

the Bulletin

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ABOVE: On Feb. 7, the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile visited Lawrenceville – with a stop at York Commons, where it made a three-point turn in the parking lot – to help with local Meals On Wheels deliveries. Photo by Patty Davidson

UPMC Unveils Final Plans for East End Expansion

By Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

Shadyside/Bloomfield – About 30 community members turned out on the wintry evening of Feb. 4 to review the final plans for a 10-year expansion of UPMC Shadyside.

The hospital's plans, which were approved by Pittsburgh City Council on Dec. 27, include a staff-only parking garage on a vacant Bloomfield lot and a state-of-the-art research center on Baum

Boulevard. The plan was conceived to solve a number of tactical problems facing the hospital, most significantly the dearth of parking spaces for its employees.

The February meeting followed a series of public presentations by UPMC Shadyside since fall of 2011. Based on feedback – and extensive criticism – from Bloomfield and Friendship neighbors and business owners, the hospital made a

See **UPMC** | page 3

Future Architects Envision Recreation Center

By Wesley Davis The Bulletin

Bloomfield – On Feb. 2, a group of third-year Penn State University architecture students gathered at the Bloomfield Liedertafel to present their designs for a Bloomfield recreation center to the community.

Twelve standout students from a class of 55 presented their designs for a center on the site of the old Bloomfield Recreation Center, located at 408 Ella St., which was closed a decade ago due to structural

issues. Large poster boards gave full details of their plans, while the students pointed out specific features on intricate, three-dimensional models.

These students had previously met with members of the community on Sept. 10 to hear their concerns and desires related to the building of a new community center, according to the booklet the students prepared. Student Corey Clippinger noted Bloomfield residents' emphasis on a need

See **Recreation** | page 10

Maintaining "Responsible Hospitality"

By Lauren Byrne Lawrenceville United

Lawrenceville – Lawrenceville is home to many residents and businesses, and is becoming an attractive destination for many more.

See **page 2**

2

ENEC Helps Veteran Land UPMC Job

By Wesley Davis The Bulletin

Garfield – Melvin Key had a good job with U.S. Airways as a Fleet Service Lead Agent, but there was just one problem – his family lives

See **page 5**

5

GA/GI Fest Takes Over Avenue in April

By Brenda Brown Bulletin Contributor

Penn Avenue – Still basking in the glory of its selection as the first festival ever honored by the Pittsburgh Technology Council, the Geek

See **page 16**

16



ABOVE: Nationally known drag performer Alaska, an East End resident, is competing in "RuPaul's Drag Race" on television. See the full story on page 12. Photo by John Colombo Photography

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the Bulletin

Hospitality from page 1

Motivated by a desire to grow a vibrant, thriving shopping, dining and arts-and-entertainment district, the community has put in place a process to establish and monitor "responsible hospitality."

With the support of Councilman Patrick Dowd, Lawrenceville United and Lawrenceville Corporation have worked for the past two years to ensure protection of the investment of the existing community remains a top priority as new businesses eye Lawrenceville. The Responsible Hospitality Committee, made up of residents, business owners and planning professionals, formed in 2012 to plan for the future of the district. The Committee is looking at data, including parking needs, occupancy levels, capacity of streets and sidewalks and zoning and Liquor Control Board policies relative to the Lawrenceville business district. The Committee also oversees a community process adopted by the groups – based on a model created by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Public Safety Task Force – to manage new businesses moving in or changes in use and ownership.

Since 2011, this community process has been implemented to help steward the

introduction of eight new businesses along the Butler Street corridor. The process has brought about positive results and has proved successful in opening the lines of communication between the community and establishment owners, and in identifying, addressing and planning for any concerns regarding the anticipated impact of the businesses.

The community tested this process first with the opening of Industry Public House in a space much larger than many other liquor-serving establishments. In working with the owners, the community and business owners created a Conditional License Agreement outlining responsible operational measures and concerns facing residents. Although originally the owners did not plan for a full kitchen or daytime hours, Industry worked with the community to create a business plan that more closely aligned with the neighborhood's vision and concerns. Industry has been open for a year with lunch and dinner hours, and no violations or complaints.

The process was also implemented for Alchemy N' Ale. Many concerns surrounded the proposed manager for the

business. Despite the community's efforts to reach a Conditional License Agreement to address concerns, the owners refused to work with the community. With no other alternative, LU and LC protested the liquor license application, and at the LCB's hearing on the license – after Alchemy N' Ale had already opened – it was revealed that the manager was participating in the very activities the community had expressed concerns about. The liquor license was not approved, and the venue subsequently closed.

The owners of Matteo's, Franktuary, Tender, Salud, the Allegheny Wine Mixer and Cure have all also participated in this same process. They shared complete business plans and an agreement was crafted with each of them that identified issues about garbage placement, employee break areas, hours of operation and more. In the months to come, LU and LC plan to initiate the process again regarding a proposed liquor-licensed establishment at 47th and Home Street in the old Good Funeral Home, and regarding the proposed expansion of Thunderbird Café on Butler Street.

As part of the city-wide Responsible Hospitality Planning Initiative, Lawrenceville will be working with other

districts, the Responsible Hospitality Institute, City Planning, CTAC, BBI and others to draft potential zoning overlays or standards that could be implemented to help protect the community from overoccupancy and saturation. The community organizations will be working with the LCB and business owners to host alcohol management trainings. LU received funding from Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development to focus on responsible hospitality planning, and has secured pro bono legal representation from Tom Madigan, an attorney with Pepper Hamilton, for help with these processes. LU's Public Safety Action Team is tracking all violations in the district and working to hold business owners accountable. A parking study was recently completed for the business district, identifying short-term and long-term parking solutions.

If residents or stakeholders have questions or concerns about this process, ideas to help with planning for the district's future or interest in becoming more involved in the Responsible Hospitality Committee, please contact Lawrenceville United at 412-802-7220 or info@Lunited.org. ♦

Thank you! The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation would like to acknowledge its NPP partners, PNC Bank and Allegheny Valley Bank. Thanks also to BNY Mellon, Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development, The United Way, Dollar Bank, Citizens Bank, and all of *The Bulletin's* advertisers.



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UPMC from page 1



ABOVE: This expansive vacant lot in Bloomfield, seen here from Gross Street, will be the site of a staff-only parking garage for UPMC Shadyside. Photo by Paula Martinac

variety of concessions. These included reducing the size of the proposed parking garage, eliminating access points to the garage from residential streets and jettisoning plans for a surface parking lot.

John Innocenti, President of UPMC Presbyterian/Shadyside, kicked off the meeting with an explanation of the staging of the two parts of the plan. He informed the audience that the renovation and construction of the Center for Innovative Science (CIS), slated to occupy the old Ford Motor Co. building at the corner of Baum Boulevard and Morewood Avenue, would take a back seat to construction of the so-called Luna Parking Garage. "CIS is not budgeted yet," he said, and won't be "until the garage is built."

The work on CIS will include a complete renovation of the existing industrial building, which dates to 1915, and the construction of a new addition that will complement the historic building in look and building materials. A glass atrium connector will bridge the old and new buildings. A 306-car garage will be built underneath the new part of the center, with a single entry and exit on Morewood. The main pedestrian entrance to the building will be through a landscaped entrance on Centre.

The exterior renovation is "nearly complete," reported Bryan Cannon, an architect with ZGF Architects, but that is as far as work will go at this time.

The so-called Luna Garage has been approved by the UPMC Board of Directors. It will occupy a massive, unsightly Bloomfield lot bounded by Cypress, Gross and Woodworth Streets and the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway. Howard Graves of Graves Design explained that the garage will accommodate 1,000 cars and 100 bicycles. There will be entry and egress from a long, three-lane ramp on Baum Boulevard. Baum will be the only access point, and it will be signalized.

In response to a question about the timing of the traffic signal for the garage, Dan Gilman of Councilman Bill Peduto's

office explained that Baum Boulevard and Centre Avenue will soon be included in Traffic21, a research initiative from Carnegie Mellon University that uses technology advancements to control traffic flow in the city. New signalization on those corridors will be keyed into changing traffic patterns at different times of day.

The Luna Garage will be five levels high with a top deck, but because the lot sits in a ravine, the open-air deck will be the most visible part of the garage to neighbors and passersby. Graves assured the audience that the building will be "open air and very safe and comfortable for people using it day or night."

