



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.org

Casinos Threaten Quality of Life Along The Waterfront

COMMUNITY ALERT

City Council Hearing Focuses on Casinos

Wednesday,
September 26
8 a.m.

Council Chamber
Room 400
City Hall

Your Attendance
Encouraged

Much has happened and continues to happen since our last update regarding casinos in the July/August newsletter. As we've previously reported: it was December, 2006 when the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) approved gambling licenses for two casinos in the City of Philadelphia. These would be located on Delaware Avenue and merely a couple of miles distance from each other along the waterfront: Foxwoods, just north of the Home Depot shopping complex, where serious traffic problems already exist; and SugarHouse, on the border of Northern Liberties and Fishtown — less than 200 feet from a residential neighborhood. The two casinos combined will generate at least 60,000 cars per day.

Society Hill and several other thriving and reviving residential neighborhoods would be directly affected by these casinos just north and south of us. Community resistance initially focused on the objective to keep casinos at least 1,500 feet away from residential neighborhoods, which would force casino owners to select more suitable alternate locations — such as the Navy Yard, the sports stadium area or the airport area.

To that effect, there was an attempt to place a voter referendum question in last spring's primary election to authorize the 1,500 foot buffer zone desired by many Philadelphians and community groups including Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA). However, that initiative was knocked off the ballot by the State Supreme Court.

Currently, civic groups continue to persuade legislators in Harrisburg to write the 1,500 foot buffer zone into the gambling law. These efforts continue in earnest. In fact, State Representative Babette Josephs, of the Rittenhouse Square area, has introduced a bill into the House of Representatives supporting this objective and obtaining co-sponsorship by many other state legislators. Numerous members of various communities and coalitions, including ours, testified at the hearing in support of this legislation (House Bill 1477). The hearing took place on September 11th, at press time, so we cannot report on its results herewith. To learn the results of that hearing, or any other related news or updates, SHCA can send you email alerts. If you are uncertain as to whether or not you are included on our association's email list, please contact SHCA administrator Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com.

As the casinos and their political allies continue to disregard public concern, and as Foxwoods, for example, obtains more and more approvals for its ill-conceived location, anti-casino advocates have become more aggressive and determined. Anti-casino coalitions are no longer committed to prohibiting casinos within 1,500 feet of any home, school, or place of worship. Instead, their intention is to prevent any slots parlors from operating *anywhere* in the City of Philadelphia.

There are a number of strategies in play. To construct their massive slots parlors, both casinos may need to purchase or lease State lands along the riverfront (so called riparian rights). State Representative Michael O'Brien

WED.

September

19

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings Wednesday, September 19, 2007

St. Peter's Church
3rd & Pine Streets

- 6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting**
All SHCA members are welcome.
- 7:00 p.m. Meet & Greet Session**
- 7:30 p.m. Presentation by the Delaware River
Neighborhood Alliance**
All Society Hill residents are invited to attend.

continued on page 7

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September/October 2007
Society Hill Reporter

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Submission Deadlines

November/December issue
Advertising: October 1
Editorial: October 5

Website

www.societyhillcivic.org

Submissions

We want to hear from you. Our goal is to print news of interest to Society Hillers — happenings in and around our community for residents, business people and professionals. Direct your editorial submissions and/or queries to Bernice Hamel via fax at 215-925-0877 or email bernicehamel@comcast.net. To publicize an event, submit all press releases directly to Sandy Rothman. (See contact information above.)

Materials must be submitted in writing — via mail, email, or fax — and must include the name of a contact person. Edited submissions will be considered for publication if the subject matter is community-related and if space allows. Otherwise, upcoming events of interest may be listed in the Community Calendar. Letters to the Editors will be considered for publication — but only if signed and the writer provides contact information.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

RICHARD DE WYNGAERT

Safeguarding Our Community

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult.

— Lucius Annaeus Seneca

The meandering days of summer grant to many of us permission to suspend or alter, however briefly, our incumbent responsibilities and daily rituals. I hope that whatever change in routine your summer brought you has provided new opportunities for personal renewal and fresh perspective.

And then September arrives: time to assess where we are and where we want to go. Welcome back. I hope everyone had a great summer!

One group that worked diligently, and representatively, throughout the course of the entire summer is the Delaware River Neighborhood Alliance (DRNA). The SHCA's continued membership in DRNA is very significant. Although still young, DRNA is an alliance of 24 civic associations reaching north and west as far as Chestnut Hill. It represents over 250,000 people and is a powerful voice in Philadelphia.

DRNA wants to influence the casino issue because it believes communities deserve a voice in development decisions by which they are profoundly affected. DRNA supports development that both protects communities and positions Philadelphia to thrive in the 21st century.

Our civic association's Board supports DRNA's expressed position — encouraging development that builds upon Philadelphia's existing social and economic strengths without jeopardizing its future growth. The Board of SHCA is committed to healthy development and safeguarding our community.

Over the summer, in addition to maintaining its weekly meetings, DRNA conducted trips to Harrisburg, met with Democratic mayoral candidate Michael Nutter once, State Senator Fumo twice, and Governor Rendell once. Going forward, many more meetings are likely. However, in August, during a three-hour meeting attended by both Governor Rendell and Senator Fumo, something very important happened. In response to the concerns DRNA voiced

regarding chosen sites and expected negative casino impacts on communities, the Governor challenged the organization to identify alternate sites. A list has been compiled.

This has been a period of intense civic engagement, a hopeful sign for Society Hill and Philadelphia. Many members of our community have attended City Council hearings, listened to informative and compelling testimony, worked at the state level, participated in the citywide petition, voted and volunteered for "Philly Ballot Box" on election day, attended citizen forums and participated in the waterfront development planning process through "Plan Philly." With ongoing rapid developments at multiple levels, our challenges are to keep our membership informed and positioned to have its voices heard. As I said in my previous message, the only thing that is certain is that in the end, the result will be a reflection of the degree to which each of us has become informed, participated in the process, and made our voices heard.

In dialogue there is possibility...my hope is that DRNA, as a coalition, will continue to work and benefit all civic associations throughout Philadelphia — long after the "casino issues" are resolved.

As you probably know, SHCA continues to monitor and influence several other challenges that can affect the quality of our lives. These challenges are identified and reviewed regularly in this, our community newsletter. If you have a specific concern, please contact us and bring it to our attention — as we aim to represent all residents of Society Hill, whether or not you are a member. However, if you are not a current member, please consider joining our pro-active organization. With your input, your help and your contribution, we can continue to address your concerns.

I look forward to your attendance and participation at SHCA's forthcoming general membership meeting — to be held on Wednesday, September 19th at St. Peter's Church. At that session, the DRNA will make a presentation to bring us fully up-to-date on where we stand regarding the struggle to create a realistic buffer zone between casinos and thriving residential neighborhoods such as our own. (Please see page 1 for details about this important meeting.)



**Richard De Wyngaert,
President**

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New Year 5768

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Noteworthy Neighbors:
Staci & Marc Schwartz

FUN! FUN! FUN!

Head House Restoration Project Continues

Major
Fund-raising
Event
Planned for
Spring 2008

The Society Hill Civic Association in partnership with the Head House Conservancy, the South Street Headhouse District and Queen Village Neighbors Association are planning a fun and *fund-raising* event to be held this coming spring. The Conservancy, our community's grassroots, nonprofit organization, successfully restored Head House in the early 1990's. But all buildings — new or old — require regular maintenance and improvements. There's now a list of much-needed upgrades and improvements to assure that Head House will continue to thrive for many more years.

Built in 1805, this National Historical Landmark is believed to be America's oldest surviving fire house building, which served three local volunteer fire companies. Head House is attached to the country's oldest known colonnaded market sheds, "the Shambles," which was constructed beginning in 1745. Until the 1950's these market sheds extended south and terminated at South Street, but today they end at Lombard Street.

To help maintain this historical site in our midst, our partnership of two civic associations, together with the South Street Headhouse Business District and the Head House Conservancy, is planning a major community-wide and collaborative fundraising effort. This on-site event, offering fine food, music, dancing and great neighbors having lots of fun will be scheduled for spring 2008. (Specific date to be announced.)

Since the Business District will be donating food and services, all proceeds from this fund-raiser will be dedicated specifically for the ongoing upkeep of this unique landmark structure. Now that Head House and the Shambles have reclaimed their past glory, let's keep it that way. Interested in helping us? For more information, please contact either Tania Rorke at 215-370-6485 or trorke@aol.com; Dave Hammond, the District's executive director, at 215-413-3713 or Daveatsshd@aol.com; or Bernice Hamel, Head House Conservancy's president, at 215-925-4363 or bernicehamel@comcast.net. Meanwhile, see you at the Shambles on market days...

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Thanksgiving

America's oldest open-air marketplace in use since Colonial times has been enjoying new life this summer, as it has become the most popular farm market anywhere in the region! These colonnaded market sheds, known as "the Shambles," have been "reincarnated" to their original purpose — offering on Sundays a wide variety of farm-fresh products directly from growers, coordinated by the non-profit Food Trust.

