



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

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Senator Fumo to Speak at Sept 21 Meeting



State Senator Fumo

Our featured speaker for the evening of Wednesday, September 21 is State Senator Vincent J. Fumo, who has always been a great friend to Society Hill and to historic preservation. We are fortunate that Senator Fumo is at the forefront of the fight to save our community's most cherished sites—including the Dilworth House. Indeed, America's oldest firehouse at 2nd Street—built in 1805—would not have been rescued and fully renovated had not the Senator stepped forward to become the Head House Conservancy's first major benefactor. Senator Fumo's generosity helped bring that project to a successful conclusion—such that even its rare clock (built by Isaiah Lukens, who also built the clock at Independence Hall) was repaired. All community members are invited to join us for our General Membership Meeting, to be held at St. Joseph's Parish Hall, on Willings Alley between 3rd & 4th Streets. In addition to Senator Fumo, representatives from the School District of Philadelphia will present finalized plans for the new playground for McCall School. They will be available for questions following their presentation.

At the August 12 Historical Commission Meeting

Dilworth Continued, Ayer Building Considered

The Struggle for Dilworth Continues

Despite a heads-up lead editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on August 12 advocating preservation of the Dilworth House, the hearing at the Historical Commission did not occur as scheduled. More than 100 people showed up on a sweltering summer morning—filling the room and crowding the hallways in order to take a strong stand to save the house. However, the developer's lawyer, with the Commerce Director's assistance, managed to obtain a continuance in order to avoid the hearing scheduled for that day. This came on the heels of the Historical Commission's own Designation Committee's unanimous (4-0) rejection of the developer's 15-point argument for demolishing

the house. The hearing has been scheduled for sometime in late September. We again call on all our supporters to attend. Keep tuned to www.savedilworthnow.org for the exact date, time and location of the hearing. And, if you haven't yet done so, please sign the online petition. (Don't have a computer? Call SHCA's office so that Administrator Matt DeJulio may phone you with details about time and place.)

The Dilworth House is a symbol of Mayor Dilworth's personal commitment to the revitalization of Society Hill. The idea was to help foster the creation of a middle-class neighborhood so that Center City, from river to river, could take its rightful place as part of a world-class city. This spirit of optimism is something Philadelphia should treasure always.

Washington Square's Magnificent N.W. Ayer Building Conversion Considered
Another most important Philadelphia building was considered by the Historical Commission on August 12: the quintessential Art Deco building at 210 West Washington Square, known as the N.W. Ayer Building. This structure is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in Philadelphia. Its developers—the Goldenberg Group and Brown/Hill Development—together

WED.

September

21

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings
Wednesday, September 21, 2005

St. Joseph's Parish Hall

Willings Alley between 3rd & 4th

6:00 p.m. Board Meeting

All SHCA members are welcome to attend.

7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting

All community members are invited to attend.
Refreshments served.

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Submission Deadlines

for Nov/Dec Issue

Advertising October 1

Editorial October 13

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 or copy should be submitted to the SHCA office by email, mail or fax by the submission deadline above.

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.

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Noteworthy Neighbor:
Shana Vitoff

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

September, a Time of Renewal

Summer is a time of rest and relaxation. Labor Day traditionally marks the end of these lazy days and in September we summon renewed energy to complete old projects or get involved with new ones.

This fall, we expect to receive funds from two grants. The first is a \$110,000 grant we obtained through the assistance of Senator Fumo. These funds will go toward updating the Franklin Lights. (See page 11.). Many thanks to Martha Levine and her Franklin Lights Committee, who are working to get this project started.

The Second grant of \$50,000, which we received through the assistance of State Representative Marie Lederer, will be spent on our neighborhood. We have received several requests for additional trash receptacles to be placed at intersections throughout the community. If you have other suggestions on how these funds can best be used, please let me know!

We are also becoming more involved with the beautification of Washington Square Park. Under the leadership of Board member Sissie Lipton, a committee will initially work on the entrances to the Square, beginning with the park's southeast corner. (See page 17.)

Thanks to the Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP), under the able direction of Paul Boni, for all of its hard work. As you have read on page 1, the ZHP Committee had to prepare for two Historic Commission hearings to preserve the Dilworth House: on July 28 they appeared before the Historical Commission's

Designation Committee, and on August 12 they attended the full Commission hearing which was given a continuance for later in September. Many thanks to Society Hill residents and neighbors from other communities who took time out from their schedules in support of preserving the Dilworth House, although a decision has not yet been reached regarding its ultimate fate. Your presence at these hearings has shown city officials that we as a community care about this Philadelphia landmark. Paul Boni and his team have done an amazing job in defending our position. Thanks to State Senator Vincent Fumo and Councilman Frank DiCicco for their continued support of our efforts. In addition, the ZHP Committee also worked with the developers of the distinguished Ayer Building—on the west side of Washington Square—to convert it into upscale condominium apartments.

Other projects and issues for the upcoming year include: assembling an overall strategic plan for our civic association; improving our website to make it more informative and user friendly; focusing on Town Watch, analyzing traffic and safety issues—including the abundance of tourist vehicles in our neighborhood; renovating Three Bears Park; and last but not least, monitoring the development plans for NewMarket—the largest unoccupied parcel of land remaining in Society Hill.

If I've forgotten to include a subject or project that would further enrich our community, please do not hesitate to contact me (TRorke@aol.com). Our hard-working civic association needs your suggestions and welcomes your feedback!



Tania Rorke
SHCA President

Time to complete old projects — or get involved with new ones!

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Dilworth Continued, Ayer Building Considered

continued from page 1

with their architects wish to convert this office building into 22 upscale condominium residences. Several design plans were presented to the Historical Commission, which followed earlier meetings with both SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) and also Wash-West's Civic Association. The developer's plans include converting the building's basement and part of its mezzanine level into parking for all of the residents. The plans also include changing one of the building's street-level windows, which faces Washington Square, into a door for purposes of a retail or commercial tenant. These modifications were not opposed by the ZHP Committee and were approved by the Commission.

