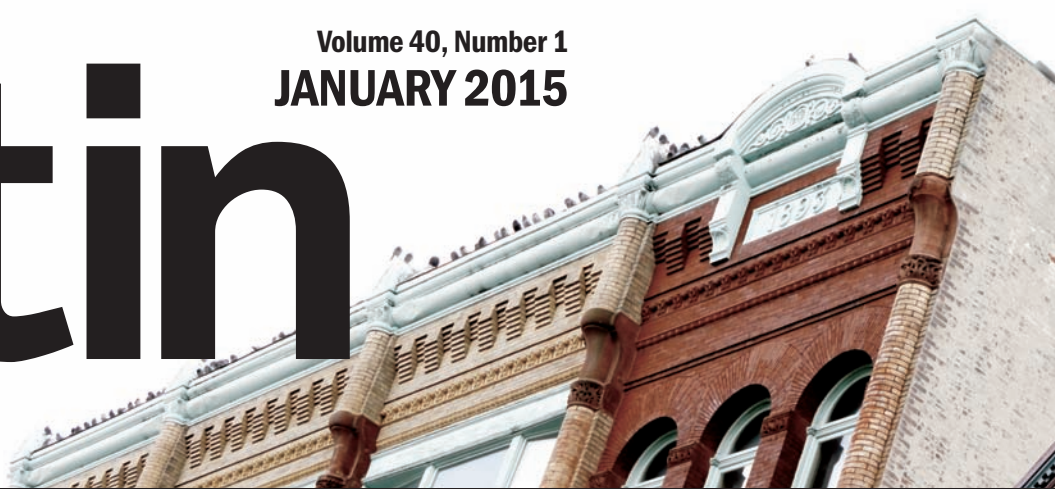


the Bulletin

Volume 40, Number 1
JANUARY 2015

Serving Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty,
Lawrenceville, and Stanton Heights Since 1975



Penn Avenue to reopen to two-way traffic

By Sarah Burke *The Bulletin*

Penn Avenue – For residents and business owners who have struggled during the reconstruction of Penn Avenue, good news is on the horizon.

Aaron Pickering, Michael Baker Corporation's field manager for the Penn Avenue reconstruction project, reports that the section of Penn Avenue between Evaline and Mathilda Streets is on schedule to reopen to two-way traffic at the end of December, dependent on weather conditions.

"The weather has cooperated for the most part thus far, and this will need to continue to ... achieve the goal," Pickering said. "The project team again thanks the residents and businesses for their continued patience as the east-bound roadway nears completion."

Pickering told *The Bulletin* that the remaining sections of roadway pavement were completed on Dec. 12, and the contractor, Matcon Diamond, is continuing work to install roadway drainage and complete the curb gutter along the eastbound roadway.

See **Construction** | page 3



ABOVE: Ashley McFarland (left), education and outreach coordinator at the Pittsburgh Glass Center, attends the center's Holiday Glass Sale on Dec. 7, along with glass artist Sam Foreman. Photo by John Colombo Photography.

Neighbors rally to keep grocery store on Penn

By Aggie Brose

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Penn Avenue – The Bottom Dollar grocery store at 5200 Penn Ave. is still slated to close on Dec. 31 due to the sale of all of Bottom Dollar's Pennsylvania stores to ALDI, Inc. The Bloom-

See **Bottom Dollar** | page 2

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Woolslair application deadline extended

By Wesley Davis

Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Bloomfield – For students entering kindergarten through second grade, Pittsburgh Woolslair PreK-5 will become a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math)

See **Woolslair** | page 5

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ABOVE: Claire Perteete, proprietor of Dandelions, offers Susie Salo of Highland Park a homemade cookie and recipe at the Joy of Cookies tour in Lawrenceville. Photo by John Colombo Photography.

A Publication of The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Bulletin

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

In reflecting on the recent deaths of two men in New York City and Ferguson, Missouri at the hands of police officers, the board and staff of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) recognize that these tragedies point to the need for stronger police-community relations across the nation. In Pittsburgh, as elsewhere, these relations should reinforce protocols that protect every human life, while simultaneously supporting the role of law enforcement in keeping our society safe from crimes committed by its members.

Through its public safety task force, the BGC has long advocated for a sensitive, yet effective, police presence in our communities. But that presence should never come at a price that needlessly sacrifices the dignity or risks the lives of any people, including suspects, in service to the greater good. In our dialogues with the Pittsburgh Police Bureau, we have found them to share these concerns, but the larger community now needs to be a regular party to that conversation. It does appear that the city administration, under Mayor William Peduto, is on a parallel course, with its focus on improving the equipment and training available to officers on the street.

Crime can often spark anger, and retaliation by those who've been victimized, but these responses only serve to further destabilize our communities. We need our police to be a source of calm and reasoned intervention in dealing with suspects or difficult circumstances, and to employ deadly force only when the lives of its officers are truly and unavoidably in jeopardy. Taking a suspect alive, as happened in the recent arrest of a man who allegedly assassinated a state police officer this fall, is a triumph in the pursuit of a just and civil society. It is what separates us from the animal kingdom.

It will take the families of Michael Brown and Eric Garner a long time to come to grips with their deaths. But we should move as quickly as we can to apply what it is we can collectively learn from their unfortunate ends.

To add your voice to the conversation, write or email The Bulletin at 5149 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15224, or at bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org. ♦

Bottom Dollar *from page 1*

field-Garfield Corporation (BGC) recently convened two transition team meetings with local stakeholders and elected officials to define strategies that would keep a grocery store at the 5200 Penn Ave. location.

The BGC is engaging with U.S. Senator Bob Casey, Governor-Elect Tom Wolf, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Mayor William Peduto, State Senator Wayne Fontana, Councilwoman Deborah Gross, and Councilman Rev. Ricky Burgess to encourage ALDI's executives to share with the public a written plan for the Penn Avenue site that will be owned by ALDI once the sale is finalized in the first quarter of 2015.

The closure of 46 Bottom Dollar stores, including the one at 5200 Penn Ave., will lead to 1,600 Pennsylvanians losing their jobs. Residents who want to support keeping a grocery store on Penn Avenue can get involved in two ways.

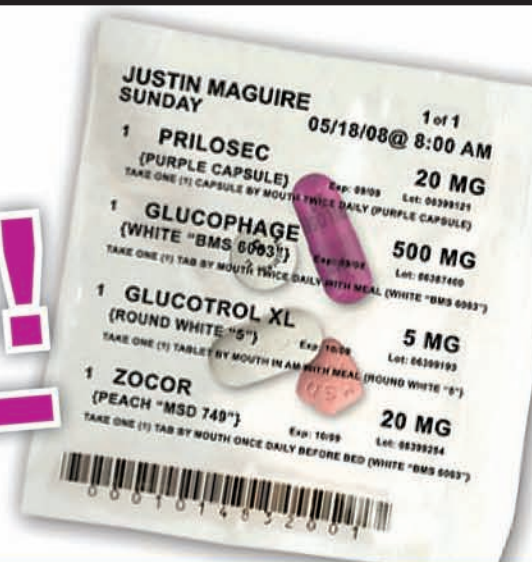
A neighborhood grocery store rally is planned for Dec. 22. This will include a 6 p.m. press conference at 5200 Penn Ave., followed by a 7 p.m. community meeting at 113 N. Pacific Ave. Residents are encouraged to attend and show support for maintaining a grocery store in the neighborhood.

Neighbors and local stakeholders can also help by contacting ALDI and Bottom Dollar executives. Residents can ask ALDI executives to maintain a grocery store at 5200 Penn Ave., and to share their plans for the Penn Avenue location. Residents can also encourage Bottom Dollar executives to halt any sale of fixtures or grocery store equipment until a plan for the Penn Avenue location has been finalized.

Jason Hart, president of ALDI, Inc., can be reached at 630-879-8100 or 1200 N. Kirk Rd., Batavia, IL 60510. Christina Morasczyk, real estate contact for the ALDI Saxonburg Division – which includes southwestern Pennsylvania – can be reached at 724-352-9393 ext. 123, christina.morasczyk@aldi.us, or 6000 N. Noah Dr., Saxonburg, PA 16056. Steve Wilson, Bottom Dollar's real estate representative, can be reached at 704-633-8250, sdwilson@foodlion.com, or 2110 Executive Dr., Salisbury, NC 28147.

If you have questions or would like to engage in this issue, call 412-441-6950 ext. 15. ♦

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AutoZone store at Babyland goes to court

By Rick Swartz *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

Penn Avenue – The owners of the former Babyland site in Friendship have taken an appeal in response to the refusal by the city zoning board to grant the numerous variances needed for an AutoZone store that they want to build at that location.

The property owners, known as 5542 Penn L.P., have filed a petition at Common Pleas Court to have the board's decision in the case overturned. They have named the zoning board as the appellee, or defendant, in the case.

