



The Bulletin

A Publication of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

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Volume 36, No. 9 Covering Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty and Lawrenceville since 1975 September 2011

Tech Center Brings Training, Workshops to Penn Avenue

by Michael LaFleur

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

A new face arrives in a familiar place this month, as the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) launches a community computer center at 5321 Penn Avenue. The center, one of four opening around the city, is using funds from the 2009 federal economic stimulus program that were awarded in 2010 to the Neighborhood Learning Alliance (NLA), an East Liberty-based non-profit formerly known as Wireless Neighborhoods.

The street-level, accessible venue in Garfield has been a hub of activity in recent years, serving as home to both the BGC's Youth Development Center and the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center. Now, after some remodeling, all three initiatives will be able to work under one roof, offering a wide range of education and employment services

for teens and adults.

"Our objective is to remove the impediments to success for young people and adults," Rick Flanagan, BGC youth development director, told *The Bulletin* recently. "In the tough economy we're in, we need to do everything we can to give people a leg up on getting their high school diploma, moving on to post-secondary education or training, and searching the Internet for information on a variety of job opportunities or other needs."

As reported in the June edition of *The Bulletin*, the Neighborhood Learning Alliance won a competitive grant for its project, Pittsburgh CONNECTS, from the U. S. Department of Education. These funds are allowing the Internet access and computer use to be offered free to city residents. Each user will have his or her own log-in access code for the laptops or desktops at each of the four locations.

See **TECH**, page 6



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

SUNFLOWERS ARE IN BLOOM AT WHAT USED TO BE AN UNSIGHTLY LOT AT BROAD AND N. GRAHAM STREETS IN GARFIELD. A VOLUNTEER TEAM WORKED WITH THE BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD CORPORATION AND GTECH TO PLANT AND TEND THE FLOWERS, WHICH WILL HELP CLEAN THE SOIL SO THE LOT CAN BE RE-USED.

NEIGHBORS MEET WITH NEW MEXICAN RESTAURANT OWNERS

by Paula Martinac

The Bulletin

How does an authentic Mexican restaurant on Penn Avenue sound? After a presentation by the restaurant's principals at an August community meeting, nearby neighbors seem to agree that it sounds pretty good.

Jeff and Erin Catalina have rented the bottom floor of the Glass Lofts at 5491 to locate their restaurant, to be called Verde Mexican Kitchen & Cantina. Jeff described the new restaurant as "upscale casual."

The Catalinas met with nearby neighbors and staff from the Bloomfield Garfield Corporation on August 11. The BGC has a standing policy to hold a meeting whenever a

new establishment applies for a liquor license in the neighborhood. "It's easier to stop a nuisance bar from opening," explained Aggie Brose, BGC deputy director, about the policy, "than to try to close one down." The same policy got nearby neighbors on-board with Salt of the Earth restaurant, and helped scuttle the plans for a bar/restaurant on the site of the former Horoscope Lounge. (See related story, page 2.)

Jeff Catalina is originally from San Antonio, Texas, so he says he knows Mexican food. He worked for 15 years in management consulting, but "got tired of flying every week" and had been "dying to do this [Verde] for

See **RESTAURANT**, page 4

AS PART OF SUMMER DREAMERS CAMP, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARNED BOTH TO PLAY CHESS AND TO APPLY ITS STRATEGIES TO THEIR LIVES. READ THE FULL STORY ON PAGE 7.



Kathryn Vargas/NLA

The final deadline for all articles, ads, and Bulletin Board items for the October 2011 issue is **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2011**. Placement is first-come, first-served. For more information: 412-441-6915.

BREAKING NEWS

Update on Past Coverage of 5431 Penn Avenue

by Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

On August 4, a superseding indictment added new counts of violating federal narcotics and money laundering laws to existing charges against Michelle Jimenez, 31, and Terald Bennett, 29.

As previously reported in *The Bulletin*, in 2010, Jimenez attempted to open a bar/restaurant at 5431 Penn Avenue, the site of the former Horoscope Lounge. When suspicions arose about her business plan, an investigation by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation staff and Public Safety Task Force members uncovered Jimenez's intimate relationship with Bennett, a former Garfield resident with a lengthy arrest record – a connection she had kept under wraps. Her falsification of other information soon came to light, and Jimenez backed away from her plan in May 2010.

Then, in March 2011, a federal indictment came down against Jimenez and Bennett, among others, on charges of conspiring to “distribute and possess with intent to distribute one kilogram or more of heroin” between June 2009 and February 2011. The new, superseding indictment adds counts of “conspiring to commit money laundering” against Jimenez and Bennett for allegedly using drug money to buy properties in Pittsburgh and Wilkinsburg in Jimenez's name. The couple also stands accused of using a business account for Jimenez's defunct downtown clothing store, Exclusive Fashions, to launder money.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory J. Nescott will prosecute the case. The Drug Enforcement Agency and the Internal Revenue Service carried out the investigation. If found guilty, Jimenez and Bennett could face 10 years to life in prison, a fine of \$10.5 million, or both. ♦

Consolidated East Liberty Website Debuts



by Margaret Graham
East Liberty Development, Inc.

Looking for all of the most up-to-date information on East Liberty? Look no further than the new eastliberty.org.

East Liberty's two websites, www.eastliberty.org and www.eastlibertypost.com were recently combined into one, easy-to-use site. The site will have the “East Liberty Post” as well as information about the neighborhood and East Liberty Development, Inc.

East Liberty has grown and changed a lot in the last decade. Want to know what the neighborhood was like 50 years ago? How about 100 years ago? Or 300 years ago? The new eastliberty.org has an updated, easy-to-navigate history section, complete with

photos of the neighborhood throughout the years.

This new site features updates about East Liberty and the East End, just like the old “East Liberty Post.” The new “Post,” however, is authored by both ELDI and other partners in the neighborhood. All neighborhood events can now easily be found by checking out the events calendar. Detailed descriptions of the events can still be found on the Post.

If you'd rather learn about East Liberty without leaving your social networks, you can “like” East Liberty on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EastLibertyPgh. If you're on Twitter, tweet us @eastlibertypgh. Check out our photos at www.flickr.com/EastLibertyPgh. ♦



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

GCAT CHAT

Monthly Neighborhood Clean-Up

Saturday, September 24, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Edge Studio, 5411 Penn Ave.

Join the Clean Street Team and help pick up Garfield and Penn Ave! Enjoy some refreshments! Gloves and bags are provided. Learn more about the Clean Street Team at: www.gcatpgh.com

GCAT Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, September 28, at 6 p.m. at the Bloomfield Community Activity Center, 113 North Pacific Ave.

Be part of the Garfield Community Action Team (GCAT) and help with projects that improve the neighborhood. For other events, check the GCAT Calendar: www.gcatpgh.com/pages/calendar

Garfield Map Project

Submit your stories about your favorite places in Garfield. The Garfield Community Action Team (GCAT) is starting an exciting new project that will map out and share with the community both historic and new places to see in Garfield. Fill out the form below and mail, or submit online at: www.gcatpgh.com/pages/map-project

GARFIELD MAP PROJECT | Sharing stories about places in Garfield

Where is your favorite place? (please give an address or intersection)

When did you visit this place? (is it still there or is it new)

What is it about this place that you like? (share your story)

Name:

Email or Phone:

Mail to: Bloomfield Garfield Corporation, Attn. Kathryn Vargas
5149 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Cut here and mail in.