The most controversial aspect of their proposal included the construction of a new penthouse unit on the building's rooftop. SHCA'S ZHP Committee expressed concerns about this penthouse, but did not oppose it. Nevertheless, the Historical Commission determined that the existing profile of the Ayer building is too important, so this design proposal was rejected unanimously. The second controversial design alteration was a canopy that would stretch to the curb to be installed above the extraordinary Art Deco

entrance doors. The Historical Commission rejected this because the front doors of the Ayer Building are considered a great work of art.

We look forward to seeing the successful conversion of this building into luxury condominiums, as it will be a wonderful asset in our neighborhood. We are pleased to report that the developers have been quite responsive to our community's concerns. Their original plan to construct three penthouse apartments, one above the other, had been modified down to one rooftop apartment based on our critique. Indeed, most of the negative feedback they received centered on their three-story penthouse proposal. Then at the Historical Commission's August hearing, the Executive Director of the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, John Gallery, illustrated with drawings how any construction on top of this elegant Art Deco structure would ruin one of the finest buildings in the city. As a result, their modified, one-story penthouse concept was unanimously opposed by the Commission, and their proposal to construct a canopy in front of the building's elegant, irreplaceable front entrance doors facing Washington Square was also voted down.



The N.W. Ayer Building
photo from the Bernie Cleff Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia

Note: The above article is run in lieu of SHCA's Zoning & Historical Preservation Report by Paul Boni, Esq.

Dilworth House

A Poem by R. E. Booth, Jr., M.D.

*So raze her faded brick façade
For years that stood foursquare,
And said for every eye to see
That change was in the air.*

*Behind it grew the stuff of dreams
And dwelt a vital Mayor,
Whose vision for the Hill's rebirth
Went far beyond the square.*

*He turned down lovely Lemon Hill,
Historic – and more fair,
So friends in Philadelphia
Would trust that he did care.*

*Rooms once rife with plans and deals
Where democrats held sway,
Were crucibles of social change
That we embrace today.*

*Dentils, muntins, firemarks – all
Strong symbols of our past.
What matter if they aren't antique?
The memory's what must last.*

*“Greene Countrie Towne” was Penn's ideal,
With homes – and lives – to scale.
Though centuries have come and gone,
The concept must not fail.*

*O better that the wrecking ball
Should leave a void behind.
A modern tower would demean
What our Fathers had in mind.*

*So crush her to a pile of bricks
As George's troops look on;
And bury with the Dilworth House
The hopes of those now gone!*

Dr. Booth was inspired to write this poem when he heard about the potential demolition of the Dilworth House. The poem was read before the Designation Committee of the Historical Commission on July 28.

Noted orthopedic surgeon, Dr. R.E. Booth, Jr., has had a watercolor of the Dilworth House sitting on his office desk for more than 30 years. He remembers fondly that as a young intern he had treated a woman with no medical insurance who was known throughout the area as “the bag lady.” One day she came back to “repay” him for his medical services with a painting, her own rendition of Washington Square's Dilworth House.

It would seem that there are thousands of other Philadelphians and former Philadelphians, who may not now live in our neighborhood, but who recall Mayor Dilworth and who look reverently at his old home on the Square whenever they visit.

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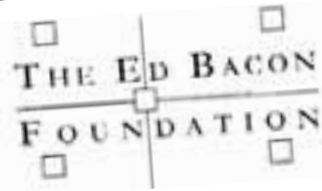
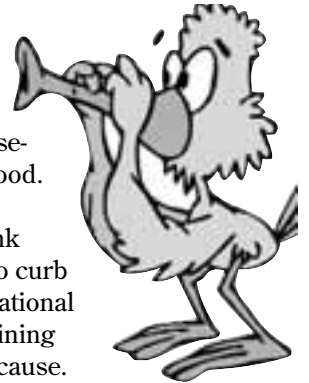
Ducks Gone Wild; Sharks Sighted

Noisy Vehicles Grow in Size and Number

Quack! Quack! There they go again. Neighbors have continued to complain about Ride the Ducks and Super Ducks this season. One neighbor complained, "The Ducks are back with a vengeance, and now there is a third competing Shark ride as well!" As in years past, overly loud PA systems, blaring music, non-stop quacking and erratic routes that allow free access to our residential streets are the principal complaints. Although SHCA leaders have spoken several times to the managers of these profit-making tourist businesses, their agreed-upon "no-quacking" policies throughout Society Hill are not being honored. A few years ago, when Ride the Ducks first established itself in Philadelphia, SHCA's leaders received guarantees that our neighborhood would be mostly off limits to these large amphibious vehicles—and that riders would be told not to use those quacking devices while driving down our

residential streets. Today, however, as many as 50% of the drivers are new hires. They encourage the use of quacking noise-makers throughout the neighborhood.

Rumor has it that Councilman Frank DiCicco is working on legislation to curb these undesirable activities. The National Park Service has also been complaining about the racket these businesses cause. With the proliferation of vehicular tourist attractions, including the latest, a Shark tour ride, our quality of life during the warm months has been adversely affected. Surely there must be a way to accommodate locals and visitors alike. We would like to set a fair policy for such business ventures and at the same time protect our unique residential community.



Tania Rorke, President

Dear Ms. Rorke:

On behalf of the Ed Bacon Foundation, I offer my heartfelt appreciation for your organization's generous and significant gesture of establishing a permanent marker to commemorate the roles of Edmund N. Bacon and Charles E. Peterson in Society Hill's revitalization. The marker turned out wonderfully, and the dedication ceremony was truly memorable, with an impressive attendance. Ed has expressed to me his joy and gratitude for all of your hard work. I know it was a great day for him, to be reunited with so many of his long-time colleagues and to experience such profound appreciation directly from your membership.

It was also a true honor for me to be included on the committee that planned and designed the commemorative marker. The other members of that committee did an exceptional job carrying this project through to its realization. They deserve much praise for the enormous amount of time and care they contributed to ensuring the project's success. I would like to extend my special thanks to Darlene Cavalier, Bernice Hamel, Stanhope and Libby Brown, and Penny Batcheler. Finally, I would also like to extend my thanks to your dedicated membership. The residents of Society Hill continue to ensure the success of this precious community—the realization of Ed's dream and vision.