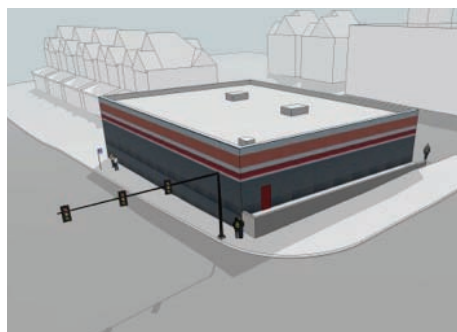
A number of outside parties have banded together to file a petition to intervene in support of the city's position. Included in this group are the Friendship Community Organization; Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation; East Liberty Development, Inc.; Highland Park Community Development Corporation; and two nearby property owners.

"There will not be a full-fledged hearing in the manner that happened at the zoning board," advised Jon Pushinsky, who together with a second attorney, David Toal, prepared and filed the petition to intervene. "The transcript of the zoning board hearing will be forwarded to the judge who presides over the appeal. Both sides will be invited to submit their briefs in the case, and then the judge will attempt to hold a conciliation conference. That conference is typically not open to the public."

The owners, 5542 Penn L.P., argued forcefully before the zoning board that the design of the new building and parking lot, as well as the orientation of

the building on the lot, were dictated in large measure by the developer's need to conform to the provisions for access for mobility-impaired individuals as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The opponents to the zoning application argued just the opposite, that the law's provisions do not define the manner in which access to a public building is provided for such individuals, only that access be provided where feasible to do so. At issue for the opponents has been the design of the store, which has its main door facing a side parking lot, and little in the way of openings into the building from either Penn or Negley Avenues.

"Basically, they're asking the powers that be to let them build a concrete box of a building on a very prominent corner of the neighborhood, and hanging their argument on the ADA," said John Axtell, a member of the Friendship Community Organization. "We believe that a building that accommodates both the ADA and the need for a thoughtfully designed structure on that important corner is doable." ♦



ABOVE: Rendering of the proposed AutoZone store at the corner of Penn and Negley Avenues. Model by evolveEA.

PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

No homicides were reported in all of Zone 5 for the month of November, according to Pittsburgh Police. Zone 5 includes the Garfield, Bloomfield, Friendship, East Liberty, and Homewood neighborhoods. The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's (BGC) staff would like to thank Zone 5's officers, along with all of the stakeholders involved in the BGC's Public Safety Task Force, for their tireless efforts to fight crime in the area.

The BGC looks forward to continuing to work with Zone 5 officers and community stakeholders to improve the safety of our neighborhood, with ongoing support from City Hall to support policing efforts. The city has received a grant to support hiring 15 community-oriented police officers, and these 15 officers are expected to be assigned to Zone 5 after they have completed training.

Thank you! The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation would like to acknowledge its main corporate partners, WesBanco, Dollar Bank, and Allegheny Valley Bank. Thanks also to BNY Mellon, First Niagara Bank, PNC Bank, Allegheny Health Network, Citizens Bank, the Sprout Fund, and all of The Bulletin's advertisers.

the Bulletin

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The deadline for the February issue is **Thursday, January 15.**

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Board Meetings are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at 5321 Penn Ave. and are open to the public. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

The Bulletin is made possible in part by funding from Dollar Bank, WesBanco Bank, and The Heinz Endowments.

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Construction *from page 1*

Due to the financial hardships experienced by Penn Avenue businesses, a \$35,000 emergency loan fund, established in August with a grant from the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA), is being administered by Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC).

Aggie Brose, deputy director of the BGC, said that reopening the avenue to two-way traffic will bring some relief to residents and business owners.

"Although this project has been difficult for the community, four new businesses have come to the Penn Avenue corridor during reconstruction," Brose said. "Now

is the perfect time for even more new businesses to come on board."

Reopening Penn to two-way traffic also coincides with "Tour de Penn," a Biz Buzz program sponsored by the URA that runs through Feb. 14.

The campaign's goal is to attract foot traffic back to Penn Avenue by encouraging participants to visit businesses within the construction zone, receive "passport stamps," and enter weekly gift card drawings.

For more information, visit www.pennavenue.org/tourdepenn. ♦



ABOVE: A construction crew pours new curbs and bump-outs along Penn Avenue. Photo by Wesley Davis.



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Rogers School to go to Impakt Development

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin Contributor*

Garfield – The Pittsburgh school board has decided to sell the vacant Rogers School property, sandwiched between Columbo and Black Streets in Garfield, to a private developer for \$275,000.

In a November vote, the school board turned aside bids from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) and E Properties, a Lawrenceville developer, in permitting the sale to Impakt to go forward. The BGC’s bid was for \$150,000, while E Properties had matched Impakt’s offer. Impakt had informed the board that their intention is to convert the property into market-rate apartments, in a similar fashion to what they did with the former Fifth Avenue High School in the city’s Uptown neighborhood several years ago.

Board member Terry Kennedy advised her colleagues, at a November meeting of the board’s business and finance committee, that the sale to Impakt could be concluded within 45 days because Impakt is reportedly paying cash for the property. She did not want to see the property remain in the district’s hands for any length of time while a purchaser tried to assemble the financing for its purchase and redevelopment. The building has been vacant since 2009. The BGC, in its offer, had asked for six months to close on the purchase if it were selected as the buyer.

Impakt Development was profiled in a June 2010 edition of the Pittsburgh Business Times. The article identified Casey Steiner and Jonathan Hill as the principals in the company. Their previous projects include the Grant School Lofts and South Side Lofts, both reclamation projects of once-vacant school buildings.

For the BGC, the school board’s decision comes as a disappointment. According to Rick Swartz, the BGC’s executive director, the group was going to attempt to convert the building into below-market-rate

apartments, and, as such, had to be more cautious about what it could offer for the property.

“With the building needing quite a bit of environmental remediation, we had to be more conservative in our approach. Our goal was to see one-bedroom apartments renting for \$500 per month, not \$1,000,” Swartz said.

He also said the school board seemed uncomfortable with the notion that the BGC would be the purchaser, but that it would ultimately have to form a for-profit, limited partnership in order to see the affordable housing project done.

“What a number of board members had a hard time grasping was why a for-profit entity would have to be involved,” Swartz said. “They were advised by their solicitor, Ira Weiss, that this could be, in his words, ‘tantamount to an evasion of the school code’ if the district were to go ahead and sell it to us.”

Swartz said the Internal Revenue Service, which allocates federal tax credits in order to relieve the developers of affordable housing from having to take on significant amounts of debt, mandates that the ownership entity for such housing be a for-profit.

“Without that vehicle, the tax credits cannot be passed through to private investors, who will then put up the cash for the project, and receive the credits to use over each year of a 15-year period,” he said.

Still, Swartz admitted, it was a learning experience for him and for the community.

“Board members Tom Sumpter, Dr. Regina Holley, and Mark Brentley, Sr., voted to sell the property to the BGC, because they got the gist of what it was we were proposing,” he said. “For that, we are very appreciative.” ♦



ABOVE: The Pittsburgh school board has decided to sell the vacant Rogers School building to Impakt Development, a private developer. Photo courtesy of cityLAB.

'Moms and Cops' seminar to promote safety

By Aggie Brose Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation



ABOVE: Officer Michael Gay visits Nakia Walls and family. Photo courtesy of Michael Gay.

Garfield – The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) will partner with the Pittsburgh Police Bureau, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC, and Magee Women's Hospital of UPMC to host a "Moms and Cops" seminar from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Feb. 4 at 113 N. Pacific Ave. Breakfast, lunch, and childcare will be provided free of charge.

"Moms and Cops is a daylong seminar for mothers of young children as well as professionals who work with families to come together to learn how to keep ... children safe," said Liz Style, coordinator of SaferTogether in the Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety. "The seminar includes training on recognizing signs of abuse and what kinds of family resources are available in the community to help you raise your children."

The program's handbook explains that Moms and Cops aims to "offer information as to how families, police officers, and providers can access services in a time of need" and to "provide an educational model for the early detection of neglect and abuse of children and for combatting domestic violence."

According to the agenda for the Feb. 4 seminar, the event will include presentations from police officers and detectives on how mothers can keep themselves and their families safe. It will also include presentations from local social service agencies that will provide information on resources available to families in the community.

"People who attend generally leave very pleased with the information-packed day. You get a lot out of it," Style said.

Required registration forms can be completed at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's youth development office at 5321 Penn Ave., 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Saturdays.

Continuing education credits are available for counselors, psychologists, and mental health professionals. For assistance in registering for the seminar, contact Wesley Davis at 412-441-6950 ext. 17 or wesley@bloomfield-garfield.org. ♦

Ferlo leaves office as state senator

By Sarah Burke The Bulletin

East End – After representing the 38th senatorial district for more than 10 years, Pennsylvania State Senator Jim Ferlo left office on Nov. 30.