In collaboration with the South Street Headhouse District ("The District"), which leases this historic property from the city, the Food Trust and its many vendors sell a variety of farm-direct products: vegetables, fruits, fresh eggs, poultry, homemade breads and desserts, home-grown flowers...the list goes on and on.

If you haven't yet shopped at the Head House on any recent Sunday, you'll be quite surprised by its wide range of offerings — not to mention the hundreds of neighbors and friends you'll bump into as you negotiate moving from one vendor to another. The market, which first began operating this past spring, was expected to "close up shop" by early fall. But its success exceeded everyone's expectations. That is why the Food Trust and The District are hoping to operate the market year round, every weekend. In fact, by the time you read this report, that decision will have been made — and is promising to be a "done deal."

In any case, the Shambles' open-air market will definitely operate through the month of November, and will also open on the Wednesday immediately prior to Thanksgiving. Plan on placing your advance holiday orders there — for fresh turkey, home-made pies, and just-picked vegetables — direct from the farm vendors of your choice. Very convenient! See you at the market!!!



Chefs' Culinary Samples At Head House Shambles

Wednesday, October 10th, 7-10 p.m.

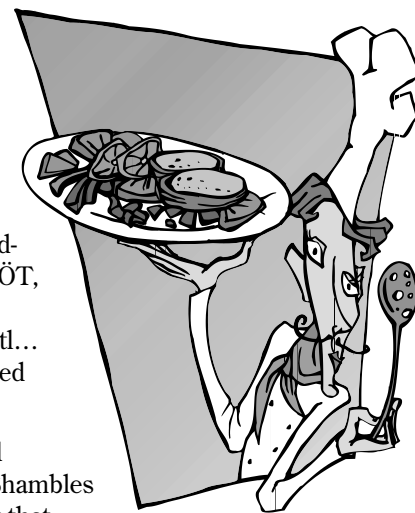
Our greater neighborhood, which offers a diverse selection of high-quality dining choices, announces its "First Annual Fall Chefs' Culinary Sampling" event on Wednesday, October 10th from 7-10 p.m. To be held where? Beneath the Head House Shambles, of course!

This showcase of our area's exceptional dining destinations includes several restaurants that have opened recently. These great chefs, in cooperation with the South Street Headhouse District, will host this unique Pay-Per-Serving Culinary Reception. For a minimum and very modest \$10 donation to the Head House Conservancy — each guest will receive five tickets and a wristband good for one serving each from any of the participating restaurant stations. After the first five servings, tickets will cost only \$2 each.

Do join us for a taste of some of our community's finest restaurants, including Coquette, Ansill, Beau Monde, ZÖT, Ava, Django, Hosteria da Elio, Gayle, Bistro Romano, Bridget Foy's, Xochitl... and many more. Music will be provided by the City Rhythm Orchestra.

Your participation (and donation) will specifically benefit the Head House Shambles — a treasured Philadelphia landmark that traces its roots back to the market sheds of 1745, one of the oldest continuously operated outdoor markets in America — now enjoying a renaissance with its Sunday Market Days. Join us for this soon-to-happen, exciting culinary reception, which will be followed with a major event this coming spring, 2008.

For more information about this special dining event, visit www.SouthStreet.com.



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Ode to the Elders of Society Hill

BY FRANKLIN S. ROBERTS

*Some forty years ago this eve
A hardy few who did perceive
A treasure lost to sloth and grime
Might live again in mod'rin time
And resurrect historic myths
Faint mem'ries in the "Bloody Fifth"
So gingerly they ventured forth
From sheltered dens and suburbs north
Young architects with damp diplomas
Aristocrats smell strange aromas
Young lawyers yet to draft a tort
Conjoined with folks of last resort
Heroic stoic pioneers
Accompanied by their dainty dears
Soon testing bricks and termite borings
Privy pits and ancient floorings
Making do with wine and gorgon —
Hauled overland from Front and Or'gon
Today the Hill is once more chaste
Former storefronts have been erased
Cute flower pots frame Franklin Lamps
And candlelight leads to tourist tramps'
All hail the wheezing heroes bold
You fought decay, restored the old
All now can see from Franklin's dream
The perfect spot for slots machines!*

If you haven't gathered from Franklin's delightful poem, he and his wife, Lynne, have been Society Hill residents since 1961. Among Franklin's accomplishments as both a writer and producer of plays, he was Associate Producer of the Broadway production "1776" and the Broadway show "Applause! Applause!" starring Lauren Bacall. In addition, he co-produced Gene Kelly's "Clown Around" performances which toured all the big arenas on the West Coast. He was also a major investor in Broadway's "Fiddler on the Roof."

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Casinos Threaten Quality of Life Along The Waterfront

continued from page 1

has a degree of control as to whether the riparian rights are transferred for the SugarHouse project. His longstanding public position has been that he will block the transfer of such rights unless and until the civic groups of Northern Liberties and Fishtown have reached written deals with SugarHouse. However, Northern Liberties Neighbors Association, along with most of the civic associations along the river ward, have thus far refused to negotiate with SugarHouse based on a majority vote by their members, who want Representative O'Brien to stand strong and represent the will of the people.

It is Representative Keller who would be asked by the casinos and their political allies to introduce the bill for riparian rights for Foxwoods. There is still dispute as to where exactly the riparian line is located. Foxwoods claims it needs no riparian lands to build its project. Representative Keller states that Foxwoods would sit smack dab on top of riparian lands. This topic was debated at the September 11th state legislative hearing.

On the City front, there is much activity. For any casino to obtain its necessary building permit, it must first obtain zoning approval. At the present time, neither proposed site is zoned for slots parlors. The zoning district that would allow gambling — the so-called Commercial Entertainment District ("CED") — has not been specified anywhere in the City. As the people ask City Council to specify the CED at alternate sites, such as the Navy Yard, council members continue to lack sufficient political will to select any alternate sites. Rather, Council prefers to continue to blame the State for the two current bad choices.

Meanwhile, Councilman Frank DeCicco has attempted several maneuvers to block Foxwoods. This included rezoning of the Foxwoods' property to R10, which specifies it as residential. Unintentionally, however, rezoning the property to residential has given Foxwoods an excuse to claim "victimization." Thus, Foxwoods has asked the State Supreme Court to award automatic zoning approval. That case is still pending.

The most critical date on the immediate horizon is Wednesday, September 26th. This is the day when City Council will reconvene to consider laying down the CED district at one or both of the proposed casino sites. SHCA encourages its members to attend this hearing at City Hall —

in the City Council Chamber, Room 400, at 8 a.m. This is a critical opportunity for constituents to voice their concerns. Please attend.

Meanwhile, in addition to more traffic problems, more crime and poor land use, one of the fundamental tenets used to justify casinos (jobs and tax revenue) has been clearly criticized by the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority (PICA). This economic watch-dog group, which is the independent State economic agency that reviews the City's budget, issued a report at the end of July which criticized the City's five-year budget plan. In fact, it took Philadelphia to task not only for counting the revenues generated by slots parlors — but also for ignoring their costs. PICA then dropped its bombshell, concluding that slots parlors will ultimately result in an economic loss for the city.

PICA estimated that the costs associated with handling the crime and addiction connected to the arrival of slots parlors could be \$200 million per year — which would blow the city's budget. Furthermore, PICA said that for every job created by the slots parlors, our local economy could lose one or more jobs. This "cannibalization" effect has been documented by many researchers and professors who have studied such so-called "convenience gaming" facilities. These are not destination resorts that would bring more money into our economy, because Foxwoods and SugarHouse would target the local population and would redirect customers, money, and jobs from our local restaurants, movie theaters and other entertainment venues. To read the PICA report, it is available at www.picapa.org.

Our civic association is working along with other civic groups to consider the filing of federal legal claims that would combat the onset of casinos. Since the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has been hostile to what *We, The People* believe are the solid rights of citizens who wish to hold our government in check, perhaps true justice can be reached in the federal courts.

Needless to say, we welcome your support, as well as your financial contributions on this, our latest front. To stay tuned for details and email updates, contact SHCA Administrator Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com to provide your email address.

PICA, the economic watch-dog group, concluded that slots parlors will ultimately result in an **economic loss** for the city.

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“Penn’s Village” Now Taking Form!

BY TANIA RORKE, PRESIDENT OF PENN’S VILLAGE COMMITTEE

In communities all over the country, “Villages” are appearing to enable older or disabled residents to live independently in their own homes for as long as they can. The Boston area has such a village, known as “Beacon Hill Village,” and Washington, D.C. is launching one called “Capitol Hill Village.” Soon Philadelphia will have its own. For the past two years members of Society Hill and nearby communities have been working to create what is now known as “Penn’s Village.”

As you may have read in the *New York Times*, American Association of Retired Persons newsletters and past editions of our own *Reporter*, these “Villages” are grassroots efforts designed to assist individuals to remain in their own homes as they age — if they so choose. While some Villages require members to be 55 years of age or older, Penn’s Village will have no age restrictions, and will offer residents from Society Hill and nearby neighborhoods, such as Queen Village and Old City, the practical means and the confidence to live their lives to the fullest as they grow older.

