

the Bulletin

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*Serving Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield,
East Liberty, and Lawrenceville since 1975*

Penn Plaza promises: funding for housing, park inches forward

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

East End - Negotiations between city officials, neighborhood groups, and the Gumberg development interests - following the fulfillment of the terms of a court-approved, consent decree the parties signed in October 2017 in the wake of the demolition of the Penn Plaza Apartments - have picked up steam of late.

This recent progress is aimed at creating a fund for affordable housing and rebuilding what is now an eviscerated Enright Parklet next door to what will be a new commercial development owned by Gumberg.

The consent decree emerged in the aftermath of the eviction of over 200 Penn Plaza tenants, and a legal battle that ensued between the City and Gumberg - after the City rejected the developer's preliminary

See **Penn Plaza** | page 2



ABOVE: Public transit advocate Fred Ricky Mergner heralds Garfield's updated 88-Penn signage at the intersection of Penn & N. Millvale Aves. In response to feedback from local transit riders, the Port Authority adjusted its citywide plans for bus stop consolidation. Look to page 11 for more details. Photo courtesy of Fred Ricky Mergner.



ABOVE: Scavengers visit the rear side of 4825 Penn Ave. to take the junk remaining from an abandoned demolition job. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs. Look to page 5 for more details about this "eyesore" property and its derelict owner.

PGH Theological Seminary, ACTION-Housing create affordable housing in East End

By Melissa Logan *Pittsburgh Theological Seminary*

East Liberty - In an effort to help address the city's growing affordable housing shortage, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS) is engaging ACTION-Housing Inc. in the sale of three apartment buildings that will be converted into affordable apartments.

Located on N. Highland Ave., between Stanton Ave. and St. Marie St., the apartments currently house PTS students. The revitalization project entails updating the kitchens and bathrooms, along with landscaping each building's grounds and

installing new windows, a community room, and a number of apartments designed to meet standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"We believe we should be good neighbors, as Jesus made clear throughout his teachings," PTS Board chair Jim Gockley said. "Working with ACTION on providing affordable housing allows us to continue the Seminary's commitment to generous hospitality, and it helps ensure that Pittsburgh remains a place for all people."

See **Affordable Housing** | page 4

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*FREE LEAD LINE REPLACEMENT:
MAKE PWSA FOOT THE BILL*

*ARTISAN CAFÉ CLOSES, PUNK
LEGACY REMAINS ON PENN AVE.*

- PAGE 9 -

Penn Plaza *continued from page 1*

plan for the site in December 2016. The decree cleared the way for Gumberg to return to the city Planning Commission and eventually gain its approval for a development that will consist of a Whole Foods store, a 600+-car parking garage, a nine-story office tower, and some retail storefronts.

The conditions in the decree that have been of greatest interest to the neighborhood groups are: 1) Securing \$4 million or more from a bond issue, floated by the city’s Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), from real estate tax revenues contributed by the Gumberg interests, that will seed a fund for affordable housing; 2) Impaneling an advisory committee to oversee how those funds will be deployed; 3) Extending the radius – one that defines the geographical area where monies from the bond issue can be used to help fund housing projects from .5 to .75 miles from the East Liberty transit station [behind the Eastside Bond housing complex]; 4) Developing a timetable for the creation of a new park adjacent to the commercial project that will replace Enright Parklet and buffer the nearby residential district from Gumberg’s project; a portion of the existing parklet was sold by the City last year to Gumberg for their development.

The administration of the housing fund will be left to an entity with a cumbersome name: the East Liberty Transit Revitalization Investment District Authority (ELTRIDA). Its five-member board, appointed by the URA and operating mostly out of public view, is charged with investing its revenues in private development projects located within .5 miles of the transit station. ELTRIDA’s revenues come from real estate taxes paid by developers – monies that are diverted for use in the investment district instead of being put into the City’s coffers.

When Yvonne Hilton, the city’s Solicitor, met with attorneys representing three neighborhood groups on Feb. 18, she pledged to find answers to their questions about when the decree’s four main conditions would be addressed.

These neighborhood advocates are pushing for a quarter-mile extension to the radius of the transit revitalization investment district that would take it into parts of Garfield, Friendship, and Larimer. Their fear is that, if the radius is left at one-half mile, the bond funds will be spent entirely within the East Liberty commercial district, and almost exclusively for the benefit of large, mixed-use developments promoted by developers such as Walnut Capital. But the City must first complete a study of the proposal before deciding if it wants to introduce corresponding legislation at City Council.

The neighborhood groups, including the Enright Park Neighbors Association, East Liberty Development, Inc., Friendship Community Organization, and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), have nominated their representatives to the advisory committee for the housing fund. But the ground rules for the fund’s operation and the conduct of the committee’s meetings have not been hammered out because it has yet to convene. The representatives are Jason Roth, Ted Melnyk, Martha Terry, and Josh Malloy, along with a member of Mayor Peduto’s staff. According to the BGC’s executive director, Rick Swartz, “the BGC will seek to have the committee’s meetings open to the public.”

The groups have also expressed significant concern around the funding and construction timetable for the new park. It will extend from S. Negley Avenue all the way to S. Euclid Ave., formerly known as “Penn Circle West.” The bond issue, to be floated by the URA, will have \$1 million reserved for the project, together with \$300,000 that was inserted into the city’s 2020 capital budget. Whether those funds will be sufficient remains unknown, but the prospects are not encouraging; a new park currently under construction in the Larimer neighborhood is projected to cost three times as much. Regardless, since the final design, engineering, and contract bidding have yet to be done, it is likely that construction of the new park would not begin until 2022.