Commentary

UPMC/Highmark Showdown Sparks Concern, Meetings

by Sen. Jim Ferlo
Pa. 38th Senatorial District

My office has fielded a number of calls and emails from people with serious concerns and questions regarding the current conflict between Highmark, Inc. and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). Many are worried about where they will turn for health coverage and care if Highmark and UPMC do not reach an agreement.

Highmark is the dominant health insurance provider in Allegheny County, and UPMC is the dominant health-care provider. So if the two do not come to an agreement, it could be disastrous for health-care consumers and employers in our region. Patients' access to health care should not be the rope in this tug of war.

As a core value, I believe everyone has the right of access to high-quality,

affordable healthcare. Under PA Act 55 of 1997, both Highmark and UPMC are recognized as Institutions of Purely Public Charity – e.g., non-profits. Their behavior is hardly charitable towards the needs of our citizens, and public officials are taking steps to hold them accountable.

I will be convening a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, September 8, at 7 p.m. at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall Ballroom. This forum is open to community members and stakeholders who want to express their concerns and take action, please join us.

Additionally, the State Senate Banking and Insurance Committee will convene a public hearing regarding this matter on September 13 at Penn State McKeesport. To learn more, please visit my website at www.senatorferlo.com or call my office at 412-621-3006. ♦

PENN AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT REACHES MILESTONE

by Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

The upcoming reconstruction of Penn Avenue between Evaline and Mathilda reached another milestone on July 25, when project engineers received official approval from PennDOT of their "Line, Grade and Typical Section" submission, which represents about 30 percent of the design plans.

"This put us ahead of schedule by a couple of months," Brian Krul, who heads up the engineering team from L.R. Kimball Associates, explained at a recent meeting of the Penn Avenue Reconstruction Project committee.

Actual construction of the four-block stretch is slated to begin in early 2013 and last eight to 10 months.

The "Line & Grade" maps have been posted to the project website at www.lrkimball.com/penn-avenue.aspx. Business and property owners along the avenue can now check for information on how the plans, including curb lines and bump-outs, specifically impact their properties.

Also recently completed was a 250-page report on the vaults along Penn Avenue, done by subconsultant Dawood Engineering, Inc. Business and property owners were contacted so that their vaults – underground spaces for storage, accessed through metal doors in the sidewalk – could be inspected for structural adequacy during actual construction. Dawood made recommendations for accommodating or abandoning these impacted vaults. "It's been challenging," Krul observed, noting that some vault doors were welded shut; others had been covered over. Next up, the engineers will submit the Traffic

Control Plan and Traffic Signal Plan to PennDOT for approval. Signals at Mathilda, Millvale and Evaline, Krul explained, will look much like they do at the intersection at Penn, Friendship and 45th Street, where Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC is located. As for signage, "We're trying to minimize the clutter of signs on the avenue," according to Ryan Sheran of Kimball. A map of the Penn-Evaline intersection, for example, indicates a whopping 32 existing signs.

The engineers also outlined detour plans during construction. The north side of Penn Avenue will be tackled first, with only two lanes open – one for traffic and one for parking. For the length of the project, traffic will move along Penn inbound to downtown Pittsburgh only; outbound, all traffic, including buses, will be diverted to Friendship Avenue between 45th Street and Negley.

Coming up, residents and businesses will see limited drilling activity along the four-block stretch. Drillers will take samples of the pavement in five locations, so that engineers can begin designing the pavement. Bids for drilling are out, Krul said, with drilling probably starting later this month or early October.

For those interested in learning more about how the reconstruction will affect the neighborhood, a public meeting will take place to unveil the preliminary design plans on Thursday, December 8, at 6 p.m. in the St. Lawrence O'Toole activity center, 140 N. Atlantic Avenue. Community members will be able to view the design and detour plans up close, and ask questions of the engineering and design team. Stay tuned to *The Bulletin* for more information. ♦

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Courtesy Dawood Engineering Inc.

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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5149 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
Phone: 412-441-6915
Fax: 412-441-6956
Email: Bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org

Editor: Paula Martinac

Advertising: Martin Pochapin

Intern: Caitlin Cleary

Proofreading: Rick Swartz

Bookkeeper: Mary Anne Stevanus

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The Bloomfield-Garfield
Corporation holds its monthly
board meeting on the second
Monday of each month at 5321
Penn Avenue, starting at 7 p.m.
These meetings are open to the
public.

RESTAURANT, from page 1

a long time." Erin is a Pittsburgh native who has worked in marketing at Heinz; chef LBEE (short for Lynette Bushey), who spent the last seven years working in restaurants throughout Central America, also hails from the 'Burgh.

The Catalinas described their plans for Verde in great detail. They intend to be open seven days a week for dinner, with lunch also on weekdays. The dining room will seat 62 people, with 16 at the bar and 40 on an outdoor patio facing Penn. The cantina will not offer any to-go beer; drinking will be on-premises only, with beers going for about \$5 and margaritas for about \$7. They will also offer a wide array of tequilas, ranging in price from \$5 to \$40 a shot. Authentic Mexican fare will include chicken with mole sauce, poblanos, tacos and enchiladas, tamales and tortilla soup. "There will be a good variety of meat dishes and vegetarian," Jeff noted, with LBEE making use of local foods whenever possible in her dishes.

The owners are doing extensive build-out, as the space right now is raw. In converting to the restaurant, they are using local artists and suppliers whenever possible. For example, through a Sprout Fund grant, local artist Gabe Felice will create an

"Aztec-like" mural inside.

Verde will employ 30 to 35 people, with "a preference for Spanish-speaking employees." The venue will use three security cameras, and there will be no smoking inside or out. In addition, although Verde has applied for an entertainment license as well as a



liquor license, "entertainment – maybe a guitar player – will be the exception rather than the norm," Jeff said, reserved for special occasions like Cinco de Mayo or for the grand opening, projected in late October.

The big issue at the meeting was parking, which is already tight on the avenue and threatens to become even worse with the addition of a 100-plus-seat restaurant. The owners came to the meeting armed with a parking plan, trying to assuage the neighbors'

fears. One resident of Fairmont Senior Apartments summed up the concerns when she said, "We already have a problem here with parking. People don't pay attention to signs. They just park in our [designated] spaces."

The Catalinas have mapped out some strategies for parking, by contacting both the Pittsburgh Glass Center and the new owner of the former KFC site about using their lots in the evening. There are also six designated spaces behind the Glass Lofts for Verde, and about 43 on-street spaces. In acknowledging the challenge of parking, Jeff offered to tow cars if necessary, even if it means losing customers; he noted that even the judge at Verde's zoning hearing concluded, "This stretch [of Penn] needs a grand plan for parking."

At the end of the evening, residents agreed that they were willing to give the owners the benefit of the doubt in order to bring new investment to the corridor; not one attendee wanted to file a complaint with the state liquor board. The BGC and Verde will now enter into a memo of understanding, which, although it does not have legal powers, will attempt to hold the owners accountable for the plan they presented to the neighbors. ♦

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As a Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation Board Member, you can help bring about change in your community!

If you're interested in finding out more about the duties and responsibilities of being a BGC Board Member, join us on **Monday, September 26, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Avenue**, for a special "Get Acquainted" session. Pizza and soft drinks will be served.

Young people, ages 21-35, are especially encouraged to attend! We are also looking for potential board members with financial management skills.

Please RSVP to 412-441-6950 x 15 by Friday, September 23, if you plan to attend. We hope to see you there!



