

Spruce Street Mid-Block Traffic Change Proposed

One-Way to Become Two-Way?

As was briefly noted in the last issue of the *Reporter*, a proposal (“the Proposal”) was made by the Society Hill Towers’ Political Action Committee (PAC) to change Spruce Street from one-way westbound to two-way from the Towers garage exit (just west of 2nd Street) to 38th Parallel Place (Dock Street). With this change, Spruce would become a two-way street from the Towers’ garage to Dock Street. A major rationale for this proposed change is to allow autos exiting its garage to turn left onto Spruce Street and proceed more directly to Columbus Boulevard or I-95.

The Towers’ PAC circulated a petition among its residents and some neighbors in support of the Proposal. Those who oppose it contend that the petition was not written nor circulated in an impartial manner, and that the process for obtaining approval was flawed from the beginning. For example, the Society Hill Civic Association, which represents all residents in the neighborhood, was not informed about the Proposal nor given an opportunity to become involved *before* the petition was circulated nor *before* its proponents contacted Councilman Frank DiCicco.

A committee to review the Proposal was appointed by SHCA’s President, who named three Board Directors to represent and consider the concerns of our greater community. They have already attended two meetings called by the PAC — where representatives from Councilman DiCicco’s office and the Streets Department were also present. A third meeting will be scheduled in the near future — most likely during the time this newsletter is being printed. However, neither SHCA’s Board of Directors, general membership or neighborhood residents have yet had an opportunity to be informed or have their voices heard on the matter. A community-wide meeting has been promised for sometime soon.

Society Hill residents who’ve learned of the Proposal are worried that this traffic change will affect the pedestrian-friendly nature of our neighborhood. To date, they have expressed the following concerns:

- the Streets Department has not provided any example of a similar mid-block traffic change or how such a change would affect the safety of pedestrians (particularly children, seniors and visitors) walking on the sidewalk in front of the garage’s exit or crossing at the

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For viewpoints from the Society Hill Towers’ PAC and Penn’s Landing Condo Association on the traffic change proposal, see pages 5 - 7

SHCA Board passes motion to oppose casinos at Market East. See page 9

WED.

March
18

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings
Wednesday, March 18, 2009

**Zubrow Auditorium, Pennsylvania Hospital
800 Spruce Street**

- 6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting**
All SHCA members are welcome.
- 7:00 p.m. Meet & Greet Your Neighbors**
- 7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting**
All neighborhood residents are invited to attend.

**Featuring Guest Speakers:
Candidates for District Attorney**

Meet the Candidates for District Attorney at the Membership Meeting

After many years of service, District Attorney Lynne Abraham — a proud resident of Society Hill — has decided not to seek reelection. In 2009, starting with the primary elections in May, Philadelphia will elect her successor.

Our civic association is pleased to host a Candidates’ Night at our General Membership Meeting on March 18th, at 8 p.m. — at Pennsylvania Hospital’s Zubrow Auditorium, 8th and Spruce Streets. We encourage all interested neighbors to attend this session. Come and

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Contributors
Libby Browne
Tiffany Bucciarelli
Kenny Grono
Marciene Mattleman
Mary Purcell
Michael R. Rochester
Tania Rorke

Graphic Design
Judy Lamirand
judy@parallel-design.com

Press Release Liaison
Sandra Rothman
315-C S. 2nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
e-mail: norfad@aol.com
tel: 267-671-0554

Advertising Manager
Matthew DeJulio
mattdejulio@aol.com

**Society Hill
Civic Association**
P.O. Box 63503
Philadelphia, PA
19147
tel: 215-629-1288
fax: 215-629-9914

Submission Deadlines
May/June Issue
Advertising: April 1
Editorial: April 10

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 e-mail 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, e-mail, 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 only if signed and the writer provides contact information.





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-Pascal Mercier, *Night Train to Lisbon*

We are living through a period of great challenge and uncertainty. Some might even say the basic infrastructure of our world is rapidly and fundamentally changing, as we try to assess the causes and tentatively profess possible solutions to the economic challenge we face, often applying yesterday's lessons and models.

No matter our walk in life, we are all aware of the dramatic changes taking place in the financial markets. Many companies have closed their doors. Many others are implementing strategies to change the way they do business in an effort simply to get through it. The escalating levels of unemployment portend further disruption in zip codes which, to date, have been relatively unscathed. In the end, no matter our profession or our socio-economic station, we are all affected. And with this tectonic shift, the philosophy that cultivated excess and reflexive acquisitiveness has lost some influence.

All things being local, what do these historic times mean for Society Hill? I do not think any community is insulated. We are clearly going to experience some distress, although perhaps less than other regions. We face multiple challenges. Some are directly attributable to this maelstrom. Others are independent. A number of the challenges are thoughtfully examined in this issue of *The Reporter*: state-licensed gambling and questionably located slots generating economic costs that will further stress an already compromised city budget; "reconstructed sidewalks" and pedestrian street crossings punctuated by out-of-scale controller boxes; widespread graffiti;

a proposal to change traffic patterns; stalled or shelved construction projects and a resurgent TownWatch Program, which desperately needs volunteers to be successful. Solutions to these and other challenges are without question within the reach of an engaged community. The real question: how engaged are we willing to become?

I believe if we all become involved and express our commitment to the health and enduring vitality of our community, these challenges can be met. In the end, despite the undeniable pain and dislocation, I believe much good will come from our current "restructuring." Perhaps the ideas and guiding principles to which we as a society subscribe will change: we will hold on to what is essential and to what gives us strength, and we will let go of that which does not.

Going forward, the ability and capacity to connect and inspire and successfully interact with groups that hail from many different kinds of sandboxes may prove far more valuable than historically recognized networks. This shift will provide wonderful and rich opportunities. Who knows, some of us may even experience deeper gratification from a simpler lifestyle. We may travel less but experience our community more deeply. We may have fewer clothes, but perhaps we will take better care of what we have. Our cars may be smaller but perhaps our planet will be healthier. We may have less but appreciate more.

And to our members, a big thank you for your generous support!



**Richard de Wyngaert,
President**

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Noteworthy Neighbors Douglas Verney and Francine Frankel

Spruce Street Mid-Block Traffic Change Proposed

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- intersections of Spruce and 2nd Streets or Spruce and Dock Streets;
- the potential for accidents when westbound motorists suddenly encounter vehicles making left-hand turns from the Towers garage;
 - the logistics of how moving trucks, trash and delivery trucks could maneuver at the garage intersection of this narrow street;
 - the loss of at least five residential permit parking spaces on the 200 block of Spruce Street (opposite the garage exit) — thereby depriving permitted residents of valuable parking where parking spots are at a premium and often difficult to locate. This would further limit the ability of contractors, repairmen and deliverymen to locate needed parking for their vehicles when servicing our neighbors' homes;
 - the impact on SEPTA's bus route #42, which travels west along Spruce Street. The Streets Department has, in fact, acknowledged that there is no other Center City example of a mid-block start to a two-way street that includes a SEPTA route;
 - the setting of a precedent for other local garages and parking lots to demand the same convenience — i.e. allowing them to exit in either of two directions out of their respective parking areas — based on a similar justification that it would save both time and fuel. (There are several such garages and parking lots in this neighborhood);
 - the appearance of double-yellow street striping on Spruce Street and additional signage requirements that would compromise the quality of aesthetics in our historic neighborhood.
- SHCA has been told that no decision will be made until a public meeting has taken place — to be held sometime this month or in April. Ultimately, Councilman Frank DiCicco will make a final decision based on recommendations by the city's traffic engineers, SEPTA, police and firefighters, as well as feedback from our entire community. We have been assured that the Councilman's decision will be made only after he has weighed all considerations and heard from both the proposal's supporters as well as its opponents — and only after a 90-day trial period has been conducted. However, there is concern that once all needed signage is installed and the road painted with yellow stripes for this trial period that two-way traffic on Spruce Street will become a *fait accompli*.
- For details as to where and when any public session on this subject will be conducted, please visit SHCA's website listed below. In addition, a blast e-mail providing the day, time and place of this meeting will be sent to all SHCA members for whom we have current email addresses.
- Questions? Visit www.societyhillcivic.org or contact SHCA's Administrator at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com.

General Membership: Meet the D.A. Candidates

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hear from the five current candidates for District Attorney, each of whom will present his vision of how best to prosecute crime in our city.