"[This transition] returns me to my roots as a citizen activist and volunteer," he said.

Ferlo will continue to serve as a board member of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh Green Innovators; Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc.; and the Port of Pittsburgh Commission.

"All of my records now housed at Pitt's Hillman Library



See **Ferlo** | page 16

Woolslair *from page 1*

magnet school for the 2015-2016 school year.

The application deadline for Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) magnet programs was Dec. 12. Families who completed an application for a PPS magnet school should be notified in mid- to late January on whether their children were accepted into the magnet programs to which they applied.

Because Pittsburgh Woolslair was late in joining the magnet application process, the school will continue to accept magnet applications as long as spaces are available.

Applications for Woolslair's STEAM magnet program can be found online at <http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/magnet>.

Copies of the application and assistance in completing the application are available at Pittsburgh Woolslair at 501 40th St., Lawrenceville United at 4839 Butler St., the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 5321 Penn Ave., and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Lawrenceville branch at 279 Fisk St.

Families living in Woolslair's geographical "feeder" pattern can easily enroll at the school, bypassing the magnet registration process. To learn whether your family resides within the feeder pattern, call Pittsburgh Woolslair at 412-529-8800. ♦

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Groups work to keep neighborhoods diverse

By Elizabeth Sensky East Liberty Development, Inc.

East Liberty – The neighborhoods of East Liberty and Garfield have seen much change in recent years. Crime is down and new developments are up, but these changes represent more than just a push for cosmetic improvements. Behind the scenes, people are working to ensure that these neighborhoods keep their original communities at their core. One of these people is Michael Stanton, founder of Open Hand Ministries.

Open Hand started in 2007 as a partnership between four ministries: Valley View Presbyterian in Garfield, East Liberty and Eastminster Presbyterian churches in East Liberty, and the Open Door at the Union Project in Highland Park. The collaborative ministry was created as a continuation of a five-house rehabilitation event called "East End Blitz" that Stanton coordinated while working at Hosanna Industries. The blitz helped five families become first-time homeowners. After the project concluded, Stanton realized that this type of work needed to continue long-term.

"We needed to allow for the building of relationships – in particular, cross-cultural relationships, relationships that transcend socioeconomic divides," Stanton said.

Open Hand develops these relationships as they guide low- to moderate-income families in need of affordable, safe, and energy efficient housing through the process of becoming first-time homeowners. This process includes improving families' credit scores, financial management training, and caring for the unique spiritual needs of each family. Stanton also mentioned another element critical to the process: ensuring that the families find a place in a stimulated housing market on the rise. He explains that it is this combination of factors that brings change.

"We don't want them to just be homeowners, because what is that going to accomplish?" Stanton said. "Homeownership, in and of itself, is just a one-generation thing. What we want to do is to break the cycles of oppression and be able to have second generations be self-sufficient. That's how our families become wealth-builders."

The ministry relies on the support of community organizations, including community lending agencies, local construction companies, community development corporations, and generous volunteers to realize its mission. The "partner" section of their website highlights a long list of companies, churches, and groups that have taken part, one of which is East Liberty Development, Inc.

(ELDI), a community development organization that helps by securing properties for the families.

Stanton recognizes the importance of this partnership to the ministry.

"The bottom line is that Open Hand depends on ELDI in this sense in particular – if ELDI doesn't hold a space open in our community, if their community development strategy doesn't allow room for low-income families ... to become homeowners in the midst of redevelopment, then our ministry is seriously compromised," he said.

With 11 families placed in newly rehabilitated homes throughout Garfield and East Liberty to-date, the impacts of holding this bottom line can be seen.

Eric Jester, chief executive officer of New Burgh Real Estate and resident of East Liberty since 2006, noted the transformation that happened outside his own front door in his paper, "Fighting Crime with Affordable Housing," presented at the PA Housing Alliance Conference on Nov. 17.

"An amazing thing happened. Kids started playing outside. I didn't know there were kids in this neighborhood, but there they were, by the dozen, playing football and walking to school," he said. "As the culture of fear gave way, a whole neighborhood, suppressed for decades, came to life."

For Stanton and Open Hand Ministries, the changes are appreciated on a more intimate level.

"The house we just finished on North Sheridan gave us the ability to put a beautiful family, a single mother household, into a transitioning community where the value of the property will increase as the community continues to positively transition," Stanton said.

Open Hand grew out of one man's calling to a community. Stanton moved to Garfield with his family before even having a vocation in place.

Now, with more purpose than time, he looks forward to the future. Stanton lists expanded family care, primarily through the "Circles" anti-poverty program, and transitional rental units as developments in the works.

And has Open Hand become what he envisioned when he started out?

"It's absolutely been consistent with what I feel as though I was called to do six years ago, but it's become ... deeper, so much deeper," he said. ♦

Lawrenceville Tree Tenders turn over a new leaf

By Molly Recka *Lawrenceville Corporation*

Lawrenceville – On Jan. 1, Molly Dimond-Stephany, the Lawrenceville Tree Tenders (LVT) head chair of 11 years, will be – to use her words – “passing the branch” to Sarah Koenig.

LVT is an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to maintain existing street trees, educate residents, and reforest the neighborhood of Lawrenceville.

It embodies the spirit of community service and support that led Tree Pittsburgh to choose Lawrenceville as the pilot neighborhood for the city’s first urban forest initiative, ReLeaf Lawrenceville.

Dimond-Stephany said she has decided to step down in order to dedicate more time to her three sons. She said she plans to remain heavily involved in the organization, but has complete faith in Koenig and the rest of the LVT steering committee.

“I’m very happy that [Sarah’s] the one who’s going to take over,” Dimond-Stephany said.

“I am honored and excited to take on the LVT chair position,” Koenig said. “Working with this group ... has been inspiring for many reasons. It’s wonderful to collaborate with positive and inspiring people to make changes in our community.”

Koenig currently works as a water resource planner and specializes in stormwater management. She is a certified Penn State Master Gardener, works with Burgh’s Bees Community Apiary, and is an active volunteer with Lawrenceville Greenscapes Initiative, the Public Orchard at Duncan Park and other environmentally minded groups.

“Molly and Tree Pittsburgh have built a

wonderful foundation for continued success,” Koenig said.

Both Koenig and Dimond-Stephany noted that the Tree Tenders are only successful because of a huge network of volunteer support and an incredibly active and engaged steering committee.

The steering committee meets once a month to go over all aspects of the mission. Each of Lawrenceville’s wards has two designated “Tree Captains” who essentially act as the eyes and ears of trees in their given area.

The 6th Ward is represented by Nathan Liddell and Brent Boss, Stanton Heights is represented by Anna Johnson and Lisa Ceoffe, the Penn/Main district is represented by Rebekkah Ranallo, and the 10th Ward is represented by Jesse Perkins.

There are four current Tree Captain vacancies – two in the 9th Ward, one in the 10th Ward and one in the Penn/Main district.

Opportunities to get involved in ReLeaf plan implementation will take place in early 2015, including a three-part Tree Tender course. (See page 15 for details.)

“You don’t need to know everything about trees,” Dimond-Stephany said. “You just have to love them.”

Email lvttenders@gmail.com for more information on how to get involved. ♦



ABOVE: Lawrenceville Tree Tenders’ new chair, Sarah Koenig, plants flowers in the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy garden in Polish Hill. Photo courtesy of the Polish Hill Civic Association.

Pilot released for country music variety show

By Carrie Garrison *The Bulletin*



ABOVE: Slim Forsythe admires memorabilia in his self-proclaimed “Slim Forsythe Museum” located in the staircase up to his home in Lawrenceville. Photo by Carrie Garrison.

Lawrenceville – After reaching his \$10,000 goal on KickStarter in June, Lawrenceville’s own country music star, Slim Forsythe, began filming and editing the pilot episode of his country music variety show, “Live from Nied’s Hotel,” with help from Dino Gabriel DiStefano. Shortly after Thanksgiving, the episode was completed and released on YouTube.

“We’ve produced the show, and we’re going to show it worldwide,” Forsythe said.

Forsythe said the episode will be aired on international radio stations in Germany, Denmark, and Ireland. The show features guest artists Molly Alphabet and The Beagle Brothers, various country artists, and original songs by Forsythe himself. It also includes artist interviews and clips of the audience singing along with the live music.

“We had no doubt that Slim would be successful,” Molly Alphabet told The Bulletin.

The pilot can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/mxJyRTQF-Gg>. ♦



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‘Tech Warrior’ program empowers students

By Kelvin Javier Rojas *Neighborhood Learning Alliance*

East End – There’s a movement taking shape at the Neighborhood Learning Alliance, a nonprofit on a mission to improve the education and opportunities of African-American and lower-income families in Pittsburgh.