"Changing lives and neighborhoods since 1976"

PPS Offers Two-Pronged Plan to Address Deficits

by Caitlin Cleary
The Bulletin

On Thursday, July 21, about 35 concerned parents, students, and neighbors met at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Community Activity Center to discuss proposed budget cuts from Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS). Hosted by A+ Schools, the meeting aimed at providing information and gathering feedback.

This meeting preceded the District's public announcement on August 4 that it proposes to close seven schools at the end of the 2011-12 school year, including Garfield's Pittsburgh Fort Pitt ALA, whose students would be reassigned to Arsenal Pre-K-5 and Woolslair K-5.

Sammie Dow, community youth advisor for A+ Schools, kicked off the July meeting by explaining, "We're not here to advise for or against the district; we're just here to present the information."

Rick Flanagan, director of the BGC's Youth Development Program, stated that "the deficits are real." He pointed out that University Prep 6-12 at Milliones, the feeder school for East End families living west of Negley Avenue, has already felt the first wave of cuts, including a loss of

summer programs.

First on the agenda was a video presentation by Dr. Linda Lane, Superintendent of PPS. Lane explained that the proposed budget cuts come as a result of the recent reductions in state funding affecting public schools across the board. By 2015, PPS could face a deficit of about \$100 million, according to Lane. She also presented the problems, potential solutions, and, in some cases, the difficulties raised by those solutions. "We can't raise taxes," she said, "because we are already spending about \$18,000 per student."

Lane said PPS has devised a plan in two phases to attain sustainability. The first concentrates on workforce reductions that decrease the District's funding gap by about \$11.5 million annually. The second phase consists of school closings, feeder pattern changes, course reductions, and class size adjustments. All of these could decrease the funding gap an additional \$30 to 40 million, said Lane. Increasing class size could greatly assist the District because Pittsburgh has one of the lowest average class sizes, which is at its largest at the high school level. "Operating under-enrolled classes," Lane asserted, "costs the District over \$30 million."

See PPS, page 7

Community Meeting To Unveil "Toolbox" for the East End

by Sara Blumenstein
cityLAB

cityLAB, a nonprofit organization that performs experiments with the city as its "laboratory," is holding a community meeting from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 7 at the St. Lawrence O'Toole Activity Center, 140 N. Atlantic Avenue. At the meeting, a "toolbox" of fifteen exciting ideas for Garfield and Friendship will be unveiled. These ideas, which have been developed through cityLAB's Six Percent Place experiment, include things that everyone can get involved with.

Also present at the meeting will be 90 of Professor John Folan's students from Carnegie Mellon University's School of Architecture. Professor Folan is the T. David Fitz-Gibbon Professor of Architecture and Director of the Urban Design Build Studio at CMU. These students will spend the entire fall semester researching and developing detailed implementation plans for each of potential neighborhood projects in the "toolbox." Both Professor Folan and Eve Picker, president and CEO of cityLAB, will lead the presentation.

While a big, "top-down" approach is vital in developing the infrastruc-

ture of a city, cityLAB believes that a "bottom-up" approach is equally as important. Many small experiments can redefine a community as catalytically as one big one can. This is cityLAB's mission – to systematically discover the ways to change Pittsburgh's future for the better by creating bottom-up projects en masse. All are welcome to the community meeting in order to achieve these goals together.

cityLAB has developed the Six Percent Place experiment in the East End, with Garfield, Friendship, and the Penn Avenue Arts Corridor as its laboratory, through funding from the Benedum Foundation, the Benter Foundation, and Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development. Jim Denova, vice president of the Benedum Foundation, has called the Six Percent Place experiment "a great laboratory for testing this unique economic development strategy," which he predicted would form a blueprint that could be "applicable to many other rural communities and urban neighborhoods."

Anyone curious to learn more about cityLAB and the Six Percent Place experiment is encouraged to come to the September 7 meeting and to visit cityLAB's website at www.city-labpg.org or call 1-866-PGH-CITY. ♦

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A "NIGHT OUT" IN FRIENDSHIP



Caitlin Cleary/The Bulletin

(SEATED, L TO R) HAZEL BLAIS, MARTHA ANN TERRY, NATALIE BLAIS, ZEUS, KET, ELIZABETH MASON; (STANDING) SARA STURDEVANT, JACKSON BOYTIM

by Caitlin Cleary
The Bulletin

For a humid Tuesday night, Friendship residents certainly know how to throw a party. In a neighborhood-wide recognition of National

Night Out, people shook up the usual weeknight routine with porch-hopping, refreshments, and a tangible sense of community. NNO is a national campaign designed to promote public safety through less criminal activity and a strengthened neighborhood spirit. This year about 30 neighbor-

hoods in Pittsburgh participated, according to the city's NNO website.

"There's something that happens to Friendship when it gets warm out," said resident and porch-party host Kim Mangan about the community. "In the summer, we have one big event each month that everyone can join in." This is her fourth year hosting a porch party, and by 7:30 p.m. her porch was filled with activity. Some people stopped by to say hello, while others made themselves comfortable and stuck around for the night. One of her guests, Roy Williams, spoke of his time here since moving from San Diego. "Living in Friendship is one new experience after another."

Meanwhile, a few blocks away on Coral Street, Martha Terry's porch party was just getting started. With six years of involvement in NNO, Terry said, "This night is what we do on a daily basis, but on a larger scale." Also in attendance was Zone 5 Commander, Tim O'Connor. "I'd like to have this every night," he said. "It shows we have a community looking out for each other."

On S. Atlantic, Rebecca Mizikar threw her very first porch party and dubbed it "a success." Her porch bustled with activity while balloons and outdoor lights allowed children to play on the front lawn. "With all of

the renters, some people aren't around for a long time," she said. "Tonight helps us make ties with neighbors we have never met before."

Ken Stiles' wisteria-framed porch lent an element of earthiness to his party. The sound of bagpipes from a CD player added background music to conversations. Guest and neighbor Paul Singletary said of NNO, "I think it's terrific. It bolsters the community spirit that's so strong here."

Ansley Robin has lived in Friendship since 1995 and noted, "The rising number of children acts as a deep indicator of the neighborhood's growth." Stiles, the host and a so-called "founding father" of Friendship, praised the area: "I think Friendship is amazing in the way it's defined itself. It set a goal and achieved it." Although he has always loved "running around to other people's porches," he joked that he was coerced into hosting his own party this year.

Nearly everyone celebrating NNO in Friendship cited meeting people as the greatest achievement of the night. Others boasted that the area finds success in its annual recognition of NNO due to its "porch culture." The signature porches of Friendship do more than beautify the area – they allow for cohesion throughout the community. ♦

TECH, from page 1

The Garfield site will also have a small coffee bar where users can work in a comfortable environment. The centers will operate seven days per week, with a mix of staff and volunteers, so that students with class assignments or projects will not face the restricted hours or competition for online time that often occurs at the local library.

Additionally, Pittsburgh CONNETS will roll out a full schedule of free workshops and educational programs at all four centers that will focus on topics the community most wants to learn about. These sessions will include basic computer use, software training, protection of computer hardware, and smart ways to surf the Net. Other programs will offer information on how to research and combat illnesses, personal budget management, and online banking. The center aims to reach out to all

members of the community to help them overcome what fears they may have in using technological tools.

The BGC's Youth Development Center and ENEC have long shared a mission to give assistance to East End residents in employment and education. "While that mission will not change, partnering with NLA's Pittsburgh CONNETS will make these programs even better suited to meeting the community's needs," Flanagan asserts.

