

# the Bulletin

A publication of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

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APRIL  
2020



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

## Local 'buddy system': supporting seniors at a COVID-19 distance

By Helen Gerhardt *Lawrenceville United*

*Insight/Pittsburgh* - Now more than ever, we are all washing our hands - together, but from a distance.

As the pandemic takes center stage and the bad news keeps coming, local residents are making some good news by stepping up, even while under quarantine, to help their neighbors all over the city.

At Lawrenceville United (LU), we remain immensely grateful for all of the volunteers and community partners collaborating on creative, practical solutions to the challenges we now face.

The new Lawrenceville/Bloomfield/Garfield "Buddy System" is a good example of how mutual aid can support local residents. The system is fueled by volunteers who help and support their senior neigh-

See **Buddy System** | page 2



**ABOVE:** People walk along Butler Street on Mar. 18, where the Row House Cinema marquee reads, "We will get through this Pittsburgh." Photo by Ryan Loew/PublicSource. PublicSource is an independent news organization in Pittsburgh. Visit [PublicSource.org](http://PublicSource.org).

## East Liberty grows new business, welcomes local entrepreneurs

By Elizabeth Sensky *East Liberty Development, Inc.*

*East Liberty* - As the neighborhood enjoys economic rebirth, local organizations continue working towards equitable business growth.

East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI), the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA), and other community partners are collaborating to help minority- and women-owned businesses benefit from the influx of people and capital.

Through initiatives like "Catapult: Start-up to Storefront" and Gallery on Penn, ELDI and the URA are working to lower barriers while connecting local entre-

preneurs with resources and guidance to grow their brand.

"East Liberty has seen a lot of growth over the last couple of years and, with that growth, has dealt with this feeling that minority- and women-owned businesses were not being effectively represented or preserved in the neighborhood," Diamonte Walker, Deputy Executive Director of the URA, explained. "Working with ELDI and other East End neighborhood groups, we've been able to rebuild and reknit some of that fabric."

See **Growing Biz** | page 4



**ABOVE:** Workers lift a module into place, stacking progress on the construction of a house at 5456 Black St. Two single-family homes and a duplex are now being offered for sale by Module Housing, LLC. Photo by Rick Swartz.

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OBSERVATIONS 'OVERHEARD'  
BY THE BULLETIN'S APRIL FOOL

GARFIELD COMMUNITY SURVEY:  
SUBMIT YOUR OPINIONS!

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## Buddy System continued from page 1

bors, as well as people with underlying health conditions that render them "at-risk" for COVID-19.

LU has worked closely with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) and Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) to match members of these vulnerable populations with "buddies."

Buddies are here, throughout the East End, to provide check-in phone calls and share vital information; they can even help out with household chores, cooking, shopping, medicine pick-up, etc.

As of press time, the sign-up list for the Buddy System boasted nearly 300 names. While more than 40 local homes have already been matched with Buddies, the system still has a huge surplus of neighborhood volunteers waiting to lend a hand.

LU strongly encourages older adults, and residents with serious chronic medical conditions, to heed the advice of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. By accepting a Buddy - someone in the area who helps maintain their support system - many local seniors should be able to enjoy a better quality of life during the crisis.

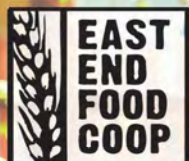
Any residents of Lawrenceville, Bloomfield, Friendship, and Garfield may sign up - either as a volunteer or a recipient of support; Buddies are matched by geographic proximity. To sign up, visit the COVID-19 resource page at [LUnited.org/coronavirus](http://LUnited.org/coronavirus) or call 412-802-7220.

In light of the current crisis, LU and other partners are ramping up food distribution by handing out over 100 prepared meals every week, along with produce provided by 412 Food Rescue.

Coordinating plans for new "grab & go" locations where East End families can pick up kids' lunches, LU is also working in partnership with the Healthy Active Living Center to arrange meal deliveries for senior high rises in the area.

LU's Farmers Market, which is still scheduled to begin its season on Jun. 2, can help vendors reconnect with regular customers after a long sabbatical [spent under quarantine].

LU is here to support you, and we would love to hear your good ideas and suggestions for mutual aid. Please contact us at 412-802-7220 or [info@LUnited.org](mailto:info@LUnited.org); visit [LUnited.org](http://LUnited.org) for weekly updates. ♦



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## CCRP student Angelo La Fortune forges political career at PA Senate office



**AT LEFT:** Angelo LaFortune (right), who interns at State Senator Jay Costa's office, is also in his senior year at Brashear High School. A partially blind student, he participates in the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's College & Career Readiness Program (CCRP) to connect with resources and career opportunities. Upon graduating, La Fortune plans to attend the Hiram G. Andrews Center, which offers vocational training and associate degrees to students with disabilities. He plans to study retail or materials management. Photo courtesy of Paul Johnson.



## Schedule update: Learn & Earn program, Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center

By Amber Epps Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

**Garfield** - On Mar. 16, the city's Learn & Earn employment program opened its application process for summer internships. Within days, the coronavirus outbreak changed everyone's plans, from Paris to Pittsburgh.

Although in-person applications have been suspended at local support centers, Learn & Earn applicants may still apply online at [partner4work.org/learnandearn](http://partner4work.org/learnandearn).

