



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.com

First General Membership Meeting for 2006



Happy New Year to one and all! We're delighted to tell you that the first month of 2006 will offer two welcoming community activities.

In spite of what Mother Nature may bring to our doorsteps, we'd love to have you join us.

We begin by inviting you to our civic association's General Membership Meeting, the first for the year 2006. This exciting session, to be held on Thursday, January 19th, will be hosted by Pennsylvania Hospital in its Zubrow Auditorium, beginning promptly at 7:30 p.m. A very special slide presentation will be offered by Robert Morris Skaler, architect, architectural historian and author of the recently published book *Society Hill and Old City* — one of a comprehensive series of books that celebrates the history of neighborhoods, called "Images of America." Mr. Skaler will share with us photos of how Society Hill appeared 50 years ago, using photographs borrowed from the private collection of the late Charles E. Peterson — one of our community's "Founding Fathers." The book's vintage images and carefully researched narrative tell the story of our historic community.

You won't want to miss Mr. Skaler's fascinating presentation, as many photos featured in the slide show are not included in the book, due to space limitations. If you're one of the lucky ones, you may even discover your own house or your block in one of these images. This presentation will

also provide a valuable "lesson" for anyone who takes our neighborhood's current prosperity for granted or may not realize that it took years of hard work by many urban pioneers — some of whom still live among us today — to obtain the national recognition Society Hill deserves.

The book will be on sale at the meeting — cash or credit card accepted. Although the retail price is \$20, SHCA will benefit by receiving a \$10 donation for each volume sold, a gracious offer from SHCA Board Director Richard deWyngaert, who is the owner of our new community bookstore, Head House Books. Also, we're pleased to announce that any SHCA member who has renewed, or intends to renew, at one of three special levels — Federal Friend, Georgian Grantor or Ben Franklin Benefactor — will receive a free copy of this wonderful book.

Society Hill's Mid-Winter Social, Hosted by Bookbinders

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2006
Community Mid-Winter Social
Free for all SHCA members
Hosted by Old Original Bookbinders
125 Walnut Street
RSVP by January 20

The next exciting event, to occur exactly one week after SHCA's January meeting, will be our Community Mid-Winter Social — graciously hosted by Old Original Bookbinders. This warm and welcoming winter party will help chase away those cold-weather blues, and it will be an opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. Fran Newberg and Lois Beck, residents of Society Hill Towers, are coordinating this free social, which is open to all current members of our civic association. Not-to-worry if you haven't yet joined or renewed for 2006. We'd like you to party with us, so bring your membership check (or charge card) and join the fun, from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, January 26th. RSVP no later than January 20th to SHCA's Administrator Matt DeJulio: mattdejulio@aol.com; 215-629-1288.

THURS.

January

19

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings
 Thursday, January 19, 2006

Pennsylvania Hospital —
Zubrow Auditorium
Corner of 8th & Spruce Streets

- 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting**
 All SHCA members are welcome to attend.
- 7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting**
 Preston Building, Zubrow Auditorium, 1st floor
- Featured Speaker & Slide Presentation by Robert Skaler, author of *Society Hill and Old City*
 - Tania Rorke presents update on Three Bears Park renovations
- All community residents are invited to attend.

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Columnists
Paul Boni, Esq.
Jean Bryan
Tania Rorke
Keri White
David Woods

Contributors
Martha Levine
Wally Wing
Gerald Wolpe

Graphic Design
Judy Lamirand

Press Release Liaison
Andrea Layden
37 St. James Court
Philadelphia PA 19106
married2irish@msn.com
215-922-6486

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**Advertising Manager
and Photographer**
Matthew DeJulio
**Society Hill
Civic Association**
P.O. Box 63503
Philadelphia, PA
19147

tel: 215-629-1288
fax: 215-629-9914
email: MattDeJulio@aol.com

Website
www.societyhillcivic.com

Submissions

We want to hear from you. Our goal is to print news of interest to Society Hill residents, especially happenings in and around our community. To publicize an event in the *Reporter*, press releases should be submitted directly to Andrea Layden. All editorial or other submissions should be sent to Bernice Hamel via fax at 215-925-0877 or email: bernicehamel@comcast.net.

Material must be submitted in writing and must include the name of a contact person. Edited material may appear if space allows; otherwise upcoming events may be listed in the Community Calendar. Only signed Letters to the Editors will be considered for publication.

SNOW ALERT

This is a reminder to all Society Hill homeowners: it is your legal responsibility to remove snow from your sidewalk — within 6 hours of snowfall’s end.

The path you shovel must be at least 30 inches wide. If not done, you risk a fine of up to \$300 per snowfall.

Be a concerned neighbor. Arrange to have your sidewalk shoveled promptly after each snowfall if you’ll be away during the winter.



P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

TANIA RORKE, SHCA PRESIDENT

The new year is upon us — how quickly it arrived! And though the civic association was very busy this past year, 2006 promises to be even more challenging.

Before previewing some of those upcoming projects, I'd like to take a moment to thank the community for its help to make Saturday, November 19th such a success. Many residents wielded brooms and rakes during the morning Clean-Up Day activities. One neighbor in particular who chaired and coordinated this project deserves a special thank you — Dana Hall. As lunchtime approached, many folks walked over to our first-ever Saturday General Membership Meeting and lunch at St. Peter's School, our gracious host. The meeting was one of the best attended in recent SHCA history. We were happy to find neighbors who wished to sign up as new members that day! For those of you who were unable to attend, Councilman Frank DiCicco was our principal speaker. He covered several issues pertinent to our quality of life — including our concern about property tax increases. We thank him for his direct and candid responses to our questions, and we appreciate his continued support.

SHCA is facing several major projects in the year ahead, as well as some serious issues that may impact us. While not everyone may support SHCA's position on every neighborhood issue, I can confidently say that as a volunteer organization, SHCA works toward achieving the best results for the community as a whole.

The first project I hope to see completed in 2006 is Phase 1 of the Three Bears Park renovations. We were perhaps overly optimistic in expecting the project to begin last fall, but barring any further obstacles, we hope to receive in mid-January the Philadelphia Historical Commission's final approval to proceed. The new playground equipment has been ordered, and construction will begin as soon as weather permits. The two to three month project will be lengthy, but portions of the park will remain available for families to use during construction. When the new equipment is ready for play, I'm sure we will all agree that it was well worth the wait!

