

SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

November/December 2011

The Newsletter
of The Society Hill
Civic Association

www.societyhillcivic.org

State Senator Farnese to Speak



State Senator
Larry Farnese

Legislative Update

We are delighted to announce that State Senator Larry Farnese will be the featured speaker at the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) November 16th General Membership Meeting. We are certain there is much you'll want to learn and many questions you will want answered — whether they are current issues facing our immediate neighborhood or the community at large.

Senator Farnese has represented Pennsylvania's First Senatorial District since 2009. He currently serves as the Democratic Chair of the Communications and Technology Committee, and is a member of several other committees.

The Senator earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Villanova University and graduated from Temple University's Beasley School of Law in 1994. He is a member of the Pennsylvania Housing Advisory Committee and serves on the board of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. He also serves on the board of Casa Farnese, the first affordable senior housing complex in Philadelphia, founded in 1966 by the Senator's grandfather.

Following in his family tradition of commitment to education, Senator Farnese was recently

appointed to serve on the boards of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency and the Public School Employees Retirement System.

Senator Farnese continues to build his record as a reformer through legislation and policy initiatives in the areas of public safety, economic development, and job creation. Recognizing that quality of life is crucial to economic development, Senator Farnese has sponsored a number of initiatives to improve public safety. He has introduced legislation to reduce gun violence, and supported continued funding of the Gun Violence Task Force, to combat the purchase of guns for individuals who are not legally allowed to possess firearms due to prior criminal convictions.

The General Membership Meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the Zubrow Auditorium on the first floor of Pennsylvania Hospital, just inside the main entrance at 8th Street near Spruce. All neighbors are invited. Prior to the General Meeting, at 6 p.m., we will hold our monthly Board Meeting at the Pennsylvania Hospital Great Court Conference Room. All current members of the Society Hill Civic Association are welcome to attend.

WED.

November

16

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings
Wednesday, November 16, 2011

Pennsylvania Hospital, 8th & Spruce Streets

6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting
Pennsylvania Hospital Great Court Conference Room
All SHCA members are welcome.

7:30 p.m. General Membership Meeting
Pennsylvania Hospital Zubrow Auditorium
All neighborhood residents are invited to attend.

Topic: Legislative Update, Followed by Q&A

Speaker: Senator Larry Farnese, Democratic Member of the Pennsylvania State Senate

Gather for Holiday Cheer

Mark Monday, December 5th on your calendars! This is the date for our annual, highly anticipated Holiday Social — a time to gather with neighbors for an evening of libations, good food and just plain fun. Stay tuned for more details.





Liberty Tree

by Thomas Paine

A song written early in the American Revolution.

In a chariot of light from the regions of day,
The Goddess of Liberty came;
Ten thousand celestials directed the way
And hither conducted the dame.

A fair budding branch from the gardens above,
Where millions with millions agree,
She brought in her hand as a pledge of her love,
And the plant she named Liberty Tree.

The celestial exotic struck deep in the ground,
Like a native it flourished and bore;
The fame of its fruit drew the nations around,
To seek out this peaceable shore.

Unmindful of names or distinction they came,
For freemen like brothers agree;
With one spirit endued, they one friendship pursued,
And their temple was Liberty Tree.

Beneath this fair tree, like the patriarchs of old,
Their bread in contentment they ate,
Unvexed with the troubles of silver and gold,
The cares of the grand and the great.

With timber and tar they Old England supplied,
And supported her power on the sea;
Her battles they fought, without getting a goat,
For the honor of Liberty Tree.

But hear, O ye swains, 'tis a tale most profane,
How all the tyrannical powers,
Kings, Commons, and Lords, are uniting amain
To cut down this guardian of ours;

From the east to the west blow the trumpet to arms
Through the land let the sound of it flee,
Let the far and the near, all unite with a cheer,
In defence of our Liberty Tree.



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Submission Deadlines

January/February Issue
Advertising: December 1st
Editorial: December 10th

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, businesses and professionals. Direct your editorial submissions and/or queries to Sandra Rothman by phone at 267-671-0554 or email norfad@aol.com. To publicize an event, submit all press releases directly.

Materials must be submitted in writing – via mail or email – 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 Editor will be considered for publication only if signed and the writer provides contact information.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Renewing Our Commitment

The pace of life quickens at this time of year, and our free time becomes "booked up" with anticipated events — whether it's the holidays we celebrate or the special occasions with family and friends. But the coming New Year also provides an opportunity to consider the needs of this neighborhood and to renew our commitment to allow important work to go forward.

Society Hill has an interesting set of challenges ahead, and I believe it is the Association's mandate to respond to them. The many issues impacting our community, both in positive and negative ways, must be anticipated and dealt with effectively. Our neighborhood must be kept safe, clean and beautiful. We must monitor ongoing economic development — not just in Society Hill but in surrounding areas — to ensure that our neighborhood retains the vitality and prosperity we have inherited. And we must be vigilant in protecting the unique character that makes this a wonderful place to live.

All of these issues, and more, require the participation of neighbors with a wide spectrum of talents and the dedication of partners willing to give their time and financial resources for the common good. Some of us are able to spend a portion of our time each month serving the Civic Association in volunteer positions. My heartfelt thanks go out to all our Committee chairpersons and their Committee members for the time spent

in these often behind-the-scenes, unglamorous jobs. The hours add up but the benefits are invaluable.