It’s called the “Warrior Movement,” and its core belief is that – given the right resources and coaching – Pittsburgh teens can be highly effective educators, mentors, leaders, and community advocates. The movement began with the Reading Warriors program, which employs high school students as reading mentors for 100 elementary school children by helping with homework and holding public reading demonstrations.

But that was just the beginning. The Warrior Movement is now expanding and gaining momentum.

It’s 4:30 p.m. on robotics day at Pittsburgh Woolslair Pre-K-5 in Bloomfield. Among buzzing electric motors, rustling plastic parts, and the rambunctious gaiety of fourth- and fifth-graders discussing how best to program a robotic arm, sits Giordan Dixon, a proud Tech Warrior.

“Even though it is a lot of responsibility, I enjoy helping the kids build robots and working with the staff,” Dixon said.

Tech Warriors is part of NLA’s new STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) initiative.

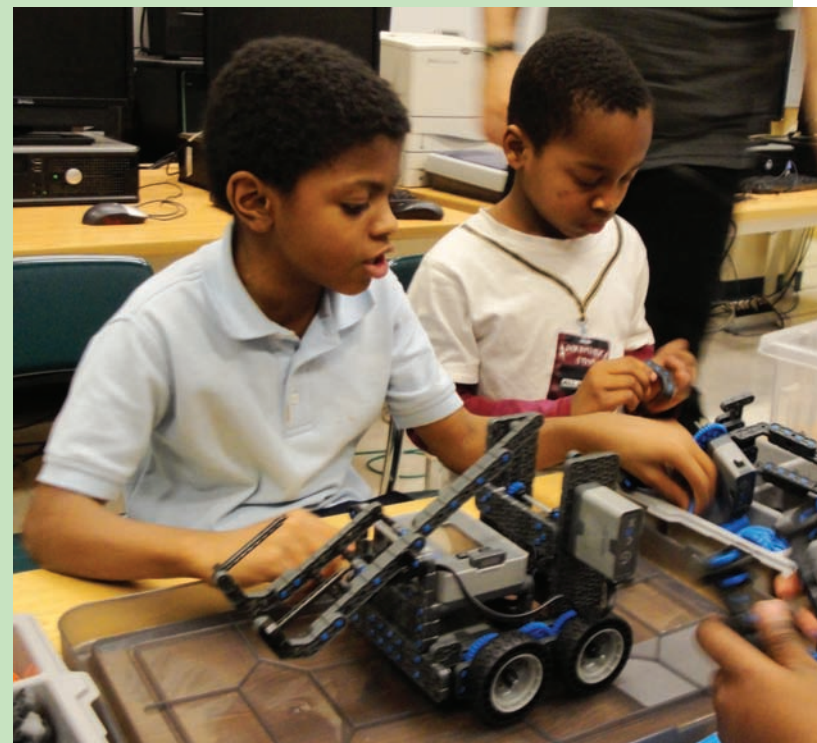
As a Tech Warrior, Dixon gets the opportunity to work with staff at one of the NLA’s STEM programs – elementary school robotics, a collaboration between NLA and Carnegie Mellon’s Robotics Academy.

Thanks to generous funding from Google, NLA is moving forward with its Warrior model of peer-led community development. NLA is working to coach and empower high school students to share new technologies with children, and also to explore Pittsburgh’s growing “maker movement” – a social movement that stresses a do-it-yourself attitude, new and unique applications of technologies, and invention and prototyping.

Tech Warriors participate in professional development and receive homework help and a stipend for their service. Still in its infancy, the Tech Warrior program is expanding, with active recruitment in Pittsburgh’s high schools.

The Tech Warrior program engages high school teens with STEM topics, giving them the critical exposure to math and science that they might otherwise miss. Plans for enrichment activities like “maker workshops” are designed to be participatory, peer-led, and creative. They also aim to encourage students to be self-motivated.

The hope is that enrichment activities like these workshops will serve as a new path into STEM subjects that might otherwise be intimidating to students. The times are begging for their engagement.



ABOVE: Students build robots at Pittsburgh Woolslair PreK-5 in Bloomfield, one of the sites for the new Tech Warrior program. Photo by Sarah Burke.

For NLA’s staff, the Tech Warrior program represents a response to the U.S. STEM crisis. The National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) reports that by 2018, the economy will have created 46.8-million new jobs, with two-thirds of them requiring at least some college education. Yet only 39 percent of non-Hispanic whites ages 25 to 29 have bachelor’s degrees, and the percentage is even lower for African Americans – 19 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

As for graduates in STEM-related disciplines, economic data suggest a deficit of more than 1 million people. Fostering interest in STEM, engaging students, and creating more STEM teachers is a national concern.

No matter which specific program a Tech Warrior chooses to work for, expectations are high.



“Even though it is a lot of responsibility, I enjoy helping the kids build robots and working with the staff.”

– Giordan Dixon, Tech Warrior (pictured at left in green shirt)

“We depend on Warriors to work as staff – to help run our afterschool tech programs – so of course we have high expectations of them,” said Stephen MacIsaac, executive director of Neighborhood Learning Alliance. “But [the Tech Warrior program] is more than that. What we’re really interested in is fostering a technical mindset for these students.”

With the bar set high for student achievement, the NLA aims to continue to grow and expand the Tech Warrior program. If the future is as bright as NLA’s vision, the Tech Warriors of today will find their places as the leaders of tomorrow – innovating, tackling social problems, and educating the next generation of leaders. ♦

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Kelly Strayhorn Theater welcomes spring with events, festivals, premieres

By Paula Simon *Kelly Strayhorn Theater*

East Liberty – Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) moves into its eighth season this spring with diverse programming. The lineup includes dance and theater performances, community events, the return of Sunstar music festival, and the premiere of two new works from a dance company based in Cuba.

This past fall, the theater celebrated 100 years of the Regent Theatre – the building Kelly Strayhorn Theater calls home – with a reception and community day. During the celebrations, KST premiered “Capsule 15206,” a time capsule project where patrons could submit their memories of the theater and neighborhood through pictures, stories, keepsakes, and crafts created during the community day.

KST kicks off the spring season with the sixth annual “East Liberty Celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day” on Jan. 19. The event is open to the community and honors the life and legacy of Dr. King, featuring family-friendly activities and performances.

“We’re thrilled to continue celebrating the building’s centennial with a mix of classic and never-before-seen performances this spring,” said Janera Solomon, executive director of KST. “From premieres by international artists to festivals celebrating the talented women in our region, the performances this season

resonate with the theater and neighborhood’s rich legacy of culturally rich programming.”

In February, the theater presents the U.S. premiere of two new works by Malpaso Dance Company – hailing for Havana, Cuba – featuring work by Trey McIntyre and music by Grammy-award-winning musician Arturo O’Farrill. Malpaso’s premieres mark the launch of KST’s “World Stage Series,” an initiative that brings diverse and innovative performers from around the world to Pittsburgh.

The following month, KST honors Women’s History Month with the return of Sunstar Festival, a biennial festival celebrating the best of women in music with a three-day lineup of concerts, parties, talks, and more. Past performers have included local pop and R&B artist Bridgette Perdue, Spanky Wilson, and the Grammy-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops.

The March festivities continue with Stein Holum Projects’ “The Wholehearted,” an interdisciplinary theatre piece, and the return of KST’s New Moves Contemporary Dance Festival. The multi-day, multi-venue festival showcases new works by young choreographers from Pittsburgh and around the country. The festival features “Super Nature,” an intimate performance installation by Body Cartography Project, founded by co-directors Olive Bieringa and Otto Ramstad.



The theater closes the spring season and kicks off its summer programming with “Full Bloom Summer Dance Party” in June. Now in its seventh year, the fundraiser boasts live performances from local and visiting artists, a sampling of food and drink from East End restaurants, and a dance party.

Visit www.kelly-strayhorn.org for tickets and a complete list of events. ♦

ABOVE: Malpaso Dance Company from Havana, Cuba, will premiere two new works in the U.S. at Kelly Strayhorn Theater this February. Photo by Roberto Leon.

Assemble offers free afterschool programs

By Kate Bell *Assemble*

Garfield – Beginning in January, Assemble will again offer its afterschool program three days per week, Tuesday through Thursday, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Studies have shown that afterschool programs can help students improve their standardized test scores, and that students enrolled in such programs are less likely to drop out of school or get into trouble with the law.

Despite these benefits, only 28 percent of Allegheny County youths participate in an afterschool program, with many parents citing high costs – the average program costs \$114 per week – as the reason their children are not enrolled.

Assemble, a nonprofit organization located at 5125 Penn Ave. in Garfield, aims to provide high-quality afterschool programming to local families, without the high cost. While a suggested donation is requested to cover the cost of materials, all youths are welcome to attend, whether their families can afford to donate or not.

Assemble’s program offers hands-on activities that focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), as well as homework help and a snack.

