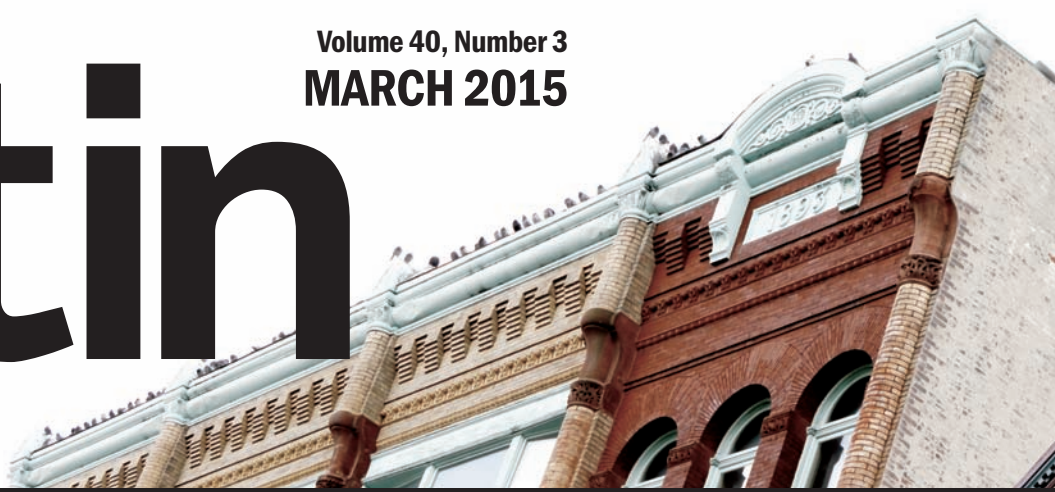


# the Bulletin

Volume 40, Number 3  
MARCH 2015

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



## Aldi to announce decision on Penn Avenue store by March 31

By Carrie Garrison *The Bulletin*  
& Rick Swartz *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

*Pittsburgh* – The community surrounding the now-shuttered Bottom Dollar grocery store at 5200 Penn Ave. waits anxiously, now that more is known about the timetable for its ultimate disposition. Executives from Aldi, the purchaser-to-be for this store and eight others in Allegheny County, made it clear to elected officials and community representatives at a Feb. 2 meeting that Aldi will not rush into any type of decision on their collective fate.

In attendance at the meeting were Mayor William Peduto; Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald; a representative from U.S. Sen. Bob Casey's office; Brent Laubaugh, a vice president at Aldi's regional office in Saxonburg; Christina Morascyzk, Aldi's regional real estate director; and three representatives from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC).

See **Bottom Dollar** | page 3

## Garfield 'tiny house' plan presented to residents

By PJ Maloney *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

*Garfield* – "Tiny houses" have generated quite a buzz these days, offering people the chance to own a home without having to pay for a house that's larger than what they need or want. One of

See **Tiny House** | page 4

4

## Community plans future of Lawrenceville parks

By Lauren Byrne *Lawrenceville United*

*Lawrenceville* – Over the past five years, Leslie and Arsenal Parks have served as sites for food truck roundups, Google stargazing events, public art exhibition sites, fireworks celebrations, and

See **Parks** | page 11

11



**ABOVE:** The Pittsburgh Police Bureau will host a recruitment event in Garfield on March 11. The full story begins below and continues on page 3. Photo courtesy of Assistant Chief Scott Shubert.

## Recruitment for hospital, police underway

By Wesley Davis *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

*Garfield* – West Penn Hospital and the Pittsburgh Police Bureau will both be in Garfield on March 11 to share with East End residents the opportunities for employment available with each.

West Penn Hospital will open the event with a 1 p.m. presentation by Patrick Boyle, its human resources director, at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave.

See **Recruitment** | page 2



**ABOVE:** Volunteers lift a crocheted flower bouquet into place for the "Pop des Fleurs" test installation in Lawrenceville's Arsenal Park. For details, visit [www.popdesfleurs.com](http://www.popdesfleurs.com). Photo by Rebecca Harrison.

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Bulletin

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# Recruitment from page 1



**ABOVE:** West Penn Hospital will offer an orientation session for prospective job candidates on March 11. Photo by Rick Flanagan.

Shahira Wahba, employment coordinator for the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC), said Boyle will lead an in-depth discussion on open positions at the hospital, how to apply for them, and what his staff is looking for in terms of qualified candidates.

Wahba said that attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and have a dialogue with West Penn Hospital's recruiters on their hiring process.

"The ENEC will then be able to work with attendees on their applications to West Penn," Wahba said.

The West Penn Hospital and Allegheny Health Network job website, [www.ahn.org/careers](http://www.ahn.org/careers), listed 80 open positions at West Penn Hospital as of mid-February, including nursing, food service, clerical, environmental services (housekeeping), and medical assistant positions.

Rick Flanagan, manager of the ENEC, highlighted the need for diverse and skilled candidates at West Penn Hospital.

"The range and number of positions available within the hospital means that just about any job seeker should consider attending this recruitment event," Flanagan said.

The Pittsburgh Police Department's recruitment event will follow at 6 p.m., also at the activity center.

Michael Gay, community relations officer for the police bureau, said that serving as an officer presents an opportunity "to effect change in our neighborhoods."

Gay encouraged neighbors to "get off the sidelines," and apply to be an officer.

"If you want to be a part of the progress

in our neighborhood and in our city, this is a great opportunity," Gay said.

The City of Pittsburgh's 2014 fiscal year operating budget lists the salary of a first-year police officer as \$42,548. The hourly wage paid to recruits while they are in the police training academy is \$14.24, according to the 2014 budget.

Flanagan explained that there would be a limited timeframe to apply to be an officer, running from Feb. 23 to May 11. Flanagan encouraged those who are interested in applying to attend this event as a way to learn about what the application process entails and the assistance available to interested applicants.

To register, call 412-465-0425. ♦

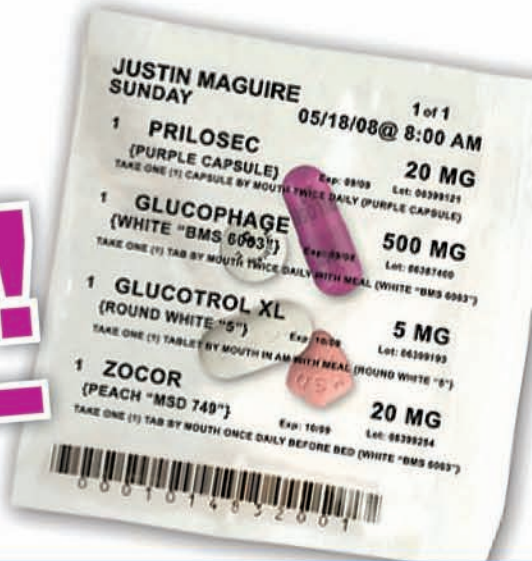
## PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

**East End** – The Pittsburgh Police Department reports that there were three incidents in Zone 5 in the month of January and one arrest. Crime rates are at an all-time low in Garfield, according to Zone 5 officers.

