

Society Hill REPORTER

...Working Together
For a Better Place To Live

May 2000

Newsletter of The Society Hill Civic Association

Town Meeting May 17 at 7:30 PM

The beautifully refurbished Keshet Israel at 412 Lombard Street will host a town meeting on Wednesday, May 17, at 7:30 PM for the Society Hill Civic Association general membership.

Organized by **Councilman Frank DiCicco**, the panel will feature the 6th District Police Captain, Brian Korn, as well as representatives from the Managing Director's Office, the Parking Authority and the Streets Department. These city officials will discuss the present and future state of affairs in our neighborhood. Please plan to attend and be prepared with your questions. They can make changes in the way things are done. (See page 19 for story on Keshet Israel.)

Elections

Elections for new SHCA board members will also be held at the May 17 General Membership meeting. Officers are elected for one-year terms with a three-term limit. Directors are elected for three-year terms.

If a SHCA member wishes to run for a board position, they must submit their name and the position they are seeking to the Board prior to the election, be a member of the organization, reside in the quadrant if they are petitioning for the position of director, and accompany the petition with signatures of ten SHCA members (who also reside in the same quadrant if a directorship is being sought).

The nominating committee has proposed the following slate of candidates:

President Malcolm Lazin
Senior Vice President . . . Mary Sturdivant
Vice President Jim Moss
Vice President Debby Robinson
Secretary Diane Molas
Treasurer Richard Bost

Quadrant Directors
NE ... Ann Verber
NW ... Perry Whyte*
NW ... Mark Valentine
SW ... Mark Keener
SE ... Amy Foran*
SE ... David Shanks

* Filling terms that expire in 2001.

*See page 6 for brief
biographical
information about
the candidates.*

Save These Dates

SHCA General Membership Meeting Wednesday, May 17

Congregation Keshet Israel
412 Lombard Street
7:30 PM Meet Your Neighbors • 8:00 PM Program
Town meeting

Physick House Plant Sale

321 S. 4th Street (in the garden)
May 5 - 7

Society Hill Synagogue Fair

Sunday, May 7, 10 AM - 2 PM
Lawrence Walk off Spruce Street

Society Hill Open House Tours

Sunday, May 7, 1-5 PM - Houses
Sunday, May 14, 1-5 PM - Gardens
\$35: Tickets at Thaddeus Kosciuszko House,
301 Pine Street

Pennsylvania Hospital's Garden Bazaar

Elm Garden (8th & Spruce Streets)
Thursday, May 11
10 AM to 3 PM

Annuals, herbs, food, gifts and fun

St. Peter's Garden Party, Kick Off Capital Campaign

Saturday, May 13, 6 - 7:30 PM
3rd & Pine Streets

Mix and Mingle

Wednesday, June 7, 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Kaleidoscope Cafe
605 South 3rd Street
Free Wine, Beer & Hors d'oeuvres to Members
Join at Door

Clean Up Day, Saturday, July 22

Flyer later will give details

Weekend Craft Fair at Headhouse

2nd & Lombard Streets
Starting Noon, May 27 till Fall

Jump Start Thursday

Free meter parking & merchant discounts after 5 PM
every Thursday on South Street

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.wnwr.com/shca>

Committee Updates

100th Welcome Basket Delivered

This past March, the 100th Welcome Basket was presented to a lucky Pine Street couple, who also received a complimentary SHCA 2000 membership to mark the occasion.

SHCA presents a large basket of fresh foods, theatre tickets, gift certificates and valuable information to anyone who has recently made Society Hill home.

Help by letting us know of new neighbors in your block.

— Martha Levine, 215-629-0727

Project Street Trees

If you lost a tree over the winter and would like it replaced, please call to select a species and set up for removal and planting. SHCA is still offering a \$100 subsidy for all new street trees.

—Jean Bodine, 215-627-8393

Tree Tenders

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is again offering their four-part class to learn how to care for trees in the city and select appropriate ones for a sidewalk. Classes are Wednesdays from 6-9 PM on June 7, 14, and 21 and Saturday, 10-1 on June 17 at PHS headquarters, 100 N. 20th Street. Call Mindy Maslin at 215-988-8845 to reserve your seat.

— Cherry Bombeck

Historic Preservation and Zoning

This committee, chaired by Richard Bost, Becky Stoloff and Bernice Hamel, have had several projects to review recently. In one instance, SHCA received a letter from a new neighbor's architect requesting a meeting with residents in a "desire to preserve and maintain the character of this neighborhood." The committee hopes that the neighbor's sensitivity to our community will become a model for working together so that, to quote his architect: "we can produce a design that is a positive addition to the district" and one that is "an appropriate and welcome addition to the area."