Thank you for allowing the Ed Bacon Foundation to play a meaningful role in this project. It has been a joy to work with your organization. I look forward to future collaborations in order to preserve and strengthen Ed's vision and legacy in Society Hill and Philadelphia.

Respectfully Yours,

Gregory Heller, President, Edmund Bacon Foundation

Letter to the President

SHCA President Tania Rorke recently received this letter of thanks from the Ed Bacon Foundation



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National Night Out: August 2nd was a huge success with several new people signed up to walk. Many neighbors and Sixth District Police made it a social event, taking a walk around the neighborhood. We were happy to see D.A. Lynn Abraham, Captain Brian Korn and Bike Officer Ferrero. Thanks to everyone who contributed food, drink, paper goods and citronella candles—including Chef's Market, Cosi, Famous Fourth Street Deli, Pink Rose, Philadelphia Java Company, as well as individuals Diana Anhalt, Marilyn Appel, Matt DeJulio, Michael Erdos, Sam Sadtler, Jennifer Spierling, and especially Jane Cooper for her contributions and coordination. Don't miss next year's Night Out—we'll ask for cooler weather.

Accident-prone Spruce Street: It may be a matter of trees blocking lights or stop signs at intersections, or then again, it may be reckless driving. With about 60 accidents in Society Hill from March 1st to June 30th, between Front and 8th, 13 have been on Spruce Street, 9 on Pine, 3 on Lombard and 14 on Walnut. The worst accidents have occurred at 2nd and Pine; 4th, 5th and 6th on Spruce; and 8th at Locust. If the sign says "No Turn on Red" do not turn on red. Near-accidents occur when careless drivers think they absolutely must make the light. Seventh and Spruce has had a series of parked car scrapes lately. Be careful! SSSH is working on getting the trees at intersections pruned.

Pedestrian Safety: SSSH commissioned Orth-Rogers, Inc., a transportation and engineering consulting firm, to conduct two speed studies. The first took place on 6th Street between Walnut and Pine; the second on Spruce Street, between 3rd and 5th. Much to our surprise, 85% of cars were traveling between 25 - 29 mph or less, varying by street. No traffic calming devices are recommended, according to the State Handbook, unless traffic exceeds the speed limit by 10mph. Other possibilities are drivers going through red lights, cutting off pedestrians as they cross the street, turning on No Turn on Red signs, or distractions, such as speaking on cell phones.

Of particular concern are the greenway intersections at St. Joseph's Way and St. Peter's Way, as they intersect with Spruce, Cypress and Delancey Streets. Suggestions by Bob Rogers of Orth-Rogers and Greg Heller, of the Ed Bacon Foundation, are to paint zebra stripes at these intersections, or place caution signs and No Parking signs at the crosswalks. Take the time to cross at the corner; if you must take a shortcut, please cross with extreme caution.

Willings Alley is now a two-way street, making it very dangerous, not only for cars, but also for pedestrians. Neighbors in the area, as well as SSSH, are following up on a suggestion to make this street one way.

For your safety and for your car's safety, particularly if you have visiting relatives with out-of-state license plates, do not leave anything (e.g. luggage, clothing, money or books) in your car, which can be seen by a potential robber from the street or with a flashlight. It's easy for a professional to enter a car, even without breaking a window.

Fix-it Fraud (from AARP): Once you've been ripped-off, it's next to impossible to get your money back. Never pay any upfront money to a contractor who "needs it to buy materials," because respectable contractors have a line of credit. Recommendations from a contractor may be worthless—as references may be from a brother-in-law or other relative. Beware of "contractors" who don't list their business number in the phone directory, who accept only cash payments, or who pressure you to sign immediately.

Washington Square Fountain: In the previous issue of this newsletter we suggested that you keep your children out of the Washington Square fountain—no matter how tempting and clean the water may appear, as it is filled with dog hair and lots of bacteria. In addition, some neighbors have observed that the fountain is sometimes used by inconsiderate people as their toilet.

Retired Cell Phones: Keep your old cell phones and chargers coming to 414 Spruce Street. Your reconfigured phones are distributed to abused women and the elderly.



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Good News for Franklin Lights:

Halfway There!

SHCA's Board of Directors recently approved a full-scale fundraising effort to replace and improve the quality of light throughout Society Hill. Our objective is to match available city and state funds with private, voluntary funds donated by Society Hill neighbors.

Five years ago, a plan was introduced to the SHCA Board to upgrade the existing, 40-year-old Franklin Lights, because they are in disrepair and provide inadequate light at 50 watts per lamp. Two years ago SHCA's Board considered a new, improved model with 70 watts of high-pressured sodium and state-of-the-art technology, but there was insufficient funding to move forward. Then, more recently, the City of Philadelphia contributed \$100,000 for these new lights. Still not enough money! We then applied for a state grant through Senator Vincent Fumo's office and have been told that a check for \$110,000 is on its way. However, this state grant has an expiration date of June 30, 2006, so we must **use it now or lose it!**

Here are the facts:

We need to replace 400 light fixtures at \$1,250 each—for a total cost of \$500,000. Our current available funds of \$210,000 from the city and state will cover, at best, half of the project. Therefore, we need to ask neighbors to contribute what they can to match these government funds—to make these new, improved street lights a reality. Since most Society Hill blocks have eight Franklin Lights each, four new lights will be paid for with government funds, but the remaining four must be funded through contributions to our "Adopt A

Franklin Light" program. This program is essential if we are to replace all of our street lights within the same time period. This is not only the most cost-effective way to accomplish the goal, but is also more inclusive and fair—we don't want to leave any blocks or their residents in the dark!

We plan to seek contributions through an "Invitation to Give," to be sent to each Society Hill household—asking for a donation towards a Franklin Light. Organizations such as churches, synagogues and businesses will also be asked to help. Your contributions are tax deductible through the Society Hill Fund.

