

# Greetings & Happy New Year from the Lark Street BID!

2011 was a very busy & successful year for the Lark Street BID & we would like to thank everyone in the Lark Street Neighborhood for helping us achieve our goals & celebrate our milestones including the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LarkFEST & the 15 Year Anniversary of the Organization. We anticipate many new & wonderful things happening in the District in the upcoming year & look forward to sharing in those achievements with our merchants, neighbors, & community supporters.

We provide the following core neighborhood services:

- Neighborhood Safety
- Neighborhood Marketing
- Street Maintenance
- Special Events & Promotions

## Our Mission

To build, sustain, & enhance a unique & prosperous living & business community for the residents, visitors, & merchants of the Lark Street Neighborhood of Albany.

## Neighborhood Safety

In 2011, we welcomed APD Neighborhood Engagement Officers Kevin Reedy & Mike Geraci. Their dedication to the neighborhood & constant presence are a welcome addition to the District. When not patrolling the neighborhood, the officers can be found in their office located in the Lark Street BID building at 245 Lark Street.

Operation Safe Corridor was launched this past September throughout the Lark Street District & down both Central & Washington Avenues. Safe Corridor signs indicate the desired traveling path that increases the eyes & ears on the street, keeping visitors, residents, & merchants safer while traveling through the neighborhood. If you are not already an Operation Safe Corridor Safe Haven Business, new businesses are always welcome to join. Safe Haven businesses provide a safe space for people requesting assistance & can be identified by the Operation Safe Corridor sign in their window or door.

The BID held two public Neighborhood Safety Watch forums in 2011, inviting merchants & residents to learn more about how they can play an active role in keeping our District safe. 2012 will see the continuation of these programs, as well as additional programming focused on neighborhood safety & quality of life issues. The Public Safety Committee of the Lark Street BID is open to the public; check our website for upcoming meeting dates.

## Neighborhood Marketing



2011 was the year of Petula Lark! Starting with a contest to name our feathered friend, Petula graced everything from pins to t-shirts, posters to banners. This past year saw the completion of a banner project with the installation of more than 30 banners in the District. Emblazoned with the Lark Street logo & mascot, District merchants sponsored individual banners & received a sponsor slice with their own name & logo. Annual banner sponsorships are still available; keep an eye out for information this spring on how you can market your business in this way.

The Lark Street BID promotes the businesses & events of the District through traditional advertising as well as through social media outlets including Facebook, boasting over 500 members, & Twitter, with close to 900 followers.

## Street Maintenance & Green Initiatives

A number of street maintenance initiatives took place in 2011, including adding an additional day of street cleaning to the weekly schedule. Along with the Green machines, the Clean Team staff is also spending time on foot sweeping the sidewalks making sure that our District is kept in tip-top shape. This past spring, The Lark Street BID was the only recipient in the Capital Region for a beautification award from Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, selecting Dana Park for a revitalization project. Scotts, with assistance from DGS, gave Dana Park a complete makeover including new sod, shrubs, trees, & flowers, making Dana Park a more inviting communal area. The BID also participates in volunteer clean up days with area organizations; helping to increase feelings of community & civic mindedness in all those involved. 2011 included clean up days with Hackett Middle School & Key Bank.

Please remember in the winter months that while the BID clears the crosswalks at each intersection, property owners are responsible for clearing snow on the sidewalk adjacent to their building(s).

## Special Events & Promotions

2011 was a BIG year for the Lark Street BID with multiple anniversaries being commemorated. While the toasts to the anniversaries of the BID as an organization, Art on Lark, LarkFEST, & Winter WonderLARK may be over, the 2012 event lineup is still going to offer many surprises & wonderful activities for the Merchants, Neighborhood, & City to enjoy!

### 2012 Event Dates

Champagne on the Park	Thursday, May 10
Art on Lark	Saturday, June 9
LarkFEST	Saturday, September 15
Winter WonderLARK	Saturday, December 8

The BID is also a supporter & participant in the monthly 1<sup>st</sup> Friday celebrations. You can join us from 5-9 pm various months throughout the year as we showcase both up & coming & more established artists from the region & see why Lark Street is known as "Albany's Arts District." Check our website for the schedule.

## Business Assistance

Whether you are an established business on the street or a new addition, the Lark Street BID is here to assist you with your small business needs. Whether it is a simple query or a more complicated issue, we have the resources & tools to assist you in getting the help you require. Our small business forums, Business Resource Guide, networking events, & relationships with the City of Albany & local organizations can help you get the answers you need to your business questions.

In 2011, the BID established new loading zones, coordinated ribbon-cutting events for new businesses, & served as a liaison for Merchants & the City in order to assist Merchants in a variety of projects.

## Other Benefits

If you have any news you want to share let us know, we are happy to use all of our social media & internet-based outlets to spread the news. We can also send out more formal press releases to all of our media contacts.

If you haven't been to our website, [larkstreet.org](http://larkstreet.org), in a while be sure to check out the business listings & map to make sure your information is correct. If you have updates to your listing, please let us know! While you are visiting [larkstreet.org](http://larkstreet.org) be sure to subscribe to our newsletter & receive up-to-date information on special events, business initiatives, safety, & other neighborhood information.

Do you have any special events of your own coming up?  
You can easily add them to our online calendar. Just click on the "Calendar" tab on our website.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the BID's activities & events, you are welcome to join any number of our committees. Please contact us for more information.

Our office is open from 9am - 5pm Monday – Friday. We have an open door policy & welcome visitors that are coming by for a purpose or just to say hi.

Best wishes for the New Year,

Mary Spinelli      & Sara-Becca Smith  
Executive Director      Director of Operations

## The Lark Street BID

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Business Improvement District