The committee urges all those desiring either a facade alteration to their home or development of a new structure within our historic district to schedule a meeting with the committee—in the early stages of developing architectural design plans—so that together we can continue to preserve and maintain the harmony of our streetscape.

— Bernice T. Hamel

Other Zoning Matters

News you can use: **Mark Wade**, local developer, has approximately 32 feet of iron fencing which was removed from a Society Hill home. He would like it to stay in the neighborhood. If interested, call Mark at 215-546-8228.

Interesting news: **Michael DiPaolo** and **Gene LeFevre** have purchased the Morris Reynolds House on 8th and St. James Streets to open a bed and breakfast.

Good news: Everything remains on schedule for the W Hotel

Continued on page 15

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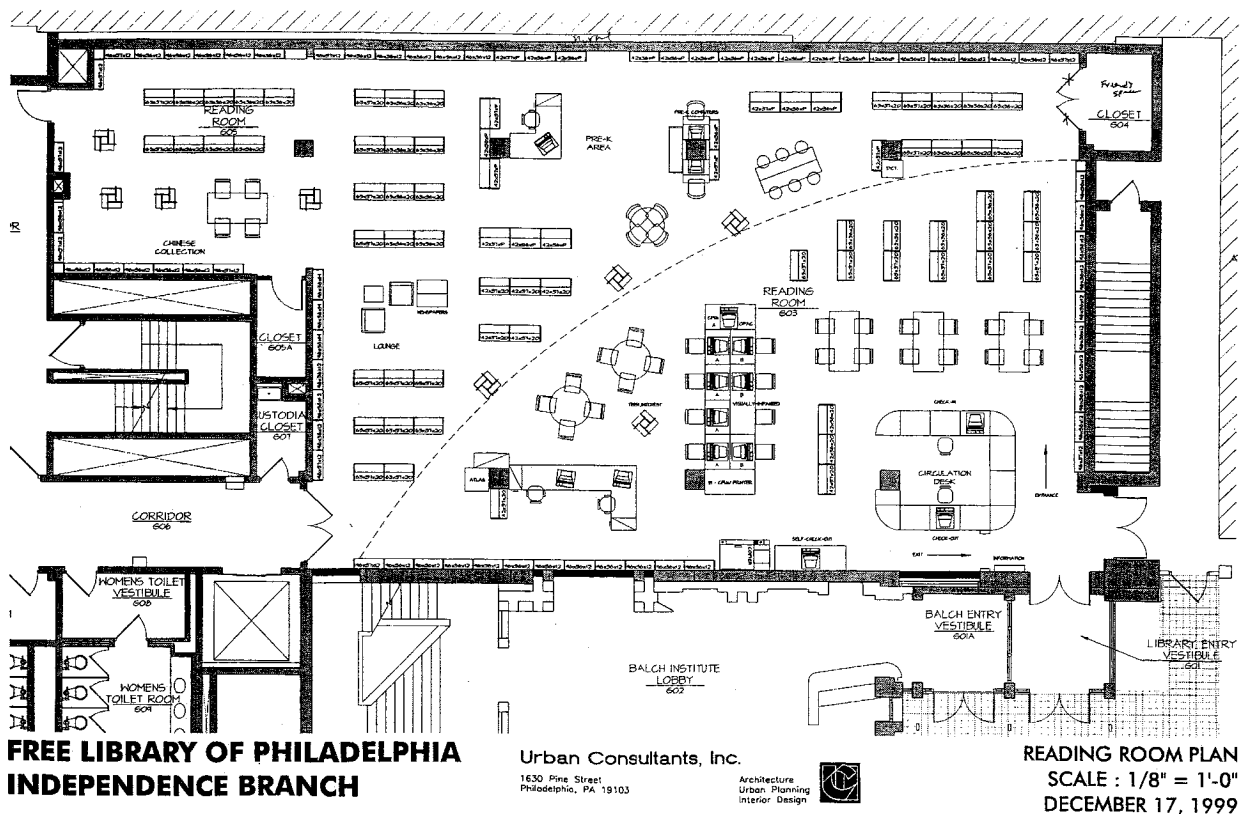


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Books and Bucks Still Needed

The general contractor for renovating the new Independence Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia at 18 South 7th Street has been selected, and the renovations should begin in June or early July.