The center is relying on staffing from Americorps workers, the BGC, and the ENEC, along with local volunteers ready to assist anyone who walks through the door. Those interested in volunteering to help community members access resources and information online, or assist students with schoolwork, can contact Michael LaFleur at 412-441-9833. ♦

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SUMMER DREAMERS CAMP PROVIDES FUN AND ACADEMICS

by Dan Derks

Neighborhood Learning Alliance

Neighborhood Learning Alliance (NLA) and the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC) played roles in the second year of Summer Dreamers, a Pittsburgh Public Schools summer camp for students in grades K-8. The program's goals are simple: to offer PPS students opportunities to grow and prepare for next school year, through a slew of engaging activities and academic-readiness classes. Summer Dreamers provides needed support for students both socially and academically in the summertime - especially important for middle-schoolers, for whom these years are huge indicators of high school success.

The Summer Dreamers program is a district-wide initiative using centralized PPS sites that students from the surrounding middle and elementary schools can easily get to. Though Pittsburgh Peabody's legacy as a public school came to an end with this year's graduating class, the halls of the building were buzzing with stu-

dents' energy. This summer, Peabody was host to students from Sterrett, Sci Tech, Sunnyside, Dilworth, Faison, and Fort Pitt, to name a few. Every day from July 11 through August 10, these students took part in a 90-minute-long morning activity, 90 minutes of academic-readiness classes, and a three-hour afternoon activity, with lunch breaking up the day.

In partnership, NLA and ENEC provided four exciting activities for more than 150 middle schoolers. These included: Checkmate! (a chess program that not only taught students the game, but also how to apply its principles of strategy and preparation in their daily lives); Make a Splash (a swimming program that helped students learn to swim and improve their swimming skills); Health Smart (a healthy eating, healthy living, healthy futures class that helped students meet the challenges ahead of them), and Swim and Water Polo (an advanced swim program that taught students the exciting and physically intense sport of water polo). Checkmate! and Make a Splash were offered in the mornings, while Health Smart and Water Polo were in the afternoons.

These four programs were some of the most popular at Camp Peabody. The Make a Splash and Water Polo programs felt like Pittsburgh's hottest new clubs, as the students who were lucky enough to get one of the 150 spots offered were camp VIPs, strutting down the halls in their swimsuits as other students sat and watched, hot and dry, on the waiting list.

Checkmate! was a sweeping success out of the gate, as students who might have been the class clowns during the school year learned the discipline and focus necessary to play the nearly 2,000-year-old game. Maybe their dedication came from the promise their teacher Mr. Malcolm made - that by the end of the summer, they'd be able to beat the average adult at the game.

Health Smart was the true underdog of the summer, turning students' attitudes around on the first day about how boring they thought a "healthy" program would be. In their first week together, the students made a visit to ONENESS, a brand new Capoeira studio/holistic health center in Morningside, where they saw a performance of Brazilian martial arts. They also learned about their favorite

new sport, Ultimate Frisbee, and picked the menu for their "fruit of the day." Health Smart students also volunteered at Vintage Senior Center, where they cooked alongside seniors in the community.

Both NLA and ENEC are very pleased with the efforts of their activity providers and the PPS staff working to make this year's Summer Dreamers not only a fun experience, but one that really impacted the middle school students of Pittsburgh's most under-served populations to help keep them in school and performing to the highest of their abilities. ♦

PPS, from page 5

After the video, attendees used polling remotes to respond to questions regarding potential effects of the budget cuts. (See sidebar for sample questions.) Some of these were vague, yes-no questions. Several people took issue with a question that dealt with offering fewer high school electives. One woman said, "I think foreign language is a core academic course. It shouldn't be lumped in with jewelry-making." Rick Swartz, executive director of the BGC, wondered, "Why is juggling course offerings the only option being discussed? What about cuts in personnel costs?"

The second part of the polling portion of the meeting consisted of small group discussion on issues such as the criteria used to determine which classes to cut and which to keep. Groups were then invited to share their ideas. One group suggested combining upper-level language classes or offering more Web-based classes. Attendees agreed the top criterion for keeping a course was that it "prepares students for college or a career," and the second that it "has proven that it supports and accelerates student success."

In concluding the meeting, Dow emphasized, "We don't want to critique the proposal. We are still at the information-gathering stage." PPS will process the feedback from this meeting and then convene another community meeting at a future date.

For more information about the PPS budget plan and past community meetings, or to register feedback, visit www.pps.k12.pa.us/CitySchoolsFiscalChallenges or email cityschoolsfsicalchallenges@pghboe.net. ♦

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STUDIOS

Family Care Connection Plants Urban Garden

by Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

Good things are growing at Family Care Connection (FCC) in Lawrenceville — and many of them are delicious.

In August, the center — one of several neighborhood family social-service programs of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC — unveiled its new backyard "urban tranquility garden." The outdoor space, funded by an environmental grant from the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development, was designed by FCC's Suzanne Rubiano, R.N., and built with the labor and sweat of staff, parents, and children.

"It's an example of 'urban reuse,'" said Rubiano. "This was just a junky plot full of weeds." Following almost two months of hard work, it's now an oasis.

But the garden, located behind the 5235 Butler Street offices, is even more than a quiet place for a time-out. The plot is full of herbs and fresh vegetables ready for pick-

ing. At an open house on August 3, FCC staff laid out a buffet table of healthful snacks prepared with many of the garden's fresh ingredients, such as rosemary, basil and dill.

"We plan to teach families how to use herbs and vegetables in their cooking," Rubiano explained. "It doesn't take a lot of space to grow tomatoes. Some of our kids had never seen things growing on vines." Rubiano said FCC will sponsor cooking classes for families in the fall in addition to its regular services, which include mental health services, child development and school readiness, substance abuse prevention, and parenting education.

The FCC garden boasts a calming fountain at its center, and a wooden fence decorated with brightly painted sunflowers by Carla Ross. There's a bench for contemplation or rest, and a walkway that winds through the herbs and flowers. Several Phipps Conservatory and Penn State Extension master gardeners offered valuable gardening advice, while Home Depot of Monroeville provided free delivery of supplies and gave FCC a discount on many of the needed products.

The environmental grant also included funds to spruce up the front



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

of the FCC building. "We're near a bar, and we used to find beer bottles tossed on the sidewalk every morning," said Rubiano. After brightly colored pots for roses and other plants were installed in front, "the beer bottles stopped showing up," suggesting that bar-goers respect the work FCC put into its beautification efforts.

The garden does seem to make the neighbors happy. Several attended the open house and sampled the

delicious food. "They like the calming nature of the garden," Rubiano noted. What's good for FCC and its clients provides a boost to the surrounding neighborhood, too. ♦

For more information about FCC-Lawrenceville, located at 5235 Butler Street, visit <http://www.chp.edu/CHP/family+care+connection+centers> or call 412-784-8683.

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State Senator Jim Ferlo

hosts

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NEW YORKERS RETIRE TO LAWRENCEVILLE “PALACE”

by Paula Martinac
The Bulletin

New York City boasts a lot of pluses, including cultural attractions, diverse restaurants and beautiful parks. But it's also known for its cramped and overpriced living quarters, which is what spurred longtime residents Gillian Lerner and her husband Al Kupersmith to look else-

where when they were planning on retiring. Recent transplants to Pittsburgh, they will be opening their home on Sherrod Street to visitors as part of the annual Lawrenceville Hospitality House Tour on Sunday, October 2.

