



SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

January/February 2013

The Newsletter  
of The Society Hill  
Civic Association

www.societyhillcivic.org

## Are Electronic Building Wraps on Our Horizon?

BY ROSANNE LOESCH

City planning is being sacrificed in exchange for the promise of ad hoc donations to needy groups.

Get ready for a newly created district of giant electronic building wraps and billboards facing the Vine Street Expressway between 6th and 7th Streets near Callowhill Street. Will the residents of historic neighborhoods south of Vine Street be affected? You bet.

Just take a drive or walk day (or night) traveling north on 5th Street near Walnut. Ahead is an enormous billboard that was recently converted to an electronic digital sign, thanks to an over-the-counter permit that was erroneously issued by Licenses & Inspections (and is currently being appealed). When this billboard was a traditional, static sign, it was hardly noticeable from such a distance at night. But now the very white, intense light (and the flashing change of ads at 6-second intervals) travels for many blocks and

serves as an unwelcome backdrop for Independence Park and Society Hill.

In December, I testified before the Rules Committee against the bill (#120920) that would create the new electronic sign district. Its primary purpose is to allow the owner of the Electric Factory, Myron Berman (a developer from NYC), to wrap the buildings he owns with giant electronic signs facing the Vine Street Expressway. Large electronic billboards will also be allowed. Mr. Berman has been fighting to do this for years, first through the courts (going all the way to the Pennsylvania and U.S. Supreme Courts, where it was repeatedly defeated) and then by using City Council to legislate a zoning change, thus bypassing the zoning process.

*continued on page 7*

### THIS NEW YEAR, RESOLVE TO GIVE BACK!

If you're reading the *Reporter* and aren't yet a member of the Society Hill Civic Association, (SHCA) consider this: SHCA provides countless services that enhance your property value, as well as your quality of life. Your neighborhood

is cleaner, safer and more beautiful because of our efforts. Please turn to page 5 now! Find out one way we spend almost \$25,000 each year making your Society Hill better. Then support us and become a member today.

WED.

Jan.  
**16**

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings  
Wednesday, January 16, 2013

**Pennsylvania Hospital  
8th & Spruce Streets**

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

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

**Please refer to SHCA weekly email blasts for speaker and topic information.**

### A HOLIDAY TRADITION



**It started six years ago: A simple garland, a few shiny ornaments and a bright red bow. More than 25 neighbors from the 200 blocks of Delancey and Spruce Streets, as well as Phillips and American Streets, continued the tradition in 2012 when they "adopted" and adorned historical Franklin lights the first week of December. This special custom is not just about decorations. It's about neighbors becoming friends as they make their blocks merry and bright.**



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Go to our website,  
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to access past issues of  
the Reporter, and to view  
many photos in color.

**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 717-715-5791 or email [sandra.rothman@aol.com](mailto:sandra.rothman@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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P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

## An Active Year Ahead

As we move into the New Year, it is my sincere wish that all of my neighbors had happy celebrations of holiday traditions and have made sensible New Year's resolutions, the kind one can actually keep!

The past year was an active one of advocacy for our civic association on all fronts. My heartfelt thanks go out to our standing committees and their chairs, who do so much to keep our neighborhood clean, safe and functional, as well as the many others who volunteer considerable time and effort, as we tackle the array of issues facing us. This coming year promises to be even more active!

As most of us who live in the older, eastern section of Society Hill have noticed, the city's project to install handicapped-accessible ramps at the majority of street corners has been moving along slowly, but moving. Board members Lorna Katz-Lawson and Martha Levine have been following the work and will be our liaison with the city as the paving project finishes up. This round of budgeting will not allow repaving of all of our streets, but we believe the new ramps are as compatible as possible with the historic neighborhood and certainly fulfill our obligation to accommodate people with disabilities. The following months will see SHCA pushing the city for proper completion.

Several other ongoing Historic Preservation issues need our positive support and vigilance in 2013. Our association and concerned neighbors have devoted quite a bit of time and money over the years in our opposition to plans to destroy most of Dilworth House in favor of a high-rise building. The courts have, in layman's terms, refused such plans and sent the proposal back to the original city agencies. Meanwhile, Dilworth House remains vacant and deteriorating.

Another issue that could become a serious one to our historic neighborhood is a recent and capricious proposal by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. It would require all buildings, including our most historic, to have grey gas meters the size of turkeys mounted on the front facing the street. The reason offered is that high-pressure gas entering a building through

a steel supply pipe, as compared to PVC, is vulnerable to rupture and explosion. A state review commission took comments on the proposal and heard much negative feedback from historic districts like Society Hill, preservationists like the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia and others in the field. As PGW has stated that only five percent of its 480,000 customers have steel pipe and there have been only 65 "reportable" leaks in the last 40 years, the commission recommended PUC rescind its ruling. The SHCA will follow this issue.

Several years ago, SHCA joined with many other civic associations and concerned groups to oppose casino gambling at two sites along the riverfront. Our government disregarded its electorate, and we were stuck with the Sugarhouse casino on North Delaware Avenue. For years, the specter of the Foxwoods site at Reed Street and Columbus Boulevard hung over us until, in 2012, the license was finally revoked. Now there is bidding for six new sites in Philadelphia. This year will find our community once again in dialogue on this complex issue.

A sign that the much-lamented recession may be easing appeared in the form of housing statistics as reported by the Center City District and Central Philadelphia Development Corporation. Society Hill fares well, appearing at or near the top of the rankings for median sales price, household income, education, longevity, density (surprisingly, since I always thought of Society Hill as a dense neighborhood!), and low vacancy rate. This may be good news/bad news for us in 2013, since City Council and Mayor Nutter will be negotiating real estate tax reform under the Actual Value Initiative. Our civic association has been working with other civic associations and the Tax Fairness Coalition to monitor the process, to urge Council to conduct open proceedings and to craft a fair assessment process. At this point, it seems likely that most of us can expect an increase in our property taxes. We have already heard several presentations at general membership meetings and will be hearing more.

Best Wishes for the New Year!



**Steven Weixler,  
President**

*Best  
Wishes  
for the  
New Year*

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**THANKS AND FAREWELL****Bernice Hamel**

**We thought our readers would want to see this recent email from our good neighbor, Bernice Hamel. As we all know, Bernice created the *Society Hill Reporter* 25 years ago and made it the well-respected publication it is today. Au revoir, Bernice. You've made lasting contributions to Society Hill and we will miss your sunny presence!**

Dear SHCA Board of Directors:

I'm writing to let you know that after enjoying 26 years as a resident in Society Hill, my husband and I will be moving at the end of January, and therefore, I must reluctantly resign my position as a current SHCA Director-At-Large.

As you know, I have been a very devoted resident (as well as community activist), and I have truly marveled at how this historical neighborhood has always responded intelligently and appropriately to whatever challenges we've faced over the past many years. The great news is that Society Hill seems to be getting better with each passing year, due to inspired and hard-working leadership as exhibited by you and the proactive, positive members of our civic association!

Please know that it has truly been a pleasure (and a privilege!) to work with you and our entire SHCA "gang!" If in the future I can be of assistance in any way, just let me know, as I'd be most happy to help out.

Thanks for being great neighbors and wonderful civic activists.

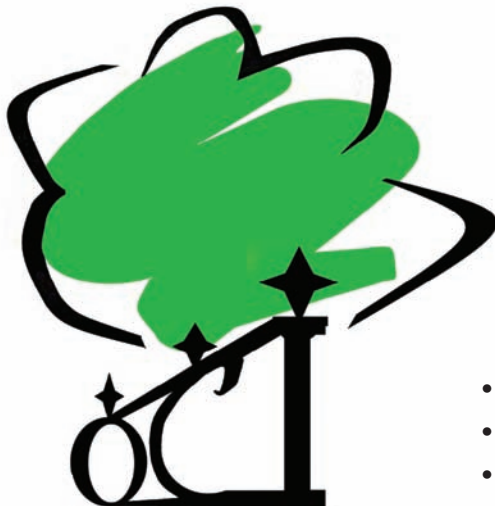
Sincerely, Bernice Hamel

**GOOD NEWS FOR SOCIETY HILL****Real Estate Market Continues to Rebound**

The Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, with the Center City District, recently published a report informing readers that, while the national economy may be slow to recover, Center City (which includes Society Hill) has maintained its appeal. It continues to grow in market share among singles, couples with and without children, and empty nesters.

