

Rochester's Coolest Spaces





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100-Year-Old Barn Timber Turned Into a New Sustainable Learning Center

Yeah, we think it's pretty cool too!

Thanks to a partnership between The Harley School, 9X30 Design Architecture LLP, and The Nichols Construction Team a new type of learning facility was created.

The Commons uses renewable energy sources to generate energy, heat and cool air with non-consuming passive methods, and capture and utilize water and carbon in the on-site greenhouse.

It also includes a control center where students learn the factors involved in managing the building's systems.

Harley holds a monthly **Commons Series**, which is free and open to the public. Discussion topics include mindfulness and empathy; environmental sustainability and science; civic engagement [in the community, social justice] and the democratic process; and inquiry-driven exploration. Schedule: harleyschool.org



The Harley School

Established 1917



FROM OUR EDITOR



Dear readers,

You don't have to look far to find cool spaces in Rochester. From cutting-edge office designs to cleverly repurposed buildings to quiet outdoor spots hidden amid the bustle of downtown, there is no shortage of great spaces in which to work or play.

The Rochester Business Journal asked our influential and connected readers to help us pick the coolest spaces in our region. We received nearly 200 nominations spread over four categories: Education, Events, Consumer and Office. Our editors selected the top 30 based on each space's appearance and function.

In this magazine you will have a chance to learn a little more about those winners and what makes them one of Rochester's Coolest Spaces. You can also find the winners showcased at rbj.net/coolest-spaces.

Ben Jacobs
Editor
Rochester Business Journal



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Creativity replaces cookie-cutter in architecture

By Kevin Oklobzija

In another age of architecture, the hallmark of a project often wasn't design creativity.

It was more like: have Jell-O mold, will build.

Just look at the cookie-cutter sports stadiums constructed from the mid-1960s through the 1970s. Who could tell the Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh from Riverfront Stadium in Cincinnati from Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia from Busch Stadium in St. Louis from Fulton County Stadium in Atlanta.

Educational structures weren't much different. No need for natural light when you have fluorescent bulbs.

"You could identify the architect just by looking at the outside of a building," said Victor Tomaselli, architect and senior principal at SEI Design Group in Rochester. "They weren't always savvy or sensitive to

aesthetics."

My, how times have changed. Now the architect is much more often allowed to incorporate artistic capabilities within the design structure, turning empty space into a sensory escape.

Rarely is it just one mind creating the design plan, however.

"We have a group of 10 designers that get together and brainstorm every project," said Allen Rossignol, president and CEO of Edge Architecture in Rochester. "We critique our own work, and this really creates an energy for these designs, and I know that energy gets passed on to the owner (of the space)."

A trend now: social, collaborative spaces, Rossignol said. An area within a room is designed to create interaction among strangers without anyone knowing that's the purpose of the blueprint. They were incorporated by Edge into the creation of Teen Central, part of the renovation project

at the City of Rochester's Bausch and Lomb Public Library Building, and at SUNY Geneseo's dining hall.

"Unscheduled collisions of social interactions," Rossignol explained. "Starbucks started the whole idea of where you bump into people."

Edge Architecture has been working with Barnes & Noble on just that sort of space. "It's done with soft seating areas, maybe in a place where you might be waiting for a friend to show up," he said.

Sometimes in an adaptive reuse project, the creative ideas accentuating modern design bring back to life the essence of a bygone century.

"It's like playing the old rustic against the new sleek," said Al Pardi, president and partner at Pardi Partnership Architects of Rochester.

Pardi's firm did just that a few years back with Howard Hanna's Rochester headquarters at the intersection of West Broad and West Main streets. The building was a warehouse, which utilized the aqueduct that is now Broad Street.

"Barges would pull up adjacent to the building and be unloaded," Pardi said.

Remembering that past was key in the creation of the offices for Howard Hanna (at the time Nothnagle). "The access doors were built to be like the original doors," Pardi said. "There are wood beams and wood columns mixed with real slick, contemporary designs and contemporary lighting."

Not far away in the High Falls District sits the headquarters of SEI Design. When the partners founded the firm in 2006, they were looking for space that would be functional but also sell their work before they ever had to say a word. They toured the



The former Parry Building in the High Falls District, today the headquarters of SEI Design Group, incorporates the historic spirit of the building with cutting-edge office design. Photo provided

old, vacant Parry Building, a structure built in the mid-1800s, and knew right away they had found their home.

"It was basically an open shell with raw ceilings, floors and walls," Tomaselli said. "The character was pretty intense."

In creating their office, preservation of the past was first and foremost. So rather than remove old manufacturing equipment that was still in place, they worked it into the decor. A steel shaft is suspended from the ceiling and runs the length of the building, probably 80 to 100 feet. It was a mechanism powered by water in a bygone era. From it hang chains from the pulley system used in the warehouse 150 years ago. Those implements were tidied up and now give the office one-of-a-kind, this-is-how-it-was-once-done character.

"They would use that system to pick stuff probably off a horse-drawn cart and bring it into the building," Tomaselli said. "There's a rich history in this part of town that we as architects believe should be respected. Everything is all very modern, but it blends well with that history, like the warm wood tones that complement the exposed brick walls."

The SEI Design Group office is one of Rochester's Coolest Spaces. The firm also did the design on the Rochester City School District's James P.B. Duffy School No. 12 on South Avenue, another site honored.

School No. 12 was your typical half-century-old school that de-emphasized walls and used pods as classrooms. It also had a great number of interior rooms that were isolated from daylight, as well as a hallway and stairwell system that was functionally inefficient, SEI architect and principal Ted Mountain said.