Although a slight delay in the selection of the contractor has pushed back the opening of the branch until the winter, this will give the fund-raising campaign for the branch extra time to raise the money to ensure a complete, diverse and first-rate collection.

\$230,000 still needed

That campaign aims to raise \$230,000. Several proposals for larger gifts have already been submitted to foundations and corporations, and information will be sent out to potential individual donors this month. Various events planned for early fall will let you help put books on the shelves of the your new branch. The campaign is a joint effort of the East Philadelphia Coalition for a Free Library Branch (founded by Directors of SHCA) and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Branch head named

Meanwhile, the Independence Branch head librarian has been selected. Jennifer Chang, currently a children's librarian at the central library, is a native of Taiwan. She came to the United States in 1987 to enter graduate studies at the University of Illinois. After receiving her masters in library science in 1989, she

joined the Free Library as a librarian at the Northeast Regional Library.

In 1990 she returned to Taiwan to teach students English and to help place them in American universities. In 1994 Ms. Chang immigrated to America where she rejoined the Free Library and began intensive outreach to Philadelphia's Asian American community.

Ms. Chang is a member of the Asian Women's Coalition and is on the boards of Children's Village and the Chinatown Learning Center where she frequently reads aloud to children.

For more information about the Independence Branch or making a contribution to the campaign, please contact me at 215-625-7995 or at LizaNicker@aol.com.

— Liza Seltzer

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Red, White, Blue & Green

Welcome America and Philadelphia Green, two non-profit agencies, have teamed up to get Center City and all the neighborhoods to plant flowers and show the flag for two special events this summer 2000 — the twelve-day Welcome America festival sponsored by SUNOCO and the Republican National Convention.



Left to right, Sheila Brown and Sandee Williams check the plant orders.



Left to right, Cherry Bombeck demonstrates basket assembly to Pam Sinkler Todd, Helen Niedermayer, and Dave Stevens.

Led by **Mary Sturdivant** and **Cherry Bombeck**, these neighbors quickly rallied and collected over \$5,000 for hanging flowering baskets for the Franklin lampposts and flags to decorate the baskets for the two events: **Elizabeth Armour, Jean Bodine, Sheila Brown, Janet Cooke, Al & Joanne DeSantos, Nancy Friedlander, Michelle and Tim Gillette, Rosemarie Helling, Mark Keener, Leslie LaRocca, Martha Levine, Marian McGee, Marion McKone, Martha Moore, Margaret Munsch, Helen Niedermayer, Diane Pastor, Judee Roberts, Russ Schaedler, Irene Shuman, David and Dorothy Stevens, Pamela Sinkler Todd, Mark Valentine, Norma Van Dyke, Carolyn Wahrenberger, Donna Wechsler, Sandra Williams, Emily Wood, and Kevin Yoder.**

Gail Hearn and **Peggy O'Donnell** started the idea several years ago when they hung moss baskets on the Franklin lamps on the 500 block of Pine. Gail showed **Janet Cooke**, who enlisted **Kevin Yoder** and got Third Street wired.

Cherry Bombeck and Mary Sturdivant worked through the Physick House plant sale and held a workshop to get more neighbors involved, and this year they enlisted the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) and **Julie Snell** to get the entire neighborhood involved. Delivery, assembly, and installation are all scheduled for Saturday, May 20, at St. Peter's parking lot. Although each block captain is assembling their own teams, volunteers are still needed to help assemble and install baskets.

To volunteer, call Mary Sturdivant at 215-299-3247.

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The Candidates

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Malcolm Lazin has lived in Society Hill for twenty-two years. Mr. Lazin is an attorney and was previously a partner at the law firm of Rubin Quinn Moss & Patterson. He is currently serving as the Executive Director of PrideFest America which he founded in 1983. Mr. Lazin has been President of the Waterfront Developers Corporation, the Camden Waterfront Developers Corporation, and the Penn's Landing Development Corporation. He has served as co-chair of the Local Legislative Committee of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce since 1983 and has been involved in many areas of public and community service. Mr. Lazin attended Lebanon Valley College and received his Juris Doctorate from the Boston University School of Law.

Mary Sturdivant, a Society Hill resident since 1975, has served on the SHCA board as director, secretary, and vice president since 1993 and is a tree tender. Her proudest accomplishments in the community are the Clean Up Days she co-chaired with Larry Meehan for four years and this year's Hanging Flower Basket project. Mary is a marketing specialist for CB Richard Ellis, Inc., an international commercial real estate firm. Prior to that, she enjoyed twenty-years in marketing with IBM. She graduated from Rosemont College and has a Masters in Arts (English) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jim Moss is currently Special Counsel at the law firm of Astor Weiss Kaplan & Rosenblum. He is also a Director on the Board of the Society Hills Civic Association and was formerly on the boards of the PA and Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Associations, the Muse Art Gallery and the Cheltenham Center for the Arts. Mr. Moss was President of the Cheltenham Home Rule Charter Commission and served as President of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Americans for Democratic Action from 1994 through 1996.