To date, 60 households have pledged contributions, including six \$1,250 donations to fund a complete light on their respective blocks. Two synagogues and a church have also pledged from \$625 to \$1,250 each to improve lighting near their buildings. We are now considering the possibility of placing a plaque on each pole, acknowledging neighbors who have donated \$500 or more.

Our Proposed Time Frame:

- Receipt of State DCED grant in Sept. 2005.
- Send out solicitation cards by mail in late September or early October 2005, allowing most of October for responses.
- Plan a social event honoring Ben Franklin's 300th birthday during late Fall or early 2006.

To make a tax-deductible contribution, or for more information, please contact Franklin Lights Committee Chair, Martha Levine at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@msn.com.



LET THERE BE LIGHT!



The first public lighting in Philadelphia was instituted in 1751. It is reasonable to assume that the earliest lights used glass globes imported from London. Benjamin Franklin, in his *Autobiography*, criticized these draftless, smoky and fragile lamps. "I therefore suggested composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke and crevices admitting air below...."

Franklin's modifications were adopted, and these improved lamps burned sperm oil; their posts were made of wood, and the short cross bars at the top of the posts were there for the lamplighter's ladder to lean against. The Franklin Lights you see throughout Society Hill are "modernized" versions installed during our community's revival during the 1960s. They are lit by electricity and have cast-iron posts.



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HEADHOUSE HAPPENINGS

Past, Present and Future on S. 2nd Street

Public events occurring on the corridor along S. 2nd Street from Pine to South Streets have caused some concern and discussion recently. Seasonal events held at historic Head House and its Shambles were no longer exclusively given over to the Craft Fair on weekends, as had been done for the past 37 years. Instead, under the auspices and approval of the South Street Headhouse District (SSHHD or District—see sidebar) several other types of events were held there. We believe these were well-intentioned new ideas—encouraging variety—and meant to benefit the business district. However, some of the events conducted this past summer created controversy when residents watched, for example, the serving of beer under the Shambles; specifically, a special event held on July 16. In addition, another potentially harmful activity included the grilling of food under the Shambles roof, which caused smoke, smells and potential damage—a definite no-no for this prized National Historical Landmark.

Community concern arose about these Headhouse happenings not because of the new events, but rather because of the failure to inform our neighborhood fully about the District's plans in advance. Indeed, Headhouse, America's last extant colonial-era firehouse, along with its adjacent market sheds, known as "the Shambles," is a symbol of our entire community, and we should vigorously protect it.

In the future we hope the District will inform our civic association of its plans, so that proposals can be tailored to satisfy both nearby residents, as well as the event coordinators.

As for the future, some good news: we have been told that old-fashioned parking meters on S. 2nd Street between Lombard and South Streets will eventually be replaced with a single upgraded system for all autos in this parking area—rather than having a meter for each parked car.

Now for the bad news: rumor has it that the District plans to hold occasional concerts on this same S. 2nd Street parking site—at which time parking will be prohibited there. This would affect both Society Hill and Queen Village by bringing crowds, noise, and those unsightly but necessary public potties. Is this use of space appropriate for our very historic area? Would the financial benefit for the District outweigh our

residential concerns? Since Penn's Landing is so close by, we wonder why such public events as concerts are even being considered to be held here....

The South Street Headhouse Special Services District (SSHHD or District).

The District is an independent municipal authority (similar to the Center City District) which taxes all businesses within its self-determined and city-approved boundaries. SSHD includes South Street from Front through 8th Street and also stretches down S. 4th Street's "Fabric Row." The District provides sanitation services and police protection, and encourages a mix of businesses and entertainment venues in the area. It operates out of the historic Headhouse site through a lease with the City of Philadelphia for \$1 per year—and is charged with the building's ongoing care and maintenance. The District's current Executive Director is Dave Hammond, a Queen Village resident, while its board is composed primarily of business owners. Previously, the voices of residents from both Society Hill and Queen Village were officially represented on the board as community liaison persons, but SSHD eliminated those positions. Perhaps it is time to rethink this "missing link" to foster better dialogue and mutual support.

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Illustration By SEAN EARLY

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Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

Dance Academy Debuts

Back to school this fall also means, for many young locals, back to dance classes—and so we now welcome The Philadelphia Dance Academy to Society Hill. This beautiful new dance studio, located at 232 S. 4th Street, offers classes in creative movement, ballet, jazz, hip hop and Pilates. The school has suitable programs for “dancers” of all ages—whether for toddlers, school students, teens or even for adults, in keeping with its mission to provide exceptional training in dance technique and artistry to students of all ages and levels.

Instructors are professionally trained, and the focus is on precise technique, creative expression and the joy of dance. There will be a spring recital for older students, and parents of the tots will be invited to a class observation during the final week. Dance classes begin the week of September 12th and run through June 10th. Sessions are divided into nine-week quarters and follow the school calendar for vacations. The Philadelphia Dance Academy occupies the rear portion of an office building near 4th & Locust Streets, which is uniquely suited for its use. Upon visiting the space, I was very pleasantly surprised. There are enormous skylights flooding the studio with natural light. The spacious reception area is tastefully furnished, and the dance area is ideal—large, bright, well equipped with mirrors and the necessary dance paraphernalia, such as ballet exercise barres. There are two changing areas in the basement of the studio, affording ample priva-

cy. The building is also secure, as the exterior door is locked and there is an intercom with an buzz-entry system.

Director Lori Lahnemann, Ed.M. began her training with the Joffrey Ballet and New York City Ballet. She has also danced with the Boston Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Alvin Ailey Dance Company, Ballet Frankfurt, and the National Ballet of Spain. In addition to her extensive dance training, Ms. Lahnemann holds a Master's Degree in elementary education from Temple University, and has taught in the Philadelphia public school system. Her enthusiasm for dance is infectious, but performances, costumes and rehearsals are not her focus. She believes that “when you teach dance, especially to children, movement should be the primary focus; otherwise you spend the entire session rehearsing and that can be stressful for both teacher and student.”