"The pods were essentially four classrooms jammed into one, the only real separation between rooms were bookcases so the acoustics were poor, and it was also designed when there wasn't emphasis on natural lighting," Mountain said. "It was



At the James P.B. Duffy School No. 12, architects addressed a lack of natural light by adding dozens more windows, two light courts that run from ground floor to roof, and skylights. Photo provided

kind of depressing in these pods."

The project was a challenge. The redesign of the stairways and hallways needed to be code compliant, and even though the three-story building was quite deep in structure, they wanted to bring natural light to as many spaces as possible.

So in going about renovation, the designers employed the same approach they always use.

"You evaluate and identify problems, issues and shortcomings," Tomaselli said. "Then you interview the owner to determine pragmatic needs and aesthetic desires."

Step two: "How can we solve the problems the building has inherently and aesthetically," Tomaselli said.

At School No. 12, SEI architects achieved their functional and creative goals. They addressed the lack of natural light by adding upwards of 85 windows and creating two light courts that run from ground floor to roof, topped off by 30-foot-by-30-foot skylights.

Sometimes the space itself doesn't really present challenges. Instead, a firm wants the old-style office structure replaced by today's trends.

"People don't get offices lined in a row, they get work counters and stools with ping pong tables and pool tables not far away," Pardi said. "There are informal sitting areas and lounges. And in the combined office

space, we put indoor plantings and change the ceiling heights so you don't feel like you're in an airport."

Pardi's architects have ideas, but so does the client.

"We sit down with the owner of the company and we look at how they do their work," he said. "And that's the beauty of it; it's based on the company."

Most rewarding is when the client loves the work, and it impacts business. Statistics say that's certainly the case at Teen Central in the library, where there's an array of different spaces, including personal studios that allow the creation of projects such as music videos and movies. In the central area, overhead lighting features an array of colors that stimulate moods and minds.

"Since the grand opening in the spring of 2017, there has been a 62 percent increase in traffic to the spaces we designed," Rossignol said.

That's proof of the impact of creative design. And proof the Jello mold won't ever be used again in architecture.

"Every project is unique, every building has different parameters, limits and problems," Tomaselli said, "so they naturally all require a different solution."

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Breathing new life into Rochester's old buildings

By Lisa Granite

The repurposing trend has grown beyond household objects to encompass the entire house—or rather, warehouse. Old and often abandoned buildings are being upcycled into dynamic new spaces, salvaging a piece of Rochester's history and giving both a new chapter.

The first step in the process is simple: find the right building for the new need. When Clover Lanes owner Dan Morgenstern was looking for a spot to create a fresh take on the classic bowling alley, he hired Staach Inc. The multi-disciplinary design firm concentrates on interior and furniture design, but also manufactures furniture and other components for spaces.



Eshelman

Staach principal and founder Seth Eshelman says his team worked with Morgenstern on "site selection, concept design and test fitting the space, and figuring out how the space will work." The result was Radio Social, a full-scale bowling and gaming center complete with a bar and a dining area.

"Trying to find a way to reuse old buildings was part of the work we did with them," Eshelman says. "We were touring other facilities, trying to figure out a way to use these buildings, and when we found (the building on) Carlson Road it seemed to be a natural fit. The space had a really good feel to it."

The building was the former Stromberg-Carlson manufacturing facility. Among other aspects, the property's large backyard area fit Morgenstern's vision for Radio Social as a place where people could hang out and play a variety of games, both indoors and outdoors.



The dining room and bar area in Radio Social has a modern look, but retains some details from the original Stromberg-Carlson facility. Photo by Leah Stacy

Bringing the outdoors inside was a big factor in architectural and engineering firm Clark Patterson Lee's transformation of the old Tops Friendly Markets store in Irondequoit into the Rochester Regional Health Riedman Health Center.



Trott

"(We made use of) the whole building, but we also added the front to allow for natural light," principal architect Michelle Trott says. "We did breakthroughs in a couple spots to add natural light to waiting rooms as well."

Other features that made the Tops store a good site include its proximity to local bus stops and the open floor plan.

"It's a prominent site, with great access for patients," Trott says. "And the building itself was not in bad shape. (Old stores like) Tops or Wal-Marts have

these open floors plans that allow us to create what we need."

With 26 floors of offices, the former Chase Tower had the opposite of an open floor plan. Gallina Development Corp., a commercial real estate firm, gutted it to create The Metropolitan's residential, retail and commercial spaces—and soon the new offices of Partners + Napier.



Flisnik

Architectural and engineering firm Bergmann is working with Partners + Napier on a "highly dynamic open office area and office interface area," says Gary Flisnik, principal of Bergmann's Northeast Buildings Division. The floors that will house the new offices originally contained a large dining room, an auditorium and an industrial kitchen.

"There was some large-scale food service equipment that had to be removed, and a lot of exhaust systems and mechanical mezzanines for servicing," Flisnik says.

And there was one more thing that required removal: asbestos.

"This building was constructed in the '60s," Flisnik says. "That building vintage usually signifies there is a high level of asbestos material that needs to be taken care of prior to demolition work, and that was the case here."

Managing curveballs like this one is by far the biggest challenge of repurposing old buildings, these experts say.

"There is a tendency for a lot more unknowns to occur," Flisnik explains. "When you're going in and renovating an existing structure, there may not be any accurate building structure documents you can rely on."

"You do the best you can to get professionals in to assess the site before you start, but you never know," Eshel-

man says. "You'll rip down a wall, and then it's like 'oh, we didn't expect that.' You just don't know until you're knee deep in it."