Another major endeavor, initiated in 2005 but continuing throughout 2006, is the upgrading of Society Hill's Franklin Lights. For an update on this ambitious undertaking, please see page 7 of this issue. We are very grateful to Martha Levine and the Franklin Lights Committee for their efforts. Also, I want to personally thank the many neighbors who have already contributed and to those who have committed to donating funds towards the improvement of our neighborhood's lighting.

Another major project we continue to devote time and effort to is the beautification of Washington Square. During the last six months, our association has been primarily responsible for the "greening" of the Square — thanks to Sissie Lipton's leadership and her group of devoted volunteers. I would also like to applaud Paul Levy, director of the Center City District, and their partners for the improved new lighting the District has installed around the Square.

As you stroll through the Square, please look for these improvements as well as those around the entire neighborhood. In fact, please share with us any ideas you may have as to how to best utilize the generous \$30,000 Neighborhood Beautification Grant recently received from State Representative Marie Lederer's office.

One issue of great concern centers on property tax increases. Matt White, a local attorney and our own Northeast Quadrant Director, has offered to chair a committee to look at this important issue. Councilman DiCicco has also assured us that he will address taxes at additional "Town Meetings."

In the area of historic preservation, we continue to focus on saving the Dilworth House, and at press time, we still await Mayor Street's decision on its fate. Appropriate development at the New-Market site is another matter of great importance. We hope to begin discussions with the developers, immediate neighbors and other interested parties to achieve a plan satisfactory to all.

In the coming months, look for our association's special plans to celebrate Ben Franklin's Tercentenary. For now, I wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!



Join us for our
Mid-Winter
Social
Thursday,
January 26th

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for SHCA members

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Stefania Marino



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Updates At Independence Park

Security & Landscape Improvements

Positive changes are happening at Independence National Historical Park! The unwelcoming security system that was instituted immediately following the 9/11 attacks will be modified. One measure that would have been an affront to the notion of liberty was the federal proposal to close vehicular traffic on Chestnut Street in front of Independence Hall. Fortunately, our community successfully fought this by working with members of the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition (IMBARC), headed by longtime Society Hill resident, Carter Buller. The implementation of a more practical and welcoming security plan, soon to consist of only two security stations, was initially spearheaded by IMBARC and finally agreed upon by park officials. According to neighbor Carter Buller, this plan “balances the needs of security with pedestrian and vehicular accessibility, historic sensitivity and visitor friendliness.” He noted, however, that the ugly bike racks serving as improvised pedestrian barriers surrounding the park and Independence Hall have not yet been removed, although IMBARC is working with the Park Service to have this accomplished as quickly as possible.

On November 14th Governor Rendell and Mayor Street, together with National Park Service personnel and civic leaders from the city and state, gathered outside the Independence Visitor Center to announce that, after many years of delay, the funding package required to complete landscaping and other finishing touches to Independence Mall is now almost on hand — \$17.5 million, of which \$3.5 million is still needed. Completion for the funded improvements is slated for July 4th of this year. Overall, Independence Mall was a \$300 million development, resulting in the construction of three significant buildings — the National Constitution Center, the Independence Visitor Center and the new Liberty Bell Center. However, the funds required to unite these buildings and landscape the surrounding grounds have remained unavailable — until now. Ultimately, the Mall will be replaced with a green campus-like setting filled with new plantings, paths, lawns, benches and lighting. Most important the rock-strewn eyesore, commonly referred to as the “gravel pit” (at Arch Street near the National Constitution Center) will be gone. An integral part of the Mall’s completion, announced on November 14th, will be the creation of a First

Amendment Rights Area — to commemorate and interpret the “President’s House,” where Presidents Washington and Adams once lived, and where Washington brought enslaved Africans from his Mt. Vernon plantation. The Mall’s new amenities will eventually include a new café, located between Market and Arch Streets, when final funding becomes available, hopefully no later than 2007. (FYI: The concept for Independence Mall dates back to the 1950s, when all the existing buildings on its nine city blocks were demolished so as to enhance America’s “new” treasure: Independence National Historical Park.)



Other important announcements were made on November 14th — including naming of the park’s acting superintendent, Dennis Reidenbach, as permanent park superintendent — succeeding Mary Bomar, who now heads the Northeast Region of the Park Service. We wish them both well. The restoration of Independence Mall is being supported generously by numerous private organizations — including the Pew Charitable Trusts and the William Penn Foundation — in addition to funding by federal, city and state treasuries.

The only mixed news made public on that lovely fall afternoon is that the Liberty Bell Pavilion, built for the city’s Bicentennial, will be demolished, probably in March. The ultra-modern pavilion, constructed of glass and granite, was cherished by architectural enthusiasts, but to others it appeared to be an anomaly in this “colonial-style” neighborhood. Ironically, the pavilion was built specifically to make the Liberty Bell more accessible to visitors than when it was housed inside Independence Hall. In fact, architect Romaldo Giurgola designed the structure within guidelines established by the National Park Service. Until recently, the architectural community was optimistic that this stylish pavilion would be preserved and moved to a nearby college campus. But the college backed out, and at press time it appears that the bell is definitely tolling for this unique pavilion.

The funding package required to complete landscaping and other finishing touches for Independence Mall is now almost in hand.

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Now Underway

Campaign to Adopt a Franklin Light

SHCA's Adopt-A-Franklin-Light Campaign

is off to a great start, but we still need your help. In early November 2005, we sent out 3,000 cards to Society Hill residents asking them to "invest in the future of our neighborhood" by joining the campaign to improve our street lighting. Washington Square has new pedestrian lighting. Our neighbors in Washington Square West are in the process of upgrading their lights on Pine Street. Society Hill will be left in the dark unless we, as a community, raise the necessary funds.

What is the Adopt-A-Franklin-Light Campaign?

Our goal is to raise enough funds to replace each of our outdated and dim 50-watt Franklin Lights with a brighter "state of the art" model that retains the original Ben Franklin design we know and love. Good lighting is essential to our quality of life — it provides a more secure and attractive environment. When the city's team tested Society Hill's light output, they reported it as below the minimum acceptable standard for a city neighborhood. Basically, we need to replace 400 lights at \$1,500 per light. With \$220,000 in place from city and state funding, it falls on community members to match these funds to raise another \$330,000. Therefore, we are asking residents to help by making private contributions.

