

SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

July/August 2021

The Newsletter
of The Society Hill
Civic Association

www.societyhillcivic.org

Welcome on Board!

The Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) Board recently held its annual election for officers and directors. We welcome all these neighbors who have volunteered to work on behalf of the betterment of this community and are grateful for the time and energy they are

willing to bring to our organization. The SHCA Board has always reflected the rich, diverse talents of this special neighborhood, and this group is no exception. We are especially happy to introduce readers to eight people who are serving our association for the first time.



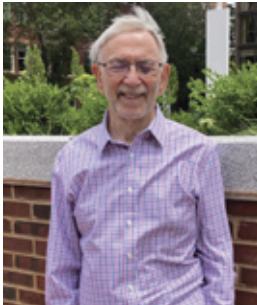
Nick DeGregorio
Representative Penn's Landing Square

Nick is president of the Penn's Landing Square Association. He and his wife, Venice, have lived in Society Hill for six years. They have three grown sons and nine grandchildren. His career was spent in restaurant management and corporate sales. The couple love city life and think SHCA is vital to our neighborhood.



Rick McConnell
Director at Large

Rick has lived in and around Philadelphia for his entire life, most notably in Society Hill for the last five years. He is the father of three grown children. Rick retired from the insurance industry. He and Christa enjoy the too-many-to-list wonderful aspects of life that Society Hill offers.



Bernard Gelman
Representative for Independence Place

Bernard is a retired certified public accountant who has lived at Independence Place since 1987. He was a docent on the Battleship New Jersey and currently volunteers at the National Constitution Center. He loves using his skills to help people in need.



Mollie McEntee
Secretary

Mollie has lived in Society Hill for over 10 years. She works as a city and state lobbyist at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney. Growing up in rural Pennsylvania, she was always fascinated by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Mummers. Her many interests include sports, the arts and culture, reading and traveling.



Michael Gorman
Treasurer

Michael, his wife, Jessica, and their daughter Abby have called Society Hill home since 2013. He has spent 20 years in the financial industry working with commercial real estate companies. Outside work, he enjoys reading, golfing, traveling and enjoying everything Society Hill has to offer with his family.



Carl Moody
Director at Large

Carl, a native Philadelphian and Dartmouth graduate, with his wife, Rhonda, raised their five kids and enjoy nine grandkids. Since retiring in 2016, they moved here, walked the 500-mile Camino de Santiago across Spain twice and 450 miles across France once. He loves people and this wonderful neighborhood.



Al Meinster
Southeast Quadrant Director

Al cares for his neighbors as family. Now as director at large, his devotion-fueled energy will contribute to SHCA's mission of maintaining—nay—improving, the quality of life for the Society Hill family.



Yvana Rizzo
Southwest Quadrant Director

Philadelphia native Yvana Rizzo has been a resident of Society Hill since 2011. She is an active member of the community and has served as a Block Coordinator for SHCA for the past several years. Yvana lives with her husband, Daniel, a local dentist, and their miniature dachshund Henry.

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SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

**NUSA
Award-Winning
Newsletter
First Place
2020**

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Society Hill Civic Association

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Website

Find past issues in color
at www.societyhillcivic.org.

The views set forth in the opinion articles are the views of the authors and are not necessarily those of SHCA.

Submissions

If you have news that would be of interest to Society Hillers, email Sandra Rothman at sandra.rothman@aol.com. Materials must be submitted in writing and include the name of a contact person. Edited submissions will be considered for publication if space permits. Letters to the Editor must be signed, with contact information.

SHCA Mission Statement

The aims and purposes of SHCA are: to promote the improvement of the Society Hill area of Philadelphia, including its cultural, educational and civic activities, and the preservation and restoration of its historic buildings; to represent the residents of Society Hill in matters affecting the City of Philadelphia generally and Society Hill in particular; and to interpret the value and significance of Society Hill to the public.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LARRY SPECTOR

Quality-of-Life Issues

Life returns to the city post pandemic, and we can now get out and about to enjoy it. Our board has an idea to help make up for the loss of the outdoor community gathering we always enjoyed at the Washington Square Affair, which we now hope can take place in June 2022. The idea is to hold a totally informal family event with food trucks, games and music — and just have some fun. If you are interested in helping to make this happen or have resources or ideas that could be used, please email us at info@societyhillcivic.org.

But getting out and about means different things to different people, like ATVs, dirt bikes, drag racing cars and deafening noise.

We have tried to address the problem, in part, by repeatedly asking the city to make good on its plan for a pilot project that would close Spruce Street to west-bound traffic turning off Columbus Boulevard. We recently learned through Councilman Mark Squilla that the city estimates that the pilot will begin in late July, with a monitoring of the traffic volume on affected streets before and after the closure.

Many of you have listened in to one or both very-well-attended community Zoom meetings about ATVs. For both meetings, the mayor's office at the last minute said it had a conflict and could not attend. Meanwhile, it has not offered even a whisper of willingness to do something about the problem.

Council Members Squilla, Derek Green and Allan Domb on May 6 introduced a bill that would put dirt bikes on par with all-terrain vehicles as illegal to operate, stand or park on any city street. Any violation would result in seizure and eventual forfeiture of the vehicle or, in some cases a \$2,000 fine. The police have recently seized 47 dirt bikes. It cost them \$72,000 to run a single, special helicopter-aided operation to search for and confiscate illegal bikes. The DA has prosecuted one ATV rider for aggravated assault and battery on Broad Street.

Some ideas expressed at the meetings were: prevent gas stations from selling to illegal vehicles; boot or otherwise immobilize them as is already permitted by law; and enforce the city's noise ordinance, including its special provision relating to South Street, by ticketing a bike if it has a muffler modified to allow excessive noise.