The police department has also reported that the "Shot Spotter" system is now operational in Zone 5, which includes the Bloomfield, Garfield, Friendship, East Liberty, and Homewood neighborhoods of Pittsburgh. The Shot Spotter is an electronic sensor system that detects gunshots and provides officers with immediate information on the location of gunfire. Zone 5 officers have indicated that the Shot Spotter system has helped them to make several arrests following gun-related incidents.

Residents who notice graffiti are encouraged to call 311 to submit a complaint that includes the address of the graffiti. Residents can also visit [www.pittsburghpa.gov/311/form](http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/311/form) to submit a 311 complaint to the city. – Aggie Brose, Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

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## PENN RECONSTRUCTION UPDATE

*Penn Avenue* – Patrick Hassett, assistant director of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works, reports that the Penn Avenue reconstruction project's winter suspension will be lifted by the end of February.

Contractor Matcon Diamond is then slated to return to the avenue to install new streetlights and traffic signals. Crews will also begin limited work on the vaults – storage spaces under the sidewalk.

Hassett said that additional vaults have been discovered since the initial count completed in the summer of 2013, which will impact the construction schedule. – *Sarah Burke, The Bulletin*

## #OPENONPENN CAMPAIGN

*Penn Avenue* – #OpenOnPenn is a video and social media campaign designed to promote businesses that have suffered due to the Penn Avenue reconstruction project. The campaign seeks to help those affected by the roadwork by encouraging people to purchase gift cards to local businesses. The video features the perspectives of several business owners discussing how they were impacted by the construction, sharing their excitement to be a member of the commercial district, and inviting viewers to come back and rediscover the avenue. Funding for the campaign was provided by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh. View the video and purchase a gift card at <http://pennavenue.org/openonpenn>. – *Amber Epps, Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

## the Bulletin

A publication of the  
Bloomfield-Garfield  
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### Volume 40, Number 3

The deadline for the April issue is Friday, March 13.

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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, Allegheny Valley Bank, and The Heinz Endowments.

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## Bottom Dollar *from page 1*

Aldi representatives said they will share plans for the Penn Avenue site by March 31, when they purchase the building from Bottom Dollar's parent company, the Delhaize Group.

"We understand the importance of the site itself to the community," Laubaugh said in the meeting. "We cannot share our decision on its future before we've done the necessary due diligence."

Laubaugh expressed willingness to "look at all possible opportunities to make this a positive outcome for the community and Penn Avenue." More than 250 people have signed an online petition in support of retaining a grocery store on Penn.

"We will be open to not restricting the potential for the site to remain a grocery store if we decide not to open a store there ourselves," Laubaugh said. "The circumstances surrounding this store would lead us to refrain from incorporating things like restrictive deed covenants that would cause a different outcome than what the community obviously wants."

Morascyzk said that Aldi, which operates 16 stores in Allegheny County, conducts much of its market research in-house, through surveys of the population in that market, or shoppers at existing stores.

"[We're] proud that we have gotten fairly

good at it," she said. "There isn't a single store in the county where we've regretted our decision to open the store in that location."

Laubaugh said that Aldi will immediately share its decision on the Penn Avenue site with the mayor and county executive.

"Everyone will be kept in the loop," he said.

Laubaugh declined to make a visit to the neighborhood, ostensibly to get better acquainted with the circumstances surrounding the Penn Avenue store.

No matter what Aldi decides, Aggie Brose, deputy director of the BGC, said the BGC's goal is to make sure the community continues to have access to fresh, affordably priced food.

"If Aldi doesn't open a store on Penn Avenue, then our goal would be to free the real estate, with all of the fixtures and equipment, for purchase either by the BGC itself, or by another food store operator directly," Brose told The Bulletin.

The BGC is also talking with other potential grocers to gauge their interest in the site.

"The BGC has met with several interested parties already, but much will depend on what the price tag ultimately is for the



**ABOVE:** The Penn Avenue Bottom Dollar closed its doors – and painted over its sign – in January. Photo by Rick Flanagan.

acquisition or the leasing of the site," Brose said. "We would prefer that it be Bottom Dollar that sells it to us or someone else, and not Aldi. But Aldi would have to allow that to happen. We think the acquisition cost could be reduced significantly if the property doesn't have to pass through Aldi's hands first."

Bottom Dollar has agreed not to sell any grocery fixtures or equipment until the Penn Avenue building's sale is finalized.



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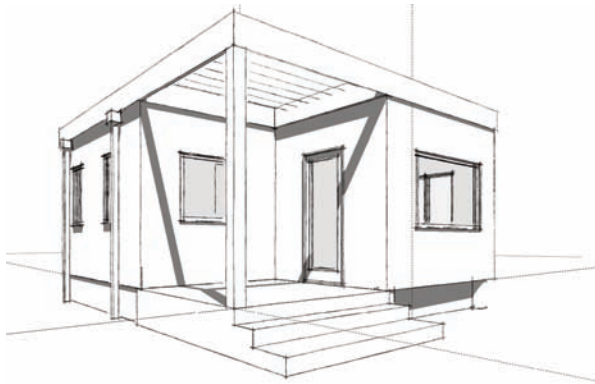


Tiny House *from page 1*

these tiny houses might be coming to Garfield.

Eve Picker of CityLAB said, “I’ve never seen anything that’s gotten so much press, when nothing concrete has actually happened.” Picker hopes to turn south-western Pennsylvania’s eyes on Garfield, and she hopes to make it happen soon.

At a community meeting on Feb. 19, CityLAB and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) told neighbors that they’re planning to build a tiny house on a lot at 223 N. Atlantic Avenue, but there are obstacles that need to be overcome.



ABOVE: An exterior view of the “tiny house” planned for 223 N. Atlantic Ave. Rendering by architect Chad Chalmers, courtesy of CityLAB.

These include the need for three variances from current city housing code, and coming up with a price tag that will offer a homebuyer significant savings over the cost of a standard-size home.

A hearing before Pittsburgh zoning officials is scheduled for March 5. Picker said it appears there is no opposition right now to a request for variances related to the size of the house, parking requirements, and a rear setback.

But CityLAB said it has been difficult to find a contractor who will change the construction methods used in building a

standard-size house to significantly reduce the cost of building a tiny house. Picker said the solution might be to hire a contractor to build the structure, but do the site work and finishing “on our own.” She said the goal is to keep the sale price of the home under \$100,000.

The one-story tiny house proposed for North Atlantic would be 12 feet tall, with a footprint of 18 by 24 feet. It

See **Tiny House** | page 12

Mayor to expand summer employment program

By Wesley Davis Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Pittsburgh –The City of Pittsburgh plans to expand this year’s summer youth employment program to allow more young people to participate, according to LaTrenda Leonard, deputy chief of operations and administrator in the office of Mayor William Peduto.

“We want people to realize that this is the future workforce of the region. We can

keep kids safe and we can keep them here through employment,” Leonard said, adding that the city hopes “to lead badging efforts to certify and quantify what the youths are learning.”