Our Franklin Lights Committee met recently with Councilman Frank DiCicco, who said he fully supports our project and promises to try to pry loose some additional City funding. Stay tuned.

How Much Does A Light Cost?

Each Franklin Light costs \$1,500, which includes all parts and installation. The entire lantern and goose-neck bracket will be replaced, not just the bulb. Most blocks in our neighborhood have eight lights; a few have ten. It will take 15 donations of \$100 to pay for one Franklin Light.

How is the Campaign Progressing?

Thus far, we have had a healthy response to the mailing of our "Invitation To Give" cards, and we extend our sincerest thanks to those who have already contributed. At press time, 140 checks totaling over \$53,000 from residents, businesses and organizations have been received. Amounts vary from \$100 to \$3,000 each. Among them, ten generous households each donated \$1,500 (the cost of one light) and more are promised. There has also been a strong response from condominium residents.

We also thank local businesses and organizations which have contributed \$1,500 or more: Posel Management (Ritz Theaters); Plumer Realtors; Starr Restaurant Organization; Pennsylvania Hospital; Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Corp.; Gannon-Coyne Associates; and the Society Hill Synagogue. Other businesses or organizations which also contributed include: Old Pine Presbyterian Church; Old St. Joseph's Church; and many individual Prudential Fox Roach realtors.

How Can You Help?

SHCA will be able to meet its goal of matching funds only if all of us pitch in with a contribution. Neighbors or groups may join together to sponsor a single light. If desired, we will be glad to erect a plaque honoring any person(s) who sponsors one or more lights. Think of your contribution as a very visible gift to yourself and neighbors that will last for many years to come. If you have not yet made your contribution, please return your RSVP card (or use the form below) along with your tax-deductible check — made payable to **The Society Hill Fund**, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Please note that a check made to SHCA, our civic association, is NOT tax-deductible.

For more information, contact Martha Levine, Project Manager, marthalev@msn.com, 215-629-0727.

DONATION FORM

Adopt-a-Franklin-Light Campaign

<p>Please select a level of contribution and make your tax-deductible check payable to The Society Hill Fund, a non-profit 501(c)3. Send to The Society Hill Fund, Box 63503, Phila. PA 19147.</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30px;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Lamp Posts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100 or more</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Lamp Lighters</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$250 or more</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Shining Lights</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$500 or more</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Luminaries</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1000 or more</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Guiding Lights</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$1500 = cost of 1 light</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lamp Posts	\$100 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lamp Lighters	\$250 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shining Lights	\$500 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luminaries	\$1000 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guiding Lights	\$1500 = cost of 1 light
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Benjamin Franklin

Good Citizen and Model of Neighborhood Improvement

Benjamin Franklin helped define “good citizenship.” So states the web page for PBS’s *Citizen Ben*, a production that aired several years ago. Other websites offer lesson plans on good citizenship for children of all ages, based on Benjamin Franklin’s accomplishments in his early years in Philadelphia. As we mark the 300th anniversary of Franklin’s birth, parties will be held in his honor and papers read about his work. Those of us who live in the neighborhoods in which he lived and worked, however, are more fortunate as beneficiaries of his genius. Even more we are challenged to be the “good citizen” that Franklin was.

In 1727, Benjamin Franklin was a busy 21-year-old printer, too busy, he says in his *Autobiography*, to spend time “in taverns, games, or frolics of any kind; and my industry in my business continu’d as indefatigable as it was necessary.” Business did not deter him, however, from forming “a club of mutual improvement, [12 men] which we called the JUNTO...Every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discuss’d by the company; and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing, on any subject he pleased.”...

Franklin’s Junto, also called the “Leather-Apron Club,” was based on Cotton Mather’s “neighborhood benefit societies.” Franklin chose members from various professions — surveyors, merchants, glaziers, cobblers, cabinetmakers, tradesmen and printers. All were given a set of 24 questions to discuss on human issues, both civic and personal. An interesting rule for participation was “that these queries...be read distinctly at each meeting; a pause between each, while one might fill and drink a glass of wine.” Nothing stuffy about Franklin!

Among the civic-minded questions on the agenda:

- Do you know of any fellow citizen, who has lately done a worthy action, deserving praise and imitation? or who has committed an error proper for us to be warned against and avoid?
- Do you think of any thing at present, in which the Junto may be serviceable to mankind? to their country, to their friends, or to themselves?
- Have you lately observed any defect in the laws of your country, of which it would be proper to move the legislature an amendment? Or do you know of any beneficial law that is wanting?

One of the important problems the Junto tackled was how to keep the predominantly wooden houses from being destroyed by fire. Franklin, who might be considered our first emergency-preparedness czar, says: “About this time I wrote a paper [1735]...on the different accidents and carelessnesses by which houses were set on fire, with cautions against them, and means proposed of avoiding them. This was much spoken of as a useful piece, and gave rise to a project, which soon followed it, of forming a company for the more ready extinguishing of fires, and mutual assistance in removing and securing the goods when in danger.”

A year later the Union Fire Company was established. By 1752 there were eight well-organized fire companies in Philadelphia. Franklin, always creative, kept his volunteer firemen interested by including a monthly social evening. In addition to the fire company, out of these Friday evening Junto meetings came the first subscription library, an academy for “compleat education of youth” (the University of Pennsylvania), the first public hospital in the state (our neighbor, Pennsylvania Hospital), better street lights and pavements, a more regulated constabulary, including a night watch, and many, many improvements from which we benefit today.

Carl Van Doren, a 20th-century biographer of Franklin wrote: “Philadelphia during the great years of the Junto (1727 to 1757) was a town of remarkable intellectual activity.... But no matter what claims may be made for other men, Franklin emerges as the chief among them, the energizing, galvanizing source of two-thirds of the town’s important enterprises.” (“Meet Doctor Franklin,” 1943, the Franklin Institute)

We, the beneficiaries of Franklin’s endeavors, who walk the same streets, use the libraries, count on the fire, police and health care workers, are his natural descendants. As volunteers in SHCA we help keep Society Hill moving as preservationists, advocates, administrators, townwatchers and reporters, and, yes, graffiti removers. But there is always more to be done. Franklin understood the need for neighborhood socializing, and that may be one area where SHCA could use some help. There are others. Our President Tania Rorke and our Board stand ready to assist you in using your talents for Society Hill’s betterment.