Meanwhile, none of this is doing anything to allay our fears from dangerous speeding or keep us from getting blasted with noise in the middle of the night. My own take on the problem is that the laws already on the books are not enforced because they require a face-to-face confrontation between a police officer with a gun and a driver or owner standing next to a parked bike. This is precisely the situation that has led to disaster in recent years, so the illegal bikes have their way. A recent amendment to the City Charter provides for the employment of public safety officers

authorized to issue citations for quality-of-life offenses and the ability to call for police backup. We are told it has not been implemented due in part to COVID, but that 20 such officers will be hired in the months ahead. It remains to be seen whether such authorities will be able to enforce the law.



And then there is the broader issue of just how much this matters, depending on your point of view. I recently spoke with someone for whom I have the utmost respect, who is very involved in addressing the problems of poverty, gun violence and distressed housing that plague some areas where dirt bikers live. His sentiment, and probably the sentiment of some of the powers that be, is not to deny the seriousness of the problem we experience, but that people in these other areas rarely get a good night's sleep because of their much more serious problems. Their troubles should have priority. For people from those neighborhoods who ride a bike, riding is freedom to get away, and they will get out and be loud wherever they choose. We must reckon with this reality as we continue to press for relief.

Larry Spector is an attorney handling business disputes and related litigation. He has lived in Society Hill since 1976, married, and raised two daughters here with wife, Ann.

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STEPPING BACK IN TIME

BY LYNN MILLER

When Acadians Were Cast Away in Philadelphia

French Acadia became a part of the British Empire and was renamed Nova Scotia in 1713 with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht by France and Britain. Over the next decades, many of the French who had been farming the marshy coastal lands for generations refused to give the unconditional oath of loyalty demanded by the British government.

Tensions grew, especially when thousands of English settlers were brought into the colony. So, by the 1750s, the British ordered the forcible deportation of more than 6,000 French-speaking Acadians to various English colonies along the eastern seaboard. Three ships carrying 454 Acadians landed in Philadelphia in 1755. The colonial government immediately placed them under armed guard until the legislature could decide what to do.

With disease spreading rapidly through the ships moored in the Delaware, officials soon ordered them to be off-loaded onto Province Island several miles south of the city, today the site of the Philadelphia International Airport. Provisions of a half-pound of meat and a pound of bread per person per day were provided. They were largely attended to by a French-born Philadelphia Quaker, Anthony “Antoine” Benezet.



Anthony Benezet

In France, the Benezet family had been well-to-do Huguenots but converted to the Society of Friends after immigrating to England in 1731. In Philadelphia, Benezet became a leading progressive educator and social reformer, in keeping with Quaker commitments. By the time the Acadians landed in the Delaware, he had taught at what would later be known as the William Penn Charter School and organized a public school for girls, the first such institution in America. He would go on to create the first school for enslaved Africans and the first anti-slavery society in the colony.



“Arrival of the Acadians in Pennsylvania” by Robert Dafford

Benezet was in many respects the spiritual descendent of William Penn himself, extending the founder’s great social experiment farther than Penn had done, to the education of Africans and the effort to abolish slavery. By the time displaced Acadians came under his care, Benezet was publishing pamphlets in the effort to persuade British authorities that their ban on slavery should be extended to their North American colonies. Even before American independence was won, his advocacy helped lead to the 1780 act of the Pennsylvania legislature that gradually abolished slavery within the Commonwealth, the first such enactment in America.

In the 1750s, however, the Acadians sent to Pennsylvania continued to languish on Province Island. In March 1756, a bill was passed by the legislature which divided them into groups and assigned them to the counties of Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester and Lancaster. It stipulated that no more than one family should be assigned to any one township. The Acadians protested at being split up, and many of the townships did not want to receive them. As a result, little changed in the lives of the displaced. Some were moved; many simply waited. Increasingly, they succumbed to smallpox. Those who were able found odd jobs, while others pilfered what they could to sustain themselves and their families.

In January 1757, the governor approved a bill providing that Acadian boys and girls should be bound out as apprentices, and that they should be taught to read and write the English language. The Acadians then submitted a petition to the assembly praying that they not be separated from their children. “Be pleased to tell us,” they pleaded, “whether we are Subjects, Prisoners, Slaves or Freeman?” They asked permission to leave the province, saying that they were willing to sell the remains of their household goods to regain their liberty. “Be merciful,” they implored, “to a people plunged into an Abyss of Bitterness and Sorrow.”

The provincial government refused to act on their petition. Rather, it continued to provide meager aid year after year. For more than twenty years, from the time of their arrival until 1776, some ten thousand pounds was paid out of the provincial treasury for the relief of Philadelphia’s Acadians.

Meanwhile, Anthony Benezet led an effort to raise the funds needed to build a number of one-story wooden houses on the north side of Pine Street between 5th and 6th Streets. There, many of them were housed. Benezet also taught some of their children and fought to enroll others in public schools. Gradually, those that remained in Philadelphia and were able-bodied entered the workforce.

The records of marriages and births among the parishioners of St. Joseph’s Church include some of these exiles, those numbers dwindling after the mid-1760s. Smallpox victims — and there were many — were buried, along with other indigent Philadelphians, in Southeast (Washington) Square.

Lynn Miller is co-author of *Salut! France Meets Philadelphia: The French Presence in Philadelphia’s History, Culture, and Art*, from which this article is taken.



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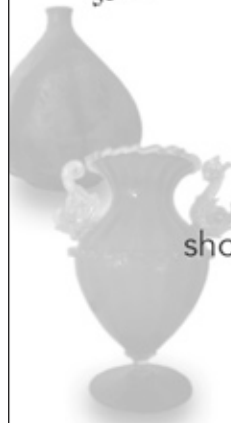
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KEEPING POSTED

BY AL CAVALARI

The Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons

Postcards provide a documentary record of society. Collecting them is a bit like archeology. We piece together the past using tiny, randomly found artifacts. The Jim Crow era and racial segregation are well represented, but examples from Philadelphia are very unusual. The seemingly dull card shown here is actually an exciting find. Mailed in early December 1941 by Mary Bush, her message to her cousin Catherine makes it a gem.

The Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons was founded during the Civil War by wealthy Blacks and white Quakers to address the problems that slavery and discrimination posed for aging African Americans. The home's very reason for existence came directly from the crimes of slavery, because the children of the enslaved were prevented from accumulating wealth and, thus, were unable to care for their elderly.

In 1871, 25 residents moved from the original home at 340 South Front Street to the new building at Girard and Belmont Avenues pictured on this card. It was funded with a donation of property and cash worth \$250,000 by Stephen Smith, one of the wealthiest African Americans in the United States.

I read the 15th annual report dated June 12, 1879, and quote this, "The object of this association shall be the relief of that worthy class of colored persons who have endeavored throughout life to maintain themselves, but from various causes are finally dependent upon the charity of others." Interestingly, this meeting was chaired by noted Philadelphia businessman and underground railroad agent William Still, who at various times served as vice president and president of the board of directors.

To be admitted, an applicant "must bring satisfactory testimonials of the propriety of their conduct and the respectability of their character." By 1879 there was a \$100 fee which admitted the prospective client for six months' probation. If the person's conduct was unacceptable,



This postcard mailed in 1941 shows the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons. Mary Bush's message to her cousin is on the back.



Original home founded by Stephen Smith

they would be "retained no longer, but shall be charged board for the time they may be residents at \$2.50 per day, deducted from the deposit."

The home was to be strictly but lovingly run. Morning and evening bible study was mandatory. Alcohol was prohibited. A matron was charged to enforce rules, provide suitable nourishment and to be kind and respectful to everyone.

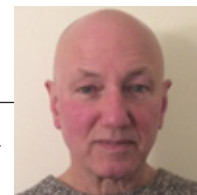
History records that in 1871 there were 87 residents. Ages ranged from 78 to 101. Nine were blind, several had paralysis and some were developmentally delayed.

So how did this institution fare? I'm happy for our postcard writer, Mary

Bush, that all those years later she found herself in such stable surroundings. She had been "very sick, lost my leg between body and knee, am better now and going to get an artificial leg." She is "trusting the good Lord to carry [her] through." She likes it there, "someone is with me all the time & Dr. and Nurse when I need them, not far from family." Holding Mary's postcard in my hand and looking at her handwriting makes it feel like I'm receiving a note from the 19th century.

Some collectors prefer unused mint condition cards. Not me. One of the wisest things I've ever heard is from Karie Diethorn, Chief Curator at Independence National Historical Park. She said in studying history, we use historical artifacts to "get back to someone else's world." Mary's message to her cousin, her handwriting, the stamp she put on it and the postal cancellation turns this card from a mere image into a connection back to her and then back to those kind souls in the aftermath of the Civil War who saw suffering and tried to stop it.

I used Google Street View to visit that corner now. A modern building has replaced the one on this card. The sign on it reads "Stephen Smith Home for The Aged founded 1865." It is operated by Centennial Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center. Their website states that "Care Puts the Focus Back on Residents." I wonder if the people doing that good work there today know about their connection to their noble colleagues all those years ago. I bet they would all get along just fine.

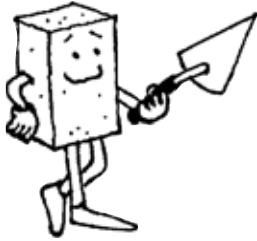


Al Cavalari is a certified member of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides. For a day job, he operates the Flag Guys®, a flag business in upstate New York. Write to Al at flagguys@aol.com.

'FIX THE BRIX'

BY MARTHA LEVINE

If It Is Broke, Then Fix It!



Rick the Brick

A shout out to the 250 Society Hill property owners who have repaired their uneven sidewalks with the help of SHCA's "Fix the Brix" subsidy. **We offer a subsidy of 40 percent of the total invoice up to \$400 for current members and 40 percent up to \$300 for non-members.**

Level sidewalks, brick or cement, make our neighborhood safer for all of us as we walk to the market, the gym, the park and beyond. Still, we have a lot more to do.

Two causes of brick and cement movement are ground settling or tree roots pushing up the bricks or masonry. As property owners, we are responsible for the maintenance of our homes up to the curb. There is no city program to do this.

Check your property, and if you are in need of repair, take advantage of this generous subsidy. We offer it for brick or cement sidewalks. Here's how to begin.

Fix the Brix Subsidy Program

- 1** Take a "before" photo of the problem sidewalk, and email it to me at marthalev6@gmail.com.
- 2** Hire a mason to do the work. Make sure the work is completed to your satisfaction before payment. We have a suggested list of masons if needed.
- 3** Email me the "after" photo.
- 4** Mail us the original paid invoice, and make a copy for yourself. If possible, include a copy of your cancelled check payment. Mail to: SHCA, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia PA 19147.
- 5** Receive a subsidy check within a few weeks.



Martha Levine is a vice president of SHCA.

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Fred Manfred is a real estate licensee affiliated with Compass Re. Compass Re is a licensed real estate broker and abides by equal housing opportunity laws.

TREE TENDERS UPDATE

BY CLAUDIA CARABELLI

Help Maintain Our Urban Forest

Trees certainly beautify a community, as one can clearly appreciate this time of year, but they do much more than that. Here are three major contributions that trees make to our environment:

- Trees provide shade that helps keep us cool in the summer.
- Trees absorb rainfall to decrease flooding.
- Trees decrease pollution by catching particulate matter from the air.

Here are seven actions, compliments of the **Fairmount Park Conservancy**, that we can all take to help protect our invaluable urban forest.

Plant a tree on your property. Be sure to choose wisely as some species are better suited to city life than others. A certified arborist can help with your selection.

Get connected to The Philly Tree Plan. Check out www.myphillypark.org for lots of great information.

Become a Tree Tender. You need look no further than SHCA to join. We work under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS). They regularly offer training for a small fee.