Leonard said the city also plans to create a tiered system of internships, providing exploratory experiences for first-year participants and allowing returning participants to take responsibility for individual projects at their worksites.

The application period for the summer youth employment program will start in early April.

The City of Pittsburgh’s summer youth employment program is a six-week internship program for qualifying city residents between the ages of 14 and 21. Program participants are paid an hourly wage to take part in a work experience that aligns with their career interests.

Robert Best, a senior at Pittsburgh Milliones 6-12 who participated in last



ABOVE: Robert Best (left), a participant in last year’s summer youth employment program, stopped by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation’s Youth Development Center recently to discuss his future employment plans with program coordinator Mallory Helbling. Photo by Wesley Davis.

See **Summer Employment** | page 7



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# Preschool aims for comeback after construction

By Carrie Garrison *The Bulletin*

**Garfield** – At its lowest point during the Penn Avenue reconstruction project, enrollment at Community Preschool and Nursery – a center that is licensed to care for 57 children – dropped to just nine. Now that the avenue has reopened to two-way traffic, center representatives are hopeful about the future of their business. “Because we’re still standing and because we have such a beautiful center, I believe our enrollment will pick back up soon,” said Heather Carter, the center’s director.

Since the reconstruction project began its winter suspension, the center has already admitted four new children and has spaces for 25 more, said Frank Papposki of MetroCom Management, the organization that oversees Community Preschool and Nursery. Papposki plans to hold an open house and invest in banners and other marketing initiatives to attract prospective families.

Papposki said that, due to its financial challenges during construction, the center fell several months behind on rent and took out two loans from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation totaling \$11,000. In the last 12 months, the center has lost between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Papposki said he is not surprised that attendance at the center went down as a result of construction. He believes that the lack of parking and easy access slowly wore away at parents, and they began to search elsewhere for child care.

“I completely understand where they were coming from,” Papposki said.

Since its founding in 2003, Community Preschool and Nursery has aimed to provide affordable child care to local residents.

The center provides a mini-bus for school-age children, ages 6 and up. The staff is interested in providing a bus for

younger children as well, but cannot do so without the interest of parents and coordination of schedules. Children are also provided three meals a day at the center.

The center’s child care fees are based upon the parents’ income and are ultimately determined by the state of Pennsylvania.

While Penn Avenue reconstruction has been a challenge, Papposki said the center’s families and employees are feeling more optimistic now.

“It has been difficult to remain positive,” Papposki said. “I believe now that the construction is somewhat finished, the whole mood of the center has been lifted.”

For more information on Community Preschool and Nursery, located at 4809 Penn Ave., call 412-441-2595. ♦



**ABOVE:** Heather Carter, director of the Community Preschool and Nursery in Garfield, stands next to the “Now Enrolling” sign displayed at the center. Photo by Carrie Garrison.

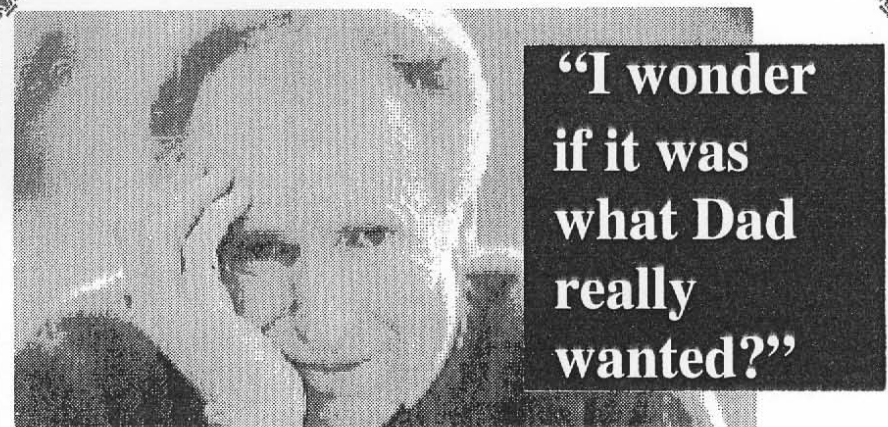
# Summer Employment from page 4

year’s program, described the experience as “a very valuable way to spend my summer,” adding that he “learned a lot and made great connections.”

Mallory Helbling, program coordinator at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, explained that the summer employment program benefited Best because he took the initiative to “make connections during his summer internship to find employment during the school year.”

Rick Flanagan, manager of the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC) in Garfield, said that the ENEC and BGC are partnering with Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s East Liberty branch, 130 S. Whitfield St., to host a teen job fair on April 10 from 3 to 6 p.m.

Flanagan indicated that this event will be a great opportunity for 14- to 21-year-olds to network with potential summer employers. Businesses who wish to recruit at the fair are encouraged to call the ENEC at 412-362-8580. ♦



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# NeighborhoodFOCUS

## Circus training program thrives in Bloomfield

By Carrie Garrison *The Bulletin*

*Bloomfield* – “Everybody thought I was crazy, and I said, “Trust me on this.”

Those are the words of Holly Dayton-Kirby, owner and artistic director of Pittsburgh Dance Center in Bloomfield.

When Dayton-Kirby saw Cirque du Soleil perform in May 2011, she was instantly mesmerized by the aerial silk dancers. After unsuccessfully trying to find a class in Pittsburgh to learn aerial silks, Dayton-Kirby hired a circus training coach. Now, she’s developed her own circus training curriculum and is teaching others in her studio, located at 4765 Liberty Ave.

Pittsburgh Dance Center now holds circus classes every night of the week except Fridays, including a special needs circus class on Wednesday nights. The studio is home to more than 20 different dance classes and 47 teachers, ten of whom teach the circus classes.

“We are pretty much setting the circus standard here in Pittsburgh,” Dayton-Kirby said.

The circus training program includes trapeze, lyra (aerial hoop), beam, acrobalance, and contortion training.

Dayton-Kirby said the suggested age to begin circus training is 6 and older. The studio is preparing to start teaching tightrope walking, and a unicycle training course is planned for March.

Pittsburgh Dance Center is equipped with 15-foot aerial silks and other circus gear. The circus training program has grown to incorporate a 15-member performance company, called The Air Masters, that travels and performs a full circus show.

Dayton-Kirby said she is excited for the first aerial showcase, “Pure Imagination,” which will be held March 1 at the studio. The event will begin at 4 p.m. and encompasses a meet-and-greet, live aerial show, and reception. It costs \$10 for spectators.

Part of Dayton-Kirby’s inspiration for the studio came from her own dance training. A Bloomfield native, Dayton-Kirby noticed that there were very few local, affordable dance training programs. She has aimed to



**ABOVE:** Ally Slayden (left), advanced circus training teacher, and Holly Dayton-Kirby pose with aerial silks at Pittsburgh Dance Center. Photo by John Colombo Photography.