Our friends at the Committee of Seventy — the nonprofit group which works for fair elections, a well informed citizenry and effective government — has succinctly described the role of D.A. as the "Attorney for the People" in all criminal courts of Philadelphia (www.seventy.org). Previous D.A.s serving our city include, of course, retiring Lynne Abraham, Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille, Governor Edward G. Rendell and Senator Arlen Specter. For Candidates'

Night, we have invited all five Democratic candidates (named below) and will, of course, welcome the Republican candidate(s) as soon as announced. Please note that since these candidates all have impressive resumes, we suggest you visit their respective websites to learn the specifics of their educational backgrounds and professional experiences.

- Brian Grady: www.VoteGrady2009.com
- Dan McCaffery: www.mccafferyforda.com
- Dan McElhatton: www.votemcelhatton.com
- Michael Turner: www.turner4da.com
- Seth Williams: www.VoteSethWilliams.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Penn's Landing Square Association Opposed to Spruce Street Traffic Change

By Michael R. Rochester, Penn's Landing Square Association Council member and SHCA Board Director representing Penn's Landing Square

The Penn's Landing Square Association Council and Corporation Board have unanimously instructed me — as their representative to the SHCA Board of Directors — to express their opposition to the proposal that would allow drivers to make left turns out of the Society Hill Towers garage onto Spruce Street. This change would create a very dangerous problem for all residents whose homes are located at the intersection most affected by this attempt to convert Spruce Street into a two-way street.

The intersection of Spruce and 2nd Streets is at best a problematic issue. Traffic from Dock Street and the current Towers portion of Spruce Street create a serious problem for pedestrians. Any effort to add traffic coming from the west

onto Spruce — turning Spruce into a two-way street from Second to Dock Streets — will create an impossible situation for the many residents of Penn's Landing Square.

Please note that the petition signed by neighbors in support of this proposed traffic change was circulated without any input from Penn's Landing Square residents or their elected condo representatives. The complex consists of 110 homes and apartments. Its parking garage is located near the intersection of Spruce and Front Streets. Fearing for pedestrian safety and the potential of auto accidents occurring if two-way traffic is permitted along the aforementioned portion of Spruce, the Penn's Landing Board has unanimously voted to oppose this change. I have been instructed to ask for the support of the Society Hill Civic Association in this matter.

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Society Hill Towers Lists Reasons for the Proposed Spruce Street Conversion

**By Mary Purcell, Member,
Society Hill Towers' Political Action Committee**

Background

In the fall of 2008, neighbors at the Towers and "Pei houses" resurrected a proposal to change:

- Spruce Street to two-way from the Society Hill Towers (SHT) garage to 38th Parallel Street;
- 38th Parallel Street to two-way.

Currently, those exiting the Towers garage who wish to travel to Columbus Boulevard follow one of the following circuitous routes:

- West on Spruce, North on 3rd past Locust Street up to Thomas Paine Place, East on Thomas Paine, past 2nd Street to Dock Street in front of Society Hill Sheraton, to a left onto Dock Street heading East, to Columbus;
- West on Spruce, North on 3rd, East on Locust Street, South on 2nd past Spruce Street, East on Delancey (or Pine), North on Front to a right onto Spruce Street heading East to Columbus.

The routes above include busy streets on SEPTA routes (such as Spruce and 3rd Streets), as well as Belgian block streets that are narrow and/or deteriorating, such as Delancey and Thomas Paine.

Residents who park on Locust Street or in the Locust Street parking lots follow modified versions of these routes. If the proposed changes are made, traffic from the Towers' garage, the Towers and Locust Street could travel directly East on Spruce to Columbus Boulevard.

Streets Department Review

The Streets Department's preliminary review indicated that the change is feasible without endangering safety, providing that parking on Spruce is eliminated from the SHT garage to 2nd Street, a loss of 5 parking spaces. There was discussion about making the 2-way section from Philip to 2nd Streets, to avoid a mid-block change, but the Towers suggested that the change commence at the garage, rather than S. Philip, to minimize impact on neighborhood parking.

The Streets Department indicated that the change would be done on a 90-day test basis, and it was agreed that community support would be needed first, to be accomplished via petition.

The Towers have requested that the city look at adding parking as close as possible in the nearby

neighborhood, and Brian Abernathy of Councilman DiCicco's office is coordinating the response.

Community Support

Volunteers from the Towers and Pei houses circulated a petition in the neighborhood. More than 300 signatures supported, including 100 non-Towers residents; 4 opposed.

Volunteers went to each home either on the current routes or on the proposed route (100 and 200 blocks of Spruce). For those not at home, volunteers returned a second and third time. Particular emphasis was placed on the 100 and 200 blocks of Spruce, though volunteers found only a few residents at home.

In addition, meetings have been held with representatives of the Towers, SHCA, Streets Department and Brian Abernathy. In response to SHCA representatives' concerns, SEPTA and the Fire Department have indicated that the change will not impact their operations.

Towers' Garage Survey

The Towers surveyed their residents using the Towers' garage. About 100 responded, and results show that 70 percent of garage exits would be a left onto Spruce, if available. Six disagreed with the proposed change. Projections based on survey results indicate that about 300 left turns per day from the garage can be expected.

Benefits

Based on survey results and projecting for traffic not captured (e.g., Locust Street, guests, employees), we estimate that the proposed changes will result in annual savings of at least:

- 30,000 – 40,000 miles
(300 left turns/day x .4 mile saved
x 365 days = 43,800)
- 1,500 – 2,500 gallons of gas
(40,000 miles/15 mpg = 2,667)
- 6,000 – 10,000 hours driving time per year
(300 left turns per day x 365 days
x 6 minutes = 10,950 hours per year)
as well as reducing traffic on busy and narrow streets such as Spruce, 3rd, Delancey and Thomas Paine.

The Towers' Council believes that the proposed changes will benefit the neighborhood, and not just the Towers and Pei houses, where support is strong.

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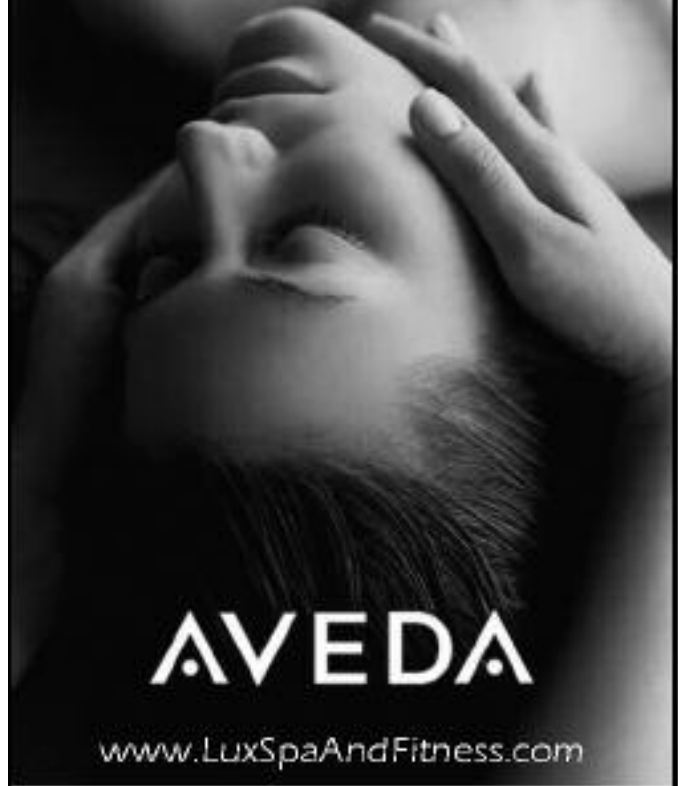
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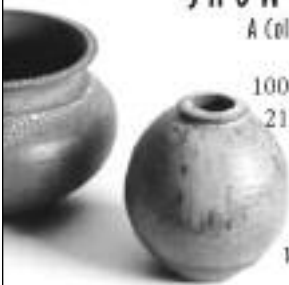
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Growing Opposition to a Market Street Casino

According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* Editorial Board, "If the book relating the history of gaming in Pennsylvania ever gets written, it's hard to imagine the word 'debacle' not in the title." The *Wall Street Journal* says that trying to bring casinos to Philadelphia "may be the casino industry's Waterloo." Not even the state's biggest champion of gambling, Governor Ed Rendell, knows whether two casinos will finally end up in the city. When asked if this will happen by Marty Moss-Coane — on local public radio station WHYY — he replied, "I don't know."