Most welcome to Society Hill residents is the news that total 2012 home sales were up from 2011 by 3.7 percent, the average home price went up by 13 percent and the average number of days on the market fell from 138 to 108.

This reversal is great news for Philadelphia, which recorded positive, citywide population growth in the 2010 census, after almost a half-century of declining population.

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## What Does SHCA Do for Me?

Recently, a neighbor in one of Society Hill’s high rises mentioned to this writer that membership in our civic association was fine and good for home owners, but condo and apartment residents didn’t really need it. “After all,” she said, “I pay monthly maintenance fees — enough is enough!”

We were walking down Spruce Street when I asked, “And what about our graffiti problem?” My friend laughed, informing me that, in a community like ours, graffiti really isn’t the issue it is in other parts of the city.

My friend — and readers — may be very surprised to learn that unsightly graffiti is a problem in Society Hill. SHCA, however, has a policy of zero tolerance, believing that keeping our neighborhood in a well-ordered condition stops further vandalism and escalation into more serious crime.

Keeping our community in a “well-ordered condition” entails constant diligence and almost \$25,000 yearly from our membership coffers to pay for graffiti removal, as well as street

sweeping after weekly trash pick-up. The city does NOT pay for this sweeping service.

Clean streets, sidewalks, trash receptacles and public furniture, like Franklin lights, enhance everyone’s quality of life and property values in Society Hill. And it is everyone’s responsibility to shoulder the costs.

SHCA cannot keep providing these services without a larger member base. We need you to step up to the plate and join SHCA today. See page 31 for a membership form.

**This graffiti-covered box is on Spruce Street, just outside of our neighborhood. Fortunately, vandals have let up on Society Hill trash receptacles and controller boxes. It’s no fun to have your “masterpiece” immediately removed!**



**SHCA spends more than \$6,000 yearly to eliminate graffiti on public spaces. In addition, board members volunteer their time and “elbow grease” to make this kind of vandalism quickly disappear.**



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## 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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Are Electronic Building Wraps on Our Horizon? *continued from page 1*

One year ago, former Councilman Frank DiCicco introduced a bill identical to #120920 that was vetoed by Mayor Michael Nutter for two basic reasons: Philadelphia stood to lose federal highway funds for violating the Highway Beautification Act if this district were created so near a federally funded highway (Vine Street), and the Mayor wanted any changes to signage rules to be made under the comprehensive review of the new zoning code, not through the legislative process.

Now, Mr. Berman has gotten our new Councilman Mark Squilla to re-introduce the DiCicco bill, this time using the promise of money for schools to get approval. Mr. Berman testified at Council that 20 percent of net profits would go to “schools and community groups.” Interestingly, the bill introduced before the Rules Committee contained no mention of the money for schools, and schools are not legally allowed to accept this money.

So Mr. Berman hired Jeff Hornstein, (who is also the President of Queen Village Neighbors Association), to meet with the parent associations at three schools (McCall, Spring Garden and Kearney) and the boards of the following community groups: Old City, Callowhill, Chinatown, Northern Liberties, Washington Square West and West Poplar. (Mr. Hornstein did not ask to meet with the Society Hill Civic Association Board, even though Society Hill is as close to the proposed district as these other neighborhoods.)

He offered the civic groups between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year if they would sign a community benefits agreement that required their testimony at City Council in favor of the billboard district. Mr. Hornstein offered significantly more money to the parent groups in exchange for the same testimony because 2/3 of the 20 percent set aside would go to the three schools. However, as of this writing, no one has seen the exact language of the Community Benefits Agreement. Mr. Hornstein has publicly stated that he would be compensated if the bill goes through.

The three parent groups all testified in favor of the bill, as did the developer, Mr. Berman and Mr. Hornstein. None of the six neighborhoods adjoining the proposed district (Callowhill, Old City, Society Hill, Chinatown, Northern Liberties and Washington Square West) testified in favor of the bill. A number of associations submitted testimony against it, including Callowhill, Old City, Chinatown and Society Hill. In addition, Eva Gladstein, Executive Director of the Planning Commission, testified against the proposal, and

Independence National Historic Park submitted a letter opposing the creation of the billboard district. Before the final vote, PennDOT sent a letter to each member of Council stating that the City of Philadelphia risks losing millions of dollars of federal highway funds if outdoor advertising falls within 660 feet of the Vine Street right of way.

There are many flaws to Mr. Berman’s and Mr. Hornstein’s promises of money to schools. For one thing, there is no contractual obligation with the City to honor this commitment. The “agreements” are with the three parent associations and any civic group that decides to join. Secondly, the method for distributing the money is completely ad hoc. It handpicks certain communities and certain schools over others, based on their willingness to testify in support of the bill. Third, this bill violates a principle much bigger than its objective — that of sound urban planning. It heralds a potential free-for-all where developers can buy off needy groups in exchange for creating “community support” for bad projects.

What happened to city planning and the multi-year effort to create a new zoning code? Is City Council just free to ignore zoning law and the Planning Commission to create new zoning as it desires?

Promising needy parent associations additional funds does not justify this grab of public space or circumvention of the planning process. Spreading a few dollars (in comparison to the massive amount of revenue that will be generated by the signs) around to organizations desperate for money does not turn a constituency of one — i.e. the owner of the Electric Factory — into a broader constituency.

City Council passed this bill 16 to 1 (Councilman Wilson Goode voted against it) on December 13, 2012, in spite of the opposition of the City Planning Commission, numerous community groups, Independence National Historical Park and PennDOT. Mayor Nutter is expected to again veto this bill. He has until January 24 to do so. However, this time Council could now have the votes to override the Mayor’s veto.

To voice your opinion, fax Councilman Squilla’s office at 215-686-1931, call 215-686-3458 or email mark.squilla@phila.gov, and copy Mayor Nutter at Michael.nutter@phila.gov or fax 215-686-2180. Copies may be sent to mattdejulio@aol.com.

Rosanne Loesch is a Society Hill resident and past President of the Society Hill Civic Association. Rosanne testified on her own behalf.



**This electronic digital sign, located at 5th and Callowhill Streets, flashes up to 10,000 bright messages daily. It can easily be seen from residences in Society Hill and from various parts of the Independence National Historic District — a United Nations World Heritage Site.**

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Funds were promised in exchange for favorable testimony.

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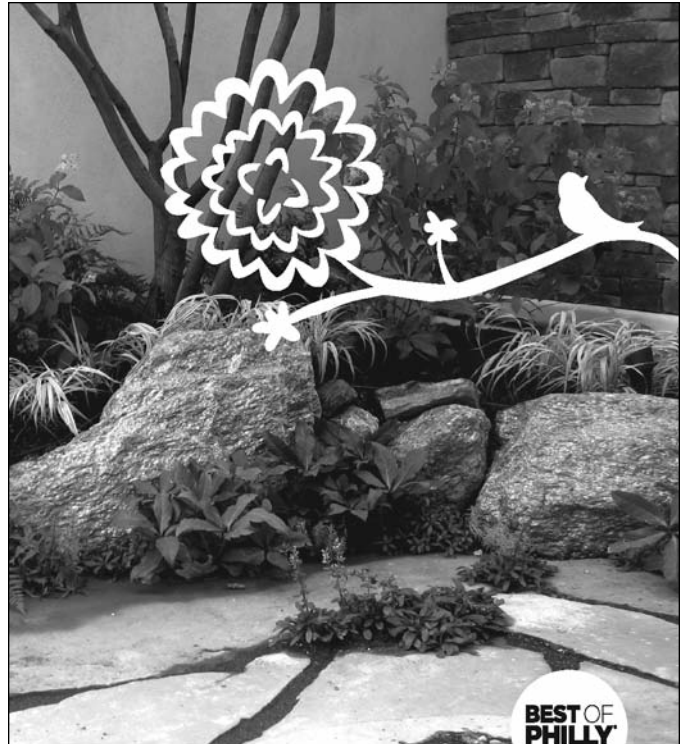
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**ZONING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**


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BY LORNA KATZ-LAWSON

Every month, SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation (ZHP) Committee meets to address community concerns related to both zoning and historic conservation. We urge you to submit your plans or ideas for the exterior of your property to the ZHP Committee before submitting them to the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC) for their necessary approval.