“I want to give everybody the opportunity to dance.”  
– Holly Dayton-Kirby, Pittsburgh Dance Center

make her studio affordable and open to all.  
“I’m not trying to make everyone a dancer, but I want to give everybody the opportunity to dance,” she said. “Our niche is really just to offer as much as we can, keep it affordable, and have fun.”

Dayton-Kirby is committed to giving everyone – including dancers with special needs, amputees, and children – the chance to participate.  
Her classes are tailored to each dancer and aim to get everyone on the dance floor. Dayton-Kirby said her unique approach has been well received by the Bloomfield community.

“I can’t tell you how many ‘thank yous’ I’ve had,” Kirby said. “My goal is to get everyone on this floor doing something and having fun.” ♦

**BELOW:** Asani Valentino, 9, participates in circus training at Pittsburgh Dance Center. Photo by John Colombo Photography.





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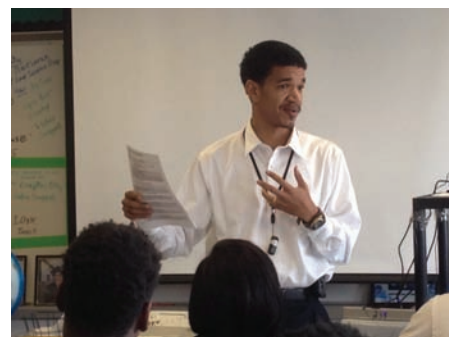
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## Students receive SAT help, mentoring

*Hill District* – Malcolm Thomas (left photo), the director of Neighborhood Learning Alliance’s “Reaching Back” male mentoring program, and Jason Rivers (right photo), Pittsburgh Public Schools’ “We Promise” project manager, addressed a group of 25 juniors at Pittsburgh Milliones University Preparatory School on Feb. 11 to introduce an SAT preparation class.

Participating students will receive rigorous SAT training that will be complemented by culturally appropriate mentoring and support as they move towards the SAT on May 2. This class is a partnership between Pittsburgh Public Schools, Neighborhood Learning Alliance, the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, Pittsburgh Prep, and the University of Pittsburgh. *Photos by Wesley Davis.*



## Woolslair students win poster contest



*Bloomfield* – A group of “Little Learning Warriors” enrolled in Pittsburgh Woolslair PreK-5’s afterschool program recently created a poster, “We’re Hooked on After School,” to promote regular attendance. Their poster was recently chosen as a winner in a “Be There” poster contest, sponsored by the United Way of Allegheny County. The afterschool program at Woolslair is a partnership between Neighborhood Learning Alliance and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. *Photo by Jessica Jacobs.*

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‘Moms and Cops’ seminar raises awareness



Garfield – The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation hosted a “Moms and Cops” seminar on Feb. 4. Maurita Bryant, assistant chief of investigations, organized this event to train local mothers and social service providers on child safety, domestic violence prevention, and how to access helpful local resources. This event was supported by BNY Mellon. Photo by Rick Flanagan.



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EYESORE OF THE MONTH

Penn Avenue eyesore shows potential

By Aggie Brose Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield – The eyesore of the month is 4827 Penn Ave. in Garfield. According to the Allegheny County real estate website, the recorded owners are “Big Ham Group, Inc.” They acquired the property on Feb. 9, 2012 for \$1. Their tax bill mailing address is 321 Bingham St., Suite 301, Pittsburgh, PA 15211. The owner’s mailing address is 1224 E. Carson St., Suite 301, Pittsburgh, PA 15203-1238.

The property was nominated as an eyesore because it had all the markings of an abandoned property, with the first story completely covered in graffiti. Piles of debris on the Millvale Avenue sidewalk forced pedestrians to walk in the street. Some of the second-story windows were partially covered with boards, and others were broken with hanging glass.

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) contacted the Permits, Licenses, and Inspections Bureau (PL&IB) record room and found that the property had been condemned. A building permit issued on Nov. 2, 2012 has since been revoked.

BGC contact the owners to ascertain why the building was still sitting vacant three years after they had acquired it, and to find out their plans for the building, which occupies a prominent corner on Penn Avenue.

BGC located the owners of the property through their listed address, 1224 Carson St., Suite 301, which houses the firm of

Rewis & Yoder.

Mr. Joe Rewis responded to the call and informed the BGC that he and his partners had acquired the building with the intent of rehabilitating it. They would like to see the first floor used for a bar, restaurant, or doctor’s office, due to the close proximity of Children’s Hospital, with an apartment on the second floor and a rooftop deck.

Rewis told BGC staff that he and his partners had not abandoned the property, and that substantial interior cleaning and demolition had been done to-date. He informed the BGC that an ongoing issue with Duquesne Light’s alleged failure to repair a dangerous utility pole had caused a substantial setback in getting the roof replaced.

Upon receiving the call from BGC regarding the graffiti, windows, and debris, the owners immediately had a crew clean up the debris and take care of the graffiti by painting the entire first story. Rewis also said he would have his contractor clean out the broken windows and properly board them up until spring.

Rewis said he will complete the exterior renovations in the spring. He also provided all of his contact information and said he looks forward to working with BGC to make the neighborhood a better place for all businesses and residents. ♦

BELOW: The owners of 4827 Penn Ave. have removed debris and painted over graffiti on the first story, but several second-story windows remain broken and unboarded. Photo by Wesley Davis.



# Parks from page 1

experiential learning for local schools. Despite the increased and recent activity, there is potential to restore the parks so that they can serve even more residents and attract more users.

The Lawrenceville community has been working since the fall of 2013 with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and the City of Pittsburgh to create a master plan for Arsenal Park, Leslie Park, and the connections through Lawrenceville between both parks. The goal of the plan is to bring the parks to a new level of usability, safety, and accessibility while preserving their historical significance for current and future generations.

To create this plan, hundreds of residents and stakeholders collaborated with each other and with MKSK, a design firm hired to lead the project. Community members participated in block walks and interactive discussions in the parks, reviewed and created concepts in focus groups and community meetings, and participated in online dialogue at <http://arsenalpark.mindmixer.com>.

This robust community process will

culminate with a "Master Plan Party" celebration on the evening of March 26, when the final plan will be shared and implementation will begin. The location and start time are still being determined, but those interested in attending can visit [www.lunited.org](http://www.lunited.org) or call 412-802-7220 for updates.

Engaged stakeholders have ranged in age from young children with their parents and teachers, to young professionals, long-time residents, and even a 93-year-old who has used the park since age 3. The diverse community of Lawrenceville and the broader community of park users have weighed in to create a vision that is reflective of the community's history and the desires of current Lawrenceville residents.

Some concepts that emerged through the planning process include multi-purpose courts, educational gardens and green infrastructure, performance areas, accessible gateways into the park, improved paths throughout the park, picnic shelters, and informal areas where large groups can congregate. Water features,

public art, and innovative play spaces that complement the natural topography of the parks are also priorities for local families.

"Not having previously participated in a planning process with a strong community input component, I did not know what to expect, but I am very excited about how the process has unfolded," said Randall Sulkin, president of Friends of Arsenal Park. "The community has actively participated both in person and online at every planning step along the way, giving valuable input and feedback. That feedback has allowed MKSK Studios to create wonderful plans for Arsenal and Leslie Parks with modern features and amenities, while still retaining the history of both parks."