For immediate assistance, contact the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's (BGC) youth development staff at 412-441-9833 (ext. 14), 412-301-3462, or 412-690-0642. Representatives will be available from Monday through Friday, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Partner4Work, the organization funding Learn & Earn, plans to conduct the program as scheduled - with youths beginning their work experience in late June. Please email [Amber@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:Amber@bloomfield-garfield.org) to learn more about these opportunities.

Due to COVID-19 precautions, the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC) is closed to the public. Staffers are working to put resume-writing, interview skills, job links, and other resources on the ENEC website ([enepittsburgh.org](http://enepittsburgh.org)).

Those seeking career guidance are welcome to call the ENEC at 412-441-9833 (ext. 23), or email [brendan@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:brendan@bloomfield-garfield.org), to schedule an appointment. ♦

## 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.

Vol. 45, No. 4

Deadline for the May edition is Friday, April 17.

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**Board Meetings** are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month, at the BGC Community Activity Center (113 N. Pacific 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 and WesBanco Bank.

**Bloomfield-Garfield.org**

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### Thank you!

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## Local organizations supporting neighbors during time of need

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

**Pittsburgh** - While the pandemic turns everything upside down, local communities are responding with a resilient front. Please refer to the following resources for more info.

**"Neighbors in Need" fund:** This fund helps individuals/families who are facing a hardship; grants range from \$50 to \$400. Contact the Bloomfield Garfield Corporation at 412-426-5329 (ext. 17) or email [nina@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:nina@bloomfield-garfield.org) to learn more.

**Food delivery:** Volunteers will deliver packaged meals to any Garfield residents in need. Call Garfield Jubilee Association at 412-849-6689 for details.

**"Grab-and-Go" meals at your doorstep:** Located at the corner of Friendship and S. Pacific Aves., the Earthen Vessels Outreach (EVO) meal-delivery service is available Monday through Friday, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m., to deliver lunches door-to-door. EVO welcomes volunteers to call 412-214-0862 or email [earthenvessels98@gmail.com](mailto:earthenvessels98@gmail.com).

**Greater PGH Community Food Bank Distribution Site [Friday, Apr. 3, at 11 a.m.]:** Garfield residents may pick up food boxes, without leaving their vehicles, at Valley View Presbyterian Church (601 N. Aiken Ave.); volunteers will place boxes in residents' cars. Local residents who cannot drive may arrange for home delivery by calling ahead [412-708-6158]; no documents needed.

**Greater PGH Community Food Bank Distribution Site [Saturday, Apr. 18, at 9 a.m.]:** Garfield residents may pick up food boxes at Morningside Church of God in Christ (5173 Dearborn St.); proof of residence and source of financial income are necessary.

**Rent & Utilities:** The Housing Stabilization Program at the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority, provides one-time, or short term (up to 4 months), financial assistance to renters facing a temporary, non-reoccurring housing crisis. Call 412-227-4163. ♦

## GARFIELD COVID-19 HELP

Garfield Residents facing dire emergency  
can apply for the "Neighbors in Need" fund.  
Community Members can also receive  
information on other resources.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR  
UP-TO-DATE RESOURCES

**BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG**

**Garfield Residents:  
Call 412-426-5329**

## Growing Biz *continued from page 1*

In April of 2018, ELDI launched Catapult, a minority- and women-owned business incubator program, alongside Circles Greater Pittsburgh, a nonprofit fighting generational poverty in the city.

The 12-month Catapult program provides individualized coaching, lessons, and support - led by Paramount Co-Op - to a cohort of 15 local, minority- and women-owned businesses.

Gallery on Penn, a natural extension of the program, opened in November of 2018; the gallery (5935 Penn Ave.) offers its retail space to Catapult members at little charge. Located in the heart of East Liberty's business district, it serves as an ideal testing ground for entrepreneurs to sell their products and build up clientele without the burden of expensive overhead.

After they secure access to enough capital, Walker explained, these businesses need technical assistance in order to succeed.

"Folks need coaching. They need mentorship, they need guidance, and they need customers," she said. "So, it's key to find opportunities that get them into spaces with high foot traffic and high visibility."

Both of these initiatives aim to foster a well-networked business community in the East End. On Feb. 27, the URA teamed up with the City to host a small business resource fair at Gallery on Penn. The fair brought together service providers, from nonprofit groups all over Pittsburgh, to illustrate how they can support small businesses with everything from building construction to business plans and financing. The goal, Walker said, was to "meet the businesses where they are."

"This is something that we've been doing for a few years now," she explained, "and we're intentionally focusing on the loca-

tions that really need us to be there, boots on the ground, so that folks see that we're in this fight with them to build a vibrant, diverse business community."

Entrepreneurs milled about the gallery on Feb. 27, collecting information from exhibitors about the opportunities available to help their businesses. Attendees were also able to do some shopping as patrons of the small businesses currently operating out of the Gallery, and speak to various owners about their experience working with the same service providers.

Reflecting on the momentum of Catapult and Gallery on Penn, Walker remains optimistic about the "business ecosystem" that the URA, ELDI, and their partners are building in the East End - a unique marriage of the nonprofit, private, and public sectors.

"In the end, what you have is a retail incubator unlike anything I've seen in the country, in one of the busiest business districts in the city of Pittsburgh. These businesses now have the potential to take on their own space," Walker emphasized, "because they've had that experience in the Gallery, paired with the technical assistance and business development from the Catapult program."