Hopefully, many of us can afford to contribute another essential resource: money. Your checks enable Society Hill Civic Association to be your advocate, to undertake special projects and to make a tangible difference in the quality of life here.

Before the hustle and bustle of the season overtakes us, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to appeal to all of my neighbors to contribute in some way to the common good, which the Civic Association represents. I encourage you to join SHCA if you are not already a member or to renew your membership and to contribute an additional amount if you are able. In addition, take a further step to help: Urge your friends and neighbors to join us in our work. The more people we represent and the more input we get from involved and committed residents, the stronger and more robust our community life becomes.

Society Hill needs the rich and diverse talent of the people who live here. Please join your Civic Association in continuing our mission as a caring neighborhood.

Last, but hardly least, I wish all our neighbors a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous New Year.



**Steven Weixler,
President**

Urge your
friends and
neighbors
to join us in
our work.

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and Robert Moskowitz

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

Society Hill's Fall Clean-Up Day



Rain
or
Shine!

On Saturday morning, November 19th, all Society Hill residents are encouraged to sweep their sidewalks and gutters, as well as nearby walkways and alleyways, before the city's sweeper trucks arrive sometime between 8 a.m. and noon.

Wherever posted, cars must be moved to the opposite side of the street after 6 p.m. on Friday night — or they could be ticketed on Saturday morning, beginning at 8 a.m. Please note that to accommodate Saturday synagogue services, the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of both Spruce and Lombard Streets will be swept by 8:30 a.m. — leaving the south side of these streets available for congregants to park their cars.

All streets will be swept from Front to 8th and from Walnut to Lombard Streets (not including Walnut Street). There will be **NO PARKING** on either side of the 300 and 400 blocks of Front Street, the 200 and 300 blocks of 2nd Street, and Lawrence Court. Although "Other Side Parking" signs will generally read "from 6 p.m. Friday until 3 p.m. Saturday," Society Hill's Block Coordinators are encouraged to remove these signs as near to 1 p.m. as possible — to permit cars to be moved back to their usual side of the street between 1 and 3 p.m. — since this move will prevent those cars from getting ticketed. (After all, Parking Authority personnel are more likely to ticket a car based on the posted signs rather than whether or not the street has been swept.)

Trash bags will be available — handed out by SHCA's Clean-Up Day volunteers — at the S. 5th Street SuperFresh, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Your

bagged street leaves and trash (but no household trash!) should be left at intersections by 1 p.m. on Locust, Spruce, Pine and Lombard Streets, where they cross the numbered streets. And, let's remember to spiff up Three Bears Park, too!

Coordinating this fall's Clean-Up Day are Co-Chairs Spencer Finch (specfinch2@hotmail.com) and Bob Curley (bobpcurley@gmail.com). For last-minute Clean-Up Day questions, call Spencer at 215-592-0536 or Bob at 215-592-4251.

Clean-Up Day's Paper-Shredding and Electronic Recycling Services

This Clean-Up Day, SHCA is again sponsoring a paper-shredding service for the convenience of Society Hill residents only (sorry, no businesses). This service is limited to confidential materials, since non-confidential papers should be recycled — not shredded! In addition, we are providing electronic recycling — bring your old computers, printers, fax machines and cell phones to be disposed of responsibly — no wires or cords.

- These services will be available in the St. Peter's School parking lot, at 3rd and Lombard.
- Hours are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (earlier if the truck reaches capacity).
- Paper only is accepted — no CDs or disks.

If you partake of these special services and are not yet an SHCA member, please consider joining our civic association — simply by filling out the form — either online at societyhillcivic.org or on page 25 of this newsletter. Any questions? Call 215-629-1288.

Don't Use Your Fireplace This Winter...

...until you first read this.



The City of Philadelphia has an ordinance that requires all chimneys to be lined before use. Many of our homes are over 200 years old and the insides of the chimneys are deteriorating — causing mortar to break down and fall out, which leaves openings in the interior walls of the chimney. Using the fireplace in this condition can have disastrous results if fire and/or carbon monoxide leaks into the house. In addition, chimneys get clogged over time with debris such as bird's nests, pieces of mortar, etc. Remember that even the chimney from your heating system requires a lining.

How to prepare your fireplace and chimney for the winter months:

- Have a qualified contractor clean out your chimneys annually.
- Have your chimney lined with a stainless steel (or aluminum) liner to prevent leaks and fires.

To obtain a list of chimney experts, consult the List of Contractors that SHCA provides exclusively for current members. Contact Martha Levine at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727 and a list will be mailed to you. Not available online or through email.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

Glenn Douglas Memorial Concert

The family of the late Glenn Douglas, who passed away last autumn, is happy to invite Society Hill neighbors to a Memorial Concert on Saturday, November 19th at Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 North Broad Street. Friends and family will gather at 6 p.m. to hear daughter Shana and her friends pay tribute to Glenn's life with selections by Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms.

Born and raised in England, Glenn moved to the United States in 1982. Earning his Ph.D. in Educational Administration, Glenn was a natural-born educator. His last position was Principal of William Levering School in Philadelphia, where, this year, the Glenn D. Douglas Memorial Scholarship Award was established in his honor.

A Renaissance man, Glenn had interest and talent in music, art, science, history, math, reading, cooking, and travel. He especially loved reading about World War II, and his hero was Winston Churchill. After Glenn was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2004, more than ever, he emulated Churchill by taking his hero's advice: "If you're going through hell, keep going."

