



The Bulletin

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Now is the time for high school seniors to apply for the Pittsburgh Promise Scholarship

By Stacie Chandler
The Bulletin

Put very simply, the Pittsburgh Promise gives free money for post-secondary education at almost 100 selected Pennsylvania educational institutions, including trade or technical schools, for qualified graduates of the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

The goal of the Pittsburgh Promise is two-fold: to reward students for their hard work and achievements, and to attract and retain families who might not have chosen the Pittsburgh Public Schools for their children.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to give your child the post-secondary education that could be the key to his or her success. Learn how easy it is to become a Pittsburgh Promise Scholarship recipient.

What is a qualified graduate?

Requirements for the Class of 2009 are as follows:

- Graduate from a Pittsburgh Public School, one of the four schools chartered by the PPS, or a state-approved private school such as the School for the Deaf or the School for the Blind.
- Have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.25 at graduation.
- Have at least an 85% attendance rate in high school after accounting for suspensions and unexcused absences.
- Must have been enrolled in the Pittsburgh Public Schools and have been a resident of the Pittsburgh Public School District continuously since at least 9th Grade.
- Earn admission to a Promise-eligible school with the intent to pursue a bachelor, associate or two-year degree.
- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students must be US citizens, permanent residents or eligible non-citizens as detailed in the student eligibility volume of the Federal Student Aid Handbook, available in the

Enrolled and Resident continuously since:

% of the \$5000 annual award:

Kindergarten

100%

Grades 1 through 5

95%

Grades 6 through 8

85%

Grade 9

75%

Grades 10 through 12

Not eligible

Publications section of www.ifap.ed.gov.

- Complete and submit the Promise Scholarship Application.

How much money?

Eligible students can qualify for up to \$5,000 per year for up to four academic years – a total of \$20,000. The amount is determined by how long the student has been enrolled in the Pittsburgh Public Schools and been a resident. Eligible students will receive a minimum of \$1000.

See chart above.

What selected institutions?

- More than two dozen state-funded universities in Pennsylvania.
- More than two dozen private schools in Allegheny County that offer two- or four-year degrees.

What are the income guidelines?

There are no income requirements or limits. Any student who meets the eligibility requirements can receive a

See **PROMISE**, page 5

Area students take to the ice with the Penguins at Mellon Arena

By Madeline Chandler
Bulletin Contributor



Photos by Madeline Chandler

School students watch as the Pittsburgh penguins gather for instructions at a recent open practice.

The announcer's voice boomed from the loudspeakers, the lights dimmed, and suddenly a fantastic light show started as the Penguins' logo flashed on the ice. One by one, the players skated onto the ice as thousands of screams and cheers filled Mellon Arena. The excitement of a Pittsburgh Penguins game? No, it was the Penguins' 2008 open practice.

This year, the Penguins open practice was made available to more than just the usual diehard fans. Although there were still fans there, every single school in Allegheny County with students in grades 1 through 8 was invited. Each school, including Arsenal Middle School in Lawrenceville, was given up to 250 tickets to do with as they pleased. More than 60 schools took advantage of the opportunity, with 250 school buses transporting upwards of 9,000 students to

enjoy the experience.

The arena was full of students wearing Penguins gear while some kids who hadn't yet experienced the great sport donned Steelers gear or shirts that had to do with Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Pride was everywhere.

The Penguins got to the Stanley Cup Finals last spring, losing to the Red Wings in the fifth game of the series. The team is making a comeback this year and are preparing themselves to bring fans of all ages along for the ride.

The Penguins had many reasons to invite the students to watch them practice. First off, it gave kids the chance to learn all about the great sport of hockey. Radio play-by-play announcer Paul Steigerwald and former Penguin and Radio Color Commentator Phil Bourque emceed the practice. Bourque explained to the students how

See **"Penguins,"** page 12

**FEBRUARY
DEADLINE!**

The **FINAL DEADLINE** for the **FEBRUARY 2009** issue of The Bulletin is **THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2009.**

This includes all classified ads, Bulletin Board announcements, story submissions, and ad space reservations.

H.O.M.E. rehabs houses

What is a Household?

In the Hebrew scriptures, a "household" can be both a physical structure, as well as an extended family or community. In 2004, Eastminster Presbyterian Church founded the nonprofit corporation Household Outreach Ministries of Eastminster (H.O.M.E.) to help families in the congregation and neighborhood, and to rehab vacant properties in the neighborhood.

Over the past five years, H.O.M.E. has been involved in more than ten home rehabs, and what has become clear is that the training of young men and women may be the most important thing that H.O.M.E. is doing.

H.O.M.E. President, Ted Melnyk sees this as a winning combination. "Families win as they move into affordable housing, neighborhoods win as vacant homes are transformed, students win as they learn job and trade skills that will last a lifetime, and the local church wins folks to Christ as we are His hands and His

By Ted Melnyk
Bulletin Contributor

feet physically rebuilding our neighborhoods."

Through private donations, fundraisers, Eastminster's Mission Committee and Community WORKS (a new partnership with Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, Wireless Neighborhoods and local high schools), H.O.M.E. was able to greatly expand its work with young people. By last summer's end, 18 youths were employed by H.O.M.E. and working on local housing.

This past year, most of H.O.M.E.'s energies were focused on 502 Sheridan St. and 845/847 N. Saint Clair. 502 Sheridan was rehabbed for Eastminster church member Carol DeLaTorre and her family. Local youth, contractors, and hundreds of volunteers assisted in the rehab of this house.

A combination of Carol's mortgage, a First Front Door grant, a donation

from Eastminster and other area churches, along with donated labor, made this housing "affordable."

845/847 North Saint Clair was developed as a "stepping stone," a duplex where families can live for a few years while a portion of their rent is escrowed for a down payment on a house. During this time, families receive any necessary assistance in budgeting, credit counseling and training for home repair. Unlike your typical landlord, owners Rocky & Esther Stief, who partnered with H.O.M.E. are "break-even" landlords. Thanks to their commitment to this concept, we have rehabbed yet another vacant property in our neighborhood. H.O.M.E. is excited about replicating the Stief/HOME partnership - it may become a "best practice" - an opportunity for local real estate investment, training of youths, and assisting folks into home ownership.