Nevertheless, in spite of all the social and economic risks that gaming would bring to Philadelphia — to the detriment of both residents and the city budget — Mayor Nutter's administration is hurtling down a path towards establishing a casino in the heart of the city. Specifically, the administration is spending significant city funds to "study" the feasibility of installing a slots parlor at the Gallery on Market Street East, which would contain 5,000 machines. The rationale is that this casino would serve as an anchor to revitalize Market East, which abuts Society Hill's northern border. The Mayor's point person on casinos has called this plan "a home run for the city."

The casino slated for Market Street East is Foxwoods — one of two casino operators originally given gaming licenses to build on the Delaware waterfront. The original site for Foxwoods was at Reed Street and Columbus Boulevard, just south of Queen Village. The impetus to change its site was due to several factors, primarily: widespread neighborhood opposition; the unveiling of a new Master Plan for the waterfront that does not include "big box" development; the ballooning cost for building infrastructure at the waterfront; and the recent dramatic downturn of casino industry profits, especially Foxwoods' profits, as indicated in the February 15th edition of the *Inquirer*. The cost of developing the waterfront had been estimated at \$670 million, but this figure is already several years old. In the same *Inquirer* article, an economist was quoted on the increasingly shaky financial condition of the Foxwoods corporation: "Their plan for growth was built on an economy that no longer exists and is not coming back."

One of the supposed justifications for legalizing slots gambling in Pennsylvania is that it would reduce the Philadelphia wage-tax for all working

citizens. Governor Rendell even threatened, in his radio interview with Moss-Coane, that the state legislature would cut Philadelphia out of any wage-tax reduction if at least one of the two licensed slots parlors slated for the city had not begun construction as of August 2009.

Meanwhile, many Philadelphians have been asking: "What citizen would not be willing to forego a \$120 reduction in his annual wage tax (in the case of a household earning \$50,000 per year) to prevent the vast social ills and financial drains of the predatory casino industry from coming to our historic city?" Another justification for casinos in Philadelphia is the projected \$23 million in tax revenue if both casinos open in the city. However, critics point out that this figure will not even cover the increased cost for the mitigation of crime, gambling addiction and its expected consequences. They cite significant expenditures for policing, court and incarceration costs, addiction treatment and family services. The casino industry is facing more than just the ire of good citizens who continue to learn about the reality of how the majority of casino industry profits stem from a group of vulnerable and addicted gamblers — many of whom would never gamble unless slots parlors arrive on their doorsteps.

Additional troubles facing the two licensed casinos — Foxwoods and SugarHouse — are that both have failed to open their doors within the mandatory timetable required under the state's gaming act. (The proposed location for SugarHouse is on the Delaware River, directly adjacent to the residential neighborhoods of Northern Liberties and Fishtown.) SugarHouse's window for beginning operations ended in January 2009. Although it has applied for a one-year extension, it still faces permit appeals both on the state and federal levels.

The license for Foxwoods' riverfront casino will also expire — next month in April 2009. It must appear before the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) — not only for an extension of its license, but also because it proposes to move from its original waterfront location, at Reed and Delaware Avenue, to the Gallery site in Center City, on Market Street between 10th and 11th Streets. It also will face an in-depth examination of its finances, according to a spokesman from the PGCB.

SHCA's Board of Directors passed a motion to oppose casinos at Market East or near any residential community at its February 18th meeting.

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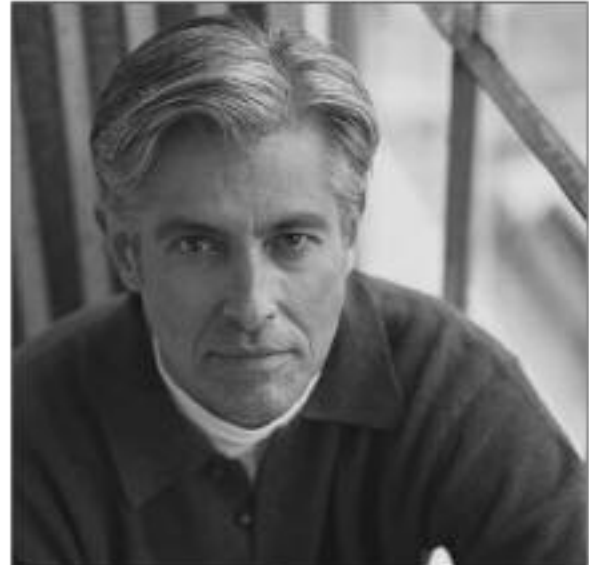
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Growing Opposition to a Market Street Casino

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However, Foxwoods continues to pursue a license for the Market Street location in spite of many groups that have united against placing a casino in the heart of our city. These diverse groups consist of over three dozen organizations, including: the Black Clergy of Philadelphia, Asian-Americans United, Arch Street United Methodist Church, the Shalom Center, and Project H.O.M.E. The list of communities, non-profit and religious organizations continues to grow. Under the banner of "No Casino in the Heart of the City Coalition," the group condemns the unfair, fast-tracking of the Market Street casino and rejects actions taken by the city's government that make it an active partner with the casino industry.

Our civic association has formulated its own position — consistent with its long-held belief that casinos do not belong in or near residential

neighborhoods. At the February 18th Board Meeting, SHCA Directors overwhelmingly voted to oppose placing any casino on Market Street East. By an 11-3 vote, the Board agreed to the following statement: **"Consistent with our previously expressed position, SHCA continues to oppose casinos near residential neighborhoods and, accordingly, opposes casinos at Market East."** One SHCA Director expressed the opinion of most when she said: "The last thing Philadelphia needs is a sleazy casino located in the heart of our beautiful and most historic neighborhoods."

Society Hill residents who are concerned about the threat that this location poses to the city and our neighborhood can stay informed or become involved by visiting SHCA's website at www.societyhillcivic.org and clicking onto "Casino Committee." —*The Editorial Board*

SHCA BOARD NOMINEES NEEDED

SHCA's Annual Elections Wednesday, May 20

Our civic association will be electing officers and directors at its annual meeting in May. Nominees to be elected for a one-year term will be the President, five Vice-Presidents, the Secretary and Treasurer. Also, members from each of Society Hill's four quadrants will elect one Board Director for a three-year term. (Every quadrant is served by three directors.) Individuals will be nominated for these positions next month

by SHCA's Nominating and Elections Committee. To be considered by that committee for any of these positions, or to recommend another member for nomination, please contact SHCA's Administrator, Matt DeJulio, whose phone and email address are listed below.

Additionally, a person may be nominated by a petition, signed by ten current SHCA members. Please note that in the case of a petition regarding a quadrant directorship, the ten signers must reside in that quadrant. Petitions should be mailed to

SHCA, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147, and must be received by Friday, March 27.

The names of all individuals nominated will be listed in the May/June, 2009 issue of the *Society Hill Reporter*, and the election of officers and quadrant directors will take place at the May 20 General Membership Meeting.

If you have any questions regarding this election process, please contact Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com.

THE 2009 OLD HOUSE FAIR

Saturday, March 28th 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

If the adage "nothing succeeds like success" proves true, then the 2009 Old House Fair should be bigger and better than ever. This one-day Fair, sponsored by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, will be held at the Germantown Friends School, located at 31 W. Coulter Street, Philadelphia, 19144.

One of the longest running restoration-themed events on the East Coast, the fair connects owners of older and historic homes with appropriate professional resources. This year's Fair will feature over 70 vendor booths and an array of activities to help owners of old houses better maintain and/or restore their properties. These learning opportunities include demonstrations, expert panel

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New Trash Receptacles: Boon or Bust?

BY MARTHA LEVINE

The Problem

When neighbors complained about the many overflowing corner trash cans throughout Society Hill, we knew we had to find a remedy. The problem was that some residents were placing their household trash into corner cans rather than saving their weekly accumulations of trash to put out on collection day. At several locations, corner trash cans were filled to the brim — and often beyond! Still, that didn't deter some folks from setting down their bags of trash next to those receptacles.