During the last year of his life, Glenn wrote three books: an autobiography and two works of fiction.

Glenn had an adventurous, creative spirit and a positive outlook on life, along with a true British wit and an engaging humor. His sense of community and spiritual nature led him and his wife, Neila, to Temple Rodeph Shalom. Even during his most challenging days, Glenn found solace and comfort at Friday evening's shabbat services. When he became too ill to attend, the Rodeph Shalom community continued to embrace and nurture him. The upcoming Memorial Concert is a fitting tribute to Glenn's love of music and his deep connection to Temple Rodeph Shalom.

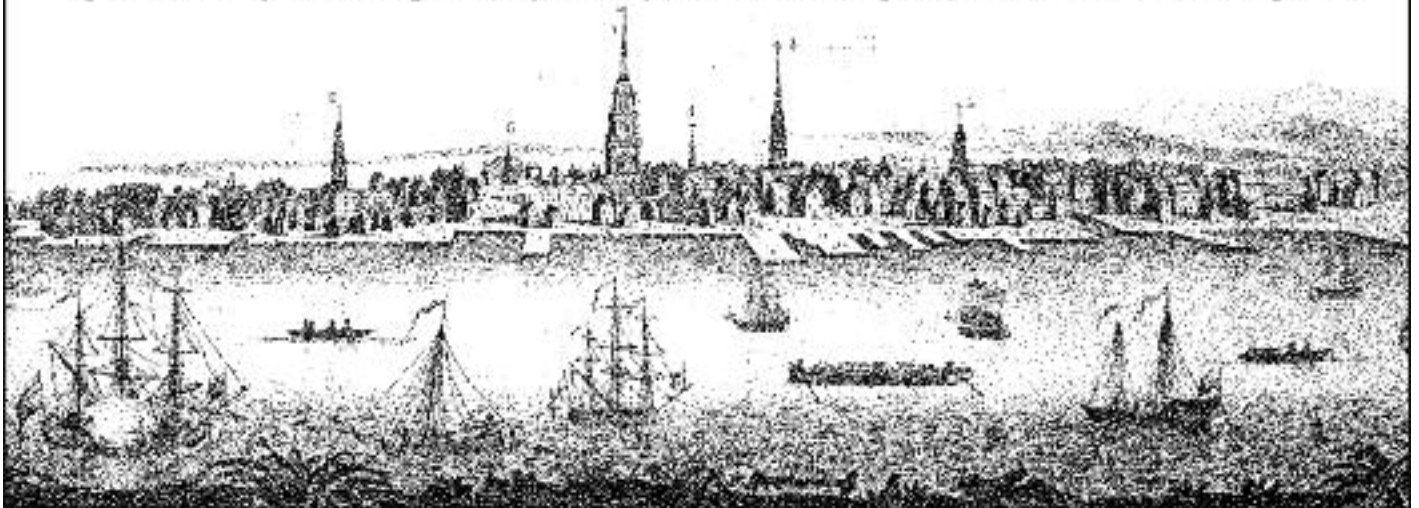


THANKS, 6TH DISTRICT

On behalf of SHCA, Martha Levine presented a \$1,500 check to Lt. Aggozino of the 6th Police District in appreciation of the District's dedication to Society Hill. During our summer crime wave, the 6th District police, under the direction of Capt. Brian Korn, were committed to tracking down and arresting the offenders of seven robberies, including the choking robber reported about in the last Reporter. The funds will be used to enhance the Police headquarters.

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LET THERE BE LIGHT

Old City and Race Street Pier Make a New Connection

Mayor Michael Nutter and the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (a nonprofit organization founded in 2009 to act as a steward of the Delaware River) recently flipped the switch to light the new Race Street Connector, which provides pedestrian-friendly access between Old City and the Delaware River waterfront at the Race Street Pier.

This is the first of four light screens, made of expanded metal with colorful lighting and bold signage, that will unify the spaces under the three viaducts and lead people seamlessly through the underpasses, past the old historic pumping station that will soon be the home of Live Arts/Fringe Festival and from there to the Race Street Pier, Penn's Landing, and other destinations on the Central Delaware.

Topping off the initiative is a stunning new public art project by artist Richard Torchia, in collaboration with Greenhouse Media, entitled Marquee.

Marquee is comprised of a 60' by 4' horizontal LED screen mounted on the west-facing side of the I-95 overpass over Race Street in Old City. This LED screen will display live-feed images of the surface of the Delaware River, captured by cameras at the water's edge, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The images on the screen are constantly shifting according to weather and lighting conditions, as well as boating patterns and river wildlife.

The work reciprocates the gesture made by the Race Street Pier, an urban park that brings the city to the river: Marquee brings the river to the city. It represents the City's first technology-based Percent for Art commission — a program started in 1959 by the Philadelphia Redevelopment



The Marquee and lighted screens lead pedestrians and bicyclists under I-95 to the Race Street Pier.

Authority that requires developers to budget no less than one percent of the total building construction cost toward commissioning original, site-specific works of public art.



The Race Street Pier

“The Race Street Pier is one of Philadelphia’s newest destinations and is helping to revive our waterfront,” says Mayor Nutter. He adds that the Race Street Connector represents the first in a series of primary Connector Street Programs proposed in the new Master Plan for the Central Delaware. The next key connector street program will be at the intersection of Columbia and Delaware Avenues and will improve the connection between the Fishtown neighborhood and the waterfront, including Penn Treaty Park — that wonderful public asset on the Delaware River located at the intersection of Columbus Boulevard and Beach Street.

