



# The Bulletin

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## Who Benefits from the Census? *You Do!*

By Paula Martinac  
*The Bulletin*

What do the national school breakfast and lunch programs, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the unemployment insurance program, Medicaid, and new home construction all have in common? They are among the many programs that benefit local residents every day, and that require U.S. Census data in order to determine where billions of federal dollars are distributed.

### *Is It Any of Their Business?*

If you think the U.S. Census is just about the government poking its nose into people's private business, think again. The census, which takes place every 10 years and will be conducted again this year, provides information used to fund many of the programs that community members rely on and take for granted. For example, if your

child participates in the school lunch program, or if you or a loved one has taken advantage of programs for seniors, census figures help to determine what the level of need is in your community.

Census data also help local governments and agencies decide where to locate new roads, public transit routes, schools, and hospitals. The information also guides corporations in deciding where to set up new businesses, based on population density.

That's why, said Aggie Brose, Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's deputy director, "it's so important that residents in our neighborhoods fill out the census form." Brose was recently appointed to the Complete Count Committee, a local working group convened to make sure that Pittsburgh neighborhoods are thoroughly included in the census. "A complete count of all our residents is the only way to ensure we receive the congressional representation and federal funding

this region deserves," Mayor Luke Ravenstahl said in establishing the committee with County Executive Dan Onorato.

### *Who Should Be Counted?*

Mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the census provides a snapshot of the country's population. All residents, citizens and non-citizens, must be counted. Households will receive a questionnaire in the mail in February, consisting of 10 simple questions that take about 10 minutes to answer. In the spring and summer, those households that did not respond will receive a visit from a census worker, who will ask the same questions as appear on the form.

For those who do not get a form by mail, the questionnaires will also be available at selected public sites. In the East End, for example, the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC), located at 5321 Penn Avenue, will have questionnaires



IT'S IN OUR HANDS

available and staff who can help anyone needing assistance to fill out the form.

### *Can the Information Be Used Against People?*

Questions on the census form include whether a unit is rented or owned, and the names, genders, and races of those living in the household. Answers to the census questions are confidential. By law, the Census Bureau is not permitted to share people's responses with any-

**See Census, page 12**

## Conversion of Penn Circle Designed to Improve Circulation in East Liberty



ARTIST'S RENDERING OF PENN CIRCLE CONVERSION (HIGHLIGHTED IN GRAY).  
Courtesy ELDI

At a public meeting on November 16, Ernie Hogan,

By Tiffany Clark  
*East Liberty Development Inc.*

the deputy director of development of East Liberty Development Inc., and Pat Hassett, assistant director of the City of Pittsburgh's Bureau of Transportation and Engineering, presented plans for the conversion of Penn Circle into a two-way street to more than 40 East Liberty community members. The reconstruction of Penn Circle South and Penn Circle East into a bidirectional roadway will begin in the spring of 2010, and is expected to be completed by the summer of 2011.

Penn Circle, a major one-way ring road created during the "urban renew-

al" efforts of the 1960s, has caused confusion for driv-

ers and constricted major investment in the neighborhood's commercial core ever since it was built. In 2002, part of Penn Circle South was reconfigured during the construction of the Eastside development. The City of Pittsburgh is now working with ELDI to convert the next major section of the road into two-way traffic from South Highland Avenue to Penn Circle North. Parts of Penn Avenue and Broad Street near Penn Circle will also be reconstructed.

**See Penn Circle, page 12**

The deadline for all articles, ads, and Bulletin Board items for the February 2010 issue is **FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2010**. For more information, call 412-441-6915.

## PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE REPORT

### OUR COMMUNITY IS NOT A DUMPING GROUND!

Recently, PA  
Cleanways re-  
leased a 2009

dumping survey identifying 14 illegal dumping sites in Garfield and an estimated 17 tons of waste. Of the 14 sites identified, eight are fully visible from surrounding roadways, and the remaining six are partially visible. There were also three sites identified in Bloomfield at an estimated three tons of waste.

When the BGC went out to survey the sites, we noticed a mixture of landscape debris, personal trash, and large item waste. On Shamrock Way, we found mattresses; on Jordan Way, a futon; on the corner of Alhambra and Evaline, a bunch of garbage bags and two sinks left in a vacant lot; and on Brown Way, a much larger mixture of landscaping waste, personal trash, household fixtures, and furniture.

We cannot tolerate this activity in our neighborhoods. Any form of littering or dumping is illegal and subject to fines. It has the potential to destroy the environment in our neighborhood and bring down property values. We are asking neighbors to keep their eyes and ears out for this activity. If you see something suspicious, or are able to get the license number of someone dumping, please report the activity to the

**By Kathryn Vargas**  
*Bloomfield-Garfield Corp.*

BGC office at 412-441-6950 x 15. We will make sure that the incident is reported. And, if you hire a contractor to perform some renovations, ask him where he'll be hauling the debris generated by the work.

Together, we can start to crack down on illegal dumping, and send the message that we will do what it takes to keep our community clean.

Here are some of the streets with identified dump sites:

*Garfield:*

Corner of Alhambra Way and N.

Evaline

Broad Street

Brown Way

Corner of Shamrock Way and

Elora Way

Jordan Way, between N. Evaline  
and Winebiddle

Mora Way

Cornwall Street

Kincaid Street

N. Negley Avenue

*Bloomfield:*

Juniper

Juniper at Edmond

Aloe at South Matilda



*Paula Martinac/The Bulletin*



**ILLEGAL DUMP SITES ON  
BROWN WAY (TOP); SHAMROCK  
WAY AND ELORA WAY (MID-  
DLE); AND ALHAMBRA WAY  
(LEFT).**

### Community Groups Gain Tools for Neighborhood Stabilization

Bob Gradeck and other staff from the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Social and Urban Research offered a workshop to East End community organizations about how to use the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System. PNCIS is an online database that collects information on community conditions and makes it available to local stakeholders and groups.