Other projects this past year included working with East Liberty Development, B Diversified Construction, and Open Hand Ministries on properties at 713 & 715 Mellon St., 710 and 712 North St. Clair, and the granddaddy of them all, doing the demolition work at 5620 Rippey St., where students got to smash out walls in 20 apartments!

Penn Avenue Reconstruction meeting March 12

The City of Pittsburgh, in cooperation with the PA Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Penn Avenue Corridor Phasing Plan Committee, will conduct the second and final public meeting for the ongoing Penn Avenue Corridor Phasing Plan Study. The first, held in March of 2008, presented the scope of the Penn Avenue revitalization project and gathered feedback from the community. The final public meeting will give the project's current status, evaluate project needs, and discuss project priorities.

The public will learn the results from assessments and reports on pavement/sidewalk/curb conditions; streetscaping and street trees; street lighting; accidents; transit and bicycle considerations; traffic and pedestrian flow; traffic signing and pavement markings; neighborhood assets; and quality of life. A needs analysis summarizing major deficiencies and conditions throughout the corridor will be evaluated and discussed.

The Final Public Meeting will be held at St. Lawrence O'Toole Activity Building on March 12, 2009. The meeting time will be announced.

New staff at FDA

Chris Phelan was named named Real Estate Manager at Friendship Development Associates. Phelan will be managing the development and construction of all FDA real estate projects.

A University of Virginia graduate, Phelan comes to FDA with a wealth of construction and real estate development experience including preconstruction services, project management and accounting. He has worked in construction for several years and owned his own business, Archetype Design & Construction. Most recently, Chris worked for Clark Construction Group, LLC., where he was involved in multiple projects including a \$150 million, 1.2 million square foot mixed-use design-assist project in Rockville, Maryland.

Eileen Kraus-Dobratz was named Finance Manager at Friendship Development Associates, where she will also manage the FDA office.

Kraus-Dobratz is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where she earned an MBA in Finance and a Ph.D. in International Relations with a concentration in International Economic Development. She has worked in finance and accounting at the University of Pittsburgh, The Tides Center (PA) and continues to work as a non-profit consultant assisting international non-profits with U.S. regulations.

AARP, ENEC assist jobseekers

The AARP Foundation provides WorkSearch services through The Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center at 5100 Penn Avenue.

So what does this mean? What type of programs would AARP have that would complement the ENEC's objective of helping people to obtain employment?

Most people think of AARP as an organization specifically geared to assisting those who are retired with everything from healthcare, to planning vacations, to lobbying congress "to-do-right" by this population. Most people probably are not aware that AARP Foundation is dedicated to assisting individuals who want to remain in or re-enter the workforce.

AARP Foundation, through their WorkSearch Assessment, provides an on-line assessment program to assist individuals with identifying suitable job choices based on one's interests, personal characteristics, skills and experience. This system offers quick tests to determine if one has the right skills for a job, online training programs to fill skill gaps, and links to job openings by zip code. The WorkSearch Assessment System is available at no cost to mature job seekers.

In conjunction with the WorkSearch Assessment System, the Pittsburgh office has been selected to provide short term training to those who are 40 years of age or older, who meet the median income level, and are interested in becoming more marketable in today's employment arena. A variety of on-line certifications, as well as community-based (classroom training) opportunities are available. Degree opportunities are available, as well.

For job seekers 55 and older who meet the federal low-income guidelines, AARP Foundation WorkSearch offers paid training through their Senior Community Service Employment Program. SCSEP provides eligible participants with on-the-job experience to develop and update skills through paid training assignments at non-profit and public agencies. The goal is to assist enrollees in obtaining permanent "unsubsidized" jobs in their community.

Former participant Angelo D'Angelo said, "AARP was instrumental in helping me to totally change careers and it put me on a whole new road to success."

Contact Vaughn Ampersand, Information Navigator at ENEC at 412-362-8580 to schedule an appointment to get your free, personal, AARP on-line assessment account, and learn more about SCSEP.

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Shadyside (across from Buffalo Blues)
412-363-0211

Apartment complex marks 20th Anniversary with Open House

By Stacie Chandler
The Bulletin

It's been 20 years since the former St. Lawrence O'Toole School at 5321 Penn Avenue in Garfield was converted to a residence for seniors. Many of the building's residents can recall attending parent-teacher conferences at the school when their children were young. In fact, one of the first residents at Laurentian Hall was a member of the first grade class when St. Lawrence O'Toole School opened its doors in 1917.

It's that kind of connection that makes Laurentian Hall's Manager, Mary Ann McGill, smile. She also attended school in the building when she was a child and vividly recalls where classrooms and the principal's office were located back then. But, she said, newcomers can hardly believe how beautifully the building was transformed from a school into the warm and welcoming residential facility that it is today.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary, Laurentian Hall will hold an Open House on Sunday, January 18, 2009 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.. The public is invited to drop by and see what the facility has to offer potential residents. Open House visitors are invited to sign up for a drawing for a 19" HDTV.

With its high ceiling and enormous windows, the common room is an enticing place for residents to play a game of cards, watch the big-screen television, play the piano, or curl up in a comfy chair with a favorite book. Walking down the wide halls, visitors can't help but smile at the cheerful holiday decorations that occupants have displayed on the doors of their apartments.

Laurentian Hall offers 36 handicapped-friendly units. The big classroom-sized windows mean each efficiency, one-bedroom or two-bedroom unit is bright and airy. There are cords to summon assistance in every room. McGill said the apartments have all been undergoing renovation, particularly in the kitchenette. The small under-counter refrigerators have been replaced with full-sized refrigerators and expanded counter and cabinet space has been added.

Not that residents need to spend a lot of time in

the kitchen. Laurentian Hall serves dinner Monday through Saturday evenings in the cozy dining hall. Up to 20 dinners each month (soup, salad, a choice of two entrees, starch, bread and butter, dessert and tea or coffee and milk) are included in the monthly fees. McGill says the daily meal sets Laurentian Hall apart from similar facilities.

"Sometimes seniors don't eat properly. Perhaps they don't like to cook for just one person. This way they get a well-balanced, tasty meal every day with nothing to prepare and nothing to clean up," she said.

Laurentian Hall's small population and shared dinner provide a real sense of community, too. "You don't fall through the cracks in a building like this," said McGill. Planned social events and impromptu gatherings are part of everyday life. Grocery stores, restaurants and other shopping are all conveniently located. There's free parking and residents can use the laundry rooms – there's one on each floor – free of charge.