Penn’s Village expects to be the primary resource for its members’ needs — such as expedited access to medical services, skilled or non-skilled

“in-home” care, transportation, personalized grocery shopping trips, home repair services, financial and legal planning assistance, computer assistance, as well as social and cultural events. Its range of services would include, for example, educational and wellness seminars, exercise classes such as walking groups, volunteer opportunities, long-distance monitoring, dog walking and plant or garden watering. These are just a few of the services Penn’s Village expects to offer. It will either directly provide such services for its members or contract with other agencies to provide them.

Penn’s Village is now in the process of incorporating and applying for 501(C)(3) non-profit status. It is developing formalized relationships with Pennsylvania Hospital and Thomas Jefferson Hospital, as well as other organizations in the Philadelphia area.

If you would like to become involved or to learn more about Penn’s Village, please be in touch with Tania Rorke, at 215-370-6485 or trorke@aol.com. Also, we invite you to attend our next information meeting — scheduled for Monday, October 1st, to be held at 7 p.m. at St. Peter’s Parrish House (313 Pine Street).

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Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

Best time to call _____ am / pm

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1 – Type: Retail Wholesale Manufacturer Professional/Service

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3 – Your Percent of Ownership: _____ %

4 – Number of Employees: 1-49 50+

5 – Approximate Value of Your Business: Under \$1 Million \$1-\$5 Million Over \$5 Million

6 – Do you have a Succession Plan in Place? Yes No

Detach and Mail to: Constantine Stephano, Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., 233 South Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3911

Franklin Lights Update

MARTHA LEVINE, CHAIR, FRANKLIN LIGHTS COMMITTEE

Most renovation jobs always seem to take longer to complete than anticipated. This is the case with the final phase of our community's Franklin Lights improvement project — painting of the poles. All the new light fixtures were installed last spring, and we had expected to have the poles painted this summer, which would complete the entire project. But this final phase was delayed due to technicalities.

One would imagine that painting any light pole would be a fairly straightforward process, but as it turns out, it is more complicated. I met with several representatives from the paint supplier, Sherwin Williams, who are providing the specifications for the job. They also incorporated a list of requirements for the painting contractor so that the job is done properly. For each pole the work includes sanding, priming and adding a top coat with a special graffiti-resistant coating (making it easier to clean with a solution). This should maintain the color for 20 years or more.

Specifications are ready and several commercial painting companies are prepared to bid on the project. We hope by the time you read this update, the work

will have begun. As mentioned in the last *Reporter*, signs and hanging flower baskets will have to be removed temporarily until the paint dries completely. We will notify each block as to when your poles will be painted. The city is responsible for replacing signs.

If some lights are blinking or cycling on and off randomly, please email me with the light's exact location, so I can forward this information to the Streets Department. The problem seems to be the result of some overly sensitive light sensors. Light sensors normally turn the lights on in the dark and off in daylight.

Some well-meaning neighbors have painted the light poles near their homes because they were covered with graffiti. Please refrain from doing this, as our professional painters will clean off all existing graffiti. Should the graffiti "artists" strike again, please report to me at the email address below.

The Franklin Lights Committee has not forgotten the plaques for those who have donated to the project at the \$1,500 level or above and who have requested a plaque. Ultimately, each plaque ordered will be installed after the painting of the poles is completed. I will check with you for the exact wording that you request.



For more information or to report a malfunctioning light, please contact Marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.

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TESTIMONY GIVEN

Before the Philadelphia City Council Rules Committee By The Reverend Richard L. Ullman Wednesday, June 13, 2007

My name is Dick Ullman. I live in Society Hill and I am an Episcopal priest. I am retired from full-time ministry, but continue active in ministry in our city. I am here to urge your favorable action on the bill to establish a buffer zone between any casino and homes, schools, and houses of worship.

...Houses of worship have always been places of refuge — sanctuaries set apart. You know this by your own experience. When you step into a church, a synagogue, a mosque, you walk on holy ground.

From ancient times, every society has honored sacred precincts. Moses in the Presence of the Holy One at the Burning Bush takes off his shoes, aware that he stands on holy ground. Still today, at Hindu and Buddhist temples and at Muslim mosques throughout the world, visitors remove their shoes. The idea of buffer zones is nothing new.

One of the great things about America is our respect for the free exercise of religion. That respect is enshrined in our Constitution. Our Bill of Rights tasks every arm of government to take scrupulous care not to interfere with religious practice and conscience. And so throughout our history, at every level of government, we have enacted laws to provide buffer zones, to give houses of worship protection from certain otherwise permissible activities.

Liquor laws, for example, recognize that it is important to respect a house of worship in the distribution of liquor licenses. Why is this? It is not because a bar or tavern is a bad thing in itself. It is because a bar or tavern attracts activities that can come in conflict with the activities appropriate to a house of worship. It is because these two uses are incompatible when they are too close to each other.

Liquor laws are not the only example of protective buffer zones. The Philadelphia Code provides buffer zones to protect houses of worship from adult bookstores, drug paraphernalia stores, check cashing agencies, and tattoo parlors. Why is this? Again, it is because the nature of these uses is incompatible with the activities occurring at a house of worship.

As the ancient rabbis would say, how much more is this true when it comes to casinos?!

First, the casinos proposed for our city will have several liquor licenses and will be operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week — no Sabbath or holy days allowed. Imagine attempting a silent retreat, or Yom Kippur services, or an Easter Vigil next door to such a neighbor!

Second, the casinos proposed for our city will engender much traffic in their neighborhoods, traffic that will hinder access to any nearby house of worship, discourage attendance, and thereby, through government permission, discourage and interfere with the free exercise of religion.

Third, experience the world over tells us (and Pennsylvania's Act 71 provides for this fact) that a certain portion of casino patrons will be either pathologically addicted gamblers or "problem" gamblers. Now imagine that such a person or that person's loved ones seek the comfort of a house of worship. Don't you agree it is appropriate that no casino be within range of eye or ear?

With the casinos proposed for our city, we will have something much greater in scale and impact than a tavern, an adult bookstore, a check cashing agency, a vendor of drug paraphernalia, or a tattoo parlor.

We will have thousands of slots machines, several liquor venues operating 24/7, and a tremendous volume of vehicular traffic. A buffer zone measured in miles would be reasonable...a buffer zone of 1,500 feet would at least show some respect. I ask for your respect today.

The deep tradition of our city respects religious communities of all sorts. That is what William Penn's colony was all about. This respect for all religious communities was a new idea on the face of the earth when Penn established his place of Brotherly Love — Philadelphia — here where Penn's Woods met the river.

As a priest, my impulse is to appeal to you in the name of all that is holy that you act favorably on the buffer zone ordinance. Instead, as a citizen with scrupulous regard for the separation of Church and State, I will limit my appeal. Let me simply appeal on the basis of the established norms of American law and of Philadelphia tradition:

- Adopt the buffer zone because you respect our tradition.
- Adopt the buffer zone because, like William Penn, you honor all religious communities, and the conditions in which they are free to flourish.
- Adopt the buffer zone because you wish no house of worship to be diminished by the close proximity of inconsistent, conflicting, and detrimental neighbors.
- Adopt the buffer zone because you don't want this city's pioneering, historic respect for religious communities to die on your watch.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

We received several responses to Jane Biberman's "Accidental Tourist" column that appeared in the summer issue of this newsletter on the topic of horse carriage rides in the neighborhood. Because of space limitations, we cannot print these comments in total, but we share with you the gist of some responses.

Below are quotations from a letter written by William Hawkins, long-time Society Hill resident and a board director of the Pennsylvania SPCA.

I was sorry to see a positive story on the horse carriage trade in the Reporter. While the purpose of the article was tourism...it doesn't take into account the many problems posed by the carriage companies and their drivers....

Recently a number of city residents were pushing for the Health Department, which oversees the monitoring of the horse carriage trade through PACCA (Philadelphia Animal Care and Control Association), to report horses continuing to work beyond the high temperature threshold of 91 degrees — with no success....

Tourists will climb in a carriage regardless of the temperature — they're not pulling the carriage. ...When it is 91 degrees, the horses' hooves are in contact with tarmac that is closer to 105 degrees. All the while, tourists sit back and enjoy the ride, oblivious.

Carriages frequently go off route, stay out beyond curfew, and many horses are forced to work beyond the ten hour in-harness regulation.

The column's headline, "How to Bet the Horses and Win" a reference to horse racing, also was unfortunate. For every Barbaro that gets decent treatment after an injury, there are thousands that are euthanized immediately. Not to mention the thousands that have ended up in slaughterhouses.

The fact is, all of us need to do due diligence on a wide range of issues. Yes, it is time-consuming, often difficult, disappointing, and frequently requiring we adjust our lives and/or how we view our experiences. But it is important that we do.

Another letter we received was from neighbor Karen Tourian. Here's some of what she wrote:

These carriages are parasites. They interfere with traffic (as they move at a pedestrian walking pace, about three miles per hour, when not stopped completely in the middle of the road); they deposit urine and feces on the streets; ...and they have destroyed many of the streets in our neighborhood. For example, Third Street, which is on one of their 'quote' routes, now has a large channel down to the Belgian blocks from the constant abuse of horse shoes. ...They would also ride illegally down the one-lane or one-way streets (which are not cleaned, since they are not "official" routes). Presumably, both the cleaning and all street repairs are paid for by our taxes, not the carriage companies....

