



SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

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## March 16 SHCA Membership Meeting

### Subject: Real Estate Tax Reassessment

**Matthew A. White**  
Chair, Tax Reassessment Committee

A proposed drastic increase in the amount of property taxes that you pay is underway. Our next General Meeting, to be held in the Society Hill Synagogue on Thursday, March 16, will focus on this issue as we invite David Glancey, Chairman of the Philadelphia Board of Revision of Taxes, Brett Mandell, head of *Philadelphia Forward*, a tax reform organization, and Councilman Frank DiCicco to address the Civic Association on an issue that will impact everyone living in Society Hill and Center City.

There is some good news in this story. Thanks in part to the efforts of Councilman DiCicco, the changes will not be implemented until 2008 at the earliest. But the sobering fact remains: unless there is enough political initiative to alter the current plans, we stand to see our tax bills increase, on average, over 100%—that’s right, the changes being implemented will cause a homeowner in Society Hill who currently pays \$10,000 to see his tax bill go to \$20,000.

What’s going on? In theory, it is a well-intentioned effort to bring fairness and transparency into the City property tax assessment. Currently, property taxes are determined by a formula that starts with a property’s “assessed value,” multiplied by a pre-determined percentage (32%), multiplied by the tax rate. The problem is with the “assessed value” — often there is very little correlation between the current “assessed” value and the actual value. The value set by the Board is only a gross estimate of actual value. This creates anomalies where two similar houses, sitting side by side, pay very different tax bills. It has also, over time, created a situation where neighborhoods that have seen property values rise (like ours) are

*continued on page 8*

## Congratulations, SHCA!

### Preservation Alliance Honors SHCA

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia has awarded SHCA its 2006 Community Action Award for “many significant efforts the Civic Association has undertaken during the past year to preserve and protect the historic character of Society Hill.” This award recognizes our work during 2005 generally, including our efforts on the Dilworth House, the NewMarket site, the Ayer Building, the Oceanaire Restaurant, etc., and dozens of projects associated with individual houses. Thanks to Paul Boni and the Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee, SHCA President Tania Rorke and members who generously supported our efforts with their checks, signatures on petitions and their presence and involvement at crucial meetings. The award will be presented at the Alliance’s annual awards luncheon, to be held on May 3rd. Please contact Matt DeJulio if you would like to attend the awards luncheon. We anticipate having a limited number of seats available but additional passes are available for purchase.

<b>THURS.</b>	<b>MARK YOUR CALENDAR</b>
March <span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">16</span>	Society Hill Civic Association Meetings Thursday, March 16, 2006 <hr/> <b>Society Hill Synagogue, 418 Spruce Street</b> Board Meeting – 2nd Floor Classroom General Membership Meeting – Sanctuary <hr/> <b>6:00 p.m. Board Meeting</b> All SHCA members are welcome to attend. <hr/> <b>7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting</b> All community residents are invited to attend. <hr/> Speakers • Brett Mandell, Executive Director, <i>Philadelphia Forward</i> • David Glancey, Chairman Philadelphia Board of Revision of Taxes • Councilman Frank DiCicco

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**Submission Deadlines**  
 May/June 2006 issue  
 Advertising: April 1  
 Editorial: April 15

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**Submissions**

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

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

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**Society Hill Open House Tour**

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**Sunday, May 7, 1 p.m.–5 p.m. Tickets: \$35**  
 Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this annual event that provides a great afternoon exploring about 8 or 9 historic homes. Proceeds help to support your neighborhood!

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


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TANIA RORKE, SHCA PRESIDENT

SHCA is nearing the end of its membership drive for 2006. For those of you who have not joined the Association or have not renewed your membership, ask yourselves, "Why should I join (or rejoin) the Society Hill Civic Association?" While going over the SHCA membership list for my block, I noticed that one of my neighbors had not renewed. I gave her an application and asked her the reason. Her answer was that she did not agree with our position on one specific issue. I also recently received a forwarded email from an angry member who requested that his dues be refunded because he had to wait in line at our complimentary winter social at Bookbinders. I am sure our organization does not make every Society Hill resident happy all the time, but I am also certain we do our best to respond to individual issues as we try to reach SHCA's overall goals. Most members would agree that the goals of our association are important, from the mundane issue of trash collecting to the more important one of keeping the neighborhood safe. So we ask for and thank you for your continued support.

This is a very busy time for SHCA. We are presently addressing several issues that will significantly impact every resident in our community. First, the Board of Revision of Taxes is planning to reassess property values throughout the entire city. This reassessment process is supposed to be done on a yearly basis, but it has not been done in over 15 years. We have been working with other civic associations and Councilman DiCicco's office to come up with alternative suggestions on how this process can be carried out. Matt White, a current board member has agreed to chair our newly formed committee, the Tax Reassessment Committee. If you would like to volunteer and assist with this important issue, please contact Matt White at [mwhite@WOLFBLOCK.com](mailto:mwhite@WOLFBLOCK.com). We also hope to see many of our members at our March Membership Meeting where our featured speakers will be Mr. David Glancey, from the Board of Revision of Taxes, Mr. Brett Mandell, from *Philly Forward* and Councilman Frank DiCicco.

The second concern of most residents is Gambling. Where will the casinos go? There are five sites being considered, two of which will have a significant impact on our community; namely, those at Spring Garden and Delaware Avenue and Reed Street and Delaware Avenue. We are uniting with other civic associations that border the Delaware River and working closely with Councilman DiCicco's office on this issue. The Councilman has arranged for neighborhood representatives to meet with the

developers. For more information, the Pennsylvania Gaming Board has also scheduled public input-hearings on the proposed gaming facilities. (go to [www.pgcb.state.pa.us/press/pr\\_013106.HTM](http://www.pgcb.state.pa.us/press/pr_013106.HTM)). Hearings for Philadelphia are scheduled for April 10-12. Ray Swerdlow, a current SHCA Board Member has agreed to chair our Gaming Committee. Please contact Ray at [ray@thesixpackstore.com](mailto:ray@thesixpackstore.com), to become more involved.

Other neighborhood projects and issues which we continue to address are: Three Bears Park renovations, Adopt a Franklin Light, Washington Square beautification, saving Dilworth House, and NewMarket development. The Friends of Three Bears Park has received the final approval needed from the Historical Commission to begin the project. They are hoping to see construction start there in the early spring. Fundraising for the Franklin Lamps is well underway. Thanks to Martha Levine, her committee, and generous people in the neighborhood, the project has raised over \$100,000 to be spent on the improvement of street lighting. Councilman DiCicco has also dedicated over \$200,000 to this project. We are continuing to work with Independence National Park on improving Washington Square. This spring you should notice a beautiful difference there as the bulbs planted last fall will bloom—thanks to Sissie Lipton and those who worked with her to add more color to the park. The Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) continues to be active on the Dilworth House and NewMarket as well as other projects of neighborhood concern. See Paul Boni's ZHP report for more information on these issues (page 11).

As you have read on page 1, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia is awarding the Society Hill Civic Association the "2006 Community Action Award." The Alliance reports that SHCA was selected because of "many significant efforts the Civic Association has undertaken during the past year to preserve and protect the historic character of Society Hill." While many may think this award is for our work on the Dilworth House and the NewMarket site, it also recognizes our efforts on behalf of the Ayer Building, the Oceanaire, and dozens of other projects associated with individual houses. Many thanks go to Paul Boni and the members of his committee who dedicate so much of their time to preservation issues.

As you can see, the SHCA is not defined by one project; many members dedicate their time to numerous projects—all with the goal of making Society Hill a better place in which to live. Again, thank you for your continued support.