Deborah Robinson has lived in Society Hill for more than thirty years. Ms. Robinson is married and has three children and six grandchildren. A graduate of Bryn Mawr College, Ms. Robinson has worked for the Philadelphia Chamber Concerts, the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas and the Mann Music Center. She has done extensive volunteer work with the Philadelphia Orchestra and this year is serving as secretary for the 100th Birthday Gala for the Orchestra. Ms. Robinson is the co-chair and treasurer of the South Street Detail Police District Advisory Council and serves as a director of the Society Hill Civic Association and as its representative to a neighborhood advisory council to the South Street Headhouse District.

Rick Bost is an attorney with the law firm Kolansky & Strauss where he practices in the area of disciplinary matters for the City of Philadelphia's police officers. Mr. Bost is currently co-chair of the Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee of the Society Hill Civic Association and, prior to the merger of the two committees, served as the chair of the Zoning Committee. Last summer, Mr. Bost participated in a 150 mile bike ride to benefit the Multiple Sclerosis Society. Mr. Bost received his Bachelors Degree in accounting from Temple University and attended Widner University School of Law. He has lived at his current residence in Society Hill for the last five years and has also lived in Society Hill Towers.

Ann Verber is a partner in the litigation department of the Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel law firm, specializing in the area of family law. Ms. Verber previously served as board member and fundraising chair for the Support Center for Child Advocates and was president of the Queen Village Neighbors Civic Association. She is currently a member of the Boards of Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, Young Audiences of Eastern Pennsylvania and the South Street Headhouse Special Services District. Ms. Verber graduated from Ohio State University and received her Juris Doctorate from the Ohio State University School of Law.

Amy Foran is Assistant General Counsel for The Day & Zimmermann Group, Inc. Ms. Foran, who began her legal career at the law firm of Morgan Lewis & Bockius, specializes in labor and employment law. She has lived in Society Hill for five years and is an editor for the Society Hill Reporter. Ms. Foran previously served as a board member for the Volunteers for the Indigent Project and currently is an active volunteer attorney for the Support Center for Child Advocates. Ms. Foran received her Bachelor of Music and Masters of Management degrees from the University of Michigan and her Juris Doctorate from the Temple University School of Law.

Continued on page 12

Opening June 3

New Farmers Market on Second St. Chefs To Demonstrate

Get ready to shop till you drop beginning Saturday, June 3, 11 AM to 3 PM, at our new neighborhood outdoor farmers market, the Second Street Farmers Market near Second and Lombard Streets. While plans are still being worked out, a fantastic group of farmers has already signed on to offer neighborhood residents the best of Pennsylvania and New Jersey farm products. Prepare your taste buds for the freshest, most delicious food you've ever tasted — picked that morning and sold to you by the farmer who grew it.

The farmers market will not displace the crafts market in the Headhouse, and final site details are still being worked out. But neighbors have been very supportive and enthusiastic about plans for the Second Street Farmers Market. And don't worry — the Farmers' Market on South and Passyunk Streets will remain open every Tuesday!

An incredible line-up of farmers will sell products grown and produced on local farms, from freshly harvested organic vegetables to farm-raised fish freshly 'caught' that morning. The list of farmers includes: Runnin' Free Farm Organic Produce from Flemington, NJ, offering organic vegetables, fruit and other farm products; East Coast Exotics out of Toughkenanon, PA, selling a wide variety of exotic mushrooms; Fahnstock Fruit Farm in Lititz with mouth-watering fresh fruit and vegetables; Big Brown Fish Hatchery from Effort, PA, with a full line of farm-raised fresh fish; Pleasant Hill Farms from Emmaus, growing organic vegetables and fruit; Susquehanna Mini Dairy Cooperative bringing fresh milk, cheese and yogurt from the Susquehanna Valley; Herrcastle Farm in Holtwood with freshly harvested vegetables and fruit; Highfield Dairy in Big Cove Tannery with goat milk, cheeses, meats and vegetables; Fisher's Farmer's Market from Oxford, PA, producing a full line of vegetables; Kimberton Hills Bakery from Kimberton, offering organic baked goods; Hoaglund Farms in Elysburg, PA, with their vegetables and fruit; North Star Orchard from Coatesville specializing in fruit and fruit products; Stauffer Farms from Lancaster with vegetables, fruit, beef and baked goods; and Trickett's Honey, producing Philadelphia's own home-grown honey.