“All of this has been disappointing,” Swartz observed following the Feb. 18 meeting. “The housing fund and the reconfigured park were pretty much all that the neighborhood groups walked away with from the consent decree two-and-a-half years ago. The benefits from both could be years away from being realized, while the new commercial development will start coming out of the ground within weeks. Until there’s some hard progress in achieving our goals, it seems like the balancing of the scales - in which both sides, the developers and the community, get what they want - remains nothing more than an illusion.” ♦



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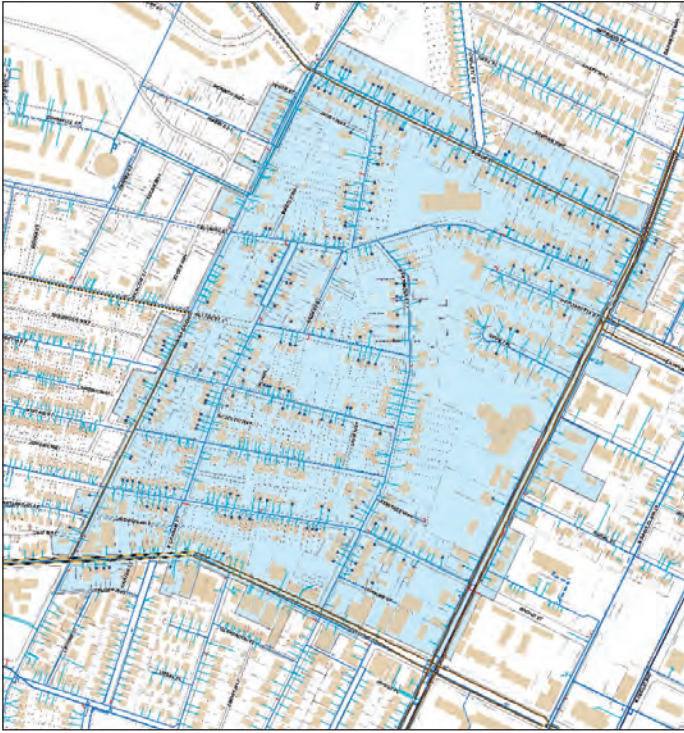
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FREE TO THE PEOPLE

PWSA replaces Garfield lead lines at no cost to homeowners

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation



AT LEFT: A sketch of Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority's (PWSA) eligibility map, shaded in blue, displays Garfield addresses that are eligible for free lead service line replacement. The boundary points for PWSA's line replacement program are N. Aiken Ave. to the west, Black St. to the north, N. Negley Ave. to the east, and Penn Ave. to the south. Refer to page 10 for a list of addresses that are now eligible for free lead line replacement. See if your address qualifies at pgh2o.com/leadmap. Graphic courtesy of PWSA.

Garfield - Local homeowners now have an opportunity to get their lead service lines replaced, free of charge, by Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority (PWSA). Rental tenants may also qualify for this program, but only with documented permission from the property owner.

For any property where a lead line is located on both the PWSA side and the private side, PWSA will replace it for no charge. In late 2017, a state law changed to allow the Authority to replace the private side along with its own lines.

All eligible properties must be located within geographic boundaries that PWSA has laid out for each neighborhood [see the map of Garfield above]. An interactive map is available online (pgh2o.com/leadmap) to help PWSA customers determine if their property is eligible; customers can call the Lead Line Help Desk at 412-255-8987.

In the Garfield neighborhood, addresses that are eligible for free lead line replacement include Black St., Broad St., Columbo St., Dunkirk St., Hillcrest St., Kincaid St., Margaretta St., Penn Ave., Rippey Pl., and Rosetta St. - between N. Aiken & N. Negley Aves. As of press time, PWSA's work in Garfield will begin in March, with Bloomfield slated for April.

Owners of properties located outside the map may also still qualify for free lead line replacement. PWSA has established a free lead line replacement program that is available to homeowners and tenants who meet certain income requirements; eligible customers can have their lead line replaced in one to two months.

For more information about the program's income requirements, contact Dollar Energy Fund at 866-762-2348. ♦

the Bulletin

Serving Pittsburgh's
East End neighborhoods
since 1975

with the mission of reporting on issues affecting underserved communities and facilitating local residents' exchange of ideas.

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The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Thank you!

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Affordable Housing continued from page 1

A nonprofit aligned with the Seminary’s mission, ACTION-Housing works to empower people to build more secure and self-sufficient lives.

The organization’s work embraces a vision of the city where at-risk populations can be provided with not only affordable places to live, but also good access to health care, supportive services, transit, and employment centers - a city where all neighborhoods welcome, and plan for, the inclusion of those with lower incomes and those with disabilities.

Once the renovations are completed, the buildings will be ready to provide housing for low-income and moderate-income households, maintaining a focus on individuals with disabilities and single parents; the renovated facilities will continue to offer housing to Seminary students.

A majority of the available units will be made affordable to households earning between 20-80% of Area Median Income. Conveniently located near multiple business districts, the site will offer access to public transportation, schools, parks, and fresh-food options.

“This project allows the Seminary to be

good stewards of our resources,” the Rev. Dr. David Esterline, president and professor of cross-cultural theological education at PTS, noted. “We’re providing modern, affordable, proximate, and safe housing to our students while simultaneously serving a neighborhood need.”

“It is not often that an opportunity like this comes along,” Larry Swanson, executive director of ACTION-Housing, observed.

“The leadership of the Seminary has demonstrated that we all have a chance to help address the issues faced by those with fewer resources and greater challenges to thriving in our city,” he continued. “ACTION-Housing is excited to be able to work alongside the Seminary to create new affordable housing in the East End.”

The renovations, which will begin this summer, are expected to take approximately 16 months. ACTION-Housing is bringing together a trusted team - GBBN Architects, NELCON Construction, and Iams Consulting - for the project.

As of press time, a community meeting was scheduled for Feb. 25 at the PTS campus. To learn more about this new project, visit PTS.edu or ActionHousing.org. ♦

CCRP student Cecil Price III pursues internship at Josh Gibson Foundation



AT LEFT: Cecil Price III, president of the student body at Obama Academy, has earned stellar grades throughout his four years of high school. While awaiting 10 different award packages, from some top-notch colleges, he will intern with the Josh Gibson Foundation here in Pittsburgh. Price III looks forward to mentoring young students while helping the foundation plan its 100-year anniversary celebration. Photo by Judy Lubarski.