Jane Biberman, author of the "Accidental Tourist" column has replied to these letters:

I was appalled to learn of the abuses of horses by the carriage companies. As a horse lover, I had no idea about the inhumane conditions in which some of them are forced to work. I believe our community should protest. I do praise, however, any responsible driver, such as Cheri Holt, who takes good care of her horse.



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SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL

A COLUMN BY MARILYN APPEL

Washington Square Park

How to reduce the number of homeless people “camping” in the park

Unfortunately, during the past several months many homeless people have been “camping” at the park — sleeping on benches, cooking meals and leaving trash. While we have sympathy for their plight, we regret the results of their ubiquitous presence. Many Society Hill neighbors, who have spent countless hours helping to beautify Washington Square, now no longer feel welcome there.

What to do about this? We have been in touch with the Outreach Coordinator for the Homeless Project, who sends workers every morning to -persuade these vagrants to leave voluntarily. We have also contacted Police Sergeant Hill, at 215-686-3095, who is in charge of the “Service Detail” responsible for the homeless throughout Center City. Although his officers monitor the park daily, these unwanted visitors always return. According to Sergeant Hill, the best option for eliminating or reducing their numbers is for neighbors to call John Hopf, Director of Park Rangers, at the National Park Service (215-597-

7055). We hope that the more calls he receives, the more willing he will be to help solve this problem expeditiously.

Since Washington Square sits on federal property, which has a regulation against “camping” on such property, Hopf has the authority to have NPS rangers keep Washington Square free of these individuals. We have also contacted Ian Crane, NPS Park Security (Ian_Crane@nps.gov) to see how he can help.

Recommended solutions to these problems throughout the park include: installing an additional armrest in the middle of each bench to deter homeless people from sleeping on benches; and installing user-friendly but tamper-proof trash receptacles that discourage homeless from littering — both costly projects. The Park Service would have to approve these measures.

In the meantime, walk carefully through the park and never, ever give money, food or clothing to any strangers.



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SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL

Never a Dull Moment!

Mugging at the Movies —
The Ritz Bourse

A criminal incident, carefully planned and strategically executed, recently occurred at one of our favorite movie theaters — the Ritz at the Bourse. The hapless victim, who was accompanied by a friend, was targeted because her handbag was obviously not zipped closed. As she descended the escalator, she was surrounded — one man in front of her, his partner behind. They stole her wallet. Several minutes later she realized that her handbag was lighter than usual. She reported the theft to the Ritz's manager, asking him to allow her to use his office phone to call American Express in order to block usage of all her credit cards. Unfortunately, the manager would not permit her to use his office phone — why ever not? He himself did phone the police, while she went back upstairs to call AMEX. Shaken, but eventually recovered, this victim wrote a letter describing the incident to the Ritz management (in California), *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, the city's Police Commissioner, the Mayor and the Society Hill Civic Association. Thus far, she has received no response, except from our committee.

Regrettably, the police did not interview her at her home until several hours later, because — apparently — mugging is not considered a high priority. In fact, the interviewing officer insisted on calling the crime a “purse snatching” (even a lower priority), although this woman was pushed and fell over the perpetrator in front of her. Only twenty minutes after the mugging, these men had the gall to charge merchandise at both Wal-Mart and Target, at which time the stolen cards were blocked. If the stores' cashiers had called security when the cards were blocked from usage, perhaps these criminals would have been apprehended. But instead they got away. When we called the police in our district they replied that Wal-Mart and Target are located in a different district (not our 6th District), and that those cops should have been called by the stores' managements. Bottom line: you must be aware at all times of what is occurring around you.

Another disturbing mugging incident occurred recently on Pine Street. Four women were walking when one had her purse stolen at knife point. The other women were oblivious until she started to scream! Again, we urge you **to be aware** of your surroundings — whether talking to companions or on a cell phone. Don't let yourself become a victim!

Lights — Remember to turn them on: Lighting is a deterrent to crime. Your home's outdoor, front lights should be turned on automatically every evening, whether you're home or not. We recommend that you have these lights connected to a timer, which can be easily installed. It would also be good to have a motion sensor device installed at the back of your house, which will automatically turn on a light — to prevent a thief from climbing over a wall and stealing items in your backyard or gaining entry to your home.

The value of security alarms: Recently, on the 100 block of Pine Street, a security alarm system prevented a break-in when the owners were out of town. **Always** keep your security system turned on — whether you're away or asleep. It's a definite crime deterrent. It was reported in the news that several women in Queen Village were physically and sexually assaulted during the summer. In one incident the perpetrator entered a house through its rear screen door at about 1:30 a.m. This is a very good reason for investing in a rear motion sensor light and security system. Always lock your doors and windows, whether you're home or not.

Other disturbing incidents in Society Hill: There seems to be an increase, both day and night, of robberies, smashed car windows, money stolen from unlocked cars (yes, unlocked!), FedEx packages left on doorsteps that have been stolen, bicycles taken, kids on bikes grabbing cell phones, and so it goes. This leads us to say once again: be aware of what's going on.

Bike patrol officers: Our neighborhood's bike patrol officer is Joe Ferrero. If you see something happening that may need a quick police response, directly call Officer Ferrero on his cell phone: 267-787-7864. (Keep that number handy or on your speed dial.) Then, immediately dial 911.

Watch out for Ride-the-Ducks: These vehicles are sliding through, not fully stopping, at the 6th Street stop sign at the south end of Washington Square at Independence Place. The police have been informed, and if caught, the company will be ticketed. Be careful when crossing that intersection!

Be responsible: Remember to obey the city ordinance that dogs must always be on leash. Be considerate, and avoid a hefty fine. Another reminder about responsibility: you are legally accountable for any loose or missing bricks on the sidewalk in front of your house, which can be a lawsuit waiting to happen, if someone trips and gets hurt!

I.C.E. - a promising new idea: I.C.E. stands for “In Case of Emergency.” Put emergency number(s) on your cell or home phone's speed dial. (I.C.E #1 and I.C.E #2) The police are beginning to recognize I.C.E. on your phones and will call your specified emergency numbers to contact the people you want alerted.

Another plea for recycling old cell phones: Bring them to 414 Spruce Street. These phones will be given to the police who reprogram them to call only 911. They are then donated to the elderly and the abused. Don't forget to bring their chargers, too. Sorry, no receipts.

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RESTAURANT REVIEWS

New “Kids” on the Block – Restaurants, That Is!

Occasionally we introduce new restaurants that have opened their doors in our vicinity. In a previous issue, we described Core de Roma, Ansell, Southwark and Crescent City. In this article we feature three recently opened local dining places — providing brief descriptions (not evaluations!) of these welcome new restaurants. This summary is not an attempt to compete with the *Inquirer's* food critic, Craig LaBan — who could or would? Just go and judge (and enjoy) for yourselves!



ZÖT

**122 Lombard Street
627-639-3260**

Nestled between long-time neighbors Bistro Romano and Tokio Japanese/Champignons, this new “kid” boasts mussels, mussels and more mussels — all in different sauces — so save your bread for dunkin’! Monday is “all-you-can-eat” mussels night, and if you can consume more than they give you the first time around, you must have a hollow leg! Curious about the meaning of ZÖT? This Belgian word has several interpretations, but the most common is “eccentric person.” If this means trying (at various times, of course) their 300 different beers (four on tap, rotating) and over 150 wine selections — well, you too can become a ZÖT! Tim Treban, from the U.K. and a former government diplomat, is the restaurant’s business partner; and Bernard Dehaene is its Belgian chef. ZÖT’s extensive menu aims to please everyone, with high quality food and many affordable choices. Currently undergoing renovation of its upstairs space, the restaurant will soon be able to accommodate 20-30 people there for private parties and meetings. Craig LeBan has already dined there three times and has awarded it two bells, while Zagat’s score is 25 (out of 30). Closed on Tuesdays, ZÖT accepts all credit cards and is handicap accessible. Reservations accepted.

COQUETTE

**700 S. 5th Street
(corner of 5th & Bainbridge)
215-238-9000**

In addition to a new baby girl, this newest venture for Cary Neff, chef/owner of Sansom Street Oyster House, is Coquette. This stands at a spot that previously housed several Thai restaurants. Now, with its totally different and attractive contemporary look, this popular eatery also offers al fresco dining. The chefs de cuisine are David and Carla Gilberg, a husband and wife team who first met at Haverford College. He’s from Rochester, NY; she’s from Portugal. Previously David worked at Novelty, subsequently at Matyson and Loie, where Carla collaborated with him. Their focus on food is “simplicity, high quality and clean, precise preparation.” This unpretentious but ambitious neighborhood restaurant offers “bold, satisfying bistro fare with a twist” — always serving its own homemade breads — with different menus for dinner, brunch or late night, as well as a “special” dish that varies daily. The entire restaurant can be reserved for private parties and can accommodate up to 40 people seated inside, with an additional 12 at its “raw bar,” and 24 more for outdoor dining — weather permitting. Currently a BYO, Coquette awaits receipt of its liquor license. Prices are reasonable, and all credit cards are accepted. Closed Mondays and handicap accessible.