Learn more. The PHS and the Fairmount Park Conservancy offer a wealth of information. Visit www.phsonline.org.

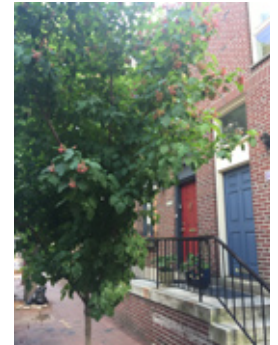
Be an advocate with elected officials. Let your elected officials know if you live in a “hot zone” devoid of trees. Contact them and tag them on social media.

Help shape policy and vote. This is an effective way to create more responsive climate change policy.

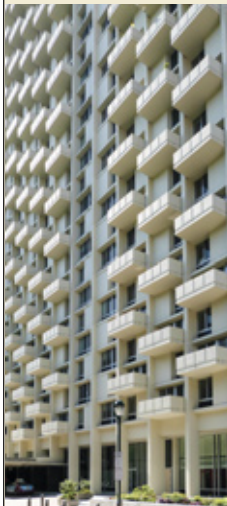
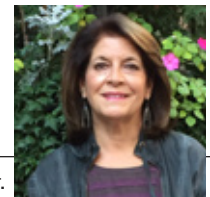
Talk with your employer. Many organizations can provide corporate financial support or volunteer workdays for their employees to plant trees.

Stay informed and get involved. The city trees can't survive without us.

Claudia Carabelli is SHCA's Southwest Quadrant Director.



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JUST SOLD

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Service

We answer the phone when you call during business hours. Now, that's different! We are in constant contact with our arborists and field personnel to provide timely responses to your needs. A knowledgeable arborist will visit with you to discuss your needs and concerns. Seasoned veterans with well-maintained tools and equipment will perform the agreed-upon services to your satisfaction.

Quality

Our recommendations are based on observations and a consultative approach that identifies your needs and expectations, tempered with our concern to maintain and improve the health, appearance and safety of your landscape. Custom pruning achieves the landscape appearance you desire while being performed to the specifications of proper arboricultural practices. Plant Health Care services include a thorough inspection before any



treatment so that we apply materials only when and where they are needed. Landscape projects are meticulously executed and guaranteed. We also offer Blue Stone installations.

Distinctive

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Fix Your Bricks

Brick sidewalks in Society Hill and downtown Philly are being renovated to provide a smooth, safe walking surface for pedestrians. We have experience and have repaired many sidewalks and patios in the city. The upheaval caused by tree roots can often be carefully corrected without removing or killing trees. Call McFarland to inquire about fixing your bricks.



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WASHINGTON SQUARE COMMITTEE REPORT

BY FRED MANFRED

Unseasonable Season Vexes Volunteers

Anyone who loves spring had to feel a little cheated this year. It was dry and summer temps arrived early. This was a particular challenge for the Washington Square Committee (WSC) who had staggered shipments of 3,500 new plants and bushes. The last installation was early July.

Our stalwart group of volunteers, however, were faithful and flexible as delivery schedules shifted with little or no notice. Some volunteers worked into the evening to ensure that all plants were in the ground on the day they were delivered.

By any measure, WSC co-chair **Sherley Young**, Potting Shed Cabinet member **Penny Pleasance** and Washington Square Affair co-chair **Joan Rollins Tropp** have been volunteer superstars and deserve a mention here. Sherley not only spends countless hours planning each shipment of plants and aligning them with volunteers, but she also leads the hand-pruning brigade dedicated to maintaining our bushes and keeping them healthy and looking natural in their surroundings. In her spare time, she wages an awesome weeding war against the proliferation of plantains. Those are the broadleaf weeds with long tap roots that have taken over portions of the park's lawn. Her passion is contagious; she's converted a few of us to join her in this cause.

Penny Pleasance is our "secret sauce" when it comes to plant selection, planting bed design and the park's overall cohesive plan. Penny's knowledge and experience comes

from Mt. Cuba Center, which is a botanical garden in Delaware. Prior to developing our final plant list and orders, Penny consults with all the planting bed mentors regarding plant selection and placement. On delivery day, Penny brings amazing calm and coordination as the plants are delivered and distributed to each planting bed.

Joan Tropp is not only a creative and dedicated planting bed mentor, she has also waged her own war against litter in the park. Joan can be seen three times a day briskly scanning the park for debris, litter and fallen branches. She, too, brings her own brand of secret sauce when it comes to the park's beautification.

The National Park Service has notified us to expect delays in opening the fountain this year and that repairs to the central guard house will be ongoing. It seems that one repair has led to another. The fountain basin will be resealed. The sealing product will be beige in color, matching the perimeter sandstone coping. Bringing closure to these projects reminds me of the many problems one might encounter herding cats.

Washington Square is more beautiful than ever! Please, come out for a stroll to meet a friend or plan a picnic. We look forward to seeing you — stop by to say hello!

Fred Manfred is a Realtor® at Compass, and co-chairs the Washington Square Committee and the Washington Square Affair.



Paintings of Washington Square in Summer 2021 by **Mike Neff**, a Philadelphia professor and artist.



GARDEN NEWS YOU CAN USE

South Street Pop Up Garden Returns

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) announces the return of the South Street **Pop Up Garden** at 1438 South Street. Visitors will experience a unique blend of horticulture and culinary arts. Guests of all ages, as well as pets, are encouraged to visit and enjoy a tranquil garden atmosphere featuring delicious food and drink. PHS ensures that all CDC guidelines are followed.

Seasonal food and drink specials began in May with Mexican specialties celebrating Cinco de

Mayo. Guests can look forward to the delicious tastes of summer such as seafood specials and BBQ. Dog bowls are conveniently located throughout the gardens so our furry friends can join in the fun.

New this year, visitors will have the opportunity to book private spaces in the garden for groups, allowing birthdays, anniversaries and other events to be held safely, beautifully surrounded by nature. Information on these private spaces and reservations are available at www.phsonline.org.