The lot around the garage will be extensively landscaped, with much of the existing vegetation maintained, Graves noted. There will also be a fence around the perimeter of the lot, which will look like wrought iron but will be made from a lighter material.

Questions from the meeting-goers were extensive, and emotions occasionally ran high. One business owner remarked that she felt "squeezed" by the intrusion of UPMC into the area, and was concerned about "business interruption" and blocking of parking spaces on Baum during construction of the garage. In fact, the lots for several small businesses are tucked into the middle of the hospital's expansion, like Alley Way Auto Body on Woodworth Street and Café Sam on Baum.

Sean Logan, VP for Community Relations at UPMC, assured meeting-goers that no parking on Baum would be eliminated. He said he was willing to entertain more input from neighbors, but stressed that the plan presented had already been approved by City Council. "We'd consider anything," he said. "We have always been good neighbors." As the next step, the plans will be presented to the Department of City Planning in March, but Logan said there was no date set. ♦

the Bulletin

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The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Penn Avenue Stakeholders Get to Work

By Samantha McDonough

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Penn Avenue – On Jan. 24, the Penn Avenue Stakeholders Group met at Verde Mexican Kitchen & Cantina for the first of its on-going monthly meetings for 2013 to address how to improve Penn Avenue. The group began meeting monthly in September of 2012. January's meeting, which was limited due to space constraints in the restaurant to 13 attendees, included Penn Ave business and building owners discussing and giving updates on a variety of topics.

Some of the items on the agenda included a new business district marketing website for Penn Avenue that has been in the works as a collaboration between Penn media businesses (Image Box, Plumb Media and new-to-the-avenue Spam Genius) and a few individuals (Jason Sauer of Most Wanted Fine Art, Minette Vaccariello of Garfield Community Action Team and myself). The website will be a one-stop site that will link all things Penn Ave and will help to promote the district to potential new businesses and residents.

Another agenda item was an update on the work that has begun, with support from Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development, to have Mary Navarro, a consultant who has worked with many funding institutions in the area, to evaluate the Penn Avenue Arts

Initiative. Navarro will be conducting interviews to consider how a new vision of PAAI could serve not only Penn Avenue, but all of the bordering communities, specifically looking at creating a youth component to the initiative. PAAI currently serves primarily as a marketing mechanism for Unblurred: First Fridays on Penn, although it did sponsor the recent Kwanzaa on Penn event. More exciting programs and events may be in its future.

One of the biggest achievements of the January meeting was to form four working subcommittees charged with focusing the topics the group's conversations into actionable goals. The new sub-committees are Business Development and Recruitment, Vacant Storefronts and Properties, Special Events and Marketing and Promotion. The committees will meet separately and then report to the larger Stakeholders meeting.

Any Penn Avenue stakeholder who has not been involved with this group yet and is interested in participating in any of these sub-committees, please call 412-389-5521 or email mainstreets@bloomfield-garfield.org. The March meeting will be held on March 21 at Most Wanted Fine Art Gallery, 5015 Penn Ave., at 5:30 pm. ♦

EYESORE OF THE MONTH

Sore Thumb Sticking Out in Lawrenceville

By Aggie Brose

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Lawrenceville – The nominated eyesore of the month is 5329-½ Carnegie Street in Lawrenceville in the 10th Ward. According to the Allegheny County real estate website, the recorded owners for this property are Brian and Kim Czartorski, with a mailing address of P.O. Box 113, Muse, PA 15250.

The property was acquired in October 2004 for the price of \$1. The taxes on the property are up to date. However, the real estate website lists the property as “Condemned/Boarded-Up.”

BGC staff contacted Lawrenceville United, which has been working on addressing this property since 2009. LU staff reported that the property owners were taken to Housing Court last month, where they were fined \$5,000 each. In LU’s understanding, the owners will be appealing the decision in the Court of Common Pleas. The Bureau of Building Inspection reports that there are four citations on the property: broken windows with missing glass, gutters hanging off, debris and litter in the rear and overgrowth in the rear.

According to LU staff, this block has had a few sore spots, but is starting to turn around thanks to the work of diligent nearby neighbors and new property owners. All the other properties are in the hands of responsible homeowners, or are in the process of being responsibly owned.

It was reported to the BGC that last fall this property, although vacant for a long period of time, had become the site of disruptive behavior. The property was left unsecured, and the open door attracted unsavory characters. The City boarded up the property, but anyone wishing to get inside was able to enter.

Homeowners on the street reported observing drug deals on the property. Also, during this period of vacancy, someone set a fire inside that was extinguished before impacting the entire row. Fortunately, a



ABOVE: With rotting gutters and trim and broken windows, this Lawrenceville house is truly an eyesore. Photo by Paula Martinac

contractor working on a neighboring property was working late, noticed smoke and was able to put out the fire before it became serious.

The BGC has also learned that at least one person unsuccessfully tried contacting the owners to purchase the property.

BGC staff tried multiple times to contact the owners at 724-746-6992, leaving voice messages to ask questions about their intentions. In its current state, the property is threatening the safety of the neighbors and detracting from the value and quality of life of the neighborhood. At press time, no response had been received.

In the meantime, LU staff reportedly traded emails with Ms. Czartorski, but she did not share long-term plans for improvements or renovations.

The BGC will continue to try reaching the Czartorskis about their plans for the property. ♦

Penn Avenue Gets Fiberglass Utility Poles

By Paula Martinac

The Bulletin

Penn Avenue – Say goodbye to the rusted old trolley poles on Penn Avenue. Thanks to a deal Mayor Luke Ravenstahl struck with Rick Riazzi, President and CEO of Duquesne Light, Penn Avenue will not be saddled with either the old poles or unattractive wooden utility poles when Phase 1 of the reconstruction of the corridor gets underway this summer.

Although Duquesne Light initially said it was “committed” to wooden poles, Riazzi has agreed to install nine 40-foot-tall black fiberglass utility poles instead. These will better complement the sleek black poles the reconstruction project will employ for signage, traffic signals and lighting. The utility company will also remove the existing trolley poles.

The fiberglass poles are 10 inches in diameter and octagonal in shape. According to the manufacturer, Creative Pultrusions, they have been “specifically engineered to withstand the environmental forces of Mother Nature and ... the test of time.”

Phase 1 extends the four blocks between Evaline and Mathilda Streets. Duquesne Light documents indicate that eight of the poles will be located on the north side of Penn Avenue. Four will be positioned between Evaline and Winebiddle, two between Winebiddle and Gross and two between Gross and Millvale. The ninth pole will be just off Penn on Gross Street.

“This wouldn’t have happened without the mayor,” said Aggie Brose, chair of the Penn Avenue reconstruction committee and deputy director of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. The fiberglass poles are priced \$47,000 more than the proposed wooden ones, and the city will pick up the additional cost.

The reconstruction project is intended to stimulate economic development for the business corridor, enhance public safety and beautify the avenue. So far, things are “on track,” according to Brian Krul of L.R. Kimball, the engineering firm contracted by the city. The intended start date for construction is mid-August of this year.

A final public meeting will take place this summer to present the plans for the project to the community, including an overview of the different stages of construction and the rerouted traffic patterns. Watch *The Bulletin* for an announcement of the meeting date. ♦



ABOVE: Duquesne Light will use these octagonal fiberglass utility poles along Penn Avenue instead of wooden ones. Photo courtesy Duquesne Light

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ENEC from page 1

in Pittsburgh and the job was in Philadelphia. Key said the 18-hour shifts and long commute exhausted him and led his wife to say, "It's time to come home."

Key said he was able to occasionally find short-term employment in Pittsburgh but wanted a stable position with comprehensive benefits. He found such work, as a transporter at UPMC-Shadyside, with the help of Usama El-Teraifi, Employment Coordinator at the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center.

On a bulletin board at his church, King of Kings Baptist Ministries in Garfield, Key said he found a posting about the ENEC. He attended three workshops as part of the ENEC's POWRR program, which guides applicants through the process of applying for a job with UPMC. Two of the classes take place at the ENEC office, focusing on skills like resume writing and interviewing and on UPMC's professional culture. In the third class, participants meet with a UPMC recruiter.

Key explained that he had no problem printing out resumes and meeting with interviewers, but "today's market requires a different kind of person." Specifically, Key said he was surprised to learn that resumes should include buzzwords related to the position being applied for, to make them stand out when employers use a

computer program to scan for those words.