**Tania Rorke**  
SHCA President

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SHCA Membership Soars

## The Philadelphia Group knows the importance of investing in the future. Like the "Adopt a Franklin Light Campaign."

The Philadelphia Group is pleased to support the important work of the Society Hill Civic Association. A strong partnership in making our community a better place to live and work.



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Safe And Sound In Society Hill: Better To Be Safe Than Sorry

New Stop Signs in Place

But it took an injury to do it. Matt DeJulio, BSHCA's administrator, emailed our Councilman Frank DiCicco when a woman was hit by a car crossing 6th Street and Washington Square, at the dangerous intersection in front of Independence Place. Well, at this point in time, there are stop signs in both directions, later to be replaced with a traffic light. That should certainly slow things down. Thank you Frank, Matt and the Streets Department.

Don't be complacent, keep your eyes open! There are other intersections that are dangerous— examples: Lawrence Court and Pine, where cars coming out of the court cannot see traffic coming down Pine because of the parked cars; cars turning anytime onto Spruce from 4th, turning south on 4th from Spruce, from Pine onto 5th, and others, even though there are "No Turn On Red" signs posted. A special warning to those of you who insist on walking while talking on your cell phones: look when crossing.

**Avoid the latest scam**

Never give out over the phone those small numbers on the backs of your credit cards. Thieves will call pretending to be your credit card company and ask to verify your credit card number, which they will read out to you. Then they will ask for those numbers on the back "to be sure that the card is in your possession." Stop right there — it's a scam.

**Be kind to animals**

Dogs must be on leash — it's the law! But how about cats? Please think twice about letting your cat roam free in the neighborhood. A black and white cat without a tag was hit by a car at 4th and Delancey recently. A kind neighbor disposed of the body. It's not just the

human population that has to be careful crossing the streets, but at least they have the sense to look; house cats may not look and they are not as adept as our squirrels at avoiding the cars.

**"City Smarts"**

Tip from Tae Kwan Do: the elbow is the strongest point on your body, if you are close enough to an attacker to use it.

If a robber asks for your wallet, **do not hand it to him.** Toss it as far away from you as possible and **run like mad in the other direction.**

- As soon as you get into your car, lock the doors and take off.
- Always take the elevator, not the stairs, especially at night. Need we say more?
- In a parking lot or garage, look at the cars on either side of yours. If there is a van parked next to you or a lone man is seated in the car, do not enter your car from that side. Walk back and get someone to walk with you to your car, preferably a security guard or police officer.
- Neighborhood Alert: Make sure your doors (front and back) are always locked.

**Used cell phones**

We continue to collect them for the elderly or abused. Drop them at 414 Spruce Street. We give them to the police who send them off to be reprogrammed to call only 911. We, and the people who are fortunate enough to be able to use them, sincerely appreciate the hundreds of used cell phones we have received and are sorry that we cannot provide individual receipts.



**SHCA leadership and members enjoy a luncheon at the Downtown Club in honor of Benjamin Franklin's birthday, January 17. Seated: Sissie Lipton, Bernice Hamel, Carole Le Favre-Rochester, Matt DeJulio; Top row: Jackie Lewis, Tania Norke, Herb Lipton, Carol Colabelli, Martha Levine.**

Question of the month:

**If the city were to place video cameras in Society Hill in order to deter crime and catch criminals, I would**

\_\_\_\_\_ **approve**

\_\_\_\_\_ **disapprove**

Comments

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**Send responses to MattDeJulio@aol.com**



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March 12th, 2:00-4:00 pm:

Dr. David Moolten, local author of *Especially Then*

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*The Southern Review*

March 18th, 1:00-3:00 pm:

Jennifer Shahade, two-time U.S. Women's Chess Champion *Chess Bitch*

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Thank you for surviving! A sharing of Experience and Book Signing

March 29th, 6:00-8:00 pm:

Cancer survivor Perry Rothaus will speak and sign *Live Strong*

by The Lance Armstrong Foundation

April 30th, 2:00-4:00 pm:

Timothy Kenslee

*The Sedgwicks in Love: Courtship, Engagement, and Marriage in the Early Republic (Hardcover)*

Recommended, not only for American history buffs but for anyone who likes a good family tale.



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 Twenty-Five Years and Still Going
 

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## Community Newsletter Reaches a Milestone!

For many years newsletters have delivered stories and information to our community. Until 1981, we received, sporadically, typed and xeroxed issues called *The Resident Newsletter*. In March 1981 the first commercially printed version containing advertisements was published. *The Resident Newsletter* kept its name and its editors, Nancy Frenze and Ruth Dugan, and in time ads covered production costs. Many community members have given time and expertise to editing, management, and advertising through the years. *The Resident Newsletter* continued until 1990 when it morphed into the regular bi-monthly *Society Hill Reporter* with Bernice Hamel as the new editor.

Darts and Laurels was a popular feature of *The Resident Newsletter*. The last xeroxed version (December 14, 1980) gave a Dart to itself for "using microscopic type," and in the same issue gave a Laurel, "for saving money by printing fewer pages due to the use of microscopic print." Two Darts going back to 1987 show that there are some things that never change: "to the Night Walkers who take their dogs strolling when it's late and dark, and fail to pick up after them. We know who you are..." and "to the people who are always fixing our streets. We would appreciate a period of calm when someday they will be fixed."

Every civic issue affecting Society Hill — from diapering carriage horses to historic designation — was chronicled in those newsletters. The first issue (March '81) featured articles on low income housing, Real Estate Tax Appeals, Independence Place, "Bookbinders Lot," the new Sheraton Hotel, resident parking, and the Shambles (HeadHouse), as items for the upcoming General Membership meeting. The front page described the first membership wine and cheese party with the Al Stauffer trio at NewMarket's pavilion. Over 300 SHCA members attended the party, which became an ongoing membership winter event. Committee members that year were Lu Bangert, Carol Berger, Nancy Frenze, Joan Simon and Edna Wenk, with Carole Saft and Sissy Futcher busy at the membership desk.

As it does today, the Civic Association took on many issues, for example, Penn's Landing development of the Central Riverfront District Plan in March of 1982. That same year Town Watch was initiated—with 400 volunteers patrolling the neighborhood. Town Watch participation waned but was revitalized many

times. Resident Permit Parking was hard won, but SHCA did succeed in thwarting the Parking Authority's plan to place parking meters on blocks in Society Hill. The block captain system was considered a *fait accompli* in 1983 but it needed resuscitation periodically.

The September '83 issue focused on Bill 2768, which proposed inclusion of Washington Square Park within the Independence National Park system. Efforts to include the park continued in 1986. Now many years — and \$3 million dollars later — mission accomplished! The Preservation Ordinance Bill #235 was introduced in City Council and discussed in the September '84 issue. In March '86 *The Resident Newsletter* printed the plan for I-95, with recommendations and concerns included. The May '87 issue dealt with Mayor Goode's Trash to Steam Project and Councilman David Cohen's Recycling project. Pennsylvania Hospital proposed a plan to incinerate waste. This proposal dominated five of late 80's newsletters and the plan was ultimately rejected.

There are no archived issues of *The Resident Newsletter* after March '81 through 1990 when the *Society Hill Reporter* was initiated. If any readers or former staff have saved issues, especially from 1988, 1989 and 1990 and would be willing to donate them or have them copied, contact Nancy Frenze at 215-923-5459. She hopes to complete an archive of the issues from 1981-1990 — to be included in the Athenaeum research collection. SHCA would like to keep a full archive (under Matt DeJulio's watchful eye) as well.