Chefs kick it up a notch!

The Farmers Market Trust is working with neighbors, farmers market advocates and Chefs Collaborative 2000 to plan the Second Street Farmers Market.

Each week, a local chef will demonstrate cooking techniques using products available from market farmers. Chefs Collaborative is a group of Philadelphia area chefs who promote sustainable cuisine by teaching children, supporting local farmers, educating one another, and inspiring the public to choose good, clean food.

— Duane Perry and Bob Pierson



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 & Reading Terminal Market
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 Philadelphia Sports Clubs, 220-250 South 5th Street
 Riff Cleaners, 314 South 5th Street
 Sfizzio Restaurant, Society Hill Towers,
 237 St. James Place
 Show of Hands Gallery, 1006 Pine Street
 Starbuck's Coffee, 347 South Street
 Society Hill Playhouse, 507 South 8th Street
 Super Fresh Food Markets, 5th and Pine Streets
 Wilma Theatre, 265 South Broad Street
 Zeke's Deli, 318 South 5th Street

— Martha Levine

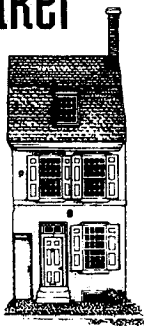


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Darts and Laurels

Laurel to Robert LaRocca for jumping into the fray with *pro bono* legal counsel that got PECO to take down those awful transformers. We like the idea that PECO employee Ed McBride is trying to anticipate problems and ward off black outs, but some aesthetic sense, Ed, PUHLEEZE!

Laurel to everyone who is opening their home or garden to the Philadelphia Open House tours. Special thanks to **Linda Skale** and **Martha Levine** for chairing the event and their crew of volunteer house sitters. They are planning a summer tour for the Republicans.

Dart Averted – Words failed us when we saw that flock of plastic pink flamingos in the Episcopal House garden. They are now back to sedate, but tasteful yellow tulips. Apparently the birds were part of a youth ministry program. We didn't ask the cosmic "Why."

Dart to the Sixth Police District patrol people for not catching the miscreants who are writing on every blank surface they can find. Fellow citizens, call 911 immediately if you see anyone lingering around a Franklin Lamppost, stoop, cable box, garage door or traffic light pole. Can you believe these vandals consider themselves artists? I suppose blinding them or cutting off their hands would constitute cruel and unusual punishment. Darn!

Laurel to the Third Police District patrol people who kept a lid on the potentially explosive Mardi Gras activities on South Street, even shutting the street down for awhile. Of course, we have made note to be partying on South Street next Fat Tuesday, not listening to the roar of the crowd from a high rise tower four blocks away.

Darts to the Historic Commission and the Zoning Board for allowing a FIVE-car garage at the new home at 3rd and Walnut Street. Yes, it is a home, not an office building. When the owners sell, maybe they will donate it to the community so we can have our own fire station. Oh, I hope they put the house on the Philadelphia Open House tour next year; I am dying to see the inside.

Laurel to the architect and owners for the renovation of the home at the northeast corner of 6th and Spruce Streets. WOW! Okay, the kitchen vent onto 6th Street is a little tacky (well, I had to complain about something!) If you read this, please, please, sign up for the summer House Tour!

Oops! In the March issue of THE REPORTER, an article on neighborhood improvement districts said that Society Hill real estate tax revenues to the city were \$150 million. That is the assessed real estate value. Revenues are \$12,870,000.

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In Society Hill Real Estate

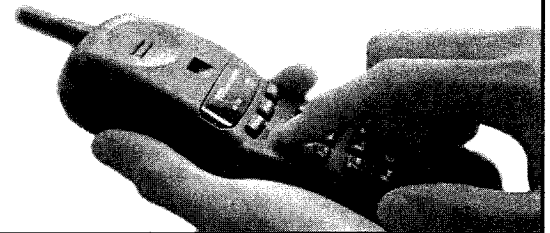
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Membership 2000 (as of April 15)

To correct spelling, please call the office. We will be happy to correct mistakes or omissions in future listings.

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Continued on page 13

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Society Hill REPORTER

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To reach any of the officers or directors or send a letter or contribution to THE REPORTER, call the office at 215-629-1288, leave your name and number and Day Murray, the administrator, will have the director return your call.