The ENEC, managed by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, constantly updates job leads, hosts classes to assist those applying for a job with companies like UPMC or PNC Bank and holds workshops to help ex-offenders find employment, according to El-Teraifi. "It's not just getting the job but maintaining it that's important," he said. He noted that UPMC's statistics show those who complete the POWRR program have higher rates of being hired and lower attrition rates than general applicants and employees.

Key said El-Teraifi helped him start his application to UPMC. While he submitted his initial application in September, he had his first day of work on February 4, going through a protracted application process. El-Teraifi said that he maintains connections with recruiters at companies like UPMC and he was able to contact them to make sure Key's application did not fall through the cracks. "I always advocate on behalf of our clients," he said. "Melvin is not an exception."

While El-Teraifi was able to advocate for Key, he said that it was ultimately Key who got the job. "The fact that he got a position at UPMC Shadyside is a testa-

ment to his skills," he pointed out. The hospital's proximity to East Side residents makes it a sought-after employer, El-Teraifi noted.

Key served three years in the U.S. Army as a Protocol Officer. "We always like to help our veterans and give them our best," El-Teraifi said. Both Key and El-Teraifi highlighted the ENEC's resources that help clients improve their computer skills, no matter their ability. Key said, "They'll spend extra time with you if you're having problems," which can be the push someone needs when "learning how to get back into that second career."

Key said he recommends the ENEC's services to others in his church and the community at large, noting the positive impact employment can have on young people. El-Teraifi said the ENEC is "not just an employment center, it's a community center."

During his employment search, Key said he told himself, "My next job is going to be my last." He is very excited to have found such a position. "I took it as a godsend," he said. Benefits of the job, including assistance with the cost of his children's education, motivate Key. He said, "I can retire from here. I have a 14-year-old who is definitely college-bound."

El-Teraifi said he thinks of the ENEC as "one of the hidden treasures of the city" for the free computer services, professional advice, printing and faxing it provides. "We have a lot of recruiters coming on-site, and some of them even



ABOVE: Melvin Key went through the ENEC's POWRR program and landed a job at UPMC-Shadyside. Photo by Wesley Davis

interview here," he noted.

The ENEC is located at 5321 Penn Ave. and is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and from noon to 6 p.m. on weekends. To inquire about the ENEC's schedule of recruiter visits and other employment workshops, call 412-441-9833 or visit its new website: www.enecpittsburgh.org. ♦

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NEWSBRIEFS

Zoning Board OK's Greenhouse

Garfield – Garfield will soon be sporting its first greenhouse, now that the city Zoning Board of Adjustment has given the green light to John Creasy, manager of Garfield Community Farm, to erect one on Edlam Way between Fannel and Wickow Streets.

At a hearing on Jan. 10 before the board, Creasy described his plans to add a one-story structure to the property he has developed as a farm that provides produce to residents of the East End, along with education to children and adults alike in the merits of growing their own fruits and vegetables. The tract of land Creasy and a number of volunteers have been dutifully cultivating sits along Cornwall Street near the city water tower.

Several neighbors, including Rev. Chad Collins from Valley View Presbyterian Church, testified in support of adding a greenhouse to the farm. The zoning board issued its decision Feb. 7, clearing the way for Creasy to get a building permit and begin construction this spring. – *Rick Swartz, Bloomfield-Garfield Corp.*

Volunteers Needed for Garfield Survey

Garfield – On April 6, the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) with the aid of volunteers and the Department of City Planning will be hitting the streets of Garfield to conduct a windshield survey of the neighborhood. The survey will last from 1 to 4 p.m. Anyone is welcome to volunteer for this event.

A windshield survey gathers information on the condition of all the residential property in the neighborhood. Volunteers will have a form with boxes to check off, detailing the type of property – whether it is occupied or vacant and the overall condition. The data collected on these forms will be used to help strategize ways to further implement Garfield 2030, the community's 20-year housing and land-use plan.

All volunteers will be trained on how to use the survey forms before going out in pairs into the neighborhood. Each pair of volunteers will be armed with a clipboard, a map of their section of the neighborhood and one form for each property in their section. Food will be served to volunteers at the BGC's Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave. Those interested in participating should call 412-441-6950 x 17 or email carolyn@bloomfield-garfield.org.

Aggie Brose, deputy director of the BGC, requests that neighbors be welcoming of the volunteers. "We'll be in the street with clipboards, looking at properties," she explained. "It's not the FBI or the police. We will be looking at all our housing stock. Please welcome the volunteers with a smile." – *Carolyn Ristau, Bloomfield-Garfield Corp.*

Townhouses Coming to Penn

Penn Avenue – Who would have imagined 15 years ago that Penn Avenue would be a lively street with restaurants, art galleries, professional offices, shops and loft apartments? The avenue has welcomed many new businesses and residents over the past decade. The changes have happened slowly, but they add up to a big difference – and the momentum is continuing.

Over the next several months, in the block between Aiken and Graham Streets, next to the Quiet Storm, you'll see two vacant houses demolished, which is just the first step to another new development. The boarded-up, empty houses will be replaced by three new for-sale townhouses.

Friendship Development Associates, Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation are jointly sponsoring the development. The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, which has been a key supporter of the revitalization of the avenue – particularly the Fairmont Apartments and the Glass Lofts – is helping to get the project off the ground with early financing.

The new townhouses will be designed to attract buyers who are looking for contemporary urban living with easy access not only to local shops and restaurants, but to nearby commercial centers in East Liberty, Lawrenceville, Shadyside and Oakland. A request for proposals was issued February 12th to developers experienced in urban infill projects. A proposal will be selected that best meets the goals of the project, and work on the design is expected to begin in late spring.

The community partners will review drawings as the design progresses to ensure the new townhouses contribute to the character and vitality of the corridor. Watch for the groundbreaking within the next year, and then it won't be long before there will be three new households on the avenue. – *Stefani Danes, Bulletin Contributor*

West Penn ER Celebrates Anniversary

Bloomfield – On Feb. 14, West Penn Allegheny Health System and Highmark celebrated the one-year anniversary of the restoration of emergency medicine and other critical services at West Penn Hospital.

Since the reopening of the emergency department last year, West Penn has experienced significant growth, according to WPAHS officials. Outpatient volume increased 25 percent, while inpatient discharges increased 45 percent. Surgical volumes were also up by 30 percent. The hospital's services expansion has created jobs, adding some 240 full-time equivalent employees to the local workforce. West Penn also added numerous physicians to its medical staff, including specialists in bariatric surgery, endocrinology, general surgery, gynecologic oncology, neurology, neurosurgery, obstetrics and gynecology, orthopedics, palliative medicine and urology. – *WPAHS press release*

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Playing That Funky Music

Band Takes Its Name from Abandoned Marketing Concept for East Liberty Neighborhood

By Christine Bethea *Bulletin Contributor*

East Liberty – Scan the website of the three young musicians known as the East Liberty Quarters and you'll see their genres: boogie, funk, disco and dance. You might think they're a 1980s flashback group, but the East Liberty Quarters are actually a hip, 20-something, 21st-century band.

The name comes from an old branding idea for East Liberty. "We wanted to distinguish the neighborhood from all the others," explains Dave Feehan, former Executive Director of East Liberty Development, Inc. "We had actual silver-tone quarters made that people could use for discounts in stores like Bolan's Candy and Anthon's – they're gone now – or even David's Shoes, which is still there. The idea was taken from the French Quarter in New Orleans. We thought it would be different if Pittsburgh had a quarter, too."

The marketing idea never stuck, but "different" was enough to attract the attention of a new band searching for a name almost 20 years later. They came across the



ABOVE: The East Liberty Quarters: BusCrates 16-Bit Ensemble, Nice Rec and Grand Ear. Photo by Matthew Woodward

“It’s about uplifting people – feel-good music.”

moniker while walking through the neighborhood, where it appeared on worn-out promotional materials still lingering on public garbage cans and old billboards. One member of the group, BusCrates 16-Bit Ensemble (Orlando Marshall), grew up in the community, while the other two – Grand Ear (Blaine Britt) and Nice Rec (Peter Mudge) – both come from nearby, having floated through Wilkinsburg, Swissvale, Bloomfield and Lawrenceville in their musical careers. "What a cool [bleep] name!" Grand Ear says he proclaimed when he saw it.

