

the Bulletin

A publication of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Vol. 45, No. 6

JUNE
2020



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

'We're in this together': Garfield groups form COVID-19 alliance

By Joann Monroe *Garfield Jubilee Assoc.,
Garfield COVID-19 Team*

Garfield - As the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic take root, many local residents are struggling to pay bills and keep food on the table.

Those in need of food, emergency grants, case management, and supportive services may now look to the "Garfield COVID-19 Team" for help. An alliance forged by local advocates, the Garfield COVID-19 Team aims to meet a growing need for assistance in the city's East End neighborhoods.

The following organizations have joined up to share their resources, ideas, and visions: the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC); Garfield Jubilee Association, Inc.; the Garfield Land Trust; Laurentian Hall; Everyday's a Sunday; Assemble; Val-

See **COVID-19 Team** | page 2



ABOVE: Pastor Chad Collins (left) and Gerald 'Frog' Charleton stay strong while volunteering at Valley View Presbyterian Church's food distribution site on Friday, May 1. Check out more of their service to Garfield residents on pages 11 & 12. Photo by Joey Kennedy.

City offers financial aid to local businesses hurt by pandemic

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

Pittsburgh - Many small businesses and nonprofit organizations have suffered financial harm as a result of Governor Tom Wolf's March shutdown order to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, most have received little-to-no help getting back on their feet, from either the federal or state governments.

As of early May, over 4.1 million loans had been approved under the federal government's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), but that funding is directed to just 12% of all of the known businesses or organizations in the country.

To qualify for a PPP loan, borrowers had to demonstrate something in the way of an employee payroll over the prior nine months, which raises questions for employers that had few or no employees on the books during that period.

On May 14, the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), stepped into the mix with an announcement that it has established a COVID-19 "Small Business Recovery Fund."

According to Jennifer Wilhelm, the URA's

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ABOVE: Zaire Giles (left) and his mother, Sonya, celebrate his acceptance letter and scholarship from Penn State University. Giles credits the BGC's College & Career Readiness Program for helping in his success story. Read more on page 7. Photo courtesy of Zaire Giles.

- PAGE 8 -

*NOW STREAMING: EAST LIBERTY
CHURCHES ZOOMING ONLINE*

*GETTING OUT THE VOTE...
TO YOUR NEW POLLING PLACE*

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COVID-19 Team continued from page 1

ley View Presbyterian Church; Morning-side Church of God In Christ; Brothers & Sisters Emerging; Boom Concepts; Earth-en Vessels Outreach; Lawrenceville United; Garfield Community Farm; Garfield Glen; the Thomas Merton Center; Action Housing, Inc.; and KBK Enterprises.

Since its formation in March, as the crisis began to unfold, the Garfield COVID-19 Team has served 5,679 families with an estimated 39,840 meals.

Working together, Garfield Jubilee and Laurentian Hall have distributed food to approximately 1,000 families every week, connecting local residents with a total of 12,000 meals in the process. Giant Eagle donated an additional \$500 worth of meats, which were distributed to residents of Garfield and adjacent neighborhoods by Zone 5 Police Officers.

One of Garfield's best-kept secrets, Everyday's a Sunday (4919 Penn Ave.) continues distributing free meals to area res-

idents. Working in conjunction with the BGC, owner/manager Natalie DeiCas has secured more than 10,000 pounds of food donations to make hot, delicious meals for her neighbors during their time of need.

DeiCas and her crew have prepared 9,480 meals to feed over 3,000 local families - and counting. Everyday's a Sunday supplies residents with free vegetables, drinks, snacks, and easy-to-prepare meals as well. DeiCas also sells tasty breakfast, lunch, and dinner items - available for pick-up/ delivery seven days a week [find "Everyday's a Sunday" on GrubHub & DoorDash].

Contributing a combined 18,360 meals, Valley View Presbyterian Church distributed food to 1,004 families and Morning-side Church of God in Christ distributed food to an additional 675 families. As food insecurity keeps compounding throughout the East End, the team is developing a strategic plan to continue providing local residents with essential resources.

The BGC has provided emergency "Neighbors in Need" grants - totaling approximately \$11,175 - to 37 families since the crisis began in March. The grants, which are capped at \$500 each, average about \$300 per applicant.

As of press time, the Garfield COVID-19 Team has raised more than \$13,000. While providing case management and supportive services, Garfield Jubilee also offers health and insurance referrals, as well as assistance for special needs children. Assemble hosts virtual STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math), activities and "making" opportunities for young learners [see page 15].

This is only a sample of the organizations doing great things in Garfield. Readers interested in contributing time/energy/funds to the relief effort may contact Nina Gibbs at nina@bloomfield-garfield.org. ♦



AT LEFT: Volunteers organize food donations outside Garfield's Morning-side Church of God in Christ (M.C.O.G.I.C.). The church has joined forces with other service organizations to form the 'Garfield COVID-19 Team' and help any neighbors who are struggling to put food on the table during the pandemic. Photo courtesy of M.C.O.G.I.C.