Laurentian Hall currently has openings for new residents who are over 62 years of age or mobility impaired. Income guidelines apply and Section 8 vouchers are accepted. Rent varies, but it includes 20 dinners each month and all utilities except cable and telephone.

Drop by the Open House for a tour or call Mary Ann McGill at (412) 361-4462 to schedule a visit at another time.



Laurentian Hall offers spacious and comfortable private and public spaces for its residents. The common room (above) has plenty of cozy seating for games, reading and watching television. Each apartment comes with a full bathroom, many of which are equipped with the needs of the mobility-impaired in mind (below right). Residents receive 20 dinners a month as part of their rental package, but each apartment has an equipped kitchen, as well. (below left).



Stacie Chandler/The Bulletin



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The Bulletin

serving Bloomfield, Garfield, East Liberty,
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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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BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD CORPORATION'S

EYESORE OF THE MONTH

Every other month, we highlight property owners who have admirably maintained or renovated their properties. Properties are nominated by community members. It's easy to do! Just make a quick call to Aggie Brose at 412-441-6950 x 15 with your choice for "Eyesore of the Month."

Abandonment and blight: unacceptable

The property at 5367 Columbo Street, was selected for Eyesore Property of the Month. According to the Allegheny County Real Estate website, Cheryl Y. Harshaw is the recorded owner. The mailing address for the tax bill is 14100 Greenview Rd., Detroit, MI 48223. Ms. Harshaw acquired the property in January, 2002 for \$1.00. At present the taxes are paid.

BGC staff visited the property and found it abandoned and blighted. This property sits behind well-maintained homes on N. Aiken Ave.

BGC staff contacted the Bureau of Building Inspection and found that the property was cited in the past and citations had been abated. There are no current citations.

The front floor entry is boarded up, but the windows on the first and second floor have been broken out. There is an opening to a crawl space on the side of the house. The asphalt driveway is separating and lifting.

We appreciate the fact that Ms. Harshaw is paying her taxes and taking care of citations, but she has walked away from this property and that is not acceptable. She needs to rehabilitate, sell or demolish, if necessary, and not allow it to stand abandoned for years and create blight for our neighbors.

BGC was able to contact Ms. Harshaw in Detroit to learn her plans for this property in our community. Ms. Harshaw reported that two years ago she was in the process of evicting her last tenant and they trashed the house and moved out during the night, leaving her with a \$1,500 water bill, which she paid. Her mother lives in the neighborhood and monitors the property for her. She would like to sell it, but has not put the house on the market. She has agreed to have her phone number published so interested buyers can contact her at 1-313-580-3334. She will entertain the best offer.



Stacie Chandler/The Bulletin

The DOC-Economou Project: Another Perspective

The dilemma over the future of the proposed mixed-use development at Baum Blvd. and Liberty Ave. sounds as if it may be with us for a while.

Various community groups and the developer, DOC-Economou (can there be a worse name for a development entity?), could not come to agreement on a number of terms and conditions with respect to the first phase of the project: the construction of a seven-story building next to the Bloomfield Post Office that would blend retail, hotel rooms, and high-end condominiums.

Although I haven't attended any meetings on the project, like many, I have followed it with some interest. Herewith some observations from someone who admittedly is one step removed:

1) As one who works for a community organization, I'm always mindful of the fact that, in zoning matters, I don't want to be perceived as the

POINT OF VIEW

By Richard Swartz

BGC Executive Director

spokesman for the community on what it deems acceptable or unacceptable, in terms of a proposed use for a particular property. People who stand to be most affected by the use need to be the ones who speak up.

It's also important for people to understand that my organization's stance on a proposed use should be reflective of community sentiment, provided that such sentiment is grounded in fact, and not supposition.

Bodies like the zoning board need to ask if my board of directors reviewed the proposed use, what position they have taken, and why it is they feel the need to weigh in. Do any of them live in close proximity to the site in question? Do any members have an economic interest which can bias their position? Sometimes there's a sense

that, because we are members of a community group, our collective voice should somehow count for more than if each of us came to the table as individual citizens. Should that necessarily be the case?

I've sat at more than a few zoning hearings over a 25-year period where the "Concerned Citizens of (insert name of any locality)" wanted to block something as seemingly innocuous as a home that persons with developmental disabilities would share. The group would turn out 50 people for the hearing, in a municipality or neighborhood with, say, 5,000 residents. Sometimes, community groups, such as they are, may not be speaking for the "community" at all, or certainly not the community in its entirety.

2) The DOC-Economou project

See DOC-Economou,
page 9

PITTSBURGH PROMISE, from page 1

scholarship from the Pittsburgh Promise, regardless of his or her family's income.

What can I use the money for?

Beginning in the fall of 2009, the money can be used for expenses considered part of the total cost of attendance, such as tuition, room and board, fees, and books. The money is paid directly to the school.

How much does it cost to attend the eligible schools?

The cost of post-secondary education varies greatly. The most expensive schools are private institutions where tuition, room and board, and fees can run as high as \$50,000 a year. Larger state-supported schools such as University of Pittsburgh, Temple University or Penn State University cost about \$23,000 for tuition, room and board, and fees. Smaller state colleges and universities such as Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Cheyney University of Pennsylvania run about \$16,000.

Tuition and fees at vocational and technical programs at Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science, Pittsburgh Culinary Institute or Sewickley Valley School of Nursing are comparable. A year at Community College of Allegheny County costs just under \$5000 for tuition and fees.

Many students choose to live at home and commute to a local campus to help keep the costs down.

What's the catch?

- The Pittsburgh Promise is a "last dollar scholarship." By completing the FAFSA, students will be considered for a variety of state and federal grants. When all grants are awarded from other sources, such as the school or the state or federal government, the Pittsburgh Promise will fill the gap, up to \$5000.

- Students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average in order to renew the Promise Scholarship for the upcoming academic year.

Where do we get information?

Information and applications are available from a variety of sources:

The Pittsburgh Promise website:

www.pittsburghpromise.org

Pittsburgh Public Schools

website: www.ppsk12.pa.us

High School Guidance Office

PPS Parent Hotline:

412.622.7920

How do I determine if my child is eligible?