**410 South Front Street****(aka New Market or Stamper Square)**

After the October 31 hearing at the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), the Board declared it would delay its decision by 30 days, since it needed time to review testimony. In addition, the testimony of a neighbor representing some Pine Street residents led ZBA to believe that further talks with the developer would occur (and probably result in an agreement that would remove residents' opposition to the proposed development). As of this writing, no one has received notice of the decision.

Toll Brothers also presented to the Architectural Review Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission a revised design for the public plaza on 2nd Street. This was approved, although lighting still has not been developed. SHCA's agreement with Toll has certain restrictions about the lighting, in order to keep the area sufficiently lighted to discourage vagrancy or vandalism without disturbing the near neighbors.

**308 Cypress Street**

New owners presented their proposal for a three-story rear addition that would have required a zoning variance for excess coverage. As a result of the open discussion with the near neighbors and the understanding of the impact the larger addition would have, the new owners decided to scale back their design to comply with the code.

**210 West Washington Square**

Representatives of Talula's Garden met with ZHP to gain support for an expansion of the restaurant into an informal take-out/eat-in café, with a beer and wine service, to be called "Talula's Daily." The new facility would be located in a currently unoccupied commercial space in the Ayer Building and would operate similarly to Fork, etc., but with sidewalk tables.

No exterior changes are proposed other than modifying the upper sash of a few windows on St. James Street to be able to vent exhaust fans from the new kitchen that would be required.

**800 Walnut Street**

As a result of a meeting under the auspices of Washington Square West Civic Association's Zoning, Penn Medicine agreed to work with the near neighbors, who would be directly affected, to revise its signs. Without prodding, they radically reduced the lighted signage in the lobby (which was three stories high), realizing that the sign was so large it would not be able to be read by those moving down 8th Street.

**Community Organization Registration**

In our last issue, we reported that "Well, at last — we are official." Well, perhaps not so fast, now that City Council has decided to upset the apple cart before the new zoning code gets its first chance to prove its mettle. City Council wants to control who represents the community, including ad hoc groups that rally for a particular cause without any formal organization or proof of general support by a neighborhood. This was moved out of the Rules Committee on December 4 and was to have been voted on later in December.

**Lit Bros. Digital Roof Signs**

ZHP member Mike Wass represented SHCA at PHC to oppose the proposed digital signs. The review was a continuation of an earlier one — in which the applicant was required to provide a mockup of the sign to determine if the new screening grille that carries the digital mesh would have the appearance of the historic grillage that carried the original Lit's sign. Others who joined SHCA in opposition to the sign were the Preservation Alliance, the National Park Service, residents of the Ayer and the St. James, Old City Civic Association, Washington Square West Civic Association, and Ellie Gesensway, who spearheaded the restoration of the building back in the 70's and, of course, Scenic Philadelphia.

After much discussion, a vote was called and approval was passed by a single vote. The SHCA Board subsequently voted to pursue determining whether it would have standing to appeal on behalf of affected neighbors. The lighted signs, flashing with 8-second changes until 11 p.m. every day, will be visible to high-rise residents of at least three buildings between 6th and 8th Streets.

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# Philly's Property Tax Overhaul Effort Praised

As Philadelphia prepares to overhaul its property tax system, a new report from The Pew Charitable Trusts finds that no other U.S. city in recent years has made such significant changes at one time and in the absence of a state mandate or court order.

The report, "The Actual Value Initiative: Overhauling Property Taxes in Philadelphia," examines how the city's property tax assessment system evolved to the point that assessments of many properties have little relation to their true value and how other cities have dealt with this situation. It also analyzes the current city proposals designed to mitigate the big spikes in property taxes that the changes would likely bring to some residents.

One key reason why our property assessments have gotten so far out of line with market values (in addition to a history of local inaction) is that the state of Pennsylvania is one of only nine states that impose no reassessment timetables or standard assessment methods on local government. It also is one of just three states to receive a

grade of F in "standardized procedures" from the Council on State Taxation, a Washington-based trade group. In fact, according to the city's chief assessment officer, Richie McKeithen, Philadelphia has never had a thorough citywide field inspection of every property and its characteristics until now.

To view the full report, visit [www.pewtrusts.org](http://www.pewtrusts.org).

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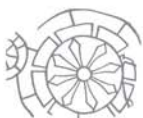
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## EXPLORING THE CITY

BY JIM MURPHY

## Washington Avenue Immigration Station

Here's where almost one million immigrants entered the United States.



International Navigation Company Emigrant Station at Washington Avenue and the Delaware River, circa 1890.

Image Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

While walking south on Columbus Boulevard one Sunday afternoon, I suddenly noticed a blue and gold Pennsylvania historical marker identifying the site of the Washington Avenue Immigration Station. The marker — at the foot of Washington Avenue — says, “Since the 1870’s, the station was an entry point and processing center for immigrants, primarily from Southern and Eastern Europe. From here, newcomers moved into the city or other parts of the state. It was demolished in 1915.”

Even though I’ve lived my entire life within 10 miles of this spot, I never realized Philadelphia had an immigration station. I assumed, incorrectly, that our ancestors all came through Ellis Island.

**I was equally surprised** to learn that almost one million immigrants first set foot on U.S. soil at Washington Avenue.

Philadelphia is actually one of seven cities that at different times were runners-up to New York as an entry point for immigrants. The others were: Boston, Baltimore, Miami, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco and, later, Honolulu.

The Washington Avenue Immigration Center “was like a big warehouse,” says Bob Skiba, President of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides. Bob, who is co-writing a book called *Lost Philadelphia* with fellow guide Ed Mauger (pronounced major), plans to include the immigration station in the book.

Built by the Pennsylvania Railroad near the docks of the American Line (which it also owned), the two-story station included a restaurant, ticket office, money exchange and comfort areas on the ground floor, plus a large lobby. Passengers disembarked onto the second floor, where they were examined and questioned by customs inspectors.

**After a \$10,000 expansion** in 1896, which also included electric lights and steam heating, eight inspectors were able to handle 300 English-speaking or 150 non-English speaking immigrants per hour, or up to 1,500 per day. Before the improvements, the maximum was 300 per day.

The Washington Avenue wharves were a busy, bustling place, says Frederic R. Miller in *Philadelphia: Immigrant City*, a Balch online resource. Factories, warehouses, sugar refineries and grain elevators were nearby, “all connected to the vast yards of the Pennsylvania Railroad.”

Outside the station, a crowd of entrepreneurs usually gathered, ready and willing to charge newcomers exorbitant rates for their many services.

#### On-the-spot weddings

Inside, “The station naturally became one of the most colorful places in Philadelphia,” Miller says. For example, a part of the examination room was called the “Altar.” Why? “Since under some conditions single women were prevented from landing, many hurried unions were celebrated on the spot.”

The American Line, the only one offering weekly sailings, brought 17,342 passengers to Philadelphia from Liverpool in 1882 alone. Even after it began serving New York in the 1890’s, the line added “ships with such local names as the Kensington, Southwark, Haverford and Merion to the Philadelphia run around the turn of the century.”

