



SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.com

## Membership Meeting You Won't Want To Miss



**Paul Levy**  
President & CEO  
Center City District

*Featured Speaker:* Paul R. Levy

*Topic:*

“Shaping the Future of Society Hill”

Our Wednesday, May 17 General Membership Meeting should not be missed by anyone who cares about Society Hill. First, we will conduct our civic association’s annual election of Officers and Quadrant Directors, all of whom volunteer their services for the benefit of our unique little corner of the world. (See pages 19-23 to review the roster and marvel at the talented group of candidates who give of their time and expertise for Society Hill.)

Following the election, our featured speaker will be Paul R. Levy, President & CEO of Philadelphia’s Center City District (CCD). Paul will present to us CCD’s recently produced video entitled: “Center City’s Residential Revival: 50 Years in the Making.” The video tells the story of Society Hill’s series of renovations that began in 1956 and continues with our neighborhood’s redevelopment over the last fifty years. This historical overview will likely help us determine how we wish to shape Society Hill’s future.

After the video Paul will also provide a brief demographic profile of what has changed in the neighborhood since the 1960s and discuss his thoughts about Society Hill’s strengths. Also, he will ask us what we would prefer to invest in should we have access to capital improvement funds. Would it be playgrounds, parks, lighting, parking, repair of sidewalks, or traffic concerns?

As CCD’s chief, Paul Levy directs the \$14 million downtown management district, which provides security, hospitality, cleaning, marketing, promotion and planning services for the city’s central business district. To date the CCD has completed \$44 million of improvements for the city’s streetscape, parks, lighting and façade enhancement. Paul also serves as Executive Director of the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, (CPDC). CPDC’s recent initiatives include advocacy efforts to increase Center City’s residential population by converting vacant office buildings to apartments; business retention and recruitment; improvements for the Benjamin Franklin Parkway; and a partnership initiative with the Philadelphia School District to promote school options for Center City families.

Finally, Paul hopes to generate a lively discussion to help our civic association set priorities for the coming year. By the way, Paul, and his wife, Carrie Rickey (a film reviewer for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*) happen to live in Society Hill with their two daughters.

WED.

May

17

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings  
Wednesday, May 17, 2006

**Pennsylvania Hospital — Zubrow Auditorium**  
Corner of 8th & Spruce Streets, 1st floor

**6:00 p.m. Board Meeting**

All SHCA members are welcome.

**7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting**

All community residents are invited.

Elections: SHCA Officers & Board Directors

Speaker: Paul R. Levy, President & CEO of Philadelphia’s Center City District

Video: “Center City’s Residential Revival: 50 Years in the Making”

### SHCA’s Spring Fling

On Tuesday, May 23rd, Positano Coast will host a FREE social for all SHCA members. (Join at the door, if you are not yet a member!)

5:30-7:30 p.m. Cocktails and hors d’oeuvres; cash bar; (10% discount if you stay for dinner)

See page 5 for details about spending an evening on the “Amalfi Coast” without ever having to leave Society Hill.



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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.

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.

In this Issue...

- Page 5**  
SHCA's Spring Fling;  
Franklin Lights Update
- Page 7**  
Real Estate Tax  
Reassessment
- Page 9**  
Home Renovations
- Page 11**  
Zoning & Historic  
Preservation Report
- Page 13**  
Safe & Sound
- Page 15**  
Report on the *Reporter*
- Pages 19-23**  
SHCA Board Nominations
- Page 27**  
Kids' Beat
- Page 29**  
Senior Scene
- Page 34**  
Noteworthy Neighbors:  
Jack & Helaine Greenberg

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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

This has been quite a busy year for our civic association's board of directors, as there are many challenging issues before us. These include proposed gambling casinos on Columbus Blvd.; significant increases in our property taxes; a proposal for a hi-rise development at NewMarket; preservation of the Dilworth House; upgrading every Franklin Light in the neighborhood; beautifying Washington Square; and restoring Three Bears Park. I commend our board for their willingness to rise to each challenge.

On April 12th several community residents testified before the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board. Both Ray Swerdlow, chair of our Gaming Committee, and I, as president, spoke on SHCA's behalf. We also testified on behalf of the Riverfront Communities United, a coalition of eight civic associations (ours included) and one business district, the South Street Headhouse District. This coalition was formed for the purpose of reviewing and analyzing the Philadelphia Entertainment and Development Partners' ("Foxwoods") application for a casino license, to be located at Columbus Boulevard and Reed Streets, next to the Home Depot.

Many other individuals from Society Hill attended and spoke at the hearing. As a coalition, we collectively oppose the Foxwoods' proposed development. For more information about the coalition, please visit [www.RiverFrontUnited.org](http://www.RiverFrontUnited.org). Or, if you wish to submit written testimony opposing the proposed gambling sites, please address it to: Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, Harrisburg, PA 17106-9060. All testimony must be received by June 2, 2006.

There is a great deal of legislative activity in Harrisburg and Philadelphia regarding tax issues. Matt White, chair of SHCA's Tax Committee, has been working closely with Councilman DiCicco's office to learn more about possible changes we may see in our property taxes. He has written a report on the proposed reassessment of city properties. (See page 7)

Regarding our wish to preserve the Dilworth House, at this time we anticipate an uptick in activity as the process moves to a full and final hearing by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Another major concern is NewMarket — the vacant lot at Society Hill's eastern end: a small working group of SHCA board directors and Zoning & Historic Preservation (ZHP) Committee members have been meeting with NewMarket's developer and his attorney to discuss ideas for the site. We will strive to obtain an agreement satisfactory to everyone in the community. A public meeting will be held in the near future where the developer will present his proposed plans for the site. For more information, see Paul Boni's ZHP report on page 11 and visit our website: [www.SaveNewMarketNow.org](http://www.SaveNewMarketNow.org).

We continue to applaud SHCA's Franklin Lights Committee and all members of the neighborhood who have generously donated to the project. New light fixtures have been ordered by the city, and we hope installation begins sometime this summer. The wattage in each light will be increased from 50 watts to 100 watts — so in the evening hours we can expect to see brighter streets and sidewalks which will result in a safer neighborhood.

SHCA continues to make strides in improving the appearance of Washington Square. We hope you have enjoyed the blooming daffodils and tulips that were planted last fall by neighborhood volunteers together with Valley Crest Landscaping. So that additional plantings can be completed, we are currently working with Independence National Historical Park to address problems with the Square's irrigation system. We also continue to address with the Park Service the Square's lighting issues and fountain.

**NEWSFLASH Three Bears Park:** The new playground equipment has been ordered and will soon be shipped, so that park renovations can at last begin. At press time, we are in the end stages of negotiation with a contractor, and we hope to see construction commence *continued on page 7*



**Tania Rorke**  
SHCA President

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## Tour More Than 15 Sumptuous Private Gardens in Society Hill!

**Society Hill Civic Association and Friends of Independence National Historical Park  
Present The 28th Annual Philadelphia Open House Tour Of Society Hill Gardens  
Sunday, June 4, 2006, 1 – 5 PM**

Reservations in Advance Suggested: 215-861-4971.

Tickets Available the Day of the Tour at The Episcopal Diocese Garden, 4th and Locust Streets.

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## SHCA's Free Spring Fling Join us!

Tuesday, May 23rd, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Positano Coast, at 212 Walnut Street, has a menu, atmosphere and style typical of the seaside city Positano, on Italy's Amalfi Coast. We hope you can join us for free hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar at our spring social for SHCA members — generously hosted by owner Aldo Lamberti. Then, if you decide to stay for dinner — perfect for group sharing — your bill will be discounted by 10%. Please contact SHCA's Administrator Matt DeJulio to reserve your place. But if at the last minute you must cancel, do let us know — so that we can accommodate all who wish

to participate. At our previous SHCA social, several folks who had reserved never showed up, and due to the room's size, we were required to turn away some neighbors who reserved late. We cannot let that happen again. As soon as you know you can definitely join us, contact Matt at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com no later than May 18th.

If you're not yet a member of SHCA, no worries! The Spring Fling is your opportunity to join our association.



## Franklin Lights Campaign Update

On April 27th a fundraiser celebration for Adopt-A-Franklin Light was held at the beautiful Downtown Club. The event was scheduled primarily as a "thank you" party for all those who contributed to SHCA's street lighting improvement campaign since November 2005, but the party also brought in additional funds. A full report will be included in the next issue of the *Reporter*.

The campaign, which moved along with astounding success, has received considerable support from city and state funding. We owe much gratitude to our Councilman Frank DiCicco who gave our campaign a real shot in the arm by allocating \$250,000 in city funds to us. Thanks to Senator Vince Fumo, we also received a grant from the Commonwealth for \$110,000 in September 2005. The city's Street Lighting Department, through its Chief Joseph Doyle, contributed \$100,000. The current total for all city and state funds is \$460,000. In addition, through our community's rallying support of the campaign, many generous residents have contributed over \$110,000, as of April 12th. The total on hand is \$570,000, although \$600,000 is needed to complete the project. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have raised the missing \$30,000.