But sometimes those unexpected finds can prove fortuitous. Eshelman and his team discovered a cache of original windows when going through the Stromberg-Carlson building, which they used as a model for the new windows.

"Our goal was to bring some awareness of the building, historically try to bring it back a little bit," he says. "It really helped to open the space up and bring a lot of natural light in, plus bring some appreciation of what this building was when it was a manufacturing facility."

Resurrecting a bit of history is arguably one of the most valuable aspects of repurposing older buildings—one that can't be replicated in a new build.

"I think that it's a movement to bring back to life some areas that weren't in use," Trott says. "Obviously, Tops was

vacant for a while and this has helped bring back a useful plaza to Irondequoit where there wasn't something before. It brings life to the community."

Flisnik concurs.

"Taking something that has been vacant and bringing it back to life is certainly a real pro," he says. He adds that while some of these buildings might have historical preservation issues, which may require a little extra work, "the pro part of that is you're keeping some of that history around."

"These older spaces have their old story, and we're able to take that story and fold it into a new narrative," Eshelman says. "You're taking these unique, historical buildings from the city's past and bringing people back into them, and I think that's a really powerful thing."

Lisa Granite is the associate editor of the Rochester Business Journal and The Daily Record.

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CENTER CITY TERRACE + LOUNGE

When it opened in July 2017, the Center City Terrace + Lounge filled a need in Rochester's business district: providing an outdoor haven above the hustle and bustle of downtown.

Located on the fourth floor of the Hyatt Regency Rochester, the spacious roof terrace and indoor bar provide a comfortable atmosphere to relax, enjoy some food and drinks and take in the views.

Center City has become a hot spot for group gatherings, be it a corporate event, wedding or even just a night out with some friends. It is also becoming a favorite among locals, particularly those working or living downtown, who just want a place to unwind in the open air.

The team at MC Management



— which owns the Hyatt and Center City, among other local hospitality venues — wanted to provide “an urban oasis for locals and visitors alike that could take advantage of the beautiful city view.”

While the rooftop view brings

many to Center City, it's hardly the only draw. A robust menu of creative cocktails, beer and wine, and a laid-back atmosphere — complete with yard games, firepits and comfy deck furniture — make it an enjoyable hangout in addition to the scenery.

THE PLAYHOUSE / SWILLBURGER

A historic former church on South Clinton Avenue has a new life as a bar, burger joint and retro arcade.

The Playhouse and Swillburger opened about three years ago inside 820 S. Clinton Ave., the newest chapter in the 1890 building's long history. Originally constructed as the Second German Baptist Church, the building has held various religious congregations, a machine shop and the Rochester Community Players before restaurateurs Jeff Ching and Brian Van Etten purchased it in 2014.

During extensive renovations to create the Playhouse and Swillburger, many of the building's original design elements were incorporated into the updated space, such as a rose window and balconies. Much of the original



layout was kept. The Playhouse's bar occupies the same footprint as the former RCP stage, and the backstage area is now office space.

The design contributes to the Playhouse and Swillburger's melding of old and new. The burgers, tater tots and other fare made

with local ingredients at Swillburger presents a modern take on the classic American burger joint, while a custom bar and furniture from the Rochester-based Staach design firm join over 35 arcade cabinets and pinball machines from decades past.

PORT OF ROCHESTER MARINA

Since opening in 2016, the state-of-the-art Port of Rochester Marina has helped draw boaters, residents and visitors to Rochester's Lake Ontario waterfront.

The marina, located about seven miles north of the city center, sits where the Genesee River meets the lake. It provides several amenities for boaters, including showers, internet, a boaters' lounge, a pump-out station, and a ship store. The marina also boasts a four-lane boat launch and a dock wall.

The space is popular among local boaters, but the marina also regularly hosts ships from the upper Great Lakes, Florida, Canada and even as far away as Europe.

The port is centrally located among several other bars and restaurants, Ontario Beach Park,



and the Charlotte Genesee Light-house, making it a charming place for both out-of-town boaters and locals to stop and enjoy the waterfront.

Owned by the City of Rochester and operated by F3 Marina, the marina is also a vital part of showcasing and revitalizing Rochester's waterfront areas. The area is a

great place for all to walk, bike, picnic and enjoy water views. Since opening, several restaurants have opened in the marina's terminal building for all to enjoy, including California Rollin', Jetty at the Port and Abbott's Frozen Custard. A large event space is also available for rental.

RADIO SOCIAL

Open for just over a year, Radio Social brings the concept of a social club to Rochester under the spacious roof of the former Stromberg-Carlson facility, repurposing a former manufacturing space into a fun gathering spot for friends and families.

The unique space, located on Carlson Road in Rochester's North Winton Village, opened in May 2017 as a new spin on the traditional bowling alley. Dan Morgenstern, who owned Clover Lanes in Brighton until its closure in 2016, wanted to take a fresh approach in his new bowling business.

In addition to 32 rent-by-the-hour lanes, Radio Social offers a variety of games including giant Jenga, cornhole, table tennis, pool, foosball, skee ball, darts and shuffleboard.

Local designers like Staach and



Lives Styled contributed to shaping the 30,000-square-foot space's modern midcentury design, an homage to the building's history as a World War II-era radio production facility. A display wall of classic radios is frequently photographed by visitors.

Radio Social also boasts a

restaurant serving dinner and Sunday brunch, directed by local restaurateur Chuck Cerankosky and staffed by executive chef Steven Eakins, a Fairport native who appeared on Food Network's "Chopped." A bar in the back room serves signature cocktails and local beers.