In 1898, the Hamburg-American Line began service to Philadelphia, bringing many Polish and Jewish immigrants here. In all, trans-Atlantic steamers brought over 60,000 immigrants to the city in 1913 — the peak. From 1910 to 1914, at the height of immigration from southern and

### FAST FACTS

#### Name:

Washington Avenue Immigration Station

**Location:** Pier 53, Washington Avenue and Columbus Blvd.

**Years in Service:** 1873 to 1915

#### Immigrants

**Processed Here:** Almost 1 million

#### Original Name:

International Navigation Company Immigration Station

#### Built By:

The Pennsylvania Railroad, which wanted to expand its freight and passenger service into the trans-Atlantic market and bypass New York.

EXPLORING THE CITY

*continued from page 12*

eastern Europe, Philadelphia was the third largest immigrant portal in the country.

**World War I** and restrictive immigration quotas quickly changed that. The annual average of arrivals in Philadelphia plummeted from 49,644 between 1910 and 1914 to 5,598 between 1915 and 1924 and just 408 from 1925 to 1930.

Even though the city is no longer a major immigration portal, its Washington Avenue corridor still attracts foreign-born residents.

A cursory glance at the Southeast Asian temples, shops and restaurants along Washington Avenue — plus the Mexican taquerias, cantinas and stores that have sprung up nearby — shows that this area is again an immigrant gateway, with all the energy and excitement that comes with it.

**Next Issue:** Learn about Lazarreto, the now-closed quarantine station on the Delaware River, where all ships had to dock for inspection.



**Accommodations of Emigrant Depot, Philadelphia**  
**Interior of the Washington Avenue Immigrant Station (Pennsylvania Railroad Emigrant Depot), circa 1885.**  
 Image courtesy of Independence Seaport Museum (Philadelphia, PA), 1965.217.

**Why Most Immigrants Landed in New York**

With its great harbor, New York was much easier to get to from Europe than some of its East Coast rivals. In part, that's why some 12 million immigrants entered the U.S. there. In addition, from its earliest days, Philadelphia had three major disadvantages, according to Frederic R. Miller:

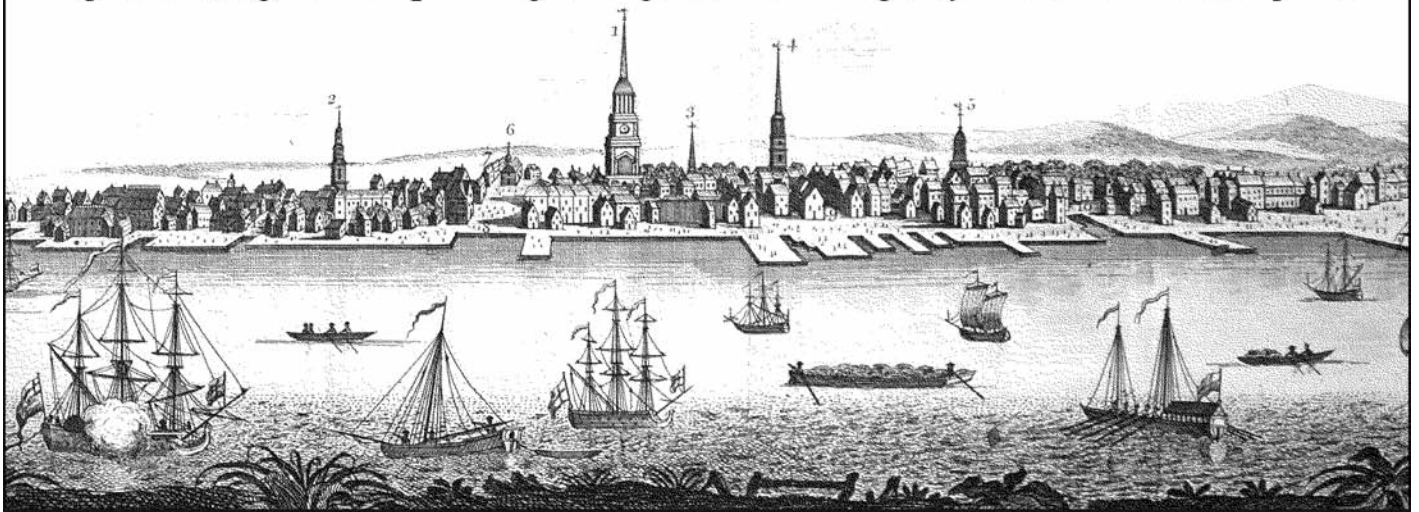
**Ice:** Even after the city bought an iceboat in 1838, shippers were concerned it would not prevail against five-foot thick ridges of ice in the river.

**Longer distance:** An ocean voyage to Philadelphia was 200 miles longer than to New York. It also involved traveling 110 miles up a shallow bay and up what used to be a winding river channel.

**Torturous travel:** Not only was the two-week voyage around Cape May boring, it was frustrating to the weary travelers, too, because land was in sight the whole time.

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ON OUR SHELF

## Puffins and Painters

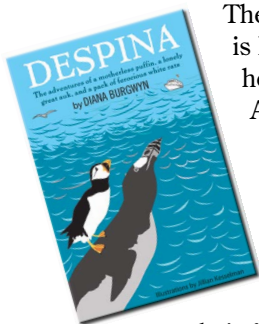
**Diana Burgwyn**, a Society Hill neighbor for 20 years, is the author of several adult, non-fiction books on subjects ranging from marriage without children to travel and classical music. In the classical music arena, Diana has been a critic, program annotator, feature writer, speaker and oral historian.



Author Diana Burgwyn

She lived and worked for two years in a beautiful old castle in Salzburg, Austria, with her husband, Jim. While there, Diana wrote a book entitled *Salzburg: A Portrait*.

She is also the author of *Seventy-Five Years of The Curtis Institute of Music: A Narrative Portrait* and of a commemorative book, *The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts*. For many years Diana contributed opera reviews to the British publication *Opera Now*. In the field of chamber music, she is author of *Marlboro Music: A Fifty Year Portrait*, and she completed an oral history of Marlboro.



Then came the puffins. *Despina* is Diana's first work of fiction and her first book for children. She saw Atlantic puffins up close on a trip to Scotland many years ago, and she has been in love with them ever since. "I fell in love with their silly way of strutting, their vivid coloring, glossy black and white bodies and multi-colored beaks,

their fat little bodies in flight and their chainsaw voices. The more I learned about the various species of puffin, the more entranced I became."

*Despina* is a fantasy for readers age 8 to 12, and it contains a lot of scientific information — so much so that the director of seabird restoration for the National Audubon Society has recommended it as an unusual and fun way to teach science to kids. The underlying message of the book is that every species has its place on earth and, once gone, will never be seen again. Hence, we must protect endangered species from that fate.

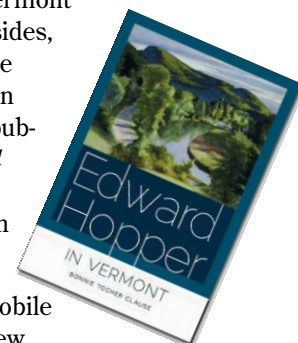
*Despina* is available in soft cover and as an e-book from Amazon.com or Barnesandnoble.com. Further information about the book can be found on Diana's website: [DianaBurgwyn.com](http://DianaBurgwyn.com).

**Bonnie Tocher Clause** is a writer and an independent scholar. *Edward Hopper in Vermont* is her first book. She has lived in Philadelphia since 1984, and in 1996 she bought her home on Bradford Alley, at the edge of Society Hill. Bonnie and her partner, Michael J. Hogan, now divide their time between Philadelphia, Long Beach Island in New Jersey, and South Royalton, a small town in central Vermont. Their Vermont home is just down the road from the farm where Edward Hopper and his wife stayed during the summers of 1937 and '38.