Past activities have included programming with Scratch – a visual programming language for kids – and making art for Assemble’s “HyperLocal” gallery show. While signing up in advance is appreciated, and will guarantee a spot for your child if the program fills up, Assemble also accepts students who occasionally drop in.

For more information about the program, email info@assemblepgh.org or call 412-254-4230. ♦



ABOVE: Veronica Green, an eighth-grader at Pittsburgh Obama 6-12, works on a project in Assemble’s afterschool program. Photo courtesy of Assemble.

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Worksites sought for youth interns

By Wesley Davis *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*



ABOVE: Youth interns at TechShop in East Liberty meet to brainstorm project ideas. Photo by Lyndsey Rozzi.

high school junior or senior as an intern.

Program coordinator Lyndsey Rozzi explained that this program, which is funded by the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board, allows the BGC to compensate interns for 100 hours of work at a site that will provide an educational experience for program participants. The goal of the program is to help high school students develop job skills and explore career pathways.

Employers are needed who can provide a stimulating and educational work experience for high school students in various industries, including education, business, healthcare, technology and more, Rozzi said, adding that students in the program are responsible and can bring unique skills to any workplace.

Mallory Helbling, out-of-school employment program coordinator for the BGC, added that the BGC is also recruiting worksites for its out-of-school employment program, which provides paid internship experiences for 18- to 21-year-olds who have finished high school.

Helbling said that her priority is finding worksites that will consider hiring program candidates after the hours of work subsidized by the program have expired.

To learn more about hosting an intern, contact the BGC’s youth development director, Rick Flanagan, at rickf@bloomfield-garfield.org or 412-441-9833. Employers can also complete an online form at <http://bit.ly/bgcworksites>. ♦

Quantum plans pop-up comedy club in Garfield

By Stevie Herendeen *Quantum Theatre*

Garfield – Innovative, experimental theater is coming to the neighborhood once again with Quantum Theatre’s production of “Brahman/i, a One-Hijra Stand-Up Comedy Show.” In keeping with Quantum’s Neighborhood Initiative, which brings theater to the communities surrounding the Penn Avenue corridor, “Brahman/i” will be staged at 113 N. Pacific Avenue in Garfield this February.

In this stand-up comedy routine, a hijra – the Hindi word for an intersex person – explores history, mythology, gender roles, and high school. “Brahman/i” takes on more than a dozen unforgettable characters in a fascinating life story that reveals observations of the world from adolescence to adulthood, and takes the audience on a voyage to answer the universal question, “Where do I fit in?” “Brahman/i” is a compelling and hilarious 90 minutes examining identity, curiosity, courage, and the assigned roles in which many often find themselves trapped.

Playwright Aditi Brennan Kapil said she was drawn to Brahma, the great, genderless cosmic spirit in the Hindi pantheon.

Her writing in this play describes someone who will never fit into any single category,

yet owns the power of that space.

“This play is by/about/for people who never fit in, who no longer care, and the power that comes with the moment of self-creation,” Kapil writes.

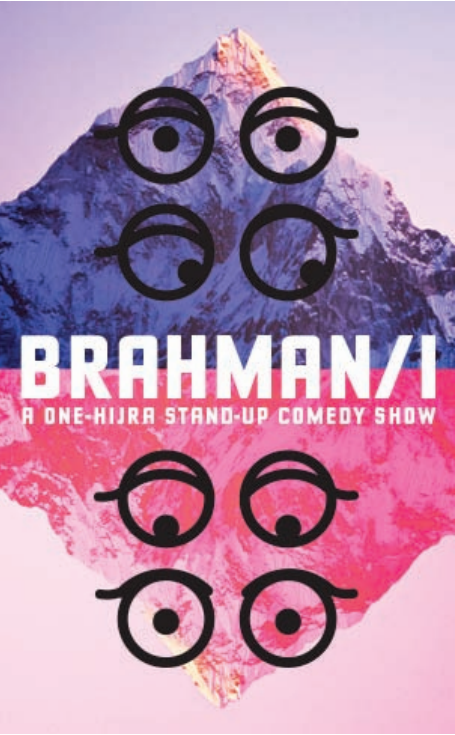
“Brahman/i” is the first part of Kapil’s trilogy, “Displaced Hindu Gods,” which consists of three plays riffing on the three deities of the Hindu Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Kapil said she conceived the trilogy as a way to explore the Indian part of her own heritage, “as a woman, as a person of mixed race, as an immigrant twice over ... We need stories to understand ourselves, both individually and in the context of society.”


Quantum will stage its production in the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation’s Community Activity Center, just one block off Penn Avenue. In keeping true to the show’s setting, the company plans to transform the space into a pop-up comedy club called “Temple of Comedy.”

“It’s fun to have a renowned theater company like Quantum come to Garfield,” said Rick Swartz, executive director of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. “With the roadway reconstruction on Penn coming to conclusion by year’s end, access from all points should be much easier. Hopefully, the great food places we have on Penn will see some benefit to their bottom line from theater patrons. What Quantum does by moving around the city in this fashion is truly unique.”

Performances run Jan. 30 to Feb. 22, Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 7 p.m. Special events include a community night for Bloomfield and Garfield residents – who can reserve a free ticket by calling 412-362-1713 – on Jan. 29, a post-show discussion with the cast on Feb. 1, ladies’ night on Feb. 4, a wine tasting on Feb. 5, “Social Q” on Feb. 12, and “Quantum on the Couch” on Feb. 14.

Tickets and more information are available at www.quantumtheatre.com, or by calling 412-362-1713. ♦





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Shopping small on Penn Avenue

By Amber Epps Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Penn Avenue – On Nov. 29, Penn Avenue participated in the nationwide “Small Business Saturday” initiative.

Small Business Saturday was designed to promote and support small businesses on the day after one of the biggest shopping days of the season, Black Friday.

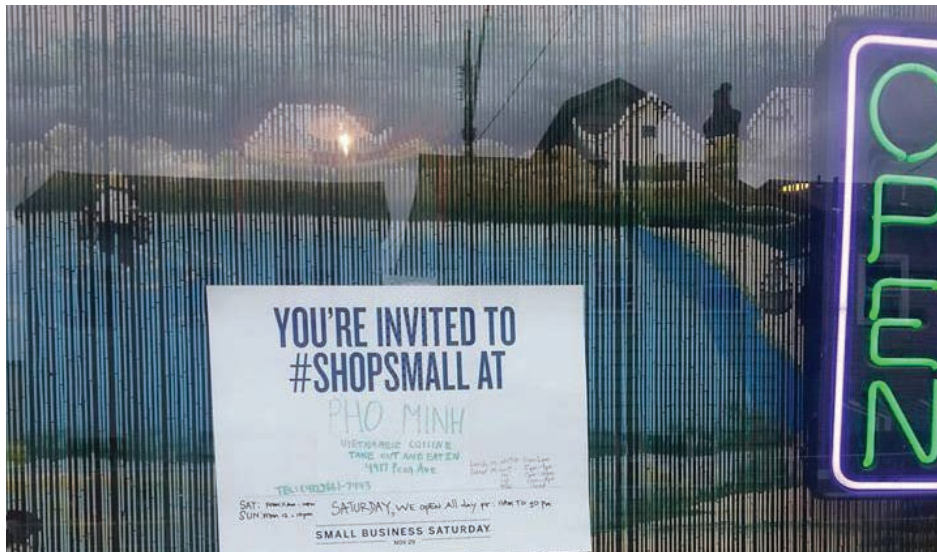
Penn Avenue businesses put balloons and blue-and-white doormats outside to let customers know that they were open.

Participating businesses included Los Sabrosos Dance Company, Clay Penn, Mostly Mod & ARTica, Aahmani Afrikan Braids, Eastland Hairlines, Verde Mexican Kitchen and Cantina, Robin's Nest, and Daily Bread.

The doors at Most Wanted Fine Art were open to showcase Jay Malls' exhibit showcasing the work of Mozelle Thompson, a Pittsburgh resident who was raised in Garfield. ♦



ABOVE: The Small Business Saturday Band played at Most Wanted Fine Art during Jay Malls' exhibit honoring the late Mozelle Thompson. The band members include singer Jacquea Mae, Miles Jackson on bass, Carlos Pena on guitar, and Poogie Bell on drums. Photo by Amber Epps.



ABOVE: Businesses displayed signs in their windows for Small Business Saturday on Nov. 29. Photo by Amber Epps.

Bloomfield group launches new website

By Christina Howell Bloomfield Development Corporation

Bloomfield – The Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) has launched a new website that features an online business directory.

The website, custom-designed by Terry Orlowski from Beyond the Office and whose family lives in Bloomfield, is easier to navigate than the former website. Featuring an event calendar and news articles, the website also hosts more photos of Bloomfield and will convey more information about the neighborhood and its neighbors.

A business directory aims to list every business in Bloomfield, including contact information. The directory is easily searchable and mirrors the new energy at the BDC.