The Anticipated Remedy

Ever-ready to respond to neighborhood problems, SHCA's Board of Directors discussed some options. Last year, one Director came up with a possible solution: Replace topless cans with a partially covered model that would deter deposits of large bags of trash. Since SHCA's budget is limited, we did not have the resources to purchase brand-new receptacles. Instead, we settled for twenty-five recycled but un-refurbished covered trash cans from a company called Recepta-Sign. These receptacles, used in many commercial parts of Center City, display messages on their four sides and a map of Philadelphia on their vaulted top parts. We kept our fingers crossed — wondering if this would be the solution to our *disastrous dumping dilemma?*

Back to Square One

Without warning, on a cold winter day in early February, we felt the presence of these new arrivals. While driving down Pine Street, I spied a trash receptacle that was not there the day before. Then another at the next corner, and the next. But wait! They were "new" but looked worn, beaten down by years of use — the victims of graffiti, rust and filth. Many neighbors were outraged by their appearance and questioned "why are we getting these old trash cans?"

A small group of Board Directors and others jumped into action — joining forces to find a remedy. Here are some options we have discussed:

- Clean all the graffiti with the use of a solvent, and/or touch up with paint where needed;
- Replace the maps with a clear covering — as many maps were already removed, ripped or covered with graffiti.

- Remove the four side panels with messages — a labor-intensive job involving special screwdrivers. These panels were a magnet for graffiti and will continue to be. They were also laden with rust and grime. All these unsightly problems — messages, graffiti, and rust and grime are inappropriate for our historic neighborhood. (At 3rd and Spruce Streets and also at 6th and Pine Streets, please see several models with these message panels removed.)

Caveat: After several phone calls to the Streets Department, we were informed that these "new" trash receptacles will not be fitted with plastic bags for refuse collection — citing cost as the reason. So now when someone deposits the remnants of his McDonald's Big Mac and over-sized drink into one of these receptacles, we are left with a malodorous situation — which will only get worse in warmer weather. This is unsanitary and unacceptable for our residential neighborhood.

Now, before we can consider the refurbishment of each of these receptacles — by our own team of dedicated neighborhood volunteers — the city must guarantee the use of plastic bags in which to collect the trash. In your travels, please look at the two sites mentioned above, and let us know what you think about these receptacles — either with or without their side panels.

Where are we? This is "a work in progress," and so we welcome your feedback, as we try to "do the right thing" for our historic neighborhood. To offer your ideas or for more information, please contact Martha Levine at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.



Corner trash cans are a convenience for pedestrian deposits — not containers for household trash!

TREE PLANTERS WANTED!

Please join the Tree Tenders and hearty residents to help plant trees in Society Hill this coming spring. We are teaming up with the tree pit property owners on this planting project, but we need more volunteers

to pitch in and help out. Planting will be scheduled for a week-end in late April or early May by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Fairmount Park Commission, which are providing us with the trees.

Join in the fun as we "green-up" our neighborhood with beautiful trees! No prior experience is needed. Just call Garrett Smith at 215-760-1213 or Hans Bombeck at 215-627-1356. Thanks so much!

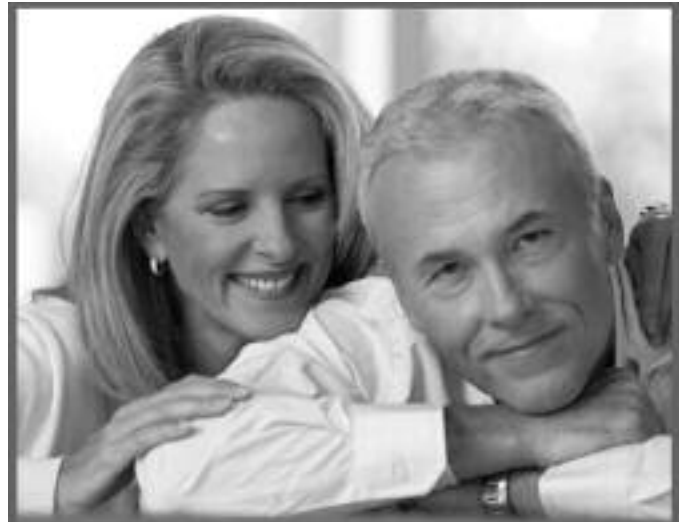


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ZONING & HISTORICAL PRESERVATION (ZHP) REPORTS

BY PAUL BONI

Update on the Dilworth House

Our civic association continues to work hard to protect the historic Dilworth House, which is located at 223-25 S. 6th Street, facing Washington Square.

As you may know, the house was built in the 1950's for Mayor Richardson Dilworth, who led his administration's unique urban renewal policy, which for the first time in the United States integrated historic preservation with new development. He also led by personal example when he moved his family into what had been a run-down neighborhood.

The property is currently owned by a developer who is proposing to tear down half of the Dilworth House and graft onto its rear a 16-story condo tower. In 2006, the plan was approved by the city's Historical Commission. In September of 2008, after several days of presenting expert testimony, documents and other evidence to the Board of Licenses & Inspections Review (L&I), our civic association and a group of near neighbors were successful in demonstrating that the Historical Commission's decision was contrary to law. The Commission's approval was overturned.

The developer has appealed that decision, and we are currently defending the Board of L&I Review's decision in the Court of Common Pleas. Even though the Historical Commission's approval was overturned, the developer is proceeding to seek zoning approvals. At the Zoning Board of Adjustment in February 2009, the developer sought zoning variances. Our civic association and a group of near neighbors appeared in opposition. The Zoning Board has taken the matter under advisement, and we currently await a decision.

SHCA's Zoning & Historical Preservation Committee has always been open to a reasonable compromise that would respect the historic integrity of the Dilworth House as well as the surrounding community. Although we are vigilant about protecting our historic neighborhood, we are also in favor of appropriate new development. Our hard work continues.

BY STEVEN WEIXLER

Big Boost For Local Cultural and Historical Landmark

Staci Schwarz, President of the Society Hill Synagogue Society, has exciting news to share with our community. She reports that the synagogue has recently completed a year-long training program with Partners for Sacred Places (PFSP), a national organization devoted to helping religious congregations raise funds to take care of their historic buildings. She is delighted to announce that Society Hill Synagogue is the proud recipient of an \$80,000 two-to-one matching grant from the PFSP/Philadelphia Regional Fund. The synagogue now has two years to raise the necessary funds to complete the restoration work on one of our neighborhood's beautiful and historic houses of worship.

As you may know, Society Hill Synagogue is also in the middle of a Capital Campaign which will raise funds to support a much-needed expansion and renovation of the historic building and the adjacent property located at 430 Spruce Street. The funds raised through the PFSP matching grant will enable the congregation to repair and/or replace the roof, the exterior building envelope, and several of the 184-year-old diamond-pane windows that are located in the front of the building, as well as the windows in the sanctuary.

Staci and the congregation hope that the Society Hill Civic Association and our community at large will join the synagogue's members in celebrating this significant grant award, which will serve as a catalyst to raise the necessary funds for critical repairs to this important historical landmark in Society Hill.

For more information, or to make a contribution toward the matching grant, please call Betty van de Rijn at 215-922-6590, ext. 23.

Stamper Square

Several neighbors have asked about the status of the Stamper Square project, proposed to be located at the former NewMarket site (Front to Second Streets, between Pine and Lombard). After consulting with Councilman DiCicco's office, the city's Planning Commission and the developer's representative, SHCA's ZHP Committee is unable to provide any new information on whether or not the project will go forward as planned.



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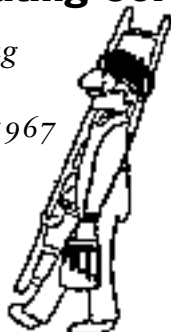
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Central Delaware Advisory Group Elects Officers

by Rene Goodwin, Pennsport Civic Association's Representative to CDAG and Chair for Communications and Outreach

On January 13, 2009, the Central Delaware Advisory Group (CDAG) elected its first Executive Committee. Officers include Steven Weixler of Society Hill Civic Association, Chairman; Matt Ruben of Northern Liberties Neighbors Association and Jeff Rush of Queen Village Neighbors Association, Vice Chairmen; Marsha Bacal of Society Hill Towers, Treasurer; and Laura Lanza of Port Richmond, Secretary.

The officers were elected from the members of the CDAG Board, which consists of volunteer representatives from each of the waterfront communities. "We want to insure that the plan for the waterfront includes true ongoing civic participation," said Steve Weixler, "and we look forward to working with all who have a stake in the waterfront's future."

As the newly elected group moves forward in its role as steward for the civic vision, they will be working closely with elected officials, developers and all interested citizens.