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ZONING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BY LORNA KATZ-LAWSON

SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation (ZHP) Committee meets monthly to address community concerns related to both zoning and historic preservation. It helps homeowners who would like to make changes to the exteriors of their properties understand and be prepared for the process of approval by the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC), which is required for exterior changes, and for any zoning variance which may be needed. We urge you to submit your plans or ideas to the ZHP committee before submitting them to PHC.

320 Walnut Street Through to Willings Alley

Nolen Properties, Inc. presented a proposal for restoration of the existing six-story building, converting it from office to residential use, leaving the open lot for on-site parking for the residential units and 4 to 6 spaces for Old St. Joseph's use.

A second meeting was held to continue discussion between the near neighbors, made up of two homeowner associations and a board member from Old St. Joseph's, to discuss their issues and hopefully come to a consensus on what they could actively support along with SHCA.

As a result of the meeting, residents developed a list of questions they wanted answered by the developer, including a clearly articulated review of the zoning issues — which are more complex than at most properties. A sub-committee was formed with representatives from Willings Alley Mews, Bingham Court, Old St. Joseph's Church and SHCA and charged with writing a description of what they could support — anticipating that this would become the basis for an agreement with the developer and the city.

341 Pine Street

Having received an interpretation of the court's opinion directly from the presiding judge, the ZBA set a new date to hear the applicant's appeal for November 2nd.

512-514 South 3rd Street

ZHP heard a presentation of this application to allow an apartment on the first floor of the building. The building is not, technically, within SHCA's geographical boundaries but is, nonetheless, within the Society Hill Historic District. SHCA only reviewed the application for historic preservation impacts. SHCA sent a letter to ZBA asking it to require the applicant to complete the existing construction from previous permits.

ZHP Advocacy Activities

Crosstown Coalition – Zoning Code Commission

The Crosstown Coalition, which is comprised of 13 civic associations including SHCA, submitted white papers on the primary sticking points of the proposed new zoning code — as a detailed backup to public testimony at City Council in September. In addition, SHCA separately testified on issues particular to historic properties or districts. The Crosstown Coalition has met again with the members of the Zoning Code Commission and with Stacy Graham of Councilman Green's office to promote our revisions and additions to the proposed new Zoning Code. Response has been very positive and we feel most of our issues are likely to be resolved favorably.

ADA Ramps/Street Project

SHCA Board members Martha Levine and Lorna Katz-Lawson will be doing a corner-by-corner walk-through with representatives of the Streets Department to review what is proposed at each corner to make sure it conforms with our agreement with the City.

ZHP Committee News

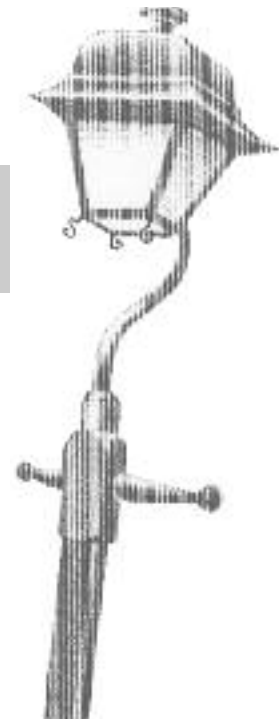
The committee welcomed three new members: Adrienne Greenfield, Michelle Sonsino-Lewis and David Horwitz. All are familiar either with the law, operations of city government, or both.

**LIGHTS
OUT?**

See a Franklin Light that is not working or is damaged?

Call 311.

Yes, the City will come within 10 business days and repair it. Keep an eye out to see that the light has been serviced. If it has not, phone 311 again with the reference number provided at your first call. Remember that **you are the eyes and ears** of Society Hill.





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What's Cooking?

There is no "Safe and Sound" column this month, because columnist Marilyn Appel is busy in her kitchen perfecting recipes for the next Opera cookbook — a popular fundraiser that provides scholarships for students at the Academy of Vocal Arts. Available are copies of the most recent cookbook, *Don Giovanni, An Opera Cookbook*, whose cover art shows the dissolute

nobleman returning home after a night of seduction. The recipes are based on the location and era of the opera, with dishes that are Spanish-inspired and use the ingredients that would have been prevalent in Seville in the 18th century. The book sells for \$30 with all proceeds going towards the scholarships. Contact Daniel Pantano at 215-735-1685 to order a copy.



SHCA is Giving Money Away!

BY MARTHA LEVINE

Armed with a \$10,000 budget, SHCA's "Fix the Brix" project reimburses Society Hill homeowners (at 40% of the total cost up to \$300) who level their front sidewalks. Having level sidewalks is important to insure smooth sailing for pedestrians. Uneven bricks, or cement, can cause accidents with the homeowner liable for casualties.

Join the over 75 households who have participated in the "Fix the Brix" project over the last 2 years. Remember, we have a limited budget, so get involved while it lasts.

Here's how to do it:

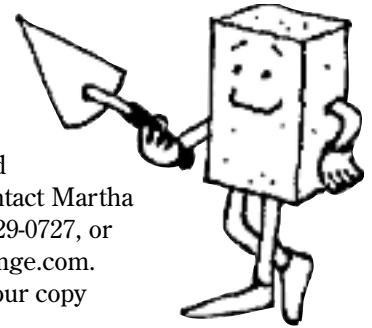
- 1 Contact SHCA for a list of recommended masons and arborists.
- 2 Get several estimates for work to be done on **front sidewalks only** — backyards and alleys do not qualify. Choose a contractor to do the work.