You're probably wondering when we will see the new Franklin Lights. Good news! We've been

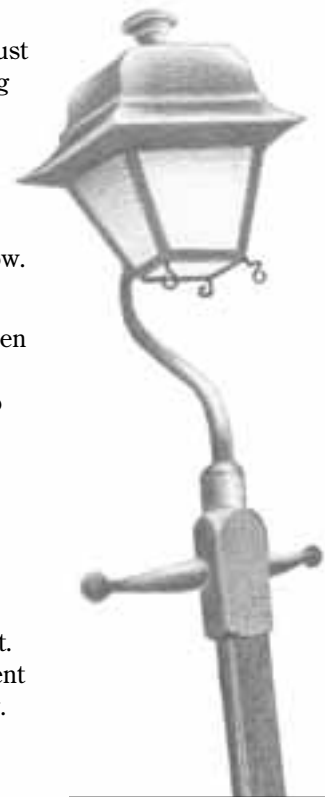
informed that the city's Street Lighting Department will be ordering them this month. Installation will likely take place from late August through December. We will all benefit by living in a brighter and safer neighborhood.

Any family, individual or group of neighbors that has contributed \$1,500 or more toward a light fixture may request an engraved plaque placed on a light of your choice. Just let us know.

Some people have asked what will be done with the old Franklin Lights once they have been removed. If you are interested, the city may be willing to offer these discarded light fixtures to our campaign contributors on request. These lights will be inoperable and would need to be rewired by your electrician. Please contact us if you wish to own one; it can be used in your garden but not placed on the sidewalk.

Thanks again to all who showed such great support for this important improvement project. We have certainly made an impressive statement to city officials that we are a united community.

For additional information, or to make a contribution, please contact Martha Levine at 215-629-0727, or marthalev@msn.com. All tax-deductible contributions should be made payable to The Society Hill Fund, a 501c (3) organization. Mail to P.O. BOX 63503, Philadelphia, PA, 19147.



**New Lights are  
to be ordered  
this month!**

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# Real Estate Tax Reassessment

**By Matt White, Esq.**  
**Chair, SHCA Tax Committee**

Over 75 of our neighbors participated in a lively discussion at SHCA's March 16th General Membership Meeting in response to the evening's invited speakers: Councilman Frank DiCicco, David Glancey (head of the city's Board of Revision of Taxes), and Brett Mandell (of *Philadelphia Forward*).

As we previously reported, the Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT) is planning a city-wide reassessment of all properties. In Philadelphia, real estate taxes are set by starting with an "assessed value," which is multiplied by a ratio determined by the BRT, and further taxed by the city at a rate of approximately 8.6%. The BRT is undertaking to change the methods for determining the current "assessed value" by taxing all properties at their "fair market value." The reasons stated for this change are, primarily, that the "assessed value" has no relation to reality and can be arbitrary; that a "fair market value" is the fairest way to apply taxes across the city; and that a fair market value-based tax is much more predictable and consistent such that two neighboring houses, of more or less the same value, would pay the same property taxes.

The problem is that across wide areas of Philadelphia, the absolute property taxes paid will increase dramatically, without regard to income or ability to pay. This will be the case even if City Council lowers the tax rate from its current level of above 8% down to the rumored 2%. You can do the math yourself. For example: Under the new plan being discussed, if you could sell your house for \$500,000, then your property taxes would be about \$10,000; if you could sell your house for \$1,000,000, then your taxes would be \$20,000.

Councilman DiCicco and Mr. Glancey summarized many different proposals being considered to "buffer"

this impact. Councilman DiCicco is already in communication with our representatives in Harrisburg to talk about relief that requires state legislation—such as Homestead Exemptions (i.e. a certain portion of the property, say, \$25,000 in value, would not be subject to tax); or "circuit breakers" (i.e. the tax couldn't increase more than a certain percentage in any year); or outright "caps" on the amount of tax that could be collected; as well as relief for seniors and individuals with low incomes.

At the city level, Councilman DiCicco and other council representatives have already authored and introduced bills designed to accomplish some relief. These measures include the use of 5 year averages for the assessed value and other proposals that would "phase in" the tax. Importantly, Councilman DiCicco and Mr. Glancey both confirmed that these new assessments would not go into effect until 2008 at the earliest.

At our membership meeting, and in the days that followed, many neighbors offered their own good ideas. These included "credits" or "deferrals" based upon the number of years a homeowner has lived in his house. For example, for every ten years that you've lived in your house, your taxes would be deferred for one year.

SHCA's Tax Reassessment Committee will be exploring these alternatives, working with other civic groups, and ensuring that city officials understand our views and the potential negative impact of proposed changes on the city. The Tax Reassessment Committee will conduct its first meeting sometime in May. We've already heard from several residents who are interested in participating. If you would like to join, please contact Chairperson Matt White at 215-977-2269 or at [mwhite@wolfblock.com](mailto:mwhite@wolfblock.com).




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Is a  
"fair market  
value" the  
fairest way  
to apply  
taxes across  
the city?

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## President's Message

*continued from page 3*

later this spring or in early summer. Construction is expected to take about twelve weeks, and the final result will be well worth our long wait!

As you may know, our civic association applied successfully for a "neighborhood beautification" grant. We have received several suggestions about how these funds should be spent. Ideas include new trash receptacles and tree plantings. If you have a suggestion about how we can improve our community with these funds, please email me at [trorke@aol.com](mailto:trorke@aol.com) by May 17, 2006. These beautification improvements will likely begin next month.

We expect to see a large turnout at SHCA's May 17th General Membership Meeting when we will vote on the incoming slate of officers and directors. For the first time in several years, there has been only one vacancy on our board. Unfortunately, our most trusted and valuable secretary, Lana Noel, is moving out of the neighborhood. I'm sure I speak for many when I thank her for her contributions to our organization and wish her and her family the best in their new home. I also thank all who had expressed their willingness to serve on our board. Although there was only one available opening this year, please know that every monthly board meeting is always open to all SHCA members and that active participation on any committee is always welcome. We appreciate involvement from all residents of our community!





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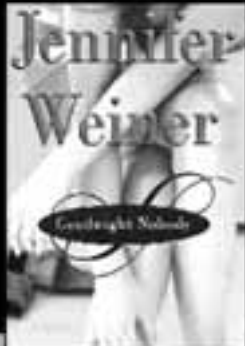
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**May 12th, 7:00 pm:**  
Bestselling author Jennifer Weiner appears to discuss and sign her latest book *Goodnight Nobody*. This is Weiner's fourth novel, following *In Her Shoes* that was adapted into a movie starring Cameron Diaz.



**May 13th, 12:00-3:00 pm:**  
**Mini Natural Pet Expo**  
Meet Christine McLaughlin, author of *The Dog Lover's Companion to Philadelphia* and Carol Armen, author of *Philly Dogs Have More Fun - The Best Places to Go and Things to Do*. Animal experts and veterinarians will be on hand with valuable knowledge on nutrition & wellness.



**Events for the Kids:**  
Children's Story Hour: Fridays at 11  
Arts & Crafts: May 6 • 4 - 5 pm  
Arts History 4 Kids: Sundays • 2 - 3 pm  
Chess Club 4 Kids: Thursdays • 4 - 6 pm

**For the Adults**  
Senior Game Night, Poetry Night, and Book Clubs

Check our website for upcoming events and details

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## Planning To Renovate Your Home? Be Prepared!

For the last seven years SHCA has assembled and shared with neighbors its List of Recommended Contractors. The list, regularly updated by SHCA's Vice President Martha Levine, is a wonderful resource, because it includes the names of contractors who have been highly recommended by neighbors. However, to achieve the best results for *your* project, we recommend that you proceed with these caveats in mind:

1. When considering which contractor to hire, always get several bids. Caution: the lowest bid doesn't necessarily yield the best results.
2. Ask the contractor for at least three references, preferably in our neighborhood. If your house is older, you'll want a contractor who has experience working with historic homes. It's also a good idea to get a sample of your contractor's work by visiting one or two projects he's completed, so you can assess the quality of his work. Most likely neighbors will understand your request and will be pleased to show off their "finished project."
3. For any medium-to-large projects, and before the work begins, the general contractor should provide his insurance company's certificate of insurance to show that he is covered for any damages to your home during the course of his work. Preferably, the form should be specific by having your home address on it instead of his using a generic form.

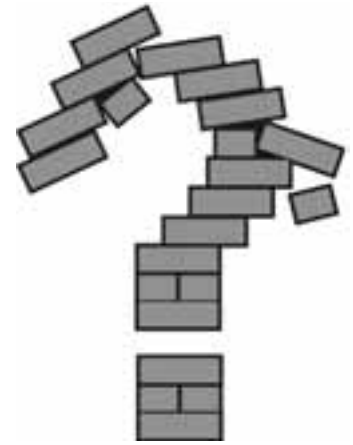
4. The contractor (and architect, if included) should have meetings with you to review the scope of the work — before it begins — and provide regular progress reports as the work continues. He should clearly inform you about how the finished product will look. These are the times to ask questions. After all, it's your home and your money.