The information helps community leaders, Gradeck said, because "they don't have to chase down data" on such topics as foreclosures, tax delinquency, crime, property ownership, the housing market, and land use in a particular neighborhood. Gradeck's team worked with East Liberty Development Inc., for example, to identify real estate for acquisition "before it fell into the hands of absentee property owners." PNCIS also enabled Lawrenceville Corporation to identify "the worst of the worst" absentee property owners and "put together a strategy to get them to adopt better practices," Gradeck reported.

"There are a lot of speculators scooping up property in low-market areas," Gradeck said, "and it's not always the best thing for residents." The information available through PNCIS can make the job of community groups working for neighborhood stabilization a lot easier.

### Participate in the Pittsburgh Citizen's Police Academy

Twice a year, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police sponsors an opportunity for members of the community to become closely acquainted with the roles and responsibilities of the Police Bureau. The Pittsburgh Citizen's Police Academy (CPA) brings the police and the community close together in a setting that offers a sample of police training to each participant.\*

The next session of the Citizen's Police Academy will begin Tuesday, February 2, 2010, at the Allegheny County Adult Probation Day Reporting Center, located at 2320 Arlington Avenue. The program will be held each Tuesday evening, from 6 to 9 p.m. for 15 weeks.

Class size is limited to 30 participants. All interested persons must complete a written application, available online, and give permission for the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police to conduct a background check to determine if they have a criminal record. All applications must be received by January 15, 2010.

For more information on the City of Pittsburgh Citizen's Police Academy and/or an application, please go to [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/police/html/citizens\\_police.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/police/html/citizens_police.html), or contact Lieutenant Jennifer Beidle at: Pittsburgh Police Headquarters, 1203 Western Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15233; phone: 412-323-7844; email: [jennifer.beidle@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:jennifer.beidle@city.pittsburgh.pa.us).

*\*Please note: this program is not an accredited certification course to become a sworn police officer.*

## Mobile Council Office Continues Service to District 7

In 2008, my office launched a unique program called Council to Go – a mobile district office – to better serve you in the neighborhoods where you live, and to better represent you downtown. During Council to Go, my staff and I go to prominent places in your community to meet with you; we can help you learn to use 311, discuss legislation before City Council, answer your questions about city services, or check on any previous requests you have already made through our office.

Since we started this program, we've met and answered questions for over 300 constituents. We've accomplished this without spending a single penny of your tax dollars. Space for Council to Go is generously donated by our hosts.

We have tried to schedule our Council to Go sessions in places you already like to visit, like neighborhood coffee shops or farmer's markets. With sites across the district, from Polish Hill to Lawrenceville to Highland

**By Patrick Dowd**  
*City Council - District 7*

Park, we found that we can service 20 percent more requests than we could by phone or email from our downtown office. In 2009, we talked to constituents about issues like nuisance properties, the G-20 and its effect on our neighborhoods, residential permit parking, street paving, and dozens of other topics of interest to you and your neighbors.

"Where is your district office?" is a question I used to hear pretty often. Council to Go is my district office and keeps me active in the communities I represent, allowing me to get out and talk to folks where they live and work, not just downtown. We've been very pleased with the success of this program, and in 2010 might try Council on the Go – a chance for me to take a walk around your community with you and your neighbors.

Please join me and my staff in 2010 at a Council to Go in your neighborhood. We look forward to meeting you there!



COUNCILMAN PATRICK DOWD TALKS TO A CONSTITUENT AT THE DECEMBER COUNCIL TO GO AT PERK ME UP IN LAWRENCEVILLE.

### Council To Go 2010 Schedule

#### Polish Hill

Polish Hill Civic Association,  
3060 Brereton St.  
January 20, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

#### Lawrenceville

Perk Me Up  
4407 Butler St.  
February 19, 7:30 – 9 a.m.

#### Highland Park

Enrico's Tazza D'Oro  
1125 N. Highland Ave.  
January 27, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

#### Morningside

Morning Glory Coffeehouse  
1806 Chislett St.  
February 24, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

#### Bloomfield

Farmers' Market  
Friendship Ave. & Edmond St.  
May – November only

## Tour the East End on Two Wheels



As part of the City of Pittsburgh's new "Small Business Bicycle Rack Program," 200 bike racks were added this fall to neighborhoods around town. New racks cropped up in Bloomfield, Lawrenceville, Friendship, and Garfield, including one in front of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's community development office at 5149 Penn Avenue (*see photo*). The design follows the original Bike Pittsburgh model, created by Wall-to-Wall Studios, and represents the convergence of Pittsburgh's three rivers at The Point. Each sleek rack can accommodate two bikes, one on either side. The program falls under the City's "Taking Care of Business" initiative, which aims to revitalize business districts.

# I Don't Have The Time!

With today's busy lifestyles, it hardly seems that there are enough hours a day.

Work, family, friends all seem to take up more and more of our time.

That's why talking about funeral prearrangements is an easy topic to put off.

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# The Bulletin

serving Bloomfield, Garfield, East Liberty,  
Friendship, and Lawrenceville since 1975



The Bulletin is published by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corp. to:

- serve the incorporated territory of the BGC and surrounding communities
- report on activities and ideas affecting those communities
- offer an opportunity to express opinions and exchange ideas

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Don't forget to visit The  
Bulletin's blog at  
[www.bgcbulletin.blogspot.com](http://www.bgcbulletin.blogspot.com)  
for the latest events  
and happenings!