Bonnie Tocher Clause and her partner, Michael J. Hogan

Edward Hopper's *plein air* watercolors of rural Vermont show another side of the artist, known for his iconic depictions of urban loneliness and isolation. During summer excursions between 1927 and 1938, Hopper recorded his singular interpretations of the Vermont landscape in watercolors and drawings of hillsides, meadows, roadside views and scenes along the White River, against the backdrop of the Green Mountains. These little-known works, rarely published, are reproduced sequentially in *Edward Hopper in Vermont*, along with the stories of their creation and their subsequent acquisition by private collectors and museums.



Bonnie traces Edward and Jo Hopper's automobile trips through Vermont as they searched for new places to paint. These journeys resulted first in a few paintings of barns and farm buildings, more typically "Hopperesque," and later in a series of "pure" landscapes, unusual for Hopper in their lack of architectural form or other signs of human presence. They are also distinctive in the techniques and palette that Hopper used to capture the particular colors and quality of light of the Vermont landscape. Clause establishes Hopper's Vermont sojourns, working within his personal and professional biography and in the context of Vermont during the Great Depression.

A happy offshoot of the book will be an exhibit at the Middlebury College Museum of Art next summer (Middlebury, Vermont, May 25 - August 11). The exhibit will include about 20 of Hopper's Vermont watercolors — most, if not all, of the ones that are reproduced in the book — and about half a dozen of his Vermont drawings.

*Edward Hopper in Vermont* is published by the University Press of New England and is available at bookstores, as well as Amazon.com.

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PHILLY FOOD LOVERS

BY KERI WHITE

Get Thee to Redwood

Redwood, an eclectic new restaurant and wine bar brought to us by Copabanana’s owner Bill Curry and his nephew Dan Christensen, is a welcome addition to the South Street dining scene. We landed there on a Tuesday night and were thrilled to see a lively bar crowd comfortably ensconced in a beautifully renovated space topped by a striking copper-tiled ceiling.

Redwood offers two dozen wines by the glass, either in a tasting or full pour size. You can also choose to imbibe from their small but well chosen wine list. In addition, the establishment taps a healthy selection of craft draft beers and has a staggering trove of bottled beers to choose from. We were tempted by the specialty cocktails:

Cucumber Crush (vodka, thai basil, black pepper puree and cucumbers); Sonoma County Lemonade (blended whiskey, lemon juice, ginger syrup, club soda); Down Home Tea (bourbon, black tea, lemon juice, lime juice, simple syrup, mint) to name a few, but seeing as it was Tuesday evening, we stuck with wine. The Tempranillo did not disappoint.

We embraced the “small plates” approach and ordered a bunch of items for the table. The cheese plate was a standout; we ended up ordering a second one with dessert for the “Manchego-phile” in our group. We also enjoyed the Buttermilk Fried Oyster Caesar Salad; oysters were perfectly crisp on the outside and very obviously fresh. Reisling Poached Pear Salad with Arcadian Greens, Goat Cheese and Pear Vinaigrette was a symphony of sweet and

savory that really worked. The grilled asparagus wrapped in crisped Prosciutto was delightful, sprinkled with sea salt and cracked pepper and drizzled with balsamic reduction. We were on the fence about ordering the Smoked Salmon Bruschetta with caper-dill cream cheese, but were glad we did. We also had an average crab cake with a way-better-than-average chipotle remoulade sauce and a grilled “three cheese” sandwich with tomato on sourdough.

For dessert, we opted for the aforementioned second cheese plate, as well as a selection of chocolate truffles, which were quite good. The service was friendly and attentive, and though the menu is relatively small, it offers sufficient



diversity for a variety of tastes. Food prices are moderate, ranging from \$5 for hummus to \$18 for the steak frites dinner, and most beverages fall in the \$6-9 price point.

My criterion for a first-time visit to a new restaurant

is always “Would I go back?” In the case of Redwood, the answer is yes, for several reasons: good wine, good food, good service. But of equal importance is my strong desire to see businesses like Redwood thrive in our community, and the only way that happens is if we support them. So get thee to Redwood and raise a glass to our new neighbors. Cheers!

Visit Philly Food Lovers at [www.phillyfoodlovers.com/](http://www.phillyfoodlovers.com/), follow them on Facebook at Philly Food Lovers and Twitter @Phillyphood.



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## OUT AND ABOUT

## Bewitching Witches, Gruesome Ghouls

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Philadelphia was recently rated as one of the best U.S. cities for trick-or-treating, according to Zillow (an online real estate database). The ranking was based on where children get the most candy with the least walking and the greatest safety. If Society Hill is an example, it's easy to see why Philly gets such high marks.

For the past 15 years, generous and fun-spirited folks on Delancey (from Front to 4th Streets), as well as American Street, have made it a tradition to celebrate Halloween with hundreds of families from all around the city. Ghosts and goblins descend on this "boo-tifully" decorated neighborhood to have fun, show off their costumes and gather at Three Bears Park for pizza and prizes.





OUT AND ABOUT

# Friendly Ducks, Angry Birds







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**SHOP LOCALLY!**

BY MARTHA LEVINE

## Up Close and Personal: Five on 5th

Society Hill residents are fortunate to have access to five businesses that are right in the middle of our

neighborhood. We recently interviewed this congenial group of entrepreneurs and are pleased to introduce them to you.



**Son Kin (right) and her daughter Jenny.**

**1 Riff Cleaners**  
**314 S. 5th Street**  
 Son Kin has been the owner of Riff Cleaners for the last seven years, with a total of 10 years in the dry cleaning business. She was born in Korea and moved to the U.S. 25 years ago. When I asked her about our neighborhood,

Son said she has many good customers who are so friendly, like family. You only have to see the numerous patrons' Christmas cards (many with children's photos) amassed over the years to realize how true this is. Riff's offers dry cleaning, laundry services, tailoring and repairs — all done on premises. They even offer same-day services.



**Kyle Brooks**

**2 Salon@5th**  
**316 S. 5th Street**  
 Kyle Brooks became the proprietor of Salon@5th in 2002. Originally from a small town in upstate New York, Kyle has been in the salon business for 28 years. At his salon, he strives for a professional, yet relaxed environment —

a real neighborhood salon. He offers a glass of wine to clients while they are being coiffed. Kyle enjoys being in the neighborhood, because he feels it is family-oriented and has a small-town feel. Salon@5th offers hair styling, waxing services and three different hair product lines for purchase.



**Theresa Fera and Felix Maietta**

**3 Union Gourmet 5th Street**  
**318 S. 5th Street**  
**(New Kids on the Block)**  
 Husband and wife team Felix Maietta and Theresa Fera are the owners of Union Gourmet 5th Street, which opened its doors in spring 2012. They have been Society Hill residents for over 20 years

and love living and working in the community. Many of their customers are greeted with a hug. Felix, often seen with a white chef's hat, is the master chef, while Theresa is the manager and a terrific people-greeter! Plans to update the Union Gourmet 5th Street interior (booths, tables and flooring) are anticipated for early 2013.



**Wine and Spirits Shoppe**

**4 Wine and Spirits Shoppe**  
**320 S. 5th Street**  
 The manager of the store could not be interviewed without approval from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board in Harrisburg, so instead I am giving my observations. This store is one of several selected state stores in Center City that

offers wine tasting and selection services from a specialist who will assist customers. The person I spoke to has 20 years' experience managing restaurants and has the knowledge to help customers select wines that suit their needs. Small paper cups are provided for the tasting. This is a welcome service to all of us oenophiles. And it's open Sundays!



**John Kirlin, manager of Super Fresh**

**5 SuperFresh**  
**309 S. 5th Street**  
 Store Manager John Kirlin came to our SuperFresh over a year ago, after having worked for this company since the 1970's. He finds Society Hill to be one of the nicest neighborhoods in his experience because people are friendly and seem to love the store. Most challenging is the size of the building (as well as the

parking lot), because he would like to have more products than the small store can accommodate. He expects a renovation in a year or so — during which the store would remain open. John is interested in getting feedback about what products neighbors want. On your next shopping trip, ask for John and give him some ideas. And to quell the rumors — there are no plans to close the store!