5. Above all, stay engaged with the project. You should allocate personal time to oversee what is being done during the renovation process — rather than be surprised or dissatisfied at its conclusion. After all, once the contractor is finished, you will be living with the result of his work.

6. For medium-to-large jobs, your contractor or architect should obtain a permit from L & I, especially for extensive plumbing and electrical work. And because Society Hill is a certified "historic district" within the city's ordinance, prior to proceeding with any work to the façade of your home (other than painting), we recommend that you contact the chair of SHCA's Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee, Paul Boni, at 215-989-0034 or paulboni@bonilaw.com.

SHCA will be glad to send you an updated List of Recommended Contractors. To obtain this list, please contact Martha Levine, at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@msn.com.

Good luck with your project!



**Loose bricks can be hazardous to your health (and your pocketbook)**

### **Whoops!**

That's one word you don't want to hear outside your front door! Our neighborhood's beautiful brick sidewalks can be hazardous when bricks are loose or missing. You may not realize that, as a homeowner, you are responsible for the condition of the sidewalk in front of your house. So, don't wait until you hear that word — make repairs now if you need to.

## Historic Properties Repair Program

Does your historic home need repairs you can't afford? A new grant program administered by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, called the Historic Properties Repair Program (HPRP), may be able to help you. HPRP was established to assist low and moderate-income homeowners with grants for exterior repairs to help preserve Philadelphia's historic neighborhoods.

To be eligible for a grant, properties must be owner-occupied and located either in the City of Philadelphia or a National Register historic district. Homeowners choose pre-qualified contractors with restoration experience from lists provided by HPRP, and funds can be used for a variety of small

or large-scale exterior projects, such as: roof or window repairs, carpentry restoration, masonry re-pointing— even a sagging porch qualifies.

The grants, ranging from \$1,500 to \$20,000, don't cover the entire cost of the project— only the amount equal to the cost difference between doing basic repairs and doing authentic restoration work. For example, if replacing porch posts with modern ironwork would cost \$1,000, while historic wood columns would cost \$2,500, the difference of \$1,500 would be eligible for grant funding. More information on HPRP, including income eligibility levels, is available from: The Preservation Alliance, 1616 Walnut Street, Suite 1620, Philadelphia, PA 19103. 215-546-1146.

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**Many of us believe the residential condo tower of 240 feet proposed by the developer is inappropriate for NewMarket, especially since the Zoning Code restricts the height of a new development to 35 or 60 feet.**

This graphic shows Front Street, looking west, with a residential condo tower of 240 feet, which is the approximate height proposed by the developer as of press time. All buildings have been measured and the graphic shows all buildings “to scale.” We have drawn the tower as a simple rectangle only because its shape and materials are not currently the focus of our concern.

Many of us believe that a 240-foot high tower is inappropriate for NewMarket, especially since the Zoning Code restricts the height of a new development to 35 feet (or in some cases 60 feet). We know of no situation that would justify a four-fold increase in height. Increased height means increased mass, increased congestion, increased traffic and a blocking out of the sky. In other words, it represents an overbuilding in the neighborhood.

We should demand excellence in terms of scale, materials and design. This is what appropriate infill should be in any historic area – let alone the nation’s premiere historic neighborhood. Please visit [www.SaveNewMarketNow.org](http://www.SaveNewMarketNow.org) to learn more about NewMarket, the zoning law as it pertains to the site and other related issues. You will also find an online petition we’d like you to sign. By signing it and including your email address, you will receive periodic emails from us providing status reports, with dates and times of zoning hearings. Help us take a stand for appropriate development and for compliance with the law.

The developer is using an unfortunate strategy. For the entirety of 2005, he has engaged in a series of meetings with some of the residential neighbors whose properties physically abut NewMarket. He has persuaded some of these folks to sign letters of non-objection to a tall tower. In return, the developer would construct an open area in the interior of the block, enabling

certain residents to cut doors through their garden walls and enjoy a private, gated park. We are uncertain about the other terms and conditions of this arrangement (though we’ve heard rumors about parking, etc.) and as of press time the developer has not seen fit to show us copies of the letters. Clearly, the developer is trying to have this arrangement (with a rather small set of neighbors) act as a proxy for the interests of the greater community. Without intending any disrespect to this small set that would receive largess from the developer, we believe firmly that a tall tower is inconsistent with the nature and fabric of our historic neighborhood. We are emboldened by the hundreds of people who have already signed our petition, and we’ll remain focused on the project.

We intend to continue working to negotiate a good development. In the next couple of weeks or so, we hope to host an open meeting where you can see the developer’s plans, ask questions and provide your opinions. Signing the online petition is a good way to receive notice of the date and time of the meeting, but we’ll also spread the word through SHCA’s Block Coordinators and by posting temporary signs around the neighborhood.

We should also mention that we still very much hope you can donate money to help us with our legal fund. The website [www.NewMarketNow.org](http://www.NewMarketNow.org) allows you to make a contribution online. Every donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar by a generous and anonymous neighborhood donor.

**The Dilworth House (223-25 S. 6th Street):** Nothing too much to report right now. We’re still waiting for the Historical Commission to schedule a final hearing. For those of you who signed up on [www.SaveDilworthNow.org](http://www.SaveDilworthNow.org), we’ll send you status reports as new info becomes available.

— Paul Boni, Chair  
Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee

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We should demand excellence in terms of scale, materials and design.

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## Safe and Sound in Society Hill

### 6th St. Stop Sign – Gone & Now Replaced

A stop sign that was recently installed on S. 6th Street, in front of Independence Place, was stolen not long after it first appeared at that busy and sometimes dangerous intersection. As this issue goes to press, we are happy to report that the stolen sign has just been replaced. However, we urge you to remain very cautious at that intersection, because based on our previous experience, even though the sign was there cars did slow down most of the time, but often they did not actually stop. We ask you to be always especially careful whenever you are crossing there.

### Pedestrians: Cell Phone Caution

Many pedestrians are so absorbed while talking on their cell phones that they're not aware of what's going on around them. Potentially this can be dangerous, so we remind you to remain alert. Preferably, save those calls for when you're not strolling down the street.

### Be aware – Attacks are not always made by men

A white female, about 21-25 years of age, heavy-set, with bright red-orange hair and wearing a black sweat-suit, recently approached a female victim, punched her in the face and took her purse. This incident occurred at 12:30 a.m. at 200 Locust Street.

### The following attacks were inflicted by men – or perhaps the same man each time

Mid-morning at 9th and Pine. Similarly at 9th

and Waverly and 7th and Pine. He wields a screwdriver, accosts people as they exit their apartments, demands entrance and steals whatever he can. No physical injury to the victims, thank goodness! He is described as a black male, about 5'7", medium to stocky build, with round face, short shaved hair, light beard, and wearing a grey shirt, black pants and boots.

### A more serious assault

South 3rd Street about 10:30 at night; the perp approached his victim with a knife, pushed him up against a building, demanded his money and got away with \$125. He is described as a white male, about 5'9", mid-20s, mustache and wearing a grey sweat-suit. Police responded quickly, but he managed to get away.

### Final Report & Warning

700 block of Pine Street. A resident approached his apartment and saw a perp trying to pop the hinges to the door of his apartment. The perp had a screwdriver and could have been the same guy as the one described above. But the warning is this: DO NOT confront him; quickly leave the area and immediately call 911.

### YES we're still accepting old cell phones.

Please drop them off at 414 Spruce Street. We take them to the DA's office, where they are reprogrammed to call only 911, and then given to the elderly and/or the abused. Sorry, we can't give you a receipt, but you can take your contribution as a tax deduction.

### BURGLARY ALERT!

Three houses on Spruce Street were burglarized in the early hours of Sunday morning, April 23rd, about 1 a.m. We urge all residents to be extra vigilant. Before turning in, turn on your security alarm system. If you don't have an alarm system, consider acquiring one. Also be sure to lock all doors and first floor windows day & night.

Caffeine to the Rescue:

## Society Hill Townwatch Thanks Cosi, Java and Starbucks

Society Hill TownWatch is pleased to announce that three coffee houses in our neighborhood are offering free coffee and hot chocolate to our patrollers. We are grateful to Cosi (2nd Street), Java (4th Street) and Starbucks (8th and Walnut Streets) for their generous and energizing offer. This is the type of community-friendly business initiative that makes us proud of our neighbors and proud to live in our wonderful neighborhood.

We also extend our thanks to all of you who answered our call for additional TownWatch volunteers. SHTW now has twenty new faces out on patrol, and the momentum is palpable. Thanks for helping to keep a good thing going!!!

To join Society Hill TownWatch or for additional information, please call 267-251-0749 or send an email to Michael Erdos, SHTW chair, at michael.erdos@phila.gov.