For more info about Catapult and the gallery, visit [eastliberty.org/eldi-initiatives](http://eastliberty.org/eldi-initiatives). With the coronavirus outbreak taking its toll on Pittsburgh's business community, Gallery on Penn is temporarily closed.

The URA and its community partners are stressing the importance, now more than ever, of finding ways to support local merchants. Many East End businesses are offering pick-up service, or online shopping opportunities, for their loyal customers.

Learn more at [eastlibertychamber.org](http://eastlibertychamber.org). ♦



**ABOVE:** Community leaders gather with Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto (third from right) at a small business resource fair in East Liberty on Feb. 27. Photo courtesy of ELDI.

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## Artists losing income during pandemic; local fund offers financial assistance

**A Message from the PGH Artist Emergency Fund**

*[Editor's Note: The following has been edited to reflect fundraising updates.]*

*Perspective/Pittsburgh* - The preventative measures we, as a community, have taken to minimize the spread of COVID-19 have been comprehensive - a true representation of the solidarity of our communities, and our capacity to unite.

We are happy that our collective response is cautious and intentional. However, with the global pandemic of COVID-19, there are no safety nets to support the immediate needs of our local and regional performers. Whether they are working security, tending bar at a club, performing theatre, hosting a drag show, or playing with a band, many artists rely on gig payments as their primary source of income. Now that these gigs are being cancelled, *en masse*, local performers are in need of mutual aid.

We are a group of artists, performers, and community organizers based in Pittsburgh responding to the urgent needs of our friends and community who have been put in compromised positions due to COVID-19. We are aiming to raise \$40,000 [after meeting the initial goal of \$15,000 in just a few days]. These funds raised will help provide checks of up to \$250 per artist (individual, not business) to offset the income lost to cancelled gigs and jobs; these funds may be used to pay rent and utilities, or for the purchase of food and other essentials.

As the fund is bolstered, we will process submissions and payments on an ongoing basis until this time of uncertainty and financial upheaval is over. To be clear, our submissions currently outweigh the money left in the fund. However, we remain hopeful that, with enough support, we can assist every local artist who has expressed their need.

Interested patrons may direct their donations to the Pittsburgh Artists Emergency Fund at [gofundme.com/f/pgh-artists-emergency-fund](https://gofundme.com/f/pgh-artists-emergency-fund). ♦

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### Corrections:

\* In last month's edition, *The Bulletin* incorrectly described people "stealing" in a caption on the front page. Upon further clarification, the photo subjects were removing/disposing of the debris at an eyesore property.

\* Last month, *The Bulletin* also mistakenly identified Friendship Community Group (FCG) as "Friendship Community Organization."

*We apologize, and encourage readers to help us fact-check The Bulletin!*



**ABOVE:** A clean-up crew removes detritus from a Garfield street on Feb. 29. By the end of the day, they had collected 3 tons of trash, including 22 tires. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



**ABOVE:** Neighborhood volunteers join members of Allegheny Cleanways for a "job well done" photo after completing a clean-up in Garfield. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.

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## COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Fund



In an effort to help City of Pittsburgh residents maintain stability during the COVID-19 pandemic, the URA has partnered with the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh to administer the COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Fund.

The goal of the fund is to provide Rental, Mortgage and Utility Assistance to workers who are affected by the outbreak because their hours were cut and/or not able to work given the plethora of circumstances associated with preserving public health and community safety.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Be a City of Pittsburgh Resident
- Be employed, recently employed, or self-employed and experience a reduction in hours or a layoff due to the employer reducing/eliminating work hours or the loss of contract work as a public health precaution related to the COVID-19 virus.

Documentation from the employer will be required

- Experience a financial hardship and inability to pay rent, mortgage payment(s), or utilities

### Area Median Income Chart

Household Size	50%	80%
1	\$28,000	\$44,750
2	\$32,000	\$51,150
3	\$36,000	\$57,550
4	\$39,950	\$63,900
5	\$43,150	\$69,050
6	\$46,350	\$74,150

### Income Limits

Mortgage Assistance: At or below 80% AMI

Rental Assistance: At or below 50% AMI

**For more information, please contact:**

**Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh**

**Phone: 412.227.4163**



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of Pittsburgh**



## N. Evaline St. green project: planting seeds for local conservation effort

By Cody Manson-Webb Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) has partnered with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and Treevitalize to clean up and transform a few open lots at the end of North Evaline Street. By bringing new tree life to the area, Treevitalize will not only provide canopy cover, but also natural stormwater management to reduce the runoff that spills down the street.

The SCA specializes in teaching youths [ages 14 to 18] skills pertaining to conservation, landscaping, and community awareness. Now accepting applications from local teens through the city's Learn & Earn program, the SCA is offering a paid, summer internship that runs from Jun. 29 through Aug. 7.

The student conservationists are also seeking crew leaders to supervise youths in the N. Evaline green project. Crew leaders [ages 21 and up] will earn paid training, and a weekly check, for their role in keeping the kids motivated and safe throughout the project timeline; Garfield residents will be given priority in assigning crew leaders.

Those interested in applying for the internship, and crew leader positions, may contact the BGC's Nina Gibbs [412-441-6950 (ext. 17), [Nina@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:Nina@bloomfield-garfield.org)]. ♦

## Volunteer Voices: Natalie DeiCas, owner of 'Everyday's a Sunday' Café

Interview by Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - Natalie DeiCas, who owns "Everyday's a Sunday" Café (4919 Penn Ave.), has always maintained a commitment to feeding her neighbors.