## EYESORE OF THE MONTH

### Home Improvement: 18 Years and Counting?

The property at 5010 Penn Avenue, City of Pittsburgh, 8th Ward, was nominated as January's Eyesore Property of the Month. The recorded owner, according to the Allegheny County Real Estate website, is Harold J. Bauer Jr. Mr. Bauer acquired the property in September 1992 for \$6,000. The mailing address for the tax bill is 4623 Friendship Avenue, 8th Ward. The taxes are current. The property was condemned on May 11, 1992.

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) staff called the Record Room of the Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI) and found that Mr. Bauer acquired an electrical permit in 1996. He then acquired a building permit on January 28, 2009, for interior and exterior renovations to abate the condemnation notice. The building permit, however, expired on July 27, 2009.

The BGC contacted Mr. Bauer to inquire what his plans were for the property, since the property has had scaffolding and an 8-foot chain link fence in front for quite a number of years, and there is no visible sign of repairs to the property. Mr. Bauer explained that he acquired the build-

ing after it had been abandoned. He said it was once a drug house and had been accidentally set on fire about 25 years ago. To the best of the BGC's knowledge, the house has remained unoccupied since that fire.

According to Mr. Bauer, the property is under repair, but he could not give the BGC a time frame for when the repairs would be completed. He stressed that he has finished a lot of work, citing these improvements: repointing of the entire building; rebuilding of the front box gutters; installation of new windows; completion of electrical work; abatement of termite damage; and addition of a new driveway and doors. He also reported to the BGC that he is working on the shed roof, and has plans for a metal roof on the front porch to keep the architectural integrity of the building.

Mr. Bauer told the BGC that he is a life-long resident of the area. He said he has used sweat equity to repair the property when he has had time away from his regular job. He said he is dedicated to finishing the repairs, moving in with his family, and calling it home as a single-fam-



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

**5010 PENN AVENUE IS IN ITS SECOND DECADE OF BEING "UNDER REPAIR."**

ily dwelling. We look forward to seeing the completion of the decades-long project very soon.

To nominate a property for either Eyesore or Showcase of the Month, call 412-441-6950 x 15 or email [Aggie@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:Aggie@bloomfield-garfield.org).

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## Lawrenceville United Welcomes New Leader

By Paula Martinac  
The Bulletin

Lauren Byrne, the brand-new executive director of Lawrenceville United (LU), says she wanted to be involved in community organizing since age 4. "I didn't actually know what it was," she laughs, "but I thought my grandmother's job was really cool. I was always with her and shadowing her." Her grandmother is Aggie Brose, longtime deputy director of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. In fact, Byrne says, she comes from "a long line of people who think it's important to give back to the community."

A lifelong resident of Pittsburgh's East End, Byrne started training for her future career early on. For a special project at Ellis School, she wrote a history of Garfield, the neighborhood where she was born, which entailed talking to residents and community leaders. "That was the first time I threw myself into studying a neighborhood," she explains.

At Allegheny College, Byrne double-majored in political science and English. A freshman seminar called "How Communities Work" got her hooked for good on community organizing. During the summers, she interned in State Sen. Jim Ferlo's Lawrenceville office, doing con-

stituent relations; after graduating, she went to work in Mayor Bob O'Connor's office, as assistant to then-Policy Manager Yarone Zober.

When Luke Ravenstahl became mayor and Zober rose to Chief of Staff, Byrne continued working as his assistant for a while, then eventually assumed the job of Neighborhood Initiatives Coordinator. In that capacity, she says she "hit the ground running," traveling to each of Pittsburgh's 90 neighborhoods, attending community meetings as the mayor's liaison, and bringing back people's concerns to Grant Street.

Two city initiatives that started on her watch were Green Out Pittsburgh and Taking Care of Business. Green Out Pittsburgh seeks, among other things, "to stabilize publicly owned vacant lots," says Byrne, and to transform them into green spaces. "We made happen what community members envisioned for the lots," she explains. Since 2007, when the program began, 120 parcels have been greened.

Under the Taking Care of Business initiative, which began in 2008, Byrne worked with community leaders to figure out what features make businesses want to locate to a neighborhood and to try to make them a reality. "Those are my expensive garbage cans," she smiles, referring to the pub-

lic trash cans placed along Penn Avenue in 2009 to help keep litter off streets and sidewalks. Handsome new bike racks throughout the East End are also part of the program. (See photo, page 3.)

Although Byrne says she "really enjoyed" her job in the mayor's office, she jumped at the chance to apply for the position at Lawrenceville United that had been held by Tony Ceoffe, who was elected a district judge. "I was always working on the government side" of community development, she notes. "Now I can take everything I've learned and apply it to one neighborhood. I'm excited that I'll become an expert on Lawrenceville."

Byrne exudes enthusiasm and passion when she talks about her new job; she says that "every time I meet someone I get a new idea" about what can be done. While she credits LU under Ceoffe with implementing very successful public safety initiatives, she says she thinks there is even more work to be accomplished. She hopes to "explore new ways to tackle crime...and [deal with] slum landlords" and "to help create community plans" based on what stakeholders



**TWO GENERATIONS OF COMMUNITY LEADERS: AGGIE BROSE AND GRANDDAUGHTER LAUREN BYRNE.**

Adam Flanagan/BGC

would like to see transpire in the neighborhood.

Lawrenceville, according to Byrne, is an exciting place because it "has a rich history and tradition, but young people are moving in, too," helping to shape the future of the community. At just 25, Byrne can count herself in the new generation of change-makers. Luckily for Pittsburgh, she intends to stay. "I love everything about Pittsburgh," she says. "I don't see myself leaving."