By the way, I happen to have inside information on “Ms. Lori,” as she taught my daughter at DanceSpace, a studio that Lori co-founded in 1999. The class was playful but structured, and the kids loved it!

For information on class schedules and registration, you can call 215-837-3936, visit www.philadelphiadanceacademy.com, or email philadance@aol.com. (Note: This Dance Academy is distinctly different from the S. 2nd Street Society Hill Dance Academy, which emphasizes ballroom dancing, see p. 34.)

Kid's Quote

“You know what my favorite thing is at Bookbinders? The Snapper Soup!”

Cormick, age 8
Society Hill Kid

P is for Philadelphia

Philly's Kids Shine in This One!

Friends of Independence National Historical Park (INHP) and the National Liberty Museum announce a tour and discussion by Temple University Press author Susan Korman on Saturday, September 17, at 10 a.m. at the Independence Visitors Center, Sixth and Market Sts. The event will include a special tour of the Historic District followed by a discussion with the author at the National Liberty Museum.


Susan Korman is the author of over twenty books for young readers and her latest, *P is for Philadelphia*, is a unique, alphabetic tour of the city and the region, with words by Korman and

illustrations by the area's public school children, who participated in a city-wide drawing contest. *P Is for Philadelphia* includes entries on William Penn's arrival and historic treaty with the Delaware Indians, the city's heritage as the cradle of American liberty, as well as its food, sports teams, neighborhoods, and festivals.

Fee for INHP members and children is \$5 and \$10 for non-members. For more information about this event, or to register, please call The Friends of INHP at 215-928-1188. For more information about the Friends of INHP, visit their website, www.friendsofindependence.org.




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McCall School Playground:

For Society Hill Kids and Their Families!

This fall Society Hill's young families will have another wonderful addition to the neighborhood. You may recall that last year Paul Vallas, CEO of Philadelphia Schools, announced that the McCall Elementary School (between 6th and 7th Streets near Delancey Street) was one of four schools selected to receive funding for a new playground as part of his city-wide initiative to eliminate the "concrete jungles" surrounding many of Philadelphia's public schools.

Over the past year representatives from the McCall Home and School Association, local churches and synagogues, neighborhood par-

ents, members of SHCA and residents of nearby homes met to help design the playground. To address community concerns, the new playground will have no benches — to prevent loitering; the play area will have no roof — for easy monitoring; and the new play equipment will be varied, providing stimulation for children of different ages.

The McCall playground is expected to be "open for business" in October, just in time for the kids to enjoy the crisp fall weather! Thanks to the School Playground Committee and members of the Philadelphia School District for making this

Three Bears Park Fall Festivities Planned

Mark your calendars for our Fall Festival on Saturday, September 24, 2005 from 10 to 3. Rain Date is September 25. The Festival includes fun activities for children, a food and bake sale, a gently-used toy sale, a silent auction, homemade crafts sale and a school open house. Funds raised at the Fall Festival will go towards future park renovations, park-sponsored events and the daily upkeep of the park.

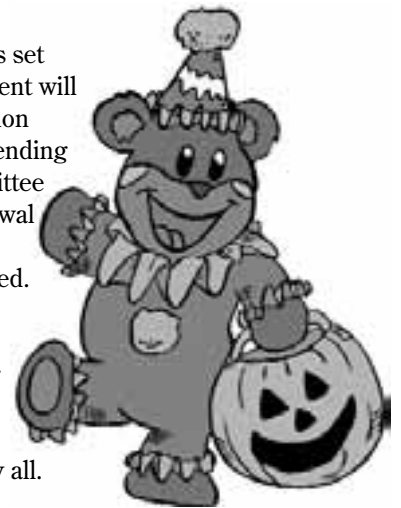
We had hoped to start renovations to Three Bears this past August. If you have visited the park recently, however, you can see that renovations have not begun. Procedural changes within the Department of Recreation and the Capital Improvements Department have slowed the process, and the city has not been able to order the equipment. The overall plan for the new playground is complete, benches and surfacing have

been chosen, and Councilman DiCicco has set aside the funding. If all goes well, equipment will be ordered in September, with an installation date in October or early November — depending on weather. The Three Bears Park Committee and all who have worked hard on the renewal project thank you for your patience. You will not be disappointed when it is completed.

Attention ghosts and witches!

HALLOWEEN falls on a Monday this year so our party in Three Bears will begin at 5 p.m. We will have pizza and apple juice for children. A great time is always had by all.

If you are interested in volunteering, donating items for the Festival, or assisting in the coordination of the Halloween Festivities, please contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544 or TRorke@aol.com.



You'll find Halloween fun for the kids at Three Bears Park!

Are You a Budding Journalist? The Reporter Wants You!

We have a column for parents of young children, Kids' Beat, thanks to Keri White and we have a Senior Scene, thanks to Jean Bryan. We think it is about time to call on budding young journalists to join us. If you like to write and have a "nose for news," let us know. If there are neighborhood concerns that are specific to your age group (we plan to include ages 12 to 17), give us a call or email us (see page 2). Depending on the number of responses we receive, we may give many of you an opportunity to write columns (taking turns, of course). Include a sample of your writing.

Landscaping For Washington Square

Good News! The National Park Service has given SHCA the go-ahead to hire a professional landscape company to assist in the design, planting and maintenance of Washington Square. We need your help to support this project. Donations are always welcome and we can also use volunteers to help with planting flowers and bushes. Please send your e-mail address to Matt DeJulio (mattdejulio@aol.com) so that we can keep you updated on this ongoing beautification project. *Note:* Please don't let the petunias be your pooch's potty!

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Trouble at The Tavern

The last surviving Colonial tavern in Philadelphia, *A Man Full of Trouble*, sits on a modest tract of land beneath the soaring Society Hill Towers. Tourists take pictures of it; neighbors cherish its historical significance. The story of *A Man Full of Trouble* has been told many times in this *Reporter*. We recounted how the Knauer Foundation renovated it, installed period furniture and opened the Tavern for group tours. When the Tavern was transferred to the University of Pennsylvania at Virginia Knauer's death, we watched to make sure that further renovations were in keeping with the historic context of the building, and we were informed that Penn planned to use it as a temporary home for visiting staff.