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EYESORE-OF-THE-MONTH: 4825 Penn Ave.

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - The property at 4825 Penn Ave., once known as the “Heavenly Cuts” building, was condemned last June by the city’s Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections (PLI). Despite the visible evidence of a haphazard demolition job taking place at the rear of the site, there is currently no building permit on file with the City.

In a conversation with representatives from the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, the property’s owner, Dr. Ghassan Bejjani, recently maintained that he has submitted the proper applications for building permits and said that he hopes to go through the zoning approval process this year.

Dr. Bejjani explained that he plans to tear down the existing structure and replace it with a three-story building. His stated timeline indicates that demolition of the building could begin in the fall. However, the City has documented several open violations that would inevitably delay any kind of development project at 4825 Penn Ave.

Some of the violations [listed at pittsburghpa.buildingeye.com/enforcement] recorded by PLI include “working without a permit,” “bowed, collapsing windows,” and “stone/brick missing from the foundation,” just to name a few. The two most important details, though, are “engineer’s report needed to remedy building” and “must obtain building permit to remove violations.”

Carolyn Wenning, who lives next door to Bejjani’s building, has watched it slowly deteriorate over the last few years.

“It’s been so sad to see a perfectly good building end up in condemnation,” she said. “Although the partial teardown scared away the rats and woodchucks, the rotting debris smells bad.”

The Bulletin will continue tracking this story, publishing updates in the near future. ♦

BELOW: The front of the former “Heavenly Cuts” building, owned by Dr. Ghassan Bejjani, at 4825 Penn Ave. in Garfield. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



ABOVE: A botched demolition job has produced loads of debris at the rear of 4825 Penn Ave. As described in a photo caption on the front page, this alley-facing wasteland has attracted a number of scavengers, as well as rodents. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



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Lawrenceville United hires war veteran Helen Gerhardt as community organizer

By Dave Breingan *Lawrenceville United*

Lawrenceville - In working to improve and protect the quality of life for all local residents, Lawrenceville United (LU) is excited to welcome Helen Gerhardt as its new Community Engagement & Program Manager.

She takes over for Darrell Kinsel, who will continue working full-time at LU, while returning to his roots helping schools and young people. Kinsel will work with the "PEP Rally" program, which aims to strengthen and support neighborhood public schools through family and community engagement.

A veteran of the war in Iraq, Gerhardt is an experienced and well-known advocate for many far-reaching issues that the Lawrenceville community holds in high priority.

She was a co-chair of the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Task Force, which last year released a spate of recommendations to the City of Pittsburgh on how to preserve and create affordable housing.

In her wide-ranging experience, Gerhardt has also led campaigns to improve public transit, founded a coalition to improve lit-

eracy in Georgia, and helped constituents apply for SNAP and other benefits.

"Over the last ten years, as a community organizer, I've bused and biked and walked - and driven a series of beaten-up, old cars - all over the Pittsburgh region," she said, "learning from people with an amazing range of life experiences, and sharing the hard work of trying to build equitable food access, public transit, housing, and community planning."

Gerhardt will coordinate LU's communications, manage the "AdvantAGE" program [supporting older adults to age in place successfully], plan community events, and direct neighborhood cleaning and greening efforts.

"I've done a good share of huffing and puffing, up and down Lawrenceville's hills," she admitted, "but now I look forward to getting to know this neighborhood in much greater depth: root, branch, and leaf."

As a graduate of Phipps Conservatory's rigorous Master Gardener program, Gerhardt is not kidding when she says one of her newfound goals is to leverage the historic neighborhood's "green potential."

BELOW: Helen Gerhardt was recently hired as Lawrenceville United's new Community Engagement & Program Manager. A veteran of the war in Iraq, Gerhardt has also worked in community organizing for more than a decade. Photo courtesy of Dave Breingan.



"One of the things that I'm most excited about is working with the Lawrenceville Tree Tenders," she said, "and volunteers from Lawrenceville's community gardens and food forest."

Gerhardt will also help coordinate the Lawrenceville Farmers Market, which operates every Tuesday, from 4-7 p.m. [June through October].

Ahead of the 2020 season, LU is hiring a new Farmers Market Manager; the part-time position, which manages the market's daily operations, is year-round and averages 10-15 hours of work per week.

After experiencing a substantial growth of its customer base in 2019, LU is looking for candidates who can help sustain the momentum.

The organization seeks candidates that can grow attendance and vendor participation while also positioning the Market to address local issues like food insecurity and food equity.

For more information about the Farmers Market Manager position, and further details on the 2020 season, please contact 412-802-7220, email info@LUnited.org, or visit LUnited.org. ♦



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'Permaculture' down on the farm in Garfield

A Message from Garfield Community Farm

Garfield - Farmer John Creasy is planning a one-day, deep dive into the foundations of sustainable gardening. Hosted by Garfield Community Farm (Cornwall & Wicklow Sts.), the class will explore "permaculture" and its benefits to local gardeners.

At its root, permaculture is the practice of regenerative living that demonstrates care for the earth, and care for people, in ways that promote equity and justice. Creasy will focus on the activism of homegrown food and urban ecological restoration - and how applying the simple principles of permaculture can effect great change.

The session will involve both classroom teaching and time spent outside on the farm, depending on the weather. The date/time of the class will be determined by the number of interested gardeners; for more details, email John at john@pghopendoor.org. ♦



ABOVE: Visitors and gardeners take a moment to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of Garfield Community Farm (Cornwall & Wicklow Sts.). Photo courtesy of John Creasy.

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Neighborhood FOCUS

Bloomfield community responds to sale of ShurSave grocery

By Christina Howell Bloomfield Development Corporation

Perspective/Bloomfield - News broke in early February that Echo Realty, a development company boasting Giant Eagle among its major clients, has purchased the site of the IGA ShurSave grocery store for \$5.78 million.