A longtime instructor and proctor for the ServSafe program, she is likewise committed to food safety. DeiCas relocated her business from East Liberty to Garfield nearly two years ago, and has been growing her local clientele and community connections ever since.

Although the COVID-19 outbreak has forced the closure of Everyday's dining area, DeiCas perseveres to serve her customers via delivery [Grubhub, DoorDash] and pick-up orders [412-363-2233]. She also volunteers by preparing/packaging breakfasts, distributed to children throughout the city, to help fight local food insecurity during the pandemic.

In a recent [remote] interview, DeiCas explained how she developed such a tireless devotion to feeding and supporting her neighbors. The following conversation has been edited for space.



ABOVE: Natalie DeiCas, owner of Everyday's a Sunday Café (4919 Penn Ave.) in Garfield. Photo courtesy of Natalie DeiCas.

**Bulletin:** When did you begin volunteering?

DeiCas: "I have been volunteering since I was a kid, as both of my parents volunteered their time and taught me to do the same. 'Treat others the way you want to be treated' is what they always told me."

**Bulletin:** What motivates you to stay involved?

DeiCas: "The simple joy of cooking for others keeps me going. Just knowing that I'm helping people who have trouble getting food, but need to eat, is enough for me to wake up like, 'Everyday's a Sunday.'"

**Bulletin:** How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected your daily routine?

DeiCas: "I've always cooked for people, and continue volunteering with 412 Food Rescue, but now I'm also passing out meals and toiletry items to the local community."

**Bulletin:** Anything else you'd like to share?

DeiCas: "When I moved my business from East Liberty to Garfield, Rick Swartz [executive director of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC)] walked me up and down Penn Avenue. He told me about all the great family-owned business in Garfield, and said that my café would serve the community well. Since that day, the BGC has been here for all of my business needs. I couldn't be more thankful for all their support." ♦



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# Neighborhood FOCUS

## 'The house that time forgot' in Garfield: 5356 Rosetta St.

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

**Garfield** - Although the neighborhood has changed a lot in the past 20 years, there are still some reminders of blight - once a common sight in Garfield. Nowhere is this more evident than in what lies behind a house in the 5300 block of Rosetta Street.

The house at 5356 Rosetta St. once belonged to George and Gladys Crystian. In April of 2016, 35 years after the couple purchased it for \$1, the City of Pittsburgh took the house for unpaid real estate taxes. By that time, it was vacant and already badly neglected.

A check of the county's real estate website shows no house with the address of 5356 Rosetta St. One has to search a bit longer to find that the county is using an address of "5360 Rosetta St." for the property.

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) plans to acquire the property from the city in order to demolish the house and build a new, single-family home in its place. It would be one of a number of sites in Garfield for the construction of 25 new, rental homes that the BGC believes could help address the shortage of affordable housing [in the city] for working-class families.

The City is ready to sell the property to the organization, but there is just one hitch.

**BELOW:** An abandoned house, currently in the city's possession, at 5356 Rosetta St. in Garfield. Plans are to raze it and build a new, single-family home in its place. Photo by Joe Reuben.



*"Our block looks like a part of the city that time's forgotten, doesn't it?"*

- Resident living in the 5300 block of Rosetta Street

Situated behind the home is a pile that measures six feet deep - full of old tires, along with a stack of wooden debris from a construction site - that has all the makings of a major environmental hazard. Until recently, a car had remained parked in the driveway for some time, partially blocking the view of the backyard from the street. While the vehicle has since been removed, its owner was never identified.

According to Rick Swartz, the BGC's executive director, the mound of tires was not discovered until he arranged for the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) to visit the property to do a final reading of the water meter. "Of course, leave it to the PWSA to want to do a final meter reading on a house that has been empty for any number of years," Swartz recently told *The Bulletin*. "I'm surprised they're not checking burial vaults in Allegheny Cemetery for water usage."

While Swartz and a representative from the city's real estate department were

- continued on next page -



**ABOVE:** An unruly pile of tires and construction debris mar the landscape behind a house at 5356 Rosetta St. in Garfield. Photo by Joe Reuben.

## Garfield Night Market

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waiting for the PWSA service rep to arrive, he said the two of them decided to walk around the parked car in an effort to locate a remote reading device for the water meter. That is when they say they discovered the tires.

"It's hard to believe that any city inspector from the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections could have missed this mess," Swartz observed. "Their eyesight is so keen that they can spot weeds, six inches high, from a half-block away. But in their defense, if one were only doing a drive-by of the property, I could see how the [parked] car would have obscured the tires from view."

One neighbor, who asked that her identity be withheld, wondered why nothing has been done about the situation since the city took possession of the property four years ago. "Does anybody from the city bother to inspect the properties they take for, you know, back taxes? It's obvious that somebody came out and boarded the property. It certainly wasn't the Crystians [the previous owners]," she commented. "Our block looks like a part of the city that time's forgotten, doesn't it?"

This neighbor, like others on the street, admits she did little to call the city's attention to the situation. "I don't live next door to it, so I thought maybe someone else was reporting it. I've given up on the 3-1-1 system. When it's the city's own property, it's like a whole different set of rules apply," she added. "If you glance down the

street, you'll see it's not the only property that's unsightly."