Green Thumb Alert

The **Physic Garden** at Pennsylvania Hospital, a beautiful collection of medicinal plants and herbs at 800 Spruce Street, needs volunteers to weed, prune and deadhead from mid-May through mid-November. Perks include free lunch in the hospital cafeteria and \$5 parking. Bring your own hand tools, gloves, water and a hat. For more information, contact Kate McGrann 215-334-6111 or kmcgrann@aol.com.



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Philadelphia, PA 19107



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WELCOME BAGS

BY MARTHA LEVINE

Welcoming New Neighbors While Helping Local Businesses

Although 2020 is a year we'd like to forget, Society Hill attracted many new neighbors who purchased houses and condos. With our Welcome Gift Bag program, we present a gift to new property owners. Each bag contains a bottle of wine, a bag of coffee, a pastry treat, gift cards to restaurants, retail, services and a few museums. In addition, there is valuable neighborhood information.

The presentation is by appointment.

There is no indoor contact. The bag is dropped off at the recipient's door with a quick hello, followed by a phone call to review the contents. Since February 1, we have presented more than 50 gift bags.

If you purchased a property in Society Hill in late 2019, 2020, or 2021, you qualify for a Welcome Gift Bag. For inquires and/or for an appointment to receive one, please contact coordinator Martha Levine at 215-629-0727 or marthalev6@gmail.com.

Thank You, Donors!

Help us say thank you to these Welcome Gift Bag donors by patronizing their establishments:

Restaurants

- Bistro Romano, 120 Lombard Street
- Cavanaugh's Headhouse, 421 S. 2nd Street
- Fork Restaurant, 306 Market Street
- Frieda Café, 320 Walnut Street
- Gnocchi, 613 E. Passyunk Street
- High Street Phila, 101 S. 9th Street
- La Buca Ristorante, 711 Locust Street
- Malbec Argentine Steakhouse, 400-402 S. 2nd Street
- Panorama Restaurant, 14 N. Front Street
- PJ Clarke's, 601 Walnut Street

Retail, Services and Museums

- Adornamenti (jewelry), 1006 Pine Street
- Bloom Philadelphia (floral arrangements), www.bloomphiladelphia.com
- Ghost Tours of Philadelphia, www.ghosttour.com
- Head House Books, 619 S. 2nd Street
- Independence Seaport Museum, 211 S. Columbus Boulevard
- Judy Moon Massage, 829 Spruce Street
- National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street
- Paper on Pine (stationary), 1310 Sansom Street
- Phila. Society for the Preservation of Landmarks (Physick and Powel House Tours)
- Show of Hands (craft gallery), 1006 Pine Street



Susan



Stefanie & Alex



Sam with her canine buddy Lida



Wendy with her dog Baixa and son Jonas



Emma & Ryan

SHCA List of Contractors: A Perk of Membership

If you are in need of a reference to start your search for a contractor, we have a helpful tool: The Society Hill List of Contractors.

The 14-page list is free to current SHCA members and is available by email or hard copy. Included are all types of contractors, highly recommended by our own neighbors and listed under categories such as: general contractors, painters, electricians, plumbers, masons, landscapers, HVAC and more. Everything you need for your home.

We even have a miscellaneous section including home care professionals, furniture repair, home organizing, moving help, rug cleaning, etc.

Remember, you must be a current SHCA member to receive a list. A good reason to join. To receive a list, email marthalev6@gmail.com or call 215-629-0727. To join, go to our website at www.societyhillcivic.org/membership.



OUR AND ABOUT

PHOTOS BY SANDRA ROTHMAN

Sweeping Changes in the Neighborhood

The community recently came together with brooms and bags, rakes and muscle to tidy up our streets and sidewalks after winter left its mark. Thanks to all who contributed their time and energy on an especially beautiful spring morning! A big thank

you to the 58 block coordinators who help spread the word about this biannual event. They are an important communication resource for Society Hill. Our gratitude to State Representative Mary Isaacson for sponsoring shredding and electronic disposal services.

Your participation on Clean-up Day means a great deal. A little bit of effort has a HUGE IMPACT when we SHARE the load. Our block is such a beautiful street all tidied up. Thanks for sharing your Saturday with me and your neighbors.

**— Rhonda Moody
Block Coordinator**



DOING GOOD IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BY MARTHA LEVINE

Our Franklin Lights are Shining Again

Have you noticed that our Franklin lights are shining brighter than ever? Thanks to the work of Todd Kelly and crew at Graffiti Removal Experts, all of our 500 lights in Society Hill have been thoroughly cleaned. We love our Franklin lights, seen by many as the symbol of Society Hill.

The SHCA board voted to allocate funding for the long overdue project to clean the lights that have accumulated heavy dirt and insects that block some of the light output. A brighter neighborhood is a safer one. During the month of May, you may have spotted the crew perched on ladders giving these lights a thorough cleaning both inside and out, using Dawn Powerwash dish spray and water as recommended by the Streets Department. Each light fixture has five panels plus the “top hat.”

Back in 2007, SHCA initiated and sponsored the Franklin Lights Restoration Project that gave us 500 all new and brighter light fixtures, doubling the light to 100 watts per light plus better reflectivity. This was a massive \$600,000 project involving major fundraising, a state grant and a city appropriation. In 2010, using leftover funds, we had the tired-looking light poles painted.

Many thanks to those neighbors who stepped out of their homes to show their appreciation to the workers. Some even provided refreshments, such as coffee, soft drinks and baked goods. Take a walk after dark to enjoy our beautiful, sparkling Franklin lights!