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**SOCIETY HILL WELCOME BASKETS**

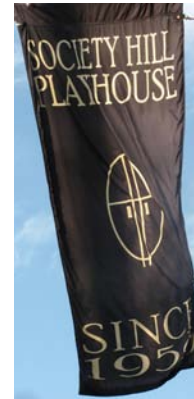
BY MARTHA LEVINE

# A Big Welcome for New Neighbors

In addition to working hard for our neighborhood, SHCA also presents new, first-time Society Hill homeowners with a Welcome Basket. Although other residents' associations may now be copying this gesture, they cannot duplicate the quantity and quality of our gift.

Each large Welcome Basket contains fresh foods, important information and many gift certificates to area theaters, restaurants, shops and services. Below is the full list of contributors. Please help us to say "thank you" to them by patronizing their businesses.

If you are a new homeowner as of 2012 and would like to have a basket presented to you in your home by appointment, please contact me at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.



Photos by Martha Levine



**These theaters are long-time contributors to the Welcome Basket program: Arden Theatre, Lantern Theater Company, The Suzanne Roberts Theater (Philadelphia Theatre Company), Society Hill Playhouse, and Wilma Theater.**

## 2012 WELCOME BASKET CONTRIBUTORS

**Coffee Shops**

- Old City Coffee, 221 Church Street
- Old City Coffee, Reading Terminal Market
- Starbucks Coffee Inc., 8th & Walnut Streets
- Philadelphia Java Company, 518 S. 4th Street

**Food Stores**

- Fork:etc (prepared foods), 308 Market Street
- SuperFresh, 5th & Pine Streets

**Hair Salons**

- Salon@5th, 316 S. 5th Street

**Restaurants**

- Bistro Romano, 120 Lombard Street
- Bridget Foy's, 200 South Street
- Chops Restaurant & Bar, 700 Walnut Street
- City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd Street
- Core De Roma, 214 South Street
- Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th Street
- Fork, 306 Market Street
- La Buca Ristorante, 711 Locust Street
- Mustard Greens (Chinese), 622 S. 2nd Street
- Positano Coast Restaurant, 2nd & Walnut Streets
- QBBQ & Tequila, 207 Chestnut Street
- Ristorante Panorama, 14 N. Front Street
- Union Gourmet@5th Street, 318 S. 5th Street
- Village Belle, 757 S. Front Street

**Specialty Foods**

- Cookies By Design & Cafe Express, Shops @ Society Hill Towers, 265 St. James Place
- Homemade Goodies by Roz, 510 S. 5th Street
- Metropolitan Bakery, 262 S. 19th Street (Rittenhouse Sq.)

**Specialty Shops**

- Adornamenti (jewelry), 1106 Pine Street
- Industry (decorative home goods), 1020 Pine Street
- Happily Ever After (toys), 1010 Pine Street
- Head House Books, 619 S. 2nd Street

- Hello Home, 1004 Pine Street
- Lolli Lolli (children's clothing/toys), 713 Walnut Street
- Paper on Pine (invitations/stationery), 115 S. 13th Street
- Show of Hands Gallery (crafts), 1006 Pine Street

**Theaters/Entertainment**

- Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut St.
- Arden Theater, 40 N. 2nd Street
- Ballet X at Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street
- Eastern State Penitentiary, 2124 Fairmount Avenue
- 1812 Productions (all-comedy theater), 215-592-9560
- Ghost Tours of Philadelphia, 610-587-8308
- InterAct Theater Company, 2030 Sansom Street
- Lantern Theater Company, 10th & Ludlow Streets (south of Market)
- Lights of Liberty, featuring Liberty 360, 6th & Chestnut Sts.
- National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street
- Pennsylvania Ballet, Academy of Music, Broad & Locust Sts.
- Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, 215-569-8080
- Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, 2111 Sansom Street
- Philadelphia Theatre Company, Susan Roberts Theater, Broad & Pine Streets
- Piffaro, The Renaissance Band, 215-235-8469
- Society Hill Playhouse, 507 S. 8th Street
- The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Kimmel Center, 215-545-1739
- The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine Church
- Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street

**Other Services**

- Judy Moon Massage Therapy, Hopkinson House, 604 Washington Square
- Liberty Tree & Landscape Management, 215-725-3637
- Lux Spa and Fitness at the Omni Hotel, 401 Chestnut St.
- Riff Cleaners, 314 S. 5th Street
- Salvatore Custom Drapery & Installations, 215-547-2880
- SCULPT – Personal Trainer, 215-803-0723
- The Worth Collection (women's fashions), 215-925-8813






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**302 Salter Street** **\$439,900**  
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**200 Locust Street 14FGH** **\$779,000**  
 Cozy and spacious 3BD/3BA home with a prestigious layout, wide open den, and a second kitchen, along with plenty of storage space with endless possibilities, all found in a fantastic location.

**211-25 S. 4th Street 104** **\$805,000**  
 Beautifully elegant condo located in the exclusive boutique building, The Willings! This unit features a 24 hour doorman, soaring ceilings, beautiful wood floors, updated granite and stainless kitchens, perfectly sized bedrooms, and private storage areas.

**210 Pine Street** **\$875,000**  
 Fantastically located 3BD/3BA home featuring 1-year prepaid parking, contemporary kitchen, a red brick patio, and finished basement with bar, also complete with wood burning fireplace, beautiful hardwood floors, and charming crown moldings!

**838-40 Lombard Street** **\$1,795,000**  
 Highly coveted 5BD/4.5BA home with rooftop terrace, elevator, and garage, complete with granite and stainless kitchen, cozy den, 4 piece marble tile bath, and private yard with patio and gardening area.



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What's not to like about walking? It's free, easy — and there's no question that it's good for you. And who doesn't love to talk? In addition to just being fun, social interactions enhance mental and physical well-being. Add the soothing element of being in (and interacting with) the great outdoors, and you're well on your way to a healthier lifestyle.

We're fortunate in Society Hill to have two choices as to where and when to don our walking shoes and join neighbors for a good "green" workout. Both of these groups welcome all ages, genders, and levels of walking stamina:



The **Walkie/Talkies** have been taking and making strides for the last six years, as they explore the interesting city streetscapes in and near our community. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 8:15 a.m., weather permitting, they meet at Three Bears Park (3rd and Delancey) to hash out their route, and then off they go for an hour-long journey. The core group of Walkie/Talkie "old-timers" embraces all newcomers with warm enthusiasm!



More recently, neighbor Dr. Lisa Unger has initiated "**Philly Is Walking In The Park!**" — a coordinated walking program through beautiful, historic Washington Square (6th and Locust). On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 8 a.m. (excluding poor weather conditions), a diverse band of neighbors cheerfully convenes at the fountain in the center of the park to exchange a few words before embarking on a half-hour, self-paced walk on the park's sturdy, level pavers.

Need some reminders about the benefits of walking? It seems counter-intuitive, but the more energy you expend walking, the more energetic you feel for the rest of the day. Walking also lowers blood pressure and wards off cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of both men and women. Thirty minutes of daily walking help postmenopausal women reduce the risk of hip fractures by 40 percent. Fifty and 60-year-olds who exercise regularly are 35 percent less likely to die over the next eight years than their non-walking counterparts. Finally, walking increases the strength and flexibility of your muscles — lessening arthritis pain.



**National Park Service ranger George Neuhauser gives an engaging talk about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to "Philly Is Walking In The Park" participants. The group gathers monthly after its walk for "Hot & Healthy CommuniTEAS," such as the one pictured above at The Bagel Factory, 510 Walnut Street. Events like these help participants become an even healthier, more connected community.**

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lace up,  
layer up,  
and get  
moving!