Has your child been a resident of the Pittsburgh Public School District and

attended a Pittsburgh Public School continuously since at least 9th grade? The amount of the scholarship is based on the number of years the student has been enrolled in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. For example, a child who went to a PPS elementary school and then left the district for middle school, but returned for high school and was there on the first day of 9th grade, would be eligible for up to 75% of the Pittsburgh Promise, or \$3,750 per year for four academic years.

Has your child attended school regularly?

Students who have not attended school at least 85% of the time are not eligible. The attendance requirement factors in unexcused absences and suspensions. A student would have to be suspended or have unexcused absences on more than 27 days in a school year to become ineligible. Your child's attendance record is shown on his/her report card.

How do I know if my child's Grade Point Average (GPA) is high enough?

The GPA is based on an average of a child's final grades for a marking period in each subject. An A=4, a B=3, a C=2, a D=1. The GPA reflects a student's performance over his or her four years of high school. If the GPA is not shown on your child's report card, ask the school.

See the example of how a GPA is calculated at left. A student who has received a variety of grades, some Bs and some Cs and a few As, will have

a 2.25 or above, the minimum GPA to be eligible for the Pittsburgh Promise Scholarship.

A student who has no grades higher than a C will have a GPA of 2.0 or below, which does not qualify for the Pittsburgh Promise Scholarship.

What is a FAFSA?

Every educational institution requires applicants to fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine a student's eligibility for all forms of financial aid, including grants (which need not be repaid), student loans (which are low-interest loans that do not need to be repaid until the student has completed school), and work-study programs (jobs for students to help pay for their educational expenses).

The FAFSA should be submitted by the parent/guardian or the student when you have completed your 2008 Income Tax Return, as household income information is required. Students should complete the questionnaire below to determine who must complete the FAFSA.

Not submitting a FAFSA means a student could miss out on grants and scholarships.

You can submit or get more information about a FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Can I get help with a FAFSA?

The Negro Educational Emergency Drive – NEED, located on the first floor of the Warner Centre at 332 Fifth Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh, offers assistance with FAFSA. Their phone number is 412-566-2760.

Sample GPA

NINTH GRADE:

First Semester	Second Semester	Year to Date
History C	B	
Math B	B	
Spanish C	C	
Gym A	B	
Science B	C	
2.8	2.6	2.7

TENTH GRADE:

First Semester	Second Semester	Year to Date
History B	A	
Math C	C	
Spanish B	C	
Gym B	B	
Science C	B	
2.6	2.8	2.7

ELEVENTH GRADE:

First Semester	Second Semester	Year to Date
History A	B	
Math B	C	
Spanish C	B	
Gym A	A	
Science C	D	
3.0	2.2	2.7

TWELFTH GRADE:

First Semester	Second Semester	at Graduation
History B	B	
Math C	A	
Spanish B	B	
Gym C	C	
Science B	C	
2.6	2.8	2.675

Student's Dependency Status

For financial aid purposes, a student's dependency status determines whether the parents' information must be included on the FAFSA and who has primary responsibility for educational expenses.

If the student is dependent for financial aid purposes, both the student and the student's parent(s) must complete the FAFSA. The student and parents are jointly responsible for educational expenses.

If the student is independent for financial aid purposes, only the student, and if married, the student's spouse, complete the FAFSA. The student alone is responsible for paying educational expenses.

Answer the questions below to determine your filing status.

1. Before January 1 of this year were you 23 or older?
2. When you attend college, will you be working on a master's or doctorate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD or graduate certificate)?
3. Are you married? (Answer yes if you are separated not divorced.)
4. Do you have children who receive more than half their support from you?
5. Do you have dependents (other than your child or spouse) who live with you and receive more than half of their support from you?
6. Are (a) both of your parents deceased or (b) are you (or were you until age 18) a ward or dependent of the court?
7. Are you currently serving on active duty in the US armed forces?

If you answered No to every question, you are considered a dependent student, and you must provide financial information for your parents.

If you answered Yes to any question, you are considered an independent student, and you do not have to provide financial information for your parents



By Bill Stanhope and Kate Bayer
In Memory and Honor of Jay Bernard

"Give Sonnie a second look, please"



Sonnie is a dog you don't want to pass up. This handsome four-year old mixed-breed was picked up as a stray and is now back with the Animal Rescue League for the second time following an unhappy first adoption.

Sonnie is currently in foster care where it is reported that he is pleasant, bright, apparently housetrained and good with children. Sonnie likes activity but can also just "chill" out when the need arises. He is friendly around other dogs, doesn't chew on things he shouldn't, and likes riding in a car.

When walking Sonnie has a comical and quirky gait that makes him quite fun to be around. All in all, he is a very pleasant fellow who has had some pretty tough breaks. He would make a wonderful family companion in a home with lots of love to give. For more information about Sonnie contact Carol at 412-661-6452, ext 231.

Preventing hearing loss

From the time we are born, hearing is an important way we interact with the environment. Hearing can be affected by a family history of hearing loss, by certain medications, by trauma, and by the noise in our day-to-day environment. We cannot control all of

these, but there are things we can do to help our hearing last a lifetime.

Here are some simple ways to protect your hearing:

- Turn down the TV and the stereo! Many people turn up the volume out of habit, not necessity.
- Wear protective earplugs when doing things like using the lawnmower or powertools at home or



By Amy J. DiPlacido, M.D.
Bloomfield-Garfield
Family Health Center

work.

• Don't use noise to drown out other noise. An example of this is turning up the radio at home to drown out the noise of the washing machine or dishwasher.

• Get your hearing checked regularly.

• Talk to your doctor about possible medications that could be contributing to hearing loss.

It's not just the amount of time you spend around noise, but also how loud the noise is, that matters.

Good luck and a happy, health new year.

If you have an idea for a topic you'd like "To Your Health" to cover, e-mail Bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org.

Are you open to cremation?

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- ☐ **No, we do not cremate pets in our crematory**
However, if you wish, we will be happy to refer you to a pet cremation specialist.
- ☐ **24/7 Cremation**
For your convenience we are available every day and we accommodate special requests and schedules.
- ☐ **"Whose ashes are in the urn?"**
We personally perform the cremation so we know.
- ☐ **We perform all cremations individually**
All cremations are done on-site, so your loved one never leaves our care.
- ☐ **We understand your concerns**
That's why we explain your options and respect your wishes.
- ☐ **No hidden charges**
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So if you think you're open to the idea of cremation, think of us—we can answer any questions you may have.