### HELP WANTED

#### Volunteer Needed to Share Editorial Responsibilities for Independence Library Newsletter

Independence Branch Library, Society Hill's hard won free library, is just five years old. Friends of Independence Library, has been publishing *BiblioFILE*, the Friends newsletter, for almost that long.

If you are an experienced editor and would enjoy sharing the responsibility of producing this four-page quarterly, please email Nancy Frenze, executive editor, at: [the\\_nancy@hotmail.com](mailto:the_nancy@hotmail.com) for more information.

## Real Estate Tax Reassessment

*continued from page 1*

paying proportionally less than neighborhoods where values have been flat or falling.

The new assessment being undertaken by the Board of Revision of Taxes proposes to make the "assessed" value be the same as an actual, fair market value. The Board, using sophisticated computer software and modeling, satellite imagery and market data, attempts to place an actual fair market value on every property in the City. Once the assessed value has been determined as the true, actual fair market value, City Council and the Mayor can then set the tax rate to be applied to this value.

Sound good? The problem is that across Philadelphia, those neighborhoods that have seen significant increases in fair market value will now be paying a direct tax based on those increased values—irrespective of income or ability to pay. As Councilman DiCicco noted in a letter sent on January 5, 2006 to Mr. Glancey the current, planned implementation would "decimate our constituents."

What can we do? First, the Civic Association has formed a special task force to study this issue and to join forces with other neighborhoods and civic associations to make sure that our views are part of the conversation and decision-making. SHCA President, Tania Rorke, has already met with leaders from many of these groups and more meetings are planned. Second, Councilman DiCicco has introduced several bills in City Council to buffer the impact that we will feel. He has promised to continue to do what he can to help his constituents, as his District contains many of the homes that will be most impacted by the proposed changes. Third, we can all educate ourselves about the issue. The better we understand the problem, the more likely it is that we can develop creative solutions that permit fair taxation without destroying our neighborhood.

**We look forward to seeing you  
at the March 16 General Meeting at  
7:30 p.m. at Society Hill Synagogue.**

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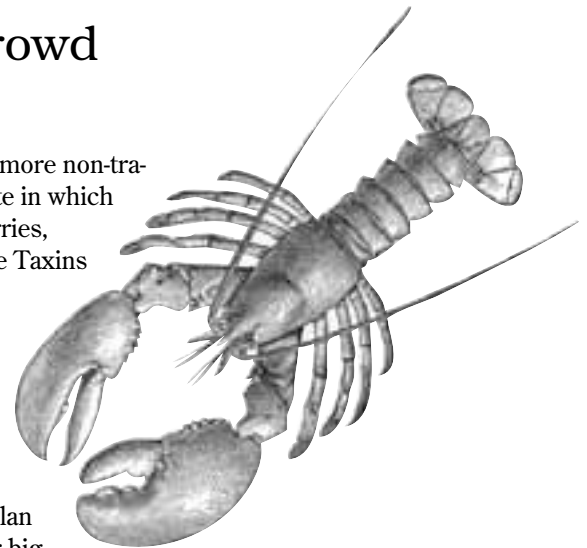
## Bookbinder's Social Brings Record Crowd

It was January 26th and we had an enormous crowd for our winter social. According to Matt DeJulio, SHCA Administrator, over 250 residents attended a winter party in the newly refurbished Bookbinder's Restaurant at its long-time traditional site at 2nd and Walnut. All these people and we didn't even disturb the formal diners, since the Taxins have a couple of lovely private rooms where they held the SHCA party. The rooms do have space limitations, however, and due to the capacity crowd, regretfully we had to decline reservations for almost 70 SHCA members. We hope you are understanding about this; we are working on solving the problem with some creative ideas for this and higher numbers responding to a neighborhood social.

SHCA thanks proprietors John and Jayme Taxin for the delicious hors d'oeuvres and for continually refilling the amazing array of finger foods, which, following their traditional seafood theme, went from calamari and mussel salad,

crab cakes and rumaki to a more non-traditional fountain of chocolate in which we could dip huge strawberries, fruit slices and pretzels. The Taxins really know how to put on a party and all of us were not only most appreciative but absolutely delighted. Patronizing this wonderful new-old institution is sure to keep them in the neighborhood. They'll help you plan your small dinner parties or bigger events and you can count on "Bookies" to provide delectable and extraordinary food.

We also would like to thank our own SHCA members, Fran Newburg, past Social Committee Chair, and Lois Beck, current Chair, for their efforts in making this event so successful and we raise a glass to Matt DeJulio who spent most of his time taking reservations and checking people in.



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**ZONING & HISTORIC PRESERVATION**


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BY PAUL BONI, ZHP COMMITTEE CHAIR

We continue working with homeowners to help them navigate through the Historical Commission and the Zoning Board, supporting the vast majority, but voicing our concerns when proposals are extreme. We report on two significant projects:

**The Dilworth House (223-225 S. 6th Street):**

In early February, the developer withdrew his initial application to demolish the entire house and filed a revised design that would still demolish the house but keep the front façade intact, pushing it back about 7 feet, and then sliding it north so that it would become the recessed face of the mid-rise condo. It's a terrible design; it totally disrespects the Dilworth House, not to mention that it is disallowed by the ordinance (well O.K., we mentioned it). We stand by our position that the house should be saved in its entirety. We take a moment to mention a few important related items:

- Senator Vincent Fumo continues to advocate publicly on our behalf. He recently wrote a letter to the Mayor and the Historical Commission pledging to seek state funding to buy the house for a public purpose, if the developer would like to sell. Thank you so much for your support, Senator!
- Councilman Frank DiCicco, Councilman Jim Kenney and Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown sponsored a City Council resolution calling for the preservation of the Dilworth House – and the resolution was passed unanimously, 16-0. That is fantastic! Thank you Councilman DiCicco for leading this effort.

Please sign the online petition if you'd like to receive email updates and notices of the hearings: [www.savedilworthnow.org/petition.html](http://www.savedilworthnow.org/petition.html).

**NewMarket (vacant parcel between Front and Second, Pine and Lombard):**

We continue to advocate for a development that would fit into the neighborhood. At the end of January, a small group of SHCA Board Directors, and the President of Queen Village Neighbors Association met with the developers and their architect. The purpose of the meeting was to try for a meaningful exchange of ideas in a small setting that would not be subject to large group dynamics. At the meeting, the developer's team presented us with a plan for a 281 foot high condo tower on Front Street, with 8 townhouses in the interior of the block, surrounded by a private courtyard. We explained that the zoning code limits the height of new construction to 35 or sometimes 60 feet and that while we were willing to support minor variances for a good project, 281 feet high is excessive (to put it mildly). The group agreed to have another meeting, at which the developer will present alternative plans to explore the possibility of a low-rise design, including a plan with townhouses only or something on that scale. We are not sure if the developers will present a design we can support, but we're hoping. None of these preliminary meetings substitute for SHCA's normal process of holding a publicized open meeting, which neighbors can attend and in which they can participate. If you support the concept of a low-rise development at NewMarket, please support us by signing the online petition at [www.savewmarketnow.org](http://www.savewmarketnow.org). By doing so, you'll receive more detailed updates via email.