VILLAGE GATE

Downtown residents have frequented Village Gate Square for decades. The old lithographic factory complex on N. Goodman St. was bought by Stern Properties in 1981, and was turned into an indoor mixed-use mall with small shops and restaurants.

As befitting a complex that's been around for almost four decades, the site has changed quite a bit over the years. Retailers and restaurants have come and gone, but the site's funky style still remains.

These days local murals and other artwork are joined by the popular Gate House at Village Gate restaurant, which offers gourmet burgers and wood-fired pizza, among other dishes.

Gate House's owners recently



moved the restaurant to a larger location onsite, opening the way for Polizzi's to take its spot earlier this year. It's casual fine dining that offers Mediterranean, Italian and American cuisine.

If food's not your thing, then the collection of retailers could be more your speed.

Perhaps venerable Yankee Clipper to scratch that collecting itch? Maybe a visit to The Purple Painted Lady to embrace your inner artist? Hana Pilates & Bodyworks to work off lunch? Mood Makers Books to browse their library?

Odds are there's something of interest to you. Why not find out?

WICKHAM FARMS

Fall is just around the corner and, with that in mind, the good folks at Wickham Farms, located on Fairport Nine Mile Road in Penfield, are preparing for the autumn rush.

The site is not just a farm; it also includes a pick-your-own apple orchard large enough to need its own separate parking lot.

Both farm and orchard combined cover about 100 acres of land.

The entire site is the brainchild of Bill and Debbie Wickham, who have owned and operated the farm for 32 years.

Their motto is "Farm Fresh Family Fun," and they pride themselves on keeping things simple. It's what you would expect from a family business that sprung out of selling pumpkins along the road in Pen-



field some 30 years ago.

Before the weather changes for good, there are a few summer programs left to enjoy. The tail end of August and beginning of September will feature another Sunflower Spectacular Festival.

Started last year, visitors can cut their own sunflowers, along with hayrides, free doughnuts, a five-

acre corn maze and an opportunity to use high-powered apple cannons.

Once the festival ends, the sunflowers will be harvested and given to patients and caregivers at Golisano Children's Hospital as part of their "Spread the Sunshine" effort.

540WMAIN LEARNING ACADEMY

540WMain Learning Academy is an educational venue that hosts classes and events for a wide variety of interests. The nonprofit “communiversity” can be found on the first floor of the historic 540 W. Main Street building, located in the Susan B. Anthony Preservation District.

At the heart of what makes 540WMain so special is its mission to bring together people of all walks of life around learning. Founder Calvin Eaton aims to do this in a setting that fosters a sense of community and collaboration.

The space is easily affordable for anyone looking to teach a niche class or just simply share their knowledge with the community. From vegan baking to lectures on intersectional feminism, grant writing to hip-hop cardio-fitness,



the selection of classes offered there is broad and useful to many. 540WMain also provides space for local artists to show their work, along with internship and employment opportunities for young people.

Since taking up the location in 2016, the team at 540WMain

has been slowly renovating the building. Working with Kiva Rochester, the organization secured a crowd funded loan to redesign the community classroom. Eaton says it's not only about having a good space, but making it accessible to others to use, that makes 540WMain special.

CARY GRAPHIC ARTS COLLECTION

Within the Brutalist architecture of the Rochester Institute of Technology campus lies an immersive library of graphic communication. Visitors to the Cary Graphic Arts Collection often get inky as they experience, hands-on, the history of printing on the Collection's 19 printing presses.

Far from a dusty museum with a look-but-don't-touch policy, the Cary Collection hums with activity as curators demonstrate printing techniques on the presses, students examine rare artifacts, artists-in-residence create new works, and scholars from around the world conduct research.

The library's Kelmscott/Goudy Albion iron hand press was used in 1896 by English designer William Morris to print *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, which is considered one of the most beautiful books ever produced. The newest



addition, dubbed the “Uncommon Press,” is an authentic reproduction of an 18th-century wooden common press that was built by students at RIT.

Among the more unusual objects are a book woven entirely in thread using an automated loom that prefigured the computer, every comic book published in April of 1956,

and a print created from a direct impression of an actual bat wing.

Surrounding the presses is a diverse array of artifacts like early manuscripts, artists' books, posters, and shopping bags. Since its founding in 1969, the Cary Collection has continued to host unique public exhibitions, free lectures, and other programming throughout the year.

THE COMMONS AT HARLEY SCHOOL

The Commons at Harley School is the first education space in the country for grades pre-K through 12 to offer students multiple dimensions of education around creating a sustainable future.

The 15,000-square-foot structure, designed by Christopher Costanza of 9X30 Design Architecture and built by the Nichols Construction Team, earns its status as a “living building” because it generates its own energy, heats and cools with renewable nontoxic resources, captures and utilizes water and carbon in its greenhouse, and operates efficiently. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this is that it accomplishes all this by using students as the “brains” or controls for managing its operations.



During the school year, monthly talks are held here that are open to the public and focus on a variety of related topics, and the options are always expanding. This year, after being awarded funds through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, The Commons added a kitchen to its facilities.

Also housed in The Commons are the Briggs Center for Civic Engagement, Center for Mindfulness and Empathy Education (CMEE), a design lab and maker space, and the Middle School Science Center. Students of all ages use The Commons and it functions as the hub of Harley's STEM education.

FLOWER CITY ARTS CENTER

As civic organizations grow and change, oftentimes their places of work become too small for what's needed, and it's time to move on.