One day this past July some neighbors were horrified to see a For Sale/Rent sign tacked onto the Tavern's venerable wall. *Reporter* editor Jean Bryan—who has been our chief liaison with Penn—learned that this was an error, but the episode made some community leaders nervous. Since the Tavern has been declared "significant" in Society Hill's Historic District, this means that it cannot be demolished. We are concerned, however, because it sits unused year after year.

This wonderful old building, the last of the original taverns so common during the 18th century, was a welcome haven in its day for travelers, sailors, and locals alike who came to enjoy a meal, a pint of rum and bitters, or a glass of Madeira.



(There were over 100 licensed taverns in the area before *A Man Full of Trouble* was built in 1759.) Do you know the significance of the colorful sign hung on the Tavern? It was copied from one of London's best-known taverns (*The Man Loaded with Mischief*). The sign depicts a woman holding a glass (of gin), a magpie, a monkey and a cat. Tradition has it that the sign means:

*A monkey, a magpie, and a wife
Is the true emblem of strife.*

Note: Although Society Hill has what may seem to be a plethora of authentic historic buildings, we cannot become complacent about how each unique structure can be used or preserved. Our community's concern for the "troubled" Tavern goes back to the time when its doors as a museum were closed (more than a decade ago) at which time the structure was given to the University of Pennsylvania. Since then the building has been unoccupied and unused, perhaps because Penn cannot determine a realistic or suitable purpose for it. For the past year neighbor Jean Bryan has corresponded regularly with Dean Ramin Sedehi, Penn's Vice Dean for Finance and Administration, about the building, but we thought it was probably time to communicate directly with the University's President, Amy Gutmann. On August 10, SHCA's Vice Presidents Carole LeFavre-Rochester and Bernice Hamel wrote a letter, apprising her of this rare piece of real estate owned by Penn and informing her

about our community's concern for its ongoing care. We hope the letter will help jumpstart a dialogue with Penn about how best to put this jewel in our midst to good service for today and for future generations to enjoy. We'll let you know what happens.

Can a good use be found for this empty historic property?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Community Meeting Planned

In response to community requests, we will have our first Saturday General Membership Meeting on Saturday, November 19, Time and place to be announced.

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OUT & ABOUT

Free Concerts at Curtis Institute of Music

Several Society Hill residents play an important role in the world-class Curtis Institute of Music, considered one of the leading music schools in the world. Founded in 1924 and located on Rittenhouse Square, the Institute involves several Society Hill residents—including Donald Montanaro, a member of the clarinet faculty and a Curtis graduate; Richard A. Doran, chairman of the Board of Trustees; and Helaine Greenberg, patron and volunteer.

Many Curtis alumni have had successful careers as solo performers, composers, and conductors—including Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Richard Goode, Gian Carlo Menotti, the list goes on and on. Recent graduates include Juan Diego Flórez, Hilary Hahn, Lang Lang, John Relyea, Rinat Shaham, and Ignat Solzhenitsyn. Every Curtis student is accepted on a merit-based, full-tuition scholarship—ensuring that they are chosen solely on their artistic talent and promise. Today, Curtis alumni can be found in every major orchestra and opera company around the world.

Residents of Society Hill can hear the talented young musicians at more than 100 public performances that Curtis offers each year—including orchestra concerts, operas, and solo and chamber music recitals. Several of these performances are free, as are weekly Student Recital Series on most Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8 p.m.—beginning October 10, at Field Concert Hall, 1726 Locust Street. A schedule is available on the Curtis recital hotline, 215-893-5261, or at www.curtis.edu. See the back page calendar for October concerts.

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November 2, from 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Visit one of Philadelphia's finest "gems," and at the same time help contribute to the preservation of one of our neighborhood's historic treasures. Join us at "LAGOS, The Store" on Wednesday, November 2nd from 10 a.m. through 8 p.m. LAGOS, voted best jewelry store by *Style Magazine*, is located at 1735 Walnut Street on Rittenhouse Square.

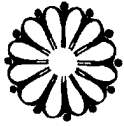
Because LAGOS, The Store wishes to acknowledge and support the preservation efforts of Historic St. Peter's Church Preservation Committee (HSPCPC), the jewelry store will donate 15% of all purchases on that day to this very worthwhile cause. For more information, contact Event Chair Joseph P. Fanelli, Jr. at 215-920-2211 or QCMJPF@aol.com. HSPCPC is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving the National Landmark of St. Peter's Church for its parishioners, neighbors, and visitors from around the world.

More than Bricks and Mortar: Architectural History at the University Museum

Wednesday, September 14th at 5:30 p.m.

Come to a lecture and tour at the University of Pennsylvania's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 3260 South Street. This museum is graced with Tiffany mosaics, dramatic skylights, Alexander Calder sculptures, an exquisite Italianate garden, grand staircases, and a dome inspired by the Pantheon.

The lecture and tour, co-sponsored by the Philadelphia Chapter of AIA, will be presented by Shawn Evans, AIA, Associate at Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell Architects; Jeffrey A. Cohen, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer in the Growth and Structure of Cities Program, Bryn Mawr College; and the Museum's own Dr. Ann Brownlee, Senior Research Scientist, Mediterranean Section. Admission is \$10 for non-members, \$5 for Museum members, and free for members of the Expedition Circle level and above. To reserve your space, or for more information, call 215-898-4890.



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National Constitution Center's Lincoln Exhibit

Have you seen the National Constitution Center's exhibition, "Lincoln: the Constitution and the Civil War" which runs through November 10th? This traveling exhibition shows "how Lincoln's leadership and constitutional vision steered the nation through its most turbulent years and into a future that forever changed America."

How much do you know about our 16th president? Here are some of his quotes. See if you can fill in the missing word in each one. Missing words appear above the quotes. Look for the answers below or check the website, home.att.net/~rjnorton/Lincoln78.html.