The Park Master Planning Project is a collaborative effort of Lawrenceville United, Lawrenceville Corporation, Friends of Arsenal Park, the City of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, and MKSK. Funding for the project was made possible through a Community Development Block Grant from former



**ABOVE:** Lawrenceville residents discuss park plans at a community meeting. Photo by Randall Sulkin.

City Councilman Patrick Dowd and current City Councilwoman Deborah Gross, and a matching grant from the Allegheny County Economic Development Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund through former Sen. Jim Ferlo's leadership and advocacy.

A steering committee comprised of community stakeholders and partner organizations has helped guide the project, which is being managed by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy with MKSK as the lead design firm and consultant. ♦

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# UPMC St. Margaret

Affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine,  
UPMC is ranked among the nation's best hospitals by U.S. News & World Report.

# Tiny House *from page 4*

would be all-electric.

"The first thing we needed was a workable design, and I think we've achieved that," said Rick Swartz, executive director of the BGC. He said the aim now is to find a way to keep the costs down.

CityLAB is working with the BGC to help make Garfield a destination for a type of housing that can't be found anywhere else. Their hope is that tiny houses will draw people to Garfield because of the quirkiness, sustainability, and thrift embodied in living small. ♦

# Youths learn how to lead

By Shannon Hussey MGR Youth Empowerment

*East End* – In an effort to increase youth involvement in social advocacy, MGR Youth Empowerment, a socially conscious nonprofit, offers an innovative leadership development program for middle- and high-school students.

The program, known as the "Youth Leadership Network" (YLN), provides an opportunity for students to create social campaigns centered on the issues that matter to them and their communities. Although guided by Darrell Kinsel, coordinator of MGR's environmental justice program, the activities of the group are student-driven.

The program started when a group of young people wanted to stay involved after participating in MGR's "Positive Spin" cycling program, part of Pittsburgh Public Schools' Summer Dreamers Academy. After learning about bicycle advocacy in Positive Spin, several young people approached Julie Mallis, MGR's "Active Health" program coordinator, about participating in a campaign to increase the number of safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian routes in their communities.

Mallis established a program for interested students to learn more about creating and managing advocacy projects. The group, which consists of ten participants from Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8, Schiller 6-8, Langley K-8, CAPA 6-12, and the Student Achievement Center in Homewood, meets once a month in MGR's office to discuss community issues and generate ideas for improvements. Their first major project involved a letter-writing campaign to alert elected officials in Harrisburg to the lack of safe paths for local pedestrians and cyclists.

In addition to their work in improving transportation safety, the group wants to be involved in other issues that affect their peers and communities. Although the participants come from different schools and parts of the city, each member has



**ABOVE:** Members of MGR's Youth Leadership Network meet to discuss issues facing their communities. Photo by Darrell Kinsel.

equal say in the activities of the group.

"I feel that you should know everyone's perspective, to give everyone what they want and need," said Arsenal student Mikeiya Bennet.

Participants in the group demonstrate their dedication to learning and leading through the time they give to the meeting sessions and working with their peers. Since the group brings together students from a range of schools and grade levels, meetings take place on days when all of them are free, mainly weekends and days off from school.

In some cases, transportation to meetings presents a challenge, and students make the effort to get a ride or take public transportation. One particularly committed student, Atronice Wilson, an eighth-grade student at Arsenal, walked all the way from her home in Garfield to attend a meeting.

While YLN provides a learning experience for current participants in MGR's programs, it's also intended to be a way for young people who have moved beyond the schools and grade levels MGR serves to stay involved with the organization. Because the group is intended to be youth-driven, it's important to retain the young people who display strong leadership abilities, who can help guide the next group of aspiring advocates. ♦

# Crime reduction drives change in East Liberty

By Elizabeth Sensky East Liberty Development, Inc.

East Liberty – Pittsburgh’s so-called revival has been a hot topic lately. From articles in the Huffington Post praising Pittsburgh as “The Coolest American City You Haven’t Been To” to The Economist ranking Pittsburgh as “The Most Livable City” in the continental U.S., Pittsburgh has been racking up the accolades. If we zoom in closer, East Liberty in particular has also been gaining its fair share of the media spotlight.

The revitalization of East Liberty and its increasing standing as a “neighborhood of choice” is at the center of this discussion. That’s why East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI), a nonprofit community development corporation dedicated to developing a mixed-income and safe East Liberty neighborhood, decided it was time to take a closer look at this renewal and examine the causes behind it. In a series of white papers written by Numeritics, a Pittsburgh-based consulting practice, the organization is doing just that.

The white paper series is an evolution of a crime study commissioned by ELDI and completed by Numeritics in October 2013. In the analysis, Numeritics examined the links between lowered crime rates, increased property values, and ELDI initiatives. With the white paper series, ELDI and Numeritics take the research a step further.

“The white papers give us an opportunity to explore concepts and ideas not in the original crime study,” said Eric Jester, former project manager at ELDI and current chief executive officer of New Burgh Real Estate, a boutique real estate firm focused on developing sustainable, mixed-income communities.

The first white paper, published in early



**ABOVE:** 2008 (left) and 2012 (right) crime heat maps in Pittsburgh’s East End. Significant change is noticeable in East Liberty’s residential area. Chronic “hot spots” are located in the business districts, with Shadyside’s commercial area serving as a crude control. Maps courtesy of East Liberty Development, Inc.

February, takes a look at crime rates in relation to property values. Numeritics identifies ELDI’s crime reduction strategy in East Liberty as a significant driver of increased property values and the neighborhood’s subsequent status as a desirable place for families and developers.

The paper claims that the recent, large commercial developments in East Liberty, including Home Depot, Google, and Whole Foods, had no impact on residential housing values. Home prices only increased after the neighborhood was safe, it contends.

Along with identifying relevant research and theories on this topic, Numeritics used statistics from the City of Pittsburgh Police Department, housing data from RealStats, and qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders to evaluate the correlation between ELDI’s actions and the large reduction in East Liberty’s residential crime since 2006.

They found that from 2006 to 2013, East Liberty saw a 49 percent reduction in crime in the residential area. Between 2006 and 2013, residential property prices also rose 120 percent.

Despite these increased property prices, Numeritics highlights ELDI’s commitment to ensuring that East Liberty remains affordable. They cite the organization’s method of using a combination of creative financing and low-income housing tax credits to purchase slum properties in locations with chronic criminal behavior. This strategy not only creates housing that is clean and safe, but also affordable.

“One of the most unique and possibly most beneficial aspects of the ELDI approach is the use of targeted, scattered-site, low-density interventions that do not create newer versions of concentrated poverty,” said Victoria Hill, one of the paper’s authors.

ELDI’s long-term work to develop the East Liberty neighborhood began in the 1980s, as a way to reverse the effects of urban renewal the neighborhood underwent in the 1960s.