So it was with Hook and Ladder No. 4 on Monroe Avenue and its original firehouse in the early 1970s. Built in 1896 and doubled in size less than ten years later, it had become outmoded by newer and more up-to-date facilities in the city.

When the firehouse was abandoned in 1971, the building became a haven for various businesses and retailers. Some important community institutions found early homes there, like the Gay Alliance and the Genesee Co-Op Federal Credit Union.

The institution that stayed put is the Flower City Arts Center. Originally called the Genesee Street



Organization after the address of its original home, the group moved into the firehouse sometime during 1972 and has since become a staple of the community.

The name may have changed, but the desire to give residents an outlet for artistic interest hasn't.

The Center now comprises

the entire firehouse, from dark-room and photography facilities, facilities for printmaking and book arts, a ceramics workshop, three galleries for local artists to exhibit their artwork and space available to rent for aspiring artists.

There are also internships, over 240 classes for the public, and youth programs.

GAREN PEACE GARDEN

Visitors to Nazareth College will notice a new garden as they enter campus. At the heart of the Garen Peace Garden is a renovated stone fountain, accessed by naturalized stone and brick pathways and surrounded by a stone amphitheater and perennial gardens.

The Garden dates back to the early 20th century, when Nazareth's founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph, hired a mason to use field-stones of various sizes, brought over from an old barn on French Road, to create a concrete-lined fountain pond in the southwest lawn of the Motherhouse, now the Golisano Academic Center.

Over the years, the fountain fell into disuse. Thanks to the efforts of Kathy Garen and Nazareth trustee Frank Clark, fountain restoration began in earnest last year,



with the final dedication taking place in September.

The garden was named in honor of Garen's parents Jim and Judy on behalf of Garen, her three sisters and their families.

The first thing visitors encoun-

ter when they enter campus, the garden's fountain has become a centerpiece for the college. It provides a serene setting for outside classes, informal student gatherings, small concerts, and quiet moments of study or reflection.

ROCHESTER BRAINERY

Looking to learn a new skill in an inspiring and welcoming space? The Rochester Brainery, a community classroom space in the city's Neighborhood of the Arts, aims to bring diverse groups of people together around a common interest in an open, bright environment.

Since opening in 2013, the Brainery has played host to over 40 classes a month on topics ranging from dance, painting and crafts to cocktail making, spirituality and business. Local artists, chefs, authors and other experts teach single-session classes that typically cost \$30 or less.

Rochester Brainery moved to its current location on Anderson Avenue two years ago, expanding from a classroom space in Village Gate. In designing the



space, owned by Stern Properties, Rochester Brainery's team utilized local design firms Staach and Lives Styled to create a comfortable and unique atmosphere for learning. The light, open design takes advantage of the building's high ceilings and large windows. Plants around the space help to make

classrooms feel fun and inviting.

The Brainery's space is available for rent to hold meetings for social and business groups, presentations, workshops, parties and celebrations. In addition, the Brainery hosts a bazaar each month that showcases the work of local makers and artisans.

JAMES P.B. DUFFY SCHOOL NO. 12

For city residents, their school buildings have been woven into the fabric of their communities over decades, acting as community centers. In many cases, however, those buildings haven't been renovated and updated for students in decades.

James P.B. Duffy School No. 12, located on South Avenue, is a prime example of this. The existing building had an open-classroom layout with poor acoustics and very limited daylighting. It was also in need of improvements for safe exiting.

SEI Design Group was hired to redesign a building for 21st century learning, bringing it back to life with enclosed classrooms, natural daylighting, a reconfigured circulation system and state-of-the-art technology.

SEI worked to completely



renovate the building, finishing their work in time for a grand opening in the fall of 2016. The new building offered extensive improvements for students and faculty alike.

Small additions were made, new window openings were created, and two "light courts" with

overhead skylights were added. Stairwells were replaced, as were all heating, cooling and electrical systems.

This was all done with the aim to give the community a gathering and learning space for decades to come, instead of demolishing a piece of Rochester history.

RUNDEL MEMORIAL BUILDING OF THE CENTRAL LIBRARY OF ROCHESTER AND MONROE COUNTY

Civic libraries are supposed to be a repository for a region's history, and the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County's Rundel Memorial Building on South Avenue is chock full of it.

While the gleaming Bausch & Lomb Public Library stands for modern architecture, the classic building that faces it across the street is a curio of another time. Built in 1936, the original Rundel Memorial Library is one of the few buildings the Works Progress Administration (WPA) erected locally, thanks to a bequest from local art enthusiast Morton Rundel, an early investor in Eastman Kodak.

Rundel bequeathed \$400,000 to go towards the building of a library and fine arts building upon his death in 1911. By the time



legal challenges from his relatives were resolved, interest helped grow the amount to over \$1 million once construction finally started in 1933.

Its location is right above the Erie Canal's original bed and the Johnson and Seymour mill race, some 200 years old, still flows

under the building.

Befitting its era of construction, the building is a testament to the Art Deco style of the 1930s. The original ceiling and chandelier designed by Pike Stained Glass Studios still remains, and repairs are done by the granddaughter of the original installer.

SPRINGDALE FARM

At first glance, Springdale Farm may look like your regular dairy farm. But a closer look reveals much more than you'd expect.

The farm, located in Northampton Park in Ogden, has been owned by Monroe County since the 1960s and run by Heritage Christian Services since 1993.

Everything is run through the farm's Visitors Center, built by Testa Construction, which is where people can figure out where to visit on the grounds, including the playground and picnic pavilion.