Nobody knows who brought the tires to the property, and how long they were dumping them there. "It had to take years," Brandon Jones, the city representative who visited the site in late February, estimated. "It's not as if someone backed a tractor-trailer down the driveway and unloaded them all at once. Tires were even stuffed into the basement stairwell of the house when there was no more room in the backyard. I can't say I've ever seen that before."

According to Swartz, the BGC will most likely have to clean up the debris, tires included, after the organization takes title to the property later this year. "It would be nice if the city could take on that responsibility now," he said, "but I'm not sure the city's budget makes any allowance for renting dumpsters and paying crews to do environmental clean-ups."

As the neighborhood keeps changing with the times, properties like 5356 Rosetta St. are a reminder of the blight from Garfield's past. "I did have the feeling that we were all stepping back in time, to a period when Garfield was one of the premier dump sites in the entire city," Swartz noted. "That was when pushing a car down a wooded hillside was considered a form of recycling." ♦

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**May Bulletin Deadline: Friday, Apr. 17**

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## BREAKING NEWS: April Fool's Day postponed, eyes post-Easter return

Pittsburgh - Finding humor in these challenging times can be tough. Yet, in the spirit of April Fool's Day, *The Bulletin* would like to indulge you in some observations that were "overheard" around town. Read more at your own peril.

*"Last night, I saw a cemetery deer walking right down Penn Avenue, but it looked confused because there were no headlights in sight."*

*"I've got three kids and, let me tell you, if there's any kind of 'baby boom' happening nine months from now, it'll be a bunch of first-borns."*

*"They should've started 'social distancing' on rush-hour PAT buses years ago."*

*"I just saw 'Corn Teen' trending on Pittsburgh Twitter. Have you ever heard of that band? All I know is everyone's saying how 'infectious' they are."*

*"Since the 'shelter-in-place' order, I haven't been driving much. Now, I'm really starting to miss all my favorite potholes."*

*"Found one of my old Nirvana t-shirts the other day...realized that my 'quarantine look' is way more 'grunge' than Kurt Cobain ever was."*

*"It's a shame how the major league baseball season is on hold. For Pirates fans, though, that might be a tender mercy."*

*"That Amazon delivery driver just pruned our neighbor's tree with his truck." ♦*

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### LEVEL 2: CREATE (1 WEEK)

WITH THE HELP OF INSTRUCTORS/ MENTORS AT THIS LEVEL, STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM WILL DEVELOP A THEME OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING AND BE ASKED TO PRODUCE A PROJECT COMBINING THE SKILLS LEARNED IN THE PREVIOUS MODULE.

### LEVEL 3: EMPOWER & CHANGE (1 WEEK)

THE GOAL OF THIS PORTION IS TO GET THE STUDENTS TO PRACTICE CRITICAL THINKING AND TEAM BUILDING SKILLS. WHEN THE STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED THE CORE CURRICULUM, THE FINAL PRODUCT WILL BE A SHOWCASE. THE SHOWCASE WILL INCLUDE ALL OF THE WORK THE STUDENTS CREATED OVER THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAM, AND WILL BE A CELEBRATION OF WHAT THE STUDENTS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

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## Local basketball star T.J. McConnell makes waves in NBA

By Tonya M. Huffman *Bulletin contributor*

*Pittsburgh* - Before Timothy John “T.J.” McConnell, Jr. ever appeared on an NBA roster, he made his name playing basketball in Pittsburgh. The McConnell name was already well-known in Pittsburgh, as T.J. comes from a long line of local athletes [some of whom still live in Friendship].

His father played basketball and enjoyed a successful coaching career at Chartiers Valley High School. Many of T.J.’s aunts and uncles have ties to either playing, coaching, or refereeing sports.

While his father coached at Chartiers Valley, T.J., his siblings, and cousins, known as “travel babies,” attended school practices and games and mimicked drills they saw the players run. “The gym was my sanctuary, an environment I embraced and thrived in. I remember going to my dad’s practices, to games, being in the gym with family. I don’t know where I’d be without basketball,” McConnell said.

As a senior, he led the Chartiers Valley basketball team to a berth in the state championship game, earning various accolades during his 2009-2010 senior season. “We really put Pittsburgh on the map, proving that good basketball players can

come out of Pittsburgh,” McConnell said.

“It was challenging at times,” he continued, “but playing with my dad, together as a family, and being around my teammates, who are like my brothers, was satisfying.”

In 2010, McConnell enrolled as a freshman at Duquesne University. Through his sophomore year, he cultivated his basketball talents, but it did not result in many victories for the Dukes. At the end of his sophomore year, McConnell had an epiphany, telling his dad: “I’m transferring to Arizona...because I’d like to win a championship.”

After sitting out the 2012-2013 season, due to NCAA transfer rules, he helped lead the Arizona Wildcats to back-to-back appearances in an “Elite Eight” game at the national tournament.

Following college, McConnell declared for the 2015 NBA Draft. After going undrafted, he played on an NBA Summer League team before eventually signing with the Philadelphia 76ers.

McConnell was on cloud 9, which fittingly became his jersey number. “I was so happy,” he noted, “and the fact that I was able

to live out my dream was awesome.”

He played hard for the next four years in Philadelphia, working to enhance his game and support his teammates.

“I try to be a good teammate, on and off the court, and give my teammates the ball to help the offense run smoothly,” McConnell explained. “I fight for my job every day, and it motivates me to work hard.”