Echo Realty has not yet created a comprehensive development plan for the site, which has dutifully served Bloomfield's grocery needs for decades. Thanks to a robust community process, local residents and stakeholders have been able to collaborate on a strong vision for an inclusive, equitable development.

Hoping to learn about this vision in more detail, company representatives reached out to Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) to introduce themselves as the new owners of the ShurSave site. Echo is currently working to redevelop the Shadyside Giant Eagle site at the intersection of Penn Ave. and Shakespeare St. The company's plans call for a grocery store, affordable housing, and mobility improvements. Neighbors are naturally optimistic that the company's new Bloomfield development will likewise include a grocery store.

BELOW: Bloomfield's ShurSave grocery store (4401 Liberty Ave.) has served the local community's grocery needs for decades. Echo Realty recently bought the site, but its redevelopment plans are still unknown. Aerial photo courtesy of Sam Spearing.



"We look forward to working with you to shepherd a productive, community-supported project that reflects and celebrates the character of Bloomfield."

- Bloomfield Development Corp., in a letter to new owners of ShurSave site

The following has been excerpted from a letter that BDC sent to Echo Realty:

"Based on our conversation, initiated by you, we are hopeful that the call was the first step in a positive, productive dialogue between you and the community. We are excited to discuss your goals for the project, our work in Bloomfield, and the vision that the community has developed for this site.

The ShurSave site is currently home to a much-needed, beloved grocery store that feeds hundreds of residents every day. Situated at the gateway to the Bloomfield neighborhood, it is also our most visible and iconic property. Because this property means so much to our community, BDC led a series of three community meetings when the property was listed for sale in 2019. With the help of ACTION-Housing and Studio for Spatial Practice, more than 100 residents and stakeholders dug deeply into their hearts and developed a vision for the future of this piece of land.

What emerged from those meetings is a comprehensive document that outlines the priorities of the community for any development of the ShurSave site in particular, while also providing guidelines for all new development in the community. Titled "Bloomfield Central Gateway Development Guidelines," this document encompasses everything we learned from the community through this process, and it reflects the needs and desires of this diverse community for its most important development site.

Among the main priorities that emerged from extensive conversations: 1) food - the retention of an affordable supermarket to ensure food access in Bloomfield; 2) housing - the provision of affordable rental and for-sale housing for a mix of income, ages, abilities, household sizes, etc.; 3) community use - the creation of spaces to support community life, health, and culture, including potential utilities like an affordable gym, a community center, art & performance space, and childcare facilities; 4) connectivity and mobility - to create a people-oriented development serving pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and people of all abilities.

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This process now directs BDC's work and is strongly supported by our city Councilwoman, Deb Gross. It required us to learn the details of relevant laws, policies, and regulations of the City of Pittsburgh, including those of the Department of City Planning, the city's Planning Commission, and others.

We gained a clear understanding of how these processes work, and how the BDC's function as a Registered Community Organization (RCO) can affect outcomes. This process leads to give-and-take from both sides, resulting in better projects overall for both the developers and the neighborhood. We are confident that this community process will be an asset to you, which we know you recognize by reaching out to meet with BDC staff as soon as possible.

We are excited to work with the City of Pittsburgh and the Port Authority of Allegheny County, and possibly PennDOT, on this project. Development at this location will have a substantial impact on the public right-of-way due to the high amount of pedestrian, bike, car, and bus traffic through this important corridor of Pittsburgh's East End. The number of crashes and public safety incidents near the intersection of Liberty Ave. and the Bloomfield Bridge and the adjacent intersections is already far too high. We look forward to working with you on a traffic study that centers the needs of our diverse community.

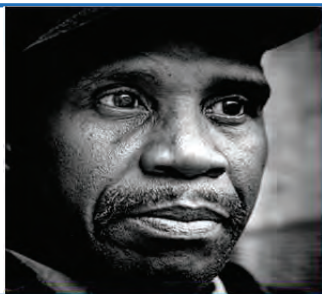
BDC embraces and encourages good development. Based on our contact with you, we know you are thinking deeply about the impact that your investment will have on Bloomfield and the surrounding neighborhoods. We look forward to working with you to shepherd a productive, community-supported project that reflects and celebrates the character of Bloomfield."

For updates on Echo's development plans, visit BloomfieldNow.org. ♦

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Artisan Café closes up shop on Penn Ave.

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

BELOW: Effective Sunday, Mar. 1, Artisan Café (5001 Penn Ave.) will close its doors in Garfield. The space will be converted back into a tattoo parlor. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



Perspective/Garfield - When Artisan Café closes up shop, the smell of fresh-brewed coffee spilling out of 5001 Penn Ave. will be sorely missed.

As of press time, the announced closing date is Saturday, Feb. 29. Located on the main floor of the Artisan Tattoo parlor, the café was known just as much for its unique flooring - made from thousands of penny coins - as it was for its inclusive, "punk-welcoming" atmosphere.

Artisan Café has become a gathering space for more than just caffeine over the last four years. Thanks to its manager, Tyler Bryan, the space has thrived as a hub for customers who feel unwelcome at other coffee shops.

"Thank you all so much for the years of support and love," Bryan wrote in a social media post. "It has been an incredible

opportunity to be part of this wonderful, growing community, and we hope to watch it keep flourishing."

According to building owner Jason Angst, who also owns and operates Artisan Tattoo, "the last few years have been rough, financially." Angst also cited the struggle of maintaining a dual business model, which can effectively double the headaches, as a contributing factor in the closing of the café.

Although the coffee shop is closing, the rest of the building at 5001 Penn Ave. will remain active moving forward.

"The tattoo shop is going to continue as it is, and we're just going to be closing the café," Bryan wrote in a follow-up email. "So far, plans are to turn [the café] into more tattooing spaces, but things aren't fully set in stone yet." ♦

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COMMUNITY LEAD RESPONSE

PWSA is replacing lead service lines on the following streets at no cost.