On Friday January 27, The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) was created from what had been the Penn's Landing Corporation. In June 2008, Mayor Nutter promised that he would reform the Penn's Landing Corporation. The mayor officially launched the "ten-point action plan for the Civic Vision," developed by Penn Praxis in collaboration with the citizens of Philadelphia under the representation of CDAG.

Although CDAG members were not named to this new corporation's board, Steven Weixler, newly elected chair of CDAG (and chair of SHCA's Zoning & Historic Committee), indicated he was "pleased that the Mayor had followed through with creating an accountable waterfront manager." He vowed to "see that CDAG members would assume a 'front and center' position at all DRWC meetings and in all critical issues or decisions concerning implementation of the action plan."

CDAG has had the lead role of providing community input in the waterfront development plans. Weixler said, "We intend to keep that critical role of public input an integral part of the process."

We want to insure that the plan for the waterfront includes true ongoing civic participation.

Caring for Your Street Trees

The city environment poses many challenges for street trees, usually planted in very small cut-outs in the sidewalk, known as tree pits, which reduce the tree's life expectancy to about one-fourth the life expectancy of the same tree planted in a lawn area.

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way—outer crown thinning and reduction—which allows the tree to fit its location and encourages a positive growth habit. Our trees are able to endure heavy storms with minimal damage because of these practices.

Without this attention to your street trees, you are inviting the risk of losing a most valuable asset.

Street trees benefit our lives in many ways: Their high crowns shade us; their flowers color our streets; their leaves improve our air quality, and overall, trees increase our property values. In short, street trees are the accents to the historical architecture of this great city.



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SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL

BY MARILYN APPEL

Calling for Help

When to dial 911 and when to call 311

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Call 311 for non-emergencies and general information — including all city services with phone numbers, addresses and hours of operation. Other information, such as how to apply for a business license; information about court hearings and probation; trash pickup; reporting everything from abandoned cars to potholes is also available by calling 311. Your call will receive a tracking number, which can be referred to by computer or phone. *Note:* 311 is available 24/7 and will vastly improve city services. Do not hesitate to call this number, as it saves 911 for true emergencies.

Sidewalk Snow & Ice Removal

After a recent storm, the ice was never removed from the sidewalk in front of two houses next to my home. After we saw several people slip and fall, we called the police — not their responsibility, but as a favor they sent someone to issue a ticket. Guess what happened after the next snowfall? Behold, cleaned and salted sidewalks!

If you've got this dangerous situation near your home, please phone me at 215-922-2626: I will alert our wonderful beat cop to issue a ticket to the homeowner.

These tickets are expensive, and the police are not to be ignored. Apparently they weren't! Meanwhile, here's an easy and practical solution for owners of small apartment buildings: leave a bucket of salt in the foyers of your building, and ask your tenants to salt down the sidewalk after any snowstorm.

Use of cell phones

Now that spring is coming, we'll warn you again about talking on your cell phone while walking or jogging along Society Hill streets: never fail to be aware of what's going on around you!

Mayor Nutter's Homeless Strategy

There will soon be 700 housing opportunities accompanied by behavioral health and other supportive services for the homeless. Thanks to the Philadelphia Housing Authority, there are now permanent housing facilities and "Safe Haven" and drug treatment beds. Wondering what to do when you see homeless persons in Center City? Call the Outreach Coordination Center's 24-hour hotline at 215-232-1984, and ask for a "Special Protocol Outreach Team (SPOT)." The SPOT Team provides a welcome service — although they cannot require a homeless person to accept their services. *Note:* If you forget this number, just call 311 and they will assist you.

Neighborhood Crimes

In the last month, primary incidents were thefts from parked cars. However, there was one theft of an automobile. But more important, there were several thefts of wallets and credit cards from purses on the floors of the Ritz movie theaters, and at Starbucks. Ladies: we remind you to place your handbags on your lap or tightly between your feet — to prevent pilfering. *Note:* The Wine and Spirits Shop on S. 5th Street, across from the SuperFresh, was broken into a couple of times recently. Thefts have also been reported from the Sporting Club on 5th Street.

DONATIONS

We are still collecting your old, used cell phones for seniors and needy citizens. We would also appreciate any donations of kitchen items for the Church at 10th and Wallace Streets. Please call 215-922-2626 or ring my doorbell at 414 Spruce Street.



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KIDS IN THE CITY

A COLUMN BY SONIA GRASSE & CATHERINE SIGNORELLO

Keeping Your Cool in the Cold: a Handy-Dandy Guide

Stay in PJs
all day and
eat dinner
for breakfast!

As city parents, we are blessed with many places and opportunities for our children to be entertained, but something we are all subject to is the weather. Being cooped up in the wintertime can prove to be somewhat challenging. Wintertime doldrums can produce feelings of being trapped, penned in and stir-crazy... and no, we aren't talking only about the kids! The thought of spending another 24 hours with the same people inside the same four walls (only two, in most cases, even with windows to see the arctic tundra outdoors), and figuring out how to occupy ourselves could drive us to lose our cool. Since a hot temper can't thaw the cold (sadly one of us has tried and failed that experiment — more than once), we have prepared this list of weather-friendly, family-bonding ideas.

Our hope is that these suggestions will help us to resist that other urge: the urge to splurge on TV time. We dedicate these ideas to those of us who have wrestled with the notion "No...seven straight hours of watching TV won't turn their (or our) brains as soft as the slush on the street." So, before our kids jump through the sofa-cum-trampoline and literally start bouncing off the walls, we offer these alternative activities to you. We are going to give them a "go" as well!

***Indoor Picnic:** Have take-out or pizza (or any meal) on a blanket on the floor.

Game Night: Choose a night to play cards or games together. The point is that they are played together as a family.

***Yes Day:** A special jar is set aside and over time filled with playing ideas that previously you were unable to try out at the time — such as: "Wear my Cinderella dress all day;" "Have donuts and chocolate milk for breakfast;" etc.... Then on a designated day the papers are removed, reviewed and applied as seen fit.

***Country of the Week:** Select a country mentioned in the news, find it on the map, do a bit of cultural research online (cuisine, language, etc.) and pay extra attention to happenings in that country during the course of the week.

***Cell-phone Free Day:** Ha! How about that! Or at least during meals....

Surprise Kidnap: Secretly plan and pick a particular (non-test, no field-trip) day to show up at school and 'kidnap' your child. Then take them for an adventure of their choosing.

Date Night: An important ritual for parents and all couples! It doesn't have to be fancy, expensive or a "big idea," but it does have to be just the two of you together (and out of the house). A nice chat over hot chocolate is always fun!

Saturday (or Sunday) Sweep-up: Make a fun routine out of clearing clutter and getting organized for the upcoming week. This can also be tied into... **Sunday Sundaes:** Prepare a "make-your-own" sundae buffet, but only for those children who have completed their homework, or cleaned their clutter.

Scavenger Hunt: Great for beginning readers or even those just learning letters and numbers.

***Toast Night:** Take out the fancy china for mealtime, and have each member in the family make a toast. The point is to put to use the fancy dishes and enjoy each other's company — even if it is only for take-out or leftovers.

Walking Together, Just-to-Walk: This can be done on a full moon night (or any night). Just set out as a family — with no destination — and enjoy the sights while enjoying conversation.

Supermarket Sweep: Make marketing fun and put your kid in charge of the list. Older kids can work with a budget, while younger ones can help find and identify items on the list by reading or even by an item's color or design.

Secret Admirers: Select friends and write notes detailing what you like about them and secretly drop the notes through their mail slots. Or make a collage by cutting out images and words from magazines and slip the collages through their mail slots. Or tie a bunch of balloons to the door-knob. 'Fess up soon though, so it's not creepy!

Lights Out Day: Choose one day a month to use little or no electricity. At the least, consider participating in Earth Hour on March 28th by joining people around the globe who will switch off their power from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. (For more information, go online to Earthhour.org.)

KIDS IN THE CITY

Play 'Top Model': Use a digital camera to take photos of each other — trying to perfect a called-out emotion — such as: give me *surprised*; give me *angry*; give me *Blue Steel*. Upload the photos and see who portrayed each emotion best. Makes a funny keepsake or scrapbook!

***Crazy Food Day:** On a day off from school, stay in PJs all day and eat dinner for breakfast, etc...

***Giving Back Day:** Fill “activity bags” with coloring books, crayons and games and give them to a local children’s hospital. Bake cookies for a local police station or fire department. Visit a nursing home and read to the elderly patients.