You may also write to SHCA at P.O. Box 3, Philadelphia, PA 19105 or fax to 215-625-9914 or e-mail at SHCIVICA@aol.com.

Next deadline for THE REPORTER:
 Wednesday, June 21

The Candidates, continued

Mark Keener is a Partner with Brown & Keener Urban Design. As an Urban Designer, Mr. Keener has worked extensively with public and private organizations to develop and implement long range plans. Among Mr. Keener's projects are the Philadelphia Center City Streets Improvement Program for the Center City District and the Master Plan for Port Richmond Industrial Areas commissioned by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation. Mr. Keener is currently the Secretary of the Society Hill Civic Association

and previously served on its Zoning and Development Committee. Mr. Keener received both his Bachelors and Masters degrees in architecture from the University of Virginia. He and his wife, Karen, have lived in their Society Hill home for eight years. Their daughter, Claire, age 6, attends Philadelphia School.

Biographical information for **Diane Molas, Perry Whyte, Mark Valentine** and **David Shanks** was not available at press time.

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Household Membership: \$40 Business Membership: \$100

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 Town Watch
 Street Trees/Tenders

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 ___ Street Trees/Tree Tenders
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Tree Tenders

Spring Tree Care — It's the Pits!

Help your street tree. Here's how:

Water — by hand once a week for the first year — at least 10-15 gallons each time. A slow draining bucket or trickle from the hose allows for better absorption. Even mature trees should be watered by hand during dry or hot spells.

Weed — they compete with the tree for nutrients and oxygen.

Cultivate — loosen the top inch or two of soil around the tree to permit more air and water to get to the roots. Some tree soil is so compacted it acts like concrete.

Mulch — add a 2-3 inch layer of wood chips or shredded bark around the base of the tree. Make a 3 – 6 inch well around the trunk — do not pile mulch against the trunk. This makes the bark vulnerable to invasion by insects and disease. The layer of mulch slowly releases nutrients into the soil, regulates soil temperature, conserves water, prevents soil compaction and reduces weeds.

Wait to prune — you are too late because the leaf buds are all open. Wait now to midsummer when the new growth hardens off.

Stop piling trash bags in the pits on Mondays. This compacts the soil and could leach some poisons into the soil. Not to mention the harm it does to any plantings or ground coverings in the pit!



Root girdling and suckers (green shoots coming out of the trunk or base) signal distressed trees. Enlarge the pit and follow the rules listed above. Tree tenders are still looking for a contractor with a jackhammer to come into the neighborhood with one price to enlarge anyone's pit. In many cases, the brick sidewalks were installed over concrete, so just removing bricks does not really enlarge the tree pit.

— Mindy Maslin, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

— Cherry Bombeck, SHCA Tree Tenders

Committee Updates, continued
at NewMarket.

Little news: On the 300 block of Cypress Street, the owners want to add a third floor to a small home.

Big news: A major renovation is planned for two contiguous but architecturally uninteresting properties on the south side of the 300 block of Delancey Street and an interesting historic property on Pine Street that goes back to Delancey Street.

Editor's Note: We have already received two phone calls worried about another McMansion going up in the neighborhood. Please call Richard Bost, Becky Stoloff, or Bernice Hamel to voice your concerns.

Bad News: **Charles E. Peterson**, re-

tired architect of Independence National Historic Park and pioneer in the early redevelopment of this neighborhood, writes: "Last week I called Mark Wieand AIA of Bower, Lewis, Thrower, the local firm on the team (for the high-rise project at 8th & Walnut Streets to be called the St. James). Mr. Wieand says that the financing hoped for was never received.

"The fact remains that architect Lloyd Malkus' restoration of the fronts of York Row (which the developers had promised to maintain) on Walnut Street was probably the first architectural restoration in what is now called Society Hill." The PSFS Building and mansions on York Row could prove another case of demolition by neglect if a developer doesn't appear soon.

Historic Window Panes

Help educate visitors about our history and architecture by displaying a window pane showing the date your home was built, by whom or for whom, and in what style. For FREE, SHCA offers a pane to all members and new residents, \$15 to non-members. **Matt DeJulio** will provide a pane within 15 days.

— *Matt DeJulio*, 215-574-0372.

Neighborhood Pride

Neighborhood Pride has assisted homeowners with their house renovations by providing, on request, the Preferred List of Contractors. Many of us who own historic houses want contractors who have the experience and sensitivity to work on our fine homes. It's bigger and better than ever, updated each month.