Visit pgh2o.com/leadmap to access our interactive map to determine if your property is eligible, or call our Lead Help Desk at [412.255.8987](tel:412.255.8987).

BLOOMFIELD

Carroll St
Cedarville St
Comrie Way
Coral St
Corday Way
Edmond St
Friendship Ave
Gem Way
Gross St
Ingalls Way
Joliet Way
Latham St
Pearl St
Penn Ave
S Aiken Ave
S Atlantic Ave
S Evaline St
S Graham St
S Mathilda St
S Millvale Ave
S Winebiddle St
Sapling Way

GARFIELD

Black St
Broad St
Columbo St
Dunkirk St
Hillcrest St
Kincaid St
Margaretta St
N Aiken Ave
N Fairmount St
N Graham St
N Negley Ave
Penn Ave
Rippey Pl
Rosetta St

UPPER LAWRENCEVILLE

52nd St
53rd St
54th St
55th St
56th St
57th St
58th St
Berlin Way
Butler St
Carnegie St
Donson Way
Dresden Way
Duncan St
Harrison St
Holmes St
Kendall St
Kent Way
Keystone St
Leydon St
Lotus Way
Mccandless Ave
Natrona Way

Poe Way
Ruby Way
Sawyer St
Stanton Ave
Wickliff St

LOWER LAWRENCEVILLE

34th St
35th St
36th St
37th St
38th St
39th St
Ater Way
Bandera St
Butler St
Cabinet St
Charlotte St
Clement Way
Foster St
Howley St
Leech St
Liberty Ave
Lodi Way
Manion Way
Mineral Way
Mintwood St
Paxton Pl
Penn Ave

PWSA recently mailed an information package to customers eligible for our 2020 Lead Service Line Replacement Program. If you received a package, please sign the enclosed agreement and return it immediately in the postage paid envelope.

Funding is limited, replacements will be performed on a first come, first served basis.

Do you have questions about our Community Lead Response?

Call our Lead Help Desk at [412.255.8987](tel:412.255.8987) or email at LeadHelp@pgh2o.com.

If your street is not listed above, please call us to find out about financial assistance programs available for line replacements.

Port Authority absorbs local feedback, alters bus stop consolidation plan

A Message from Pittsburghers for Public Transit

Op-Ed/Pittsburgh - On Thursday, Feb. 20, the Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC) announced that it would slow down on its plan to consolidate bus stops along all 97 of its bus routes. Instead of evaluating new routes for stop consolidation every three months, it will move to a six-month schedule.

This is no doubt a win for riders. The slower schedule will allow the Port Authority more time to retool its approach to bus stop consolidation, and it will give riders more time to have their voices heard. PAAC has taken steps to improve its stop consolidation program since its initial roll-out in September. But this is due, in no small part, to the organized efforts of hundreds of riders in Carrick, North Side, Garfield, Bloomfield and the rest of the county – people publishing opinion pieces, attending meetings, canvassing riders on buses, and submitting feedback.

We believe the Port Authority needs to use this momentum and continue improving its process to build a system that supports all of its riders. Here are a few steps towards bus stop consolidation that would work for all riders:

1. PAAC needs to define success.

What are the specific goals of bus stop consolidation? A 10% increase to on-time performance? A five minute decrease in route run-time? More even stop spacing? Getting more bus stops in the system to comply with PAAC's bus stop infrastructure guidelines?

It's problematic that the Port Authority appears to be using the bus stop consolidation process to eliminate stops that have poor infrastructure rather than seeking to work with municipalities to improve bus stop infrastructure when deficiencies are identified. This should never be the case. There are low-cost ways to improve pedestrian safety rather than forcing riders to walk further in unsafe conditions.

2. Eliminating a quarter of the bus stops has major impacts on the rider experience and access to transit – and these impacts grow exponentially as more routes are consolidated.

Beyond defining success, PAAC needs to approach this process from the perspective of a rider. How will improvements to on-time performance translate into meaningful user benefits? If riders are using apps and texting to check arrival times, then on-time performance is hardly perceptible, particularly if we're talking about a minute or two of difference. What is instead very noticeable to riders is how much further they have to walk, on widely-varying sidewalk infrastructure and in all types of weather to access their new stops.

Eliminating 20-25% of stops should not be considered an end in and of itself. It cannot be the single published metric for PAAC staff to determine how many stops are slated for removal on any given route. Instead, they should be assessing the proximity of specific stops to one another, adjacent amenities, sidewalk/safe crossing infrastructure, slope, bus stop usage, etc. before deciding how many and which stops to eliminate.

3. In the selection of bus stops to be removed, PAAC needs to "show its work."

There have been some baffling stops selected for removal during the consolidation process of the 16, 51, 48, and 88 routes. The average proposed spacing between stops far exceeds PAAC's own bus stop guidelines; it is now random and uneven. The Port Authority should lay out the specific data points being considered during the bus stop selection process and assign a weight to each point. It should also clearly state how rider or stakeholder (business/social service agency/housing development) feedback will inform the decision-making in the final selection process. PAAC should share how many responses it has received about the specific bus stops slated for removal. Riders

and other stakeholders will be discouraged from weighing in if it's not apparent that the feedback is being heard and documented.

The Port Authority also needs to gather and present data on the real impacts of bus stop consolidation on riders, and report it on a regular basis. This data should be measured against its goals for the project, as well as against its Title VI obligations, to ensure that there are no disparate impacts on protected classes (low-income communities, people with disabilities, people of color, older adults, etc.).

4. PAAC needs to compare "apples to apples" in its bus stop consolidation.

Every effort should be made to ensure comparative data is not skewed and that comparisons are fair and legitimate. We understand that there are several simultaneous efforts being undertaken to improve on-time performance. Traffic congestion has the single biggest impact on each route's on-time performance, which is widely variable during the winter months due to inclement weather, school schedules, and holiday travel days.

