-go.

Saratoga Chowder Tour will allow customers who love chowder to enjoy it at multiple restaurants throughout the week, avoiding overcrowding and adhering to New York State dining guidelines. Due to limited capacity at restaurants, Reservations are strongly recommended. T-shirts and hats are available for purchase. T-Shirt Graphics in Ballston Spa has set up an online store: https://saratogachowdertour2021.itemorder.com/sale

Customers can choose from several shirts and hats and have them shipped directly to their house, or merchandise can be picked up at T-Shirt Graphics. The online store will close on February 7, 2021 at 11:59 PM.

Village of Ballston Spa Board meetings are held the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7 pm. This month's meetings are February 8 and 22. The meetings will to be held via Zoom. For more information on village meetings, call the village office at 518-885-5711 or email info@villageofballstonspa.org.

**Does your car need a winter wash?**

**Show your car some *Love* and support Gateway House of Peace!**

**Go to the URL below and wash your car while helping Gateway!**

**For the Month of February Hoffman Car Wash has graciously offered 50% of the proceeds of car washes sold through the link below to Gateway House of Peace.**

**Purchase some for family and friends, or give a clean car to your Valentine!**

**Gateway is 100% supported by the public.**

**Please help us meet our fundraising goal of $5,000 by February 28.**

**Offer the gift of peace to those that are managing end of life challenges by showing your car some love this month.**

**http://www.hoffmanhelpinghands.com/fundraisers/gatewayhouse**

**Thank you Hoffman Car Wash for being dedicated to supporting our community.**

### Sandwich Boards and Winter Weather

Sandwich boards are a great way to direct customers to your business. Several of our downtown shops and restaurants have these boards on display at corners and on sidewalks. Ideally, the boards should be removed each evening when your business closes and set up the next day. Winter snow storms can wreak havoc with sidewalks and roads. Snowplows will often end up burying any boards left on the sidewalks and the DPW does not have the manpower to keep digging them out. The buried boards may also cause a hazard to pedestrians and may become damaged, which could bring about the need for replacement (and its cost) to the business. Ballston Spa DPW is reminding businesses to bring their signs in when the forecast calls for measurable snow. Thank you for your cooperation!

**Need Health Insurance? We can help!**
**Call to schedule a free appointment.**
**1-866-872-3740**
**Adirondack Health Institute**
**https://ahihealth.org**

## Calendar of Events

**February 1-6** Saratoga Chowder Tour

**February 1-28** Month-long Hoffman Car Wash Fundraiser for Gateway House of Peace

**February 8 & 22** Village of Ballston Spa Board Meetings, 7 pm, via Zoom

**February 12** SCHC "Experts Next Door" Series-18th Century Chocolate, 7 pm, via Zoom

**February 15** BSBPA Board of Directors Meeting, 6:30 pm, via Zoom

Red Cross Blood Drive, 1-6 pm, Ballston Spa Elks Lodge

**February 15-19** Ballston Spa Schools Mid-Winter Recess

**www.ballston.org**

Ballston Spa
Business & Professional
ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 386
Ballston Spa, NY 12020