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Santa visits BGC's Annual Light -Up Night

Close to 200 neighborhood children and dozens of adults gathered at the Community Activity Center last month to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season with hot chocolate, cookies and a special visit from Santa Claus himself.

The evening was made even more festive by the generosity of the Pennsylvania Mortgage Brokers

Association. The organization provided a sleighful of colorfully wrapped gifts that were distributed to children under 12.

*Photos by Adam Flanagan and Rick Flanagan
The Bulletin*



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The End of the World, When Time Stands Still

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

*This story is inspired
by Valentia Priscilla Azelle Werner*

On September 15, 2008, I gave birth to my first child, a beautiful little girl named Valentia (strong and brave in Latin). She was exactly how I imagined her, with her dad's big azure eyes and sweet-heart mouth. Like him, she was long and lanky. She also had my round face and "the Porter" nose.

Valentia was simply perfect. She didn't cry very often, but even her crying made us giggle. She looked like a wailing cartoon baby who screamed so loudly that you could see her tiny tonsils.

With Valentia, my husband, John, and I found a happiness we never knew existed. The smell and touch of her sweet skin, her soft peach-fuzz hair, and her little monkey faces made me feel at peace with myself and the world.

Valentia's arrival had been anticipated by all our friends and family. Her nursery looked like something from a magazine. I wanted everything to be absolutely perfect for my little girl.

The days following Valentia's arrival were filled with phone calls gifts and visits from well-wishers. I never imagined a child could bring such happiness to the people in our lives. John and I were on top of the world.

This amazing high ended early on October 23, 2008. When our dog woke us at about 4:30 in the morning, I realized Valentia wasn't making her usual baby noises. She had started to sleep through the night, so I wasn't surprised at first, though the room seemed awfully quiet.

Still half awake, I reached into her bed and touched her chest, but she didn't appear to be moving. "No way," I thought to myself. Still in bed, I reached over to the nightstand and switched on the light. The details are too painful and horrifying to write here, but so our nightmare began. "This can't be happening!! NO, NO, NO!!!" Valentia was gone!

The doctors, paramedics, and medical examiner seem to think it was Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) that took Valentia from us. The investigation takes four to six months to complete and, until then, we won't have a confirmed diagnosis. The wait just adds to our suffering.

The days and weeks since that horrifying morning are a blur to me. I do, however, remember every detail of the night of October 22nd, the eve of our nightmare. Naturally, I've been

replaying everything I did that night. Even though I didn't fully understand SIDS and Valentia didn't fit into the high risk categories for SIDS I still took measures to reduce her risk.

I never put Valentia in bed with us; I only laid her on her back to sleep; I don't smoke and I didn't allow people to smoke around her. I had also learned, several days earlier, that using a ceiling fan can reduce the risk of SIDS because the air circulates and lessens the chance that the baby can re-breathe her own carbon dioxide. That night, the ceiling fan was on. She was also using a pacifier, another risk reducer.

Nobody warned me about SIDS. Of course, I'd heard about SIDS, but I didn't really know what it was. I thought SIDS had something to do with suffocation, that it only happened to babies with breathing problems such as apnea and that it happened mostly to boys.

In the last few weeks, I've tried to make sense of it all. I've been working closely with Eileen Carlins, the Director of Support and Education at Sudden Infant Death Services of Pennsylvania. This Pittsburgh-based non-profit organization supports SIDS parents as they work through the devastating grief they experience.

As a mother who lost her daughter, Rachel, to SIDS in 1980, Eileen is probably the only person in my life who knows exactly what I'm feeling. Each day Eileen educates health care workers about SIDS and provides priceless support to bereaved parents like John and me. She's taught me quite a bit about SIDS and risk reducers.

According to a study conducted by the Allegheny County Medical Examiner, 68 babies died of SIDS between 2001 and 2006. Of those 68 sudden, unexpected infant deaths, only two babies were in an ideal sleeping environment: on their backs, in a crib, without environmental smoke. Eileen believes it's likely that most of the parents in these tragic deaths were unaware of the SIDS risk reducers, since most of the affected babies were found in risky environments.

According to my doctors, nobody warned me about SIDS because the chances of it happening to Valentia were "too small." This is true, but SIDS is still the major cause of infant deaths from the ages of 1 to 12

By Lisa Porter Werner
Bulletin Contributor

months. Perhaps increased awareness of this mystifying occurrence would help prevent more deaths.

If we discover that Valentia was a victim of SIDS, then for some unexplainable reason, the risk reducers we used with her that night did not work. This is another component of the mysterious nature of SIDS. Perfectly healthy babies with no risks can still die from it!

Nevertheless, the wide-spread general lack of understanding about SIDS is what prompted me to share my story. I feel a need to get the word out to other parents.

According to The American Academy of Pediatrics and SIDS of PA, the exact cause of SIDS is unclear and there is no way of knowing which babies will die from it. Researchers from both organizations believe the following: most babies who die of SIDS have an underlying brain abnormality; it is more common in boys than girls; and most deaths occur dur-

ing the fall, winter, and early spring. See the box below for some simple measures that parents and other caregivers can take to reduce the risk that their babies will die from SIDS.

Beautiful Valentia was only alive outside of my body for 38 glorious, colorful days, but she made an everlasting imprint on our souls and will always have a permanent home in our hearts. Ironically, it is her strength and bravery that inspired me to reach out and spread the word about SIDS to all new mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends of new babies.

I hope in some small way Valentia's spirit has taught each of you the fragility of a baby's life and how important it is to turn these SIDS risk reducers into daily rituals for your baby.

For more information about SIDS or this article please contact Eileen Carlins, Director of Support & Education at SIDS of PA, 412-322-5680, ext. 4. Or visit their website at www.SIDS-PA.org.