**HUGE CROWD TURNS OUT TO CELEBRATE DILWORTH ANNIVERSARY**


**The speakers at the Dilworth Celebration included, from left to right, Zachary Stalberg (President and CEO of the Committee of Seventy), Tania Rorke (SHCA President), William T. Coleman, Jr. (the featured speaker) and Paul Levy, Executive Director of the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation.**

Thanks to about 150 of you for showing up at City Hall on January 18th to help us celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Mayor Dilworth's inauguration. It was a great event! The celebration was hosted by The Committee of Seventy, the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, the Society Hill Civic Association and the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia. During his 20+ years of public service, former Mayor Dilworth left a legacy of meaningful and long-standing reforms in Philadelphia's political and civic communities. The program's featured speaker was William T. Coleman, Jr., Esquire, the first minority attorney to be hired at a large law firm in Philadelphia. Mr. Coleman was hired personally by Dilworth, who also was at the forefront of hiring other minorities and women, including significant hires into the District Attorney's office. Mr. Coleman went on to a career of many accomplishments, which included receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1995. You can read about it in this excellent *Daily News* article: [www.philly.com/mlid/dailynews/13668381.htm](http://www.philly.com/mlid/dailynews/13668381.htm)

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## SOUTH STREET BRIEF

## Exciting New Shops and Restaurants

One of the advantages of living in Society Hill is that we can step out of our homes and find places to shop, dine or be entertained close by. Basic items from our local supermarkets or gourmet delicacies from such specialty stores as Chef's Market or Whole Foods are a short walk from home. If we want to dine out, we have wonderful choices—from high-end restaurants to casual diners. The good news is that several new shops and eateries that will satisfy the "appetites" of many Society Hill denizens have recently opened nearby.

Remember the dearth of bookstores? Well, now we have two. In November we welcomed two to the neighborhood: *Voices and Visions*, though not in the South Street district, is walking distance in the Bourse (111 S. Independence Mall). Owner/manager Angela Roach adds a touch of elegance to the touristy Bourse scene. Don't miss the basement entrance on 4th Street when you are in the Independence Mall area. A recent entry on PhillyBlog says *Voices and Visions* has excellent décor; friendly staff and a nice selection of books—and a not-to-be-missed website. The other, *Head House Books*, at 619 South 2nd Street is a welcome addition after *Book Trader* moved to 7 N. Second several years ago. *Head House* is owned by SHCA Board Director Richard deWyngaert. A PhillyBlog entry describes its soothing wasabi green walls, tin ceiling, oriental rugs and cherrywood bookshelves—not to mention a family-friendly kid's section and the promise of many programs for old and young alike (See Kids' Beat, p. 19 in this issue).

#### Other places to look for on South Street

In addition to the wide range of restaurants, several South Street area stores offer our community style and quality. *Go Commute* at 333 South Street, which recently opened, offers a wonderful selection of distinctive handbags and fine luggage. *Benjamin Lovell's* shoe store at 318 South Street offers American and foreign favorites. Check out the back room for great sales.

South Street does need some kid's clothes shops, however. *Baby Gap* closed last year and *KamaKaze Kids*, which offered a full range of clothes and toys for babies to teens, closed its doors at the end of 2005. We hope this deficiency will be noted by the South Street HeadHouse District.

#### Newly Opened Eateries

**Gayle, at 617 S. 3rd Street 215-922-3850 • Seats 30.** Located at the former *Azafran* site, this innovative and cozy new spot is already enjoying a great following for its creative American menu. Owner and chef, Daniel Stern, was executive chef at *Le Bec Fin*, so reservations are definitely recommended. *Gayle* has a full-service bar and a great variety of wines and beers. They are closed Sunday and open at 5:30 on all other days. Monday through Wednesday the menu is a la carte with a prix fixe option and Thursday through Sunday prix fixe only.

**Core de Roma Trattoria (Heart of Rome) at 214 South Street, 215-592-9777 •** Luigi Pinto and his two sons Angelo and Joe are running this family-owned restaurant at the former *San Carlo*. Angelo answers the phone announcing the name of the restaurant in musical Italian—he's the general manager and sometime bartender; Joe, who is head server, takes over when necessary; Luigi will greet you at the door and usher you to your table. The menu is, of course, Italian, but with a twist—Luigi's parents lived in Trastevere, equivalent to Rome's Old City, close to the Jewish ghetto. The recipes are an authentic combination of Old Roman and Jewish from the kitchens of Luigi's mother and grandmother. Another twist is that Sunday through Thursday the restaurant is BYO or buy from the bar; on the weekends, it's strictly buy from the bar. Open seven days; 5-11 p.m. Monday through Saturday; Sunday 3-9 p.m. Reservations accepted.

**Ansill's at 627 S. 3rd Street, 215-627-2485 •** David Ansill, proprietor of another popular South Philly restaurant *Pif*, took over the former old standby, *Judy's*, at 3rd and Bainbridge. He features a new decor, a full-service bar and a menu of sophisticated "small plates" prepared by Chef Kibett Menech who trained at a number of well-known kitchens in the city, most notably *Le Bec Fin*, *Striped Bass* and *Rouge*. Be prepared to wait as *Ansill's* does not take reservations, even for parties of four or more. Open seven days from 5:30 p.m. Closing at 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and open till midnight on Friday and Saturday.

**Southwark Restaurant at 4th and Bainbridge, 215-238-1888 •** Sheri and Kip Waide are hands-on owners; Sheri is chef and Kip is bartender. Southwark offers American Bistro fare with a seasonal menu featuring local fresh produce. This eatery received three bells from the Inquirer's demanding food critic Craig LaBan. Closed Monday. Open for Sunday brunch 11-5; Tuesday through Thursday open for dinner 5:30 - 10:30; Friday and Saturday, dinner until 11:30. The bar remains open after the formal dinner hours until 2 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday where you can also catch a bite to eat. Reservations are accepted for up to six people.

**Crescent City at 9th and South Streets, 215-627-6780 •** This New Orleans style eatery serves New American cuisine with a southern accent—especially featuring fine seafood selections. Crescent City is slated to be opened in March and may even be open by the time you read this, but check anyway.



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## The Princess and The Patriot

They seemed to have nothing in common. They came from opposite ends of the eighteenth-century world—she a Russian princess; he a printer-patriot from Philadelphia: she the friend of a monarch, Catherine the Great; he the enemy of a monarch, George III. Yet Ekaterina Dashkova and Benjamin Franklin both disliked court fashion—she favored men's jackets over corsets and gowns, and he scandalized the French court by wearing a fur cap. Both led prestigious scientific institutions, she as the director of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and he the founder of the American Philosophical Society. When they met in Paris in 1781, it was a meeting of two of the most fascinating minds of the "Age of Reason."

A new exhibition, *The Princess and the Patriot: Ekaterina Dashkova, Benjamin Franklin, and the Age of Enlightenment* opened on February 17, 2006 at the Museum of the American Philosophical Society. The exhibition was designed as part of the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary.

Portraits, court jewelry, porcelain, memoirs, miniature chess set, maps, natural history specimens and other scientific objects that document the extraordinary lives of America's world-renowned scientist-statesman and the outrageous Russian princess, who spoke five languages, helped overthrow a czar and who directed the most prestigious scientific organization in her country, will be on view.

**About the American Philosophical Society**  
Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743, "to promote useful knowledge," the American Philosophical Society served in the first half century of the republic as a national library, museum and academy of science. Today, the Society continues as an eminent scholarly organization of world-wide reputation, renowned for its excellence in research and publications, its extraordinary manuscript library and its international roster of elected members who make up a veritable "Who's Who" of outstanding individuals in the arts, humanities and the sciences.

### Exhibit Times:

*The Princess and the Patriot: Ekaterina Dashkova, Benjamin Franklin, and the Age of Enlightenment* will be on view in Philosophical Hall, 104 S. Fifth Street, from February 17 to December 31, 2006. Free to the public.