Heritage Christian offers two different two-day programs for people with developmental disabilities. Those programs include a demonstration farm, where children can see the day-to-day business of farming performed right in front of them.



Other programs include volunteers for the petting zoo on the grounds, cutting carrots for animal rescue and delivering meals to elderly neighbors.

The farm is active year-round – official estimates put it at around 40,000 visitors per year – and there's plenty to offer beyond the standard farm tour and Heritage's

program.

There are tours for schools, dairy tours for families, a robotic milking barn, nature trails and a pond to enjoy.

The site remains an active option for corporate renters and community festivals, along with an annual children's camp for those between the ages of 7 and 9.



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ARTISANWORKS

As an art space, ARTISANworks is a massive collective of stunning work by local talent, with a business model that puts financial support of artists first. As an event space, it's a thrilling, kaleidoscopic setting with an edge like no other in Rochester. And, in general, it's just a cool place to visit.

A self-funding nonprofit, ARTISANworks lives within multiple interconnected former warehouse and factory buildings on Blossom Road near the intersection of Winton Road. With 40,000 square feet of renovated art space, it holds some 500,000 pieces of artwork, antiques, automobiles and memorabilia by local artisans.

Unlike traditional art galleries, where work is usually sold on a consignment arrangement, every piece inside the sprawling facility has already been purchased by AR-



TISANworks, thus ensuring financial support to the artist. ARTISANworks then supports itself through a combination of resales of those pieces and by renting out various wings of the facility for events.

About a dozen different rooms and galleries each offer different accommodations for different event needs, from the Retro Room designed for small gatherings of 20

or fewer to the Main Showroom, which holds up to 100 people complete with a hardwood dance floor, balcony, bandstand area and private bar — a hot spot for wedding receptions and other large parties. All spaces are chock-full of eye-grabbing artwork, and most can be paired with adjacent rooms to increase guest capacity.

BACKROOM LOUNGE @ RECORD ARCHIVE

Found inside one of the largest record stores in the country, the Backroom Lounge @ Record Archive is a truly unique concept that both enhances the record store experience and brings new opportunities to the brick-and-mortar retailer.

The 2,000-square-foot entertainment and event space located amid the stacks of vinyl albums and music memorabilia is an eclectic mix of eras and genres. An array of seating tables, booths and comfy chairs provide ample space for good-sized crowds, and the decor is unlike anything you'll find anywhere else. Throughout you'll spot '50s jukeboxes, lava lamps, bookshelves stacked with rock 'n' roll-themed literature, an antique piano and, the centerpiece of it all, a giant tyrannosaurus rex skeleton.



With the addition of the lounge in the spring of 2017, Record Archive became the only music store in the state to also serve alcohol. The lounge bar serves up a variety of regional craft beers and wines and, because the liquor license covers the whole business, record

store patrons are allowed to carry their drinks around the stacks while they browse.

The lounge also features a stage for live performances with state-of-the-art sound equipment and a projector and screen for playing videos.

LA LUNA

As with most downtown areas, there are many options if you're looking for a restaurant with a lovely view of Rochester.

But few have as good a view as the one offered by La Luna at 60 Browns Race.

Opened in December 2010, it's the former home of the Triphammer Grill and in a prime location—offering a spectacular view of the gorge just a short hop from High Falls on the site of a former forge.

The restaurant specializes in Italian cuisine, offering the usual choices like various pasta dishes with arugula and caprese salads for both lunch and dinner.

If salad and pasta isn't your thing, then there are pulled pork and cheesesteak wraps and sand-



wiches to enjoy. There's also grilled pizza on the menu.

Beyond the food, the restaurant has a solid track record of hosting private and corporate events, including weddings and parties.

La Luna also hosted one of the final events for the Race for the

Space competition this past spring. The annual competition—a blend of "Shark Tank" and "Extreme Home Makeover"—allows young entrepreneurs to present a retail idea and work with volunteers and members of the community to get it built.

THE PENTHOUSE AT ONE EAST AVENUE

A dynamic event space with 360-degree views of downtown Rochester and beyond, the Penthouse at One East Avenue provides the perfect urban setting for social gatherings, corporate meetings and celebrations.

The Penthouse, located on the 11th floor of One East Avenue, is within walking distance of downtown hotels, nightlife and entertainment. Built in 1962 for the Security Trust Company, One East Avenue is currently owned by Gallina Development; the 11th floor was converted into an event space in 2013.

Since then, the Penthouse — operated by Key Hospitality LLC — has hosted countless weddings, corporate events, fundraisers, showers and parties in a space



that can hold up to 250 guests, but still feels intimate. Its positioning and floor-to-ceiling windows make the Penthouse an ideal place to watch Rochester's Fourth of July fireworks, Jazz Fest, the St. Patrick's Day parade and other downtown happenings. On a clear day, visitors can even see as far as

Lake Ontario and Bristol Mountain, and the open-air wraparound terrace is a great place to catch a Rochester sunset.

The Penthouse also holds its own events, including silent discos and musical performances, as well as a weekly Sunset Cocktail Series during the summer.

SPROULL ATRIUM AT MAX OF EASTMAN

Patrons at Max of Eastman Place not only get to enjoy the food offered as part of a top-flight restaurant, but they also have expansive views of the Eastman Theatre, Gibbs Street, and the attached courtyard; thanks to the Sproull Atrium.

Designed by SWBR Architects, The Miller Center, where Max of Eastman Place is located, was an add-on to the existing Sibley Library of the Eastman School of Music, specializing in high-end dining and hosting various events since Chef Tony Gullace's restaurant opened in 2002.