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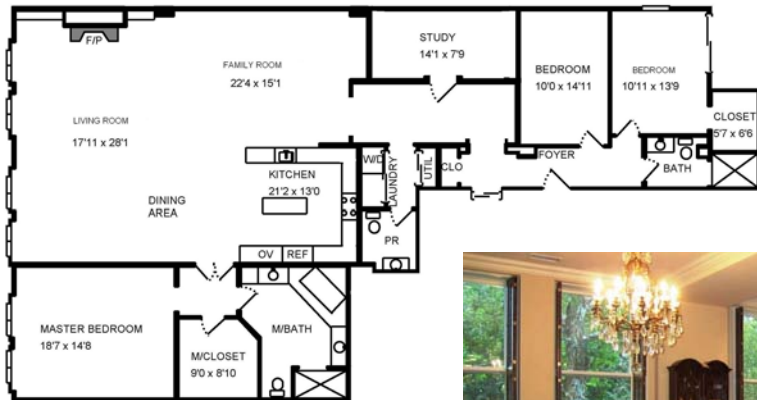
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**\$3,500,000**



### Sun-soaked Three Bedroom Plus Den

Sun-soaked three bedroom plus den, two and a half bathroom residence overlooking Washington Square with open floor plan, chef's kitchen, grand master suite and restored original building details throughout. 2716 sf  
**\$1,750,000**





**THE BEAT OF THE STREET**

BY MIKE HARRIS  
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTH STREET HEADHOUSE DISTRICT

The past few months have been very active for the South Street Headhouse District (SSHD). At the end of October, we hosted the 4th Annual "Pumpkinland Fall Festival." Nearly 3,000 visitors, young and old alike, were captivated and entertained by the acrobatics and aerial thrills of Give and Take Jugglers' Little Circus, as well as the fascinating educational demonstrations by Wheaton Arts Glass Blowers. In addition, Hot Club of Philadelphia provided irresistibly danceable music!

On December 2, SSHD held its fun and festive Winter Wonderland event. The Headhouse Market was at its holiday best, as a large throng of families enjoyed talking to Santa Claus and taking horse-drawn carriage rides. Dancers performed while the crowd shopped in the local SSHD business holiday market and counted down to the lighting of the tree.

Another major event was the ribbon-cutting and grand re-opening of the Fine Wine and Good Spirits store at 724 South Street. Now doubled in size, this completely refurbished store provides

an enjoyable shopping experience with 55 Chairman Select wines, a pleasant interior, and the beautiful new and open storefront façade.

The Fine Wine store renovation is just one of the many new investments and expansions which are taking place in the district. The year 2013 promises to hold even more exciting events, announcements and additions to the SSHD's restaurant, retail and service scene.

Take advantage of exclusive offers and discounts throughout the District with your free "Live Local. Shop Local." card, available from the South Street Headhouse District office. Download our free mobile app for your Apple or Android devices to keep up-to-date with the latest business directory, videos and news on upcoming events.

Visit southstreet.com for more information about SSHD; follow us on Facebook at South Street Headhouse District and Twitter@officialsouthst for the latest.

I'll see you on the Street!



Mike Harris

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*\*As a sideline, Jim also writes "Exploring the City" for the Society Hill Reporter*

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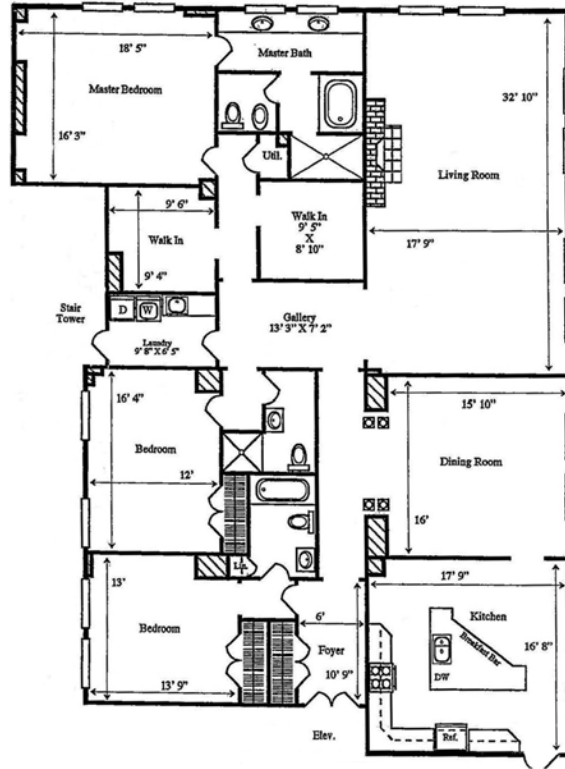
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The lavish master suite has his and hers walk-in California Closets and an ensuite bathroom appointed in marble with a Jacuzzi tub, oversized seamless glass enclosed stall shower, private commode and bidet, and double vanity with windows overlooking Washington Square. Two additional bedrooms each have their own full baths, one ensuite and the other adjacent. Additional home features include oak floors in the living areas and carpet in the bedrooms, twelve foot ceilings and eight foot windows throughout, two Bose sound systems and a spacious laundry room.

The condominium comes with one parking space in a secure lot adjacent to the building and two storage spaces.  
**\$1,995,000**



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### Beautifully Renovated Corner One Bedroom

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### One-of-a-Kind Two Bedroom

Magnificent corner two bedroom, two bathroom with an open chef's kitchen, brand new master bathroom and wonderful river and city views.  
1515 sf  
**\$599,900**



# 2013 Membership Drive Starts Off With a Bang

By early December, 590 SHCA residents had already renewed their membership — a 4% increase over the 567 who renewed at the same time last year. If the current trend continues, we will surpass our 2012 membership total of 1,036, which was a slight increase from 2011.

Membership dues notices were mailed on November 1, as usual. Residents who returned their dues by December 31 were able to participate in a drawing for two \$100 gift certificates to restaurants of their choice. Winners of the dinners will be announced in the March/April issue of the *Reporter*.

In any event, we welcome each of the over 2,600 households to join SHCA. 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 regarding zoning changes, real estate taxes, crime problems, ramp issues, trash receptacles, street lighting, bus routing, etc., it makes a greater impact if they can say they speak on behalf of the majority of residents. Members are also guaranteed a personal invitation to each of our social events.

Email [Mattdejulio@aol.com](mailto: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.

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



## THANKS, FRIENDS

**Friends of Three Bears Park** would like to thank everyone who helped make our 2012 Fall Festival a huge success! It was a beautiful day; the kids and adults all had a great time and we were able to raise funds for the maintenance and care of our neighborhood park. Thank to all of the businesses that donated either food or an item for our silent auction.

## 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/Single
- \$ 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      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Franklin Lights

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Tenders

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning and Historic Preservation      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 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
- Washington Square
- Zoning & Historic Preservation
- Franklin Lights
- Social Events
- Fundraising
- Dilworth House
- Property Taxes
- Local Government
- Reporter
- Casino Issues
- Incidents

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**NIFTY NEIGHBORS IN MY OWN BACKYARD**


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BY JANE BIBERMAN

## Marciene and Herman Mattleman: Game-Changers

**M**arciene Mattleman will never forget the day in 2003 that she met Vanita Young. “She was a 10-year-old orphan living in West Philly and her unhappiness showed in her demeanor,” she recalls. “But, then, Vanita began playing chess with After School Activities Partnerships (ASAP) and her grades improved. By her senior year, she was serving as an assistant tournament director and won a \$40,000 scholarship to Webster University in St. Louis. Today she is a smiling and confident 19-year-old. Chess changed her life!”

Marciene, better known as Marcy, helped change Vanita’s life in 2002 when she launched ASAP. Chess was the first activity introduced. “With severe cuts in funding, we committed to expanding recreation and enrichment programs for young people,” she says. “ASAP engages more than 12,000 youth in some of the city’s most underserved neighborhoods.” She notes that crime rates spike between 3 and 6 p.m., because students have nothing to do. That’s where ASAP has had a positive impact.