ELDI and Numeritics will release the rest of the white paper series in the coming weeks. The next papers will delve further into ideas relating to crime’s impact on communities and strategies for eliminating it.

Visit [www.eastliberty.org](http://www.eastliberty.org) to view the current white paper, “East Liberty Revitalization: Crime Trend and Property Prices.” To get the next papers sent directly to your inbox, you can subscribe to ELDI’s newsletter on their website, [www.eastliberty.org](http://www.eastliberty.org), or stay tuned on social media. ♦

**BELOW:** A 49 percent decrease in crime (blue line) in East Liberty’s residential area between 2006 and 2013 correlates with an approximate 120 percent increase in residential property prices (red line). Graph courtesy of East Liberty Development, Inc.



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the

Bulletin

BOARD

Local Events  
Announcements

Classes  
Fundraisers

March 2

EAST LIBERTY

Dr. Seuss Read-Aloud

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., to listen to one of Dr. Seuss’ famous books. Read-alouds will take place at 11 a.m., 4 p.m., and 6 p.m. Open to all ages.

March 3

STANTON HEIGHTS

City Hall Update

Join the Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association at 7 p.m. at the Three Rivers Village School, 4721 Stanton Ave., for an update on city services from City Councilman Rev. Ricky Burgess and City Councilwoman Deb Gross. A question-and-answer session will follow.

March 4

BLOOMFIELD

Dogs & Toddlers

Created by a certified dog behavior consultant and mother of four, Dogs & Toddlers™ is for families with children between 3 months and 3 years and exploring their independence for the first time. It is offered as both a group training class and private in-home consultation which parents and other caretakers can attend with their dogs to learn. The class takes place from 7 to 9 p.m. in West Penn Hospital’s Burstin Room, 4800 Penn Ave. \$25 per family. For more information, visit [ahn.org/west-penn](http://ahn.org/west-penn) or call 412-578-7030.

GARFIELD

Green Zone Meeting

Join the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to discuss plans for a potential “Garfield Green Zone” at 6 p.m. at the Bloomfield-Garfield Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave. Residents will have the opportunity to vote on their preferences, and refreshments will be provided.

March 5

LAWRENCEVILLE

Work Nights

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., between 6 p.m. and midnight to stay up late, network, and connect with other innovators. Enjoy late-night snacks and coffee while receiving guidance from library professionals well-versed in technology, entrepreneurship, and more. For more information, visit

<http://www.carnegielibrary.org/worknights/>, or call 412-682-3668.

STRIP DISTRICT

Pancakes in the PM

Support a great cause and enjoy your favorite breakfast for dinner at Pamela’s in the Strip District, 60 21st St. Pamela’s will offer their famous, crepe-style pancakes with your other breakfast favorites – plus a bloody mary and mimosa bar. Tickets are \$40 or \$25, and all proceeds benefit East End Cooperative Ministry’s hunger programs.

March 6

GARFIELD

Grand Opening

LOCAL 412, a new retail business located at 4901 Penn Ave., will host its grand opening event on the evening of March 6 as part of the “Unblurred” gallery crawl on Penn. LOCAL 412, which stands for “Love Our City A Lot,” will hold auditions for Rhyme Calisthenics, a Pittsburgh-based game show where contestants spin a wheel and then demonstrate their lyrical ability based on the category selected.

Closing Reception

The Irma Freeman Center for Imagination, 5006 Penn Ave., will host a closing reception from 7 to 10 p.m. for “The First Cut is the Deepest: The Woodcuts of John Carruthers” and Rachna Rajen’s “Aligning the Exterior.”

March 7

BLOOMFIELD

Pet Therapy

Learn what pet therapy is all about and how it can help with your healing journey. Free information session with two professional dog trainers and their therapy dogs. Meet Elissa Weimer, a professional dog trainer, and Shane Gentry, a professional dog trainer, behavioral consultant, and owner of “Sally Said So Professional Dog Training.” The session takes place from 1 to 3 p.m. at West Penn Hospital – Wintergarden, 4800 Friendship Ave. RSVP to Mykie Bianchi at 412-578-4316 or [mbianchi@wpahs.org](mailto:mbianchi@wpahs.org).

EAST LIBERTY

Peter Pan Selections

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., to hear performers from Pittsburgh Musical Theater sing songs from “Peter Pan,” the musical. This 2 p.m. performance is open to all ages.

GARFIELD

Homebuyer Education

Join NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania as they facilitate a free, full-day homebuyer education workshop sponsored by PNC. The workshop will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Saint Maria Goretti Activity Center, 140 N. Atlantic Ave. Lunch is provided. Anyone interested in becoming a homeowner is encouraged to attend to learn about money management and savings, credit, mortgage loans, and the right steps to shop for, purchase, and maintain your home. Experts from financial institutions, real estate agencies, insurance companies, and home inspectors will be present to speak and answer questions. Pre-registration is required by calling 412-281-9773.

March 8

LAWRENCEVILLE

Floating Transitions

Join Laura Gorham-Huon, yoga instructor, from 1 to 3 p.m. at The Shala of Pittsburgh Ashtanga Yoga, 4319 Butler St. for a workshop about the importance of transitions in the Ashtanga method. Cost is \$30 for pre-registration and \$35 for walk-in participants. Class will be limited to 20 students.

March 11

EAST LIBERTY

Trades Career Fair

East Liberty Development, Inc. and commercial development partners are hosting a trades career and apprenticeship fair at Kingsley Association, 6435 Frankstown Ave., from 3 to 6 p.m. This forum offers several apprenticeship application events and will feature local building trades employers such as P.J. Dick and Mistick Construction.

GARFIELD

Police Recruitment

Learn more about becoming a Pittsburgh police officer and navigating the application process at 6 p.m. at the Bloomfield-Garfield Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave.

West Penn Recruitment

Come to the Bloomfield-Garfield Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Ave., from 1 to 2:30 p.m. to learn about job opportunities at West Penn Hospital and Allegheny Health Network, the application process, and how to make your resume stand out to recruiters. Register by calling 412-465-0425.

March 12

LAWRENCEVILLE

Social Media Class

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville and Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania have teamed up to offer free computer workshops to residents who want to brush up on their computer skills. The workshop topic on March 12 is social media. Classes are held in Goodwill’s computer lab at 118 52nd St. and run from 6 to 8 p.m. Partici-

pants must register in advance by calling 412-632-1842.

March 14

EAST LIBERTY

Storytime Sing-Along

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 11 a.m. to sing songs, make music, and more. For children between 3 and 5 years of age, and their caregivers.

March 15

LAWRENCEVILLE

Free Lecture

Our Lady of the Angels Holy Name Society has invited local historian and author James Wudarczyk to speak on Pittsburgh events during the first two years of the Civil War. Wudarczyk, the author of the book “Until the Morning Cometh: Civil War Era Pittsburgh,” will discuss heroes and scoundrels, the first training camp in Pittsburgh, and lost facts regarding the 1862 Allegheny Arsenal explosion. The free event will take place at 11 a.m. in the new social hall under the parish’s Saint Augustine Church at the corner of 37th and Bandera Streets.