The trio markets itself as playing "future funk" or "electro-boogie." It takes at least seven synthesizers to formulate their sound. Often, a fourth person, like a drummer, guitarist or vocalist, rounds things out for their stage shows. Nice Rec, who got his nick name from his smooth DJ hand movements, admits to being a freak when it comes to collecting old equipment from the early '80s. They say they like the earlier era because music was simpler. "It was about uplifting people – feel-good music," Grand Ear explains.

"We're not sampling," says Nice Rec. "This is our own original music." The group has even rolled out vinyl from a label called Rotating Souls, which describes itself as a "record label with those Afro-RetroFuturistic jams, Hi-Tech Funk, Cosmic Boogie Noir sounds, and Gene-Spliced Disco artifacts from another dimension that we love." The East Liberty Quarters' discography includes two EPs: "East Liberty Quarters" and "The 206."

For folks who just got comfortable saying "CD" and "MP3," "EP" is an acronym



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Playing That Funky Music continued

for extended play. An EP is a musical recording that contains more music than a single, but is too short to qualify as a full studio album or LP.

The East Liberty Quarters say they love the EP format because it gets them just the right amount of music they want to record, so they can produce quality instead of quantity. *Pittsburgh City Paper*, which recently ran positive press on the band, called their sound slightly "subdued," which it may be by today's standards. Still, according to *City Paper* music editor Andy Mulkerin, there's more than enough of the new and of hip-hop influences to keep the sound fresh and modern.

BusCrates, one of the group's founding members, recently moved out of town, but that isn't causing the East Liberty Quarters, who proudly claim no leader, any real problems.

"Of course working face to face will always have a place in music collaboration," says Nice Rec. "But working long distance is not uncommon in the entertainment industry these days. We swap files online, email, call each other. There's lots of technology, so there's no reason we can't have the best of both worlds."

"Orlando is like my brother," says Grand Ear. "Wherever he is, all of us will still be making music together."

The East Liberty Quarters say they hope to release a new "7-inch" soon. Meanwhile, find them on Facebook and pick up an EP at 720 Music, Clothing & Cafe at 4405 Butler Street in Lawrenceville. ♦



Lawrenceville Author Inspired by Babies

by Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

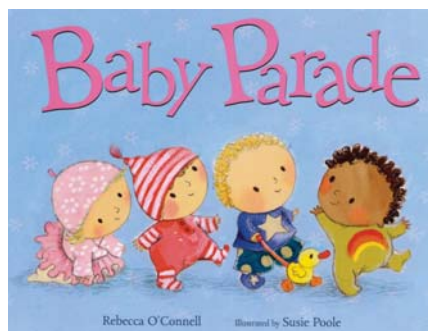
Lawrenceville – For author Rebecca O'Connell, a Lawrenceville resident, the inspiration for writing children's books comes from even the most mundane events.

Her latest book, written for the pre-school set, got its start when O'Connell, a children's librarian at Carnegie Library-Squirrel Hill, "saw all the babies with their grown-ups" streaming past her desk for a weekly story time. The babies filed by in carriages, in pouches and in arms.

"It's always been a very popular event," O'Connell noted. That's how *Baby Parade*, a picture book published this month by Albert Whitman & Co., was born.

O'Connell said *Baby Parade* is geared toward both toddlers – the audience for her popular *Danny Is Done with Diapers* (2010) – and "very tiny babies." The text emphasizes color names, which O'Connell said is about broadening children's vocabulary. "It builds their awareness of the printed word," she explained.

O'Connell's publisher paired her words with drawings by Susie Poole, a children's book author and illustrator who lives in England. Although they never met, "I was



really happy to be paired with her," O'Connell said, expressing her delight with the chubby, happy-looking babies that populate the pages of the book. She said she is particularly fond of the front cover and of a picture of neighbors waving to a baby going by in an orange pouch. "It's hard to pick a favorite," she said.

In addition to writing for toddlers, O'Connell has also published several books for older children, including the "Penina Levine" books for middle school children. Recently, a story she wrote featuring a teenager was read on NPR as part of "Hanukkah Lights."

For more information about O'Connell and her books, visit www.rebeccaconnell.com. ♦

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Recreation from page 1

for green space and a common meeting area, leading him to form a design around “social nodes where the community can gather and interact with each other.” Student Vonn Weisberger said, “I wanted to create a heart for Bloomfield.” The other students echoed Clippinger and Weisberger in their summaries of Bloomfield residents’ desires: green space and a place for all ages to gather.

Along with meeting community members, the students completed detailed research on Bloomfield history, weather, traffic and social demographics. The students’ booklet imagined an exciting community center could be “a further incentive for families and young adults to settle in Bloomfield.” The booklet also noted residents’ desire to create an area “for teenagers to congregate safely, thereby creating a secure recreation center that everyone will use.”

The students brought a three-dimensional, laser-cut map of Bloomfield for perspective. The plans differed in whether to maintain the current baseball field and where to place a new pool. Those who wanted to remove the baseball field from their plans emphasized that they would give the community center the same name as the baseball field – that of Officer Paul

J. Sciuolo II, a Bloomfield native who was one of three police officers to fall in the line of duty in 2009.

Student Rebecca Smith’s poster board claimed that in her plan “the site becomes a backyard to each and every neighbor, providing multiple spaces to meet, reconnect and play.” David Shaare, a fellow student, envisioned a community center for all seasons. He pointed out how his design for an open plaza “can be used for farmers markets, flea markets, outdoor movies, concerts, shows, eating and relaxing.” In winter, the same plaza can be “transformed into an ice rink,” with an adjacent café doubling as a skate-rental shop. Attentive to residents’ favorite activities, the students highlighted the need for basketball and bocce courts.

Another student, Melanie Ray, pointed out that the designs were theoretical but still cost-conscious. “We’re not imposing these plans on the community; they’re more of a jumping-off point,” she said. The event was billed as a presentation of an academic exercise, but the students’ models may serve as a creative resource for those involved in building a new community center.

The meeting space in the Bloomfield Liedertafel bustled with locals who braved

the snow to see the students’ presentations. After the students gave their brief speeches, community members, other students and professors mingled over free refreshments and discussed each project.

The students wrote that they “believe it is fundamental for the community to consider sustainable measures such as energy efficiency.” Along with environmental friendliness, they highlighted the need to create a community center with a manageable cost of upkeep to ensure the facility could be used for generations to come.

The event was sponsored by the Penn State Center, an organization aiming to strengthen the university’s local relationships, and the Bloomfield Development Corporation. Those seeking more information about this event and other development projects in Bloomfield can contact the Bloomfield Development Corporation at terry@bloomfieldnow.com or www.bloomfieldnow.com. ♦



ABOVE: Melanie Ray displays her model for the Bloomfield Recreation Center. Photo by Wesley Davis

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Students Earn College Credits in CCCHS Program

By Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

Lawrenceville – A big plus for juniors and seniors at Career Connections Charter High School (CCCHS), located at 4417 Butler Street, is a dual enrollment program that allows them to fulfill high school requirements and earn as many as 30 credits toward college at the same time – and at no cost to them.

CCCHS participates in the dual enrollment program with two local higher-education institutions – Community College of Allegheny County, a two-year school, and La Roche College, a four-year Catholic liberal arts college in the North Hills.

This year, because La Roche is celebrating its 50th anniversary, it is offering a \$50,000 scholarship to each graduating senior in the Scholars program who are accepted at La Roche for fall 2013 admission. Add to that the \$40,000 city residents can get if they qualify for the Pittsburgh Promise, and students and their parents have much less to worry about in terms of financing their education.

“It is a fantastic opportunity,” said George Ferguson, the CCCHS staff member who coordinates the dual enrollment and internship programs.

To be eligible for dual enrollment, juniors and seniors have to maintain a 3.0

GPA or better and have three letters of recommendation from teachers. The college-credit classes are taught on-site at the high school, and La Roche requires that CCCHS teachers qualify with the college to teach them. Students in the program visit the college campus a few times a semester and get further instruction there from professors. CCCHS pays all the expenses for the students enrolled in the program, including tuition and transportation, so it is like getting a semester or more of college for free.