“Our vision for this website is to reflect what is happening in and around our neighborhood, while also allowing people to easily find information about BDC activities and programs,” said Clarence Jackson, BDC board chair. “We want it to be helpful and relevant, with a solid news component to further promote and explain Bloomfield and its happenings.”

Questions about the website or business directory may be directed to info@bloomfieldnow.com or 412-681-8800. ♦

Salon sponsors student essay contest

By Carrie Garrison The Bulletin

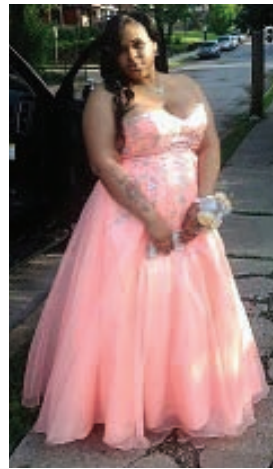
Garfield – Darchini “Dar” Jones, owner and stylist at the Diva Den Salon, 5138 Penn Ave., has developed an essay contest at the salon in hopes of inspiring self-worth in the participants.

The contest, entitled “Show ‘em What You Got,” invites senior students with passing grades from Perry Traditional Academy, Wilkinsburg High School, Westinghouse High School, and University Prep to participate.

Essays are due Feb. 20 and should be at least 250 words. Jones asks that participants write about their personalities, the role of motivation in their studies, their career goals or plans for the future, their strengths, and their belief in the importance of being focused, ambitious, and driven. In addition, Jones asks that participants include their ideas on how to break the cycle of negativity within their community or beyond.

Shortly after the Feb. 20 deadline, The Diva Den will pick one male and one female winner to receive a prom package, which includes prom tickets for the winners and their respective dates, gown or tux, a haircut or styling appointment, makeup, shoes, and prom photos.

Participants can mail or bring their essays to The Diva Den Salon, 5138 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15224. The salon asks that students wear business casual attire when bringing essays in person. Participants can also email their essays to thedivadenpgh@gmail.com. ♦



ABOVE: Last year's female essay contest winner, Kayla Stribling, received free prom photos. Photo courtesy of Diva Den.



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Garfield Glen manager holds office hours

By Wesley Davis *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*



ABOVE: Seneca Weatherspoon holds open office hours at 5321 Penn Ave. Photo by Wesley Davis.

Garfield – Seneca Weatherspoon, the site manager for Garfield Glen Housing, has open office hours at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation’s youth development office, 5321 Penn Ave., on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Part of her role is to take applications for Garfield Glen’s 45 houses on Kincaid Street, Dearborn Street, and Broad Street in Garfield. The Garfield Glen houses are below-market-rate, family-style homes that accept Section 8 vouchers by applicants. Households of two or more people are eligible to apply, but their annual income cannot exceed 60 percent of the

median figure for the Pittsburgh region.

When Garfield Glen’s second phase gets underway this spring, Weatherspoon will take applications for 19 homes that will be available for occupancy toward the end of 2015.

Weatherspoon works for NDC Real Estate, the landlord of the property. She encourages those who are interested in learning more about the Garfield Glen houses and their application process to contact her at garfieldglen@ndcrealestate.com or 724-970-7184.

Those seeking affordable housing options may also contact the Allegheny County Assistance Office, the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, and Community Human Services Corporation for assistance in finding housing. ♦

‘Innovation Zone’ takes shape at Arsenal

By Wesley Davis *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

Lawrenceville – Pittsburgh Public Schools was recently awarded a \$75,000 Community Innovation Zone grant to serve students at Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5. These grants were awarded to 12 early childhood education programs across Pennsylvania, with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW).

“This grant will provide communities with much-needed funding to expand their successes and ensure children are entering kindergarten ready to learn,” said Carolyn Dumaresq, PDE’s acting secretary of education.

A committee to inform and support this project has met once, and it will meet for the second time in January.

Carol Barone-Martin, Pittsburgh Public Schools’ executive director of early childhood education, reports that the focus of this grant is to develop stronger relationships between early childhood programs and school districts to build curriculum alignment from birth to third grade, increase family supports and engagement, and strengthen the network of community organizations that serve children and families.

Barone-Martin said that Arsenal’s program includes the following components:

- “Ready Freddy” from the University of Pittsburgh’s Office of Child Development, to transition children to kindergarten and increase attendance at school
- “Ready Rosie,” a daily email with a bilingual video curriculum that shows parents with children up to age 5 how to incorporate early learning into daily activities
- “Ready Partners,” which aims to achieve high rates of daily school attendance, reduce chronic absenteeism among students in pre-kindergarten through third grade, and improve school-to-family communication.
- “Ready Leaders,” a parent leadership training.

“These grants are almost [like] incubators to learn more about what’s working and how we can make these successes a reality for similar communities throughout the commonwealth,” said Bev Mackereth, DPW secretary. ♦

Mural brings school, community together

By Heather Jarrett *Bulletin Contributor*



ABOVE: Victor Morrissey and Zeev Mallak-Yaron talk with artist Ryder Henry about color choices and patterns. Photo by Heather Mallak.

Friendship – Looking at a faded mural on the side of her son’s new classroom at Pittsburgh Montessori PreK-5 in Friendship, Heather Mallak became determined to make the building’s outside as vibrant as the students who went to class on the inside. As founder and creative director of Public Studio in Lawrenceville, Mallak has a keen eye for potential and making big things happen with little resources. The first item on her agenda was to partner with Christine Brill, an architect and founder of Studio for Spatial Practice. Together, they set out to give the school a piece of public art.

After meeting with acting principal Kellie Meyer, they had the go-ahead to make the new mural a reality. However, having no budget, Mallak and Brill knew it would

take a community to bring the project to fruition. More than a dozen parents of students who attend class in the “demountable,” a small trailer where where the mural would be located that sits adjacent to the main school building contributed more than \$400. Busy Beaver, a new addition to the plethora of businesses located in Lawrenceville, contributed about 10 gallons of paint. Roach Brothers Painting contributed another 10 gallons of paint to complete the project.

“The community ... has been wonderful to us at Busy Beaver in our first few months of operation,” said Steven Derr, marketing director for Busy Beaver, when contacted for a response to supporting local, homegrown community projects like this one. “We were more than happy to help the community by providing paint for this enhancement project.”

The mural, which covers a 10-by-20-foot area of the demountable building, was painted by Pittsburgh artist and Friendship resident Ryder Henry. Currently, Henry is a featured artist in the Pittsburgh Biennial and is a father of a young child himself.

“After talking to parents on the playground, I knew the mural would be a success and I’d have a lot of support,” Mallak said. “As soon as I saw [Brill’s] mockup for the design, I immediately thought of Ryder Henry.”

Why did Mallak choose to take on a nontraditional project like this rather

See **Mural** | page 16



ABOVE: Principal Kellie Meyer and curriculum coach Angela Minahan stand by the completed mural with Montessori students. Photo by Heather Mallak.

Rupert teaches children about health



Lawrenceville – Duke Rupert, chief executive officer of West Penn Hospital, visited the “Little Learning Warriors” afterschool program at Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5 on Dec. 10. Rupert read the children a picture book about good habits for staying healthy.

The Little Learning Warriors afterschool program is a partnership between Neighborhood Learning Alliance and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. *Photo by Sarah Burke.*

Stanton Heights launches Green Committee

By Lissa Geiger Shulman *Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association*

Stanton Heights – The Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association is pleased to announce the formation of a Green Committee, which will focus on environmental issues and neighborhood beautification throughout Stanton Heights.

All residents of Stanton Heights and neighboring communities are invited to an official committee kick-off on Jan. 24. The Green Committee will host a winter walking tour through the community to view sites-in-progress and discuss future projects of interest to community members. The tour will conclude with a bonfire with refreshments across from the community compost heap.

Attendees can meet at the corner of Stanton Avenue and Stanton Courts West, near the former Methodist church sign at 11 a.m. RSVPs – which are requested, but not required – can be sent via email to stantonheightspgh@gmail.com.

Stanton Heights residents have spent several years working on plans for a park or parklet on the Comcast-owned property at the corner of Stanton Avenue and Woodbine Street.

“A park in this space would be a major improvement for our community,” said Barry Werber, resident and Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association board member.

Stanton Heights resident Mike Sturges echoed that sentiment.

“A park would show that residents are invested in this space,” he said. “It would deter illegal dumping, and also offer an opportunity for public safety improvements for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic along this stretch of Stanton Avenue.”

While the community came together and voted on a plan for the space in the summer of 2012, little progress has been made to-date. Concerned residents are rallying to end delays on the negotiations between the city, Comcast, and the neighborhood association.