We, the beneficiaries of Franklin’s endeavors, are his natural descendants.

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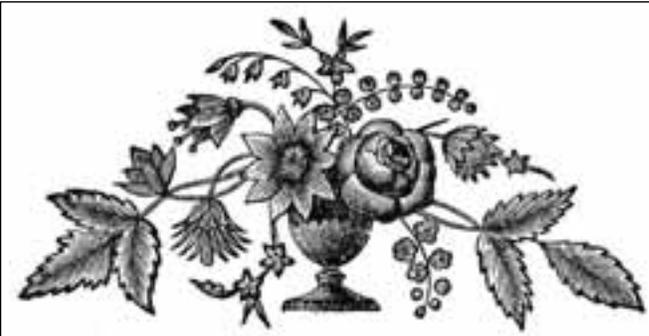
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Ben's Spirit is Alive & Well in Philly

Benjamin Franklin lived in Philadelphia during the 1700's, but he's alive today at two of our local museums: the National Liberty Museum is featuring *Ben & Me*, while the National Constitution Center offers *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World*.

National Liberty Museum

Ben & Me is a lively, family-friendly celebration of Benjamin Franklin's Tercentenary that includes special exhibits and "Franklinisms" — timeless words of advice about good character, patriotism and common sense — posted throughout the museum. Visitors are invited to see today's world through Ben's "bifocals" and find fresh ways to bring his wisdom to life in the 21st century.

The *Ben & Me* exhibit focuses on children. One display contains a private collection of "maxim mugs" and plates: period children's dishware decorated with Franklin's famous sayings designed to inspire young people of the past. The exhibit, which celebrates heroism, democracy and the American Dream, runs through November 2006. Located at 321 Chestnut Street, the museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Admission: Adults \$5; Seniors \$4; Students \$3.00; Children ages 6 - 17 \$1. Museum members and kids 5 and under admitted free.

The National Constitution Center

Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World is an international traveling exhibition making its world premiere and only East Coast showing at the National Constitution Center. The exhibition features more than 250 priceless artifacts, engaging interactive devices, and hands-on family fun. Organized by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary and hosted locally by CBS 3, this exhibition is the centerpiece of the Ben Franklin 300 Philadelphia celebration. Additional information: www.gophila.com/ben.

Exhibit admission includes the Center's permanent exhibitions: Adults \$14; Seniors, College Students and Children ages 4-12 \$12; Groups of 20 or more \$8.50. Advanced reservations strongly recommended. Purchase tickets at the NCC, by phone 215-409-6700 or online www.constitutioncenter.org. See upcoming programs listed below.

Don't Forget Franklin Court—

the permanent exhibit at Independence Park!

Visit the Underground Museum, Ben's Printing Shop and more.

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CONSTITUTION CENTER FRANKLIN TERCENTENARY PROGRAMS

Friday, January 13, 7–10 p.m.

Ben's Birthday Pajama Party

Wear your finest, family-friendly pajamas to this fun-filled birthday party, featuring admission to the *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* exhibition. Admission to the museum included. Adults \$40; Children ages 4-12 \$25. Special Member Discount: \$35/\$20. Reservations required.

Saturday, January 14, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

FREE PECO Franklin Family Fun Day: Ben's History Sleuth

Travel back in time to discover what life was like in Philadelphia during Ben's time. Be a history sleuth and find the hidden treasure in the museum! Children can also make special 300th birthday cards to be delivered to Ben himself.

Sunday, January 15, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Ben's Birthday Breakfast

Join Ben for breakfast: have your picture taken with him, sing happy birthday, sign his birthday card and enjoy cake and other fun foods! Adults \$20; Children ages 4-12 \$16. Ticket includes museum admission and the Benjamin Franklin exhibit.

Monday, January 16, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Martin Luther King Day

Celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. There will be children's crafts, dramatic readings and interpretations as well as engaging activities for all ages. Service projects will focus on the plight of homelessness. FREE.

Tuesday, January 17, 10 a.m.

300 Years and Still Current: America Celebrates

Franklin's 300th Birthday

Today's Franklins — scientists, entrepreneurs, firefighters, postal workers, civic leaders and others — will gather for Benjamin Franklin's official birthday celebration. Featured will be a birthday cake complete with candles, each "lit" by 1 of 300 representatives who embody facets of Franklin in the 21st century. FREE.

Wednesday, January 18, 6 p.m.

An Evening with Justice Breyer

Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Stephen Breyer will discuss his book, *Active Liberty: Interpreting our Democratic Constitution*. He will converse with NCC President Richard Stengel. Adults \$15; Members \$12; Students & K-12 Teachers \$6. Reservations required.

Saturday, January 21, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Community Volunteer Fair

Discover all the wonderful ways to get involved in our community. Meet with representatives from local groups and attractions.

Tuesday, January 24, 4–7 p.m.

FREE Teacher's Open House

Teachers are invited for a special tour of the blockbuster exhibit *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* to learn ways to incorporate Franklin into science, civics and reading curricula. Reserve by January 20.

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History Meets High-Tech

Physick House Hosts McCall School Fundraiser

History came full circle on Thursday, November 10th at the Physick House. Supporters of Society Hill's neighborhood public school, McCall Elementary, gathered for a cocktail party and live auction at the Physick House to raise funds for the school's new "cyber" library. Upon their arrival, guests learned that they were standing in the birthplace of General George A. McCall, the school's namesake. At the close of the 18th century, Dr. Physick vacated the house and the McCall family rented it. The general, who was born there in 1802, grew up to be a Civil War hero. His spirit was certainly present that evening as folks joined together in support of the school that now bears his name.

The party was a great deal of fun and the auction a resounding success, thanks to all the folks supporting McCall's "cybrary" — a 21st-century library providing students and teachers with high-tech research equipment, interactive "Smart-Boards" and other state-of-the-art educational apparatus. The Philadelphia School District plans to install 13 cybraries in neighborhood schools, and McCall was selected as part of this pilot project — provided that \$40,000 could be raised toward the initiative. With the generous support of sponsors, including Rohm & Haas; Wolf, Block,

Schorr & Solis-Cohen; Senator Vincent J. Fumo; Nihill & Reidley; Traditions of America; Allied Mortgage; SHCA, and private donors, including Society Hill neighbors, McCall achieved that magic number. The "cybrary" is expected to be installed and operational by next year.