Encounter Anniversary

Join Encounter Church for the celebration service of its first full year at 10 a.m. at Arsenal Middle School, 220 40th St. Then stick around for a food truck roundup in Arsenal Park. At Encounter, experience a friendly atmosphere, inspiring and heartfelt worship, and a teaching that’s both spiritual and relevant to your life. Plus, kids’ programs are available for children from age 2 through fifth grade. Visit [www.encounterpgh.com](http://www.encounterpgh.com) for more details.

March 16

BLOOMFIELD

Weight Loss Info Session

You are invited to a free information session to enhance your understanding of weight loss surgeries and services offered by Allegheny Health Network’s Bariatric and Metabolic Institute. The presentations include an informational talk given by bariatric surgical staff and a question-and-answer period. All sessions are free; registration is appreciated, but not required. There are two daytime classes – 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 2 to 3 p.m. at the Cercone Building, 4727 Friendship Ave, Suite 140 – and an evening class from 6 to 7 p.m. at West Penn Hospital – Wintergarden, 4800 Friendship Ave. For questions or to register, call 412-235-5900.

March 18

STANTON HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Meeting

The Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Three Rivers Village School, 4721 Stanton Ave. Ron Porter of RDP Consultants will continue working with the asso-

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 are published on a space-available basis; we cannot guarantee placement. Announcements for the April issue are due **Friday, March 13**. Submit listings on the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation website, [http://bit.ly/bulletin\\_submit](http://bit.ly/bulletin_submit).

# Volunteer Opportunities & Services

ciation to develop plans for improving the organization's effectiveness and seeking outside resources. Director Mike Gable of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works will also attend to discuss neighborhood green space projects and issues with snow removal during this past season.

## March 19

### LAWRENCEVILLE

## Free Lecture

As part of the Lawrenceville Historical Society's public lecture series, Ken Kobus will address the development of the Allegheny Valley Railroad and some of the industries served by the railroad. The Kobus lecture will present a photographic train ride soaring past many of the area's long-gone and forgotten train stations on an imaginary commuter trip from Braeburn to Pittsburgh. The event takes place at 7 p.m. at Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St. It is free and open to the public. No reservations required.

## Art and Aesthetics

The Aesthetic Skin & Laser Center will host its quarterly open house from 6 to 8 p.m. at 4424 Penn Ave., Suite 102. Come to view the art of Sarah Zeffiro, meet and learn about the latest in aesthetics from Dr. Roxana Barad and her staff, and enjoy nutritious food from Marty's Market while sipping a glass of wine or our fresh spa water, all created especially for your enjoyment. RSVP to [Jamie@aestheticpittsburgh.com](mailto:Jamie@aestheticpittsburgh.com).

## March 21

### LAWRENCEVILLE

## Inversion Workshop

Come to The Shala of Pittsburgh Ashtanga Yoga, 4319 Butler St., from 1 to 3 p.m. for an interactive workshop discussing proper alignment and techniques for a safe headstand, forearm stand, handstand, and shoulder stand. Participants should be able to hold plank and downward-facing dog for several minutes without any pain. Cost is \$25 if you pre-register online, or \$30 for walk-in participants.

## March 25

### EAST LIBERTY

## Beatrix Potter Program

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., at 4 p.m. for an "Artful Stories" program, including a read-aloud, discussion, and hands-on activity featuring Beatrix Potter's work. For children in kindergarten through fifth grade.

## March 26

### LAWRENCEVILLE

## Internet Basics Class

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh in Lawrenceville and Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania have teamed up to offer free computer workshops. The workshop topic on

March 26 is internet basics and safety. Classes are held in Goodwill's computer lab at 118 52nd St. and run from 6 to 8 p.m. Participants must register in advance by calling 412-632-1842.

## March 27

### BLOOMFIELD

## Spring Craft Fair

Come to West Penn Hospital – Wintergarden, 4800 Friendship Ave., from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be an array of gift items for your shopping pleasure and a basket raffle. Call April at 412-578-5482 for more details, or if you are interested in participating in the fair.

### ROSS TOWNSHIP

## Job Fair

Representative Dom Costa will hold his annual job fair at the Ross Township Community Center, 1000 Ross Municipal Dr., behind the Big Lots on McKnight Road, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come meet with more than 50 employers hiring in and around the Pittsburgh area. Those attending are encouraged to bring copies of their resumes. For more information, call 412-361-2040.

## April 10

### HIGHLAND PARK

## PULSEations 2015

Join PULSE, Pittsburgh Urban Leadership Service Experience, for its annual party and fundraiser at the Union Project, 801 N. Negley Ave. "PULSEations 2015: Vision" is an opportunity to celebrate and support the work of PULSE in Pittsburgh. Join us for a fun evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction. There will be a special VIP reception from 6 to 7 p.m., followed by the main event from 7 to 10 p.m. Call 412-361-0124 or visit [www.pulsepittsburgh.org/pulseations/](http://www.pulsepittsburgh.org/pulseations/) for more details.

## Ongoing

### BLOOMFIELD

## Wellness Programs

The Cancer Caring Center in Bloomfield, 4117 Liberty Ave., hosts free wellness programs for cancer patients and their families. Classes are offered in Zumba, hands-on therapy, yoga, art therapy, and reiki. Call 412-622-1212 for an appointment.

### EAST LIBERTY

## Comics Workshop

The Labs at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – East Liberty, 130 S. Whitfield St., will be running comics workshops every Wednesday from 4 to 7 p.m. Activities include writing and drawing exercises, hands-on tutorials with formally trained comic artists, developing your own projects from start to finish, and showcasing your finished work at the end. This workshop is free for teens in sixth through twelfth grades. Call 412-363-8232 or email [eastliberty@carnegielibrary.org](mailto:eastliberty@carnegielibrary.org) for more details.

## April Bulletin Deadline: March 13

Download advertising information: [bit.ly/bulletin\\_ad](http://bit.ly/bulletin_ad)

Download guidelines for stories, photos, and notices: [bit.ly/bulletin\\_news](http://bit.ly/bulletin_news)

### FRIENDSHIP

## Festival Vendors

Spring is just around the corner, and the annual Friendship Folk and Flower Festival (f4) is soon to follow on Saturday, May 9. Vendors of crafts, jewelry, or anything hand-made are needed. No garage sale items, please. The fee to participate is \$15. Vendors will receive a place for one table and five raffle ticket vouchers, vouchers for a sandwich and drink, a plant (excluding hanging baskets), and an item from the membership table (excluding T-shirts). Please respond by April 15 to Kathy Farrington at [farringtonk@me.com](mailto:farringtonk@me.com) to reserve a space at this popular neighborhood festival.

### GARFIELD

## S&B Sewing Circle

This community gathering takes place on the third Monday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. at Assemble, 5125 Penn Ave. Participants – adults only, please – can bring a knitting, sewing, or crafting project to work on, and a dish to share. This event is BYOB.