## Music to Their Ears



The Children's Home & Lemieux Family Center

Lee Robinson, a musician with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, educated the children at Child's Way® - a day care for medically fragile children at The Children's Home & Lemieux Family Center on Penn Avenue - about instruments from around the world. An accomplished musician for 25 years, Robinson played saxophones and percussion as well as selected musical recordings. After his performance, Robinson helped the children make their own musical instruments using recycled materials. In the photo above, Aleyna Ucargonul and Cody Clegg, both 3 years old, make their own musical instruments with a nursing student during Robinson's visit.



## Viewpoint: When Should I Get My First Mammogram?

**By Sangeeta Komerally, MD**  
Bloomfield Medical Associates

In November 2009, recommendations for when to get mammograms to detect breast cancer changed. What does this mean for you?

### What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. It is used to check for breast cancer in women (and also in men) who have no signs or symptoms of the disease. A mammogram usually involves two X-rays of each breast. From the X-rays, a doctor can detect lumps too small to be felt or tiny dots of calcium that may indicate cancer.

The National Cancer Institute recommends:

1. Women ages 40 and older should have mammograms every 1 or 2 years.
2. Women who are at higher risk of breast cancer should talk to their doctors about having their first mammo-

gram before age 40 and how often to have them.

### Risk Factors for Breast Cancer

If you have any of these risk factors, talk to your doctor about when to have mammograms:

- Personal history of breast cancer – Women who have had breast cancer are more likely to have a second breast cancer.
- Family history – The risk increases for women whose mother, sister, and/or daughter had the disease, especially if they were diagnosed before age 50, or whose close male blood relative had breast cancer.
- Menstrual and childbirth history – Women who started to menstruate before age 12 or who started menopause after age 55 are at higher risk. Having the first child after age 30 or never having a child also increases risk.
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

for more than 5 years increases the risk of developing breast cancer.

- Overweight or obesity increases risk.
- Low physical activity level throughout life also increases risk of breast cancer. Being active helps decrease breast cancer risk itself, and also because activity helps decrease or prevent obesity.
- Alcohol – Studies indicate that the more alcohol a woman drinks, the greater her risk of breast cancer.

### Controversy about Mammograms

As per the U.S. Preventive Task Force, the new recommendations have changed from 40 years to 50 years for initial screening. Women between the ages of 40 to 49 need to talk to their physicians about their risk factors and the need for a mammogram.

The change from age 40 to 50 for the first screening mammogram is because the risk for cancer increases with age, and the risk in women ages 40 to 49 is small. Also, mammograms in women 40 to 49 years old often have findings that lead the doctor and patient to be

concerned and do more studies, such as a biopsy or MRI.

The very few patients who are diagnosed with cancer by mammograms at an early age make the news – but what about the many younger women who went through extensive work-ups and the anxiety of these tests? Although the work-ups may have shown there was no cancer, these patients continue to worry that something was missed. Such anxiety may lead the person to stop getting mammograms altogether – and not having mammograms at all is a real health risk!

So, I believe that the U.S. Preventive Task Force and National Cancer Institute recommendations are helpful – because they recommend talking to your doctor "to make an informed decision about whether mammography is right for you, based on your family history, general health, and personal values" (<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/USpsf/uspsbrca.htm>).

Dr. Komerally can be reached at 412-622-6409.

## MEMBERSHIP IS NOW ONLINE!

Did you know that the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation is a membership organization, composed of people like you who want change and improvement in their neighborhoods? Now you can become a member of the BGC or renew your membership online! Just visit [www.bloomfield-garfield.org](http://www.bloomfield-garfield.org), click on "Donate / Become a Member" on the front page, and follow the easy process. If you prefer to donate by check, there is also a membership form to print out and mail in. Two options - two easy ways to support your community! We hope you will join us and your neighbors in our commitment to the revitalization of Garfield, Friendship, and Bloomfield.

## Forums on Possible Changes to East End Public Schools

A Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) advisory committee has begun the work of developing recommendations for serving the educational needs of students and families in the East Region, which includes Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty, and Lawrenceville. The East Region Advisory Committee is comprised of parents, community leaders, and District staff.

The committee is working on a plan that advances student academic achievement while considering how to make the most efficient and effective use of facilities and financial resources. As part of the process for gathering public input, three community forums for public comment will be held:

- Tuesday, January 19, 2010, 7 p.m., Reizenstein facility, 129 Denniston Ave.
- Tuesday, February 9, 2010, 7 p.m., Pittsburgh Peabody High School, 515 N. Highland Ave.
- Thursday, February 25, 2010, 7 p.m., Pittsburgh Westinghouse High School, 1101 N. Murland Ave.

Each forum will begin with a short overview of the East Region Advisory Committee's work, followed by an opportunity for public remarks. Interested citizens may speak for three minutes, and speakers are asked to provide 15 copies of their remarks. Call the PPS Superintendent's Office at 412-622-3600 beginning one week before the date of each forum, until noon on the day of the forum, to be placed on the agenda.



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

Tiffany Clark (above), Community Outreach Coordinator for East Liberty Development Inc. (ELDI), organized a December bowling party at Arsenal Lanes for staff of various community groups. The purpose, she said, was "to increase the unity among [the groups] as well as strengthen our relations." In attendance were staff from ELDI, Bloomfield-Garfield Corp., Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, Lawrenceville Corp., and Lawrenceville United.

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## Get Your Feet Wet in Local Politics This Year

2010 - a new year with new opportunities to become involved in bettering local government.

All of Pennsylvania's state representatives face re-election this year. In our area, that includes state Representatives Dom Costa and Joseph Preston. Don Walko is not seeking re-election to the state House, as he has been elected as a judge in the Court of Common Pleas. State Senator Jim Ferlo is also up for re-election.