Paul Vallas, CEO of the School District of Philadelphia, served as auctioneer for the event. He created a lively and festive atmosphere as bidders vied for a wonderful selection of prizes, including a "Sports Fan's Dream Package" featuring tickets to all four Philly pro teams' games, as well as "Stage and Screen," which offered winners the chance to preview and review a movie with film critic (and Society Hill neighbor!) Carrie Rickey. "Cyber-tinis" and Dr. Seuss Juice flowing freely from the bar and luscious appetizers, provided by 12th Street Catering, ensured that a good time was had by all.



From L to R: McCall Home & School President and Cybrary Project Co-Chair Sonja Bingham; Chief Executive Officer, Philadelphia School District Paul Vallas; Cybrary Project Co-Chairs Keri & Matt White.

Society Hill Town Watch Seeks Your Assistance

In the fall of 2003 thirty-five of our neighbors joined forces to resurrect Society Hill Town Watch (SHTW) and community policing. Thanks to them and dozens of others through the past two years, SHTW has truly come into its own. More than 100 people have joined our ranks, either as patrollers, base operators or simply to sign up for our e-mail list to stay informed about local crime. SHTW volunteers have gone out on patrol teams equipped with walkie-talkies or cell phones and reported crimes, quality-of-life issues or offered "Good Samaritan" services — all the while making new friends and promoting community activism. These committed neighbors have not only helped foster a good working relationship with the police, they have also helped deter crime. Indeed, the number of incidents in our neighborhood has decreased during this period.

Unfortunately, several of our most active patrollers, including our former Vice President, recently left the community or decided to take a well-earned hiatus. We now face the challenge of recruiting new members and patrollers, and we are asking for only a small commitment of your time. Your willingness to go on just one patrol — for one to two hours, depending on the day of the week — will go a long way. In fact, if every Society Hill resident volunteered for just one patrol annually, we would be able to field an afternoon and a nighttime patrol every day of the year!

Won't you please help Society Hill Town Watch sustain its commitment to serve our wonderful neighborhood? It's as easy as a walk in the park!

To join SHTW as a patroller, base operator or e-mail recipient, contact Michael Erdos at 267-251-0749 or michael.erdos@phila.gov.



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Safe And Sound In Society Hill

New Traffic Signs for Trouble Spots

For neighbors who have complained about cars going the wrong way on Cypress Street (east instead of west), hopefully the problem is now solved. If you haven't noticed, there are brand-new "Do Not Enter" signs installed at the west ends of the 300, 500 and 600 blocks of Cypress Street and a similar sign at Pine and Lawrence Streets, which we hope will deter inconsiderate people from driving the wrong way. Neighbors, especially parents of young children, send their thanks to city traffic engineer Mark Washington, who responded quickly to our cries for help by installing traffic signs at those locations. We are now focusing on other trouble spots, especially in front of Independence Place at 7th Street and Washington Square—see report below.

It Finally Happened

After years of fearing that someone would get hurt in front of Independence Place while crossing the intersection at 6th and Washington Square, until recently no one was ever hit. But, alas, it finally happened to an Independence Place resident who was hurt and required hospitalization. She is now out of the hospital and doing well, we're pleased to report, but we ask all neighbors to be very careful at this corner. We will attempt to get a blinking red light at that intersection, similar to one at 19th and Rittenhouse Square, and we'll keep you posted on our progress. Meanwhile, we urge extreme caution at this intersection.

Fire Safety: Call 911 and GET OUT!!!

We want you to be safe from all fire hazards. First and foremost: Never try to put out a fire yourself. Call 911 and GET OUT IMMEDIATELY!

In November there were two fires in Society Hill: the first occurred in a historic house on American Street. Apparently, the pilot light in the hot water heater ignited from items stored next to it in a basement closet. The fire quickly traveled upward to the rest of the house. Please be aware that many of our attached row houses contain common walls that are not as solid as you might expect. Fire can spread from one house to another, especially through the loft sections of these homes.

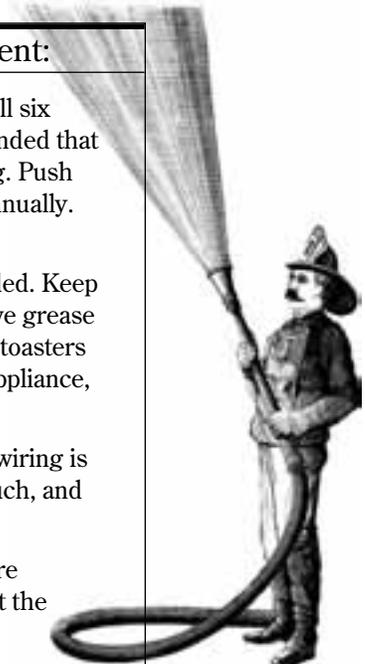
The second fire in November occurred in an unoccupied West Tower unit of Society Hill Towers, caused by a contractor using chemicals in the unvented apartment, resulting in spontaneous combustion. All occupants in that building were immediately evacuated and no one was harmed, fortunately, because the Towers management has an effective system for communicating and evacuating in emergencies.

REMEMBER: YOU are your own best protection against a devastating fire.

Your Old Cell phones are still needed. They are reprogrammed through the DA's office to dial only 911 and then are given to the abused and the elderly. Drop them off at 414 Spruce Street.

Important Safety Tips, direct from the Philadelphia Fire Department:

1. Place smoke detectors on every floor of your house, either on the ceiling or on a wall six inches below the ceiling — never in a corner or near an air vent. It is also recommended that every bedroom contain its own smoke detector to increase chances of early warning. Push the test button monthly to make sure each detector is working. Replace batteries annually. If you've got a garage, make sure there's a smoke detector in there as well.
2. Always keep an eye on what you're cooking; never leave a pot on the stove unattended. Keep loose-fitting clothing, curtains or other combustibles away from the burners. Remove grease and crumbs from small appliances. Also, it's safer to keep small appliances, such as toasters and toaster-ovens, unplugged until you need to use them. If a fire starts in a small appliance, immediately pull the plug.
3. If you see frayed or cracked wiring anywhere in your house - replace it! Make sure wiring is not under rugs or around nails. Also be sure that outlets are covered, cool to the touch, and not overloaded.
4. Most important: Every family should have an escape plan that all family members are familiar with. Practice it twice a year. Have emergency flashlights handy throughout the house, as well as a cell phone to call 911. Never, never reenter a burning building.