### Hours:

Thursday – Sunday  
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Feb. 17- Labor Day)

Friday – Sunday  
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Labor Day – Dec. 31)

Wednesday Evenings  
5 p.m. – 8 p.m. (May 1 – Labor Day)

### Second Sunday events at APS

Family-friendly hands-on art and science activities inspired by the objects in *The Princess and the Patriot* exhibition.

For more information on all programs: 215-440-3440, [www.amphilsoc.org/exhibitions/princess](http://www.amphilsoc.org/exhibitions/princess)

## New Exhibition Explores Enlightenment Ideas Through the Lives of Two Famous People



**Ekaterina Dashkova and Benjamin Franklin**



## Creating A Competitive Office Sector

### Central Philadelphia Development Corporation Forums

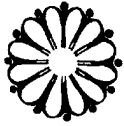
*Commemorating its 50th anniversary, the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC) will host a series of forums in 2006 to reflect upon significant accomplishments of the last half-century as well as look at potential challenges and opportunities in the years ahead. Through videos, lectures and discussions, each forum will focus on a specific topic relevant to Center City's development. The next one occurs Tuesday April 11, 2006; 4 p.m. at the Union League, Broad & Sansom Streets.*

In the 1950's, an ambitious renewal began in Philadelphia by demolishing train tracks and creating a new office district. After a long hiatus, Center City is again adding office buildings, but many sites on

West Market Street are now being developed as housing. How do we ensure that Center City remains a nucleus for business in Greater Philadelphia? There will be a preview of CPDC's plans for enhancements to the office district.

**Speakers: *How Downtowns Can Stay Competitive in a Suburban Age* — Christopher Leinberger, Visiting Fellow, The Brookings Institution, Professor & Director of Graduate Real Estate Program, University of Michigan; and Founding Partner, Arcadia Land Co.** The lecture will be followed by a panel discussion with leading local developers and commercial real estate brokers.

The forums are open to the public; registration cost is \$35 per person per forum. For more details or to register, call 215-440-5575 or e-mail [mrigler@centercityphila.org](mailto:mrigler@centercityphila.org).



# Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church

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## Jazz Vespers at Old Pine Church



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 Twenty Years And Still Going Strong
 

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## Jazz Vespers At Old Pine Presbyterian Church

If you walk past Old Pine Presbyterian Church, you can't help but notice the sign for their monthly Jazz Vespers program. If you haven't attended the 5 p.m. service on the third Sunday of each month, you are missing something special.

"Jazz Vespers at Old Pine" began in 1986. After much discussion led by then pastor Bill Pindar, a 12-person committee made up of both Old Pine church members and members of the wider community, the new Sunday afternoon program of music and prayer became a welcome addition at 4th and Pine. The initial planning group included Bill Pindar, Carolyn Wiley, Jim Wiley, Ed Klitsch, DeWitt Peterson, Pam Esposito, Karen White, Toni Freeman, Rev. Warren Davis, Rev. Mike Cobbler, Zig Zigler (high school musician), and Rev. Tom Mainor (Old Pine's associate pastor). JoAnne Peterson and later Trudy Pitts and Bill Carney joined the group.

As audiences grew, planners added guest speakers and a format that includes six jazz spots, scripture reading, a meditation, expressions of personal joys and concerns, prayers and an offering. The program lasts from 75 to 90 minutes and is followed by a social hour with refreshments. During the social, musicians' CDs are available for sale.

The 240th jazz vespers service is scheduled for June 2006. Through these 20 years, over 300 professional jazz musicians (no amateurs) have performed at Jazz Vespers, with over 100 guest speakers and 100 volunteers at the service or social hour.

Mr. C (Bill Carney) recruited the musicians during the first few years. "Father John" D'Amico, a leading jazz pianist, composer and Roman Catholic priest, took over that responsibility, one he has handled ably for 15 years.

The audience and worshippers come from many backgrounds and religious affiliations. The *Daily News* described Jazz Vespers as the "largest continuous inter-racial, inter-generational, inter-economic group happening in the city." In 1996, the program was awarded "Best in Philly" by *Philadelphia Magazine*.

### Some of the musicians who have performed at Jazz Vespers include:

Grover Washington, Jr.	Joey DeFrancesco
John Blake	Chris McBride
Domenic Fiore	Trudy Pitts
Evelyn Simms	Don Patterson
Barbara Montgomery	Mary Ellen Desmond
Denis DiBlasio	Zan Gardner
Rosella Washington	Jimmy Oliver
Sonabra Trio	Bobby Durham
Midiri Brothers	Barbone Street JB
Doctors of Rhythm	Jerry Rife's Rhythm Kings
Tex Wyndham's Band	Mason Dixon JB
Pete Smyser	Fred Adams Ensemble
JohnD'Amico	Miss Justine
Ella Csircsu	Tony DeNicola
Butch Ballard	Wendy Simon
John Simon	Tony Williams
Larry McKenna	Glenn Dodson
Dan Fogel	Jimmy O'Dell
The Gabriels	Fred Simmons
Raymond King	Sonia Sanchez
White Chorale	Jim Miller
Ron Parker	Harcapella
Harold Karabell	Paul Sherr
Monette Sudler	Joe Sudler
Eric Mintel	Settlement School Faculty
Bill Meeks	Lovitt Hines
Dave Posmontier	Suzanne Cloud
George Rabbai	

### 20th Anniversary Planned

Jazz Vespers At Old Pine is planning its 20th Anniversary events at the moment. The proposed schedule has these events, all on the third Sunday (all prior to vespers at 5 p.m.)

#### June 18

Afternoon Block Party

#### October 15

Afternoon Dinner

#### December

Jazz Organ Fest with Memento Celebration

#### March 2007

Jazz at 10:30 a.m. service  
Jazz concert in the afternoon



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# Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

Society Hill parents, mark your calendars. On Saturday April 29, a Child Health and Safety Fair will be held at St. Peter's School from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The St. Peter's School Parent Association will launch this event in conjunction with The Philadelphia School Association, McCall Home & School Association, Whole Foods, Bowen's Puppets, and many other groups. The Fair will cover a variety of topics dealing with all aspects of children's health and safety. Themed booths will be set up and demonstrations will be ongoing throughout the day. The number of areas to be covered by the organizers of this event is too extensive to list, but some highlights include: car seat/vehicle safety, internet protection, nutrition, exercise and sports safety, bullying/mental health, fire prevention, strangers/predators/abductions, CPR/first aid, drug and alcohol issues, and babysitter training.

Kids' entertainment will include puppet shows, and there will be ample opportunity for children to reap valuable, potentially life saving information from the fair. A self-defense clinic will be

child-centered, as will the babysitting seminars. Applause to St. Peter's Parent Association for identifying the need for this type of event, inviting the participation of so many other organizations and creating this valuable forum on behalf of our children and our community. To learn more about the Child Safety Fair, contact Cindy Dahl at CMDAHL3@juno.com or 215-592-4652.

We have another enriching opportunity in the neighborhood. *Head House Books*, 619 S. 2nd Street, is holding Children's Story Hours on Fridays at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. The theme is "Great New Books," and the sessions offer parents and children exposure to the latest in children's literature. *Head House* is eager to expand its community event calendar and welcomes suggestions for book groups and other activities of interest. Some possibilities include mother/daughter book clubs, strong girls reading group, arts and crafts hour, and dads on duty (particularly popular with moms). For information on Story Hour and other family events, visit [headhousebooks.com](http://headhousebooks.com), contact [sales@headhousebooks.com](mailto:sales@headhousebooks.com), or call 215-923-9525.