Ferguson said that in addition to earning college credits, the students learn life skills, especially how to “transition from high school to college.” That first semester in college, he noted, can be especially hard on young people, and a lot of them end up giving up and coming home. The dual enrollment program helps them master study skills and time management techniques so that freshman year isn’t such a shock to their systems. They can then go on to have a successful college career.

Senior Grason Woods, who lives in the Lincoln-Lemington area, is enrolled in the La Roche Scholars program at CCCHS. Although he doesn’t intend to apply to La Roche – he said has been focused on the six-year Physical Therapy program at Slip-

perry Rock since 10th grade – he will be able to apply the credits he’s earned to his chosen school. Woods found the college-level Psychology class he took at CCCHS “challenging,” but said, “The theories are so interesting, about how people think.” He has also taken Sociology and Pre-Calculus. At the same time, he is participating in CCCHS’s internship program and works three days a week at the Children’s Institute in Squirrel Hill as a Physical Therapy intern.

Fellow La Roche Scholar Austin Kulikowski, a Lawrenceville native, is still deciding what he will do after graduation this spring. He is considering becoming a firefighter, but “nothing’s final.” He said he also liked the Psychology class he took and found it “easier to grasp” than the Sociology class he enrolled in. As an enterprising intern at The Zone, the resale store that CCCHS operates on Butler Street, he has learned customer service and business skills and is “trying to upgrade the retail side to include antiques.”

“We follow all our students for a couple of years after graduation,” Ferguson stated, and the statistics suggest that the dual enrollment program does indeed help young people adjust better to college life. “We’re very proud of this program.” ♦

Drumming Up Change at Arsenal Middle School

By Wesley Davis
The Bulletin

Lawrenceville – Even after most of Arsenal Middle School's students left for the day, the energy in the building was palpable. , Principal Patti Camper explained how she aims to provide both an athletic and an artistic activity for students who wish to stay after school.

A group of boys played soccer in the gym. Up-beat music from a stereo mirrored the tempo of their quick passes. A group of girls practiced African drumming in the basement. All appeared to be enjoying themselves. Another group of students worked on the bikes they are assembling. According to Camper, this project, called Positive Spin, was made possible by support from the MGR Foundation. Camper said students are taught

how to build and maintain a bike and get to keep the bikes they assemble at the end of the program.

Camper, in her second year as principal, said she never felt like she had to choose between athletics and music in school – she played softball and the trumpet – and she aims to provide a similar flexibility for her students.

Camper has also taken a constructive approach to school discipline. She said she has reduced suspensions to one-third of the level prior to her arrival. The drop-off in suspensions, she pointed out, goes hand in hand with a sharp increase in parent conferences.

"Parents know their kids," Camper said.



ABOVE: The student council at Arsenal Middle School (shown with Principal Patti Camper) was developed to encourage student leadership. Photo by Larry Jetter

"They were wonderful."

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She expressed her determination to accommodate parents' busy schedules to hold conferences. "I've had parent conferences on Saturday; I'm okay with that," she said. According to Camper, there are three things students must do during the disciplinary process: "Take responsibility, apologize and make it right."

Arsenal Middle School currently enrolls 188 students, according to the school's website. The site also displays a graph of the percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced on 8th-grade PSSA testing in reading and math. From 2008 to 2011, the last year displayed, the percentage hovered between 50 and 60 percent in reading and in math. Detailed information about Arsenal's performance on Pennsylvania standardized testing can be found at the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website, www.education.state.pa.us.

Camper said students who aren't proficient receive tutoring, and "everything we do is preparing for the [Pittsburgh] Promise." Camper acknowledged the school's need for improvement on state tests. She also said she wants every student to succeed, rather than a state-mandated percentage of students, "For us, it's 100 percent."

"We have an achievement gap. Part of an achievement gap is an opportunity gap," Camper said. She mentioned several times the importance of exposing her students to a wide range of activities and opportunities, from sports competitions to ballet performances.

"I don't want any of our students to have a door closed because they don't have," she asserted. Camper said she is motivated by a desire for her students to imagine diverse and ambitious possibilities for themselves; she wants them to dream of being a fashion designer, a ballet dancer or a doctor. On top of Arsenal's after-school activities, students have been able to participate in designing clothes for a youth fashion show, according to Camper; they can also participate in the Health Rangers Program, in which they shadow Children's Hospital employees. Camper said she decided to let students name each homeroom after a college or university as a way to encourage them to envision themselves continuing their education.

While Arsenal has struggled in state testing, Camper expressed determination to improve scores and said, "What's not publicized is that we're growing our kids. When kids come here, they don't want to leave." She highlighted the individual attention each student receives because of Arsenal's size and the high percentage of students hailing from around the globe.

"I know every student by name," she said. "You could not possibly not fit in here. We're probably one of the most diverse if not the most diverse middle school in Pittsburgh." She also said she looks forward to a bright future of growing enrollment and improved academic performance at Arsenal Middle School. ♦



"Like" the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
on Facebook for the latest neighborhood information and community photos.

Drag Celebrities Call East End Home

By John Colombo *Bulletin Contributor*

East End – Justin Andrew Honard may be one of the most famous people in the country right now, and he lives right in the 'hood. Known locally and nationally as "Alaska," Honard is currently one of the stars of the LOGO TV show "RuPaul's Drag Race," season 5.

"RuPaul's Drag Race" auditions drag performers from all over the country to compete to become "America's next drag superstar." Each week, a contestant is cut.

At press time, four contestants had been eliminated and Alaska was still in the running. Pittsburghers meet in various East End bars and clubs to cheer Alaska on each Monday at 9 p.m. The winner will be decided in April.

The TV hit has been a dream come true for Honard, as he auditioned every season since the show started. Honard graduated from the University of Pittsburgh's theater department program in 2007. Originally

from Erie, he moved to Los Angeles after college to pursue his dream of working in the entertainment industry. On a trip to San Francisco, he was able to perform with a famous drag troupe known as Transysshack, and that's when he said he "got his calling" to do drag.

Alaska and the troupe she performs with in Pittsburgh, Haus of Haunt, make every show over-the-top fun for all types of people, straight and gay. Garfield photographer Caldwell Linker has taken photos of their many performances at the Blue Moon Bar on Butler Street in Lawrenceville, the group's home bar, and produced a coffee-table book.

One of the more outrageous shows performed was a take on "Sister Act" called "Sister Axe." They have also performed their own version of "The Wizard of Oz." This is not your father's drag – this is more like the cast of a John Waters film on steroids. The troupe also performs

frequently at Brillobox on Penn Avenue.

While living in L.A., Alaska met Aaron Cody, another drag performer who had just moved to Pittsburgh, and the two fell in love. Honard packed a truck and moved back to Pittsburgh to be with Cody, and the two have been blissfully living together in the East End.

But a funny thing happened on the way to this relationship – Cody also auditioned for "RuPaul's Drag Race." Cody, aka Sharon Needles, won season 4 and is now one of the most famous drag performers in the world. Sharon has also released a pop/metal album, which became a Top 5 seller on iTunes in its first week after release. It debuted just below Justin Bieber and right ahead of Pink, two established pop stars. The album is titled "PG-13," and a video has been released from one of the cuts, called "This Club Is a Haunted House." Alaska also sings on "PG-13."

The drag celebrities are routinely out and about in Bloomfield, Lawrenceville and Garfield. They love Pittsburgh and the East End, according to Honard, and have no plans on leaving. He said Spak Brothers' Buffalo Seitan hoagie is one of his favorite foods, and he often finds outfits for performances at the East End Community Thrift Shop.

Last year, when Sharon Needles won "RuPaul's Drag Race," Facebook was abuzz about Pittsburgh the "city of champions" – six rings, one crown. Alaska is on her way to winning this year and bringing Pittsburgh its second crown. ♦



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Pre-School Offers "Learning Through Play"

By Jennifer Pelling

Bulletin Contributor

Friendship – I discovered Arsenal Family and Children's Center (AFCC) in a way that many parents do – by word of mouth, and with a little confusion. It began when a friend found out that I was looking for a preschool.

"My kids go to Arsenal. We've been really pleased," she said.

"Oh, tell me about it," I replied. "I've always wanted to see the inside of that great big building." For a moment, my friend paused in confusion, but then she understood. "No, not that Arsenal," she clarified. "That one's good, too, but I mean the other one. The little one in Friendship."