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Open Houses
Thursday, January 5, 2006, 8:45 a.m.
Tuesday, February 14, 2006, 8:45 a.m.

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ZONING & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BY PAUL BONI, ZHP COMMITTEE CHAIR

In the interest of space, we are reporting on two front-burner issues that have kept our ZHP Committee busy:

The Ayer Building (210 W. Washington Square):

We are pleased to report that SHCA is supporting the conversion of this historic building into 56 luxury condominiums. The developers of this fantastic project are The Goldenberg Group and Brown-Hill Development. The conversion will retain all historic aspects of this important building, including the entranceway. It will also include the installation of balconies on each floor inside the notch on the southern side of the building. Valet parking will be provided; cars will be parked in the basement and the rear part of an enclosed mezzanine level. All terms and conditions were included in a written agreement negotiated and signed by our Civic Association and the developers. This agreement also affords protections to the aesthetics of Washington Square and for adjacent neighbors during the construction phase. A key part of the agreement is a limitation on the type of retail that can occupy the new retail space, located in the northeast corner of the building. Essentially, only high-end tenants will be allowed to occupy that space. For this negotiation, SHCA teamed up with the condo association members of the adjacent Saunders Building, led by Mickey Straff, whom we thank for his assistance. We also thank Councilman Frank DiCicco for standing with our Civic Association as we resolved issues with the developers. Finally, we thank the National Park Service for weighing in with their concerns, which were consistent with ours. For more information about the Ayer Building, visit www.TheAyer.com. And, no, they didn't ask us to plug their website. We just love their pictures!

Update on the NewMarket site (vacant land inside Front, 2nd, Lombard & Pine Streets):

The developer is continuing to propose a high-rise condominium for this property, while the Civic Association is advocating a different approach. Our position is based on the existing character of Society Hill, which is protected by the limits imposed by the City's Zoning Code. Society Hill contains primarily low-rise buildings, including a large collection of his-

toric properties—all in the immediate area of NewMarket. Accordingly, when City Government zoned Society Hill it quite purposefully restricted future development for areas such as NewMarket to be strictly low-rise buildings. The zoning here is intentionally different than it is downtown, along Walnut Street or along Washington Square. Specifically for NewMarket, the Zoning Code limits any new buildings to a height of 35 feet, or in some circumstances 60 feet. To get a sense of how high that is, you can estimate that there are about 10 feet per floor. In other words, the code limits construction of buildings at NewMarket to be only 3 1/2 stories or perhaps a little bit higher. That's the law and we'll do our best to advocate for compliance.

Our Civic Association welcomes development at NewMarket. Something definitely needs to be built there. And we will take a reasonable negotiating position to make certain, as best we can, that what gets built is something that fits.

The last we heard is that the developer's proposal is to reach 200 feet or higher. At our April 2005 meeting, the developer justified the proposal for a high-rise tower on the basis that it would enable the project to include more open space behind the tower. We appreciate that argument, and open public space is usually a good thing. But this does not change the fact that a 20-story tower would radically, negatively change the character of this part of Society Hill. The Civic Association will work to prevent that from happening. We know the developer has been in direct discussions with many of the abutting neighbors, to the exclusion of the Civic Association. We have been in discussions with these same neighbors in an attempt to reach a consensus with as many people as possible.

We ask that you please visit www.SaveNewMarketNow.org and sign the online petition. Also, you can contribute directly to our Challenge Fund through the website. As you may recall from our previous report, an anonymous donor will match your contributions dollar-for-dollar. Signing the online petition will also allow you to receive periodic email updates. But if you find it more convenient, you can sign the tear-off petition below and either fax or mail it to us.

PETITION

Sign the NewMarket Petition: No Tall Buildings at NewMarket

I am OPPOSED to a skyscraper or tall building(s) at NewMarket. The Philadelphia Zoning Code limits new construction to 35 feet high or, in certain cases, to 60 feet high. The Historic Preservation laws also limit the size of new buildings. These laws were put in place by City planners and government to protect historic Society Hill from the negative impacts caused by excessive or improper development.

I welcome development at NewMarket. But I want to see development that respects the character of Society Hill. Therefore, I support the Society Hill Civic Association in its efforts to advocate for sensible development at this important location.

Name: _____

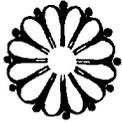
Address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone #: (optional) _____

Tear off and Fax to the SHCA: 215-629-9914, Or mail to: Society Hill Civic Association P.O. Box 63503, Phila, PA 19147

Or sign the online petition at www.SaveNewMarketNow.org



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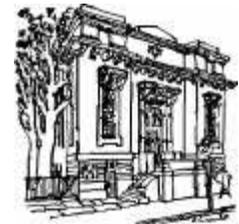
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SUBMITTED BY A CONCERNED CITIZEN

It was Thursday, November 17th, our usual trash day. The wet leaves were piled so high that one couldn't see the curb. Parking the car and walking through them became an obstacle course: either you slipped or missed the curb, or you had to park a foot away and ended up walking through the leaves anyway.

About 4 p.m. on that day, three contiguous parking spaces opened up in front of our house. What a perfect opportunity to remove those leaves, given that we would be out of town on Clean-Up Day that weekend. My husband seized the opportunity to rake the leaves in front of our house and also our neighbors' houses until he ran out of steam. He filled up five huge contractor's bags with very heavy, wet leaves — placing the bags next to our house — not at the curb — so that he could put them out at 8 p.m. that night. The old fella came into the house totally exhausted, but pleased that he had done a good deed for the day.

At 8 p.m. he found a ticket on top of the bags, issued by the city — stating that we were not permitted to “store” our trash in front of our house. To say that he was upset would be an understatement — since just the week before a trash enforcement officer had given two of our next-door neighbors “warnings” because their trash was put out at the curb in the morning. Obviously, we were ticketed by a trash enforcement officer who was, to say the least, overly enthusiastic to prove that he was doing his job.