Data that evaluates the consolidated routes' change in on-time performance should be compared against other routes' historic and current run times – in order to get a clear picture of what run-time improvements are attributable solely to the bus stop consolidation effort. ♦

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THE BULLETIN WANTS YOUR FEEDBACK!

This publication begins and ends with you, local community members, so we respectfully invite your opinions & insights.

We'd love to hear from you, so drop us a line anytime!

Please email our tip-line/suggestion box:

Bulletin@Bloomfield-Garfield.org.

Healthy eating tips: PGH Fitness Project

By Matthew Mrazik Pittsburgh Fitness Project

[Editor's Note: Thanks to Matt Mrazik, a registered dietitian at Pittsburgh Fitness Project, The Bulletin would like to spotlight some healthy eating priorities for March. Located in the Lawrenceville Shopping Center (5500 Butler St.), Pittsburgh Fitness Project is an exercise facility that offers health & wellness options to local residents. Visit pittsburghfitnessproject.com or call 412-782-5438 to learn more.]

Pittsburgh - So, here we are in 2020 - and well into the new year, with March Madness and St. Patrick's Day both just around the corner.

This may be a good time to get even more specific with your yearly health goals and take a closer look at any that may need revision. One of the easiest ways may be to break them down into smaller, perhaps more realistic, bite-sized and attainable goals.

Think "SMART": S- specific; M-measurable; A-attainable; R- realistic; T- timely. Spend some time this month with one of your own goals, or maybe one from our list.

How about cutting back on sugar? Or, maybe practicing mindful eating? As you work on these, be sure to write them down, plan next steps, check in regularly (with yourself), celebrate the successes, and never forget that it is okay to slip up and then get back on track. One of my most memorable, and relevant, mantras on this point came from former NFL head coach Marty Schottenheimer, who said "It's all about the next play, not the last one!"

We here at Pittsburgh Fitness Project would like to wish everyone the happiest and healthiest of holidays and, in the spirit of St. Patty's Day, we have included a 'next play' delight [from skinnytaste®] that you may enjoy. View the recipe below.

UN-STUFFED CABBAGE BOWLS

Ingredients:

- cooking spray
- 1 lb 93% lean ground beef
- 1 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon dried marjoram
- black pepper, to taste
- 8 ounce can tomato sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Hungarian paprika
- 1 cup less sodium beef broth
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1 medium head cabbage, cored and chopped (9 cups)

Stove Top Directions:

1. Heat a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat, then spray with oil and add the beef & salt; cook, breaking meat up until browned, for 5 minutes.
2. Add the onion, garlic, marjoram, and black pepper, then stir. Add the tomato sauce, 1/4 cup water, paprika, beef broth and raisins; quickly cover and cook at medium-low heat for 25 minutes.
3. Add the cooked rice and cabbage, cooking for 8-10 minutes. Serve with additional rice, if desired.

Nutritional Information:

Serving: 1.5 cups / Calories: 338 cal / Carbohydrates: 36g / Protein: 30.5g / Fat: 8g / Saturated Fat: 3g / Cholesterol: 71mg / Sodium: 808 mg / Fiber: 8g, Sugar: 5g. ♦



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for the latest neighborhood information and community updates.

Due to the success of The Big Easy, we are moving to a larger facility not only to facilitate our clients, but to expand our services, including daycare, boarding, a Café and grooming.

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Safety Measures - Facility Design

Safe Yards

Our outdoor play yards have a 6 feet fence with additional fencing to prevent escape.
Our outdoor play yards also have artificial grass.

Clean Air

Weather permitting, we have multiple garage doors that will be open to allow fresh air and clean breeze filter through for your dogs to enjoy while they are playing. This will maintain a clean and healthy facility free from bacteria and odor.

Fire Protection

Our facility has a fire alarm and heat sensor that automatically dispatches the Fire Department in the event of smoke or heat detection. Staff is close by for emergencies.

Veterinarians On-Site

Big Easy Dog Daze is the ONLY DAYCARE/BOARDING FACILITY IN PITTSBURGH THAT HAS VETERINARIANS ON-SITE should immediate care be needed.



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- Pharmacy, On-Site



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LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

- Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty, Lawrenceville, & Stanton Heights -

Real Estate Sales (for the month of January 2020)

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, RE/MAX Select Realty

Bloomfield

Davis Land Co Limited Partnership to Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC at 4401 Gangwish St. for \$5,780,040.

Davis Land Co Limited Partnership to Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC at 4401 Liberty Ave. for \$5,780,040.

Davis Land Company Limited Partnership to Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC at 234 Ella St. for \$5,780,040.

Dennis K Jr Smulick to Nationwide Title & Abstract LLC at 4625 Friendship Ave. for \$10,000.

J&M Land Company LP to Bloomfield Bridge Associates LLC at 4660-4664 Gangwish St. for \$197,960.

Massimo Jack Bruni to Herman Ruth LLC at 408 Orwell Way for \$100,000.

Michael L Donatucci to Ryan Danny & Brigitte at 4813 Sciota St. for \$265,000.

Tw Holdings 4 LLC to PGH 1 Realty LLC at 4308 Main St. for \$325,650.

Vincent S Berardone to Michael Cairo at 312-314 Cedarville St. for \$305,000.

Friendship

Steel Town Properties M3 LLC to Barbara A Pugh at 132 S. Graham St. for \$599,900.

Garfield

Bankers Trust Company of California NA(Trustee) to James L Saylor at 5125 Broad St. for \$19,600.

Greenfield Holdings LLC to Bree A Piper at 5434 Hillcrest St. for \$250,000.

HE 4003 LP to Sarah Markwardt at 5013 Dearborn St. for \$155,000.

Srdan Smailbegovic to Matthew A Kessler at 5491 Penn Ave. Unit A102 for \$250,000.

East Liberty

Angelus Convalescent Center Inc to 200 Amber Street LLC at 200-211 Amber St. for \$1,500,000.

E Liberty Blvd-PE LLC to 415 S. Atlantic Mmg LP at 530 N. Euclid Ave. for \$550,000.