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## Getting To Know Your Community Newsletter

Recently a writer-editor for the *Society Hill Reporter* was enjoying lunch with a neighbor who revealed that she was unfamiliar with several important initiatives and challenges now facing our community. Concerned that perhaps this neighbor was not regularly receiving issues of our newsletter, the editor questioned her further. “Oh,” said the neighbor, “the newsletter appears on my doorstep on a regular basis, but I never read it because there are too many ads in it.” Needless to say, the editor was surprised by this statement and felt obliged to justify the rationale for accepting ads — which, by the way, many residents often claim to be quite useful, as they learn about local schools, organizations, businesses and events that they might not otherwise know about. The editor realized that perhaps her neighbor was not alone in dismissing our community newsletter as an “ad rag.”

Therefore, without much ado, here are some basic facts about the production of this newsletter: First of all, it is written, assembled, edited and proofed completely by volunteers — all of whom are devoted to Society Hill and passionate about keeping all neighbors informed, whether or not

they are SHCA members. The newsletter is consistently produced and delivered to every resident, free of charge, six times a year. Since costs for the designer, printer and delivery service are paid for by advertising fees, the newsletter essentially pays for itself — so that SHCA can spend its funds for other significant purposes.

For the past 17 or so years, when the *Society Hill Reporter* was first created in its current form by Bernice Hamel, our flexible team of volunteers has never failed to produce and deliver a single issue. Its regularity has been a major reason for the growth and success of our civic association, as SHCA’s membership has since grown exponentially. As a result, civic association members have become increasingly engaged with community concerns and activities. In fact, we recently received a letter from a Society Hill Towers resident (since 1975!) who apologized for not becoming an SHCA member until now, but who is so very appreciative of all our myriad efforts that she has signed up at the Federal Friends level. In her note she said: “I find the information in SHCA’s newsletter is always relevant and useful. I read each issue cover-to-cover.”



“I read each issue cover-to-cover.”

### UPDATE

## Some Society Hill Newsletters Still Missing

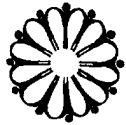
We received a very good response from readers of the previous issue (March/April 2006) when an article about the history of our community newsletter resulted in recovering 60 “missing” issues for our files. Some issues are still missing, however. They include all *Society Hill Resident Newsletters* from 1974 and 1975, March and May of 1978 (prior to the time the newsletter was subsidized by advertising, renamed and reformatted to its current appearance.) More recent missing issues of the *Society Hill Reporter* include: January 1993 and July 1994.

SHCA’s Administrator Matt DeJulio and resident Nancy Frenze now have copies of the 60 recovered issues, and their next objective is to have each issue scanned and permanently saved onto discs, so they can be preserved for the archives of

both our civic association and The Athenaeum. What we need for this project’s completion is the ability to scan these issues and transfer them onto permanent discs.

We are seeking either a willing individual, business or association with a scanner (and some time available) or a company willing to make and contribute the discs as a public service. If you are that willing volunteer or firm, please contact MattDeJulio at: [mattdejulio.com](http://mattdejulio.com) or 215-629-1288; or email Nancy Frenze at: [thenancy@hotmail.com](mailto:thenancy@hotmail.com).

We hope to have a complete file of all Society Hill newsletters that document our community’s rebirth. Please search your files, and if you find any of the itemized missing issues, send them to us — as they describe our community’s recent era, which in the future will belong to history.



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## IMBARC News—Security at Independence National Historic Park

The recent resignation of Secretary of the Interior Gail Norton may change the National Park Services' (NPS) approach to security at the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. This is the hope of Carter Buller, Chairman of the Independence Mall Business and Resident's Coalition (IMBARC), and a long-time member of SHCA. He suggests that "revisiting park security issues with a view to enhancing the visitor and resident experience" would be a very good thing.

Last February the Park Service gave a briefing on its new security plan for the park, and IMBARC released a lengthy statement outlining its objections. The two key security measures under consideration are a fence surrounding Independence Hall and the proposed process for screening visitors to the site. The NPS's proposal calls for a six-foot high, iron fence surrounding Independence Hall. IMBARC has three objections to the fence: fear that it will be permanent, the fact that it cuts the public park in half, and that it "deeply wounds the sacred symbolism of Independence Hall."

The second area of disagreement between IMBARC and the Park Service revolves around the Interior Department's plans to conduct visitor

screening in the historic Supreme Court/Old City Hall building, without any special building reinforcement.

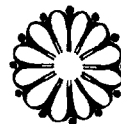
Currently, visitors can view the Supreme Court chamber exactly as it was 216 years ago, in 1790. It's possible to stand behind the waist-high railing, the bar, with an uninterrupted view of the original Courtroom and feel part of the proceedings. While conceding that visitors need to be moved more expeditiously than they are now, IMBARC is distressed by Interior's new plan to erect barriers that block this view and experience. The barrier's purpose is to prevent visitors from lingering and to move them through to Independence Hall as quickly as possible. Visitors to the Courtroom would have to return through a back door. The current experience, that of a colonial spectator, would be completely lost.

Before altering the Supreme Court building, IMBARC is proposing that the Park Service commit to a trial period during which operations will be analyzed, culminating in a study to be published in August; costs of expert analysts will be borne by IMBARC. Additionally, IMBARC is requesting bi-monthly status reports to determine how many people return to visit the Supreme Court after being screened.

### RENDELL VISITS McCALL

McCall Elementary School was selected by Governor Ed Rendell to host his celebration of the 325th Birthday of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Governor Rendell personally chose McCall, recalling it as a favorite from his days as Mayor. William Penn was also in attendance. He discussed the significance of the Commonwealth's Charter and how he acquired it from the King of England as repayment for a paternal debt. Governor Rendell then gave the McCall students an oral quiz on Pennsylvania history and took questions from the audience. The event finale consisted of the students singing "Happy Birthday" in both English and Mandarin Chinese, (which all McCall students study daily), after which Governor Rendell blew out the candles on an enormous cake. A good time was had by all.

**McCall students, bracketed by Principal Carol Domb and Governor Ed Rendell, enjoy the 325th Birthday Celebration for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**



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## SHCA BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2006-2007

All officers of the Society Hill Civic Association are elected for one-year terms, as required by SHCA's by-laws; while each Quadrant Director is elected for a three-year term. Society Hill is divided among four quadrants, and each of these quadrants is well represented by three elected board directors. In addition, every hi-rise or condominium association in Society Hill is represented by an individual SHCA board director, selected by its respective building or condo complex.

### Officers

#### President, Tania Rorke

Tania begins her third and final year as president (based on SHCA's by-laws). She faces several urgent challenges during the upcoming year which our association will focus on, such as: the increase in property taxes; the possibility of two casinos within a mile of our neighborhood; and potential development that could change the historical integrity of our community. In 1997 she and her husband, Tom, moved to their home in Society Hill. They have two daughters. Before having children, Tania was employed by Pennsylvania Hospital, where she managed the out-patient therapy department. She is an occupational therapist who specializes in hand injuries. Among her various volunteer activities, she is involved with St. Peter's School, St. Peter's Church and is President of the Friends of Three Bears Park.

### Vice Presidents

#### Michael Erdos

Michael Erdos and his wife, Diana, live on Delancey Street. They have a son, Charlie, who will turn two in August. Michael received his B.A. from Dickinson College, an MA. from Oxford University, and a J.D. from Yale Law School. He is currently Chief of the Public Nuisance Task Force, a unit that addresses drug houses, nuisance bars, and other quality-of-life issues in the Philadelphia District Attorney's office. In 2003 he helped reinstitute Society Hill TownWatch (SHTW). He is president of this current group of about 50 volunteers who patrol our streets several days and nights weekly. SHTW is allied with our association's "Safe and Sound Society Hill Committee," which Michael co-chairs.

#### Bernice Hamel

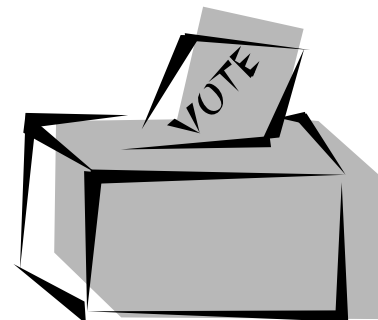
Bernice has always been a community activist. With an M.A. in Creative Writing from Temple University, she wields the "power of her pen" for several worthy causes. As president of the Head House Conservancy, she led the restoration and preservation effort that rescued this iconic National Historical Landmark in our midst. She is also a founder of the *Society Hill Reporter* and a member of SHCA's Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee. For 19 years she and her husband, Bernard, have treasured living in their historic home, built in 1762, which her two sons and three grandchildren love to visit. A current vice-president of the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center, Bernice was awarded a Citation by the Mayor of Philadelphia for promoting education and awareness of the city's history.

#### Carole Le Faivre-Rochester

Carole has lived and worked in the Philadelphia area for over 30 years. She is Editor Emeritus for the American Philosophical Society from which she retired in 2001. She has been an SHCA board director for four years. An active member of the Society Hill Synagogue, she is also on the planning committee for a local interfaith organization. Carole is program chair for the Parents of North American Israelis and was their honoree at this year's Israel Bonds dinner. In addition, she is a board director and volunteer for the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center. Carole has a Masters in Religious History from Temple University, with two years doctoral work in Judaism and Early Christianity. She and husband, Michael, are the proud new grandparents of beautiful baby Leora, who was born last October in Jerusalem.