Some 3,000 children now play in chess clubs throughout the city, and many compete in tournaments. Marcy credits her longtime mate and partner Herman with discovering the benefits of the game. “From my reading and research, I learned that chess can dramatically improve the academic performance of disadvantaged children,” he says. “Chess teaches you to plan ahead, and it also teaches many life skills, like how to win and lose gracefully.”

Herman confesses that’s he’s only an average chess player. Scrabble is his game, and ASAP now offers 85 Scrabble clubs across the city in lower-achieving school districts, where some 900 students not only learn the joy of word play, but also gain the opportunity to be mentored by dedicated volunteers. “It’s a win-win situation for both,” says Marcy. In addition, ASAP offers drama and debate clubs for middle-school

and high-school students. Grades 6-8 have the option of debating twice a year at the University of Pennsylvania while the high-school students compete in weekly debates at Central High.



Perhaps, not so coincidentally, Herman is a graduate of Central and Penn Law.

“If there’s one thing that I’m famous for, or maybe infamous is a better word, it’s making Central coed in the 80’s,” he says with a wry smile. “There are still some people who can’t forgive me, despite the

fact that since Girls’ High and Central joined forces, academic performance has excelled.”

The Mattlemans are native Philadelphians who both attended public schools. Herman grew up in Strawberry Mansion and Marcy in Wynnefield. They fell in love at a summer camp in Bucks County, where they were both counselors, and married after Marcy finished high school. Ever since, they have devoted their lives to improving the lives of others, primarily through education.

Marcy was a full-time professor at Temple University before “retiring” to establish non-profits. “My parents believed in giving back to the community and we have tried to be mentors and role models,” says Marcy. “Our three children are all involved in helping others.” In their spacious but book-crammed apartment overlooking Society Hill, there is a bulletin board highlighting their children’s achievements. They are more modest about their own, however. Herman, a practicing lawyer, is credited with reviving the Philadelphia School District during nearly 10 years on the Board of Education, seven of which he served as president. In his spare time, he informally gives career guidance to anyone who asks him.

Marcy was the founding director of the Mayor’s Commission on Literacy during the Wilson

---

Their partnership has bettered the lives of countless children.

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*continued on page 34*



**Thinking About Summer Camp?**

**Landmarks' Young Art Sleuths Day Camp**, is an artistic, cultural and historical combination that offers weaving, drawing, acting, portrait painting and journal writing workshops. Other activities include colonial country contra dancing, quilling, cooking, plaster casting, beekeeping and more.

**Contact** Donna Baldino, Camp Director  
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education@philalandmarks.org.



**Landmarks' Young Art Sleuths Day Camp provides summer fun for all school age students as they unravel history's mysteries.**

**Help Keep Our Children Safe & Productive**

**After School Activities Partnership**, a Philadelphia non-profit partners with the School District of Philadelphia, the Free Library and the Department of Recreation to bring free, enriching after-school activities to the city's youth by recruiting volunteers. You can volunteer to help keep kids safe and active after school by participating in various programs. Contact:

**Chess**  
Ben Cooper  
215-545-2727 x17

**Drama or Debate**  
Meg Hess-Homeier  
215-545-2727 x10

**Scrabble**  
Leah Wright,  
215-545-2727 x13

**Nifty Neighbors: Marciene and Herman Mattleman**

*continued from page 33*

Goode administration and the founding director of YET, Youth Education for Tomorrow, which established 30 literacy centers in community-based settings. Under former Mayor Ed Rendell, she began Philadelphia Futures, a mentoring program with college as a goal, which has been replicated in 18 states and for which she was honored at the White House by President Clinton. All of these non-profit programs have engaged thousands of volunteers and benefited as many children. Currently, the Mattlemans serve on the board of the Philadelphia Library, and Marcy is education reporter on KYW, where her three features are aired 15 times weekly.

The Mattlemans were the first couple since Walter and Lenore Annenberg to receive the prestigious Philadelphia Award in the 90's (the Lenfests followed in their footsteps), and their joint resumes could fill the rest of this column. Speaking of which, Marcy says, "The only reason I agreed to this interview was because I wanted to publicize the opportunity to get involved in lifting up the lives of the less fortunate among us.

Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate among the top 10 cities in the country. It's shocking! In Society Hill, most of us are fortunate enough and have time enough to volunteer. All around us are areas like South Philadelphia, where volunteers can dramatically improve the lives of others by simply giving one hour. There are many foreign-born students and immigrants who could perfect their language skills with help from volunteers. We are so short-changing our kids! I'm hoping an article like this will bring ASAP many applicants."

When I mentioned that I'm a Scrabble junkie, often playing online with friends or strangers until 4 a.m., Marcy was quick to turn my addiction into an opportunity to help public school children improve their language and math skills. A few days after our meeting, I was contacted by ASAP and was soon being trained as a Scrabble club leader at its headquarters at 1520 Locust Street (215-545-2727). "It only takes an hour a week to change a child's life," repeats Marcy emphatically.

I can hardly wait!

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**CLIP AND SAVE**

**2013 Holiday Trash Collection**

Trash and recycling collection will be one day behind schedule for the rest of the week following these holidays:

**New Years Day**

Tuesday, January 1

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

Monday, January 21

**President's Day**

Monday, February 18

**Good Friday**

Friday, March 29

**Memorial Day**

Monday, May 27

**Independence Day**

Thursday, July 4

**Labor Day**

Monday, September 2

**Columbus Day**

Monday, October 14

**Veterans Day**

Monday, November 11

**Thanksgiving Day**

Thursday, November 28

**Christmas Day**

Wednesday, December 25

**SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL**

BY MARILYN APPEL

**Usual mistakes:** If you leave your bikes or cars unlocked or unprotected, they are likely to be stolen (or as the police say: "taken without permission"). This past year, thieves were looking for freebies more than ever. Hope you had a pleasant and safe holiday and that no one got any of your things.

**Quiet times:** The crime report for the past few weeks has been very thin, so not much news on that front, and that's fine. We do have a new Head of Security at Pennsylvania Hospital. His name is Brian Anthony and he has extraordinary credentials, including being a former police officer.

**Light out?** Report any Franklin Light that is burned out by calling 311. It will be fixed within five to ten business days.

**Lights on:** On these dark winter days, turn on your front door light from dusk to dawn — the brighter the better. A rear door light and/or a motion detector is also essential. A timer or sensor will automatically turn them on.

**Trash pick-up time changes:** Some people are putting out their trash on the wrong day. Remember that when there is a holiday, trash is put out the next day. Also, trash may now be put out at 5:30 p.m. You don't have to wait until 7 p.m.

**New cell phones:** Now that Christmas has come and gone, you may have gotten a new cell phone. Turn in your old phones and chargers at 414 Spruce Street. I deliver them to the police when I get a big bag full; they are reprogrammed to dial 911 and given to senior citizens and victims of domestic abuse.



SOCIETY HILL

*Reporter*

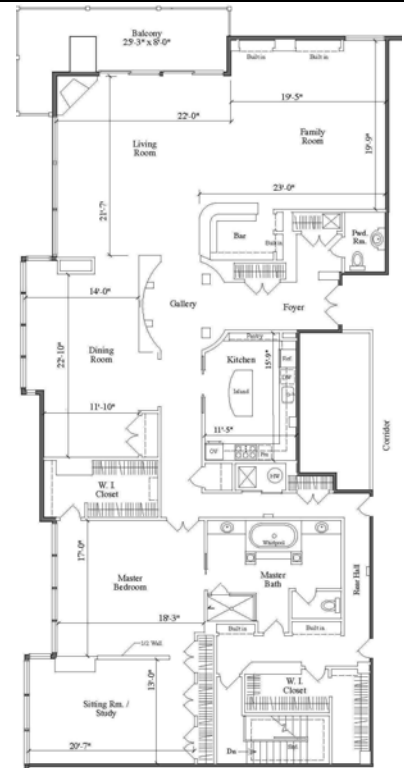
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