ABOVE: Natalie DeiCas distributes hot meals to neighbors in need on Penn Ave. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



RESUME WORKSHOP

Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center will be hosting Virtual Resume Workshops every Wednesday from 12:00pm to 2:00pm

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'Pittsburgh City Farms' program: new blueprint for food security

By Pittsburgh City Councilwoman Deb Gross District 7

Pittsburgh - During the COVID-19 outbreak, we have seen thousands line up to obtain food for their families, many of them turned away. At the same time, our food supply chain has begun to break down and grocery prices are skyrocketing.

This crisis that we are living through shows how important it is for the City to grow food that will aid in providing nutrition for its residents. For these reasons, I am working with my colleagues on City Council to develop a program that will create a network of small farms and gardens throughout the City of Pittsburgh.

This program will direct City resources to food production to tackle food insecurity and food supply chain issues. We are calling it the "Pittsburgh City Farms" program. Pittsburgh City Farms will create a number of farms or gardens in each of the nine Council Districts to grow fresh food for city residents. Currently, I am working with Councilman Anthony Coghil to pilot the program in District 4 & District 7. District 4 has a single, large 1.2-acre site in Brookline Memorial Park.

In our part of the City [District 7], we have many community gardens and small parks, so I am reaching out to community gardeners so the City can invest in already existing community garden sites and provide the resources that they need to increase food production. New gardens are also possible, as the budget allows. If all goes as planned, Pittsburgh City Farms will have its first harvest this fall. ♦



AT LEFT: A fallow East End garden plot awaits its new purpose as a Pittsburgh City Farms site. The program looks to reap a full harvest this fall. Photo courtesy of Magda Gangwar.

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. 6

Deadline for the July edition is Friday, June 19.

Editorial & Advertising Offices 5149 Penn Ave. • Pittsburgh, PA 15224 • 412-441-6950 (ext. 13) • Andrew@Bloomfield-Garfield.org

Total Circulation 15,000 Copies Mailed [bulk distribution will resume a.s.a.p.]

Staff Andrew McKeon, Editor • John Colombo, Staff Photographer • Rick Swartz, Proofreading • Pamela Schön, Office Manager • Trib Total Media, Printing & Mailing • USPS, Home Delivery

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.

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Thank you!

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) would like to acknowledge its main corporate and philanthropic partners: PNC Foundation, BNY Mellon Foundation, The Pittsburgh Foundation, WesBanco Bank, and Dollar Bank. Thanks also to PNC Bank, Allegheny Health Network, West Penn Hospital, the City of Pittsburgh, *The Bulletin's* advertisers, and all BGC members for their ongoing support and assistance.

CCRP student Cecil Price III earns scholarship to Morehouse College

By Cecil Price III CCRP student, 2020 Barack Obama Academy graduate

Pittsburgh - I am a senior, and Student Body President, at the Barack Obama Academy of International Studies. I also participate in the College & Career Readiness Program (CCRP) with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation.

As I come down to the wire on planning my secondary education, I will be attending Morehouse College in the fall - majoring in Economics and Political Science, on a Pre-Law track.

On May 20, Morehouse College acknowl-

edged me as one of the Oprah Winfrey Scholars of the Class of 2024.

As a new feature of this program, Oprah Winfrey has awarded me with a four-year, renewable scholarship. With such a blessing bestowed upon me, I would like to thank God, my family, and the entire community as a whole for their support.

I could not have achieved all that I have without someone encouraging me to continue pursuing excellence, no matter the circumstance. So, I thank you all. ♦



ABOVE: Cecil Price III, who prepared for success in the BGC's College & Career Readiness Program, recently received a scholarship to the historic Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Photo courtesy of Judy Lubarski.

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'Neighbors in Need' fund offers financial assistance grants

By Sam Spearing *Bloomfield Development Corporation*

Neighbors In Need Fund

Bloomfield/Garfield/Lawrenceville



Financial assistance grants available now!

\$300 per applicant.

When local residents began losing their sources of income and taking on new expenses during the COVID-19 pandemic, the BGC began receiving more applications for assistance.

As more and more neighbors are unexpectedly struggling to afford necessities, the lines have grown longer at food distribution centers across the city. From March through April, the Bloomfield food pantry experienced a 20% increase in the number of families served by its monthly distribution.

Meanwhile, most small businesses are either closed or earning significantly less than anticipated. Although evictions are temporarily halted in Pennsylvania through Jul. 10, many local residents will nonetheless struggle to catch up on back rent - even after they are able to return to work.

Information about applying for financial assistance through the Neighbors In Need fund can be found online at bit.ly/neighborsinneedfund or by calling 412-532-8869.

Readers are also encouraged to contribute to the fund by visiting bloomfield-garfield.org/donate-to-bgc and selecting the Neighbors in Need option; donations will go towards helping with necessities like rent, utilities, and groceries. ♦

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Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center reopens to serve community

By Amber Epps *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

Garfield - On Jun. 1, the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center and Youth Development offices located at 5321 Penn Avenue will reopen to the public on a limited basis.