707

**707 Chestnut Street
215-922-7070**

707 is positioned at a site that promises to be this city’s next “Restaurant Row,” as other dining establishments abound up and down the block. With its landscaped, outdoor café and quietly sophisticated dining room, 707 has a surprisingly whimsical yet affordable menu. You’ve heard of Jewish hoagies? Well, 707 has Jewish spring rolls (actually Reuben spring rolls), likely to be copied all over town — only one of 707’s whimsical dishes that chef Dan Soley has created. (His previous experiences range from Jake’s to Brasserie Perrier!) Note the “pigs-in-a-blanket” and “a hot dog trio” with Dijon/relish, chili and Alsatian toppings. Check out his funnel cake! Or, you can select not exactly “standard” fare, since everything is homemade — including its main course salads, sandwiches, pizzas, entrees, small plates and bites. This neighborhood venue, with its proximity to the Walnut Street Theatre, makes it a likely spot either for before-theater snacks or after-matinee dinners. Its huge bar boasts 13 beer selections and a large wine list, many affordable by the glass. Co-owned by operating partner Ryan Margolis, the restaurant’s downstairs is set up for meetings and can hold about 30 seated patrons or 50-60 for cocktails. 707 can accommodate parties for up to 200 guests, and is open seven days a week. It accepts all credit cards and reservations. Handicap accessible.

ZONING & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

STEVEN A. WEIXLER, ZHP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Central Delaware Advisory Group Will Present Vision of Riverfront Planning



Conceptual sketch of a typical “green” street leading to the river’s edge.

By PennPraxis.
Published with permission.

The Central Delaware Advisory Group’s (CDAG) work is reaching its final stages and will present a vision plan to the public and the city’s new administration in late November. The result of this process will not be a site-specific plan for seven miles of riverfront, but will outline a general plan of development similar to the work done for Society Hill by Edmund Bacon and the City Planning Commission in the 1960’s.

The new plan that was developed with the talent and resources of PennPraxis — the consulting arm of the University of Pennsylvania School of Design — breaks up the huge riverfront sites left over from industrial use, and plans a new street grid to the riverfront in familiar Philadelphia size. This will produce urban development in a scale and diversity that enriches and expands the homes, services and businesses which make Philadelphia a vital place. PennDot must replace the central stretch of I-95 within the next decade, and plans for covering it to allow new development in our central section are included. A new tree-lined boulevard allowing for bicycle and walking paths, transit and local traffic will connect these new neighborhoods and their green spaces from Port Richmond to Snyder Avenue.

The Advisory Group’s work has identified basic principles held by communities along the river and has used them as guides for development. The harm casinos can do to the environment has been kept in the forefront of the process by the fifteen civic associations represented in the Group. PennPraxis and its director, Harris Steinberg, have listened. As Sam Durso

commented in his blog after the recent Planning Commission hearing on Foxwoods Casino: The Advisory Group plan is a “re-imagining of Philly’s growing popular, prosperous neighborhoods organically, right down to its historic riverfront, with no signs of casinos, or even Wal-Mart, visible *anywhere*.” He goes on: “There are reasons for cautious optimism. While [the plan] employs urban lessons learned from as far off as Amsterdam and Madrid, it finally considers not just the riverfront neighborhoods’ wishes, but their residential successes as well.”

Another reason for cautious optimism: the advent of a new mayor and the comprehensive zoning reform we voted for last May. Society Hill is an excellent example of the future process. We enjoyed the Planning Commission’s long-term view of good development and had leaders in city government willing to support and implement it through good zoning. Our Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) and many dedicated neighbors kept the plan alive and saw it to fruition. Civic associations, Society Hill included, must now begin to advocate for this new riverfront plan. Tom Ferrick said in a recent *Philadelphia Inquirer* opinion: “At the risk of sounding like Johnny One Note, let me spout off again about neighborhood and civic groups in Philadelphia. These groups have emerged in recent years as a positive force for change in the city. The question is: What’s the next step? Personally, I think it is time for neighborhoods and civic groups to play a major role in shaping citywide politics and policy in the coming years.”

A new umbrella group of civic associations is forming with the impetus of the casino controversy and the Central Delaware Advisory Group/PennPraxis plan. SHCA’s successes in community advocacy can serve as an asset in this long-term effort by Philadelphians to see their city prosper.

As your representative to the Central Delaware Advisory Group, I will have testified before the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board on September 11th in favor of a buffer zone for our community. As always, I appreciate your thoughts and comments. Please contact me at stevenweixler@verizon.net. Be sure to visit www.planphilly.com for a thorough look at the Delaware Riverfront and www.zoningmatters.org to follow the Zoning Code Commission.

ZONING & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Development Projects We're Following

Stamper Square (formerly "NewMarket")

Front to 2nd Street between Pine & Lombard Streets

Not much news to report on the most recent proposal for this site. According to Carl Engelke, spokesman for Bridgeman Partners, negotiations are still taking place between the developers and a major upscale hotel. Naturally, design development cannot move forward until an agreement is reached.

The Philadelphia Sports Club

5th Street between Locust Walk & Spruce Street

The building that houses our community's popular sports club has been sold to Douglas Development Inc. of Washington, DC. I've been in contact with Mr. Norman Jemal at Douglas, and he states that they have no firm plans for changes to the property "for at least four or five years." He also expressed his company's policy of working with neighborhood groups and agreed to include our civic association in future planning. I will stay in contact with Douglas Development.



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Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

The "Parent-Centered" Personal Upgrade

It's back-to-school time for the kiddies! Aside from parental rejoicing, that means new clothes, new shoes, purging the closets of the outgrown items, and a general sense of a "fresh start." But how about the moms and dads? Not that I want to dwell on outgrowing my clothes (which is becoming—pardon the pun—an increasingly large problem). So I ask: who doesn't want a reorganized wardrobe and an updated look? Crave it no more.

For this column I'd like to give neighborhood "moms" their due — to give you that "back-to-school" personal upgrade. Although the heart of this column usually concentrates on kids, I'll be more parent-centered than child-centered in this case, focusing on a new business that has recently been formed by two exiled Society Hill moms.

Ann Bernicker and Diane Reginato, both of whom lived in Society Hill when their respective sets of children were few and small, currently reside in Narberth. They are counting the days toward "empty-nesterdom" when they plan to return to our beloved urban village. In the meantime, they have formed "Personal Best Image Consultants" (PBIC). Their combined skill sets have fused to make a full-service, comprehensive company that is user-friendly, professional, and accessible. Ann has been a successful hair stylist and cosmetologist in the Philadelphia area for 18 years. She trained with Bobbi Brown, Redken, Vidal Sasson, Goldwell, Sebastian International, and several private labels. Diane has vast experience as a wardrobe advisor and personal shopper, as well as in human resources, marketing, public speaking, and fashion.

Together, their firm, PBIC, offers a variety of services geared toward a head-to-toe personal upgrade. They begin with a consultation and assessment of a client's lifestyle — no stilettos in the daily wear for mommies chasing toddlers through Three Bears Park or labor-intensive hairstyles for working parents with babies. They then conduct a wardrobe audit — and they are wonderfully ruthless. Try on every item in your closet and they help you conclude that the purple pleated pants really were a mistake, even if they carry your favorite designer's label. During their audit, they make suggestions about good combinations, ideal colors, brands and cuts for you,

how hemming a skirt or taking in a jacket that you already own can make a tremendous difference. They also keep a checklist of items that you have and items that you need, which they hand you at the end of the service. Best of all, they take away all the discards, donate them to charity on your behalf (so you get credit for the donation) or consign them for you (so you receive the check when the item sells).

They offer a variety of other services, as well: instructional skin care and makeup application; hair assessment and salon consultation; personal shopping (in store, online or shop-and-deliver); plus corporate seminars and workshops. Society Hill moms certainly deserve the gift of personal time, so I recommend you check out this opportunity to be better organized and better dressed. For more information about Personal Best Image Consultants, visit Mypbimage.com or call 610-291-7730. Me? I've done it myself and can unequivocally state that it was a divine experience!

Kid's Quote

"I'm not a Muggle, because my mother really is a witch."

**Kelsey, age 8,
Society Hill Kid**

Three Bears Park Fall Events

**Fall Festival
Saturday, September 29th**

Mark your calendars for this year's annual Fall Festival at Three Bears Park — to be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Kiddie activities include a moon bounce, pony rides, face painting, balloons, a food and bake sale and a raffle. New this year: a children's toy and clothing swap. Bring gently used or new items and let your neighbor's kids discover new-found treasures! Please bring these swap items to the park by 10 a.m. on that day. Proceeds from the festival will help fund the park's weekly maintenance and clean-up, as well as contribute to its general improvements.

Three Bears Park is located on Delancey Street between 2nd & 3rd Streets



**Halloween Parade
Wednesday, October 31st**

Halloween this season occurs on Wednesday, October 31st, so bring the kids to Three Bears Park at 5 p.m. for a Halloween Parade and Costume Contest. Prizes will be given for the best costumes. Pizza and juice will be provided, and a fun time will be had by all!

If interested in donating items for the Fall Festival or to volunteer either for that event or Halloween, please contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544 or TRorke@aol.com.