— *Martha Levine*, 215-629-0727.

Clean Up Day

In cooperation with the City's Streets Department, we are moving Clean Up Day (usually the first weekend in May) to Saturday, July 22, the weekend before the Republican National Convention. We always need volunteers to leaflet the neighborhood, put up the parking signs, give out brooms, bags, coffee and doughnuts at the SuperFresh, and help with the picnic at Pennsylvania Hospital. If you would like to volunteer, call **Mark Valentine** at the office (215-629-1288). But more importantly, come out and clean up!

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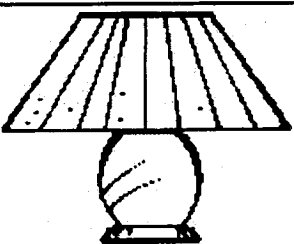
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Letters to the Editor

What's Going On Here?

Dear Editor:

After the enormous public outcry over the Hyatt Hotel project, and much discussion of the entertainment center soon to be under way at Penn's Landing, I am surprised to see another "monstrosity" go up along the Delaware River, directly in front of the two historic naval vessels, allegedly, administrative offices for the Penn's Landing Corporation!

Were there any public hearings that I might have missed? Can P.L.C. do whatever they please on their "home turf"? (It is noteworthy that there are none of the usual signs on display, naming the owner/builder/contractor/funding organization, etc., nor any zoning approval notices!)

The fact of the matter is that this new building blocks the view of the two vessels from Columbus Avenue, thus diminishing their tourist appeal, in addition to taking up valuable and already scarce river front parking space. With ample office facilities available elsewhere in the City, why this location? Does/did the SHCA have a position?

— Hans Bombeck

Dear Hans,

You ask a lot of very good questions, but we don't have good answers. The "monstrosity" is for maintenance, not office space — an even worse use for such a desirable location. No, you didn't miss any meetings. The Penn's Landing Corporation (PLC) did not bring any plans to SHCA prior to commencing construction. Yes, apparently, PLC thinks it can do whatever it wants on its own turf.

The Board discussed this at the April meeting, and this project glaringly demonstrates the need for a master plan for the waterfront (you can get several versions of plans dated different years from the Planning Commission and the PLC — a fact which demonstrates that there is no real plan — only suggestions for and from developers).

It also underscores the need for SHCA to participate in the coalition of waterfront civic associations to force the issue of developing the plan. That coalition successfully blocked the development of a high-rise that would have blocked views of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge and was out of scale with condominiums already built on the river.

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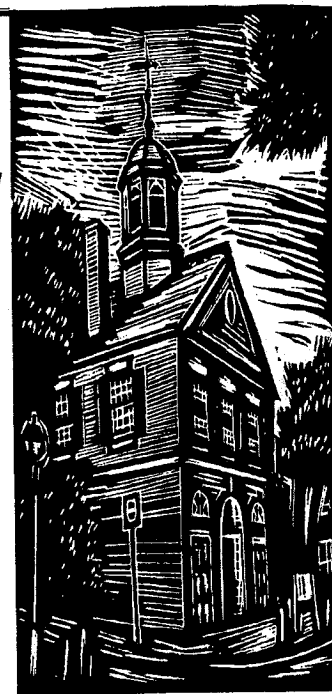
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Pool Opens Memorial Day

The Philadelphia Sports Clubs (PSC) at 5th and Spruce Streets houses the only outdoor pool in our area open to the public. For the second consecutive year, PSC will provide daily designated pool hours for children under 16 years of age.

Access to the pool requires one to be a club member or the child or guest of a member. Children using the pool must be toilet trained (no diapers or even pool diapers allowed) and supervised by a parent. Swim instruction is planned for the pool season beginning May 31. Need child care? A large playroom with qualified child care is on the premises.

For adults, PSC offers state-of-the-art resistance and cardio equipment, free weights, personal training, group fitness, pilates, yoga and tai-chi classes, as well as aqua-training, tennis instruction, a tennis court, and a nutrition program.

Lockers to rent and a pro shop are

available. To inquire about these services, call the membership office at 215-592-8900 and ask for Heather or Roger.

— Martha Levine

The weekend Headhouse Crafts Fair offers arts and crafts programs every Sunday at 3 PM to children 3 to 10 years old.

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Do you believe...

Kesher Israel Congregation

412 Lombard Street

In 1984 two young men leaned against the wall of the decrepit synagogue praying for their ailing father. They promised themselves that if he survived, they would do something for the synagogue so close to their father's hardware store at 4th and Bainbridge Streets. Amazingly, Ted Millan recovered his health. His sons, Norman and Rick, kept their promise.