Two years later, both of my children are students at the "little Arsenal," and I am convinced that this tiny brick building at 336 S. Aiken Avenue is one of the hidden gems of our area. If you drive by, it is easy to miss; but if you slow down and walk, you might hear the chattering noise of children learning as they play. They aren't the first to do so: Preschoolers, toddlers, infants and their parents have benefited from Arsenal's developmentally-appropriate programs for 50 years.

Started by Dr. Benjamin Spock in 1953 as a teaching site for pediatric medical

students at the University of Pittsburgh, Arsenal's work is built on two pillars of healthy child development – "the passionate involvement of an adult" in a child's life and "opportunities for active learning through play." The first is promoted through the on-going support and education of a child's primary caregivers, including one-on-one mentoring, supervised play, and infant and toddler play groups.

"Active learning through play" is, in the words of Executive Director Melissa Hankin, the idea that "children can learn everything that they need to learn through play," including problem-solving, the ability to interact well with peers and adults, self-control, empathy and traditional academic skills. Skilled teachers are needed to facilitate this learning, and some of Arsenal's faculty have worked at the school for more than 20 years. They are experts at careful observation and appropriate intervention that takes advantage of "teachable moments," allowing children to become confident, independent learners.

Elizabeth Glowczewski's daughter has attended Arsenal programs since she was an infant, and is currently in the 4- and 5-

year-old class. Elizabeth describes the school as a place where "learning is just absorbed," and says she marvels at her daughter's progress in writing. "There was no pressure," she recalls. "The teacher just noticed that she seemed interested in the names and tasks on the snack chart. So Mrs. Pini started showing one of the labels to [my daughter] every day and she wanted to copy them. She started practicing her letters in a way that was completely natural to her."

In the coming school year, Arsenal will respond to the needs of working parents in the community by expanding the hours of their preschool and toddler programs. Starting in September 2013, there will be morning, full-day and extended day options for two, three or five days a week. Financial assistance is available, and tours can be scheduled by calling 412-345-0008.

Arsenal also has a website (www.arsenalfamily.com) and a facebook page (Arsenal Family & Children's Center). Interested families should apply soon, as Arsenal's small classes fill up quickly. ♦



ABOVE: Rosa, a student in the 3-year-old class at Arsenal Family and Children's Center, displays her self-titled "Map of the Neighborhood." Photo by Jennifer Pelling

Program Creates Buzz about Books

By Kate Bayer

Bulletin Contributor

Lawrenceville – Are you interested in exploring books with friends you already know or haven't even met yet? If so, check out the Lawrenceville branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh for its newest and hottest initiative, Book Buzz.

CLP-Lawrenceville librarian Karen Brooks describes Book Buzz as a "traditional book club that meets in non-traditional places and reads about non-traditional topics." Book Buzz is "a highly caffeinated, sometimes alcoholic book discussion done in Pittsburgh neighborhoods," according to its website.

Book Buzz is designed to bring a younger demographic – ages 18 to 35 – into the library experience. But Brooks is quick to point out that all adults are welcome, regardless of age.

Last fall, Book Buzz selections included *Magicians* by Lev Grossman, *Wide Awake* by David Levithan and *Coldest Winter Ever* by Sister Souljah. The group met at local hangouts like Tazza D'Oro, Eclipse Lounge and Penn Brewery. By going to where people are and engaging them in ways that meet their lifestyle, Brooks says, CLP-Lawrenceville can become more relevant to everyone in the community.

Each month's selections consist of a classic title that will be discussed at the library, followed two weeks later by an "edgier, more contemporary" title related in some way to the original, says Brooks. The March Book Buzz takes on theme of "Cooks and Cooking," with the selections *My Life in France* by Julia Child on March 11 at CLP-Lawrenceville, and Julia Powell's *Cleaving* on March 25 at Perk Me Up, 4407 Butler Street.

April's theme is "Dead or Alive" and launches on April 8 with a review of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* at the library, followed by Mira Grant's *FEED* on April 15 at House of the Dead, 4110 Butler St.

Rounding out the spring series is "A Woman's World," with *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood at the library on May 13, and Hillary Jordan's *When She Woke* on June 3 at the Church Brew Works, 3521 Liberty Ave.

All are welcome to join in, and more information can be found on the website at www.clpbookbuzz.wordpress.com or by contacting Karen Brooks at brooks1@carnegielibrary.org. The Lawrenceville branch is located at 279 Fisk Street. ♦



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March 1

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March 2

GARFIELD**Crafternoons: Mail Art**

As part of our Saturday Crafternoon program, Assemble will be hosting a free mail art workshop for kids from 1 to 4 p.m. at 5125 Penn Ave. Bring addresses for a grandparent, relative or friend and send them a little love through the mail. All materials provided. Contact outreach@assemblephg.org for details.

March 4

LAWRENCEVILLE**Pajama Story Time**

Wear your PJs and bring your favorite stuffed animal for bedtime stories at the Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St. 7 p.m. For children and families. Call 412-682-3668 for more information.

BLOOMFIELD**Food Safety Certification**

The Allegheny County Health Department is hosting food protection certification courses for food industry workers at West Penn Hospital, 4800 Friendship Ave. The course teaches the importance of food safety along with techniques designed to prevent food contamination and outbreaks of food poisoning. The fee is \$60 for anyone who lives in Allegheny County or works in a food facility in the County. For more information, please call the Allegheny County Health Department at 412-687-2243 or visit www.achd.net. Program repeated March 11.

March 5

EAST LIBERTY**Intro to Computers**

This class is the starting point for learning how to use computers. Use of the mouse and keyboard commands, Microsoft Windows basics, starting programs, creating and saving files, and beginning use of the Internet will be covered. Carnegie

Library-East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 412-363-8232 for more info.

March 6

LAWRENCEVILLE**AdvantAGE Mixer**

Do you live in Ward 6? Would you like to meet your neighbors? Whether you are young or old, a long-time or new resident— you are invited to participate in a free event where you can get to know your neighbors. Greybox Theater, 3595 Butler St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Food, drinks, and fun will be provided. Please RSVP to info@lunited.org or 412-802-7220.

GARFIELD**AARP Recruitment Event**

AARP Foundation WorkSearch Program is a paid training program to assist individuals with obtaining experience and training needed to get a job. To qualify you must be 55 or older and an unemployed Allegheny County resident. Please bring a copy of the following to the meeting to determine eligibility: PA ID or PA Driver's License, Social Security card, resume and documents showing past 12 months of income (including spouse). Documentation can be copied at the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center before the meeting, ask for assistance. If you need to develop your resume, Specialists at ENEC are available to help you. Schedule an appointment today. Time: 2 to 4 p.m. at the ENEC, 5321 Penn Ave. To register: 412-362-8580.

Energy Learning Party

Ever wonder what causes volcanoes and earthquakes? Can vegetable oil really power a car? How does food keep my body going? The answers to all of these questions involve energy. Join Assemble, 5125 Penn Ave., for an Energy Learning Party from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. to learn what makes the world around you move. Participate in fun, hands-on activities led by local makers, scientists, artists, and technologists. Fun for kids, friends and grown-ups. All materials provided. Please contact outreach@assemblephg.org for more details.

March 7

LAWRENCEVILLE**AdvantAGE Mixer**

Do you live in Ward 9? Would you like to meet your neighbors? Whether you are young or old, a long-time or new resident— you are invited to participate in a free event where you can get to know your neighbors. Stephen Foster Center, 3rd Floor, 286 Main St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Food, drinks, and fun will be provided. Please RSVP to info@lunited.org or 412-802-7220.

EAST LIBERTY**Sunstar Music Festival**

From folk to jazz, and everything in between, the Kelly Strayhorn Theater's Sunstar Music Festival showcases the best vibrancy and diversity of independent female artists with a three-day line up of concerts, parties, talks and more. Tickets range in price from \$15 to \$25. Festival continues through March 9. To purchase tickets or see a detailed schedule, visit www.kelly-strayhorn.org or call 412-363-3000.

March 12

GARFIELD**Become Financially Prepared**

NeighborWorks financial experts will give a presentation on budgeting, credit scores and avoiding identity theft. 6 p.m. Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center, 5321 Penn Ave. Call 412-281-9773 to register.

EAST LIBERTY**Beginning MS Word**

Learn document creation, formatting, cut, copy, paste, spell check and printing in Microsoft Word. Carnegie Library-East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 412-363-8232 for more information.