Al says he did extensive research on the best places to retire and “Pittsburgh had everything we wanted,” including arts, culture, restaurants and good real estate prices. The

couple had long enjoyed the cultural scene in New York, regularly attending the opera, theater performances and the symphony. When they booked a trip to Pittsburgh to check out the city, they also bought tickets to cultural events so they could get a feel for the city's offerings. “A city can look great on paper,” Al remarked, then fall flat of expectations.

But Pittsburgh lived up to its hype as one of the best cities in the country to live. After touring the ‘Burgh for several days with a Howard Hanna agent, the couple decided “we could live here.”

Still, they thought their relocation plans were several years in the future. They talked to a realtor in New York about selling their Queens co-op apartment, and were advised that it could take months or even years. So they put the apartment on the market, “and within two weeks we had six potential buyers,” Gillian laughs. “One guy was offering cash.” They accepted his offer, but then had to find a place to live in Pittsburgh – quick.

“We had one week to find a house,” Gillian notes. When the realtor showed them the house on Sherrod Street, “I said, ‘This place is too big. It's like a palace,’” Gillian recalls. But

the price was right, they could walk everywhere (like many New Yorkers, they didn't own a car), and they loved the early 20th-century house. They moved in October 2009. “I retired from my job [with the city] on Friday,” Al remembers, “and we moved here on Tuesday.”

Some of the improvements Al and Gillian made included pulling up dirty wall-to-wall carpeting on floors and staircases and having hardwood flooring and laminate laid down over the old pine floors. They also did an extensive amount of painting and retiling, and lowered ceilings to make way for recessed lighting. In the future, they want to paint their staircases and lay down carpet runners.

Both say they now feel like they're living in their dream house. “Neither of us had ever had so much space,” Gillian says. “Al's family lived over a bar when he was growing up. I lived over a garage.” She says she remembers years ago watching the movie *Wonder Boys* and thinking, “I would like to live in a neighborhood like that,” without knowing it was filmed in Pittsburgh. She notes how friendly their neighbors have been and that she



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

AL'S PIANO OCCUPIES A PLACE OF HONOR ON THE FIRST FLOOR.

See **NEW YORKERS**, page 11



Marianne Bonidie, MD
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COMMUNITY FEASTS AT FARM-TO-TABLE DINNER

by Christy Valenchek
Bulletin Contributor

When Michele Morris of Friendship Development Associates saw the television show *The Endless Feast* for the first time, she says she thought, "Well that's something I would like to do." The Public Broadcast Station's reality program chronicles, event by event, North American small farm owners offering up their produce and land to host a meal for the community. The idea is simple: bringing neighbors together around local food.

It's a timeless thing to do, and it makes sense that, in the wake of the public awareness about the value of backyard gardens and pastured meat sources, we should gather around a big table and feast. What could be more basic than that? All Morris needed was a farm and a chef.

Garfield Community Farm (garfieldfarm.com) was born of a thought much like Michele's. After witnessing a small local farm effort in the Bahamas (where 99 percent of consumed food is imported), musician and Open Door pastor John Creasy said, "Now there's something I'd like to do." He has spent the past four years literally planting the seeds of this simple thought in the unlikely ground of the City-owned, knotweed-ridden, previously unused acreage that sits under the water tower in Garfield. If you visit the farm at Wicklow and Cornwall Streets today, nothing speaks to you of the dilapidated row houses that once crumbled there. Life abounds in the form of fledgling orchard trees, collards, kale, shallots, eggplants, peppers, tomatoes, lettuces and basil. The community reaps the benefits of the urban farm through low-cost CSA (community-supported agriculture) shares, the Urban Kitchen Project's produce-preparation demonstrations, and the farm's monthly food bank donations



Christy Valenchek

of fresh, organic produce.

A chef, Roxanne Easley started doing what she loved best – cooking food for friends and neighbors – when one of her friends made a passing comment: "Your food is really good. You should open up your own business." A simple idea was born. Roxanne started her business from her back porch, true to her soul food style. She later quit her day job in hopes of living her dream. This month, Roxanne's Soul Food Expressions Catering and Take Out (www.rsecatering.com) will open for business at 4124 Main Street in Bloomfield, near the new Children's Hospital.

With the necessary players in place, a volunteer team surprised folks from the two neighborhoods with smiles and burlap-wrapped invitations as they waited for buses, left worship services, or relaxed at home. It's not often that someone knocks on your door and asks you to come have a free meal unburdened by political campaigns, fundraising efforts, or attached strings. Some were wary, some curious about why anyone would do such a thing; others were unquestioningly delighted.

Under a warm summer sun the farmer, the chef and the volunteers' simple endeavors connected at Baum

Grove on Saturday, July 30, when more than 40 people from Garfield and Friendship gathered – just because.

Farm and community volunteers set a long table dressed with modest table

linens and locally grown wildflowers. Fresh mint infused sweet tea. Delicious skewers full of local vegetables, local organic chicken, green asparagus and slabs of marinated grilled eggplant decorated plates. Even the dessert was prepared with eggs hatched a few blocks away by a generous neighbor's city chickens. Children played happily with adults they had met for the first time. Neighbors who had never previously met shared stories and jokes.

Simple ideas, and people willing to do what they love, ended up uniting neighbors across the Penn Avenue border over something as basic as a locally produced meal. The next Farm to Table event is scheduled for September 28, 2011, at Garfield Community Farm. Contact Michele at 412-623-3336 or mim18@pitt.edu if you are interested in donating, serving or attending. ♦

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NEW YORKERS, from page 10

feels "much less lonely here."

One big plus of having doubled their living space is that Gillian can now display her complete collection of signed ballet shoes from a lifetime of attending the ballet in New York. And Al, an amateur classical pianist, can practice piano to his heart's content. His baby grand is proudly on display in the dining room. In Queens, they laid four carpets underneath the

piano to muffle the sound of his playing, which some neighbors still complained about. He muses that he might even play during the house tour.

"New York has turned into a tourist town," Al, who was born in the Bronx and lived his entire life in New York, says. "It's nice to visit there now, but it's good to come home" – to Lawrenceville. ♦



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COR Is On the Move

by Ken Nesbit

Coalition of Organized Residents of East Liberty

After months of transition, the Coalition of Organized Residents of East Liberty, Inc. (COR) is on the move again. COR will continue to pursue its mission to improve the quality of life for low- to moderate-income residents of the East Liberty community. Alethea Sims, COR's President, is pleased to announce the addition of two staff members.

Angel Gober, COR's Tenant Organizer, has been busy assisting resident organizations in East Liberty Gardens, Fairfield and East Liberty Place North – the apartments whose residents are represented by COR.

With Angel's assistance, COR is now a partner with Tickets for Kids, which will allow COR to make it possible for families to attend events that might have been unavailable to them. In June, for

example, COR took a group to the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium, where a good time was had by all. COR will sponsor more trips in the future.

I am working as COR's new Section 3 Specialist. Along with our intern, Ashley Fisher, I will be working to update our resident database and to help place people on the Fairfield Phase II construction site. I am also on hand to assist in such things as creating a resume and conducting mock interviews to improve residents' chances of locating employment.