"It gives us the opportunity to provide our clients with the most elegant and high-toned events, no matter what the season," says Max Rochester marketing director, Christine Bailey.

"Events during the day are light and airy, while nighttime events



become sophisticated and stylish affairs."

Designers wanted to evoke European cities like Paris in the final look, with the 30-foot northwest-facing windows and the addition of a sculpture from acclaimed local artist Albert Paley donated by local philanthropist Ned Corman.

With four separate spaces located in the Miller Center, Max

of Eastman Place has become a popular wedding destination, as well as for birthday celebrations, anniversaries and corporate events over the years.

It's also a venue for the CGI Rochester International Jazz Festival and is located in the footprint of the Key Bank Rochester Fringe Festival.

THE KEYBANK ROCHESTER FRINGE FESTIVAL SPIEGELTENT

While the KeyBank Rochester Fringe Festival is a relatively new local tradition, its home base is not.

Ever since the festival's second year in 2013, organizers have erected a spiegel tent at the event's East End hub, located at the intersection of East Main and Gibbs Street, also known as One Fringe Place during the festival.

The history of what's officially known as the KeyBank Rochester Fringe Festival Spiegel tent dates back to the 19th century.

Originally created in the Flemish region of Belgium, these mobile dance halls were popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. "Spiegel" means "mirror," and faceted mirrors, stained glass windows, wooden floors, period lighting, and wooden booths and bar are just a few of the features of these tents.



Many were buried by their owners or destroyed by the Nazis in World War II, but a handful from that era survive. San Francisco and Seattle are just two cities that have permanent tents in use today.

After noting that similar festivals around the world leased spiegel tents for their events, Fringe Festival organizers contacted Belgium-based company Het

Spiegelpaleis, leasing the Cristal Palace Spiegel tent from owner Rik Klessens.

Every year, Klessens flies here to oversee its installation and events held in the tent.

That list of events includes Cirque du Fringe show, late-night comedy shows, Silent Disco and Kids Disco, and Afternoon Tea.

ST. JOSEPH'S PARK

One of the great joys of living in a city is the potential of discovering a secret area. Somewhere to pause and take a breath from the day, seemingly hidden away from the rest of the world.

For many Rochesterians, St. Joseph's Park, located on Franklin Street downtown, is just that — a little green spot hiding smack dab in the heart of the city.

It's a fascinating resurrection of the former St. Joseph Church, an important piece of civic history.

The church was the largest German parish in Western New York for over 130 years, including a bell tower that was built in 1909. That changed in October 1974,

thanks to a four-alarm fire that destroyed most of the church.

Because the city had decreed it a landmark, demolition was illegal and out of the question.

But thanks to a handful of groups — church owners the Redemptorist Fathers, the Landmark Society of Western New York, SUNY Brockport, and the city itself — the church's tower and courtyard were saved and the surrounding land was converted into a small park that opened six years later.

The property remains an active spot for family and wedding photos, and yes, the occasional break from the world.



STUDIO 180

Rochesterians certainly don't lack for event venues. A relatively new choice on the market is making its way by blending modern touches with classic style.

Studio 180 is located in the St. Paul Quarter downtown on the first floor of the Smith Gormly Building, and has been hosting weddings and other events for the past five years.

The building itself is rich in history, having been designed by architect Harvey Ellis in the 1920s.

John Larkin and Deb Standing strove to design a venue that presented something memorable in an area where residents aren't spoiled for choice. Details include exposed brick, oak timber, original maple hardwoods and 20-foot beamed ceilings.



Larkin owns Studio 180, and the final design went along with his desire to ensure the venue avoided becoming what might be called a "cookie-cutter space."

Distinctive highlights at the studio include antique machine shop work benches turned banquet tables, a house sound system

featuring vintage receivers and speakers, and huge barn doors as wall accents. The room is lit by a collection of unique lamps and chandeliers.

Events held there so far include family gatherings, small to medium weddings and holiday celebrations.

THE YARDS COLLECTIVE

The Yards Collective, located at the Public Market in Rochester, was founded in 2011 as a collaborative art space intended to be inclusive and supportive of local residents and their artwork.

Not only is there a gallery hosting multiple events every month, there are twice-yearly Collaborative Artist Residency programs (the only programs of its kind in Rochester) and frequent craft sales, hosting a wide range of creators.

Over the last seven years, the site has grown to include over a dozen low-cost studio spaces aimed at those who wish to jump into Rochester's art scene, and not just with oils and paints. There's also a woodshop onsite for residents who prefer to indulge their muse by carving instead of painting.



The Yards director and residency program alum Kristina Kaiser calls the Public Market location funky, warm and perfect for the local art community's needs.

Beyond weekly showings Saturdays during Market hours, the gallery is also open during the city's First Friday events or by ap-

pointment. Local artists are given a chance to mingle with the community, along with the chance to show off their work and network among appreciators of the arts.

It's all part of a goal to have art be more accessible and visible in Rochester. (And fun, as Kaiser insists.)

WILDER ROOM

The newest selection on our list is actually an old city favorite recently restored to its former glory.

For society members in the latter half of the 19th and early 20th century, the local hotspot of the day was the Rochester Club on East Avenue.

Built in 1860, the Club was intended as a space for local industrialists to unwind away from the troubles of the day. According to local historians, it was the first such group in the city's history.

But as economic troubles appeared in the latter half of the 20th century, the Club's membership slowly dwindled. In 1979, the club was disbanded and the building sold off.