In July 2019, he signed a two-year, \$7 million deal with the Indiana Pacers. “It’s a great, young team, and very talented. We can do some special things with the pieces that are already here, and with the pieces that have been added,” McConnell said. “I’m excited to be a part of it.”

Although he is still expanding his philanthropic efforts, McConnell is no stranger to giving back to the community. He participated in the Sixers’ “Dimes for Dollars” initiative and, in 2017, received the “Good Guy” award from his team. Mentoring young basketball players across the country, McConnell also spoke to students at his former high school on “Career Day.”

“My wife and I have had conversations about [giving back to Pittsburgh],” he said, “and we plan to establish some type of or-

ganization or foundation in the future.”

From playing hoops back in the day, to making it in the NBA, to inspiring local athletes, McConnell continues putting Pittsburgh, front and center, on the global basketball map. ♦

**BELOW:** T.J. McConnell drives to the hoop. Photo by Pacers Sports & Entertainment.



**BELOW:** T.J. McConnell (left), who grew up in Pittsburgh, plays hard for the NBA’s Indiana Pacers. Photo by Pacers Sports & Entertainment.



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## At-home fitness tips: quarantine edition

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 fitness tips for readers living under quarantine. 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](http://pittsburghfitnessproject.com) or call 412-782-5438 to learn more.]*

**Pittsburgh** - These are challenging, unprecedented times that can stir up a lot of emotions and stress, especially when we're trying to stick to a good diet.

Many of us may feel that it's impossible to be healthy during these times, as we lack focus, commitment, determination, or willpower with our diet and food selection. Also, it may seem like eating anything we desire is now acceptable - as long as we promise to get back on track when we are able to resume our normal routine.

These thoughts have probably occurred to all of us at one point or another over the last few weeks. As our access to fresh food may become even more limited, it is important to stock up on some healthy essentials. And since food can be one of the easiest and fastest ways to make ourselves feel better during such a crisis, I wanted to share a few "back-to-basics" tips on food and nutrition:

- **Avoid highly processed/sugary foods; these not only cause inflammation and fatigue but, for many of us, also more anxiety.**
- **Try to eat every three to four hours, when physically (truly) hungry; work to not let your emotions dictate the time to eat.**
- **Buy fresh (meats if available) or frozen; stock the freezer with fruit and vegetables in bulk. Smoothie idea: frozen fruit + banana + Greek yogurt + ice.**
- **Beans: lean, inexpensive, versatile, and nutrient-rich. Add them to salads, wraps, casseroles; mix with spicy tomatoes for a tasty, high-protein dish.**
- **Canned vegetables/protein also work. Canned tuna and salmon (in water) are two of my favorites because they work in so many veggie combinations.**
- **Possibly the most sound advice: don't forget to drink plenty of water.**

With so many of us now working from home, we might experience dramatic disruptions to our workdays, as well as our exercise routines. If you have a home gym and routine, that's great! If you don't, just create a plan to move and stay active each day.

All of your movement counts, so just dedicate some time to this every day. Start small, as long as you start! Incorporate more walking, other household activities, and several stretch breaks into your day for a solid fitness foundation. Setting a phone reminder to ring every 30 minutes - a simple reminder to get up and move around for two to three minutes - can add thousands of steps to your day.

For more at-home exercise ideas, visit [youtube.com/user/FitnessBlender](https://youtube.com/user/FitnessBlender). Also, the CDC has some good tips on how to manage stress and anxiety, and to help all of us better cope and improve our mental wellbeing, at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus).

Please be well; eat nutrient-rich foods; de-stress with movement, activities, and laughter; and stay safe! ♦

## 'F4' plans for different kind of festival

By Martha Ann Terry Friendship Community Group

**BELOW:** Families gather at Baum Grove for the Friendship Flower & Folk Festival. Photo courtesy of Martha Ann Terry.



**Friendship** - In just a few weeks, which might seem like eternity in "quarantine time," the annual Friendship Flower & Folk Festival (F4) will proceed with caution on May 9.

This year's festival will look a bit different thanks to the general restrictions on large gatherings. Organized by the Friendship Community Group (FCG), the festival has become a dependable source for locally grown flowers, herbs, and vegetables.

Beginning in mid-April, FCG will begin taking online orders at [friendship-pgh.org/store](http://friendship-pgh.org/store). Orders may be picked up at Baum Grove (400 Roup Ave.) on May 9; all proceeds support FCG's ongoing maintenance of Baum Grove.

Year after year, festival-goers have been able to browse the book sale, taste some local cuisine, try their luck in the neighborhood raffle, enjoy live performances, and purchase hand-crafted items. This year's festivities, however, will be scaled down to comply with recommended "social distancing" protocol.

The COVID-19 crisis has given everyone more time to think about the world around them. It is also the perfect time to think about other ways to support Friendship residents. Consider checking on an elderly or disabled neighbor to find out if they need help, or supporting the work of the FCG and its fellow nonprofits via donation.

Friendship residents are also welcome to promote the neighborhood's goodwill by simply sitting on their porch and greeting passers-by; furry, four-legged companions are preferred, but optional.

In spreading the word about this year's festival, and its unprecedented circumstances, members of the FCG's Neighborhood & Environment Committee are excited to share the fruits of their labor at Baum Grove.