The Promise

When Norman and Rick soon visited Kesher Israel, they learned that the youngest member was 70 years old. Abe Mersky, President of the Congregation, had just led a successful fight to prevent the razing of the late 18th century building for the construction of 10 town houses. Pigeons flew in through broken windows. Rain fell on the worshipers through the leaking roof. The Millan brothers decided to fix the roof themselves. After one almost fell off, they decided to raise money for a new roof; estimated cost \$100,000. Meanwhile other young families had become attracted to the synagogue, which did not charge, and still does not charge any membership fee. They struggled to raise the roof money and somehow did raise \$19,000. Norman Millan stood on the pulpit one holiday morning and said, "Next holiday rather than yarmulkes, we will have to wear hard hats to keep the rain off."

The Rescue

Dr. Michael Yaron, a congregant, came to the rescue. He brought in his own contractors, repaired the roof and restored the entire building. He wanted no payment and no gratitude.

More and more young singles and young families joined the worshipers. There are now more than 500 members.

When the Y at Broad and Pine closed its nursery school a few years ago, the phone at Kesher Israel began to ring. Where would the 16 children from the Y school go?

412 Lombard Street had been built in the late 1700s as a Unitarian Church and was converted to a synagogue in 1894. No room had been set aside for young children. With six weeks until the opening of the school year, Norman and Rick Millan decided to provide a nursery school. Fortunately, a sign advertising the school caught Ira Schwartz' eye. He offered to help. He was laughingly told that the help that was really needed was \$200,000. Ira Schwartz asked if he could pay half immediately and the rest the following year!

Six weeks was very little time to build the school. Norman Millan promised to give Dr. Michael Yaron's contractor, Aaron Weiner, his 93 Corvette if the job was done in time. Six weeks later the school was ready and the keys were handed over. Now more than 30 tots attend school under the benevolent ship mast that supports the sanctuary.

The Miracle Continues

Visit Kesher Israel any Friday to share a remarkable spirit in a remarkable building or come to the May 17 General Membership meeting at 7:30 PM and share the spirit with all of us.

— Cirel Magen

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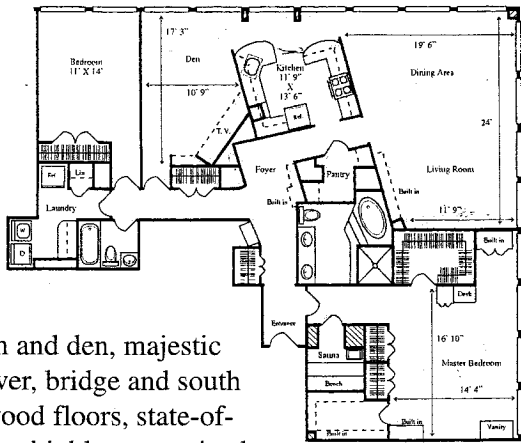
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President's Message

GOODBYE

This is my last column as President of the Society Hill Civic Association.

With this column, I am also saying good-bye to Society Hill as my home.

At the membership meeting in mid-May, a new slate of SHCA Officers and Board members will be presented to the community for their approval.

In early summer, I will be moving from my home for over 30 years to an apartment (a large one) on the other side of Broad Street.

This community and my Spruce Street home have many, many wonderful memories for me.

I will miss both very much.

Being the SHCA President the past two years has been a very meaningful experience.

I've learned much about people.

Many neighbors and Board members have shown their care for Society Hill by their actions. Others have made clear that they just don't give a damn. Too bad — they hurt the community by their selfishness and ultimately will hurt themselves.

In the months to come, I believe the two primary issues the

community will have to address are the above ground infringement of utilities, especially PECO, and a fair and objective evaluation of Neighborhood Improvement District concept for Society Hill.

Good-bye to all — and thank you!

(By the way, — now that I'm gone, Mr. Klein, you can join the Civic Association and I trust your check will be a very generous one.)

— Norman Tissan

Editor's Note: Under Norman Tissan's leadership, SHCA membership has grown to 750 households from 150 – 200 households, where it languished in the early '90s. He also started holding the general membership meetings in the neighborhood houses of worship and provided the impetus to examine the Neighborhood Improvement District concept.

Congratulations, Norman, and good luck; and so I have allowed your parting shot to Mr. Klein to stay in your column. But the bigger the organization, the bigger the need for civility.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.wnwr.com/shca>