**Child Health & Safety Fair  
Saturday April 29**

### Kid's Quote

"The Continental? I haven't been there in years."

**Elizabeth, age 9  
Society Hill Kid**

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## Major Improvements At McCall School

To the delight of the McCall students, their long awaited playground officially opened for business in December. Parents report hearing "happier sounds" and the kids give rave reviews to the new equipment. The schoolyard is open after school, on weekends and on holidays, so neighborhood kids are encouraged to enjoy the playset, the basketball court and the vast open space that is used for biking, scootering, and games. Designed for kids ages 5-12 and constructed with strict adherence to safety codes, the playset has the latest in climbers, monkey bars, see-saws, bridges and slides.

The chain-link fence was removed and replaced by a tubular steel fence that closely matches the attractive wrought iron that surrounds the majority of the schoolyard. In addition, the parking area at 7th and Cypress will be reduced to allow more play space.

### Cy-brary

Plans have been finalized for the construction of the new cyber library and work is scheduled to commence this month. This high tech research facility will be fully operational and staffed in time for the new school year in September. Special thanks to SHCA and all of the neighbors who generously supported this initiative!

### Mural Arts Program

McCall formed a partnership with Mural Arts in September, and the project came to fruition

in December. Under the leadership of Phys Ed teacher Mark Sykes, art teacher Lovett Hines, and artist David McShane, 30 upper school students worked on this cross-curricular project. They learned about the history of murals, wrote poems related to the theme, brainstormed on design concepts and created the mural from start to finish. The mural is located in the gym, which doubles as the lunchroom, so students chose the theme of health and fitness. They also wanted the mural to reflect the multicultural nature of the school and diversity of the student body, so they incorporated this aspect, as well. After finalizing the design, students created small versions of the drawings using grids to facilitate projection. They then primed the area, and projected the drawings onto the wall. Finally, they painted in their design, which depicts a variety of kids playing sports surrounded by fruits, vegetables and healthy snacks. The bright colors and appropriate content have enhanced lunchtime and gym class for the entire school community.

### Great Things Are Happening At Our Neighborhood Public School!



McCall School gym/luncheon room decorated with mural.



McCall School kids enjoy the new play area.

Top Row, left to right:

Kelsey White, Cormick White

Middle Row: Rebecca Kannon, Christian Bingham

Bottom Row: Addison Zheng, Laura Swerdlow



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## Three Bears Park Renovations

# Progress Slows Because of Unforeseen Obstacles

What has happened to the renovations at Three Bears Park? Despite best efforts of Friends of Three Bears Park, obstacles have seriously slowed the process. Although we had hoped to begin construction this past fall, a more realistic date is March 2006.

Last summer we hired architect, Peter Johnson, to complete drawings for the project. In September, the play equipment and play surface were ordered. When we learned that the renovations needed the approval of the Historical Commission, our plans were presented on November 29 to the Commission's Architectural Review, which voted unanimous support. On December 19th, the project was subsequently accepted by the Society Hill Zoning and Preservation Committee, and finally on January 13, 2006, the Historical Commission gave us the go-ahead.

During the second week of February, plans went out for bids, and at press time, we are awaiting contractors' estimates. If all goes well, we hope to begin Phase I as soon as weather allows—barring further unforeseen obstacles. Unfortunately the root systems of two large trees on the west side have caused significant damage to bricks and concrete. They will be examined by an experienced arborist. If they have to be cut down, they will be replaced with similar species.

During Phase I the present equipment and play surface as well as all of the bricks and concrete on the west side of the park will be removed. When a new concrete bed is in place, the old bricks will be laid in the same pattern. Once the brick work is complete, the play equipment and the play surface, as well as benches and

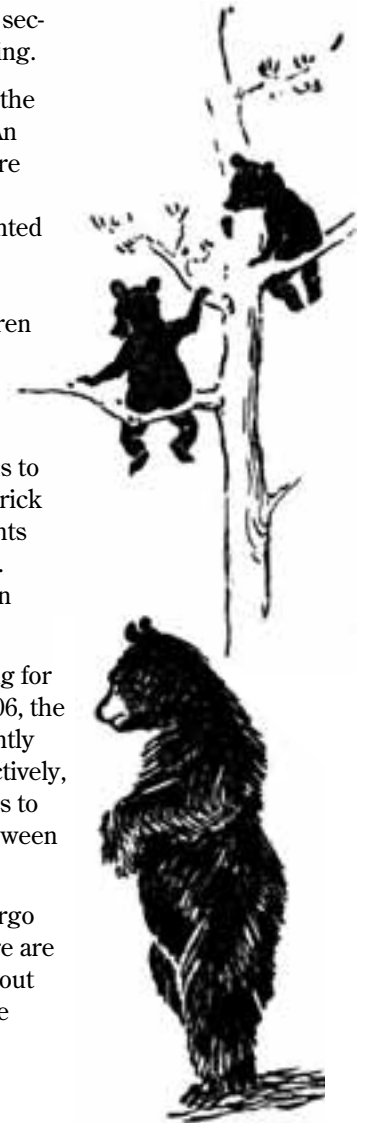
tables, will be installed — a process that may take up to twelve weeks. Work will be completed in stages so that children may continue to use sections of the park while construction is ongoing.

To date, improvements have been made on the larger planter on the east side of the park. An irrigation system has been installed to ensure proper maintenance of plant material. Patty Redenbaugh and her staff at City Plants planted bulbs that we will see blooming this spring. A small fence will be put around the inside perimeter of the planter to keep small children from stomping on the plants. Parents and nannies have allowed this practice and replacement of the plants has been costly.

Phase II of this project envisions renovations to the east side of the park with repair to the brick and slate and we hope in time to see the lights in the bollards (on east side) working again. Currently there is no funding for this portion of the project.

The Friends of Three Bears Park are looking for interested individuals to get involved. In 2006, the positions of President and Treasurer, currently held by Tania Rorke and Alex Haines respectively, will become vacant. We also need volunteers to chair our always popular Fall Festival, Halloween festivities and Easter Egg Hunt.

We appreciate your patience while we undergo construction and your understanding if there are further delays. If you have any questions about the construction or want to volunteer, please contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544 or [TRorke@aol.com](mailto:TRorke@aol.com)



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# Attendance at SHCA's Social Affairs Knows No Bounds

Five years ago Bridget Foy's hosted the SHCA social for about 35 people. Attendance at our recent socials has continued to grow and has reached a record high of over 250 this year at Bookbinders. And we even had to turn away people because of space limitations.

It was most unfortunate that we could not accommodate over 70 SHCA members, many of whom are long-time residents and members, all of whom were placed on a waiting list. Another record high for the evening were the 77 no-shows who had reserved a spot, but failed to call to say they were not coming. Had they had the courtesy to call and cancel, the 70 members placed on the waiting list would not have been left out. Another 50 people showed up without reservations, some of whom came with a promise to join, but have not yet done so. Discussions are underway to avoid this very unpleasant situation for the future. Please recognize that we cannot plan parties like this with a crystal ball.

Even more difficult is finding a venue that can accommodate our ever-growing crowd. We may even have to abandon the notion of a free party. It has been suggested that in the future we levy a pre-paid charge of between \$10 and \$25. We welcome your suggestions, which you may send to our administrator, Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 (phone) or email Matt.DeJulio@aol.com.

### SHCA Membership Revenues Soar By 54.5%

Revenues raised through annual dues have jumped from \$43,290 as of January 31, 2005 to \$65,320 at the end of January 2006. SHCA members rallied behind the call for donations over and above membership dues of \$50, so that we may continue many of the programs which have grown over the years to support our quality of life.