For those wishing to try their hand at local political life, running for committee member is a good way to start. In 2010, all Democratic Committee members are up for election. Registered Democratic voters can vote for their committee members once every four years. I say "can" because many voters do not bother to take the "trip" down the ballot to seek out candidates running for committee seats. For example, in the 9th Ward, which is central Lawrenceville, fewer than 150 people voted in any individual Democratic Committee race. (Note: Republican Committee members are up for election in 2012.)

Here's why committee members are important. Politically, Pittsburgh is made up of wards, which are further broken down into election districts, called "precincts" in other parts of the United States. For example, Pittsburgh's 9th ward, which is central Lawrenceville, consists of nine election districts. Each election district in turn holds several hundred voters. Democrats elect both a female and a

male committee member per district.

These small election districts are very important on more than just a local level. They are combined with others, forming voting districts for mayor, state representatives, U.S. Senate, and so forth.

A Democratic Committee member is an elected representative and, as such, has duties to fulfill. Their best known duty is to vote for candidates during the endorsement process. How does a committee member decide which candidate to endorse? By asking their constituents for their opinions and representing their constituents' wishes at the endorsement meeting. It's no secret that it doesn't always happen this way.

Think you'd be good for the job? Want to try?

Here are the basics: A Democratic Committee candidate must be registered as a Democratic voter and a resident of the election district. Committee members serve for four years. In addition to the endorsements, they attend periodic meetings, perform get-out-the-vote activities, and volunteer at the polls on Election Day.

If you would like to run for Democratic Committee this spring, the first day to circulate and file nomination petitions is February 16, and the filing deadline is March 9, giving you three weeks to collect signatures.

First, visit Allegheny County's Election Division, downtown at 542

**By Gloria Forouzan**  
*Bulletin Contributor*

Forbes Avenue,  
Room 604;  
phone: 412-350-4500. Pick up

petitions to get on the ballot. Note: You need a minimum of 10 signatures from registered Democratic voters living in your election district. Be smart - aim for at least twice that many signatures. Pick up a list of your election district's registered Democratic voters.

Next, take every opportunity to meet voters in your district, before the primary election, Tuesday, May 18. Here are some tips for doing that:

1. Let friends and acquaintances in your district know you're running. Ask them to help you by introducing you to their neighbors, door-knocking on their street with you, or calling voters they know in the district.

2. Attend community functions in

your district, such as block watches and clean-ups.

3. Knock on every voter's door in your district; this is a reasonable and do-able goal. There are only several hundred voters per district, and you have 10 weeks in which to reach them.

4. Send a letter/postcard to voters in your district the week before the primary.

5. Collect voters' email addresses. Send them regular updates (every two weeks) on your campaign.

Good luck!

This is the last in my series on voting and politics. Thanks to The Bulletin for giving me this opportunity to share my insights with you. Please contact me if you have questions: gtfouzan@gmail.com.

## Spreading Holiday Cheer



Adam Flanagan/BGC



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

Santa Claus's sleigh touched down in Garfield on Friday, December 4, for the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's annual holiday party. Volunteers helped Santa by serving cookies and hot cocoa to the children, parents, and other community members who filled the BGC's Community Activity Center on N. Pacific Avenue. Cookies were generously provided by UPMC St. Margaret, the Western Pennsylvania Hospital, and Whole Foods Market.



## TAX MAN

**by Patrick N. Price**  
*Tax Consultant*  
*Internal Revenue Service*

For tax years 2009 and 2010, the American Opportunity Credit makes many temporary changes to the Hope Education Credit. Textbooks, computers, software, and required course materials are now considered qualifying educational expenses, in addition to tuition and fees. Qualifying expenses must be reduced by any grants or free scholarships. The maximum amount of the Hope Credit has been increased to \$2,500. Taxpayers can now claim the Hope Credit for the first four years of post-secondary education. Taxpayers with little or no income tax may be able to claim part of the Hope Credit now as a refundable credit. For more information, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

Visit The Bulletin's blog at  
[www.bgcbulletin.blogspot.com](http://www.bgcbulletin.blogspot.com)  
for all the latest news and events!

### UPCOMING COMPUTER CLASSES AT EASTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC) is conducting free computer classes at its offices at 5321 Penn Avenue in Garfield. Computer equipment used in these classes has been supplied by the City of Pittsburgh's Operation Weed and Seed. The class schedule in January includes:

**Tuesdays:**  
Intro to Computers  
Intro to Windows  
Intro to PowerPoint  
Intermediate Word

**Wednesdays:**  
Intro to Windows

**Thursdays:**  
Working with E-Applications  
Intro to Word  
Intermediate Word  
Intro to Access  
Intro to Computers  
Intro to Excel

For class times, descriptions, and pre-requisites, or to register for a class, call ENEC at 412-362-8580 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Maximum class size is 10, so register early! No admittance to class if more than 10 minutes late. Classes are **FREE** to Allegheny County residents.

## Youths Learn Gardening and Environmental Practices from Local Experts

By Paula Martinac  
The Bulletin

If you passed the intersection of Baum Boulevard and Penn Circle West in East Liberty this fall and were in awe of the beautiful field of sunflowers there, you have the Parental Stress Center's Green Space Project to thank.

The brainchild of PSC's program director, Bob Feikema, the Green Space Project provides young people aged 13 to 18 with an opportunity to learn environmental concepts and gardening from local experts, and to exercise leadership skills in determining the future use and layout of the space.

Dominique Reed, a Pittsburgh native and Americorps VISTA worker assigned to PSC through August 2010, is at the helm of the greening project. "This is an amazing opportunity for me," said Reed, a recent Penn State University graduate in International and African-American Studies. "It's a way to empower the community to transform this lot into something positive."