- 3 When work is completed to your satisfaction, **submit a copy of the invoice with "paid" marked on it and a copy of your canceled check. Make sure the invoice specifies front sidewalk.**

- 4 Receive a SHCA check for 40% of the total up to \$300.

Caveat: If you have a corner property, you may want to delay this until the ramps project has been completed, as it may disturb some bricks.

To receive a list of suggested mason and arborists, by email or postal service, contact Martha Levine at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727, or Frank Signorello at fsignorello@gexchange.com. At completion of all work, please mail your copy of the invoice and cancelled checks to: SHCA, P. O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147



The Latest on ADA Ramps and Paving Project

Society Hill residents are understandably concerned about the timeline for completion of the paving and ramp project that was initiated by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and funded through the federal stimulus program. The project was started in March and stopped shortly thereafter, because the repairs were inconsistent with the historical nature of our neighborhood. Agreement was finally reached following many meetings and negotiating sessions with City and Civic Association representatives, together with the Preservation Alliance, other civics, PennDot and federal authorities, and with the assistance of Councilman Frank Diccio and Congressman Brady. The agreement provides that, at corners where the sidewalk is brick, only the ramp portion itself will be in concrete, and the surrounding side flares and the landing will

now be done in brick. For a more complete understanding of what was agreed to, please refer to the September/October 2011 *Reporter*.

The latest word from the City is that installation of the ramps (one at every intersection) may occur as weather permits this fall and winter, but the work is expected to resume in full force in the spring. Paving of streets will begin in the spring, but then only after the ramp work has been completed.

SHCA Board members Martha Levine and Lorna Katz-Lawson will be doing a corner-by-corner walk-through with representatives of the Streets Department to review what is proposed at each corner, make sure it conforms with our agreement and troubleshoot any issues that might require modification of the proposed work.



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 Saturday, March 3, 2012, 8 PM

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PHILLY FOOD LOVERS

BY CLAIRE BATTEN

Exploring Our Farmers' Market

The Oxford English Dictionary informs us that the word shambles means “a state of great disorder or confusion.” Why then, we might ask, is our beloved, local covered market-place at Headhouse Square so unflatteringly named? It’s because the name is derived from the Old English word for the rickety, aged stools or trestle tables on which merchants set out their wares in the Middle Ages! Around the 16th century it became synonymous with meat markets — the dictionary goes on to describe it more viscerally as “a place of butchery.”

While meat is no longer slaughtered fresh on South 2nd and Lombard Streets, the Sunday Farmers' Market, which runs from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., spring through early winter, provides plentiful options for fresh produce. It is particularly lively mid-morning; you're guaranteed to bump into a neighbor clutching a fresh baguette from Ric's Breads or Wildflower Bakery, a slab of sustainable salmon from Otolith, or one of the much vaunted chicken pot pies from Griggstown Farm.

The Food Trust — a nonprofit that believes everyone should have access to affordable, nutritious food — is responsible for organizing The Headhouse Farmers' Market. It encourages small or family-owned farms that grow or raise a diverse range of produce — enterprises such as Savoie Organics, Weavers Way and Mountain View Poultry.

Two of the best-known names at the Market are Garces Trading Company, purveyors of charcuterie, artisanal cheeses, and patisserie items, and John and Kira's handmade chocolates. John and Kira's tri-colored chocolate ladybugs make a memorable hostess gift — a subtle hint to any future guests who may be reading *The Reporter*...

The Farmers' Market is special because you're dealing directly with the actual people who dirty their hands growing, prepping and delivering the food you eat. The merchants are tremendously knowledgeable and are happy to explain how to cook their more unusual produce. I'm always on the lookout for interesting ingredients, so Mr. Yin from Queen's Farm is a particular favorite of mine. This fall, at Mr. Yin's urging, I tried some funky-looking, wild mushrooms and, for the first time ever, garlic chives. While

I didn't exactly rush home to make the medicinal garlic chive tea Mr. Yin recommended (good for warding off colds and respiratory infections), the chives were a revelation, sprucing up everything from a chicken stir-fry, to a frittata and even a plate of scrambled eggs.

The vendors continue as late as the weather allows. The Market itself runs through to the Sunday before Christmas. The produce is not only local and often organic, but it is also truly seasonal; an early frost wipes out much of fresh produce and will reduce the number of merchants at the market.

Let's all hope for a late and mild winter.

For a full list of regular vendors at the Market, see www.thefoodtrust.org/php/headhouse/index.ph. For recipe suggestions based on seasonal produce found at the Headhouse Farmers Market, see www.phillyfoodlovers.com.

Kiss Boring Vegetables Goodbye

Cumin Cauliflower

Serves 4-6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

1 large head cauliflower, washed and cut into bite-sized florets

1 Tbsp canola oil

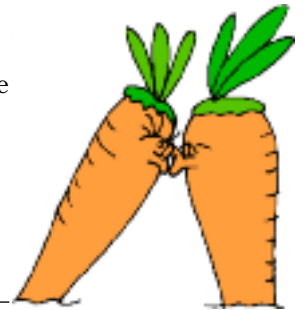
1 Tbsp cumin seeds

1/2 tsp salt

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat and add seeds and salt. Wait until seeds begin to sizzle and add cauliflower. Stir thoroughly, ensuring that all florets are dappled with cumin seeds. Lower heat, and cook, stirring frequently, until cauliflower is cooked through, about 10 minutes.