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WASHINGTON SQUARE'S FOUNTAIN

Lily Pad Now Blooms

Society Hill neighbors may be unaware of a recently completed improvement at Washington Square: the installation of a newly sculpted bronze water lily pad, blooming in the very center of the Square's fountain. The sight and sounds of the fountain's renewal are the achievement of a handful of community activists who responded to a fortuitously identified need. Here's what happened.

A few years ago, Paul Boni, former chair of SHCA's Zoning & Historic Preservation and current Board Director, accidentally came upon the fountain's original architectural drawings, while leading our community's effort to save the historic Dilworth House from demolition. (This house is set back directly across from Washington Square, on the east side of South 6th Street.) As you probably know, Mayor Dilworth initiated the revival of our historic neighborhood when in the mid-1950's he intentionally built his home directly across from the Square — one of Philadelphia's five public squares originally designed by William Penn. When the Mayor and his family moved into their newly constructed residence, it was a symbolic statement inspiring other "pioneers" to begin reviving "old and tired" buildings in the neighborhood — thus transforming Society Hill as we know and value it today.

Washington Square's fountain was designed by renowned architect, G. Edwin Brumbaugh. Because Mayor Dilworth's house was also designed by Brumbaugh, it was not totally coincidental that his drawings for the fountain were discovered by Paul as he was researching information about the house. Upon discovering these drawings, Paul immediately passed them on to SHCA Board Director Sissie Lipton, Chair of our association's Washington Square Committee.

Sissie was excited about the prospect of creating, at long last, the fountain as originally envisioned in 1956 by the architect. She forwarded these drawings to long-time neighbor, Robert E. Linck, an engineer and Chair of the Philadelphia Fountain Society. His experience includes the construction of the Hirschhorn Museum Fountain in Washinton, D.C. and restoration of both the Champagne and Waterfall Fountains in Dilworth Plaza.

Bob Linck reported to us that Brumbaugh's design for the Washington Square fountain was part of the park's Memorial to Unknown Soldiers

of the Continental Army, and he provided the following information: "All but the fountain centerpiece of this Memorial has been around for far longer than most nearby residents. Few can remember when the basin did not receive an annual coat of milky green paint and just enough squirting water to entertain children when the weather turned really hot." However, the fountain's original centerpiece design had remained "only as lines on tracing paper, with hand-lettered notes" preserved at the Winterthur Museum until a copy of Brumbaugh's drawings was discovered by Paul Boni.

Linck explored the possibility and potential cost of increasing the size of the sculpture by one-third, as the larger size would be more appropriate to the 32-foot diameter of the fountain's basin. He also pictured its fabrication with the use of a particular bronze alloy notable for its strength and durability. Fortunately, with funds donated by the Philadelphia Fountain Society, the Washington Square Association, and several other donations raised through Sissie Lipton's campaign, the total cost for the improved fountain sculpture, which faithfully implements Brumbaugh's original drawings, was completed.

However, installation of the new sculpture required approval by the National Park Service (NPS), as Washington Square is under its jurisdiction. After countless meetings with park personnel, Dennis Redenbach, Director of Independence National Historical Park, approved the installation of the new, improved and more accurate Brumbaugh design. Eventually, but with little fanfare, the lily pad was installed on June 28, 2007.

Now, according to Bob Linck, "the fountain's new jet emits a strong, scintillating stream upward from the bedazzling, newly sculpted bronze water lily in the center." Sissie Lipton is planning a celebratory ceremony to acknowledge the efforts and generosity of those responsible for our renewed fountain. We hope that many neighbors will participate at this event, to be scheduled soon.



Another fascinating fact that Bob Linck shared with us is that several years ago the filming of the motion picture "National Treasure" took place in Washington Square. For a stronger visual effect, the film's production company installed a new, more powerful pump for the fountain. Fortunately, this new pump was donated by the film's production company and it remains in service today.

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LOCAL HISTORICAL SITES — NEWS AND NEW EXHIBITS

American Philosophical Society

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Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743, the American Philosophical Society (APS) is the nation's oldest learned society promoting knowledge in the sciences and humanities. Its current exhibition, entitled "Undaunted: Five American Explorers, 1760-2007," features five intrepid Philadelphians across the span of 250 years. The explorers shared an unquenchable curiosity, sense of adventure and courage to explore the unknown which transformed our understanding of the world. They are David Rittenhouse, John James Audubon, Titan Ramsay Peale, Elisha Kent Kane and Ruth Patrick. This exhibit will be on view through December 2008.

Additional APS exhibits include: "Mason-Dixon Lines" through December 2008;" Celestial Garden" through March 2008; "You Are Here" from November 2007 through October 2008; and "Dock Creek" from March through September 2008.

The Athenæum of Philadelphia

**219 S. 6th Street, at Washington Square
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After nearly forty years as Executive Director of the Athenæum of Philadelphia, Roger W. Moss will retire this fall. Dr. Moss, a Society Hill resident, is the author of a dozen books on architecture and design, including *Historic Houses of Philadelphia* and *Historic Sacred Places of Philadelphia*, both published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. Following a national search, Dr. Sandra L. Tatman has accepted the position of Executive Director.

The Athenæum, a member-supported special collections library, was founded in 1814 to assemble materials connected with the history and antiquities of America. Housed in a National Historic Landmark building, its collection of rare books, architectural drawings, and historic photographs are available by visiting www.philadelphiabuildings.org. The Athenæum sponsors public exhibitions and lectures. It also maintains a free public database on American architects and buildings: www.Athenaonline.org.

Christ Church

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Wondering what action, if any, Christ Church took during the American Revolution? Curious about what links Philadelphia's Quaker founder, William Penn and Christ Church? These questions and more are answered on the website recently unveiled by Christ Church and the Christ Church Preservation Trust.

Funding from the Barra Foundation and private donors made it possible for the Christ Church Preservation Trust to begin an 18-month program: to catalog the church's artifacts; inventory and re-house its archival collections; as well as develop a digital website where people around the world could glimpse the records and artifacts Christ Church has generated and preserved throughout its rich history.

The church provides daily tours, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, click onto www.christchurchphila.org.

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ACCIDENTAL TOURIST IN MY OWN BACKYARD

A COLUMN BY JANE BIBERMAN

Celebrate the Jewish New Year 5768 at a Shul Near You

You don't have to be Jewish to go to shul (synagogue). If you're walking around Society Hill, you can discover four architectural gems — each with a history that could fill a book. In fact, a book has been written about them: *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, by Harry D. Boonin. This invaluable resource was kindly loaned to me by Rabbi Menachem Schmidt, head of the Vilna Shul, at 509 Pine Street. I must confess that as a longtime member of Congregation Rodeph Shalom, the state Reform temple on North Broad Street, I was largely ignorant of the smaller Orthodox and Conservative shuls in our neighborhood, which I pass by almost every day.

With Boonin's guidebook in one hand and my dog's leash in the other, I decided to take a closer look at these four jewels — Vilna, B'nai Abraham, Society Hill and Keshet Israel — embedded in Philadelphia's "Jewish Quarter" that thrived between 1881 and 1930. Walking down South 6th Street from Spruce to Lombard and east to 4th Street, I was following in the footsteps of Eastern European immigrants who once worked in sweatshops, opened stores and prayed in Orthodox shuls on every block radiating from South Street.



Vilna Shul

The lovely **Vilna Shul**, on Pine Street, is the only row house synagogue that remains in the area. Unlike the others, it moved from Parkside Avenue in the nearby "suburbs" to the Jewish Quarter. Founded by Abraham Aba Ben Yehuda Shapiro, of the city of Vilna, in 1904, the congregation eventually relocated to the 300 block of Lombard Street. Only fellow Lithuanians (Litvaks) could pray there. After Shapiro's death in 1917, his son Bernard dedicated his father's residence at 509 Pine Street as the shul's permanent site. In 1922, a two-story rear addition was added to the building. Dark wooden benches, a pressed tin ceiling, colonial chandelier

and murals painted by Morris Balk characterize the interior. Today, the Vilna is a Lubavitcher Center, a Hasidic movement emphasizing religious study that originated in Eastern Europe during the 1700's. Rabbi Schmidt welcomes all. He can be reached at 215-574-9280.

Around the corner in front of **B'nai Abraham**, at 521-527 Lombard Street, I tied my dog Kipp to a railing of this magnificent synagogue. Established by 17 Lithuanian Jews in 1882, it housed the first Jewish Aid Society in the entire area, and was a refuge for hungry and homeless immigrants. By 1885, there were 200 members and the present site was purchased. Formerly the "First Colored Wesley Methodist Church," its original Greek Revival building was constructed in 1820. Under the legendary Rabbi Bernard L. Levinthal (1891-1952), who later served Keshet Israel, the old building was torn down and replaced by a much grander one in 1910. Various described as Oriental, Byzantine or Romanesque, the synagogue is distinguished by its central dome and rather unique architecture. It was the center of Orthodox Jewish life in Philadelphia for many years, especially prior to our neighborhood's gentrification in the late 1950's. B'nai Abraham remains an Orthodox congregation today. For more information, contact Rabbi Yochanon Goldman, at 215-238-8284.