REDUCING THE RISK OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

1. Babies should sleep on their back. Studies have shown that putting babies to sleep on their back has reduced the number of SIDS deaths by half in countries, such as Norway, where babies traditionally sleep on their stomachs. Babies can re-breathe exhaled air (carbon dioxide) when they're trapped on their stomachs. If you can, use a ceiling fan to circulate the air in the room, or even open a window. Normally, babies sense when they are not getting enough air, wake and cry, which changes their heartbeat or breathing patterns to make up for the lowered oxygen and excess carbon dioxide. A baby with a flawed arcuate nucleus part of the brain, however, might lack this protective mechanism. This may also explain why more SIDS cases occur during the colder months, when respiratory and intestinal infections are more common.
2. Babies should not sleep in bed with you. It is possible to unknowingly roll over on your baby and suffocate her. In addition, studies have shown that babies can re-breathe your exhaled air which is trapped in the underlying bedding.
3. Use proper bedding for your baby. Be certain your baby sleeps on a firm mattress or other firm surface. Do not use fluffy blankets or comforters under the baby; or allow the baby to sleep on a waterbed, sofa, sheepskin, a pillow, or other soft materials. When your baby is very young, do not place soft stuffed toys or pillows in the crib with him/her.
4. Do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke around your baby. Babies and young children exposed to smoke have more colds and other diseases, as well as an increased risk of SIDS. Mothers who smoke during pregnancy are three times more likely to have a SIDS baby and exposure to second-hand smoke from mothers, fathers, and others in the household doubles a baby's risk of SIDS.
5. Do not overheat your baby. Do not let your baby go to sleep in her snow suit or lay her by a heating source. Babies should be kept warm, but they should not be allowed to get too warm. An overheated baby is more likely to go into a deep sleep from which it is difficult to arouse. The temperature in the baby's room should feel comfortable to an adult and overdressing the baby should be avoided. Keep the temperature in your baby's room so that it feels comfortable to you. If the back of your baby's head is sweaty, she is too warm!
6. Get early and regular prenatal care. Proper nutrition, no smoking or drug or alcohol use by the mother, and frequent medical check-ups beginning early in pregnancy might help prevent a baby from developing an abnormality that could put him/her at risk for sudden death. These measures may also reduce the chance of having a premature or low birth weight baby, which also increases the risk for SIDS.

DOC-Economou

continued from page 4

reportedly the subject of at least 50 meetings between community interests and the developer's representatives.

I don't know how anyone else feels, but that struck me as an inordinate number of meetings. I'm not sure the Allies planning the D-Day invasion needed 50 meetings. Maybe they did. But an outsider is left to wonder why anyone would expect a compromise to be reached with the developers after the first ten or so meetings.

The Port Authority reached a settlement with the drivers' union after three days of intense bargaining in Washington. Is it possible that there were representatives on the community's side of the table who were not interested in seeing the project move forward under any circumstances?

If so, is it realistic to think that if talks resume at some future date, there is a serious chance of a compromise being worked out? If one is unalterably opposed to the project, which often occurs in matters related

to land use, does it make sense to involve oneself in discussions whose aim supposedly is to reach a compromise?

It was remarked by one of the community representatives that the developers were "slow" in providing important information about the project. If so, did it take 50 meetings to deduce that a cooperative spirit was missing from at least one party to the discussions? Or were requests for more information simply used as a tactic to obstruct a final compromise?

3) The future of the Baum Blvd. corridor has many concerned. The one question that hangs over everything, including the DOC-Economou project, is how dense future development will be along this corridor. The disagreement between the developer and the community representatives occurred over such issues as the height of the building, traffic flow, and parking. Each of these relates to the question of density. Shadyside is a very densely-developed neighborhood. Only a block from the proposed DOC-Economou site stand two apartment buildings, the Coronado and the

Arlington. The first is eight stories high, and the other nine stories. There are two-story houses directly behind the Arlington. Both buildings have exterior parking adjacent to the premises. Traffic flows out onto S. Aiken Ave.

Perhaps there are some ideas to be drawn from these properties. Should traffic from the long-standing development flow out onto Powhattan St.? That doesn't make much sense. Certainly if traffic comes out onto Liberty Ave., it will make the intersection with Baum much busier. But is "busier" necessarily bad? Although no public subsidy is targeted for the development, perhaps there should be if the developers agreed to put all of the parking underground. And the tradeoff: let DOC-Economou build the seven-story building they're seeking.

Wisconsin Ave. in downtown Bethesda, MD is as dense and busy a place as you're likely to find in sub-

urban Maryland. It is filled with mixed-use buildings, some of which tower seven stories or more. A number of buildings have underground parking, which patrons love in bad weather. And there's a pulse to the street that you don't find anywhere in the city except perhaps on Murray Ave., E. Carson St., or Walnut St.

Wouldn't it be interesting if the future of the Baum Blvd. corridor could develop into something like Wisconsin Ave., with dense, attractively-designed uses, instead of like the concrete canyon that defines much of the UPMC/University of Pittsburgh campus above Fifth Ave. in Oakland?

But that could happen to Baum Blvd., too, if we make it next to impossible for private developers to have a role. UPMC already has a significant foothold in the corridor, it pays no real estate taxes to speak of, and it's still expanding. Is that the future we want for Baum Boulevard?

Peabody recommended for District 6-12 IB program

Pittsburgh Peabody is the best permanent home for the District's International Baccalaureate (IB) 6-12 School, according to the unanimous recommendation of the IB Site Selection Committee.

At the direction of the Board, the Committee was created to evaluate District facilities that would accommodate the IB program and be ready in time for the 2012-13 school year. Members of the Committee include parents from across the City, students, URA representatives, alumni, teachers and community members.

Keeping in mind the District's available facilities, fiscal constraints and projected enrollment decline, the Committee developed the selection criteria for determining the best permanent home for the IB school. The facilities reviewed by the Committee were either closed schools or those schools that currently have an excess capacity greater than 50%: Connelly, Langley, Oliver, Peabody, Reizenstein, and Westinghouse.

• Building Program/Facility Amenities – The facility must provide more than 50 classrooms, four or more computer labs, high school ready science labs, a gymnasium and a pool. Additional facility amenities identified by the Committee include: an auditorium, natural light, computer labs for every 200 children, separate entrances for lower and upper grades, some outdoor athletic facilities, and

three or more IB exam rooms.

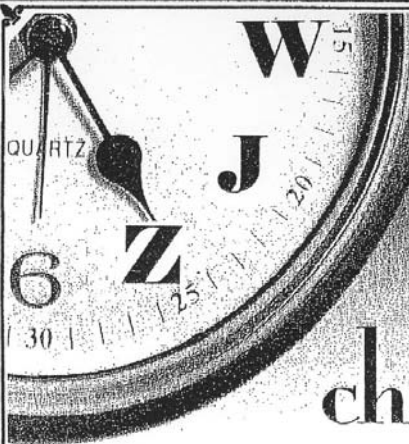
• Location – The site must be located near community resources and provide easy access to local universities. Access to Port Authority transportation was important.