#### Martha Levine

Martha, a Society Hill resident for 19 years and long-time SHCA board director, initiated the Welcome Basket program and Society Hill's List of Recommended Contractors. She co-chairs the Safe & Sound Committee, and for the past six years has worked with city officials to improve our street lights. As chair of our Franklin Lights Committee, she's worked diligently to secure city and state funds, as well as matching funds from community residents and businesses to purchase and install over 400 newly improved Franklin Lights. She also co-chairs Society Hill's Open House Tour program each spring. With a Master's in education and an MBA in marketing, Martha was formerly a Philadelphia public school teacher. She and her husband, Howard Sedran, an attorney, are the parents of a sixth grader.



#### Treasurer, Colleen Farrell

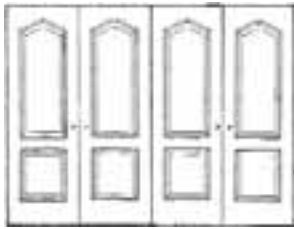
Colleen is a Philadelphia native who grew up in a large Irish Catholic family. She works in compliance for ACE, INA—an international insurance company—specializing in monitoring federal, state, and local legislation. She is also an established real estate sales person affiliated with Summit Real Estate in Center City. With a Master's degree from the Fels School of Government at the University of Pennsylvania, Colleen has been active in several boards and associations — including Women's Way, Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP), the Philadelphia League of Women Voters, the Ronald McDonald House, and the Juvenile Justice Center of Pennsylvania (CASA). Colleen is pleased to be serving as SHCA's Treasurer again, while previously she served as a Northeast Quadrant director.

#### Secretary, Marilyn Appel

Marilyn is involved in many neighborhood activities, too numerous to mention. She has received several awards for community service, including three Governor's awards and the first DA's Urban Genesis award. She was one of our community's first "TownWatchers" and a two-term president. An editor of this newsletter, she also sits on SHCA's Safe and Sound Committee and on boards of several cultural institutions. She is a reviewer for a federal granting agency. Marilyn has an Ed.D and MEd from Temple and a Bachelor of Science degree from Brandeis. She and her husband, Harry, have lived almost 40 years in their Spruce Street home, the site of the original home of Richard Allen, founder of the Mother Bethel AME Church. Their home is now a popular B&B for locals and out-of-towners.

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## SHCA BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2006-2007

### Quadrant Directors

#### Northwest Quadrant

##### **Sissie Lipton (2008; can run for a 2nd three-year term)**

Sissie and her husband, Herb, have lived at Independence Place for 19 years. They raised three wonderful and highly successful children — one of whom, Eric Lipton, is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist with the *New York Times*. Sissie serves on the Wilma Theater board and is a past president of the Friends of Moss Rehabilitation Hospital, where she was co-chair for many exhibits associated with its Artists with Disabilities program. She continues her leadership role in developing a well-functioning committee for Washington Square, which she initiated while serving as SHCA's representative from Independence Place. This is a liaison committee with the National Park Service to maintain the standards and amenities that our neighborhood park deserves.

##### **Rosanne Loesch (2009)**

Rosanne, her husband, Yves Quintin, and their teenage children have been Society Hill residents for the past four years—living in a Federal period home, built in 1792. Until their move to our neighborhood they lived for 14 years in a Washington Square West home, just a few blocks from their current residence. Rosanne first arrived in Philadelphia to attend the University of Pennsylvania Law School. She is fluent in French, having lived in France on several occasions. In addition to her board work for SHCA, she is vice-chair of the Philadelphia Chapter of the French Heritage Society, which is dedicated to preserving French architectural heritage in both the United States and France. Rosanne and her family travel frequently to France, especially Brittany.

##### **Diane Rossheim (2007; can run for a 2nd three-year term)**

Diane is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, having majored in history and political science. She has lived in Society Hill since 1979 — first on Willings Alley and now at the Hopkinson House — with husband, Bob Rossheim. Diane's career includes owning a bookstore and co-authoring a guidebook to Philadelphia. Currently she is a tour guide for several organizations, as she has a keen interest in our city's architecture, history and cultural heritage. Diane is a 26-year member of The Athenaeum, a member of The Library Company, and the Washington Square Citizens' League. She enjoys contributing her experience and expertise as a director on SHCA's board.

#### Northeast Quadrant

##### **Gordon Baltuch, M.D. (2007; can run for a 2nd three-year term)**

Gordon Baltuch and his wife, Vivian — a maxillofacial surgeon at Jefferson Hospital — live in a 200-year-old townhouse with their two small children, Orphee and Axel. A native Montrealer, Gordon was educated at Harvard, Stanford and McGill. As a neurosurgeon at Pennsylvania Hospital, he is the Director of the Center for Functional and Restorative Neurosurgery. In 2003 the Baltuchs moved from Rittenhouse Square to Society Hill. Gordon, who often walks home from work late at night, is a member of SHCA's Safe and Sound Committee. He is also on our association's Franklin Lights Committee because he wants Society Hill to be as safe and family friendly as possible, while also preserving its unique historic and urban character.

##### **Paul Boni, Esq. (2008)**

Paul continues to chair one of our association's most hard-working committees: the Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee. With his exceptional administrative skills and professionalism, Paul leads committee members as they collaborate with city agencies to maintain Society Hill's zoning and preservation laws that are key to keeping our neighborhood pristine. With a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania, acquired in 1990, Paul has his own independent legal practice, located in Old City, where he focuses on environmental and land use law. He lives in a historic "trinity" townhouse at Bell's Court (off Spruce Street). When not working on behalf of his clients and our community, Paul enjoys seeing fine films with his girlfriend.

##### **Matthew White, Esq. (2009)**

Matthew, a Society Hill resident since 1994, lives in a historic home with his wife, Keri, and their two children. Matt, who wants to help our association protect its many assets, has recently focused his efforts on the McCall School. He believes that a dynamic and thriving local public school will help Society Hill attract more families with children, which will enhance the community's stability and growth. He is currently chairing SHCA's Tax Reassessment Committee. A partner in the law office of Wolf, Block, Schorr and Solis-Cohen, Matt specializes in business litigation and dispute resolution. He is a graduate of Harvard and Vanderbilt Law School, and is on the Executive Committee serving as General Counsel for the Jewish Family & Children's Services of Philadelphia.

#### Southeast Quadrant

##### **Carol Colabelli (2008)**

Carol is a native Philadelphian. She and Ralph, her husband of 43 years, moved from the Art Museum area to Society Hill's Blackwell Place in 1997. Carol is owner and partner of Professional Meetings International, a worldwide meeting management company servicing the pharmaceutical industry. She is a member of SHCA's Franklin Lights Committee and also the Membership Committee. Carol and Ralph have traveled extensively throughout Europe and Asia. Their main interests include, of course, their three children and two wonderful grandkids. In their spare time they attend and support our local theater. They are also great readers (particularly of historical books), and they love exploring America's diverse cities, focusing their interests on regional culture and cuisine.

##### **Richard de Wyngaert (2007)**

Richard, his wife, Susan, and their three daughters have been living in and loving Society Hill for over ten years. Having spent many years as an auctioneer and fine arts dealer, Richard now works privately in asset management. In addition, he recently opened our community's favorite new bookstore. Head House Books provides high-quality books for adults and children of all ages, in a handsome and cozy setting at 619 South 2nd Street. It offers story hours for pre-schoolers, after-school programs for older kids, and is a venue for showcasing the work of local poets and authors. Richard, a graduate of Georgetown University, is active in many community institutions and serves on a number of boards. He is very committed to Society Hill and to addressing the myriad issues that concern residents.

##### **Sandra Rothman (2009)**

Sandy moved to Society Hill from Chester County six years ago and is still captivated by our neighborhood's beauty and history. For many years she earned her living by leading book discussion groups and also conducting tours to France — specifically to that country's prehistoric caves. A former teacher, Sandy has recently returned to her original profession. She is now teaching English as a Second Language in the Philadelphia school system to elementary students who are recent immigrants from several countries. She has been a co-editor of the *Society Hill Reporter* for the past four years and currently assists the team as a proofreader. She lives at Penn's Landing Square with her son, Alexander, now a junior at Harvard, and her Bichon pup, Coco.

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## SHCA BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2006-2007

### Quadrant Directors

#### Southwest Quadrant Anine Burlingham (2009)

In 2002 Anine and her husband, Mark, fulfilled a dream of living in Center City Philadelphia. Having lived in Lancaster, PA since 1983, they raised four children and became empty-nesters. Anine has served on the boards of the Lancaster Symphony, Lancaster Art Alliance, Lancaster Medical Auxiliary, and a private community association. She continues to donate her services for other community endeavors. Previously a frequent visitor to Philadelphia, she now feels privileged to enjoy it on a daily basis and help to improve our neighborhood. Anine is an accomplished cellist, avid horticulturist, and huge Sixers fan. She and Mark maintain a residence in Lancaster so he can continue his practice as Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Lancaster General Hospital, but they relish their weekends together in Philadelphia.