This year we have 850 RENEWALS compared with 641 at the same time last year, 63 are brand-new members. We are still waiting to hear from 170 members who were on our SHCA rolls but who have not as yet responded to a second renewal notice mailed in early January. If you are among these folks, please send in your check today along with the adjacent form — so that we may save the postage on a third mailing.

SHCA especially wishes to thank and acknowledge the 206 large donor households: 17 signed on as Ben Franklin benefactors; 14 were Georgian Grantors; 131 were Federal Friends; and 44 gave specially earmarked contributions that were equivalent to the Federal Friend or above level. Donations for beautification of Washington Square and for Sidewalk Cleaning were most popular in this latter category.

## SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

### Membership Application/Renewal Form



Renewal     New

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Emails provide you with timely, topical information about once a week. We do not, and will not, SPAM you; Provide your email address, and stay in the loop of neighborhood happenings!

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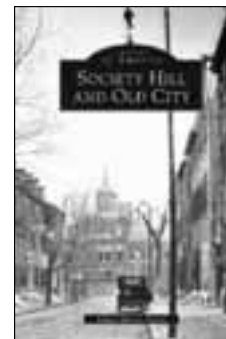
- \$ 50 Basic Household
- \$100 Federal Friend\*
- \$150 Georgian Grantor\*
- \$300 Benjamin Franklin Benefactor\*\*
- \$ 40 Senior/Student

\*Will receive the Robert Skaler book,  
*Society Hill and Old City*

\*\*Will receive book plus FREE house tour

#### Business Memberships

- \$60 Business with fewer than 5 employees
- \$ 100 Businesses/Institutions with 5 or more employees



#### Additional contribution for

- Beautification of Washington Square
- Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal
- Town Watch/Safe and Sound
- Zoning/Historic Preservation
- Society Hill Reporter
- McCall School
- Street Trees
- Franklin Lighting

**Check Enclosed**      **Total**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Charge VISA/Mastercard**

Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to volunteer** for the following committee(s):

- Clean-Up Day     Washington Square     Town Watch
- Zoning & Historic Preservation     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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 Ray & Margaret Munsch  
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 Christophe Van den Bulte  
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 Barrie Trimmingham  
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The list included in this issue is current as of January 30. If your check arrived after that date you will be acknowledged in the next issue of the *Reporter*.

\*deceased


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Needless to say, SHCA is always grateful to the many businesses and organizations that participate in our program, and so we ask neighbors to

patronize these generous local businesses. In this issue, we extend a special “thank you” to new Welcome Basket contributors: **Wireless Zone**, our only neighborhood wireless store and cell phone boutique at 322 South Street; **Moshulu** 401 South Columbus Blvd., a unique shipboard restaurant and bar, docked at Penn’s Landing; **Old Original Bookbinders** at 2nd and Walnut, newly renovated but with many old seafood favorites, and **Caramel**, 527 Walnut, a café and expresso bar. **M. Jason Bailey**, who specializes in personal fitness consultations is also participating. For more information on either contributing or receiving a basket, contact Martha Levine, marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.

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Ghost Tours of Philadelphia, 215-413-1997  
Independence Seaport Museum, 211 S. Columbus Boulevard  
The Kimmel Center, Broad & Spruce  
Lights of Liberty Show, 6th & Chestnut  
National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut  
Adventure Aquarium – Camden Waterfront  
Pennsylvania Ballet, 1101 S. Broad  
Phila. Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine, 400 Pine  
Phila. Chamber Music Society, 215-569-8080  
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City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd  
Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th  
Deux Cheminees, 1221 Locust  
Farmicia Restaurant, 15 S. 3rd  
Fork, 302 Market  
Fork, etc. (prepared foods), 306 Market  
La Buca Ristorante, 711 Locust  
Moshulu, 401 South Columbus Blvd.\*  
Mustard Greens, 622 S. 2nd  
Old Original Bookbinders, 2nd & Walnut Streets\*  
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Pizzicato Restaurant, 248 Market  
Sfizzio Restaurant, Society Hill Towers

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Brescia Salon, 118 South Street  
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Li’ Joana Skin Care Clinic, 400 Walnut Street  
M’s Salon On the Square- Hopkinson House  
Pileggi on the Square, 717 Walnut  
Salon @5th, 316 S. 5th

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Linu Boutique, 1036 Pine  
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\* new Welcome Basket donors





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**SENIOR SCENE**


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## News You Can Use

- Direct Access is a new development in physical therapy in Pennsylvania, which allows you to be evaluated and treated by specially trained physical therapists “directly” without the need for a referral from a physician. You may have received a letter from Excel Physical Therapy explaining more about the program. If you did not and are interested in learning more, please call 1-866-883-9235. Joe Ruhl, PT of Excel Physical Therapy, first alerted me to this newly available help. Joe explained that Direct Access is appropriate in certain situations for a limited time (the letter gave as an example a “person with low back pain that started after a four hour car ride”).

- Here in Greater Philadelphia, people have access to a website called Coming of Age, which describes itself as a “powerful portal that brings you articles, video clips, weblogs, stories and links, information about life and financial planning, working in retirement, caregiving, volunteer opportunities and much more.” It is particularly designed for people 50 years and older. The website is [www.comingofage.org](http://www.comingofage.org).

- We’ve been made aware of plans for a Friends Center City Retirement Community whose purpose is “to create a continuing care retirement community in Center City” affiliated with the Quakers. They hope to create a “vibrant and innovative urban community for older adults” with 125-150 apartments. Their website is [www.centercityretirement.com](http://www.centercityretirement.com). A recent AARP Bulletin described a different living arrangement for folks ages 50 years and older. It is called Beacon Hill Village whose mission is to keep people in their own homes in their own neighborhoods. Check out the website, [www.beaconhillvillage.org/villageservices.html](http://www.beaconhillvillage.org/villageservices.html) or simply type Beacon Hill Village into your search engine.

### Interest Groups

Susan Chernin (email – [susan.l.chernin@verizon.net](mailto:susan.l.chernin@verizon.net) – Susan’s email has a “dot” after susan and after l as in lilac) is a new addition to our list of seniors. She loved the idea of the Walkie Talkies, but says she is a “slow, really slow” walker. Susan is interested in forming a group of walkers who may need canes or, for whatever reason, need to walk slowly but still are determined to get exercise. If you are interested, email Susan or call Jean Bryan.

### Entertainment

On February 15 a group of us enjoyed the play *9 Lives of Desire* at the Wilma Theater. The “coffee chat” following the performance was lively and interesting. Thanks to Sissie Lipton, board member of the Wilma, who arranged tickets for Senior Scene. These are the kinds of outings we hope to have more often, in addition to other social activities — pot luck dinners and/or movies and educational opportunities.

### Housekeeping

If you did not hear about the above-mentioned play, it is simply that I do not have you listed in the master Senior Scene 2006 Directory. Please email or phone me to get your name on the list. You will not be getting anything more in your email than notification of events, I promise. I am also updating my Senior Scene phone list for those of you who prefer to be called about our events.

I’m always appreciative when folks let me know tidbits that might be helpful to others. So remember to email me at [jeanbryan@gmail.com](mailto:jeanbryan@gmail.com) or call 215-925-6416. Your input is welcome. And your offers to arrange outings are always appreciated.

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I think all this talk about age is foolish. Every time I’m one year older, everyone else is too.