NOTE: This recipe can be replicated with virtually any vegetable: broccoli, peas, carrots, potatoes, or a combo of any or all is wonderful! This is a traditional Indian preparation, but it is great with all cuisines.

The Sunday Farmers' Market runs through early winter.



BRAVO!

Congratulations to neighbor Linda Skale,

co-chair of the Society Hill House Tour, for her second-place win in the individual container gardening category of the 2011 City Gardens Contest. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, this annual event gives Philadelphians recognition for their dedicated and imaginative gardening skills. To learn more, go to www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org or call 215-988-8897.



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A Society Hill Farewell to Summer

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EXPLORING THE CITY

BY JIM MURPHY

National Archives at Philadelphia

Last February, our *Reporter* designer noticed a sign for the National Archives at Philadelphia on Chestnut between 9th and 10th Streets, and suggested I check it out.

She didn't know a National Archives office was located in the city. Neither did I. But after several visits, I can tell you it is a treasure trove of important documents and a valuable resource for area residents.

Whether you are putting together a family history, trying to prove citizenship, learning how to evaluate primary sources, or doing any type of historical research, it's worth a visit to the National Archives at Philadelphia, one of 13 regional archives. Admission is free, but there is a charge for copying documents.

What you'll find: key documents from 1789 to the present, including those from 1790 to 1800, when Philadelphia was the temporary capital of the United States.

Among them:

Custom House records — to raise money to pay its Revolutionary War debt, the U.S. collected taxes on goods entering and leaving the country. **U.S. Mint records** — the new government's efforts to pull the country together with a federal monetary system. **U.S. District Court records** — from nine districts and more, plus 80 federal agencies.

With these historic documents, says Leslie Simon, Director, Archival Operations, "You see the Constitution taken from paper and made operational." Many of these records do not exist anywhere else in their original form.

Genealogy accounts for about 40 percent of visitors, Leslie says. To assist family researchers, the facility holds Genealogy Open Houses on the First Friday of the month, noon to 2 p.m., and invites the public to bring lunch.

Other frequent visitors to the Philadelphia archives include people researching pollution records, writing novels and doing historic research.

To minimize deterioration, the facility's documents are stored in non-acidic archival files and boxes and kept in a rigidly controlled environment.

Items of interest:

Sooty records: During one visit, Leslie pulled out U.S. Admiralty records from Pittsburgh in 1888. Not only were they tied with red tape, they also had "ambient coal dust" on them, reflecting the environmental conditions of the city at that time. This kind of external evidence does not show up in digital records, she says.

Interactive demo: A lobby display currently highlights court documents on the subjects of "separate but equal" schooling and the rights of freedom of speech. You use a "hearing wand" to answer questions and see if you are correct.

Slaves' rights: In 1807, Judge Richard Peters of the District Court of Pennsylvania made a major decision that went against then-current thinking. He permitted six slaves on board the brig *Catherine* to share their portion of salvage from the wrecked schooner *Messenger* — "for their own separate use."

Coming Soon: Avid genealogists are counting down the days to the release of the 1940 census on April 2, 2012. That's the day personally identifiable data will be available.

Under federal law, this information must remain private for 72 years.

Other activities: To promote usage by the public and encourage youngsters to look at primary sources, the National Archives at Philadelphia sponsors and leads students in this area's National History Day competition. Recently, it also held a special art exhibit titled: *Libro Curio: Reconstructing the Book*. Using old book spines, covers and tabs, 15 artists from the Philadelphia Center for the Book developed their own creative visions of the books.

When you go: Since you are entering a Government building, you will need to have an ID and sign in with your address. Bags must be placed in lockers, so bring a quarter. You can get it back when you leave.

Free access to genealogical records, court documents and more.



The Libro Curio exhibit opened on September 27th at the National Archives.

FAST FACTS

Name: National Archives at Philadelphia

Address: 900 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19107

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Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th
Old St. Mary Church - 4:30 p.m.

Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25th
Old St. Mary Church - 10 a.m.

New Year's Eve, Saturday, December 31st
Old St. Mary Church - 4:30 p.m.

New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1st, 2012
Old St. Mary Church - 10 a.m.

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SOCIETY HILL GOES LITERARY

BY KERI WHITE



Have you noticed the number of book groups that have sprouted in and around Society Hill? “The trend is growing,” says Headhouse Books’ owner Richard DeWynngaert (www.headhousebooks.com). “We currently serve eight groups by recommending titles, ordering books (both e-books downloaded directly from our website onto customers’ tablets and, also, physical books). In some cases, we host meetings at the shop (619 South 2nd Street) and have frequent requests from customers asking about new book groups. There is also enormous growth in the online book community with people using forums like Facebook and Twitter to share their literary opinions.”

While local book groups may seem to be a modern phenomena, they arguably trace their roots back to (who else?) Benjamin Franklin and his Junto — a group of friends he organized for mutual improvement. This assemblage of movers and thinkers, avid readers all, gathered in taverns and homes to discuss the issues of the day, and eventually formed a subscription library to share books — which were scarce and expensive at the time.