On May 9, when most folks will be picking up their orders for Mother's Day, customers are encouraged to check out the progress made at Baum Grove. For more info, visit [friendship-pgh.org](http://friendship-pgh.org). ♦

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# LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

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

Real Estate Sales (for the month of February 2020)

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, RE/MAX Select Realty

## Bloomfield

3M Holdings LLC to RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP at 248 S. Mathilda St. for \$14,898.

Coral Row LLC to Joao Miguel Dias Marques Smedo at 5143 Coral St. for \$289,000.

Donald James Heatherington Jr to Kenneth M Town at 220 Pearl St. for \$262,000.

Ian Paterson to Sarah M Skelly at 4513 Torley St. for \$279,900.

Kris L & Marcia D Billingsley to Jarrett F Billingsley at 345 Ella St. for \$180,000.

Michael & Victoria Haggerson to Rachel Elizabeth O'Neill at 407 S. Pacific Ave. for \$577,305.

Moguls Development LLC to Hudson Morewood LP at 282 Morewood Ave. for \$604,250.

Nationwide Title & Abstract LLC to David Ross at 4625 Friendship Ave. for \$96,500.

Sergio & Joanne Pampena to Michelle & Jason A Merritt at 348 S. Atlantic Ave. for \$1.

## Friendship

3M Holdings LLC to RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP at 353 Stratford Ave. for \$9,733.

Mary Shannon Flynn to Brian Bollens at 301 Roup Ave. for \$245,000.

## Garfield

Ann P Snyder to Monica A Thompson at 511 N. Aiken Ave. for \$1.

David Gould to Brian N Miller at 220 N. Graham St. for \$50,000.

Leslie D Reicher to Michael A & Mallory J Dance at 5111-5113 Penn Ave. for \$452,000.

Rudolph I Davis to Creative Solutions Investments LLC at 5462 Black St. for \$50,000.

## East Liberty

3M Holdings LLC to RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP at 6041 Saint Marie St. for \$14,898.

Charles F Jr & Sara N Nevells to Pittsburgh Flips LLC at 606 N. Euclid Ave. for \$190,000.

Dan Alexander Herstig to Casa De Kaha LLC

at 710 N. Beatty St. for \$181,500.

East Liberty Development Inc. to Joshua Alan McKinley at 348 Enright Ct. for \$145,000.

## Lawrenceville

3M Holdings LLC to RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP at 5227 Duncan St. for \$570,000.

3M Holdings LLC to RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP at 5229 Duncan St. for \$570,000.

Brian Colby Cali to Michael Nemer at 3644 Penn Ave. Unit 305 for \$275,000.

City Of Pittsburgh to Artem Dolinskiy at 0 45th St. for \$75,000.

Daniel A Jackson to Eric George Lecato at 342 Service Way for \$274,900.

Eric Vanistendael to Green Ventures LLC at 321 37th St. for \$115,000.

Fabrizio Giuliani to Patrick Panebianco at 130 41st St. for \$227,000.

George R & Frances Ann Ryan to Quality Home Investments LLC at 3912 Howley St. for \$195,000.

James T & Joann M Eslick to Alexandra Demartino at 4205 Main St. for \$142,000.

Kallyn C Westfall to Benjamin C Chady at 5154-5158 Natrona Way for \$230,000.

Longshore Re LLC to C. Douglas Bernstein at 4837 Blackberry Way for \$100,000.

Louis & Alberta Nese to Anthony Jansen Paumier at 309 -311 39th St. for \$170,000.

MBRE Holdings LLC to Hanover Valley LLC at 170 37th St. for \$70,000.

Natalie C & Antoinette Hardobey Peters to AJJ Ventures LLC at 4622 Carlton St. for \$130,000.

P & B Realty Holdings LLC to Ryan P Bittner at 3822 Clement Way for \$389,000.

Pints on Penn Properties LLC to MP Project One LLC at 3523 Penn Ave. for \$285,000.

R & M Homes LLC to Ghady Haidar at 5216 Keystone St. for \$575,000.

Ronald W & Nancy Schmidt to Morgan D & Terri L Pattison at 5415 Carnegie St. for

\$140,500.

Sharon Marino to Christopher Michael Perez at 305 37th St. for \$575,000.

Smokey Joe Properties LLC to Anthony Russo at 3934 Woollsey Way for \$325,000.

Stephen E Corrick to SMA Howley LLC at 3815 Howley St. for \$100,000.

Vaneet Malhotra to BMV Associates LLC at 186 44th St. Rear for \$10.

Wylie Holdings LP to Christopher Paul Meegan at 240 38th St. for \$415,000.

## Stanton Heights

Clifford A Sands to Eric A Armstrong at 1179

McCabe St. for \$175,000.

East Liberty Development Inc. to Rozalia Jordan at 216 Schenley Manor Dr. for \$130,000.

Jamy P & Robert Rankin to 1022 Brintell LLC at 1022 Brintell St. for \$115,000.

*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. ♦*



## A Season of Change

We can all remember coloring eggs, eating chocolate candies and wearing our finest clothing. But the true sentiment of Easter is the hope that it brings.

As we reflect on Christ's resurrection and see the coming Spring, we receive a promise of future joy.

Let this season of change be a reminder that even life's deepest sorrows can be followed with new beginnings.