COR is looking forward to reconnecting with residents and partnering agencies to keep moving to the future. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Evenings and Saturdays are by appointment. For more information, call 412-661-2600. Also, you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter.♦

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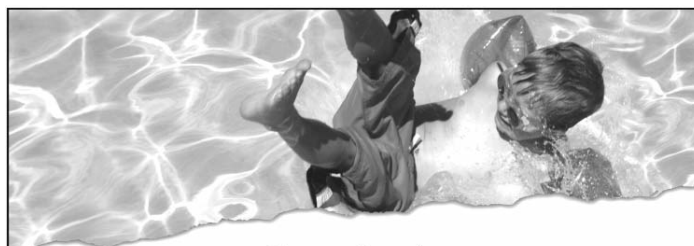
The Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC), 5321 Penn Avenue, provides a wide range of employment services free to the community, including partnerships with UPMC, Children's Hospital, and PNC Bank, career counseling, job readiness training, and resume help. With our new expanded hours and partnership with Pittsburgh CONNECTS Technology Center, you'll be able not only to apply for jobs, but learn new skills for your career. Stop in today to learn more!

Upcoming

On September 15, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. ENEC will be hosting CCAC so you can learn about their FREE online training certificate course and how to sign up!

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Are you good with computers? Like helping others learn about computers? Pittsburgh CONNECTS has part-time paid and volunteer positions available. Duties include helping people access the Internet, performing general computer maintenance, and helping with workshops. Must be personable, reliable, and comfortable using and explaining how to use computers and the internet. Evening and Weekend hours available. To apply, please visit the ENEC and ask for Michael, or email your resume to bgc.enec@gmail.com.



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YOUTHS IN BGC PROGRAM ACHIEVE EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT

by Charis Rose

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

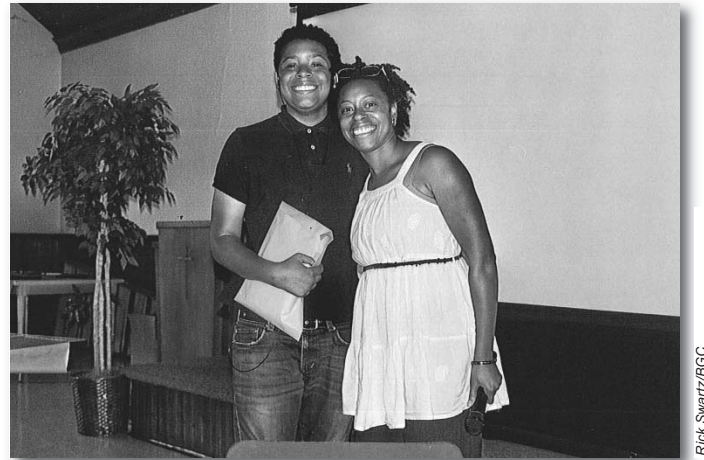
Participants in the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Out-of-School Youth Employment Program demonstrated an outstanding show of resilience this year in the face of economic hardship. Achieving certification in Microsoft Word and Customer Service, employment in various sectors, and enrollment in post-secondary institutions, while also enhancing lifelong learning habits, they have proven that hard work does pay off.

On July 26, the BGC celebrated its shining stars for their successes at the "Imagine Me" Recognition Luncheon. Youths have gained employment in education, light industrial and customer service. Others are attending Community College of Allegheny County, Penn State University, Point Park University, and Slippery Rock University, with majors in Arts, Business

Management, Computer Information Systems, Math Education, and Nursing Assistant. The Out-of-School Youth Employment Program exceeded benchmarks in every area.

These young people proved that theirs is not a lost generation. They are a driven, determined, and triumphant group of young adults. Although they faced many challenges – such as absent parents, broken relationships, teenage parenthood, criminal backgrounds, learning disabilities, domestic violence, and on and on – the program's young adults kept hold of hope, because their lives depended on it. They are our Phoenix generation.

The BGC is now recruiting strong, determined, and committed young adults, 17 to 21 years old, for the 2011–2012 program. All interested parties should contact the BGC immediately. Call 412-204-7164 for more information. ♦



Rick Swartz/BGC

THE BGC'S CHARIS ROSE (RIGHT) WITH 2010-2011 OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAM PARTICIPANT MARK CHARLTON, NOW A SOPHOMORE MAJORING IN PSYCHOLOGY AT POINT PARK UNIVERSITY.

Student Gets Hands-on Newspaper Experience

by Paula Martinac

The Bulletin

Her byline has been on *Bulletin* articles since June, as she covered everything from Garfield's feral cat population to new businesses along Penn Avenue. Now Caitlin Cleary, *The Bulletin's* summer intern, has left the paper to begin her senior year at the University of Pittsburgh.

The Bulletin accepts interns from local universities in the fall and spring, and from all universities during the summer. Interns are usually English, journalism or communications majors, but students in other fields are also welcome to apply. They work 10 to 12 hours a week, both in and out of the office, conducting interviews, writing articles, taking photographs, learning page layout, copy editing and proofreading.

"I'd never interviewed anyone before," says Caitlin, whose internship fulfilled credits for Pitt's Certificate in Public and Professional Writing. As a *Bulletin* intern, she hit the ground running and quickly learned her way around a reporter's notebook. "I felt so professional interviewing Kathi Boyle at Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force my first week."

Caitlin says she had previously thought about journalism as a career, "but I didn't know if I had a flair for it." During the internship, she started to think she could indeed make a career out of it. "I'm really interested



Paula Martinac/The Bulletin

in sports writing," she notes.

She says that what she liked most about her *Bulletin* internship was "I got to do things on my own. I had a friend who was doing an internship and just got stuck tabling somewhere. This internship was hands-on. I got an idea for what having a real job feels like."

The internship also gave her a good sense of the East End. The Philadelphia native says she now likes to attend "Unblurred: First Fridays on Penn"; has favorite eating places along the avenue, such as BFG Café and Spak Brothers; and enjoys shopping at Target. Before her internship, "I'd heard of the neighborhood, but couldn't have told you where it was," she admits. "I learned where I am in relation to other places in the city." ♦

To apply for a *Bulletin* internship, send a letter and resume to bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org.

HONOR

September 11, 2011, marks the 10th anniversary of the most devastating terrorist attacks that our Nation has ever seen.

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

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 by the 15th of each month. We do not accept listings over the phone. Listings published on a space-available basis.

COUNCIL TO GO

Meet Councilman Patrick Dowd at Council to Go, his mobile district office. Councilman Dowd and his staff will be available to hear your concerns, provide news on issues in Council, and help you access city services. In September, Council to Go will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 27, from 6 to 7 p.m. at Crazy Mocha at 4525 Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield. For details on this and future Council to Go sessions, visit www.pghgov.com/district7 or call 412-255-2140.

TOWN MEETING ON UPMC-HIGHMARK

State Senator Jim Ferlo (D-Allegheny) will host and moderate a town hall meeting focusing on consumer concerns regarding the dispute between UPMC and Highmark. The event will take place Thursday, September 8 at 7 p.m. at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall Ballroom in Oakland. Those who wish to speak at the town hall are encouraged to register with Senator Ferlo's office at 412-621-3006.

FALL INTERNSHIP @ ASSEMBLE

Do you like making things? Want to get involved and get your voice heard? Interested in learning about how nonprofits work? Then join us this fall as an intern at Assemble. We are looking for junior/seniors in high school or college students. You will be given responsibility to get ready! If interested, please email us at assemblepgh@gmail.com and we can keep the conversation going from there. You can use your internship time to get credit from school, fulfill community service, and get a great recommendation in the end. Assemble is at 5125 Penn Ave in Garfield.