Write a Story: Each family member writes (or dictates) one line of the story, having seen only the line immediately prior to it. (Fold the paper over each line). Read the whole story aloud. Or make your own “fill-in-the-blank” “Mad Libs” — a great way to learn grammar.

Note: Ideas indicated with asterisks were taken from the book *The New Family Traditions* by Meg Cox. Three other good sources are *Kids Guide to Service Projects* by Barbara Lewis; *Just Family Nights*, by Susan Vogt and dancingmeatballs.com/philadelphia.

ASAP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Have You an Afternoon Once a Week to Share Your Interests with Kids?

“ASAP” — also known as “After School Activities Partnerships” — is recruiting volunteers to lead clubs during unsupervised after-school hours at convenient, safe places of your choosing. Lead a Scrabble or chess club or an activity or game of your own preference — either alone or with a partner. We’ll supply materials and organize the kids, and you’ll have an opportunity to teach a skill that perhaps could change the life of a young person.

If interested, or for more information about this ASAP program, please consider calling long-time Society Hill neighbor Marciene Mattleman at ASAP: 215-545-2727, ext. 16, or email mmattleman@phillyasap.org.




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ACCIDENTAL TOURIST IN MY OWN BACKYARD... AND BEYOND?

BY JANE BIBERMAN

From Dogs to Debussy: Trips Around and From the Square

It's 6:30 a.m. on yet another frigid winter morning. As much as I love Washington Square, I'm not looking forward to going there now. I'd stay in bed, except that my two dogs are waiting for their constitutional. But first I have to put on layers of cold-proof clothes to brave the icy wind. I also have to dress Little Butch Obama, my new Cocker Spaniel mix, who I adopted just before our new President was elected. He shivers without his green wool turtleneck — knitted by my Aunt Anne some forty years ago for Snapper, my first dog. (I found Snapper and his successor, Fleur, in Rittenhouse Square, where I lived for three decades before moving to Independence Place with Kipp and Katie, both Shetland Sheepdog rescues.)

As a companion to dogs, I estimate that I've walked around these two Squares hundreds of thousands of times. There are countless benefits, of course — the best being the many friends I've made.

So what does this column have to do with the topic of tourism? I'll tell you: one of the most interesting people I've met on my walks is Ellen Kay Coleman, circa Snapper. Ellen, as some of you may know, runs a program known as "Excursions from the Square" (Rittenhouse, that other "square" west of ours), where her big chartered bus parks in front of the Ethical Culture Society. Ellen, who can measure out her life in bus trips rather than dog walks, has taken thousands of us from the Philadelphia area on some terrific vacations over the 38 years she's spent in the travel industry.

Being an unabashed "culture vulture," Ellen has managed to combine pleasure with business, as she designs her trips around music, theater, art and architecture. She's escorted participants to cultural festivals all along the Eastern seaboard — from Stratford to Savannah, as well as to San Francisco, Santa Fe and Minneapolis (first by plane and then by bus). Her frequent day-trips to New York City are especially economical and enjoyable. But the best part is Ellen herself. She's the ideal travel companion: experienced and well organized, knowledgeable and humorous. However, you do need a sense of humor for those occasional glitches, including late passengers who've misplaced their bags.

I'll now reminisce about an idyllic trip I took with Ellen last August — to the Marlboro Music Festival in southern Vermont. The memory of this vacation truly warms me. I'm generally not enthusiastic about group treks, but when you travel with "Excursions from the Square" you know you're going to be in the company of like-minded people. We set off at the civilized hour of 8:30 a.m. and traveled to Connecticut, where we stopped at the very beautiful Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington. En route, Ellen distributed gourmet box lunches to each of us, along with printed material describing our destination — a National Historic Landmark, built by America's first female architect: Theodate Pope Riddle. A few hours later, we settled into the cozy Putney Inn, about thirty minutes from Marlboro, our home base. The following six days were packed with open rehearsals, concerts, museums, fine dining and shopping in small, charming towns, such as Bennington and Brattleboro.

On our return trip, we visited the marvelous Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, where we saw an exhibit of Whistler paintings and a Winslow Homer show at the breath-taking Stone Hill Center — designed by Japanese architect Tadeo Ando. Our final destination was Cooperstown, New York, where we were treated to a first-rate performance of "Kiss Me Kate" at the fabulous Glimmerglass Opera. Before starting home the next day, there was time to visit the celebrated Baseball Hall of Fame — although a small group opted for the Fenimore Art Museum.

So, if you're not lucky enough to have a dog to walk, you can meet your neighbors on Ellen's bus excursions. Some local "regulars" include Nancy Halpern and Marvel Shmiefsky, both of Indy Place; Evelyn Spritz, of 2nd Street; Peggy Carroll of the Hopkinson House and Janet Andereck from Society Hill Towers. For a 2009 schedule, visit www.Squaretrips.com or email ellenkay@prodigy.net. These trips are economical and well-arranged. Pick-ups on Washington Square are being planned as I write.



All aboard for
an adventure
starting out
in our own
backyard!

PENN'S VILLAGE

BY TANIA RORKE

Great News!



Penn's Village has exciting news to share! The Internal Revenue Service has granted it non-profit status. Therefore, it is now qualified to receive tax-deductible donations. Friends wishing to donate to Penn's Village will no longer have to send their donations to the Society Hill Fund, as these donations can now be sent directly to Penn's Village!

Penn's Village is also expanding. On April 1, 2009, we will begin accepting members from Washington Square West and Rittenhouse Square. If you know residents from these areas who would benefit from Penn's Village services, or who might be interested in volunteering their time or sharing their interests with Penn's Village members, please refer them to our new website: pennsvillage.org; or have them call 215-925-7333.

Also in January 2009, Penn's Village announced a new service: Penn's Village Meals! This

service is for members who may find meal preparation a challenge and/or would like to have meals delivered to their home. Penn's Village can deliver appetizing and nutritious dinners appropriate for any diet restrictions and at very reasonable prices. Dinners will cost \$9, and for an additional \$1, dessert will be included. Members will be able to choose from a menu of entrees, and their selected frozen meals will be delivered to them once a week. It is expected that this service will be in operation by the time you read this. For more information, please call 215-925-7333.

FYI: Penn's Village is an innovative nonprofit organization founded to enhance the lives of residents who wish to remain living in their community as they grow older or for those who have special needs. It provides support, services and programs that enable members to live healthy and meaningful lives while remaining in their own homes.



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GO WEST ...

Restaurant Round-Up

MÉMÉ

This is what chef/owner, David Katz, affectionately called his grandmother: thus, the name of his new restaurant at 22nd and Spruce Streets — previously Melograno, which has moved a few blocks northeast. Mémé's menu of eclectic cuisine is descended from Moroccan-Jewish tradition. Practically all patrons seemed to be enjoying the mussels (scrumptious!); our two dining companions ordered the double-sized, shared chicken entree. Though Mémé recently received its liquor license, they will allow you to BYOB for a \$10 corkage fee. Located at 2201 Spruce Street. Call 215-735-4900.

KANELLA


At the corner of 10th and Spruce Streets (not too far to walk) there is a Greek-Cypriot restaurant called Kanella. It's a BYOB with a great variety of fish, meat and vegetables. Because it is a fairly small room usually crowded with neighborhood diners, we recommend making a reservation. Call 215-922-1773.

Located between Kanella and Mémé there's a plethora of exciting restaurants — some old and some new. So we wonder: is Spruce Street, like Market East, becoming another "restaurant row?"



...And in the Neighborhood


We thank three neighborhood restaurants, which donated "Dinners for Two" to SHCA's Membership Committee. Please see the report on page 32 for additional information about the dinner winners. These generous restaurants include Zahav, Cuba Libra and one of Steven Starr's eateries.