Union democracy civil war slavery freedom liberty
conservatism colonization Know-Nothings Great Book

1. In regard to this _____, I have to say, it is the best gift God has given to man.
2. I cannot make it better known than it already is that I strongly favor _____.
3. As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of _____.
4. What is _____? It is adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried.
5. Those who deny _____ to others, deserve it not for themselves and ... cannot long retain it.
6. In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the issue of _____.
7. With some the word _____ may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself.
8. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the _____ and is not either to save or destroy slavery.
9. When I hear anyone arguing for _____ I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally.
10. When the _____ get control, it will read "all men are created equal, except Negroes and foreigners and Catholics."



Test your knowledge of Lincoln!

1. Great Book 2. colonization 3. democracy 4. conservatism 5. freedom 6. civil war 7. liberty 8. Union 9. slavery 10. Know-Nothings

Answers: to Lincoln quiz

SENIOR SCENE

BY JEAN BRYAN

Encouraging Activities and Friendships to Enrich our Lives

Special library is a wonderful volunteer opportunity

More than Meets the Eye

Barely outside our neighborhood, at 919 Walnut Street, is a valuable resource: the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH). Its friendly librarian, Ms. Meghan Clark McDaniel, thought that this column would be a good place to spread the word. The library serves thousands of handicapped people with a variety of visual disorders, such as those who need help reading standard print, or those who simply have trouble turning the pages of a book. LBPH's services include free mail order and drop-in library and reference help, as well as many other services—including an automated telephone service that offers full text of magazines either on cassette or in Braille.

Each week LBPH volunteers donate their time to a wide range of tasks. The library needs help recruiting narrators who can read books for schoolchildren or magazine articles for adults. Learn more about these programs and how you can volunteer for this worthy cause, either by yourself or together with friends. Check out lbph.library.phila.gov, or consider stopping by to see these programs for yourself. Meghan welcomes your email at McDanielM@excen.library.phila.gov or phone calls at 1-800-222-1754.

A Night Out: Fun for the Senior Scene

On Thursday night August 4th, twelve Society Hill "seniors" attended the hilarious and highly popular show "Menopause The Musical" at the Society Hill Playhouse.

Ellie Gesensway, a long-time Hiller, summed up the evening and show in the following way: Like long-lost friends at a high school reunion, we joined an enthusiastic audience that had traveled from throughout the region to partake of the fun—chatting enthusiastically before the opening and laughing heartily (and knowledgeably!) through the entire performance.

The show is a celebration of women who are on the brink of, in the middle of, or have survived "The Change." All in the audience, including our own group that included three rather gutsy fellows, were enthralled by the virtuosic performances of the four cast members who played the roles of Power Woman, Soap Star, Earth Mother, and Iowa Housewife. We were amazed and entertained by their commanding stage presence, their rich and powerful voices, and their agile dancing and expressive posturing. Those of us familiar with the pop songs and culture of the 60s and 70s laughed the loudest at the lyrics that parodied the biggest hits of that era. One of our own brave souls, Bernie Cleff, was singled out by the beautiful (but aging) Soap Star as she descended into the audience to find the object of her "desire." There she crooned to him and playfully mussed his hair (and possibly his psyche). The audience roared with delight and approval.

After the show we gathered for dessert (homemade chocolate chip cookies, etc.), liquid refreshments, and socializing. Thanks to hosts Joan and Jeff Less for making our fun evening so complete.



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Bach Festival Concerts

Joyce Portnoy (rejoycenina@yahoo.com) wants to know if you'd like to attend this season's Bach Festival concerts, the first of which is scheduled for September 19th. Check out www.bach-fest.org, and if you are interested, email Joyce who will make arrangements and order tickets. Also, don't forget that Joyce has offered to teach or coach French for any of us planning to travel to France!

Pirate Tours

Take a fascinating walking tour with stories of criminal events that occurred in Old Philadelphia. For example, Philip Hodgson, owner of Old City Pirate Tours, will take you to Carpenters' Hall, at 320 Chestnut Street, which once had the largest collection of gold in the country. One night, in 1798, the entire collection was stolen! Email Jean Bryan (jbryan52@bellatlantic.net) to express interest, and she will make arrangements for a group tour scheduled for the fall —at \$8 per person. Or log onto www.FamousCriminalsTours.com.

Walking Group

Pam Todd (pamtodd@voicenet.com) is still trying to organize a group of walkers—from the casual stroller to the robust hiker.

How To Join Senior Scene's Yahoo Group

Email Jean Bryan (jbryan52@bellatlantic.net) indicating your interest, and she will forward your request to our tech support "maven," Bob Rossheim.

For all those folks "allergic to the Internet" or who simply prefer to communicate via telephone, our Senior Scene neighbor Pat Fusco will be happy to phone you, keeping you in the loop about our events. Just let Jean Bryan know this by calling her at: 215-925-6416, and she'll pass the info to Pat.

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OBITUARY

Farewell to A Good Neighbor: Raymond Posel

Imagine our neighborhood without the Ritz Theaters. Society Hill old-timers remember that before 1976 it was virtually impossible to find a Philadelphia venue to see good foreign or independent films. Then Raymond Posel arrived on the scene. Our resident *Inquirer* film critic, Carrie Rickey, says of Posel, "Where Robert Frost thought good fences make good neighbors, Ray Posel thought good theaters make good neighborhoods!" A Philadelphia native, Posel was not a stranger to the movie world; his father owned seven theaters. Then, daringly he opened the first Ritz Theater at 2nd and Walnut Streets—and the people came. They came from far and wide.

In fact, many of our neighbors moved to Society Hill just in order to save money on gas, as they were tired of always driving back and forth to the Ritz. Carrie Rickey described Raymond Posel, who died on June 24, as: "a tenacious man with the physical presence of Russell Crowe, the intellectual force of William Rehnquist, and a pompadour that looked good only on him and Ronald Reagan." Society Hill is grateful to him for his contributions to the culture of our community, and we mourn his loss. He gave us something to treasure, and we hope the Ritz tradition of providing fine films will continue for many years.