CALLING THE CREATIVE

Handmade Arcade is seeking crafty demonstrators for Handmade Arcade on November 12, 2011. This event has had 8,000 attendees and features demonstrations and activities for vendors. Applications are now being accepted through September 11. For more information please contact Tricia at 412-654-3884 or e-mail sponsor@handmadearcade.com

PLANET PARTY

Planet Party at Assemble, 5125 Penn Avenue, on Wednesday, Sept. 14, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. is a kid-oriented event, fun and free. Snacks will be provided. Come work with local artists and talk about the universe. How do you see it? What's really out there and where do you fit in? Come talk, make, and think! Ages 5 to 7 are strongly encouraged to join the fun.

LITTLE ITALY DAYS

Celebrate the 10-year anniversary celebration of Bloomfield's Little Italy Days on Friday through Sunday, Sept. 23 to 25. Free admission. For more information call 412-681-8800 or e-mail karla@bloomfieldnow.com

HISTORIC ALLEGHENY ARSENAL RECREATED

Tom Powers and Jim Wudarczyk will present a lecture and PowerPoint presentation titled "The Allegheny Arsenal Visualized" for the Lawrenceville Historical Society's public meeting series on Thursday, September 15, at 7 p.m. in the McVey Auditorium of Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk Street. Speakers will discuss the Arsenal's importance in Civil War history. The event is free and open to the public.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME SOCCER?

Sign up for A.I.S. Pittsburgh (Ambassadors in Sport) East End Soccer Club. For kids ages 5 to 11. Register before September 18 for the discounted rate of \$15 for 7 weeks of soccer, shirt and trophy. After that, the cost is \$20 until the registration deadline on September 24. Practices and games held on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Heth's Field by St. Raphael's Church in Morningside in the 5400 block of

Hampton Street. Mail or drop off your registration and payment to The Open Door, 801 N. Negley Avenue, Office #2 (located in the Union Project on the corner of Stanton and Negley). Questions? Contact B.J. Woodworth at 412-215-6398 or bj@pghopendoor.org or Lisa Collier at 412-567-2582 or lisa@pghopendoor.org.

BE A SCOUT

Boy scouting is designed for boys in grades 1-5 (Cub) and ages 11-17 (Boy), emphasizing leadership, citizenship and personal fitness while developing character, family understanding and community service. It's camping, fun with friends and more. A cub scout pack meets on Wednesdays at St. Raphael School in Morningside at 6:30 p.m. A boy scout troop meets at the Stephen Foster Community Center on Main Street in Lawrenceville on Mondays at 7 p.m. If interested, call 412-661-2963 or go to www.BeaScout.org.

MORNINGSIDE C.O.G.I.C.

Join the Christian fellowship on Sept. 10 from 9 a.m.-noon at Morningside Church of God in Christ at 5173 Dearborn Street. Breakfast will feature a talk by Sunday School teacher and Booster, Elder Ronald Tann. Registration for Willa McKay Johnson School of Bible 2nd Ministry ends Sept. 1 and classes begin Sept. 7-8. For more information, please call at 412-361-9865.

GARFIELD COMMUNITY MEETING

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation and Garfield Jubilee Association, Inc., are hosting a community meeting on Tuesday, September 27, at 6:30 p.m. at BGC Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Avenue. The meeting will touch on the topics of housing development, workforce development, public safety, recreation and other supportive services the organizations provide to residents. For more details on the meeting, please call 412-665-5220 or 412-441-6950.

PLAYTIME IN FRIENDSHIP

Playtime in the Friendship Playpark is geared to Friendship residents with children. We meet Wednesday nights through the end of September from 6-8 p.m. at the Montessori School Playpark on Friendship Avenue.

HOMEOWNERS FACING FORECLOSURE

Homeowners can still apply for the federal Emergency Homeowners' Loan Program (EHLPP) if they are unable to make their monthly mortgage payments because of job loss or income reduction. This program is available through Sept. 30, 2011. Homeowners may be eligible for a loan of up to \$50,000 or 24 months of mortgage payments if they meet certain criteria: having lost at least 15% of income; having missed three mortgage payments or received a foreclosure notice; being likely to start making payments again within two years; being at or below 120% of area median income; and are applying for help on their primary residence. For information and assistance, call 1-800-342-2397 or visit www.PHFA.org.

UNBLURRED: SEPT. 2

The first Friday of each month, from 6 to 11 p.m., galleries and venues in the Penn Avenue Arts District (4800-5500 Penn Avenue) open their doors and showcase a variety of artwork and performances. Guests will experience new art and meet the most eclectic array of art-makers, old and young, modern and classical, famous and amateur, emerging and veteran, all within walking distance of each other. For a complete listing of participating venues, visit <http://is.gd/unblur> online.

A PLACE TO BELONG

Come visit us at the Door of Hope Community Church, 5225 Holmes Street, Lawrenceville every Sunday at 11 a.m. for our church service. We also offer Sunday school for all age groups, plus Christians in Recovery, at 10 a.m. For additional information, please call 412-781-6440, email us at doorofhopecommunitychurch@verizon.net or check out our Facebook page for our calendar and updates.

"CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE"

Morningside Church of God in Christ, 5173 Dearborn Street in Garfield, presents "The Characters of the Bible: Old Testament." Friday, September 16 at 7 p.m.; and "New Testament on Sunday, September 18, at 5 p.m. For more information, call 412-361-9865.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

CARNEGIE LIBRARY HAPPENINGS - SEPTEMBER

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh - East Liberty Branch
130 S. Whitfield St. 412-363-8274
All programs are free

Pre-K Bingo

For ages 3-5 with an adult.
Thursdays, Sept. 8, 11 a.m.

Imagination Builders: Lego Day

For ages pre-K and up with family.
Saturday, Sept. 17, 11 a.m.

Kids Create: Origami

For all ages. Saturday, Sept. 17,
3:30 p.m.

School-Age Fun: Chocolate Tasting

For grades K-5. Thursday, Sept.
22, 4 p.m. Limited to 20 children.

Where's the BIG Idea? Math and Science for Pre-schoolers

For ages 3-6 with an adult.
Wednesday, Sept. 28, 6:30 p.m.

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh - Lawrenceville Branch
279 Fisk St. 412-682-3668
All programs are free

Adult Book Discussion

Monday, Sept. 12 at 5 p.m. Call for
book title.

Snuggle Bug Story Time

Thursday, Sept. 15, 10:30 a.m.
Runs for 8 weeks, through Nov. 3.

Open House

Monday, Sept. 19, 6-8 p.m. We
will have refreshments to celebrate
our new evening hours with a special
Pajama Party Story Time at 7
p.m. Children are welcome to wear
their PJs and bring their favorite
stuffed animal.

Film Series of Independent Productions

Tuesday, Sept. 20, 6 p.m.

PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS

Trinity Gallery, 4747 Hatfield Street
in Lawrenceville, will be offering an
introductory photography course. Pre-
register by September 8th. Classes
will begin September 15th and will
meet on consecutive Thursdays
through October 13th. Classes will be
held at Trinity Gallery from 6:30 to 8
p.m. Cameras must have a manual
mode. Cameras can be film or digital.
Cost for the course is \$125. Contact
Dan Gaser at imdan@verizon.net or
412-687-2458.