To complement our Society Hill book groups, we also have a large number of authors residing in our special part of the world: Melissa Jensen; Cordelia Biddle; Jennifer Weiner; Gerald Kolpan; and Gail Silver to name a few. We recently caught up with Melissa to chat about her writing.

“I think people tend to picture Society Hill, at least in a literary sense, as a staid (if pretty) setting — more as the background to an eighteenth century period piece than as a bright little corner of a vibrant, modern city. I write for teens and I write about Philadelphia teens. I love sending them to South Street for pizza and Head House Books for...well, books. My Philadelphia is a character in itself, and is a good marketing point, as well. Part of the back cover blurb for *The Fine Art of Truth or Dare*, coming in February, is: ‘The South Philly Girl Never Gets the Society Hill Boy.’ It tells you something when the Penguin Powers That Be liked that one. It tells you that the essence of our neighborhoods is familiar and evocative far beyond our city limits.” (For more of Melissa’s wit and wisdom, visit www.melissajensen.com.)

“...the essence of our neighborhoods is familiar far beyond our city limits.”

Melissa Jensen

In upcoming issues, this column will showcase the local and literary: book reviews; author bios; book group profiles and children’s events.

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IN MEMORIAM

Society Hill Founding Father

We are sad to announce the death of former Society Hill resident, I. George Scarpulla, who passed away on September 24th after a long battle with leukemia. Services were held in Arizona, his home for the past two years.

His daughter Marie, who lives in her parents' former condo at Independence Place, tells us that George lived a colorful life, full of diversity and unique experiences. The youngest son of Sicilian immigrants, he forged a new path for his generation and raised a family to conduct their lives with similar ambition and spirit. George's career as a professional engineer brought adventure and travel to the family, sometimes with significant inconvenience for a clan of seven, which included back and forth travel to the South Pacific and several home relocations.

Throughout their lives, George and his wife, Rosemarie, maintained interest in real estate, history and a study of the arts. This passion led the couple to be among the first families responsible for the revitalization of Philadelphia's

historic Society Hill. In 1971, the area was run down and dilapidated. The Scarpullas took a chance on the purchase of a shell of a townhouse at 3rd and Spruce Streets, which later became the family home for many years. George and Rosemarie restored four Society Hill townhouses to colonial-era accuracy (and lived in two), all of which have been certified by the Historic Commission of the City of Philadelphia. The impressive Boker-Binney House, on 3rd Street at Locust Walk, is of particular note.

George was heavily involved in the Society Hill Civic Association for many years, having organized an advocacy group to encourage residents to maintain their historical homes. He served on the Zoning and Historic Restoration Committee and worked with his wife on the Chilton's 1994 *Guide to Historic Society Hill*.

George is survived by his son John and daughters Marie, Claire and Madelyn, as well as a brother, sister and granddaughter. He was 85 years old.



I. George Scarpulla

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Farewell & Welcome Aboard

SHCA gratefully acknowledges and gives thanks to Board Treasurer Zaineb Zekeria for all her hard work over the past year. We welcome Marc Feldman, who will now fill the position.

Marc Feldman is a retired business executive who most recently served as Chief Financial Officer of the American Board of Internal Medicine. Over the course of his career, he worked with non-profit organizations, both as a management consultant and a board member, and has served on the board of Two Independence Place as president and treasurer.

Marc grew up in the West Oak Lane section of Philadelphia and attended Central High School. He has a bachelor's degree from Lehigh University and an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of the

University of Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Nancy, have lived most of their adult lives in the Philadelphia area. They have two sons, a grandson — and a granddaughter is on the way.

New to SHCA administrative duties is Greg DiTeodoro, who has lived in Society Hill since 1993. He is a Drexel University graduate with a degree in Accounting and Computer Systems Management. Greg is a certified massage therapist and yoga instructor, as well as a licensed Realtor. He also works as a professional vocalist/musician in the band "Adonis," and sings in several area churches. Greg recently became the SHCA's accountant/bookkeeper and is now delivering the *Reporter* to all Society Hill residents. He enjoys both jobs, as the former is challenging, and the latter is great exercise!

Exercise & Socialize

Join the Walkie-Talkies!

On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, a group of Society Hill gals lace up their sneakers and take to the sidewalks to keep physically fit while exploring all corners of our unique neighborhood. These year-round, one-hour walks always begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. — except, of course, when it rains.

If you enjoy socializing, this free "fitness program" most certainly encourages any and all newcomers. Just show up at Three Bears Park a few minutes prior to 8:15 a.m. (Delancey Street between 2nd & 3rd Streets) — when neighbor gals will promptly begin their friendly, non-stressful and varied Walkie-Talkie exercise program. Any questions? Just phone Bernice at 215-925-4363.



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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

2011 Membership Inches Ahead of 2010 Total

SHCA membership through mid-October stood at 1,032, a small increase from the 1,025 total in 2010.

We thank the 93 new members who replaced the 93 members from 2010 who did not renew. Membership renewal notices for 2012 will be mailed November 1, 2011. Please be on the lookout for it and send it in promptly so that we avoid postage for follow-up mailings.

If you have never been an SHCA member or have not renewed for the past two years, now is your opportunity to join or re-join. All such new or long lapsed members will have their membership grandfathered into 2012, so in effect, you get the remaining months of 2011 FREE.