## Assemble Afterschool

Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 4 to 6:30 p.m. join us at Assemble, 5125 Penn Ave., for free, hands-on making for kids in fourth through eighth grades. Tuesdays are for engineering, Wednesdays are for art, and Thursdays are for digital skills. Come once a week or all three days.

## Garden in Garfield

Are you a Garfield resident looking to grow your own food this year? At Kincaid Street Community Garden you can adopt a plot, volunteer, or participate in events. Leave a message at 412-450-0371 to learn more or visit [gcatpgh.com/kincaid-gardens](http://gcatpgh.com/kincaid-gardens).

## 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 [garfieldnightmarket@gmail.com](mailto:garfieldnightmarket@gmail.com). Also, stay tuned to <http://garfieldnightmarket.org> for updates.

### LAWRENCEVILLE

## Sunday Market

The Night Gallery hosts a market every Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Come to 4936 Harrison St. for artisan bread, fresh coffee, and amazing jewelry.

## Adult Game Night

Join your neighbors at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., every Tuesday at 6 p.m. for board games, card games, or even video games. Participants must be 18 and up. Call 412-682-3668 for more information.

## Teen Time

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., every Monday at 4:30 p.m. for Teen Time. Play Xbox 360 or Xbox One, make movies, and play music. Or you can just come and hang out.

## Little Learners

Come to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Lawrenceville, 279 Fisk St., every Wednesday at 6 p.m. for family playtime. Using a wide array of age-appropriate toys, little learners will experience something exciting with their caregivers at their sides. Recommended for newborns to 3-year-olds and their families.

## Youth Tennis Clinics

Beginner and intermediate tennis clinics for ages 6 to 10 are offered every Thursday night from 7 to 8 p.m. at Arsenal Middle School's gym, 220 40th St. No experience necessary. Rackets are provided or you can bring your own. \$10 per session, or \$45 for five sessions of your choosing. Non-marking shoes only, please. For questions or to pre-register, please contact Dave at Lawrenceville United, 412-802-7220 or [Dave@LUnited.org](mailto:Dave@LUnited.org).

## Art Exhibit

The next Gallery on 43rd Street exhibit is "Plein Air Landscapes" by Liza Brenner. Brenner is an associate professor of art at Glenville State College in West Virginia. She recently traveled to Spello, Italy for a plein air workshop, and her show focuses on work from that trip. The exhibit runs at 187 43rd St. from March 6 to April 18, with an opening reception on March 6 from 7 to 10 p.m. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, call 412-683-6488, or visit [www.facebook.com/gallery.43rdstreet](http://www.facebook.com/gallery.43rdstreet).

## Volunteers Needed

The Estelle S. Campbell Boys & Girls Club is looking for adult volunteers for arts and crafts, computers, sports, and/or fitness. Volunteers must have current child abuse and criminal clearances. For details, call 412-682-4013.

## Afterschool Programs

The Estelle S. Campbell Boys & Girls Club is accepting applications for membership in after-school and evening programs. Children ages 5 to 18 are welcome. The monthly fee for individuals is \$12, or \$10 per child for a family of two or more children. Call 412-682-4013 for more information. Don't miss out on the fun.

### MORNINGSIDE

## Tax Return Assistance

Representative Dom Costa's office will help seniors with simple income tax returns at 6808 Greenwood St. You must be 65 or older with an income under \$35,000 to be eligible. Participants must schedule an appointment by calling 412-361-2040.

### SHADYSIDE

## Curious About Quakerism?

The Religious Society of Friends holds a "Meeting for Worship" each Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. at 4836 Ellsworth Ave. Earlier arrival is encouraged, and all are welcome. Light refreshments and fellowship follow the service. For more information, call 412-683-2669 or visit [www.quaker.org/pgpamm](http://www.quaker.org/pgpamm).

# Lawrenceville partnership matches employers with job seekers

By Moira Egler *Lawrenceville Corporation*



**ABOVE:** The Lawrenceville Works team, from left to right: Jeff Sapienza, Ashley Brandolph, and Andrew Sabo. Photo by Jen Kropinak.

*Lawrenceville* – The “Lawrenceville Works” program has been wildly successful in matching local job seekers with nearby companies since its creation in July of 2013.

Lawrenceville Works is a partnership between Lawrenceville United, Lawrenceville Corporation, and Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Pennsylvania aimed at reducing unemployment and targeting poverty in the East End.

According to statistics provided by Goodwill, Lawrenceville Works has successfully placed 125 candidates with local businesses, 93 of whom hail from the 15201 ZIP code.

Jeff Sapienza, employer engagement liaison for Goodwill, said that the program not only helps community members find gainful employment, but also provides employers with high-quality, pre-screened candidates.

“No other human services agency really focuses on the employer as the customer,” Sapienza said. “Lawrenceville Works is unique in that way.”

Sapienza and his coworker, Andrew Sabo, shared a bit about the process of matching job seekers with employers. When approached by an employer looking for candidates, they first assess the specific needs of the employer for the open position.

Then, Sabo and Sapienza send their findings to Ashley Brandolph, the community employment and resource specialist who manages professional development services for job seekers in the Lawrenceville Works program.

“Companies save time and energy searching for candidates. We know they are thankful for that.”

– Andrew Sabo, Goodwill

“All job seekers, regardless of their level of professional experience, have access to the same wide range of career readiness resources, including resume building and interview preparation,” Brandolph said.

Brandolph works with a large pool of job seekers who have been pre-screened to ensure successful placement.

“It’s about finding the best fit for both parties – the employer and the job seeker. We care about retention,” she said.

Sabo said that what makes Lawrenceville Works so unique is the tailored, customized

assistance employers receive. Job candidates are only presented to the employer after they have been evaluated according to the needs of the position.

“Companies save time and energy searching for candidates,” Sabo said. “We know they are thankful for that.”

According to Goodwill, Lawrenceville Works has engaged 28 employers within Lawrenceville alone, and many have offered rave reviews of their experience.

The influx of retail and hospitality businesses into the neighborhood translates to potential employment opportunities for residents in those fields. Dora Walmsley, co-owner of Lawrenceville’s own 52nd Street Market, used the program to hire one of the market’s employees.

“We were given a pool of candidates whose missions and philosophies were very much in line with our own, and had skill sets that were already complementary to what we were trying to achieve at the market,” Walmsley said.

Tender Bar and Kitchen, another Lawrenceville establishment, hired a dishwasher through Lawrenceville Works who was able to move up through the ranks to a prep cook position.

In addition to smaller businesses, Lawrenceville Works has provided staffing solutions to large regional companies like UPMC.

Shaina Walker, a workforce development recruiter for UPMC, noted that UPMC has hired for a diverse range of positions through Lawrenceville Works.

“[The staff] prepped the candidates ahead of time to make sure they were work-ready and prepared to interview,” she said. “The program has provided us with individuals who are accountable, responsible, and who remain employed.”

Lawrenceville Works team members said the program helps to build positive connections within the Lawrenceville neighborhood.

“Employers walk away from their experience with Lawrenceville Works feeling really good, like they’re giving back to the community,” Brandolph said. ♦



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