Some headway has been made over the last few months, and the neighborhood association is actively working with the Department of City Planning, Mayor William Peduto’s office, Councilwoman Deb Gross’ office, and Councilman Rev. Ricky Burgess’ office to make the park a reality. Continuing plans for the parklet will be a major focus of the Green Committee.

Another major priority of the committee will be identifying a location for a neighborhood welcome sign and designing an attractive entranceway into the community. Options on both sides of Stanton Avenue – at the Lawrenceville and Morningside borders – are being evaluated as locations for the entryway, and for additional greening improvements.

Other projects the committee has been asked to consider include beautification of the green space between Stanton Avenue and McCandless Avenue, addressing drainage issues and continued maintenance at Kelly Field, plans for the Morningside Greenway, and maintaining accessibility at the top of the steps on 54th, 55th, 56th, and 57th Streets between Stanton Heights and Lawrenceville.

If you have additional project ideas or want to volunteer, you can join the Green Committee by contacting the Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association at stanton-heightspgh@gmail.com. ♦

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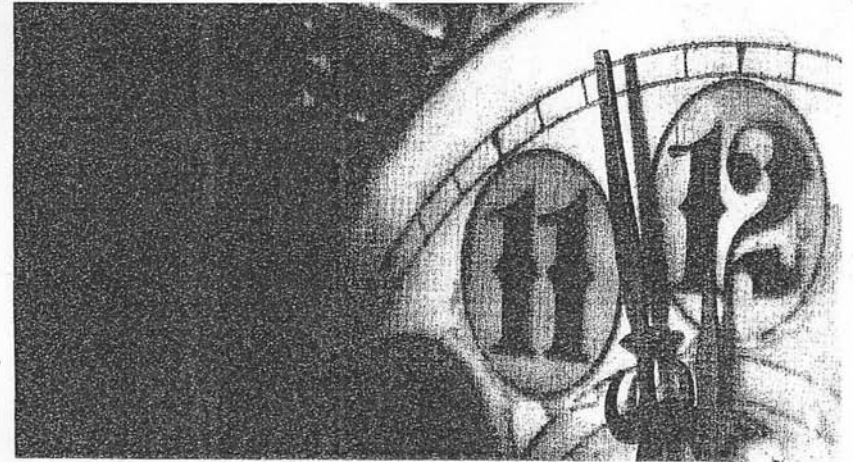
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January 2

GARFIELD

Unblurred Gallery Crawl

The first Friday of every month, from 6 to 11 p.m., venues in the Penn Avenue Arts District, 4800 to 5500 Penn Ave., open their doors to showcase the work of a variety of artists and performers.

Big Holiday Sale

From 5 to 8 p.m., shop the big holiday sale at Robin’s Nest, 5504 Penn Ave. Pick up a piece of art for your home, gifts for upcoming events, and essentials for yourself. Robin’s Nest has locally crafted home decor, wall art, handbags, jewelry, bath and body products, accessories, and more. The sale continues through Friday, Jan. 16. Call 412-362-2600 for more information, or visit <http://fb.com/RobinsNestPittsburgh>.

January 5

BLOOMFIELD

Prenatal Yoga

Expecting and looking for an ideal way to stay in shape during pregnancy? Discover prenatal yoga to help keep you limber, tone your muscles, and improve balance and coordination during pregnancy. Our experienced yoga instructors facilitate the class, which is specially designed for the expectant mom. West Penn Hospital, Burstin Room, 6:30-7:30 p.m. \$50 for a four-week session. Written permission from your doctor is required. For more information, visit ahn.org/westpenn or call 412-578-7030. Repeats on Jan. 12, 19, and 26.

LAWRENCEVILLE

Teen Time

Play Xbox? We do it at Teen Time. Make movies? We do it at Teen Time. Play music? We do it at Teen Time. Just hang out? We do it at Teen Time. Come to Teen Time at 4:30 p.m. every Monday at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh in Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St. Call 412-682-3668 with any questions. Repeats on Jan. 12, 19, and 26.

January 6

GARFIELD

Credit Counseling

From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., a credit counselor from NeighborWorks will lead one-on-one workshops to help you improve your money management skills and credit score at 5321 Penn Ave. To schedule an appointment, call 412-206-9849. Appointments are also available on Jan. 20.

Sorry, we do not accept listings by phone.

The Bulletin Board publishes listings of volunteer opportunities, free or low-cost events and classes, fundraising events, and services that are of particular interest to our neighborhoods. Listings published on a space-available basis; we cannot guarantee placement. Announcements for the February issue are due **Thursday, Jan. 15**, to bulletin@bloomfield-garfield.org. Download submission guidelines at bit.ly/bulletin_news.

LAWRENCEVILLE

Adult Game Night

Join your neighbors at the Lawrenceville branch of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, 279 Fisk St., every Tuesday at 6 p.m. for board games, card games, or even video games. Games played in the past include Ticket to Ride, Quiddler, Seven Wonders, Mexican train dominos, and backgammon. Ages 18 and up. Call 412-682-3668 with any questions. Repeats on Jan. 13, 20, and 27.

January 10

EAST LIBERTY

Storytime

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 11 a.m. for a “Pete the Cat” storytime special. Open to families with children ages 3 to 5. Call 412-363-8274 to register.

LAWRENCEVILLE

CLP Friends Meeting

Do you love the library? Come to 279 Fisk St. at 10:30 a.m. to plan fundraisers and other ways to help the library. Must be a member of the Friends of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville to attend. Contact Kim Grosel at 724-454-5379 with questions, or stop by the library to join.

January 11

BLOOMFIELD

Kids’ Dance Party

Beat the winter blues at Pittsburgh Dance Center, 4765 Liberty Ave., from 3 to 4:15 p.m. All boys and girls ages 4 and up are invited to dance, play limbo and musical chairs, and make snowflakes. Refreshments are provided, and tickets are \$5 per child. Wear your favorite blue shirt or dress.

January 13

EAST LIBERTY

Book Club

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 4 p.m. for the “Rock’n Readers” book club. Open to children in grades 3 to 5. Call 412-363-8274 to register.

January 15

LAWRENCEVILLE

Historical Society Lecture

As part of its public lecture series, the Lawrenceville Historical Society will host a program on Home-

wood Cemetery. Guest speaker will be Jennie Benford, who will address the history and notable persons buried in Pittsburgh’s second-largest cemetery. This free event is open to the public and will take place at Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St., at 7 p.m. No reservations required.

January 17

BLOOMFIELD

Infant CPR and Safety

Designed for parents and caregivers to develop skills in infant and child CPR, this “Baby 911” class also focuses on valuable safety concerns, “baby-proofing” your home, SIDS, and car safety. West Penn Hospital, Burstin Room, \$40 per person or \$75 per couple, 9 a.m. to noon. For more information, visit ahn.org/westpenn or call 412-578-7030.

EAST LIBERTY

Winter Carnival

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 11 a.m. for a winter carnival. Open to families with children of all ages. Call 412-363-8274 to register.

January 19

EAST END

MLK Day of Service

The University of Pittsburgh’s Office of PittServes is looking for service project opportunities for Pitt student volunteers to conduct on Jan. 19 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Contact Rachel Zadnik at rlz11@pitt.edu or 412-624-0240 for more information if your organization would like to host a project.

January 21

STANTON HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association will feature Ron Porter, who is working as a consultant to help the association develop neighborhood goals and work toward a community plan. Meet at the Sunnyside Auditorium, 4801 Stanton Ave., at 6:30 p.m. See www.stantonheights.org for more information.

GARFIELD

Money Management

Join NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania from 1 to 3 p.m. for a money management workshop that will help you gain control of your finances at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, 5321 Penn Ave. All are encouraged to attend this workshop to learn about budgeting, saving, banking, and credit. To register, call 412-206-9849.

January 22

GARFIELD

Small Business Fair

From 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., a small business resource

fair will be held at the Bloomfield-Garfield Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave. This event is sponsored by PNC Bank and is open to the public. If you have a small business or are interested in starting one, this event can provide you with information and resources to help. Refreshments will be provided.

January 24

BLOOMFIELD

I’m a Big Brother/Sister

For families with an older child, bringing home a new baby can be a time filled with joy and adjustment. This 90-minute class is designed to address common emotions siblings may experience. With a focus on safety, siblings-to-be are provided “hands-on” opportunities (with dolls) to hold and rock a baby, and even change a diaper. A hospital tour is included. West Penn Hospital, Burstin Room, \$25 per family, 10:30 a.m. to noon. For more information, visit ahn.org/westpenn or call 412-578-7030.

STANTON HEIGHTS

Green Committee Kickoff

The inaugural event of the Stanton Heights Green Committee will be a winter walking tour of the neighborhood showing areas of progress and areas to focus on in the coming year. Meet at 11 a.m. by the former Methodist church sign at Stanton Court West and Stanton Avenue. The free tour will conclude with a bonfire and light refreshments. Email stantonheightspgh@gmail.com for more information.