A Labor of Love



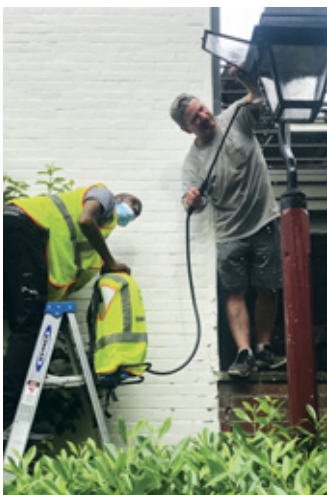
Todd Kelly maps out the light cleaning logistics.



Todd (center) is with some of the Graffiti Removal Experts crew.



Cleaning commences.



Standing on a high wall, Todd cleans a hard-to-reach light.



Todd is helped by his able assistants Theo and Ashley.



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ON OUR SHELF

HEAD HOUSE BOOKS

Real Philly History, Real Fast

“There were 33 churches in Philadelphia by 1790,” notes Society Hill resident and historian Jim Murphy, who has written a new book about Philadelphia. “We have William Penn to thank for that, as well as the diversity of our congregations, as Penn wanted an ecumenical society.” He adds, “Of course, we were a very different city then.”

Jim, a certified tour guide and member of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides, has always been interested in history. In fact, he moved from Delaware County to Philadelphia in part because of his love for the city and its rich historic past.

On his tours, “Nobody gets out of town without hearing about our two superstars Penn and Ben (William Penn and Ben Franklin),” Jim says. “Between the two of them, they made Philadelphia the largest and most important city in the colonies by 1770 — even though we started 58 years after New York City and 52 years after Boston. I want people to know how this amazing city and growth happened.”

Temple University Press (TUP), publisher of *Real Philly History, Real Fast*, describes Jim’s book this way, “Philadelphia is known as the home of vibrant colonial history — the Liberty Bell, the Betsy Ross House and Independence Hall.

“But the City of Brotherly Love is also home to — and less well known for — its quirky history. The country’s first quarantine station was located here. One of Philly’s clocks has a face larger than Big Ben’s in London. And the unique skill of Black abolitionist James Forten saved him from a life of West Indian servitude (and ‘Forten’ was not even his real name).”

Subtitled *Fascinating Facts and Interesting Oddities about the City’s Heroes and Historic Sites*, Jim’s book includes 51 tightly written stories. Many of them originally appeared in the *Society Hill Reporter* or the *QVNA Magazine*. Jim updated all the stories and added nine new ones at TUP’s request.

What makes the book unique, he says, is how much detail is packed into each story. Averaging about 750 words and taking 25 to 35 hours to research, write and then reduce the copy to its essence, each chapter has a headline, a subhead to explain why it’s important, short paragraphs, informative bullet points, interesting oddities, fast facts, nearby attractions and a color photo, all in about three to four pages.

After writing a *Reporter* column called “Exploring the City” for about five years, Jim started thinking they might make a good permanent collection. He proposed the book idea to Aaron Javscas, Editor-in-Chief at TUP, who liked it. Jim’s been working on this project ever since.

“No one book can capture all of Philadelphia’s history,” he acknowledges. “And this one doesn’t either. When you realize there are more than 300 blue and gold Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission markers in Philadelphia alone, it’s an impossible task.”

Among Jim’s favorite subjects in the book are: The Acadians of Philadelphia; Captain Gustavus Conyngham, a Philly naval leader who took the fight right to Britain’s front door; and Frank Furness’ extraordinary Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

After graduating as an English major at La Salle College (now La Salle University), Jim took courses at the Charles Morris Price School of Advertising. He also did post-grad work at Temple University, where he studied marketing research and journalism. Jim notes that he is not an academic, just an amateur historian.

As a member of the Philadelphia Tour Guides board for several years, Jim helped organize birthday parties for William Penn at Welcome Park in 2015 and City Hall in 2016. He continues to promote Pennsylvania’s founder in live and Zoom presentations on “The Amazing Success of William Penn.”

Jim was honored to get very positive reviews of his book from Sam Katz, head of History-Making Productions, Paul Steinke, executive director of Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, and Tim McGrath, author of several books, including his latest: *James Monroe: A Life*. “I was thrilled by their comments,” he says.

Real Philly History, Real Fast is available for pre-order at Head House Books and other fine bookstores. Publication date is June 21, 2021.

Editor’s note: See page 5 for more about one of Jim’s favorite topics, the Philadelphia Acadians.

Richard De Wyngaert is the proprietor of Society Hill’s only local, independently owned bookstore, Head House Books, located at 619 S. 2nd street. **Jane Biberman** is the co-writer of this article.

Fascinating Facts and Interesting Oddities about the City’s Heroes and Historic Sites



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PHILALANDMARKS NEWS

BY FIONA ELIAS

Untangling 90 Years of History and Building Support for the Future

PhilaLandmarks and the Powel House Garden Committee (aka “Gardenistas”) are pleased to present the newly installed wisteria trellis in the Powel House Garden. The Gardenistas, a group of dedicated volunteers led by Society Hill resident Linda Witt, were determined to preserve the beloved wisteria plant *Wisteria sinensis* even as its strong vines were simultaneously pulling apart and holding up the decades-old trellis.

The new custom-made cedar trellis was completed in late April. The historical photo below shows the first iteration of this iconic trellis and PhilaLandmarks founder Frances A. Wister. This nearly 90-year-old photo seems quite genteel juxtaposed with the following photos featuring the hard work and determination of Gardenistas, horticulturists and staff to untangle and then sculpturally bend the wisteria to the new trellis.

The Gardenistas also work with experts in the region to return historically appropriate trees to the Powel House Garden. The group recently installed and painstakingly cared for a rare Lady Petre Pear tree and Franklinia tree.



These additions, and of course the cherished wisteria, help to make the Powel House Garden a place of interest and beauty.

PhilaLandmarks is thrilled for 90 more years of this beautiful wisteria plant as we celebrate our 90th year as an organization. A garden event honoring the legacy of Frances A. Wister, countless volunteers and the preservation accomplishments of PhilaLandmarks is planned for late summer.