#### David Harwitz (2007) can run for a 2nd three-year term

David is a homegrown product of the neighborhood, having graduated from McCall School, Central High, the University of Pennsylvania and the Hahnemann University School of Medicine. Following completion of a residency in New York City, he returned to Society Hill. He and his wife, Marcia — an advertising executive with Dorland Global Health Communications — were married, circa 1993, and purchased a charming and demanding house on Lawrence Court, circa 1792. David practices child, adolescent and adult psychiatry in Camden, New Jersey. He serves as medical director of an intensive children's behavioral health program. In their free time, David and Marcia are availing themselves of the culture, cuisine and community that Philadelphia has to offer.

#### Wallace Wing (2008) can run for a 2nd three-year term

Wally, a graduate of Bowdoin College in his home state of Maine, served two years as a second lieutenant in the Army Finance Corps. He worked for 37 years for the General Electric Company, primarily in international taxation in New York City. There he met his wife, Sherry Shamansky. They relocated from Seattle to Philadelphia eight years ago. Now retired, both are active members of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the Philadelphia Sports Club, and Friends of Independence Park. They are both poll workers. Their home has been featured on Society Hill's annual Open House tour for which they regularly serve as hosts. Wally has been a Twilight Tour guide at Independence Park and is currently a community Block Coordinator and chair of SHCA's Anti-Graffiti and Clean-Up Day Committees.

### Directors Representing Condo & Hi-Rise Associations

#### St. James Court Andrea Layden

For the past two years Andrea Layden has been a team member of the *Society Hill Reporter*. She now specializes in being the contact person for press releases from throughout the community. She and her husband, Dan, are the proud parents of daughter, Lucia, (whom they named after singer Luciano Pavarotti) and son, Ciampone (a family name traced back to the 1700s) although for short they just call him "Champ." Andrea, a graduate of Widener University, spent ten years as an insurance adjuster with State Farm Insurance Company. She currently is president of the MOMS Club of Philadelphia — Center City (a nonprofit group for stay-at-home moms). A second-generation Italian-American, she and Dan were married in Florence, Italy.

#### Penn's Landing Square Ray Swerdlow

Ray and his wife, Nancy, have lived in Society Hill for over eight years and feel it is a great place to raise their two young children. Ray currently chairs SHCA's Gaming Committee. He is also our liaison for new liquor license applications and related issues. He is the owner of a retail beer store that has been honored with the "Best of Philly" (best place to buy a six-pack) and several other honors by media scribes. Representing Philadelphia for the Pennsylvania Tavern Association, he works with local and state-wide government bodies and agencies regarding issues faced by liquor licensees. He has recently become involved with Pennsylvanians Against Underage Drinking. The Swerdlows are active parents at the McCall School.

#### Independence Place Janice Bushman

Janice and her husband, Meyer, an attorney, have been Society Hill residents for about twenty years — first at Blackwell Court, and for the past decade at Independence Place. A retired teacher in the Philadelphia school system, Janice served as a representative in contract negotiations and grievances for the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. Currently she is a member of SHCA's Tax Reassessment Committee. An ardent (but admittedly mediocre) bridge player, she is taking history courses at the University of Pennsylvania (a favorite subject), while she also volunteers a day a week at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Janice and Meyer love to travel, and their four grown children have made them the proud grandparents of seven nearly perfect grandkids.

#### Hopkinson House Steven A. Weixler

Steve is a long-term resident of Society Hill. As principal in the Society Hill-based interior design firm Weixler, Peterson and Luzi, Steve's work has appeared in *Architectural Digest*, *Florida Design*, and *Philadelphia Style*. He has won numerous awards, and his own condominium at Hopkinson House appeared on HGTV's program "Interiors By Design" — featured as an example of stylish city living. Steve's concern about the preservation of Society Hill's historic architecture is one reason he has been such a dedicated and hard-working member of our civic association's Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee, appearing often at City Hall hearings and representing our community's best interests. He is next in line to lead that busy committee as its chair.

#### Society Hill Towers Bonnie Halda

Bonnie has been a resident of Society Hill since 1990 when she moved to the Society Hill Towers. Professionally she has over 25 years experience as a historical architect, and she holds a management position with the Northeast Region of the National Park Service. She and her husband, Richard Lush, are both very active members of our civic association's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee. Bonnie was also a member of the charrette planning team for Foglietta Plaza, and she has participated in public meetings to discuss the future of Penn's Landing. She hopes to continue serving as SHCA's representative regarding the most appropriate development for Penn's Landing. Previously Bonnie served our civic association as a vice president.

#### The St. James Norman Lieberman

Norm, a retired teacher and athletic coach for the Philadelphia school system, has lived in our area for over thirty years. He continues to officiate at track, swimming, and cross-country events, and is Chief Coordinator for officials at the Penn Relays. A national licensed race car driver with the Sports Car Club of America, he is the first director on SHCA's board selected to represent the recently built and occupied hi-rise building — the St. James — located at the corner of 8th and Walnut Streets. Norm and his wife, Sylvia, have been married for 36 years, and together they have a very strong interest in maintaining — and when possible, improving — the quality of life enjoyed by Society Hill residents.



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# Membership Drive Continues

SHCA members continued to renew for 2006 at a faster clip than in 2005, and have been far more generous than in previous years. By the end of March, 956 renewals and new members were registered vs. 919 at the same time last year. The total membership for January-December 2005 was 1,031; therefore our goal of 1,050 members by the end of 2006 seems within reasonable reach.

SHCA heartily welcomes 75 new members; but for the 137 members who haven't yet renewed for 2006, we ask that you do so today. Currently, dues and extra contributions stand at \$68,245 — a 37% increase over last year's total of \$49,810.

New members at the "Federal Friends" level who recently renewed or joined SHCA but were not listed in the last issue of the *Reporter* are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Ann Marie Baldonado<br>& Rick Swedloff | Zoraida Fiol-Silva, M.D.,<br>& Joseph L. Spaar, M.D. |
| Terri Anne Benedetto                   | Harvey & Babette Snyder                              |
| Kenneth & Elsie Cundy                  | Carla B. Sparkler (new)                              |
| Larry Meehan & Susan Tomita            | Nora & Seth Tillman (new)                            |

Those who donated at the same or higher level as "Federal Friends" but earmarked their dollars for specific community projects, such as graffiti removal or street trees, and who were not listed in the previous issue of the *Reporter* are:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Carole Abercauph                  | Arthur & Barbara Oldenhoff                |
| David & Suzanne Auten             | Doug & Tina Pappajohn                     |
| George & Penny Batcheler          | Carol Pate                                |
| Jack & Helen Bershadt             | Joseph T. Piscetello<br>& Marissa Perrone |
| Jane Biberman                     | Judy Pote                                 |
| Cherry & Hans Bombeck             | Richard Prange                            |
| Garrett Brown & Ellen Shire       | Mark Raymond<br>& Brian Wengenroth        |
| Janet Burnham                     | Donald H. Roberts, Jr.                    |
| Robert & Doris Calman             | Rita Roy                                  |
| Chris & Ann Clark                 | Marvin & Ruth Sachs                       |
| Jim & Janet Cook                  | Harvey Schwartz & Jan Felman              |
| Elisabeth Doolan                  | Luigi & Anna Sena                         |
| Mary & Dick Doran                 | S. Bernard & Irene Shuman                 |
| Harvey W. Grossman                | Robert & Joan Speck, Jr.                  |
| Janice & Jim Hayes                | Dave & Dorothy Stevens                    |
| Peter & Peggy Hynes               | Ray & Nancy Swerdlow                      |
| Lisa Karlin & Paula Cherner       | Anita Toby Lager                          |
| Laura Lane & David DeVoe          | David & Lisa U'Prichard                   |
| Anthony Latess<br>& Mark Stephens | Gilbert & Cynthia White                   |
| Lorna & John Lawson               | Ann & Douglas Wilkerson                   |
| Vicki Lupica & Mark Page          | Linda Witt & James Marsh                  |
| Roger Moss & Gail Winkler         | George Zolot & Rafi Levin                 |
| Christine Mumm                    |   |

## SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

### Membership Application/Renewal Form



Renewal     New

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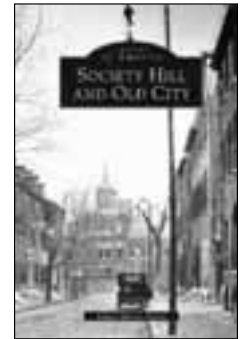
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- \$300 Benjamin Franklin Benefactor\*\*
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- \$60 Business with fewer than 5 employees
- \$ 100 Businesses/Institutions with 5 or more employees

#### Additional contribution for

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Beautification of Washington Square | <input type="radio"/> McCall School     |
| <input type="radio"/> Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal  | <input type="radio"/> Street Trees      |
| <input type="radio"/> Town Watch/Safe and Sound           | <input type="radio"/> Franklin Lighting |
| <input type="radio"/> Zoning/Historic Preservation        |   |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Society Hill Reporter</i>        | \$ _____                                |

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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# Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

“It’s a dream come true!” exhorts Staci Schwartz, M.D., a 10-year Society Hill resident and recently published children’s book author and illustrator. “I have been writing and illustrating all my life — it is a repressed passion of mine — and to see my work in bookstores literally brings tears to my eyes.”