January 26

LAWRENCEVILLE

Snow Party

Explore the world of Elsa and Anna. Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., for a winter snow party with snowmen, snowflakes, and snow cones. Costumes encouraged. This program is for children and their families, and will start at 6:30 p.m. Call 412-682-3668 with any questions.

January 28

EAST LIBERTY

STEM Super Science

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 4 p.m. for a program exploring sea life with Jacques Cousteau. Open to families with children ages 5 to 8. Call 412-363-8274 to register.

January 29

BLOOMFIELD

Financial Aid Night

State Rep. Dom Costa will host a financial aid night for students and parents to gain a better under-

Volunteer Opportunities & Services

standing of how to finance higher education. A financial aid expert from the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency will be on hand to answer questions. This event will be in the West Penn Hospital Conference Room, 4800 Friendship Ave., at 6:30 p.m.

January 31

LAWRENCEVILLE

Night at the Races

An evening of horse races to benefit Lawrenceville's Independence Day Celebration, Night at the Races, will take place from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. at Teamster's Temple, 4701 Butler St. The event is hosted by the Lawrenceville Fireworks Committee, and beer and a buffet are provided. It will feature 10 regular races and an auction race. Horses and jockeys are available for \$10. The event sold out last year, so get your \$20 tickets in advance from Lawrenceville United, 412-802-7220.

BLOOMFIELD

Ballroom Dance Party

Come to the Pittsburgh Dance Center, 4765 Liberty Ave., for a dance lesson at 8 p.m. and open ballroom and Latin dance party until 10:30 p.m. Refreshments included, BYOB, \$10 per person.

February 4

LAWRENCEVILLE

Art All Night Planning

Everyone is welcome to attend the Art All Night planning committee meeting at 7 p.m. at the Stephen Foster Community Center, 286 Main St. This is your chance to help plan this free community art event with 15,000 art lovers this April. For more information and updates, visit www.artall-night.org, like Art All Night: Lawrenceville on Facebook, and follow @artallnight on Twitter.

Ongoing

GARFIELD

Tour de Penn

The "Tour de Penn" campaign, sponsored by the Urban Redevelopment Authority, runs through Feb. 14. To participate, pick up a passport and visit businesses within the Penn Avenue construction zone, then enter weekly drawings. Participating businesses will have a blue-and-orange Tour de Penn map in the window. For more information, visit www.pennavenue.org/tourdepenn.

Night Market Vendors

This year's Garfield Night Market was a success, and the planning process has already begun for next season. If you are a vendor, or are interested in becoming a vendor, send an email to garfield-nightmarket@gmail.com. Also, stay tuned to <http://garfieldnightmarket.org> for updates.

Insurance Enrollment

Every Saturday through Feb. 15, noon to 4 p.m., individuals can meet with a trained health insur-

ance enrollment specialist, called a Certified Application Counselor, who can guide applicants through the process of enrolling in affordable health coverage at 5321 Penn Ave. Call 412-205-1298 to schedule an appointment.

LAWRENCEVILLE

Become a Tree Tender

Tree Tenders are planting trees and caring for existing ones in Pittsburgh, ensuring a healthy urban forest for generations to come. Tree Pittsburgh is offering a three-part Tree Tender course for \$40, which includes registration, materials, light food, and instruction. Scholarships are available. For more information contact joe@treepittsburgh.org or call 412-781-TREE (8733). Register online at www.treepittsburgh.org. Participants must attend all three sessions: Jan. 7, 14, and 21.

MULTIPLE

CLASS Kids Referrals

CLASS Kids offers a variety of programs to help children with disabilities have full participation in recreational and vocational opportunities in Pittsburgh. The Vocational Ventures program works with students ages 14 to 19 to develop career awareness, participate in networking opportunities, and create a resume. Participants are compensated for their time. The Family Partnership program works with students ages 5 to 13 to identify recreational interests. CLASS then assists the child in being incorporated into the activity. Stipends are available based on need. Both programs are offered at no cost. Call 412-683-7100 ext. 2245 or visit www.classcommunity.org for more information.

Charter School Lottery

The Environmental Charter School (ECS) is accepting applications for the 2015-2016 school year. ECS is a K-8, tuition-free, public school located in Pittsburgh's East End. Interested in applying? Call to request a mailed application, or download one at www.environmentalcharterschool.org. Want to visit the school? The next Lower School open house is Tuesday, Jan. 6, from 5 to 6:15 p.m. The lottery application deadline is Jan. 31. ECS Lower School can be reached by mail at 309 S. Braddock Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15221, or by phone at 412-242-1480. ECS Upper School can be reached by mail at 829 Milton St., Pittsburgh, PA 15218, or by phone at 412-247-7970.

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New club picks up 'STEAM' at Woolslair

By Kathleen Michelotti Pittsburgh Woolslair PreK-5

Bloomfield – In anticipation of becoming a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) magnet school next year, students at Pittsburgh Woolslair PreK-5 are getting a head start by participating in an afterschool STEAM club as a Digital Corps host site.

In partnership with The Sprout Fund, 12 students in grades 3-5 are learning "Scratch," a block-based computer programming language that is a project of the Life-long Kindergarten Group at the MIT Media Lab.

As part of their beginning programming skills, students are learning how to use a "sprite," or character, animate it, and move it using a coordinate plane in a variety of ways. They are using the sprite as part of the process of creating their own video game, which will be shared with others online. Each creative project highlights the students' talents and interests. Students have also made their own video game controllers using "Makey Makey" kits, Play-Doh, and aluminum foil.

Students said they are enthusiastic about learning circuitry and computer coding while using the creative process.

"My favorite part of the STEAM Club so far is making the game controller and the foil bracelet," said Justin McFadden, a third-grade student at Woolslair.

Emily Jankowski, also in third grade, said she enjoys "learning more about computers." The club will continue through late spring.

See page 5 for more information on how students entering kindergarten through second grade can enroll in Woolslair's STEAM magnet program. Registration will remain open throughout the school year as long as spaces are available. ♦



ABOVE: Woolslair students Tres'yer Moore and Jasmine Jetter use "Makey Makey" kits and Play-Doh to design a video game controller. Photo by Janet Jenkins.

Garfield celebrates the holidays



Garfield – The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation held its annual holiday party on Dec. 5 at 113 N. Pacific Ave. Special thanks to all of the community groups that brought children's activities and donations to the party to make it a unique and special occasion. These include Assemble, Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center, Eat'n Park, Garfield CISP, Garfield Community Action Team, Kelly Strayhorn Theater, King of Kings Baptist Ministries Choir, Neighborhood Learning Alliance, Lawrenceville United, West Penn Hospital, and neighborhood volunteers. Photos by Wesley Davis.

Ferlo from page 5



ABOVE: State Senator Jim Ferlo saved the day by pinch-hitting as keynote speaker at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's annual luncheon in 2013, when keynote speaker Kathleen Kane, the Pennsylvania Attorney General, cancelled at the last minute. Photo by John Colombo Photography.

archives may be an important read of city history and social policy, but the real story for me is the honor and privilege to have worked with so many dedicated individuals and groups that not only care about their families, communities, and workplaces, but believe in and fought for a greater humanity,” he said.

Ferlo served on Pittsburgh city council for 15 years until his election to the state senate in 2002. He lives in Pittsburgh’s Highland Park neighborhood, and encourages The Bulletin’s readers to stay in touch.

“You can reach me at senatorferlo@gmail.com, and my phone number continues to be in the phone book as it has been for the past 40 years,” Ferlo said. “Hope to see you at a community meeting, a picket line, a public hearing, or at a farmers market. Thank you for the many years of support and friendship.” ♦

Mural from page 12

than volunteer at the school or help out with fundraising?

“My schedule doesn’t allow me much free time during the day, and I wanted to contribute something that would have a lasting impact on both the school and the community,” Mallak said. “So the mural was born out of that idea. It was also really inspiring to have a principal at Montessori that I knew would be behind the project.”

The mural isn’t just a colorful indication of the exciting and engaging learning happening inside the building. It’s a symbol of the school’s commitment to interacting with the community at large, and of the overall progress of Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) system.

While Kellie Meyer is interim principal, she said she hopes to continue in that role. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, and a product of PPS, Point Park University, and Duquesne University, Meyer has a passion for Montessori education is apparent to everyone who knows her. She began as an early intervention professional in PPS and taught at Pittsburgh Montessori for five years before serving as acting principal.

“Our theme for the 2013-2014 school year is ‘Grow Our Own,’” Meyer said. “This mural is a perfect symbol of all of the positive changes happening in our school, and all of the supportive parents who are making an impact throughout our community.” ♦



ABOVE: Takumi Henderson peeks out of his Montessori demountable classroom. Photo by Heather Mallak.



ABOVE: Principal Kellie Meyer (left) and a Montessori student stand by the new mural. Photo by Heather Mallak.



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