LAWRENCEVILLE**AdvantAGE Mixer**

Do you live in Ward 10? Would you like to meet your neighbors? Whether you are young or old, a long-time or new resident— you are invited to participate in a free event where you can get to know your neighbors. At Nied's Hotel, 5438 Butler St., from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Food, drinks and fun will be provided. Please RSVP to info@lunited.org or 412-802-7220.

March 13

GARFIELD**Caregiver Hiring**

Home Instead Senior Care provides high-quality senior home care and is looking to add to its team. Learn how to become a Compassionate Caregiver, providing one-on-one home care for seniors. Must have a car. 11 a.m. Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center, 5321 Penn Ave. To register call 412-465-0425.

Public Safety Task Force

The Public Safety Task Force has convened monthly in Garfield since 2000. At the table are representatives from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, the Bureau of Police, other neighborhood organizations, the offices of the Mayor and City Council members, various city and county departments and the state. Community members are invited to bring specific concerns to PSTF's monthly meeting during the first 15 minutes. The meeting starts at 4 p.m. at BGC's Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave. For more information: 412-441-6950 x15.

March 15

GARFIELD**Finding Employment**

Carena Phillips, along with Usama Al-Teraifi, will give a presentation on how to find employment with a criminal record. At the free presentation you will learn about: the expungement process, what you can do to change employers' perception of you, how to maximize the chance of getting a job, and how to answer difficult interview questions about your criminal history. 2 p.m. 113 N. Pacific Ave. Call 412-362-8580 to register.

EAST LIBERTY**Dancing Across Cultures**

In "Ruth Doesn't Live Here Anymore," choreographer/performer Lionel Popkin questions the acts of cultural sourcing, representation and transmission. The work features the live performance of an original score by acclaimed composer and accordion player Guy Klucvsek, a Pittsburgh native. "Ruth Doesn't Live Here Anymore" will be performed at 8 p.m. at the Kelly Strayhorn Theater, 5941 Penn Ave. Tickets range in price from \$15 to \$35. For information or to purchase discounted advance tickets, visit www.kelly-strayhorn.org or call 412-363-3000. Also on March 16.

March 16

EAST LIBERTY**Kid's Create: Origami**

Carnegie Library-East Liberty is hosting an origami workshop. Learn the art of Japanese paper folding. All ages welcome. 3:30 p.m. 130 S. Whitfield St. Call 412-363-8232 for more information.

LEGO Night

Come to the Carnegie Library-East Liberty to play and build with blocks, straws & connectors, LEGOs and more. For ages 3 and up with family participation. 130 S. Whitfield St. 6:00 p.m. Call 412-363-8232 for more information.

LAWRENCEVILLE**Friends of CLP**

Do you love your library? Help us make it even better. Join the Friends of the Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., to discuss fundraising, programming and more at 10:30 a.m. Must be a Friends member to attend. Stop by CLP-Lawrenceville to become a Friends member. For more information call 412-682-3668.

GARFIELD**Crafternoons: Comics**

As part of our Saturday Crafternoon program, Assemble will be hosting a free comics and cartoon art workshop for kids from 1 to 4 p.m. at 5125 Penn Ave. Local cartoonists will work with kids on cartooning and design basics. Kids can collaboratively design a T-shirt or poster to be silkscreened the following week. All materials provided. Contact outreach@assemblephg.org for more details.

Sorry, we do not accept listings by phone.

The Bulletin Board publishes listings of volunteer opportunities, free or low-cost events and classes, fundraising events and services that are of particular interest to our neighborhoods. Listings published on a space-available basis; we cannot guarantee placement.

Announcements for the APRIL issue are due Friday, March 15, via email to bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org.

Volunteer Opportunities & Services

March 18

LAWRENCEVILLE

LEGO Day

Children and their caregivers are invited to use their imagination by building structures using a variety of building toys at the Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., at 7 p.m. Building blocks are more than fun toys; they are valuable educational and creative tools. For more information call 412-682-3668.

March 19

EAST LIBERTY

Beginning MS Excel

Learn spreadsheet creation, formulas, creating budgets, cell formatting, freezing panes and other MS Excel basics. Carnegie Library-East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 412-363-8232 for more info.

LAWRENCEVILLE

Computer Classes

This basic computer class will be conducted on three consecutive days, through March 21, for approximately one hour per day at noon. We will focus on how to log onto a library computer, mouse/keyboard basics, and Windows basics. Registration is required. Register for three days if possible. Classes held at Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St. To register call 412-682-3668.

March 20

STRIP DISTRICT

PATF Benefit

Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force's 27th Annual Benefit will take place at the Pittsburgh Opera at 6 p.m. A cocktail reception is followed by award-winning Varla Jean Merman (Jeffery Roberson) performing her new one-woman show, "The Book of Merman." Tickets can be purchased at www.patf.org. For more information, call 412-345-0593.

March 21

LAWRENCEVILLE

Dickens in Pennsylvania

The Lawrenceville Historical Society will host Barbara McGlynn as part of its public lecture series. Speaking on "Charles Dickens' Trip to America," McGlynn will address the Pennsylvania leg of the famous writer's tour of the United States. Lecture takes place in the McVey Auditorium of Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St. 7 p.m. Event is free.

March 22

LAWRENCEVILLE

Farmers Market Benefit

A Lawrenceville Farmers Market party, themed "Grown in Lawrenceville," will be hosted by Remedy, 5121 Butler St., from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. The

night will feature specialty cocktails, raffles, music and more. \$10 suggested donation. All proceeds go directly to supporting the market. For more information, contact PGH Party for a Purpose: info@pghparty.org or 412-302-4284.

March 23

GARFIELD

Silkscreening

As part of our Saturday Crafternoon program, Assemble will be hosting a free drop-in silkscreening workshop for kids from 1 to 4 p.m. at 5125 Penn Ave. Local printmakers will be working with kids to make Crafternoon posters and T-shirts using the image children designed at the previous Saturday Crafternoon. Please bring a T-shirt, if possible. Contact outreach@assembleph.org for more details.

March 24

GARFIELD

Youth Easter Service

Join Elder Lamont B. Shields, Pastor, for an Easter service at Morningside Church of God in Christ, 5173 Dearborn St. 4 p.m.

March 25

LAWRENCEVILLE

Xbox Kinect Gaming

Do you dare challenge Amy the Librarian at some "Kinect Bowling"? Will you beat her high score in "Dance Central"? Bring some friends and meet some new ones, eat snacks and play video games. Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St. 4:30 p.m. For more information call 412-682-3668.

March 26

LAWRENCEVILLE

Adult Game Night

Why should kids have all the fun? Join your neighbors for board games, word games or even video games at 6 p.m. Ages 18 and up. No registration required. Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St. For more information call 412-682-3668.

EAST LIBERTY

Beginning MS Powerpoint

Learn to create presentations, use templates, insert graphics and slide transitions. Carnegie Library-East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 412-363-8232 for more information.

March 30

GARFIELD

Easter Egg Hunt

Join Elder Lamont B. Shields, Pastor, for a community Easter egg hunt at Morningside Church of God in Christ, 5173 Dearborn St. 11 a.m.

On-Going

LAWRENCEVILLE

Morning Prayer Service

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 237 37th St., is open for Morning Prayer Service, Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m., led by Rev. Cullen Duke. The service lasts 15-20 minutes. All are welcome. For additional information call Rev. Cullen A. Duke at 412-621-2720, or visit zionevangelicallutheran.org.

Snugglebugs Storytime

Come to the Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., for Snugglebugs Storytime, a program of books, rhymes, songs, finger-plays and fun for babies and toddlers, and their caregivers. Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. For information call 412-682-3668.

Teen Time

Stop by the Carnegie Library-Lawrenceville on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. for fun activities, snacks and more in our Teen Space. Join us for crafts, video games and more. Ages 11 to 17. No registration required. For more information call 412-682-3668.

OAKLAND

Phipps Internship

Phipps Conservatory is accepting applications from highly motivated high school students with an interest in the well-being of the planet to serve as summer interns in our six-week, paid internship program, which will run from June 24 to August 1. The high school internship provides hands-on experience working with Phipps's science education and horticulture staff, along with classes, service projects and field trips. Applications will be accepted until April 1. For application information visit www.is.gd/hippsintern.