Why is your membership so important? Besides providing funding for our many neighborhood improvement projects, such as graffiti control, weekly sidewalk cleaning and plantings in Washington Square, numbers speak volumes. When our board advocates on your behalf re: zoning changes, real estate taxes, crime problems, ramp issues, trash receptacles, street lighting, bus re-routing, etc., it makes a greater impact if they can say they speak on behalf of over 1,500 member households representing more than half of ALL residents in Society Hill. As a member, you also are guaranteed a personal invitation to each of our social events — the Holiday Social, the Washington Square Affair, the Soiree at the Shambles and the Spring Fling.

Without member dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment. SIGN UP TODAY!!

Email mattdejulio@aol.com if you have any questions or wish to comment on why you are not a member. All comments will be shared with the board, which is representative of every quadrant in our most unique historic neighborhood.



SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

email
(print clearly) _____

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

Residential Memberships

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

Business Memberships

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

Additional Contributions

- \$ _____ Washington Square Beautification
- \$ _____ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal
- \$ _____ Zoning and Historic Preservation
- \$ _____ Franklin Lights
- \$ _____ Tree Tenders
- \$ _____ McCall School

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Charge VISA/MasterCard:

Number _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

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

- Clean-Up Day
- Franklin Lights
- Dilworth House
- Reporter
- Washington Square
- Social Events
- Property Taxes
- Casino Issues
- Zoning & Historic Preservation
- Fundraising
- Local Crime Incidents & Alerts

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

NIFTY NEIGHBORS IN MY OWN BACKYARD

BY JANE BIBERMAN

Volunteers in Action



Jay Hummel and Robert Moskowitz in Venice

Jay Hummel and Robert Moskowitz, partners for 12 years, moved to the Society Hill Towers in 2005. They share their one-bedroom apartment overlooking South Philly with two cats, Sophie and Maggie. Decorated with cat- or clock-themed antiques, their cozy home makes use of every square inch.

Jay has a degree in communications from Temple University and has his own computer and consulting business. He specializes in website design, as well as desktop support and training. (Full disclosure: He is my computer tutor without whom I would never have been able to conduct this interview via iChat.)

“After leaving Boyd’s [retail store], where I was a manager, I decided to retool,” says Jay. “So I sharpened my computer skills to make some money while looking for another job. But as it happened, it turned into a new career path. I started out working from home, which was a little crowded, and I recently rented a space near Rittenhouse Square.”

Because our community is in the midst of tough economic times, both men decided to devote themselves to volunteering. “It offers us the opportunity to help those in great need,” says Jay. “We both volunteer at St. Peter’s Church Food Cupboard, which is a local food pantry that serves more than 130 families weekly.”

“Our food comes from donations, the church and parishioners,” explains Jay. “Much is also purchased from Philabundance, the region’s largest hunger relief organization. Volunteers

prepare not only all of the non-perishable items, but also fresh veggies, fruit, bread products and dairy goods. We sort the food weekly and provide it to our clients on Saturday mornings. The net effect is that the Cupboard serves between 200 and 300 individuals each week. We’ve made friends among clients and with many people at the Cupboard who are our neighbors in Society Hill.”

Jay points out that while he is on the Vestry of St. Peter’s, not all of the Cupboard workers are church members. “In the past year, the Cupboard has grown significantly because of the leadership of our assistant rector, Claire Nevin-Field.”

“It gives us both a great feeling every time we assist our clients at the Cupboard,” adds Jay, who notes that the organization is more than 100 years old. “Originally, it started out as a poverty board that served many immigrants, a tradition that continues today. We engage local translators because many of our clients are non-English speaking. This helps us communicate with them. We also provide some assistance in regards to local social services, if needed.”

“At Thanksgiving, we prepare special bags for clients,” states Jay, “but our work continues throughout the year. Last winter around the holidays, we gave away 200 pairs of new gloves and more than a few hundred new hats, which were all donated. In addition, we provided winter coats to our homeless clients.”

Both men are also involved with POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild). They joined more than 2,000 volunteers from 40 different churches and synagogues last month at a launch on Broad Street. Leaders representing different creeds unveiled a platform centering on five major areas: public safety, health care, housing, education and jobs. They asked a labor leader, a city councilman and Mayor Nutter to pledge to connect more Philadelphians to jobs.

Closer to home — in fact, in their own backyard, Jay and Robert assist neighbors in the Towers who are housebound or need help going to doctors’ appointments or shopping. Jay also gives free computer training to immigrants, teaching them skills at a United Way affiliate. And in their very limited spare time, the couple likes to travel. “We went to Italy last summer,” reminisces Jay. “It seems like a distant dream, but you can see our photos on my Facebook page.”

If you are interested in learning more about the Food Cupboard, visit St. Peter’s Church at 313 Pine Street, call 215-925-5968 or visit stpetersphila.org/food-cupboard.html.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday through Sunday
November 10-13
**35th Annual Philadelphia
Museum of Art Craft Show**
www.pmacraftshow.org

Wednesday, November 16
SHCA Board Meeting
6:00 p.m. Great Court
Conference Room
SHCA General Meeting
7:30 p.m. Zubrow Auditorium
Pennsylvania Hospital
8th & Spruce Streets

Saturday, November 19
Fall Clean-Up Day
See page 4

Saturday, November 19
**Glenn Douglas Memorial
Concert**
See page 5

Monday, December 5
SHCA Holiday Social
Stay tuned for place and time



*Happy Holidays
to You and Yours!*



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