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Membership Reaches All-Time High

Membership in SHCA reached an all-time record of 1,012 on August 8, 2005, but that number is still short of our annual goal of 1050. Of course, we happily welcome 165 new members who joined us this year, but wonder why 86 households have failed to renew. If you just forgot, please send your check today. However, if there is a specific reason why you have not rejoined, we'd like to know. Write or call us at 215-629-1288 or email mattdejulio@aol.com. Your comments will be respectfully reviewed.

At the July 2005 Board meeting, SE Quadrant Director Richard deWyngaert accepted the position as Membership Chair, succeeding Kelly Nelson who did such an admirable job in that role for almost five years. Richard will be assisted by Carol Colabelli and Georgine Atacan.

One subject that will need our Membership Committee's attention in the coming months is whether or not to raise SHCA dues for 2006 — and if so, by how much? In addition, our membership brochure, which was last updated three years ago, will now need to be reprinted. But here's some good news: for your convenience, SHCA Administrator Matt DeJulio reports that our civic association will soon be in a position to accept credit card payments. Look for this accommodation to our members later in the year.

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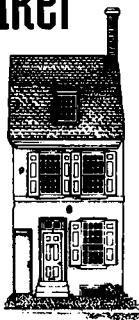


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clothing; and The Chamber Orchestra of Phila. Help us show our appreciation by patronizing these generous businesses and organizations. It's not always easy to identify new home and condo owners, therefore, we need your help. If you are a new owner, or know of a friend who is new to Society Hill as of 2005, please let us know. Welcome Baskets are presented by appointment only. Contact Martha Levine, Welcome Basket Coordinator, 215-629-0727, marthalev@msn.com

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A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

Shana Vitoff

**“I won’t dance,
why should I?”**

– Oscar Hammerstein II

Shana Vitoff, owner and director of the Society Hill Dance Academy at Headhouse Square, responds to Hammerstein’s famous question: if you won’t dance, I’m here to show you how. Even while a college student in Minnesota—studying interior design, by the way—Shana taught ballroom dancing. “I was hooked,” she says. Eventually, she became a top sales person for the Arthur Murray Dance Studios before moving to Philadelphia where, for seven years, she taught people how to move—to any beat, around any dance floor.

Then in 2002, with a loan from a thoroughbred horse breeder acquaintance who said “I’d bet on her,” she opened her Academy. Today the spacious 2nd Street 4,000 square foot facility has an appropriately gleaming dance floor for social and ballroom dancing, and its walls display artwork by local artists. Currently there are 150 men and women “students” as well as a full-time staff of six

—two of whom are world champion professional dancers from the Czech Republic.

Shana herself, who moves with the fluid motion of an accomplished danseuse or the feline grace of her three cats, once entered into competitions, but she says, “I prefer the social aspects of the business.” Aptly named (since Shana in Yiddish means “beautiful”), she is a single 34-year-old who hails from Minnesota—where her three sisters, her mother and father still live. Now a highly visible and attractive presence in Society Hill, Shana is often found taking refreshment at Cosi or walking her dog, Lulu. “People tell me that I bring more life to the area,” she says. Indeed, the Academy is a social center, as well as a place for dancing, as it hosts weddings, birthdays, and weekly parties. It was even a voting venue for the November 2004 Election. Shana considers the Academy to be “a mini Chamber of Commerce.”

Even though the majority of students come from outside Society Hill, the effervescent entrepreneur waxes eloquent about the neighborhood. “I love it,” she says. “It’s beautiful ... and everything I need is within three blocks.” In fact, she doesn’t own a car (although she does have a motorcycle license) and her comfortable apartment is adjacent to the dance studio. While Shana insists that she has no time for extracurricular interests apart from her cats and Lulu, she has ambitions for the Academy, which she sees as hosting a Society Hill ball along the lines of the popular Rittenhouse ball.

The great Fred Astaire once said, “I just put my feet in the air and move them around.” Shana would no doubt agree with his sentiment, although as an astute businesswoman, she has her feet firmly on the ground—and her eyes on the future. So if considering a waltz or a tango across the floor, Shana, who is passionate about her chosen career, reminds us that “dancing is a healthy and fun way to meet people or to network.” Learn more about her Society Hill Dance Academy at www.societyhilldance.com.

Note: See page 15 for a story about the other “Dance Academy” in our neighborhood.

Shana and Lulu



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, September 14

Talk & Tour of Architectural History
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5:30 p.m.
See p. 21

Saturday, September 17

Tour and discussion by Susan Korman,
author of *P is for Philadelphia*
Independence Visitors Center
Corner of Sixth and Market Streets
Includes tour of the historic district
10 a.m.; \$5 for members and children;
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Monday, September 19

Bach Festival Concert
See p. 25

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Wednesday, September 21

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Board Meeting, 6 p.m.
General Meeting, 7 p.m.
refreshments served

Saturday, September 24

Fall Festival
Three Bears Park
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Raindate: Sunday, September 25
Sunday, September 25

Jimmy Brent Memorial Concert
Curtis Institute
Rittenhouse Square
2 p.m. No tickets required
See p. 21

Wednesday, October 5

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6 to 7:30 p.m.
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Monday, October 10

Curtis Institute Student Recital Series
Rittenhouse Square
Free concert
8 p.m. No tickets required
See p. 21

Thursday, October 20

SHCA Board Meeting
Old Pine Community Center
7 p.m.

Friday, October 28

Standing on my Sister's Shoulders,
a documentary on women survivors of the
Civil Rights Movement. Fundraiser for the
Philadelphia Orchestra, sponsored by the
Rittenhouse Square Committee. Mother
Bethel AME Church, 6th and Lombard Sts.
5:30p.m.
For information and entrance fee,
call Marilyn Appel, 215-922-2626,
or email harmara@verizon.net

Monday, October 31

Halloween Party
Three Bears Park
5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 2

Benefit for St. Peter's Church
Lagos, the Store, Rittenhouse Square
10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
See p. 21



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