The one-half-acre space adjacent to PSC's offices formerly held a loft building; after that structure was demolished, it was an unsightly lot filled with weeds. Envisioning an opportunity to teach greening concepts, Feikema convinced the owner of the lot to lend it to PSC for the new

youth project. This fall, volunteers from BNY Mellon and the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University helped clear out the overgrown weeds and build a raised flower bed.

Reed explained that there are three distinct parts of the project. One section with a picnic bench, flower bed, and winding walk is a parkette, or miniature park. In this area, the students are working with Pittsburgh Park Conservancy experts to learn the basics of landscaping and design.

Second is a vegetable garden, in which students get hands-on experience in the basics of organic gardening. In addition to deciding what to plant, students will also get to practice entrepreneurship skills, determining whether the vegetables grown will be given away or sold at a farmer's market.

Third is the sunflower field, an environmental-learning exercise to teach how sunflower oil can be converted into biodiesel fuel. GTECH, a local company that works to empower the community through innovative green strategies, led the harvest of sunflower seeds at the end of October and demonstrated how to turn the oil into alternative energy.

Future plans include a possible apiary to house honey bees, under the direction of Burgh Bees. The apiary would further the entrepreneurship segment of the project, by providing



Courtesy Parental Stress Center

**STUDENTS IN THE PENN CIRCLE WEST GREEN SPACE PROJECT WORK OUT THE DESIGN OF THE GARDEN AT PENN CIRCLE AND BAUM BOULEVARD.**

honey for sale and wax for candles and lip balm.

"The hardest part is recruitment," noted Reed, who has been actively trying to entice high school students from around the area to join the after-school program, which takes place every Wednesday from 4 to 6 p.m. Four students are currently enrolled; the goal is to have 12 to 14 in the pro-

gram. No special skills or knowledge are required.

"We're just looking for kids who want to learn and can commit for a year," said Reed. "And who aren't afraid to get their hands dirty." Interested students and volunteers can reach her at [dreed@pscfamily.net](mailto:dreed@pscfamily.net) or 412-361-4800 x227.



Nadia Diboun/Lawrenceville Corp.

During the 10th annual "Joy of Cookies" Cookie Tour in Lawrenceville in December, gingerbread men were hung throughout the shopping district designating which shops had samples of home-baked cookies and free recipes for visitors. "This year, some businesses reported sales increases by over 40 percent from last year's tour," said cookie tour organizer Mary Coleman of Gallery on 43rd Street. Cookies were baked by Bernadette Ogurchak of Heaven's Scent Pastries.



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## Laurentian Hall Boasts Twenty Years of Serving Seniors

Mary Ann McGill can make an unusual claim: She now lives in the same room where she attended second grade back in the 1950s. McGill is the resident manager of Laurentian Hall Apartments for seniors at 5321 Penn Avenue, a building that originally housed the St. Lawrence O'Toole grade school and high school.

"Talk about coming full circle!" said McGill, noting that a number of the current residents also attended school in that building. The all-girls' high school closed in 1968, and the grade school in the early 1980s. When the building was vacant, the parishioners "took a look at the neighborhood," McGill explained, "and said we don't have so many young people anymore, but we have a lot of older people." The early 20th-century structure was reconfigured into 35 apartments, and Laurentian Hall opened its doors to its first tenants in December 1989.

The three-story, elevator building houses efficiencies, one-bedrooms, and two-bedrooms; some have been adapted to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers. Each apartment has emergency cords that residents can pull in case of falls or other crisis situations. The apartments are open to rent for

**By Paula Martinac**  
*The Bulletin*

those 62 or older, or those under 62 who are mobility impaired. Some income restrictions apply, and rents are established according to income. Utilities are included in the rent, and each unit can regulate its own temperature. A free, brightly lit laundry room on each floor is another perk.

The hallways are wide and spacious, harking back to the building's days as a school. "We kept the integrity of the hallways," McGill said. "People actually do their circuits up and down them," getting in a daily walk without having to leave the building. There is ingoing and outgoing mail service for residents five days a week.

Although residents can prepare their own meals, a dinner plan is available for an additional \$180 a month; Nova Café caters the evening meal in the common dining room. There are occasionally group activities in the community room, including movies on a large-screen TV.

Laurentian Hall's maintenance supervisor, Chuck Mahan, keeps the building in shape. He has been slowly renovating each apartment as vacancies occur, painting, installing new tile, and replacing old built-in galley kitchens with new, freestanding appli-



**A SPACIOUS, NEWLY RENOVATED ONE-BEDROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT.**

*Paula Martinac/The Bulletin*

ances and modern cabinets. "He takes pride in his work," McGill noted. "He's meticulous about it."

The facility is classified as independent living, which means that there are no medical staff on site, and residents who need assistance must arrange for it on their own or through the Area Agency on Aging. They also do their own grocery shopping and housekeeping, just as they did in their former homes.

McGill said she is proud of the facility's excellent safety record. Windows only open to a certain height, and the main door is equipped with an alarm system. In addition, there is no

directory of residents in the main entrance to attract pranksters or intruders. "Visitors have to know the room number of the person they're visiting, in order to get in," she explained.

"If you want a room where you can feel secure, this is it," said resident Joyce Miller, who used to have a home in Bloomfield but found as she got older that she needed to live on one level. "They really watch out for us here."

*For more information about living at Laurentian Hall, call 412-361-4462.*



### Take a Healthy VIEW !

*Vintage Individual Enhanced Wellness*

**Do you have an ongoing health condition, such as arthritis, diabetes, chronic pain, high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, asthma, cancer or any other condition that affects your daily life?**

Adults 60+ are invited to attend **FREE** 6-week workshops on Chronic Disease Self-Management & Diabetes Self-Management

Designed by Stanford University to help you learn:

- New ways to solve problems
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- How to work with your doctor

New classes starting in January 2010.  
Call 412-361-5003 ext. 106 for details.