A brief note of irony, adding insult to injury: on Clean-Up Day Saturday, the leaves that were not bagged by my husband were not swept or picked up by others on the block — not even the city! We will fight the ticket — but that's not the point. My old fella is still upset and swears he will probably never again provide such community service. Actually, he stated that sentiment more strongly, but his expletives are unprintable.

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SENIOR SCENE

A COLUMN BY JEAN BRYAN

Thanks for a Lovely Time

On December 16th Teresa and John Terry graciously offered their home for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres so that our community's seniors could meet and socialize. Participants had a wonderful time enjoying the Terry's hospitality. However, if you did not receive the invitation announcing this event, it is possible that your name was misplaced from the list I first assembled indicating your interest in senior activities. I send apologies and promise to do better next time. So if you'd like to be on the Senior Scene phone or email list, please reach me at 215-925-6416 or use my new email: jeanbryan@gmail.com.

Updates

The Senior Scene's Yahoo site no longer exists. Not enough folks logged onto the site to warrant Bob Rossheim's time and efforts. We thank him for his initiative — and remind you that he is a great computer teacher. (I speak from personal experience.) From now on, you will be called or emailed if any special Senior Scene event is being planned. Remember, the success of this column in helping Hillers over 50 to get to know one another depends on *your* involvement. Be creative! Offer your home or plan a neighborhood activity, such as group tickets for the theater, or dining at a local restaurant or even having a potluck dinner. Let me know, and we can go from there. I'm updating the list of folks who'd like to be alerted to whatever is being planned. Single, married, partnered? All seniors are welcome!



Left to right: Miriam Loman, Izzy Sigman, Pamela Todd, Bernice Hamel, Susan Kaidbey and Nancy Halpern

Degrees Don't Deter The Walkie-Talkies

One recent morning the Walkie-Talkies began their hour-long hike near the Man Full of Trouble Tavern. No matter what how cold the temperature, the "Women Full of Trouble" cannot be deterred — except for rain or snow. Come on out and join the healthy fun whenever you can! Meet us at Three Bears Park any Tuesday and/or Thursday at 8:15 a.m.

Helpful Hints

The website www.myguideforseniors.com will give cohesive information regarding independent community living with on-site medical clinics.

Please, if you have other helpful information for our senior group, do let me know, as I will be happy to share these ideas in forthcoming columns in the *Reporter*.

There is no cure for birth and death, save to enjoy the interval.

George Santayana, Spanish-American philosopher and poet

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

While winter casts its own magic spell — sitting by an open fire and looking out on a beautiful fresh snowfall — it can also be a pain, quite literally. Joe Ruhl, licensed physical therapist and owner of Excel Physical Therapy at 420 Bainbridge Street (215-545-8717) has offered some tips for all of us — whether we fit the senior age group or not.

- Be aware of your surroundings. An area that looks simply wet may, in fact, be ice.
- Invest in an ergonomically designed snow shovel, with bent handles, allowing the shovel to be closer to one's body. This design makes greater use of leg muscles which are more efficient than arm muscles in distributing needed oxygen to the blood. These special shovels are easily purchased at hardware stores or Home Depot.

- Shovel the snow, as it falls, if possible. When shoveling snow after it has all accumulated, people tend to scoop large, heavy amounts of snow onto the shovel, making back injuries more likely.

- Keep moving. Cold weather is a good excuse for not exercising. Don't let that happen. Find a mall for walking or use your home stairs to keep your heart and muscles working. The more fit we are, the less likely we are to be subject to injury.

Despite precautions, we may experience a fall. Joe counsels us to "go with the fall," trying not to stiffen our arms to break the impact. Catching oneself with stiff arms can result in snapping one's wrists. If you think you are hurting even a little bit, go to the ER where you can be evaluated and treated. Older bones, says Joe, are more brittle and small discomfort may mask more serious injury. Better safe than sorry.

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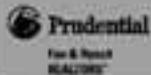
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Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

Time to Entertain *En Famille*

The holidays are over, and the mere fact that you are reading this indicates that you survived them. So you ate, drank and spent too much, missed the mark on a few gifts or crucial card recipients (oops!), but came through in one (slightly larger) piece. And now we have the cold, dreary winter to face with short days and long nights — gloomy to those (like me) susceptible to the blues due to limited natural light. The perfect time, in essence, to entertain *en famille*.

No, I am not still under the influence of eggnog. I do not mean the high-pressure, 15-step, 45-ingredient recipes, perfectly decorated and cleaned house, kids dressed in uncomfortable and tantrum inducing outfits, or worse, the babysitter cancelled at the last minute and we are scouting for anyone with a pulse to keep our kids for two hours while we make the obligatory appearance at a social gathering. Been there, done that for the last month. I am advocating a relaxed evening with friends and kids involving a minimum of effort and a maximum of camaraderie and fun. Trust me, I have done this many times and it really can be enjoyable.

Here is the plan: Invite another family or two for an early evening get-together. Ideally these are parents whose company you enjoy with off-spring compatible (or at least not homicidal)

with your little ones. If the kids are all over the age of three, they should be able to entertain themselves with cursory supervision. "Shrek 2" provides good diversion for at least 90 minutes. If the tykes are younger, this offers a strong opportunity to break in a rookie babysitter. You are around to deal with any crises that might erupt, but you don't have to do the minute-to-minute surveillance.

Plan a menu that is simple and crowd-pleasing. Pasta Bolognese, Caesar salad and Italian bread are standbys in our house for these evenings. (Yes, I have hosted these types of gatherings — note the plural — and they have usually been successful.) If cooking is not your forte, order pizza or any of the myriad offerings Society Hill and its environs provide in the way of take-out eats.

You can feed the kids first, and send them to the playroom for a movie (my personal preference) or dine with them and excuse them to the playroom when they are finished. Either way, you end up with some quality adult time. While it's not the same as an evening at Buddakan, it is a nice way to introduce the kids to the niceties of social gatherings, share some adult conversation, a casual meal and a drink (a most essential element), and get you out of the house to avoid the inevitable let down of the post-holiday season. Did I mention paper plates?

Kid's Quote

"Mom, what is the most painful part of your body to get pierced?"

Rebecca, age 6
Society Hill Kid

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The Arden Theatre Company, located at 40 N. 2nd Street, is offering a variety of Saturday and holiday workshops to occupy the minds and stimulate the talent of kids from grades 1-6.