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Society Hill Year in Review

29 Houses were sold in Society Hill, 19106 in 2008 according to the MLS. The average price was \$1,145,483 and was on the market just over 4 1/2 months. In 2007, 38 Houses sold, but the average price was only \$967,128. So although volume was down 24%, prices increased 16% in Society Hill.

| Address | Price | Days | Address | Price | Days |
|-------------------|-------------|------|---------------|-------------|------|
| x Willings Alley | \$555,000 | 44 | 1xx Delancey | \$1,087,000 | 177 |
| 3xx S. 7th Street | \$610,000 | 27 | 5xx Cypress | \$1,060,000 | 83 |
| 3xx Delancey | \$630,000 | 30 | 2xx Delancey | \$1,100,000 | 308 |
| 1xx Pine | \$650,000 | 188 | 4xx Spruce | \$1,130,000 | 1 |
| 3xx S. American | \$652,500 | 322 | 5xx Spruce | \$1,200,000 | 154 |
| 2xx Delancey | \$775,000 | 6 | 3xx S. 4th | \$1,200,000 | 786 |
| 7xx Pine | \$805,000 | 23 | 2xx S. 3rd St | \$1,250,000 | 155 |
| 2xx S. 3rd Street | \$815,000 | 258 | 6xx Pine | \$1,250,000 | 268 |
| 2xx Locust | \$825,000 | 63 | 4xx Spruce | \$1,350,000 | 319 |
| 6xx Pine | \$850,000 | 395 | 2xx S. 4th | \$1,525,000 | 274 |
| 3xx Lawrence Crt | \$899,000 | 448 | 5xx Pine | \$1,649,000 | 229 |
| 1xx Delancey | \$905,000 | 40 | 5xx Spruce | \$1,800,000 | 344 |
| 2xx S 3rd Street | \$1,037,500 | 136 | 2xx Spruce | \$2,700,000 | 11 |
| 2xx S 3rd Street | \$1,059,000 | 442 | 2xx S. 3rd St | \$2,750,000 | 88 |
| 2xx Locust | \$1,060,000 | 19 | | | |

ANGELINA'S STORIES FROM THE DOLL HOUSE!

I just love February in Society Hill. First there is Valentine's Day. It so fun to exchange cards and candy with all my friends at Saint Peter's. Then it's my daddy's birthday so we always go to Morimoto for daddy's favorite sushi and my favorite noodles! Then we always go somewhere warm for my winter break. It is kind of sad to leave home, but this year we are going to Disney World, so I really don't mind!



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Saint Peter's Church Celebrates Faith in Action for 250 Years

The 250th anniversary of Saint Peter's Church, a National Historic Landmark located at the corner of S. 3rd and Pine Streets, will be celebrated at a reception and dinner on Saturday, May 2, 2009 featuring a special guest, Sam Waterston.

The celebration will begin at 4:30 p.m. with a cocktail reception. At 6:00 p.m. a parade of the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry — the oldest continuously active military unit in service to the nation, founded in 1774 — will escort guests into the church. Through dramatic readings, Sam Waterston, award-winning stage, screen and television actor (best known for his portrayal of

District Attorney Jack McCoy on "Law & Order"), will bring to life the stories of parishioners who put their faith into action during the church's 250-year history. He will note the parallel paths of the church and the country as both struggled with issues of independence, slavery, immigration and industrialization. Following his performance Waterston will join us for an 8:00 p.m. buffet dinner, at the nearby Powel House.

Ticket prices start at \$50 per person. To request an invitation or for more information, contact Kate Randall either at randall@stpetersphila.org, 215-925-5968 or visit www.stpetersphila.org.

A Brief History of St. Peter's Church

BY LIBBY BROWNE

The first service at St. Peter's Church was held on September 4, 1761, and the church has been in continuous use ever since. It was founded in 1758 by members of Christ Church living in newly settled Society Hill. Rising on land donated by William Penn's sons, Thomas and Richard, it was designed and built by Scottish architect/builder Robert Smith, who also designed Carpenter's Hall and the tower of Christ Church. (The Penn family coat of arms can be seen above the wine-glass pulpit and sounding board.) St. Peter's and Christ Church were united until 1832. William White, Rector of both churches from 1779 until his death in 1836, was chaplain to the U.S. Congress during the Revolution, founder of the Episcopal Church in 1784, its first presiding bishop and first bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Most of the church remains as it was in the eighteenth century. Smith designed it in the mid-Georgian style, with the classical lines and clear glass windows of the Age of Reason. The pulpit and lectern are set at the opposite end of the aisle from the altar, projecting into the congregation — in order to focus attention on the Word of God, a reflection of the religious thought of the day. The original high-backed box pews, including Mayor Samuel Powel's box, which George and Martha Washington often frequented, were designed to retain heat in winter. With the advent of central heating, many churches removed their box pews, but since St. Peter's services are conducted at both ends of the church, the original arrangement

has been retained. The tower and steeple, designed by renowned Philadelphia architect William Strickland, was added in 1842 to house a chime of eight bells donated by Benjamin Chew Wilcocks and cast at the Whitechapel Foundry in London — where the Liberty Bell came from. Slaves and servants of members sat on hard benches at the west end of the gallery. One of these slaves, Absalom Jones, became a highly respected leader of the original African-American community of Philadelphia, founded the first African-American Episcopal Church, the African Church of St. Thomas, in 1794 and was the first black Episcopal priest.

Many notable Philadelphians are buried in the tranquil churchyard: Col. John Nixon, who gave the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8, 1776; Revolutionary War hero Commodore John Hazelwood (1726-1800); painter Charles Wilson Peale (1741-1827), who painted the first portrait of George Washington; Vice-President George Mifflin Dallas (1792-1864), for whom Dallas, Texas, was named; Commodore Stephen Decatur (1779-1820), hero of the Battle of Tripoli; and seven Indian chiefs who died of smallpox on a visit to Philadelphia in 1793.

St. Peter's has ministered to its changing community through nearly 250 years, through the American Revolution, the arrival of many groups of immigrants, urban decline and rebirth, and is committed to continuing into the future its original mission of service and sanctuary for all in need.



The pulpit and lectern are set at the opposite end of the aisle from the altar at St. Peter's Church.

Photos by Tom Crane

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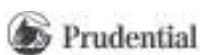
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A Historic (Green) Renovation in Society Hill

BY KENNY GRONO OF "BUCKMINSTER GREEN"

William Penn's "Greene Country Towne" is becoming greener everyday. It is home to one of the country's first green roofs on the nation's tallest LEED-certified* green building, the Comcast Center. For every new building there are many older structures that are renovated and reused. Renovation uses much less energy than new construction and is always preferable when possible.

But even without this high-profile example, Philadelphia would be green. Philadelphia was built on many of the principles that "New Urbanism" and green building now seek to reintroduce, which often includes a tight grid of mixed-use neighborhoods served by public transportation and interspersed with green space. Rowhouses that share two walls are, thus, more efficient to heat and cool. This is Philadelphia.

Luckily, green building and historical preservation need not be at odds. My Philadelphia home remodeling company, Buckminster Green, which specializes in "green" building, recently tackled a historic renovation in Society Hill where home-

owners sought to balance their desire for energy-efficient upgrades and the use of advanced, new materials with the need to preserve a historically accurate façade. For instance, the shutters used on this renovation were made from western red cedar that is available from sustainable forests and is naturally rot and insect resistant.

Of course, not every decision is that simple. Today's energy-efficient double-glazed windows are constructed differently from the divided light windows you see in Society Hill. As these would affect the look of historical facades, the Pennsylvania Historical Commission (PHC) requires true divided lights. But this does not mean energy efficiency must be sacrificed. We ordered PHC approved windows with efficient glazing, and the house is quieter and warmer because of it.

That historic homes of Society Hill are still around is a testament to the thoughtful design and long-lasting materials that went into them. As we work to update and renovate homes, we must be mindful of factors that will ensure that they are around to enjoy 100 years from now.

*LEED certification = "Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design" This is a certification process that measures the health, performance and environmental responsibility of buildings.



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922 WAVERLY **\$315,000**
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The Incredible Benefits of Regular Exercise

BY TIFFANY BUCCIARELLI

Regular exercise is incredibly beneficial to your body. I'm sure you've heard that before, right? However, most of us are uncertain as to what exactly these benefits are.

Weekly exercise literally changes our body's make-up. It strengthens muscles, keeps bones strong, improves sleep and mood, and makes your skin look great. Exercise also appears to help jump-start the immune system, reducing the number of colds you catch.

As you make the commitment to daily exercise, be sure to include the following three types:

Range-of-motion, or stretching exercises

These involve moving a joint as far as it will go (without pain). Examples are: basic stretches, dance, yoga, or tai chi.

Endurance or conditioning exercises

Walking, biking, climbing stairs, aerobics, and swimming.