## ***The New Bear on the Block***

(ComteqPublishing.com) is a colorfully illustrated, delightful book about a bear who moves into a new community and, unbeknownst to him, offends his neighbors. The neighbors form opinions about the bear before they even meet him, based on his unwitting conduct. When the misunderstanding is unraveled, all the characters realize the hazards of prejudging people and they start over. This, like all of Schwartz’s books, is done in whimsical, lyrical rhyme, which keeps the tone light and playful while gently instilling an important life lesson in a non-preachy, unthreatening way.

Addressing tolerance as a theme in a children’s book came to Staci shortly after becoming a parent. She realized that this was one of the most important lessons she could teach her daughter, and set out to create a vehicle toward that end. Similarly, she has written books about bullying, friendship, parental separation, responsibility, and independence, all of which are accessible, warm, humorous and lots of fun. Now a published author, she hopes to bring the remaining titles into circulation soon.

In working toward publication, Staci bucked many industry standards. She was repeatedly told that rhyming books don’t sell, and that picture books beyond a certain length will never be published. She felt that a bedtime story needed to be long enough to accomplish its mission. Additionally, writing in rhyme “just felt right” for her, and in her experience, children respond well to rhyme — even pre-readers begin to predict the words, remember the lines, and find the cadence soothing. Staci confesses to using rhyming mnemonics in medical school to help her remember terminology, so she may not be entirely objective, but I can say that in these books the rhyme definitely works. She was also advised to “dumb down” her language, but she felt strongly that children should be exposed to new vocabulary. She envisioned a teachable moment when parent and child use the dictionary to learn about a new word, and followed her instincts.

Staci has done numerous readings of *Bear* at area schools and has created an adorable audience participation component. Initially, she recruited her daughter and husband to act out the roles of the characters in the story; now classroom productions involve assigning those roles to children in the audience (to the delight of all concerned). The props are fabulous — stuffed animals, costumes, a squashable cake, a yellow taxi, a moving truck, an oversized party invitation—these props are campy, cute, and sometimes downright hilarious.

Neighbors can witness the reading and dramatic performance of *The New Bear on the Block* at Head House Books, our new community bookstore — located at 619 South 2nd Street — on Sunday, June 4th, from 1 to 3 p.m. Copies of the book are currently on sale there. Staci has been overwhelmed by the support from our neighborhood bookstore and repeatedly emphasized how fortunate we are to have such a wonderful resource in our midst.

In addition to Staci’s reading, Head House has recently launched several kid-oriented programs. Under the auspices of ASAP (“After School Activities Partnerships”), a program formed in conjunction with the Philadelphia School District, Head House Books will host Chess Club on Thursday afternoons at 4 p.m. for kids aged 7-12. Arts and Crafts with Amanda will continue on the second Thursday of every month from 4 to 5 p.m. for preschool kids and up. And on Sundays, from 2 to 3 p.m., an hour of art history and art creation will take place for 6-12 year olds. This program offers children the opportunity to learn about a specific artist’s work, and then create a drawing in that style. If you haven’t yet visited Head House Books, I recommend that you do.

## Kid’s Quote

“Pink is so last year. Orange is the new color.”

Jessica, age 8  
Society Hill Kid




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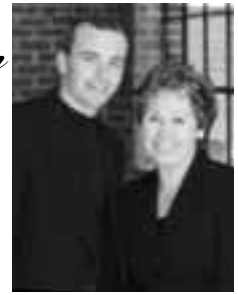
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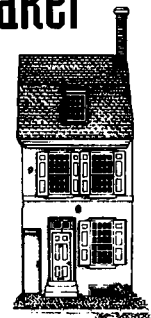


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**SENIOR SCENE**


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A COLUMN BY JEAN BRYAN

## Head Over To the Bookstore!

Last issue's *Reporter* had several references to our new neighborhood bookstore, Head House Books at 619 S. 2nd Street, just off South Street. Curious, I wandered in. What a treat! The store is a little jewel, so very attractive and, best of all, warmly welcoming. Richard de Wyngaert, the owner and a board director of SHCA, wants to make Head House Books a destination for neighbors of all ages. The store sells books, yes, of course — but Richard is striving to enrich us in many other ways. He's busy scheduling events for the young and not-so-young.

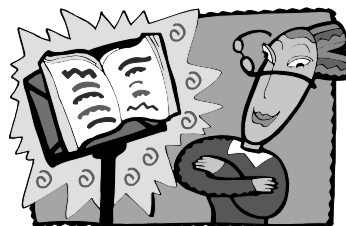
Some recent offerings will give you a feel for the enthusiasm and breadth of the bookstore: Ken Bingham presented Creative Cavalcade, a literary event with "poetry, prose, plays, parody, politics and puns." Author and history teacher, Timothy Kenslea, discussed his book, *The Sedgewicks in Love: Courtship, Engagement and Marriage in the Early Republic*.

For May and June, there are several events: Those of you who enjoyed reading (or seeing the movie) *In Her Shoes*, by former *Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist, Jennifer Weiner, will be delighted to know that Ms. Weiner will be visiting the store on Friday, May 12, to discuss and sign her new book *Goodnight Nobody: A Novel*.

Looking for new things to do with your pet? Authors Christine McLaughlin (*The Dog Lover's Companion to Philadelphia*) and Carol Armen (*Philly Dogs Have More Fun – The Best Places to Go and Things to Do with Your Dog in the Greater Philadelphia Area*) will be in the bookstore on Saturday, May 13th, from 12 – 3 p.m. Animal experts and veterinarians will be on hand to answer questions and share tips.

Friday, June 2nd, at 7 p.m., come meet Carrie Rickie, the *Inquirer's* film reviewer (and our neighbor), who will be signing copies of her latest book. Film buffs and anyone interested in "talking movies," please join in the dialog and partake of popcorn, wine and cheese.

Richard has talked about starting a book club for seniors and a senior game night — both of which could meet at the store. Wouldn't it be fun to have either or both of these activities, maybe followed by a meal at one of the plethora of eateries in our area? Interested? Please contact me, and if there's interest we'll work out the details.



Now, here's something you can do: Chess teachers are needed for middle school students. Could you give some time and share your expertise? Richard, in conjunction with After School Activities Partnerships, has volunteered to host students at Head House Books as they learn to play chess. Research shows that young people who play chess improve their concentration and ability to think strategically in a competitive atmosphere. If you have a bit of spare time, please contact the bookstore at 215-923-9525 or [RAdeWyngaert@HeadHouseBooks.com](mailto:RAdeWyngaert@HeadHouseBooks.com). Three cheers for this addition to Society Hill!

**TARP Update:** The Temple Association for Retired Persons, at 1515 Market Street, offers a summer session beginning May 30th and ending August 3. Cost is \$50 plus a \$10 activity fee. TARP also offers a Wednesday book discussion and film series on four Tuesdays — June 6, June 20, July 18, and August 8. Or try TARP's FREE summer sampler of courses — an opportunity to sample full-term classes to whet your appetite for the fall session. Call 215-204-1505 or email [tucctarp@temple.edu](mailto:tucctarp@temple.edu) for a brochure.

**Don't Forget:** The Walkie-Talkies continue to exercise body, mind and spirit — plus exploration of city blocks west, north and south — when they walk every Tuesday & Thursday morning if it doesn't rain. Just show up at Three Bears Park promptly at 8:10 a.m. and give it a try. You'll be home by 9:45 a.m. No reservations required, but contact Pamela Todd for more information at [pamelastodd@comcast.net](mailto:pamelastodd@comcast.net).

If you'd like to be included on the Senior Scene's list for occasional special activities between issues of this newsletter, please contact Jean Bryan at [jeanbryan@gmail.com](mailto:jeanbryan@gmail.com) or 215-925-6416.

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### *A Parting Thought:*

Old age is like climbing a mountain. You climb from ledge to ledge.  
The higher you get, the more tired and breathless you become,  
but your views become more extensive.

**Ingrid Bergman, Swedish actress**

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**Just Listed!** **338 South 3rd Street**

Fabulous traditional home located on Third Street off of Delancey St. 2 bedrooms plus den with French doors leading out to private deck. 2 full bathrooms, 1 w. Jacuzzi bath. Updated cook's kitchen with skylight, hardwood floors throughout, exposed brick & working fireplace.

<p><b>5                  Saint                  James</b></p>	<p><b>Listed and                  SOLD!</b></p>	<p><b>Antonio doesn't                  just list homes                  He actually                  sells them too!</b></p>	<p><b>316                  Willings                  Alley</b></p>	<p><b>Listed and                  SOLD!</b></p>
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**See Antonio promoting Society Hill  
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## Chutzpa! Do You Have It?