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U.S. actress**



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Virtual Tour# listed below each home

**220 Locust Street #16FFG** 51,299,900  
Sumptuous corner condo unit in exclusive Society Hill Towers, completely renovated with 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2100 SF of living space, custom kitchen, new hardwood floors throughout, and floor to ceiling windows with magnificent views! **Virtual Tour #4624981**

**Independence Place #2401** 51,149,000  
Fabulous Penthouse condo on Washington Square with 1stunning bedroom, 2 gorgeous stone baths, central air, spectacular chef's kitchen with top-of-the-line amenities, plus fantastic balcony with breathtaking panoramic views of the city! **Virtual Tour# 4602955**

**1016 Spruce Street #3** 5895,000  
Grand 4-5 bedroom, 2 bath tri-level condo with 4400 SF of living space, hardwood floors, fireplaces, huge kitchen in luxurious Strickland Row with common rooftop and pool! **Virtual Tour# 4650350**

**256 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street** 5719,900  
Wonderful and large duplex with 2 bedroom owner's unit with modern kitchen and bath, separate dining room, and cedar deck plus 1 bedroom, 1 bath unit and 2 car parking!! **Virtual Tour#4558799**

**903 Lombard Street** 5679,900  
Luxurious 3 bedroom, 3.5 bath home with finished basement, chef's kitchen with top-of-the-line appliances, amazing roof deck, 2 zoned central air, 10 year tax abatement, plus 1 car garage!! **Virtual Tour# 4602592**

**330 Lombard Street** 5639,900  
Wonderful 4 bedroom, 1.5 bath home with hardwood and pine floors, 2 fireplaces, high ceilings, and lovely balcony overlooking pretty landscaped yard!

**1207 Lombard Street** 5539,900  
Beautiful 4 level home with 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, den, refinished hardwood floors throughout, gas fireplace, central air, lovely Juliet balcony, 1 car parking! **Virtual Tour#4663831**

**Independence Place #706** 5499,900  
Beautiful 1 bedroom, 1.5 bath condo with den, new oak hardwood floors, custom built-ins, gorgeous new kitchen appliances, and lovely terrace!

**412 S. Iseninger Street** 5364,900  
Newly renovated historic trinity with 2 bedrooms, original wide plank pine flooring, working gas fireplace, central air, lovely garden, and dramatic rooftop deck with great views! **Virtual Tour #4601484**

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**\$569,000**

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Cathedral ceilings, 18 ft. window  
Fab Kitchen: granite, tile, stainless appliances  
2 Bedrooms, 2 full baths, granite, newly tiled  
Deck overlooks courtyard  
Woodburning stove; den/office  
Parking available, Immaculate, Must See!



**507 Spruce Street**  
**\$769,000**

1802 Historic facade, Fantastic rehab  
3 Bedrooms, 2 marble Baths & Powder room  
Living Room, Dining Area, gas fireplace  
Fab Kitchen in Granite & Slate, cherry cabinets  
Brazilian Redwood floors throughout  
Brick Patio, Basement laundry, storage  
Meticulous Move-in Condition



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## NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

## Robin Komita and Mario Moussa

...multilayered  
lives fused into  
one solid stratum.

When it comes to family togetherness, the multilayered lives of Robin Komita and Mario Moussa fuse into one solid stratum. Their three charming children, eight-year-old twins Bix and Ella and 11-year-old Miles, are inextricably bound up in their parents' lives, as well as, of course, their own.

For instance, Robin, an architect, is deeply involved in the activities of St. Peter's School, which the twins attend, and where she works on the development committee and co-chairs the school's annual plant sale, on May 13 — the day before Mother's Day. Together with husband Mario, Bix, Ella, and Miles, the whole crew goes bike riding, cross country skiing in Colorado; and recently, en bloc, on a trip to Istanbul.

And, make no mistake, these kids are a presence: Ella, curious to know what a "reporter" is doing in her house, asks journalist-type questions before offering a dish of Hershey kisses — surely not a bribe to treat her parents with kindness and civility? Later, the boys Bix and Miles show up, introducing themselves with, I thought, unstudied courtliness.



Mario and Robin met in New York through Jonathan Larson, author of the popular musical *Rent*, whose final number, appropriately, is "Love is All." The couple married in 1990 and five years later moved into their 19th-century house on Pine Street. Robin, a Carnegie-Mellon graduate in industrial design, is an active community presence. She has served as a Board Director with the Society Hill Civic Association and she is always an energetic, professional member of SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP), whose activities include current efforts to save the historically significant Dilworth House. ZHP strives always to preserve our neighborhood's provenance and architecture — or as Robin puts it, works collegially with city government and local homeowners to "keep Society Hill charming." Robin and Mario love the charm of their adopted community, likening it to a small town where you can frequently encounter people you know.

Mario, a principal and management committee member in the Center for Applied Research (CFAR), has a doctorate in social theory from the University of Chicago and an MBA from the Wharton Business School where he is a senior fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute for health economics and teaches in the School's executive program.

While Robin works for the firm Becker Winston Architects — which, incidentally, designed CFAR's offices at Four Penn Center — and Mario works on business strategy and managerial behavior, the pair manage to find time for yoga, pilates, tennis, and the Germantown Cricket Club.

For Robin and Mario, community means not only being in and of the larger local scene; but also in fully integrating the smaller one of family into their multifaceted lives.

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**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

*Ongoing thru December 2006*

**The Princess and the Patriot:**

Ekaterina Dashkova, Benjamin Franklin, and the Age of Enlightenment  
Museum of the American Philosophical Society  
104 S. 5th Street  
See page 15

*Thursday, March 16*

**SHCA Board Meeting**

6:00 p.m. 2nd Floor  
Society Hill Synagogue  
418 Spruce Street

**General Membership Meeting**

7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary  
Real Estate Tax Assessment with David Glancey, Brett Mandell and Councilman DiCicco

*Saturday, March 18*

**PECO Franklin Family Fun Day: He's Electric!**

National Constitution Center  
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Tickets for this event cost \$12 for members; \$15 for non-members; and \$6 for students.  
Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 215-409-6700  
[www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org).

*Friday, March 31*

**St. Peter's School Spring Auction**

3rd and Lombard Streets  
See page 33

*Saturdays thru the end of April*

**Breakfast with Ben**

Independence Visitors Center  
6th and Market Streets  
215-965-7676  
9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.  
\$12 Children (12 and under) \$19 Adults  
Reservations recommended

*April 1-30, 2006*

**Learn why it's a "Jellybean World!"**

National Liberty Museum  
Chestnut Street, between 3rd and 4th  
Tuesdays thru Sundays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Admission: \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and \$1 for children 6 and over  
[www.libertymuseum.org](http://www.libertymuseum.org)

*Thursday, April 6*

**SHCA Board Meeting**

6:00 p.m., Powel House  
244 S. 3rd Street

*Saturday, April 29*

**Child Health & Safety Fair**

St. Peter's School  
3rd and Lombard Streets  
See page 33

*Wednesday, May 3*

**Preservation Alliance Awards Luncheon**

Open to SHCA members.  
See page 1

*Sunday May 7*

**Society Hill Synagogue Spring Fair**

418 Spruce Street  
Featuring silent auction, kids' games, gourmet food, plants  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

*Sunday, May 7*

**The Society Hill Open House Tour**

1 - 5 p.m.  
Tickets can be purchased for \$35 by contacting Philadelphia Open House  
215-928-1188



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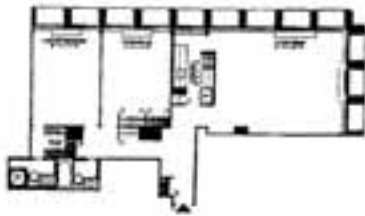
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**Two Independence Place**

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