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*[Editor's Note: Events are cancelled everywhere, so the Bulletin Board must adapt to a life with no listings. This month, instead of featuring event info, The Bulletin is encouraging Garfield residents to complete two community surveys. Please call 412-441-6950 with any questions.]*

## Public Safety Survey



**Bloomfield  
Garfield  
CORPORATION**

2020 : Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you feel safe in your community? (on a scale of 1 being very safe and 5 being not safe at all) \_\_\_\_\_**

**What do you think are the biggest issues our community faces (Please only select the top 4)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Employment/ Education Opportunities | <input type="radio"/> Violent Crime            |
| <input type="radio"/> Housing resources/ rental           | <input type="radio"/> Non-violent crime        |
| <input type="radio"/> Housing resources/home owners       | <input type="radio"/> Help with small business |
| <input type="radio"/> Potholes/sidewalks/vacant property  | <input type="radio"/> Clean Air                |
| <input type="radio"/> Trash/dumping                       |  |

**If given an opportunity to meet with Officials whose work involves our public safety, who would you most like to be able to ask questions and hear from? (Please only choose 4)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Zone 5 Police        | <input type="radio"/> Mayor's Office                          |
| <input type="radio"/> Probation            | <input type="radio"/> Magistrate                              |
| <input type="radio"/> Vice                 | <input type="radio"/> Permits, Licensing and inspection       |
| <input type="radio"/> Narcotics            | <input type="radio"/> Housing Authority of Pittsburgh         |
| <input type="radio"/> Trauma Unit          | <input type="radio"/> URA                                     |
| <input type="radio"/> DA's Office          | <input type="radio"/> Allegheny County Health Department      |
| <input type="radio"/> US Attorney General  | <input type="radio"/> Department of Mobility & Infrastructure |
| <input type="radio"/> City Council members | <input type="radio"/> PWSA – Lead                             |
| <input type="radio"/> State Representative | <input type="radio"/> Lead Safe Allegheny                     |

**I am interested in being part of a block watch:**

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

**I am interested in helping pass out fliers and volunteer at events**

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

**I would like to report a problem:**

\_\_\_\_\_



### 2020 Garfield Community Projects Survey

In light of new opportunities for the Garfield community such as the Greenzone, improvement of Fort Pitt Park, and tree planting efforts, the BGC would like to better understand how the residents of Garfield utilize their neighborhood and open spaces

#### Is illegal dumping a problem near you?

1	2	3	4	5
No	A little bit	Moderate	Yes	Big Issue

#### Do you believe access to nature has a positive effect on people's well being?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Not really	Indifferent	Maybe	Yes

#### How often do you go for walks in Garfield (either to get to a bus/residence or for fun)?

1	2	3	4	5
I don't	Not often	Sometimes	Often	All the time

#### How often do you use other parks in Pittsburgh? (Frick, Schenley, Arsenal, etc)

1	2	3	4	5
I don't	Not often	Sometimes	Often	All the time

#### Would you be willing to clean and/or mow a vacant lot near you if you owned it?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Too busy	Tell me more	Maybe	Yes

#### Do you think Garfield would benefit from well maintained walking paths and benches?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Not really	Indifferent	Maybe	Yes

#### Would you be comfortable with a low level offender to clean green areas of Garfield to reduce their fines and prevent possible jail time?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Not really	Indifferent	Maybe	Yes

#### Would you like more trees on your street/in front of your home?

No	Need more info	Yes
----	----------------	-----

**PLEASE RETURN SURVEYS, IN PERSON OR BY MAIL, TO:**

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## ECS celebrates community amid COVID-19 isolation

By Deana Callipare *Environmental Charter School*

*Perspective/Garfield* - As events across the country are cancelled, and restaurants and other public places begin to close, it can be difficult to find a sense of community. During this period of isolation, the opportunity to work together, helping one another, is crucial to everyone's survival.

The Environmental Charter School (ECS) hopes to host students' annual "Earth Nite" celebration on May 1, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at its Intermediate School (829 Milton St.) in Garfield.

Due to the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, ECS may well have to cancel Earth Nite. But, whether or not the celebration is held this year, there is no discounting how important it has become for ECS and local families over the years.

Earth Nite began in 2008, during ECS's first year, as a way for students to celebrate Earth Day, but it soon morphed into a community event with carnival games, music, food trucks, and other festivities.



Organizations from all over the Pittsburgh area come together every year to make this event a night to remember for students and their families. ECS alumni return to visit their former teachers, and current students get a chance show their parents around the school's campus.

"Earth Nite's main goal is to engage with our partners outside of a school setting, while also bringing environmental awareness to the East End community," Laura

Micco, ECS Middle School assistant principal and Earth Nite committee member, said. "It's a joyful event where students get to have fun, and all are welcomed and encouraged to join."

Even though ECS is currently closed, just like all of the public schools across the state, the Earth Nite committee is still working diligently to pull everything together for the event. They are virtually meeting, communicating via email, and

calling their co-workers to see if they can lend a hand.

Many of the committee members are also instructional staff members at ECS; they are teaching students online while simultaneously tending to their own children who can no longer go to school or daycare.

Despite any physical quarantine, the ECS family is still pushing to accomplish one goal: community.

The school's staff members anticipate a beautiful celebration of community once everyone is permitted to reunite in person. Until then, ECS encourages readers to grow their virtual communities, call their neighbors, video chat with loved ones, and help those in need.

With enough compassion, and a strong sense of community, the world can overcome this unparalleled situation.

For updates on Earth Nite and the ECS calendar, visit [ecspgh.org](http://ecspgh.org). ♦

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