Jayant U & Jyoti J Khandhar to Phoenix 9 LLC at 5514 Black St. for \$5,000.

Michael J Gibson to T&A Investments at 734 N. Beatty St. for \$1.

Phillip E Cresswell to Hall Nathan at 5712 Rippey St. for \$210,000.

Remiral LLC to Amir Mina at 5154-5158 Natrona Way for \$129,900.

William H Hoppman III to Casey Patrick Mullen at 5620 Stanton Ave. for \$75,000.

Lawrenceville

360 Ocular LLC to Dawn M Walters at 5111-5113 Penn Ave. for \$439,000.

51st Street Business Center Partnership LP to Goodwill Swpa-Real Estate LLC at 125 51st St. for \$1,900,000.

51st Street Business Center Partnership to Goodwill Of Southwestern Pennsylvania at 118 -160 52nd St. for \$2,030,000.

Collier Development LP to Red Eye Real Estate LLC at 0 34th St. for \$5,000,000.

Stanton Heights

Jamie Nussbaum to Matthew Louis Crosby at 5404 Camelia St. for \$269,000.

Kayla E Stanley to Matthew E Landy at 5412 Camelia St. for \$160,000.

Kose Haluk to Jimmy Liu at 834 Oranmore St. for \$114,285.

Nathaniel K & Desiree L Goodson to Faizul Islam at 4606 Coleridge St. for \$40,000.

Thomas L & Agnes Jean Brose to Kristi M Allen at 1442 Simona Dr for \$162,750.

Brittany J Zappala to Nicole Muise-Kielkucki at 1020 Premier St. for \$178,000.

This column uses data from Allegheny County that contains occasional errors (sale price, owners' names, etc.). We strive for accuracy every month so, if something looks off, please let us know.

For questions, comments, or just to chat about real estate in our neighborhoods, feel free to email Lillian at lillian@agent-lillian.com or call 412-335-6068. ♦

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CCRP student Dynasti Dickerson explores music career at Duquesne University



ABOVE: Pursuing her career as a trained vocalist, Dynasti Dickerson (right), a senior at CAPA High school, enjoys a campus visit at Duquesne University. She toured the college's school of music and was even able to schedule an audition with its department head. Photo courtesy of Judy Lubarski.

the Bulletin BOARD

Local Events Classes Gatherings Fundraisers

Sorry, but we do not accept listings by phone.

The Bulletin Board publishes listings of volunteer opportunities, free or low-cost events & classes, fundraisers, and services that are of particular interest to our neighborhoods. Listings are published on a space-available basis; we cannot guarantee placement or thorough edits of any listings. **Announcements for the April edition are due by Friday, Mar. 21.** Please submit your listings using the online form at bit.ly/bulletin_submit.

MARCH 5 - THURSDAY

GARFIELD

Land Trust Meeting

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Mar. 5, the Garfield Land Trust will hold a public meeting at the Community Activity Center (113 N. Pacific Ave. at Dearborn St.). Read more, and become a member today, at GarfieldLandTrust.org. Contact 412-345-3831 or GarfieldLandTrust@gmail.com to learn more.

MARCH 6 - FRIDAY

GARFIELD

Church Fish Fry

Valley View Presbyterian Church (601 N. Aiken Ave.) will host its annual Fish Fry until Friday, March 27. Stop by anytime between noon and 7 p.m. for some delicious

food and warm conversation. A full meal costs \$10 - it includes fish, two sides, a dessert, and a drink. Grab a fish sandwich to-go for \$8; cash and checks accepted. Call 412-361-0870 to learn more.

MARCH 12 - THURSDAY

GARFIELD

'Volunteer Night' at Garfield Community Farm

"Volunteer Nights" at Garfield Community Farm begin every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. and run until dusk. We invite volunteers to join us for our weekly volunteer night; no gardening experience required. We are located below the water tower, at the top of the hill in the Garfield neighborhood (509 Wicklow St.). Contact garfieldcommunityfarm@gmail.com with any questions or send us a message through our facebook page (@GarfieldCommunityFarm).

MARCH 18 - WEDNESDAY

LAWRENCEVILLE

Free Lecture: America's First Female Ambassadors

The Lawrenceville Historical public lecture series continues with guest speaker Philip Nash, Associate Professor of History at Penn State Shenango, who will examine the careers of the first six women to run U.S. embassies overseas. The lecture will explain the challenges they faced, their successes and failures, and their long-term legacy. It will also pay particular attention to the colorful Perle Mesta, US Minister to Luxembourg (1949-53), who had a strong Pittsburgh connection.

This event takes place on Wednesday, Mar. 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the Carnegie Library (279 Fisk St.) in the historic Lawrenceville neighborhood.

HOMewood

Free Financial Education Course

Bridgeway Capital and PNC Bank are partnering in collaboration for a series of free financial education courses held at the Sarah B. Campbell Enterprise Center (7800 Susquehanna St.) in Homewood. The first session, on Wednesday, Mar. 18, is called "Financial Management for Small Businesses." Participants will learn the basics of financial management and small business financing, including: start-up financing,

Spring 2020 Garfield Community Events



**Tues- Mar 3rd 12:30-2:00pm 5321 Penn
Computer Basics Class**

**Tues- Mar 17th 12:30-2:00pm 5321 Penn
Computer Basics Class**

**Sat- Mar 21st 10am-12pm
113 N. Pacific Ave & 5217 Hillcrest
Garfield Clean Spring Up**

**Fri - May 1st 5-10pm 113 N. Pacific Ave
Garfield Night Market - Unblurred Art Crawl**

**Thur - May 7th 11am-12pm 113 N. Pacific
Penn Ave Reconstruction Phase 2 Meeting**

**Sat - May 16th 10am-12pm 113 N. Pacific
Garfield Community Clean Up**



ABOVE: Garfield Gators youth athletes participate in a weekly workout at Arsenal Middle School (220 40th St.) in Lawrenceville. Photo courtesy of @GarfieldGators4Life.