B'nai Abraham

Perhaps best known in our neighborhood is the **Society Hill Synagogue**, at 418 Spruce Street. Its building, originally a Baptist church, was completed in 1829 from plans created by Thomas U. Walter — one of the designers of the U.S. Capitol building and the architect of the Philadelphia Contributionship building on South 4th Street. Jewish immigrants established this Roumanian/American congregation in 1916 when the Baptist congregants moved out of the neighborhood. The Yiddish inscription above the massive wooden doors still reads "The Great Roumanian Shul" In 1967, the building was purchased by young families and became known as Society Hill Synagogue. Its former rabbi, Ivan Caine (now emeritus), established the shul as an egalitarian

Society Hill Synagogue



continued on p. 31



Gail Finnegan, Trish Kelly and Francisco Carreno

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Celebrate the Jewish New Year...

continued from page 29

institution where women shared leadership responsibilities with men. Under the current leadership of Rabbi Avi Winokur, this congregation offers a wide variety of religious, educational and cultural programs to the entire community. For example, a chamber music concert is slated for Sunday, November 4th at 3 p.m. For information about the synagogue or the cost of the upcoming concert, please call 215-922-6590. (Meet the synagogue's new president, Dr. Staci J. Schwartz, who is featured with her husband in this issue's "Noteworthy Neighbors" on page 38.)

On a recent morning, I visited **Congregation Keshet Israel**, at 412-418 Lombard Street. I had often noticed the four stained-glass windows that face the street, but I had never ventured inside. This time I knocked on the front door and was graciously given an informal tour by enthusiastic member, Howard Arnold. An African American who converted to Judaism ten years ago, Arnold told me that Keshet Israel is the oldest Jewish congregation in Philadelphia to exist continuously in the same building. Indeed, Boonin calls it the "jewel in the crown" and writes in *The Jewish*

Quarter: "No building in the guide compares to it in historical importance." Deeded to seven Universalists in 1793, the English scientist Joseph Priestley gave a series of lectures there in 1796 which were attended by Vice President John Adams. The first Jewish congregation to occupy this building was Chevra B'nai Jacob in 1889. Keshet Israel was dedicated a few years later, in 1897, and it became a leading Zionist synagogue during its early years. In fact, Boonin devotes pages to Keshet Israel's contributions to Jewish life in the city. Today it is a vibrant Conservative shul led by Rabbi Ira Grussgott. To see its recently refurbished and strikingly beautiful interior, call 215-922-1776.

Whether you walk by or walk into one of our neighborhood shuls, Have a Happy New Year! Or, as we Jews say, "*Shana Tova!*"



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OCEANAIRE HOSTS PARTY

Thanks, Party Hosts!

Last spring, on May 8th, about 200 Society Hillers met for SCHA's Spring Fling Cocktail Party at the elegant Oceanaire Seafood Room, where we were provided with a sumptuous buffet amidst a superb 1930's setting (the former, historic PSFS building). Our sincere thanks for the generosity and skill of Corporate President Terry Ryan and Philadelphia Operating Partner Peter Mooradian.



SHCA Vice President Martha Levine, John and Carmela Infanti



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SHCA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

SHCA Membership Total Stands at 1,027

As of mid-August this year, SHCA's total memberships stood at 1,027— still shy of the 1,066 total number of members achieved in calendar year 2006. We are pleased that the 2007 total includes 79 brand-new members.

However, we regret that 82 members from 2006 and 52 members from 2005 have chosen not to renew, despite repeated mail and email contacts. Those not current in dues will be deleted from our email distribution list and will no longer receive important updates between *Reporter* issues.

SHCA volunteers continue to work hard on many important issues on behalf of the neighborhood — casinos, taxation, crime, hi-rise development, etc. We depend on membership dues to fund our many initiatives. With the maximum number of members, we can maintain the maximum clout in affecting the actions of our city government.

If you have never belonged to SHCA, please consider joining today. We are especially in need of adding hi-rise residents who are grossly under-represented in our ranks — yet who enjoy the same community benefits as everyone in our historic square mile.

If you are among the non-renewals, or have not yet become a member, we urge you to take this time **now** to send in your dues. Or please let us know the reason for your lack of participation.

JOIN "WALKIE-TALKIES"

Join Society Hill's exercise program known as the "Walkie-Talkies" — a fun and free way to become fit. Depending on your schedule, show up at Three Bears Park on any Tuesday and/or Thursday — promptly before 8:15 a.m. — to take this invigorating, one-hour walk through our city streets. The route on any day varies, depending on the participants who show up on that day, which also varies.

A great way to get to know some of your neighbors, this stimulating but simple exercise program, now in its second successful year, will surely enhance your mood and feeling of well-being. (Maybe you'll even drop a pound or two!) So, unless it rains, put on your walking shoes and give the Walkie-Talkies a try. Just arrive at Three Bears Park on any Tuesday or Thursday morning, no later than 8:15, as the group then departs to choose its route and have some healthy fun.

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. SHCA never shares your email address with others and never transmits spam. Our emails deliver only topical information related specifically to neighborhood issues. SHCA never shares its membership list with any other organization, no matter how worthy the cause.

Residential Memberships

- \$50 Basic Household
 - \$100 Federal Friend
 - \$150 Georgian Grantor
 - \$300 Benjamin Franklin Benefactor*
 - \$40 Senior/Student
- *Will receive a FREE ticket for Society Hill House Tours

Business Memberships

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

Additional contribution for

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Washington Square Beautification | <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 Lights |
| <input type="radio"/> Zoning & Historic Preservation | <input type="radio"/> PA Hospital's Pine St. Building |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Society Hill Reporter</i> | \$ _____ |

Check Enclosed Total \$ _____

Charge VISA/Mastercard

Number _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

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

- Anti-Casino Clean-Up Day Newsletter TownWatch
- Washington Square Zoning & Historic Preservation Other: _____

Return completed application to:

Society Hill Civic Association
P.O. Box 63503
Philadelphia, PA 19147



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102 Delancey St **\$1,550,000**
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room, gas fireplace, a wonderful deck and fabulous rear yard.

241-43 Chestnut E **\$1,149,900**

Amazing, one-of-a-kind, 2BD, 2BA condo, radiant heat floors,
keyless entry, laundry room/oyster bar, unique design elements, 3-
person soaking tub.

239 S 3rd **\$1,079,000**

LM, Pei designed townhouse, fully upgraded with 4 BD, 2.5 baths,
famous for central circular stairs, with a fully finished basement,
two kitchens with stainless appliances, oak floors and berber
carpets, marble bath, and a beautiful yard with parking.

1016 Spruce #3 **\$849,900**

Grand 4-5BD, 3BA tri-level condo on Strickland Row, an amazing
4467 sq ft of living space, courtyard setting, hardwood floors, wood
burning fireplaces, huge kitchen, gorgeous master bedroom suite,
central air, rooftop.

512 Addison Ct **\$849,900**

Clean, well-maintained, 3 BD, 2.5 BA, garage and driveway, large
formal dining area, rooftop, landscaped, private red-brick
courtyard, hardwood floors throughout, and a cozy gas fireplace.

332 S 3rd St **\$629,900**

Lovely 2BD, 2 BA, open den, newly renovated with original brick
façade, 1 year pre-paid parking, hardwood floors, moldings, French
doors, central air, private red-brick garden, and a lovely roof deck.

334 S 12th 1B **\$510,000**

Fantastic 2BD, 1.5 BA unit with 2 car parking, open kitchen, spiral
stairs, moldings, newly tiled bath, fp mantle, original woodwork
and original armoire.

900 Pine **From \$439,000**

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large windows, chef's kitchens, charm not found today yet with
many custom upgrades.

1100 Lombard #2 **\$349,900**

Dramatic 2nd floor bilevel, 2BD loft condo, 3 exposures, wood-
burning fireplace, central air, soaring ceilings

1106 Manning **\$330,000**

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Newsletter Delivery Challenge

Your Cooperation Requested

The *Society Hill Reporter* is delivered free of charge throughout our community six times a year (every other month). Its objective is to keep all residents informed about local happenings. Every issue is written, edited and proofread by a dedicated team of volunteers. There is no cost to any household for the printing and delivery of any issue — since the newsletter is completely underwritten by its advertisers.

Recently we've become aware of an obstacle which restricts the newsletter's delivery, and so we ask for your assistance: Several Society Hill households have stickers near their front doors indicating that no commercial leaflets or flyers can be dropped into these mailboxes — subject to being fined. Our service, which hand-delivers newsletters to all private residences in the neighborhood, will never drop any issue into any townhouse that has this "no flyer" warning. (FYI: The delivery service drops off cartons of newsletters to all apartment complexes in the neighborhood, where each has its own system for delivery among its apartment dwellers.)

Since residents of these "no flyer" townhouses never receive our bi-monthly newsletters, we ask nearby neighbors to kindly inform them about what they are missing. If these residents express interest in receiving our newsletters, we will gladly mail copies to them — whether or not they are SHCA members. Of course, we hope that once aware of our association's countless efforts to preserve our unique neighborhood — these households will join us, if they have not already done so. Please contact SHCA's administrator Matt DeJulio, at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com so he can add their names to our mailing list. Thanks for your cooperation.