• Financial – The site must minimize capital expenditures and have per pupil renovation costs that do not exceed that of recent construction projects.

After thorough review, the Committee collectively viewed the Peabody facility as the District's best option. The recommendation highlighted the facility's location and need for less capital expenditures in comparison to the renovations that would be necessary at many other District facilities.

Currently most of the District's IB/IS students live in the city's East End. The Peabody facility's proximity to home and public transportation provides students access to local universities and community amenities, in a bicycle-friendly, East End location.

The Committee did ask the District to consider increasing the natural light by restoring windows that had been covered by bricks during renovation in the 1970s. Superintendent Roosevelt and his staff will review the Committee recommendation and provide a recommendation to the Board in the next few months.



Time for a change?

The new year is upon us and once again we find ourselves wondering where time has gone.


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BULLETIN BOARD

COUNCIL-TO-GO

Meet City Council District 7 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.

This month's sessions will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 21 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Polish Hill Civic Association, and on Wednesday, Jan. 28 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Enrico's Tazza D'Oro in Highland Park. For more information about Council to Go and Councilman Dowd, visit www.pgh.gov.com/district7 or call 412-255-2140.

ART ALL NIGHT SEEKS HOST BUILDING

Art All Night 2009 will be held on April 25-26 at a TBD location in Lawrenceville. The leadership team is presently seeking host locations/buildings for this year's

event. If you own a building (or know of a building) that would be a suitable home for Art All Night, we'd love to hear from you immediately, as the planning process is underway. Email pete@walltowall.com as soon as possible. If you'd like to assist us in a leadership or volunteer role, please visit: www.artallnight.org to sign up.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY LECTURE SERIES

The Lawrenceville Historical Society Lecture Series has gained such a fine reputation that many organizations contact us for help in getting speakers. Join us Thursday, January 15 at 7 p.m. Tom Powers will discuss his recent book about the history of O'Hara Township. Tom's own family history goes back to that area's founding. His book will be available for purchase.

Free meetings are held at Canterbury Place, McVay Auditorium (1st Floor), 310 Fisk Street in Lawrenceville. For more information e-mail info@LHS15201.org.

FREE RELATIONSHIP CLASS FOR COUPLES

The Marriage Works is a healthy marriage/relationship initiative located inside the Parental Stress Center.

Our unique program offers "free" marriage and premarital group education classes. Topics covered include: communications, roles and responsibilities, decision-making, closeness and intimacy, finances and budgeting, conflict resolution, parenting and fatherhood/motherhood. Residents from East Liberty, Garfield, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington, and Wilkinsburg are encouraged to take advantage of these classes.

To register for classes beginning in January, 2009, contact Shawn or Ashley at 412-325-0602 or visit www.themarriageworks.org.

working and personal development. For more information please call 412-508-3331. We have a year's worth of activities to do and topics to discuss. Don't miss out!

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Saturday: 11:00 a.m. by appointment only (call ahead to schedule)

The cost is \$5 per class, cash or check only. Package deals are available. Email modernformations@hotmail.com or call 412.362.0274 for more information!

TABLE FOR ONE

Table For One is a group of Christian single adults whose goal is to connect with other single people to help them with life's surprises and joys.

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FINANCIAL AID NIGHTS AT HIGH SCHOOLS

Parents and families of the Pittsburgh Public Schools are invited to attend one of the District's Financial Aid Nights to learn about the types of federal and state aid available for education after high school.

Representatives from the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), Negro Educational Emergency Drive (NEED), and colleges will be on hand to speak about The Pittsburgh Promise and the various types of financial aid available to students including grants, loans and work-study.

Locations, dates and times:

Pittsburgh Carrick
Thursday, January 15 at 7 p.m.
in the School Library.

Pittsburgh Westinghouse
Thursday, January 15 at 6 p.m.
in the School Library.

Pittsburgh Schenley
Thursday, January 22, 6 to 8 p.m.
in the School Library.

Pittsburgh CAPA
Wednesday, January 28 at 6 p.m.
in the Black Box Theater.



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FRIENDSHIP HOUSE TOUR LOOKING FOR HOUSES

The planning for the 16th Annual Friendship House Tour is underway! The 2009 House Tour will feature a kitchen and bath theme.

With so many Friendship residents remodeling their kitchens and bathrooms, we thought that we'd show them off to the Pittsburgh region!

The House Tour Committee is looking for homes that have remodeled or updated a kitchen or bathroom or homes with interesting or historical elements in the kitchen or bathroom.

If you are interested in placing your home on tour, please contact Sarah Collins at sarah@friendship-pgh.org or 412-441-6147 x 7.

EECM's 25TH CELEBRATION AND ANNUAL GATHERING

The East End Cooperative Ministry will honor the life and achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at its 25th Celebration and Annual gathering of EECM congregations on Sunday, January 18, 2009.

The celebration will be held at Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 250 N. Highland Ave.

Co-hosted by Morningside Church of God in Christ and the Congregation Dor Hadash, the celebration will begin at 3:30 p.m. with a musical performance by children from the neighborhood Academy and Sacred Heart Elementary School. The service begins at 4 p.m.

The keynote speaker will be the Most Reverend David A. Zubik, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh. The theme is

"Live the Dream: Together We Will." The gathering and Celebration will include music chosen to celebrate the rich heritage of Pittsburgh's diverse communities.

Prior to the Celebration, the "sauce Boss," Bill Wharton, will play and sing spicy Florida blues while cooking a lunch for all in the Eastminster Fellowship Hall.

EECM is an urban, interfaith non-profit organization that provides compassionate assistance and direct services in Pittsburgh's East End. EECM serves the hungry, the homeless, the elderly, and the disadvantaged young people in the community. For more information contact EECM at 412-361-5549 or email at eecm@eecm.org.