Strengthening exercises

These help build strong muscles. They can be done with ankle and wrist weights, resistance machines, resistance bands, or free weights.

Walkie-Talkies

Oh, and by the way: The **Walkie-Talkies** are still at it — with a new “spring in their steps” now that March has arrived. Interested? Just show up on any non-rainy Tuesday or Thursday morning at Three Bears Park (Delancey Street) no later than 8:20 a.m. to begin an hour's brisk walk throughout the community with neighbors who enjoy exercising and socializing.



Tiffany Bucciarelli is owner of Lux Spa and Fitness, located at the Omni Hotel, 401 Chestnut Street.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

BY MARILYN APPEL, MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

It's a Win-Win Situation...

Thanks to Three Wonderful Restaurants



SHCA's Membership Committee cooked up a creative idea to encourage participation for 2009 when it decided to give away "Dinners for Two" to three randomly chosen lucky winners who would join or renew membership in our association before December 31st. We are now most pleased to announce these winners, as well as tell you about the wonderful restaurants which so generously contributed to our membership drive.

SHCA received 700 renewals by December 31st, the names were drawn, and the lucky dinner winners are: Marilyn and Joseph Forish; Larry and Susan Gilbert; and Iris Levine.

Marilyn and Joseph Forish will love being in the middle of a Cuban street scene at **Cuba Libra**. This restaurant — a popular Olde City neighborhood staple, located at 10 S. 2nd Street — serves traditional and updated authentic Cuban cuisine in just the right atmosphere.

Larry and Susan Gilbert were most delighted to receive a certificate for "Dinner for Two" for any one "**Starr**" restaurant. They will have to make a most difficult decision because there are many Starr restaurants to choose from — American to Japanese cuisine, located anywhere from 2nd and Market Streets all the way to West Philly!

Iris Levine will have a great time and lots of fun at **Zahav** — a non-kosher Israeli restaurant located on the grounds of the Society Hill Towers. She will enjoy choosing from a unique selection of small plates — as Zahav was named "one of 20 top new restaurants in America" in 2008.

We encourage our neighbors to patronize these three restaurants which serve wonderful cuisine and exhibit great neighborhood spirit. For the chance to be a lucky winner of "Dinner for Two" next year, join or renew your membership before December 31st. It's a win-win! Meanwhile, if you haven't renewed or joined SHCA for 2009 yet, please do so today!

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

SHCA 2009 Membership Drive Reaches 868

As this issue of our newsletter goes to press, SHCA's 2009 membership drive, which began last November, has generated income from 868 current members through annual dues and additional contributions. We are most pleased to report that 78 new members are included in this total.

Regretfully, however, we have not yet heard from 243 households who were members in 2008. Since we remain optimistic about reaching last year's "all time high" of 1,063, a second reminder was mailed out to those 243 folks in the last week of January. If you are among them, please send in your dues today — so that we will not need to spend postage for a third reminder.

As you may know, SHCA's annual operating budget comes primarily from membership dues. And while the *Reporter's* advertising revenue is substantial, it merely offsets the total expense of designing, printing and delivering our community newsletter to all Society Hill households six times every year.

Reminder: your membership dues pay for sidewalk cleaning, the planting of new trees, supplies for graffiti removal, the planting of flowers and general improvement of Washington Square, as well as all administrative costs. Without *your* membership dues, SHCA would cease to function.

Protect our neighborhood and your real estate investment. Please take a moment to fill out the adjacent form and mail it today with either a check or your credit card information. Or visit our web site — societyhillcivic.org — and pay by PayPal.

Additional contributions are always welcome, of course, and can be earmarked for specific SHCA activities or programs of your choice.

Questions? Call 215-629-1288 or email mattdejulio@aol.com.

SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Your E-mail (print clearly) _____

IMPORTANT: Today most everyone communicates via e-mail. Please be sure that we have your current e-mail address — so that you can receive important updates between publication of our community newsletter. All SHCA e-mails will be judiciously screened, and rarely will we send e-mails more than once a week. Nor will we share your e-mail address with anyone else. This convenient, 21st-century system helps save our civic association postage costs while keeping you regularly informed.

Residential Memberships

- \$ 1,000 Benjamin Franklin Benefactor
- \$ 500 Washington Benefactor
- \$ 300 Jefferson Benefactor
- \$ 150 Georgian Grantor
- \$ 100 Federal Friend
- \$ 50 Basic Household Membership
- \$ 40 Senior/Student

Business Memberships

- \$100 Institutions—
5+ employees
- \$ 60 Institutions—
fewer than 5 employees

Additional Contributions:

- \$ _____ Washington Square Beautification
- \$ _____ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal
- \$ _____ *Society Hill Reporter* \$ _____ Franklin Lights
- \$ _____ TownWatch/Safe and Sound \$ _____ Street Trees
- \$ _____ Zoning/Historic Preservation \$ _____ Three Bears Park
- \$ _____ No Casinos Near Neighborhoods

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Charge VISA/MasterCard:

Number _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

The following topics are of special interest to me. I welcome receipt of e-mail updates on these topics.

- Clean-Up Day Washington Square Zoning & Historic Preservation
- Franklin Lights Social Events Fund-raising
- Dilworth House Property Taxes Local crime incidents & alerts
- Reporter* Casino Issues

Please return completed application to:
Society Hill Civic Association
 P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147

NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

BY DAVID WOODS

Douglas Verney and Francine Frankel

“Good wine needs no bush.” You may or may not have heard that old adage; but rest assured, it has nothing to do with our previous president; nor indeed with politics in general. What it refers to is the garland of ivy hung outside an inn to advertise that good wine could be found within.

What put me in mind of that expression was my discussion with the two distinguished academic political scientists who are the subject of this column...neither of whose business cards carries any reference to their doctorates.

After graduating from Oxford, Douglas Verney earned a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Liverpool. In his 30's he emigrated from Britain to Canada, where he taught at Toronto's York University for several years before coming to the U.S. in 1989. He and his wife, Francine Frankel, met when both were Fellows at the Bellagio Center at Lake Como in Italy — a Center dedicated to international understanding. “I was starting a book and she was finishing one,” Verney recalls. His was

on Canada's political tradition; hers on India's political economy and that country's 'gradual revolution.'

The couple married in 1975. They have both spent much time and academic capital in the study of India's social and political development. Francine's interest in the subcontinent first began when she had to write an essay on India for her history class at CUNY (City University of New York); subsequently she acquired a Master's Degree at the School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. and a doctorate in political science at the University of Chicago. Armed with a Fulbright Scholarship, she lived in India for a year and managed to secure an interview with Jawaharlal Nehru — India's first Prime Minister following the country's independence from Britain in 1947. “He was an appealing character,” she says. “I was overwhelmed by his charisma and empathy.”

Francine went on to become a professor and founding director of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for the Advanced Study of India. Douglas, an adjunct professor and Fellow at Penn, is involved in the Center as well. In retirement he continues to write articles and book chapters on the subject of India. The pair have visited that country multiple times and recently have also traveled to Istanbul and Jerusalem. They have a summer home in Martha's Vineyard, and have lived on the 100 block of Pine Street since 1989.

Asked if two eminent political scientists ever argue about politics, they say “not really” — except that one favored Senator Clinton and the other Senator Obama. Suffice it to say that neither of them ever needed any Bush!



Meet a couple who share
an impassioned interest
in the subject of India.

Note: Columnist David Woods has recently been appointed CEO of BioscriptUS, the U.S.A. arm of the U.K.'s medical communications company, Bioscriptstirling Ltd. David first created his series of columns featuring Society Hill's “Noteworthy Neighbors” about eight years ago. He and his wife, Shelly Wolf, have lived in the neighborhood for almost two decades.



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CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 18

SHCA Meetings
See pages 1 & 4

Friday, March 20

Philadelphia Classical Symphony
"Americans in Paris and All That Jazz," organized by SHCA Board Member Marilyn Appel. First Unitarian Church 2125 Chestnut Street
For information & prices, call 215-228-2224

Saturday, March 28

2009 Old House Fair
See page 11

Saturday, May 2

St. Peter's Church 250th Anniversary
See page 27

Sunday, May 3

The Sunday Head House Farmers' Market
will begin and continue through Christmas 2009.

Saturday, May 16

The Saturday Market at Head House Square
will begin and will operate until Thanksgiving 2009.

Wednesday, May 20

SHCA Annual Elections
See page 11



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