It became known as the Rochester Ballroom, and remained an



active event venue.

The building, renamed after former Mayor Abel Carter Wilder, underwent a major renovation that was completed in time to host Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival events in June.

When completed, the building's 2,660-square-foot ballroom once again sported a barrel vaulted

ceiling, four crystal chandeliers originally installed in 1905 and windows overlooking Barrett Alley.

Along with being a venue for the Jazz Festival, the Wilder Room is now open for weddings, private celebrations, meetings, conferences and other community events.

CENTER FOR URBAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Located in the heart of Rochester's Downtown Innovation Zone, the Center for Urban Entrepreneurship, or CUE, is a hub for urban entrepreneurial programs and research.

The CUE began offering programming in 2014, but it was a move into the historic building at 40 Franklin St., once home to Rochester Savings Bank, that brought its efforts into the heart of downtown.

Constructed in 1927, the building today is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. It was acquired in 2011 by Rochester Historic Ventures — a group comprised of members of the Leenhouts, Tait and Tones families, as well as some of

the Broadstone Real Estate management team — with the intention of returning it to public use. Rochester Historic Ventures then donated the building to RIT in 2012.

After taking ownership, RIT began making significant renovations to the building with a combination of federal, state and university funds. The university estimated that \$2 million was spent just on renovating CUE's offices, which include meeting rooms for clients, shared workspace and a multipurpose classroom. The 5,000-square-foot facility maintains its historic character with all hand-laid tile from floor to ceiling and also has wireless technology throughout.



DIXON SCHWABL

When a bad snowstorm caused their former office's roof to collapse in 2001, owners Lauren Dixon and Mike Schwabl gathered the whole Dixon Schwabl staff and collected ideas on a new office for the marketing firm. Everything was on the table and the ideas that had the most votes would be adopted, provided they could stay within budget.

Just as you would expect from a team of creatives, the ideas were fresh, exciting and entirely different from that of other local offices. A koi pond, a slide between floors, working fireplaces, MacKenzie-Childs decor, outdoor meeting areas, not one but two horses from the Horses on Parade fundraising initiative, electric vehicle charging stations, bright colors throughout — especially the carpet — and temperature control in each office, along with windows that actually



open so the team can take in the seasonal smells.

If that sounds like a pipe dream to you, you're just not as resourceful as Lauren Dixon. She proudly boasts that, when it came time to build the new office in 2002, thanks to some clever budgeting and ingenuity, every single staff idea was adopted. Today in their Victor office, which

looks more like a 19th century mansion from the outside, the staff relishes working in a setting they had a hand in creating.

Dixon says perhaps her favorite aspect of the office is a bell they keep out front with a sign encouraging visitors to ring if they've just had a "wow" experience. It rings quite often.

EMERGE

When the team at Emerge began planning renovations to their office in 2015 they had two big goals in mind: creating a smaller ecological footprint and designing a space that employees could enjoy as their home away from home.

The managed services company completed those renovations in 2016, and the result has been an eco-friendly setting where employees can take in the comforts of nature while still being close to the city.

Located along Linden Avenue, Emerge's headquarters is set away from the busy streets and surrounded by forest, where employees catch the occasional deer or fox wandering by. Team members often use their breaks to take in the fresh air with a walk, and sometimes even company meet-



ings are held outside the office as outdoor "walk-and-talks."

Inside, the offices boast contemporary design and sustainable features. The facilities have been fitted with energy-saving windows, smart thermostats and smart lighting to lower power consumption, while also featuring

the latest cutting-edge technology for their business services.

With offices across the country and clients around the globe, Emerge relies on an advanced telepresence system capable of hosting group calls with the entire nationwide staff along with clients anywhere in the world.

NEXTCORPS

For years, Sibley's was the most important shopping hub in Rochester before closing in 1990. While the department store chain may be long gone, the Sibley Building stands in the center of what could be an important part of Rochester's future.

One of the newest residents in the building is nonprofit NextCorps, who moved into the top floor at the beginning of the year.

Taking over what was the old tea room of Sibley's back in its department store days, the organization has created a collaborative working space for advisors, venture capitalists and staff from Rochester, the Finger Lakes and outside Western New York.

The space includes gaming and conference areas and a rooftop deck for events and networking.



Some of the programs and resources at NextCorps are the Luminate accelerator for optics, photonics, and imaging companies; the Nexus-NY clean energy proof-of-concept center; The Entrepreneurs' Network (TEN) for small business acceleration; and Manufacturing Growth Services

for scaling business and improving the bottom line.

Old architectural details are still visible throughout the facility, which offers six wet labs; a 3-D printing fabrication lab, an auditorium, a community kitchen and private offices to accommodate company growth.

SEI DESIGN GROUP

SEI Design Group specializes in designing renovations that are intended to give classic buildings a new lease on life.

Their work includes the renovation of various school buildings throughout New York State, many of which are in the Rochester area, such as the James P.B. Duffy School 12 on South Avenue.

Another good example is SEI's own home base.

For the last 11 years, the company has been housed at the old Parry Building, located on Mill Street in the High Falls district of downtown.

The building is so named because it's the former manufacturing facility of the Parry Company. While the building itself had many tenants dating back to the 1870s, Parry was its longest-serving



tenant and the name stuck.

With that history in mind, SEI's plan was always to keep significant details and components of the original building as they renovated it to keep up to date as a 21st century company.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2007, the principals of the firm spoke about wanting to be downtown, in High Falls and in offices that were "very cool!" Their current location fits those requirements perfectly.



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