*Vintage Senior Community Center  
401 N. Highland Avenue, East Liberty  
(corner of N. Highland Ave and East Liberty Blvd)*

## FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICES

Federal, State and Local Income Tax Returns Prepared for Low to Moderate Income Households\*

All returns done online with the option of direct deposit of any refunds  
No business returns or rental property filings  
Valid photo ID and proof of Social Security # required

\* Call Tax Preparation Services Below for Income Limits

Two sites in the East End to serve eligible persons:

### BGC Community Activity Center

113 N. Pacific Avenue, Garfield  
Site Opens Saturday, February 6, 2010  
Hours: Saturdays, Noon to 4 P.M.  
**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**  
412-441-6950, x 11

### Parental Stress Center

5877 Commerce Street, East Liberty  
Site Opens Tuesday, January 19, 2010  
Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 2 - 8 P.M.; Saturdays, 9 - 4 P.M.  
**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**  
Calls accepted starting Monday, January 11, 2010  
412-361-4800

# THE BULLETIN BOARD

**The Bulletin Board publishes listings of volunteer opportunities, free or low-cost events and classes, announcements, fundraising events, and services that are of particular interest to our neighborhoods. Send announcements to [Bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:Bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org) or mail to The Bulletin, 5149 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224, by the 15th of each month. We do not accept listings on the phone. Information is published on a space-available basis.**

## VOLUNTEERS TO WORK WITH SENIORS

Do you have a few extra hours a month to help a neighbor in need? Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers (IVC) needs your help to serve seniors in your community. Through IVC, volunteers like you provide non-medical services such as rides to appointments, assistance with grocery shopping, friendly visiting, help sorting mail, and home safety checks to older adults free of charge. In many cases this simple assistance makes it possible for the elder to remain living in their own home when they might not otherwise be able. To learn more about how you can help, visit our website at [www.ivcswpa.org](http://www.ivcswpa.org) or call IVC at 412-345-7420.

## ART ALL NIGHT 2010 PLANNING SESSION

Now in its 13th year, Art All Night, Pittsburgh's most unique and populist art event, will take place on April 24 and 25, 2010. Anyone interested in taking on a leadership role for Art All Night 2010 is invited to attend the first planning meeting, to be held on January 20 at 7 p.m. at the Stephen Foster Center, 289 Main Street in Lawrenceville. For more information about Art All Night, or to sign up to volunteer for the event, please visit our website at [www.artallnight.org](http://www.artallnight.org).

## FREE "HEALTHY VIEW" CLASS FOR SENIORS

Vintage Senior Community Center, 401 North Highland Avenue, East Liberty (across from Home Depot), will offer a FREE 6-week "Healthy View" Chronic Disease Self-Management Course designed by Stanford University. The course is

designed to help self-manage ongoing health conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, chronic pain, high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, asthma, cancer, or any other condition that affects your daily life. New classes start in January 2010. Space is limited. Preregistration required. Please call 412-361-5003 x106.

## DANCE CLASSES FOR KIDS AND ADULTS

New classes and auditions at Pittsburgh Dance & Theatre Arts! The winter session begins January 4 at Pittsburgh's most diverse dance under one roof. Please join us for dance, theatre, voice, and fitness classes for kids and adults of all levels. New classes include: Tumbling for kids, African Dance for kids and adults, and Samba. Please call or visit our website for days and times: 412-681-7523 or <http://www.pgh-dance.com>. Also, auditions will be held for Pittsburgh Jr. Theatre's production of "Beauty and the Beast" on January 18 and January 25, or by appointment. Students should prepare a one-minute monologue and song; be prepared to sing!

## SHAKE YOUR BOOTIES IN 2010!

Mark your calendar now for the ninth annual Shake Your Booties! Join The Children's Home of Pittsburgh & Lemieux Family Center for our signature special event on Saturday, March 20, 2010 in the beautiful Hyde Park Prime Steakhouse, located on Pittsburgh's North Shore. Shake Your Booties will be an exciting evening filled with 1940's Hollywood glamour, great music, sumptuous tasting stations and live and silent auctions. For more information or sponsorship info, please contact Audrey Tierney at 412-441-4884, ext. 2046 or [atieney@chomepgh.org](mailto:atieney@chomepgh.org).

## FLEA MARKET IN LAWRENCEVILLE

On Saturday, January 9, 2010, Our Lady of the Angels will hold a community flea market at the St. Augustine Social Hall, 204, 37th Street in Lawrenceville. The flea market will run from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., and then reopen after the 4 p.m. Mass (from 5 to 7 p.m.). There will be both new and used items for sale.

## FREE TO THE PEOPLE

[www.carnegielibrary.org](http://www.carnegielibrary.org)



**Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh - Lawrenceville Branch**  
279 Fisk St. 412-682-3668

### Preschool Storytime

Ages 3 to 5; Thursdays, January 7, 14, 21, 28, 10:30 a.m.

### Adult Book Discussion

Monday, January 11, 5 p.m.

*The Humbling*, by Philip Roth

### Baby/Toddler Storytime

Ages birth to 3; Tuesdays, January 5, 12, 19, at 11 a.m.

### Family Fun Storytime

For all ages. Saturdays, January 9, 23, 30 at 11 a.m.

### Family Fun Artful Stories:

#### Georgia O'Keeffe

For all ages. Saturday, January 16, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### The Family Playshop

For 6 months to 3 years. Tuesday,

January 26, 10:30 -11:30 a.m.