The “Gardenistas” are pleased to present the newly installed wisteria trellis in the Powel House Garden.

Fiona Elias is head of Development and Programs for Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.



The first trellis and PhilaLandmarks founder Frances A. Wister (seated, second from right).



Vines are wrapped around the new trellis.



Today’s Gardenistas work to untangle the vines.

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Spacious Two Bedroom



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SOUTH STREET HEADHOUSE DISTRICT

BY KERI WHITE

Completed and Ongoing Projects

The South Street Headhouse District (SSHD) has been busy with various projects and initiatives to benefit the community and local businesses.

Headhouse Plaza

This project, five years in the making, came to completion in May. Construction began just a year ago, and the work was completed on schedule. SSHD Special Projects Coordinator Dana Feinberg comments, “We’ve added over 12 new trees, seven crosswalks, 16 additional ADA ramps, eight new pedestrian Franklin lights and plenty of additional lighting. This was all designed to create a safer and nicer space, and it has been a success. It was a long time in coming, and when you consider the century-old infrastructure, there were various challenges. But the end result is something that the community can be proud of and is certainly an improvement over the 65-year-old parking lot that the Plaza replaced. We look forward to the community enjoying this new and inviting public space.”

One of the benefits of the project will also be traffic calming; significant effort was devoted to planning and implementing safety measures that will benefit pedestrians, and the squared-off turning areas in the street were designed to slow traffic and improve safety.

Data-Driven Pedestrianization Pilot

SSHD has benefitted from the work of Katrina Johnson Zimmerman, an urbanist who received a Knight Foundation Grant to fund her work with open data and engagement. She has conducted comprehensive, grassroots research about pedestrianization and discovered overwhelming support for the concept on South Street. As a result, the SSHD piloted temporary street closures on South Street, converting some blocks to outdoor dining rooms and other public uses. The results of the

pilot will be assessed and analyzed, and future plans will be informed by data and community input.

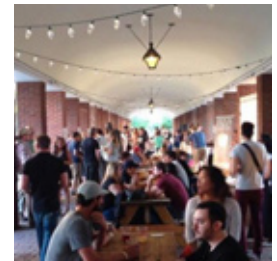
Shambles Outdoor Dining

Dining under the Shambles has been universally loved. It saved the restaurants during the pandemic by enabling them to operate, it allowed customers to enjoy nights out and it created a festive, convivial atmosphere during a difficult time. The program was so popular that it has been extended until October 31. The restaurants along the 2nd Street corridor will continue to serve patrons outdoors, with the nightly street closure ongoing to afford plenty of outdoor dining space. Even as the restrictions lift, diners can enjoy this wonderful amenity.

Supporting Police

The SSHD is keenly aware of the effect that the dirt bike racing and “cruising culture” has on the community and local businesses. SSHD Executive Director Mike Harris explains, “As a business improvement district, we do not function in a law enforcement capacity. But we do work diligently and collaboratively with the city, local civic associations, the Philadelphia Police Department and the Pennsylvania State Police to address quality-of-life issues. We also look at ways that are in our power to affect a solution. One was to pilot the South Street closure, which inhibited traffic flow and disrupted the drag racing temporarily. We have attended the town hall meetings on this topic and will continue to advocate for the community and businesses that are negatively impacted by this situation.”

The problem is not limited to South Street; the racers have been seen in many parts of Philadelphia, and this issue is common in many cities across the United States. Mike promises to continue to monitor the issue and seek productive solutions.



Dine under the Shambles!

Restaurants along the 2nd Street corridor will continue to serve patrons outdoors.

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This home features a generously sized living and dining room, a fully-equipped kitchen with great cabinet and counter space and large bedroom that enjoys great closet space, brand new carpet, and ensuite bathroom with shower/tub and single vanity.
1,205 sf | Offered for \$415,000



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IN MEMORIAM

Joy Lindy, our vivacious neighbor who really epitomized her name, died on May 10 at age 94. As her youngest son Jeffrey remembers, “She loved life, her friends, traveling, partying, Philadelphia. And she loved her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren most of all.”

Joy was born in 1926 in Philadelphia, the only child of Max Cohen, a Russian-born doctor, and his wife, Agnes. At age one, she lost hearing in her left ear and at age two, her father died.

After her mother remarried, the family moved to West Oak Lane. She later graduated from Germantown High School, earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Pennsylvania and wed Alan M. Lindy, a young man she met as a child at Hebrew school. But tragedy struck in 1970 when Mr. Lindy, a partner in a family construction firm, died suddenly while away on a business trip.

As a young widow, Joy originally thought of moving to Rittenhouse Square, but didn’t feel it was cozy or family oriented. Instead, she settled in Society Hill on Delancey Street and quickly became part of our community.

Joy joined SHCA and served over 20 years at various times as secretary, treasurer and quadrant leader. She collected 500 signatures on a petition to preserve the Dilworth House and volunteered for the Society Hill Open House and Garden Tour ever since it was inaugurated until recently. We have her to thank for the parking permits that make living with crowded city streets easier.

Joy attributed her long and happy life to innate *joie de vivre*. She said once, “They called me the smiling woman when I first moved to Society Hill, and I’ve been smiling ever since.” We’ll miss that smile. She is survived by three children, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



Joy Cohen Lindy
1926-2021

Doing Some Seasonal Cleaning?

As you clean closets and cupboards, consider recycling unwanted items through a new city program. Through a partnership with **Retrievr**,

residents can schedule doorstep pickup of unwanted clothing and electronics for recycling. To schedule a pickup, visit www.retrievr.com or call 757-703-3824.



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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

BY MATT DEJULIO

2021 Membership Continues Rebound From 2020

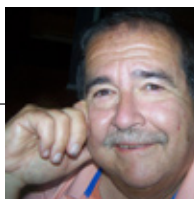
By early June, 1,090 Society Hill residents had either renewed their association membership or joined for the first time, about two percent ahead of the same time last year.