EAST LIBERTY

Historical Exhibition

The East Liberty Valley Historical Society will hold an exhibition in May featuring paintings, decorative arts and historic artifacts celebrating the impressive history and works of individuals and institutions in the East Liberty/East End area from the 18th century to the "Glory Days." The Historical Society is asking residents to share documents and artifacts for the exhibition. To discuss possible donations, contact Alfred Mann at alfred.mann@verizon.net or 412-661-5947.

Baby & Me

For babies to 24 months old and parents. Carnegie Library-East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St. Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Call 412-363-8232 for information.

GARFIELD

Free Homework Help

1st-graders through 12th-graders are invited to drop in at The LAB, 5125 Penn Ave., for homework help and writing practice from 3:30 to 6 p.m. every Tuesday. Mentors assist students with their schoolwork and also lead writing activities. Student writing will be published in small chapbooks. Snacks provided. Parents must complete a student application: <http://bit.ly/LABStudentApp>. If you're unable to print it out in advance, we will have copies on hand at The LAB. Visit www.literaryartsboom.org/calendar for information.

LAB Seeking Interns

Literary Arts Boom [The LAB] relies upon volunteers and interns to add expertise and energy to its educational youth programming, community

engagement efforts, and mad science machinations. For details about internships and volunteer opportunities visit literaryartsboom.org. Contact The LAB at literaryartsboom@gmail.com or 773-425-1531.

Life Is a Lab

Literary Arts Boom [The LAB] seeks stories from folks in Bloomfield, Garfield and Friendship about a time you tried something new. Share a snippet and we may get in touch regarding an oral history and comic book project. Also, the LAB is looking for classrooms to partner with on a storytelling and comics project in March or April. Contact literaryartsboom@gmail.com or 773-425-1531.

GED Prep

Pittsburgh CONNECTS, in collaboration with the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC), is offering free help for people interested in taking the General Equivalency Diploma exam (GED). Beginning in 2014, all GED tests will be computer-based. Individuals who never completed high school can study at the Pittsburgh CONNECTS computer center, 5321 Penn Ave., using both tutors and computer technology to prepare. GPLC provides assessment, training materials and sample tests to individuals enrolled in the GED study program. GPLC is also an approved testing provider and will arrange for students to take the GED exam. For more information, call 412-465-0858.

Computer Classes

Pittsburgh CONNECTS is hosting ongoing computer classes at its 5321 Penn Ave. office. Mondays, 10 a.m. to noon: Introduction to Computers; Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.: Internet and Email; Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.: MS Office Skills (Word and Excel); Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6 to 8 p.m.: GED Class. For more information, call 412-465-0858.

School Credit Recovery

Is your child behind in school and at risk of not graduating? NovaNET is an online program that allows your child to recover failed credits. It can be accessed at Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Pittsburgh CONNECTS computer lab at 5321 Penn Ave., Monday through Friday from 5:30 to 8 p.m. and weekends from 12 to 6 p.m. For more information, call 412-204-6182 or email NovaNETrecovery@gmail.com.

PITTSBURGH

Hiring Baseball Monitors

Citiparks BIG League Sports is looking for seasonal part-time employees for its summer baseball/softball season. Training available. If interested in the monitor position, call the BIG League office at 412-488-8585 or send resume to michelle.aul@pittsburghpa.gov. Monitors' duties include but are not limited to daily field preparations, scorekeeping, rules interpretations and light office work. Employment in this position is from May to August.

Classifieds

A Hauling Job?

We clear basements, yards, garages, attics, estates

Fast, Reliable, Reasonable

Also demolition work, minor repairs, grass cutting, salvage credit.

412-687-6928 **Call Walt** 412-773-0599

GA/GI from page 1

Art/Green Innovator's festival (GA/GI) will celebrate its fourth year on Penn Avenue on Friday, April 5, and Saturday, April 6, as part of "Unblurred."

"We never had a category for community events before," said Kim Chestney-Harvey, Art and Technology Director for PTC. "This one ticked off all the right boxes and won."

GA/GI Fest, which includes nearly every gallery and business in the Penn Avenue Arts corridor, also has participation this year from many major universities, their students and former students, including Edinboro University, Duquesne University, Point Park University, University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University. Over the past few years, thousands of festival-goers have flocked to the event due to its commitment to emerging eco programs and inventors, as well as its off-brand art and technology presentations.

"GA/GI is never perfect, but always beautiful," said GA/GI Team Director Christine Bethea. "We've had the pleasure of working with an awesome group of people and the Penn Avenue Arts Initiative."

A program of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation and Friendship Development Associates, the Penn Avenue Arts Initiative has kept Unblurred alive, growing the event since its inception in

the mid-1990s. The PAAI is currently looking for ways to expand its arts venues, supporting an art car event last fall with Most Wanted Fine Art, which, for GA/GI 4, will host the best designs from Pittsburgh's Global Video Games Jam. Visitors will be able to play the actual games at the gallery at 5015 Penn during a special session on Saturday, April 6.

In addition, the Kelly Strayhorn Theater has become a key partner in GA/GI 4, bringing a multi-disciplinary performance, "Mash Up Body," to the table as well as other in-kind services. Many galleries and businesses along the avenue are participating in the festival by including eco- and tech-friendly components in their exhibits. Look for special art, demos and more at Verde Mexican Kitchen & Cantina, Modern Formations, Irma Freeman Center for Imagination, BFG Cafe, Assemble, Tee Rex and many more.

The Pittsburgh Glass Center, which always plays a pivotal role in GA/GI, is exhibiting work by the internationally known artist Eunsuh Choi. PGC will also



ABOVE: Knit the Bridge, a project featuring the work of hundreds of local knitters and crocheters, will present a special event at GA/GI 4. Photo courtesy Touchfaster Imaging

host the festival's fashion segment, "Lights! Cameras! Fashion!" This program, coordinated by fashion editor Kristin Barker, invites photographers of every ilk to participate in a paparazzi party, as models strut and pose for pics in front of artistic backdrops. Vendors will be on hand with glass jewelry and unique clothing.

New to the festival will be "Knit the Bridge," a project of the Fiber Arts Guild, a member guild of the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. The project will hold a special event at ARTica Gallery during GA/GI 4, and has recruited hundreds of people from Southwestern Pa. who knit and

crochet to create fiber panels. Eventually, the panels will cover a bridge in the downtown Pittsburgh area. Knit the Bridge is funded by the Sprout Fund.

"This project is really about reclaiming spaces and rebuilding community. We plan to hold a special GA/GI event at ARTica in Garfield," said Amanda Gross, lead artist. Gross said she hopes the panels created during GA/GI and elsewhere will be up on a bridge by summer, with the work later donated to local shelters for blankets.

For more on the GA/GI Festival, visit gagi4.blogspot.com. ♦

Summer Dreamers Mural Unveiled



"Summer Dreamers 2012," a 15-foot mural created last summer by 75 Pittsburgh Public Schools students, was unveiled in January at Pittsburgh Millions 6-12. The students worked with Garfield-based clay and mosaic artist Laura Jean McLaughlin in the "Clay & Mosaic Extravaganza" and "From Mud to Masterpiece" programs at the school.

The mural (a small portion of which is shown above) is an example of how the Summer Dreamers Academy, a free summer learning camp, merges creative activities and education to combat summer learning loss and eliminate racial disparities in the public schools. Enrollment for Summer Dreamers Academy 2013 starts in mid-March; the five-week program kicks off July 1 and runs through Aug. 7. For more information about enrollment, email summerdreamers@pghboe.net or call 412-622-3983.



SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING!
WWW.GCATPGH.COM
*** Be Part of the Action! ***

* GCAT is an initiative of the Bloomfield Garfield Corporation Elm Street District *

GCAT CHAT

Pick-up Penn Ave
 Saturday, March 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Most Wanted Fine Art, 5015 Penn Ave.

GCAT Monthly Meeting
 Wednesday, March 20, at 6:00 p.m. at Assemble Gallery, 5125 Penn Ave.

Need a place to garden this summer in Garfield?
 Gator Gardens will be a community garden located at 5414 Kincaid Street. It will provide local residents with the space, resources, and support they need to grow food in an urban area. If you're interested in gardening here, visit: <http://gcatpgh.wufoo.com/forms/gator-garden-signup/> and fill out the form.
If you have questions about the garden, contact: gcatpgh@gmail.com or call 412-450-0371

 **Follow the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation on Twitter @BloomGarCorp!**