PITTSBURGH DANCE & THEATER ARTS

Dance, fitness, and theater classes for
kids and adults of all ages and levels
in a non-competitive, nurturing, and
professional environment at
Winchester-Thurston School, 555
Morewood Avenue. Kids & adult
classes include Ballet, Tap, Jazz,
Musical Theatre, Acting, Zumba,
Yoga, Mom & Me Yoga, and
Ballroom/Social Dance (for Adults).
Classes begin September 6. Also,
Pittsburgh Junior Theater Audition
for "How the Grinch Stole
Christmas." Kids ages 7-14 needed
for December 17 performance.
Audition dates: September 8 and 13.
Please call 412-681-7523 for appoint-
ment. For info, www.pgh-dance.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR HOUSE TOUR

Volunteers are needed for this year's
Lawrenceville Hospitality House
Tour on Sunday, October 2, from
noon to 5 p.m. Volunteers will be sta-
tioned at each house to verify that
those entering have a paid ticket.
Shifts are noon-2:30 p.m. and 2:30-5
p.m. Volunteers will receive compli-
mentary tickets to attend the tour and
will be invited to the thank you party
scheduled for Friday, October 7 at
Java Studios from 7-9 p.m.
Volunteers may sign up at
www.lawrencevillehousetour.org.

MURDER MYSTERY DINNER

Welcome to Camel Rock, Arizona,
where the outlaw is the law, the cow-
boy is king, and a gunfight is bound
to take place! On Saturday, October 1,
enjoy a murder mystery dinner at St.
Augustine Auditorium, 220 37th
Street, Lawrenceville. Sponsored by
Our Lady of the Angels Parish.
Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner
served at 6:30 p.m. Don't forget your
Western wear! Cost: \$25 a person.
Tickets available after weekend
Masses and at the Parish Office. For
information, call 42-682-0929.

FRIENDSHIP'S ANNUAL HOUSE TOUR CANCELLED

by Caitlin Cleary
The Bulletin

This fall may not feel the same to
those looking forward to the 2011
Friendship House Tour. It was
recently cancelled due to a lack of
homes to tour and less sponsorship
than in previous years.

Kim Mangan, House Tour
Committee co-chair, explains,
"Some withdrawals impacted the
quality expected." As Friendship is
such a small neighborhood, the tour
requires no fewer than six houses,
although the committee usually
prefers around eight.

According to Mangan, a reunion
event in late September will involve
former docents, volunteers and com-
mittee members generating fresh
ideas. "We want more excitement
and new members to get involved,"
she said.

Enticing homeowners to feature
their houses on the tour involves a
few different methods used by the
committee, from calls for volunteers
to blanketing the neighborhood with
fliers. "Having 400 to 700 people
through your home seems intimidat-
ing," she says. Mangan notes that

word of mouth has been their best
ally.

The architecture of Friendship
has lent itself to interesting tours in
the past. Mangan says that many
tour-goers have taken note of the
contrast between a traditional
Victorian exterior and the modern
furniture and design inside. In the
100 years of the neighborhood's
existence, a single house may have
had many owners. Houses evolve
over the years due to the ever-chang-
ing decorating styles of those who
live there, Mangan points out.

The committee is already hard at
work planning next year's event and
has set the date for Sunday,
September 16, 2012. For more infor-
mation, or to volunteer for next
year's event, please email
fda@friendship-pgh.org. ♦

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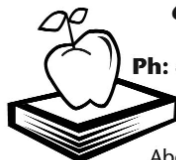
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Above Trader Joe's, one block from Target



Avenue Insider

by **Christine Bethea**
Bulletin Contributor

Often using East Liberty, Penn Avenue and other East End streetscapes as backdrops, Ahmad Sandidge of Sandidge Studios has spent three years in his location at 5515 Penn Avenue being, as he said, "The best photographer I can be."

Sandidge's decision to settle on "the Avenue," came after a long history of making difficult career choices that ultimately proved to be satisfying. Thirty years ago, he made his final determination. He had started out in the corporate world, then decided he'd rather be happy than make money.

Sandidge recalled: "I'd been to Rio and saw the people had barely anything, but their lives were full and joyous." Upon his return, he decided to attend classes at FIT in New York where, as the oldest student in his class, he determined to become a photographer or "starve trying," he said.

Before and after leaving FIT, Sandidge worked for a number of different photographers to hone his craft. He learned from some of the best in the business, but also noted he gave a lot of good advice himself. He quickly saw that while school had been a means to an end, the best way to learn photography was to go out and do it.

During this time, Sandidge had ample opportunity to travel the world

and confessed that he learned more in three months than he would have in three years at school. He soon had a growing client list of his own that included IBM, Merck, and Ebony Magazine. It was then, at the height of his career, that he was forced to make "a parental decision." After 10 years of rising success in New York, he made a sacrifice many men would have never considered — he returned to Pittsburgh, to be near his children.

"It wasn't such a letdown," Sandidge said, with a full smile. "I got to play catch with my kids and watch them ride their bikes in the street." He also began to rebuild his photography business, starting with a smaller studio in Highland Park before moving to the pristine square footage with panoramic windows he currently occupies, renovated by local architects Doug Cruze and Liza Wellman. It was in Sandidge's words, "Perfect! I didn't have to change a thing, just move in with my equipment."

However, Sandidge did add a few creature comforts like his upscale décor that includes black leather seating, a bar and a sound system that plays randomized music from all over the world. He also boasts that he fixes a mean Pina Colada. "And no offense to Starbucks, but that is not how I do photography. You can't rush photographing; there's no specific formula. When people walk in here and say, 'I

SANDIDGE STUDIOS: Capturing Moments for Eternity



Christine Bethea

want a picture taken,' I ask, 'What is it for, where will it be shown or who are you are giving it to?' We'll take time for a consultation; that way we can decide what the best approach for you will be." He added, "But I refuse to take any picture I can't show my mother."

To that end, the Sandidge studio has various props, or people can bring their own. He makes it his business to create a fun experience for his clients while getting stellar results. "Most people say I gave them much more than what they requested." For around \$225 per person, private photo parties can be scheduled. "Our ladies' evening has been especially popular. We offer unlimited wine and cheese, use of our space and props, music and

each woman gets an 11x14 retouched photo."

Ahmad Sandidge is proud of his journey, his craft and his heritage. Looking over his domain, decorated in modern Afro-centric style, he said, "As a black man raised in America, it's nice to give my clients great photography and a slice of my culture. But I'm not mad at anybody," he added with a sense of humor. And with a wave of his hand, he indicated walls showcasing the bountiful diversity of his clientele, all ages and origins in beautiful portraiture. "If I can't make you look good...then why come to me?" he stated, having proved his point. For more details, go to www.sandidgephotography.com. ♦



Lawrenceville

HOSPITALITY HOUSE TOUR

Ride the Trolleys — Beginning at Allegheny Cemetery

October 2nd	Advanced tickets	\$12
Noon - 5PM	Day of tour	\$15

www.lawrencevillehousetour.org

Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh | UPMC

Advanced Tickets on Sale at these Lawrenceville Businesses

☒ Gallery on 43rd	☒ Jay Design	☒ Dandelions
☒ Perk Me Up	☒ CoCa Cafe	☒ Pavement



BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD CORPORATION
United Way Contributor
Choice #260

Since 1976, the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation has been a voice for change and improvement in the Bloomfield, Garfield, and Friendship neighborhoods. The BGC's staff, board, and volunteers work to achieve the physical revitalization of the community, improve its economic assets, and invest in the social well-being of its citizens. Please help the BGC to continue to be strong and responsive to our neighborhoods by directing your **United Way gift to Contributor Choice #260**.