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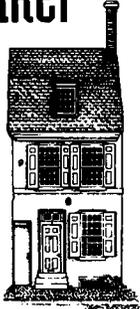


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A Personal Reflection by Gerald Wolpe

Washington Square: Beneath My Window

*Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh.
With uncouth rhimes and shapeless sculpture deck'd
Implored the passing tribute of a sigh.*

From "Elegy in a Country Church Yard" By Thomas Gray



Washington Square lies beneath my apartment window. It is one of the five city parks designed by William Penn for his new city of Philadelphia. As all city parks, it is a postage stamp, surrounded by the vertical towers that contain our apartments. An anomalous refuge, it attracts the scampering child and the leashed and frolicking dog mob. Dedicated benches with appropriate plaques are filled with onlookers who savor the designed feeling of the rural as they watch a passing parade. Children in parochial school uniforms scream as they play among the elderly, who smile with tolerant affection. It is a scene that could be played in Paris, Peking, Oslo or Tel Aviv.



Washington Square also has a unique character. In its western corner stands the monument to the Unknown Soldier of the Revolutionary War. In constant repair, it has a representation of George Washington and a pathway framed by the flags of the thirteen original states. Frequently, floral wreaths sit near the

base of the monument as ceremonial remembrances dot the city, state and federal calendars.

Washington Square was the community cemetery in colonial times. Underneath its ground were placed the bodies of colonial and British soldiers. Most of them died from disease rather than battle. It was also the paupers' graveyard for the black community, vagrants and executed criminals. Bones of heroes mixed with the disadvantaged, as history swirled around them with a mystic force that would create a nation that soon spread across a continent.

I do not know what happened to those remains as the city began to surround the park and multi-floor dwellings began to define downtown Philadelphia. Heroes have their individual monuments; the unknown share historical markers that identify where they stand. There has to be some meaning in the realization that children play, dogs frolic and life's scenario is cast on a forgotten graveyard.

The French historian, Michelet, noted, "History is the trick we play on the dead." What is even more of the trick is the effort we make to link our own years into the framework of history. Each one under Washington Square had a name and a hope for the future. That is also true of those of us who play on their graves, "implored the passing tribute of a sigh."

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New Graffiti Fighting Team

The Anti-Graffiti Committee has reached full strength with two new members whom we heartily welcome: Ralph Colabelli, Southeast Quadrant at 215-592-1217; and Constantine Stephano, Northeast Quadrant at 215-923-4921. Dwight Bechtel dwight01@hotmail.com and Wally Wing 215-592-9951 continue for the Northwest and Southwest Quadrants, respectively.

The Committee's objective is to eliminate stickers and graffiti from the neighborhood. On public property chemical solutions are used for this purpose. Attempts to remove graffiti on private property will be made when requested by the property owner; however, the solutions used are often not completely effective, especially on porous surfaces. Homeowners with graffiti on their brick or marble facades are advised to request a free power wash from the city's Graffiti Abatement Team. Call them at 215-685-9556.

As always, our team appreciates your phone calls alerting us to our next challenge!



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NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

Ignazio, Rossana and Stefania Marino

The state of Rome was founded in 753 B.C., more than two and a half millennia before the state of Pennsylvania came into existence. So it's charming to hear Dr. Ignazio Marino, a "transplanted" Roman, wax eloquent about local history as he points to Philadelphia's having the country's first bank, first hospital, first church...and to the evocative background sound of horses' hooves on cobbled streets.

His wife Rossana and thirteen-year-old daughter Stefania are also history enthusiasts — the family made a recent trip to Mexico to learn about archeology and the Mayan culture. Not only that: they are "equal opportunity" historians, naming their beloved cat Annibale after Hannibal, the Carthaginian general who was an implacable foe of Rome.

And, speaking of transplants, that's what Ignazio does for a living. He first came to the United States to study under Thomas Starzl, who in 1963 performed the world's first liver transplant in Pittsburgh. After a stint at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, which is named for Starzl, Ignazio was invited three years ago to come to Jefferson Medical College where he leads a team that performs liver, kidney and pancreas transplants, about 150 each year.



Rossana has made a beautiful and tasteful home of their 1810 house, with maximum use of its original flooring and features. She says that she and the family have been made very welcome in the neighborhood and they enjoy its amenities, including, of course, the Ritz movie theaters.

In another tip of the hat to a bygone world, Ignazio doesn't own a car. He cycles to work.

Daughter Stefania is a poised and talented teen. An eighth grader at The Philadelphia School, she's interested in math, art, music and poetry — and, of course, history. She thinks she might have a career as a lawyer or in politics. Like her parents, she loves the area and considers it safe for her and her friends to soak up the local atmosphere, especially on South Street.

Ignazio's mentor, Thomas Starzl, wrote a book entitled *Memoirs of a Transplant Surgeon*; and, while Ignazio is much published in his specialty, he has also published a book in Italian on the doctor-patient relationship, titled *Believing and Treating*. He hopes soon to have an English translation.

Although the family returns quite often to Italy, these transplants are growing roots here. When Romulus founded Rome, he peopled it with immigrants, in much the same way the United States was — and continues to be — populated.

The Marinos have learned with St. Ambrose that "If you are at Rome, live in the Roman style; if you are elsewhere, live as they live elsewhere." Benvenuto!

A family of history enthusiasts

David Woods can be reached at
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 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 18
An Evening with Justice Stephen Breyer
 National Constitution Center 6 p.m.
 Reservations Required: 215-409-6700

Thursday, January 19
SHCA Meetings
 St. Peter's Church (3rd & Pine Streets)
Board of Directors Meeting: 6 p.m.
 All members welcome
General Membership Meeting: 7:30 p.m.
 All community residents welcome

Saturday, January 21
Community Volunteer Fair
 National Constitution Center
 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 See page 11

Thursday, January 26
Society Hill Community Social
 Free Mid-Winter Party
 Hosted by Old Original Bookbinders
 125 Walnut St., 6–8 p.m.
 RSVP before January 20.
 See page 1 for details.

Monday, January 30
Greatest Hits on the Organ Before 1750
 St. Peter's Church
 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 16
SHCA Board Meeting
 Old Pine Community Center
 4th & Lombard Streets
 7 p.m. All members welcome

See page 11 for a comprehensive list of Franklin Tercentenary Celebrations



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