So far 111 new members have signed up, way ahead of 70 new members from all of last year. Non-renewals are at 131, down from 161 last year at the same time. If you have delayed sending in your renewal, or wish to join, please do so today. If you are not receiving our weekly email newsletter, please go to our website to sign up. You may also pay your dues conveniently by credit card there.

We welcome each of the over 3,600 households in our neighborhood to join SHCA. Your civic association helps protect your real estate investment by funding many improvement projects, as well as providing subsidies to neighbors who plant trees and fix their sidewalks. We help enhance your quality of life when we advocate on your behalf regarding zoning changes, real estate taxes, crime problems and traffic issues. All of this is accomplished through the hard work of our dedicated board of directors, committee members, block coordinators and, most importantly, your membership dues.

Without member dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment. **Sign up today!**

Email Mattdejulio@aol.com with questions or comments which will be shared with our board members representing every quadrant in our unique, historic neighborhood.



Matt DeJulio is a retired publishing executive. He has served SHCA as its administrator since 2001.

PARK, AMERICA!

A limited number of monthly parking spaces are available at the renovated lot at 511 S. Front Street, between South and Lombard Streets. If interested, contact Ed Sullivan with Park America at 610-637-6832.



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
- \$ _____ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal
- \$ _____ Fix the Brix
- Charge VISA/MasterCard: _____
- \$ _____ Franklin Lights
- \$ _____ Tree Tenders
- \$ _____ McCall School
- Total Enclosed \$ _____

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
- 5th Street Development
- Dilworth House
- Property Taxes
- Local Crime Incidents
- Reporter
- Fundraising
- and Alerts

Please return completed application to:

Society Hill Civic Association, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147
Make check payable to Society Hill Civic Association or join online at:
www.SocietyHillCivic.org

NEW LEADERS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BY CLAUDIA CARABELLI

*Two longstanding neighborhood institutions
have dynamic new leaders at the helm.*

**Mark Atwood**

Old Pine Community Center

Mark Atwood recently took over as the new director of Old Pine Community Center (OPCC). He's lived and worked in Philadelphia for the last 10 years and especially loves the Society Hill/Queen Village area that OPCC serves. His background, working in human services around the

issues of housing, food access, development and fundraising, should equip him well. Mark just married in May, and the couple resides happily in East Passyunk.

The center, like everywhere, scaled back during the pandemic. Volunteer opportunities and public programs came to a halt. They hope for a fall restart with safety protocols in place. Their school programs continued through the 2020-2021 academic year with supervised learning space for children to work remotely. It's filled a very real need for parents who don't have the option to work from home. The after-school program should re-start in the fall and summer camp begins soon.

OPCC recently reopened to local sports leagues. The rental fees help with the bottom line.

COVID-19 stopped a lot of things in their tracks, but hunger was not one of them. The in-person meals for those struggling with food insecurity were cancelled. OPCC continued to feed people daily with "Grab & Go" meals that include both breakfast and lunch. This sustains 25 to 30 individuals on a regular basis. They've also partnered with another city organization to shop for and deliver weekly groceries to 60 families, most of whom live in South Philadelphia.

This past year has offered a chance to step back and reassess the organization's role in the community. Mark has been spending lots of time getting to know our institutions and neighbors to help put together a community informed-by-needs assessment. He's very eager to speak with anyone who has ideas or priorities to share.

Feel free to contact him at mark@oldpinecommunitycenter.org. Donations of non-perishable foods, toiletries and, of course, money are always needed.

Go to www.oldpinecommunitycenter.org to volunteer or contribute.

Independence Seaport Museum

Seaport Museum on Penn's Landing near Walnut Street also boasts a new director in Peter Seibert. Peter comes to Philadelphia from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Wyoming's largest museum, where he served as Executive Director and Chief Executive. He's authored several books and lectured at a numerous institutions.

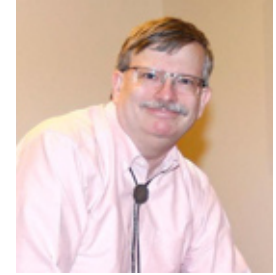
Peter described his new appointment like "coming home" as he grew up in Harrisburg and earned both his B.S. and M.A. in American Studies at Penn State University. He and his family have settled in New Jersey, since they needed a place large enough to accommodate their four dogs.

The Seaport Museum, also closed through much of the pandemic, is now open seven days a week with safety measures in place. The museum in Wyoming where Peter worked remained open during much of 2020 (at 50 percent capacity with no cases of COVID-19), so he's well versed in managing these protocols. The Seaport Museum lost a lot of staff during the shutdown. Some have moved on to other jobs. Hiring an education manager and a social media expert are just two of the positions they hope to fill soon.

Peter is passionate about dispelling the myth that "museums never change." He sees them as dynamic institutions that are always evolving. With that in mind, he has several goals for the Independence Seaport Museum. In the short term, the museum should be open and fully functioning. Secondly, their new strategic plan needs to determine where to focus their energies among the disciplines of environment, history and art. Lastly, they must become more a part of the community by promoting programs and partnering with other organizations.

There's a lot going on here beyond the expected. They have substantial outdoor programming. The place is a popular destination for school trips, most notably for their environmental programs. There's even an indoor area with an expansive deck and a beautiful view of the Delaware River that can be rented for events.

Check them out at www.phillyseaport.org and stop by for a visit.

**Peter Seibert**



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Dr. Mark Posner (2020-2013), Dr. Eva Jakabovics (2020-2014),
Dr. Robert Anolik (2020-2019), Dr. Nora Lln (2020-2017),
Christine Malloy, MD (2020-2019), Shashank Sheth, MD (2020-2019),
Annie Khuntia, MD (2020-2019), Matthew Fogg, MD (2020-2019),
Patrick Vannelli, MD (2020-2019), Sandhya Desai, MD (2020-2019)



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