Do you have questions?
Contact Nina at the BGC Office
5149 Penn Ave, PGH PA 15224
412-441-6950 x 17

Volunteer Opportunities

Announcements Services

Shout-Outs Open Calls

Classifieds

working capital, and fixed-asset loans. The session will run from 5:30-6:30 p.m.; dinner begins at 5:15 p.m. Complimentary parking is available in the adjacent parking lot.

MARCH 20 - FRIDAY

BLOOMFIELD

Music Video Shoot

This Friday, Mar. 20 show - at Howlers (4509 Liberty Ave.) - is a single-release party for a new song, "Tell Me," by Single Jo w/ Rev Ezra & The Lone Pines. AT&T SportsNet Pittsburgh will also be filming a music video that very evening. The video will be featured in a "Friday Night Rocks" segment of the Pittsburgh Pirates' game broadcasts. In other words, come to Howlers and you'll get to be on TV as a member of the audience. Free, no cover; dress in black & gold gear for maximum effect

MARCH 27 - FRIDAY

GARFIELD

Assemble '21+ Night'

Join Tess Wilson at Assemble (4824 Penn Ave.) on Friday, Mar. 27, for this class on how to produce your own books by hand. Expert book-binder Tess Wilson will lead us on a crash-course on the basics of bookbinding. In this short workshop, you'll learn the fundamentals of creating and binding your own book. Participants will leave the work-

shop with their very own bespoke journal. Assemble 21+ Workshop tickets include drinks, snacks, and all project materials.

MARCH 28 - SATURDAY

SHADYSIDE

Quaker Open House

All are welcome to explore Pittsburgh's newly renovated Quaker Meetinghouse on Saturday, Mar. 28, from 1 to 3 p.m. at 4836 Ellsworth Ave. The destination is reachable by bus route #75, as well as other buses that service Oakland. Live music and free refreshments will accompany the open house. See our newly-renovated indoor spaces and patios during a house tour, and use our library resources to learn more about Quakerism. Pittsburgh Friends Meeting (PFM) rents out our space for meetings, weddings, events, graduation parties, and more. For more info, contact us at 412-683-2669.

- ONGOING -

BLOOMFIELD

Saturday Winter Market

Located at 5050 Liberty Ave. in the heart of Bloomfield, the Saturday Winter Market runs through March 2020. Come shop local growers and makers while connecting with your neighbors and local community. The Bloomfield Saturday Market is a program of the Bloomfield Development Corporation

(bloomfieldpgh.org).

- MARK YR CALENDARS: APRIL -

BLOOMFIELD

Free Repair Clinic

On Sunday, Apr. 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Fix It PGH presents a free Repair Clinic at 4623 Liberty Ave. Bloomfield. Community members are encouraged to bring projects to have repaired - including bicycles, clothing and textiles, small appliances, electronics, etc. Volunteers will guide participants to real solutions. Tools and troubleshooting resources will be provided. For more event details, please email fixitpgh@gmail.com. ♦

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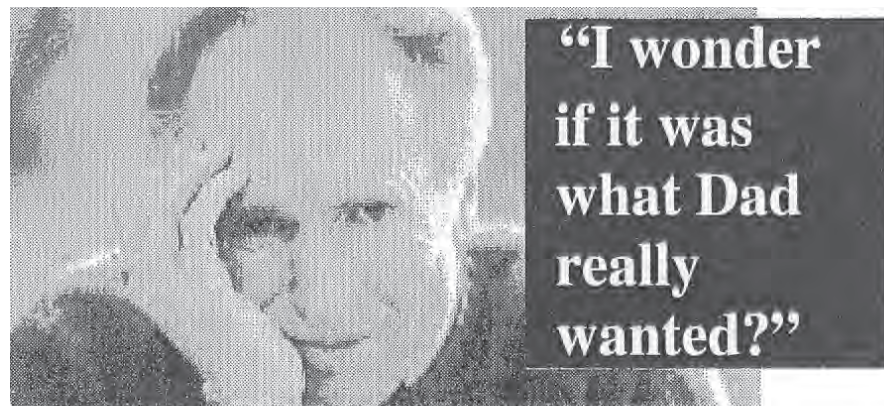
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Financial Empowerment Center offers free counseling for area residents

By Rebecca Johnson *Financial Empowerment Center*

Insight/Pittsburgh - At the Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center (FEC), we offer free, one-on-one financial counseling services to residents across the south-western PA region.

Our team of professionally-certified financial counselors help individuals and families address their financial challenges, and specific needs, in planning for a brighter future.

Every day, more Pittsburghers are taking advantage of our services - learning how to take control of their debt, deal with debt collectors, improve their credit, create a budget, save, and connect with safe & affordable bank accounts and other financial products.

After launching in New York City in 2008, the FEC model has expanded to 14 cities around the country. Since opening our doors in March 2019, our financial counselors have worked with more than 400 Pittsburghers.

BELOW: Pittsburgh's Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) offers free counseling services at convenient locations throughout the city. Graphic courtesy of FEC.



Collectively, we have helped these clients reduce their debt by \$109,000 and increase their savings by \$116,000.

FEC services are available in several neighborhoods throughout the Pittsburgh area, including the Southside, Northside,

Downtown, East Liberty, and Oakland. There are no income requirements to access FEC services, and we work with any individual so long as they are age 18 or older.

If you or someone you know is interest-

ed in meeting with an FEC counselor to plan their financial future, please call our intake line at 1-800-298-0237.

The local FEC can be reached Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and you can schedule directly [over the phone] for any location that best fits your needs. You can also email us at fecinfo@advantageccs.org.

The initial counseling session lasts about 90 minutes, and all clients are encouraged to come back for follow-up sessions with their financial counselor as often as they would like. Our counselors always encourage their clients' progress in addressing financial challenges and working towards future goals.

The Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center is offered in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, Advantage Credit Counseling Service, Inc., Neighborhood Allies, and the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund. ♦

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