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Society Hill Featured Listings



507 Pine Street
Recent Kostas Macos Renovation. Spectacular home. 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, family room, office, and finished basement. Cook's kitchen. Patio. 10'+ ceilings. Beautiful hardwood floors throughout. Perfect Space. **\$1,274,900.**



Abbots Square, #505
(530 S. 2nd Street) Large, renovated deluxe 1 bedroom, 1.5 bath condominium with balcony (overlooking beautiful Liberty Court). Granite and stainless kitchen, gorgeous hardwood floors throughout. **\$349,900.**

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Society Hill's Good Will Ambassadors

With over 465 Welcome Baskets presented to new or first-time Society Hill homeowners over the last eight years or so, SHCA can honestly say that we are "the good will ambassador to the neighborhood." The Baskets concept was originally created as a way to help new residents feel welcome and, at the same time, to introduce them to our very active civic organization. The program has proved to be a big success, as people are delighted to receive their gifts, while SHCA membership has grown to over 1,000 households.

As always, we thank our loyal contributors, listed below, for their participation. In addition, we welcome our newest contributor, **Lolli, Lolli**, a long-awaited children's shop featuring clothing and toys, located at 713 Walnut Street. Please help us say "thank you" to all Welcome Basket contributors by patronizing their establishments.

For more information, please contact Martha Levine — creator and coordinator of SHCA's Welcome Basket program — at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@msn.com.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WELCOME BASKET CONTRIBUTORS

Coffee Shops

Caramel (coffee/espresso), 725 Walnut Street
 Olde City Coffee, 221 Church & Reading Terminal Market
 Philadelphia Java Company, 518 S. 4th Street
 Starbuck's Coffee Inc., 347 South Street
 Starbuck's Coffee Inc., 8th & Walnut Streets

Food Stores

Chef's Market, 231 South Street
 Fork:etc. (prepared foods), 306 Market Street
 ShopRite, 29 Snyder Avenue
 SuperFresh Food Markets, 5th & Pine Streets
 Whole Foods Market, 929 South Street

Hair Salons

Brescia Salon, 118 South Street
 M's On the Square, 604 S. Washington Square
 Pileggi on the Square, 717 Walnut Street
 Salon @5th, 316 S. 5th Street

Restaurants

Amada, 217 Chestnut Street
 Ava Restaurant, 518 S. 3rd Street
 Bridget Foy's South Street Grill, 200 South Street
 City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd Street
 Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th Street
 Deux Cheminees, 1221 Locust Street
 Farmacia Restaurant, 15 S. 3rd Street
 Fork Restaurant, 306 Market Street
 LaBuca Ristorante, 711 Locust Street
 Mustard Greens, 622 S. 2nd Street
 Overtures Restaurant, 609 East Passyunk Avenue
 Panorama Ristorante, 14 N. Front Street
 Philadelphia Fish & Co., 207 Chestnut Street
 Pizzicato Restaurant, 248 Market Street
 Positano Coast Restaurant, 2nd & Walnut Streets
 Sfizzio, Society Hill Towers, 237 St. James Place

Specialty Foods

Homemade Goodies by Roz, 510 S. 5th Street
 Metropolitan Bakery, 15 S. 3rd Street
 Naked Chocolate Café, 1317 Walnut Street
 Pink Rose Pastry Shop, 630 S. 4th Street
 Rita's Water Ice, 239 South Street
 Zeke's Deli, 318 S. 5th Street

Specialty Shops

American Pie Crafts, 718 South Street
 Happily Ever After (toys), 1010 Pine Street
 Linu Boutique, 1036 Pine Street
 Lolli Lolli, 713 Walnut Street
 Marmelstein's Fabric and Trim, 760 S. 4th Street
 Paper on Pine, 1008 Pine Street
 Pinot (wine accessories), 227 Market Street
 Show of Hands Gallery, 1006 Pine Street
 Wireless Zone, 322 South Street

Sports Clubs/Fitness Training

M.Jason Bailey, Fitness Professional, 215-901-5816
 Philadelphia Sports Club, 220-250 S. 5th Street
 SCULPT-Fitness Training by Randi Skibinsky, 215-928-1433

Theaters/Entertainment/Museums

Annenberg Center for Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut Street
 Arden Theatre Co., 40 N. 2nd Street
 Atwater Kent Museum, 15 S. 7th Street
 The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, 1520 Locust Street #500
 Ghost Tours of Philadelphia
 Independence Seaport Museum, 211 S. Columbus Blvd.
 The Kimmel Center, Broad & Spruce Streets
 Lantern Theater Company, 10th & Ludlow Streets
 Lights of Liberty, 6th & Chestnut Streets
 Mum Puppet Theater, 115 Arch Street
 National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street
 Pennsylvania Ballet, 1101 S. Broad Street
 Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine, 400 Pine Street
 Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival, 2111 Sansom Street
 Philadelphia Theatre Company, 1714 Delancey Street
 The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, 215-569-8080
 Philomel Concerts, P.O. 41055, 19147
 Ritz Theater, 2nd & Walnut Streets
 Society Hill Playhouse, 507 South 8th Street
 TLA Video, 517 South 4th Street
 Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street

Other Services

Ananda Spa and Fitness Center, 400 Walnut Street
 James Scott, Interior Design. 215-922-2737
 Pearls by Leah, 215-627-4049
 Riff Cleaners, 314 S. 5th Street
 Robert Anthony Interiors, 1106 Pine Street
 Society Hill Veterinary Hospital, 2nd & Lombard Streets
 The Worth Collection (women's clothing), 215-925-8813



Jon and Karen Sirlin, Society Hill residents and Welcome Basket recipients, enjoy dinner at Mustard Greens, a long-time contributor to our program.

NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

Staci and Marc Schwartz

Two New “Docs”
on the Block

There’s a long history of physicians becoming writers of fiction. It includes W. Somerset Maugham, Anton Chekhov, Michael Crichton, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of Sherlock Holmes fame. And the *British Medical Journal* lists some forty more.

That company now includes Dr. Staci Schwartz, a specialist in geriatric rehab medicine, whose published children’s books include *The New Bear on the Block*, a “Best Book Award” winner that she also illustrated. The book, which carries a message of tolerance, is on the Philadelphia School District’s approved reading list.

In fact, Staci’s link to physician writers might be even stronger with Dr. Alexander McCall Smith who, while best known for his *No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency* series, wrote numerous immensely popular children’s books, and, like Staci, is married to another physician. That fellow

physician is Dr. Marc Schwartz, who received his MD degree from Temple University. Mark took his residency at Jefferson Medical School, where he is now a cardiologist and associate professor of medicine. The couple first met at Jefferson.

Interviewed in their airy, high-floor apartment together with their ten-year-old daughter Jamie, Staci and Marc talk about how they moved to Society Hill from the Rittenhouse Square area... a move that suits all three of them and their shared love of bike riding and roller-blading, mainly around Penn’s Landing. One very central attraction, though, is the couple’s involvement in the Society Hill Synagogue. Staci became its president last May after several years of active participation in its play school and early education programs. “The synagogue’s community impressed us,” she says. “Its members are warm, welcoming, intellectual, eclectic...”

As the synagogue currently celebrates its 40th anniversary, the couple emphasizes that the community is not simply about religion; rather, it offers concert series, artists’ showings, adult education programs, a preschool, as well as various social activities. The synagogue is now embarking on a capital campaign and is in the process of acquiring the adjacent building and adapting it for these programs.

The Schwartzes are prodigious readers: Marc of novels and history; Staci of classics that she had not previously read in school, such as *Jane Eyre*; and Jamie of Daniel Pinkwater and, of course, the Harry Potter books, which her parents also read.

What is it that persuades physicians to become writers of fiction? Somerset Maugham argued that medical training teaches powers of observation. But perhaps it’s more than that: it may be a desire to cure, or improve the human condition through the written word. In an age of sound bites and declining attention spans, it is perhaps a desire to preserve and protect the language — to maintain its linguistic rigor and to offer a literary wake-up call.

David Woods can be reached at
David.Woods@rxcomms.com



The New Bear on the Block,
an award-winning book
by Dr. Staci Schwartz




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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, September 19

SHCA Meetings

See page 1

Wednesday, September 26

City Council Hearing

City Hall, Room 400

8 a.m.

Saturday, September 29

Three Bears Park Fall Festival

11 a.m.-3 p.m. See page 23

Monday, October 1

"Penn's Village" Information Session

St. Peter's Parrish House, 313 Pine Street

7 p.m. See page 9

Wednesday, October 10

**Chefs' Culinary Samples
At the Head House Shambles**

S. 2nd Street between

Pine & Lombard Streets

7-10 p.m. See page 5

Wednesday, October 17

SHCA Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Location to be announced

Wednesday, October 31

**Halloween Parade &
Costume Contest**

Three Bears Park

5 p.m. See page 23



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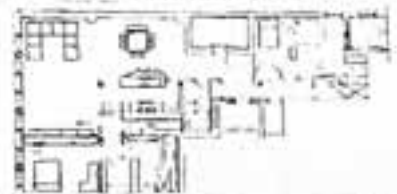


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