Lovers of language often employ “the joys” of such Yiddish words as *chutzpa\** — because there are no English equivalents to its precise nuances of meaning. More and more such Yiddish words are being incorporated into the everyday conversations of Americans — Jewish or otherwise — although in modern times the language is spoken by fewer and fewer people. Recently, however, an interest in learning to speak the language has surged and classes are being offered in surprising places — so that this colorful, colloquial language will not be lost forever.

Hoo-ha! You, too, can have fun learning to speak Yiddish! Classes at all levels — beginning, intermediate, and advanced — are being offered by Gratz College and will be held at the Gershman Y, at Broad and Pine Streets, beginning on June 8th, for the 8-week session costing \$120. Rita Ratson, a teacher from Gratz, will be your instructor at the Y. So don't *potchkee\*\** around, phone her at 215-635-7300, ext. 177 (email: [rratson@gratz.edu](mailto:rratson@gratz.edu)) and she will return your inquiry promptly, giving you the day and time of the class that's appropriate for you.

...So enjoy already!

### \* TRANSLATIONS

*\*chutzpa:*  
incredible nerve or guts; a combination of presumption and arrogance that no other word in any other language can capture. This commonly employed word can be a positive or a negative, depending on the circumstance

*\*\*potchkee:*  
to dawdle or waste time by fussing around inefficiently

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**220 Locust Street #16EEG** 51,299,900  
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 completely renovated with 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2100 SF of living  
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 to ceiling windows with magnificent views!

**Virtual Tour #4624981**  
**Independence Place #2401** 5975,000  
 Fabulous Penthouse condo on Washington Square with 1st ranking  
 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# 4602055**

**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 roofdeck and pool!  
**Virtual Tour# 4650350**

**1335-37 Pine #201** 5725,000  
 Gorgeous 2 bedroom, 2 bath custom built condo unit with gourmet  
 kitchen, central air, impeccable details throughout plus 1 year paid  
 parking and 7 years left on Tax Abatement! **Virtual Tour#4637060**

**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**

**1335-37 Pine #202** 5659,900  
 Fabulous 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo unit with beautiful wood floors,  
 central air, private deck, 2 car parking, plus Tax Abatement!  
**Virtual Tour#4694923**

**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! **Virtual Tour#4607767**

**938 South Street** 5289,900  
 Fabulous 2 bedroom, 2 bath home with hardwood floors  
 throughout, central air, and newer roof in great location!  
**Virtual Tour#4670550**

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# Free Movies Under the Head House Shambles Make It A Film Night – (BYOC)\*

**EVERY WEDNESDAY, FROM JUNE 14 TO SEPTEMBER 20**

A free weekly series of films will be offered every Wednesday night under the Head House Shambles, at South 2nd Street, between Pine and Lombard Streets. The first feature film to be screened will be “Star Wars I” on June 14th, and the entire Wednesday night series continues throughout the summer until September 30th, when “Rocky I” will be shown celebrating its 30th anniversary.

The 2006 “Make It A Film Night” series is being presented by the South Street Headhouse District, which is partnering with Fortress Communications. Fortress will set up and tear down the equipment and run the films. All you filmgoers have to do is bring your own chair\*—and perhaps a bag of popcorn. The rest is pure fun and a chance to enjoy many classic films. You can show up at the Shambles for promotions and giveaways beginning at 7 p.m., but each movie is promptly screened at 8 p.m.

**Below are the dates and names of each film. Screening begins at 8 p.m.**

- June 14: Star Wars I
- June 21: Pink Panther (the original)
- June 28: Fantasia
- Judy 5; Monty Python Holy Grail
- July 12: The Sixth Sense
- July 19: Butch Cassidy & The Sundance Kid
- July 26: Willie Wonka & the Chocolate Factory
- August 2: The Rocky Horror Picture Show
- August 9: The Sting
- August 16: Raiders of the Lost Ark
- August 23: Bambi
- August 30: Cheech & Chong
- September 6: Grease
- September 13: Philadelphia
- September 20: Rocky I (30th anniversary)

**\* BYOC = BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR!!**



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## NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

## Jack and Helaine Greenberg

---

*Pioneers!*  
*O Pioneers!*

---

**M**y dictionary defines pioneer as *'one of the first to settle in a territory'* and also as *'a person who opens up a new line of thought... or technical development.'*

By those definitions Jack and Helaine Greenberg qualify hugely. When they first ventured from the suburbs into Society Hill almost 40 years ago, their former neighbors were frightened to visit them in what they evidently thought was some kind of Baghdad on the Delaware. Indeed, Jack says that when the couple first moved here, they lived opposite a slum in whose backyard marijuana was cultivated ... and there were no movie theaters or grocery stores. And certainly no restaurants.

Helaine is a sociologist with a Ph.D from the University of Pennsylvania. She specialized in cognitive therapy and in treatment of children with post-traumatic stress. Jack is a neurologist who acquired his MD at the University of Pittsburgh. More importantly, they both have what they call BTE degrees — Been To England — having spent a year in Yorkshire, where Jack was registrar at the Leeds General Infirmary. The couple also spent two years in Japan where Jack was chief of neurology at the Army Hospital in Tokyo.

Back home in Philadelphia at the I.M. Pei house they bought in 1970, they raised two children: Betsy, now a teacher-turned-homemaker; and Jeff, who has followed his father into neurology. Jack brought the first CT Scanner into Pennsylvania and later opened his own neuro-imaging center — thereby fulfilling the second definition of pioneer. Today, he's semi-retired but serves as a clinical professor of medicine at Drexel University College of Medicine, and travels the country teaching fellow neurologists how to read and interpret CT scans.

Helaine is also part of that second definition — opening up new lines of thought by producing original work on children who survive house fires, writing a book about her father's family in Lithuania in the 1930s, and drumming up interest and ticket sales for the Curtis Institute of Music where she's a committee member.

The pair list an exhaustive array of extracurricular activities that include grandparenting, travel — most recently to Australia and New Zealand, photography, tennis, movies, walking group, book group, the gym at 5th and Locust, courses in history at Penn ... and membership in the Foreign Policy Research Institute, the Middle East Forum, and, of course, the Society Hill Civic Association where Jack once served as a board director. They both believe that the association has done impressive work in fighting for the safety and beautification of the neighborhood. Their greatest love, though, is music: the Philadelphia Orchestra and the opera, both here and at the Metropolitan in New York. Of Society Hill and the enormous changes they've seen in almost four decades here, they wax appropriately lyrical.

Walt Whitman wrote:

*"Have the elder races halted?  
Do they droop and end their lesson wearied,  
Over there beyond the seas?  
We take up the task eternal, and the burden,  
and the lesson,  
Pioneers! O Pioneers!"*

Jack and Helaine have surely been more than up to the task.




---

David Woods can be reached at  
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**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

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

**Society Hill Open House Tour**  
1 – 5 p.m.  
215-928-1188

Monday, May 8

**FDR's First 100 Days with Newsweek's Jonathan Alter**  
National Constitution Center,  
6:30 p.m.  
Reservations Required: 215-409-6700  
www.constitutioncenter.org

Monday, May 8

**St. Peter's School Spring Plant Sale**  
Flowers, Hanging baskets, gifts, etc.  
319 Lombard Street.  
8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday, May 14

**Mothers' Day Brunch**  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
National Constitution Center  
Reservations Required: 215-409-6700  
www.constitutioncenter.org

Wednesday, May 17

**SHCA Meetings**  
Pennsylvania Hospital  
8th & Spruce Streets, 1st Floor  
Board of Directors Meeting: 6 p.m.  
General Membership Meeting: 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 23

**Society Hill's Spring Fling**  
Free to SHCA members  
Hosted by Positano Coast  
212 Walnut St.; 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
See page 5 to reserve

Wednesday, May 31

**Pulitzer Prize Winning Historian Gordon Wood Looks at Revolutionary Characters**  
6:30 p.m. National Constitution Center  
Reservations Required: 215-409-6700  
www.constitutioncenter.org

Sunday, June 4

**Philadelphia Open House Garden Tour**  
1 – 5 p.m. Admission: \$30  
Reservations suggested: 215-861-4971  
See page 3

Sunday, June 4

**Reading of The New Bear on the Block at Head House Books**  
1 – 3 p.m.  
See page 27 for details

Wednesday, June 7

**Powel House Garden Party**  
5:30 – 8:30 \$50  
Call Landmarks 215-925-2251

Wednesday, June 21

**SHCA Membership Meeting**  
7:00 p.m.  
Location to be announced

Wednesday nights, beginning June 14

**Make it A Film Night**  
Series of free movies under the Shambles  
See page 33


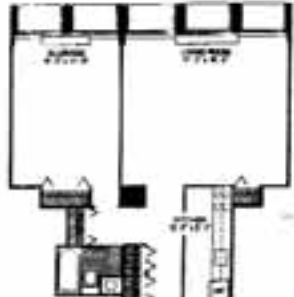

For additional spring & summer activities see Kids' Beat on page 27 and Senior Scene on page 29



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