### East Liberty Branch Events @ Borders EastSide Storytime

Ages 3 to 5. Wednesdays, January 6, 20, 10:30 a.m.

### Family Fun Storytime: A Winter Wonderland of Reading

For all ages. Saturday, January 16, 2 p.m.

### Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh - Main PC Center

4400 Forbes Avenue

<http://www.carnegielibrary.org/locations/pccenter/main/>

For more information about all our free computer classes, call the PC Center-Main Library at 412-578-2561.

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# T H E B U L L E T I N B O A R D

## GET INVOLVED WITH THE FRIENDSHIP COMMUNITY

Do you have an itch to volunteer for the neighborhood? Friendship Development Associates (FDA) is looking for new committee members, volunteers, and board members. There are several ways to get involved and support the revitalization efforts in Friendship:

- **Join a committee:** FDA committees include: Executive, Real Estate, Marketing Communications and Fundraising, Design and Planning, and Finance, as well as several sub-committees.

- **Volunteer:** Whether you'd like to help out at our annual events or organize a community clean-up, every little bit helps make Friendship a better place to live and work.

- **Support our local businesses and artists:** Come to *Unblurred: First Fridays on Penn*, where galleries and studios open up their doors and showcase a variety of artwork and performances. Visit Penn Avenue for a cup of coffee and some international cuisine, or take a class at Dance Alloy Theater or the Pittsburgh Glass Center.

To get involved, visit our website, [www.friendship-pgh.org](http://www.friendship-pgh.org), and join our email lists for information about neighborhood events and happenings.

## THE FUTURE OF LESLIE PARK POOL

Leslie Park Pool in Lawrenceville was decommissioned by the City of Pittsburgh in 2003. Now is the time to begin planning for the future of the site. Be a part of the process! Bring your memories, ideas, energy, and enthusiasm to four community forums. Everyone is welcome! Forum dates: Wednesday, Jan. 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m., CYA Stephen Foster Center, 286 Main Street; Saturday, Jan. 23, 10 a.m.-noon, St. Matthew Parish, St. Kieran Church Hall on 53rd and Carnegie Streets; Wednesday, Feb. 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Matthew Parish, St. Kieran Church Hall; Sunday, Feb. 21, noon-2 p.m., CYA Stephen Foster Center. Sessions will be facilitated by community residents and planners as well as those invested in Lawrenceville. For more information contact Jennifer Kiley at 412-327-7848 or [jenkiley@yahoo.com](mailto:jenkiley@yahoo.com)

RAND  
CORPORATION

## What Does Your Child Think About Movies?

The RAND Corporation in Pittsburgh is conducting a research study to learn about what children (ages 11-14) think about movies. Participation requires two 90 minute visits to the RAND offices. Children who complete the study will be compensated for their time and effort with up to \$40 in gift certificates. Parking and travel compensation will be provided. If you are interested and want to learn more about the study please call: 412-683-2300, ext. x4444.

The Rand Corporation is a non-profit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis.

# FREE Tax Preparation Assistance!

*This year, you can file your taxes—online—for FREE.*

IRS Certified Volunteers are available to assist you at  
**BGC Community Activity Center**  
113 N. Pacific Avenue

Appointments are required. Call **412.441.6950 x 11** for more information and to schedule your appointment.

Or you can visit [www.myfreetaxes.com/pgh](http://www.myfreetaxes.com/pgh) and file for free on your own!

This service is available for taxpayers with income up to \$58,000 for 2009.



Walmart



Visit us online at [www.eitcpgh.org](http://www.eitcpgh.org) or call  
United Way HelpLine at 412.255.1155.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**ALL TEXT ADS** are \$5 for 15 words, and 10 cents for each additional word. We **DO NOT** run personal ads.

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[www.wpahs.org](http://www.wpahs.org).



**THE WESTERN  
PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL**

WEST PENN ALLEGHENY HEALTH SYSTEM

### Census, from page 1

one, including local law enforcement, the FBI, the IRS, or the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In fact, census workers can be heavily fined or imprisoned for five years for disclosing people's private information.

#### ***How Else Does the Census Help People?***

Another advantage of the census, according to Bill Woodward, program manager of the ENEC, is that "it creates thousands of temporary jobs for census takers, and they pay well." Census takers receive an hourly salary (in this area, the jobs start at \$15.75/hour) and are also paid for training. Applicants must take a brief

test to determine their eligibility and pass certain security checks. For more information, go to <http://2010.census.gov/2010censusjobs>, or call the local census office at 412-770-3380. The ENEC can also provide assistance with census employment applications; the phone number is 412-362-8580.

"The census is a big undertaking," said Brose, "but we can get a complete count if we all understand the value of it. The questionnaire isn't a useless form to throw away. If you don't fill it out, you shortchange yourself and the whole neighborhood. The census helps all of us."

### Penn Circle, from page 1

As a part of the project, Port Authority's bus loop at the intersection of Penn Avenue and Penn Circle will be replaced with new development, which will include a combined retail and transit center as an expansion of the Eastside development. Bus stops will be created on Penn Avenue to replace the bus loop, and the City of Pittsburgh is exploring innovative bus shelters that will incorporate roofs that capture rainwater runoff.

The restructuring of Penn Circle is expected to be complete in time for the grand opening of a new Target

department store at the corner of Penn Avenue and Penn Circle East. "When Target opens, we want everyone to be able to come and go and see a revitalized Penn Circle," said Hassett.

As community members asked questions to learn more about the project, Hogan confirmed the inevitable. "It's going to be a year of frustration," between the Penn Circle work and the construction of the Target, but "It's really all towards the future progress of East Liberty," he said.

***Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on  
January 18, 2010!***