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Pens wow students during open practice at Arena

continued from page 1



Local students came with signs, as well as black and gold regalia of every kind to cheer on the Pittsburgh Penguins at their open practice last month. Arsenal Middle School students were among the 9,000 youth who spent two hours getting an up-close and personal look at hockey and some of the games biggest -- and youngest -- stars, team captain Sidney Crosby and forward Evgeni Malkin.



each drill was designed to help the team, honing the players' defensive and offensive skills. Students also got a chance to learn some geography and physics. They heard about countries all over the world as the announcers introduced players such as Miroslav Satan (MEER-OH-SLAW-VE SHA-TAN), who is from Slovakia, or Evgeni Malkin, who is from Russia. As players shot pucks, the students learned the importance and role of momentum and calculating the angle towards the net. They did this by putting a player in front of the net and having them shoot the puck towards the net. Depending on the angle of where the player's body was and how they shot the puck, they would make a goal.

The practice lasted about two hours. The team ran offensive drills that focused on getting a player in front of the net and using a rebound as a scoring opportunity. They also did defensive drills with mini scrimmages. In between each drill they did laps around the ice, practicing their stick handling.

The students also learned about sportsmanship and how team members encourage each other. Some of the players came out early to work with Marc Andre-Fleury, who was hurt, so he could stay on his game during recovery.

The players found it hard to make some plays. Curry, a goalie brought up from the Wilkes-Barre team to be Sabourin's back-up while Fleury is out, even mentioned that the practice was like a game because "you're trying to talk to the D and you can't hear them because of the crowd." Pittsburgh Public Schools

made up a large portion of the audience, overflowing the season ticket holders' seats.

Students were happy for the opportunity to get out of school and watch the practice. "I don't know much about hockey, mostly about Sidney Crosby. It's cool to not be at school and see this," said Sarah Barczak of St. Bonaventure School, as she looked up to see if a puck was coming her way.

The players paid their respects to many new-found fans by throwing pucks over the glass. Some players, such as Maxime Talbot, even gave away their sticks.

The Pens managed to have everyone learn a little about hockey, geography, physics, and fun in one action-filled afternoon.

Madeline Chandler is a senior Literary Arts major at Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts. She plans to study journalism and film at Penn State University.

Sausalido adds California flair to our Little Italy

By Lisa Porter Werner
Bulletin Contributor

Californians have a reputation for being culturally diverse and their food is known for its fusion style. This makes Bloomfield, already home to a diverse restaurant selection, the perfect location for Sausalido - a 1,200-square-foot, dressy-casual, B.Y.O.B. restaurant sort of named after the picturesque island in San Francisco Bay.

The restaurant is spelled differently because "Lido" is owner Nicholas Mineo's grandfather's name. Yes, Mineo's family owns Pittsburgh's famous Mineo's Pizza House in Squirrel Hill and Shadyside Market. "I ran the catering business out of the market. I had so many catering orders that I just decided to open a restaurant," is what the 20-something Mineo told our party on our first dining experience at Sausalido.

Our party of four arrived a few minutes after our reservation on a Saturday night. The tiny downstairs dining room is understated (in a good way), dimly lit and romantic. Unfortunately there was some confusion with our reservation and the downstairs dining room was packed. We were escorted upstairs to more 'private' seating, just the four of us in a room that seemed to be geared for larger parties. "Just wait up here until a table is available. I'll send someone up to open your bottles of wine and bring you a complimentary appetizer," we were told.

A few minutes later we were munching on antipasto oven-baked flatbread topped with prosciutto, roasted red peppers, artichokes, olive tapenade, and picante provolone cheese (\$8). No table opened up downstairs, so we stayed upstairs, which, by the time we ordered, was also packed.

The menu at Sausalido is just as charming as the

Shadyside Market. The offerings are down-to-earth, simple and incredibly fresh. We had three starters: Venezuelan Lump Crab Stuffed Shrimp - three delicious jumbo shrimp stuffed with crab meat and drizzled in lemon and herb olive oil (\$12); Raspberry Beet Salad - a hearty portion of fresh beets, red onions, honey-raspberry balsamic dressing, toasted pecans and Danish blue gorgonzola cheese atop mesclun greens (\$8.50); East Coast Caesar Salad - imported shaved Parmesan, kalamata and manzanilla olives, house-made croutons, fresh, vivid green romaine lettuce and Caesar dressing (\$8.50). I was amazed at how colorful the vegetables were in the salads. Mineo attributes the freshness of the produce to his dad's passion for visiting the local vegetable markets daily to hand-pick produce. We were also impressed by the Capon Soup - a flavorful clear broth with capon meat, spinach, ditalini, vegetables, and Parmesan Reggiano (\$4/cup), and the Smoked Gouda - topped with marinated sun-dried tomatoes and sautéed spinach (\$8).

I'm reluctant to order seafood on a first visit to a new restaurant; however, after the freshness of the appetizers and salads, I couldn't resist. The Frisco Seafood Cavatappi, a hefty portion of cork screw pasta with lump crab meat, juicy shrimp and scallops tossed with tomatoes and asparagus in a fresh tarragon cream sauce, was just as delicious as it sounded (\$24). The seafood was fresh and the tarragon cream wasn't too heavy, it was just right. We were also wowed by: London Broil, served over Parmesan pancetta risotto with stone ground mustard cream and a side of seasonal vegetables (\$25); Autumn Stuffed Chicken, a pan-roasted breast stuffed with caramelized apples and cranberries and seasoned with cinnamon and sage brown butter

Sausalido

4621 Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield
(former space of Mezzanote)
412.683.4575

www.sausalido.net

B.Y.O.B. Corkage Fee (\$2 per person)

Menu is fresh, seasonal and contemporary
New American and European Cuisine
(seems to be market driven)

Mon.-Thurs. 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Fri. 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

(\$22); and the house special that night - Gorgonzola Strip Steak cooked to just the right temperature and served with Parmesan mashed potatoes and asparagus (market price). All entrees are served with a house salad, rustic bread, and white bean and rosemary olive oil for dipping.

I was too stuffed for dessert, but my dining pals seemed to enjoy the Almond Crème Brûlée (\$6.50). I wasn't, however, too stuffed to try Mineo's mother's homemade chocolate chunks swirled with pretzels -- a treat that was given out at the end of the night (free). Yum!

Mineo came upstairs several times to chat with us and to make sure we were happy with our upstairs table and our food. He seems happy in Bloomfield and excited to bring fairly-priced fine New American cuisine to the neighborhood.

My husband and I enjoyed the food at Sausalido so much that we returned the following week for lunch. We were not disappointed; the portions were a good size and the food was fresh and flavorful.

The light and bright Californian flair which Sausalido brings to Pittsburgh's Little Italy is delightful.