Clients or program participants wishing to meet with the Employment Specialist or Youth Program Coordinators will be required to have an appointment ahead of time. Walk-ins will not be accepted for the month of June.

Anyone needing to use the computer lab will also need to call ahead of time to set up an appointment. In order to maintain social distancing practices, only five individuals will be able to use the computer lab at once.

These appointments will be 45 minutes long, which will allow staff to disinfect the lab area before the next appointments begin.

All visitors and staff will be required to wear a mask and use hand sanitizer upon entering the building. Visitors needing fax or copy services can walk in to receive assistance.

To make an appointment to meet with the Employment Specialist, please call 412-362-8580. Anyone needing to make an appointment with a Youth Programs Coordinator should call 412-441-9833 and choose the appropriate extension. ♦

East End - The COVID-19 pandemic has placed new, unprecedented burdens on thousands of families and business owners in Bloomfield, Garfield, and Lawrenceville.

Neighbors who were already struggling have taken on unforeseen expenses; many have also lost their source of income as the pandemic continues impacting our communities.

Soon, these local residents will be able to apply for financial assistance grants through the "Neighbors In Need" fund. Thanks to funding from The Pittsburgh Foundation, grants of up to \$500 will be made available to assist residents and small businesses with expenses like utilities or rent.

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), Bloomfield Development Corporation, Lawrenceville United, and Lawrenceville Corporation have partnered to distribute the money. Each neighborhood will have its own committee, a small group of neighbors, responsible for reviewing and approving the applications; the funds, if approved, will be distributed within four days of application.

The BGC has offered financial assistance grants through a Neighbors In Need fund since 2012, supporting over 200 families in that time. These grants, which residents of Garfield and other neighborhoods have used to help with unforeseen or burdensome expenses, average about

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'City of Bridges' CLT selling affordable homes in Lawrenceville

By Ed Nusser *City of Bridges Community Land Trust*

AT LEFT: A rendering of two new, affordable homes for sale on 44th St. in Lawrenceville. 'City of Bridges' Community Land Trust (CBCLT) recently sold three homes in the neighborhood, and is looking to sell three more soon. Connecting first-time homebuyers with affordable housing options, CBCLT works to offset the market forces that have driven prices up throughout Lawrenceville. Graphic courtesy of Ed Nusser.

Lawrenceville - During the month of May, City of Bridges Community Land Trust (CBCLT) closed on the sales of three permanently affordable homes to first-time homebuyers.

Located in Central Lawrenceville, these homes would have fetched prices near \$300,000 each on the open market, but were sold for \$127,500 each - to households earning less than 80% of Area Median Income.

Rothschild Doyno Collaborative, an architecture firm based in the Strip District, led the design and Shape Development, based in Bloomfield, handled the construction of the houses.

In her work as Stewardship and Community Engagement Manager at CBCLT, Crystal Jennings advocates for homeownership. "I strive to connect with residents from our communities," she said. "I want them to thrive and succeed by having the opportunity to build equity and wealth in the community of their choice. These

homes provide that opportunity."

Every one of the land trust's homes features new, high-efficiency HVAC systems, as well as fiberglass windows and Energy Star appliances. CBCLT aims to incorporate locally-produced pieces in every home it develops; light fixtures, mailboxes, kitchen backsplash tile, and other features are crafted by local artisans.

Three homes - located at 474-476 44th St., and at 184 34th St. - still remain available for purchase. Open house showings, which will follow all social distancing recommendations, are to be held on consecutive Saturdays, Jun. 20 & Jun. 27.

Interested buyers may contact Crystal Jennings at (412) 621-1811 x 110 for more details or visit <https://cityofbridgesclt.org/apply/> to submit an application; maximum income restrictions determine applicants' eligibility. All eligible CBCLT buyers may apply for down payment assistance through the City of Pittsburgh's Housing Opportunity Fund. ♦



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Small Biz Loans *continued from page 1*

director for commercial lending, the program will “position [small businesses] to stabilize and grow when the economy returns to pre-COVID-19 conditions.”

Wilhelm explained that the program will target “neighborhood-serving small businesses, businesses in low and moderate-income communities, and those small businesses most adversely affected by the Covid-19 crisis.”

The agency will use funds that it receives through the federal Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG), as well as private corporate contributions and other public funds.

The city announced in April that it was due to receive an additional \$8.3 million in CDBG monies – authorized by Congress

with its passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act at the end of March.

The URA is offering two types of loans. One is called a “recovery loan,” which is available for up to \$75,000, with no interest due during the first year of the loan, and then a rate of 2% charged thereafter. The URA is not charging a fee to originate the loan, and borrowers will not have to repay any of the loan principal during the first year.

Unlike most conventional bank loans, borrowers will not have to provide a personal guarantee as security for the loan, only a guarantee on the part of the business entity itself.

However, it is worth noting that, for busi-

nesses organized as sole proprietorships or partnerships, a guarantee by the business would be the same as a personal guarantee. Borrowers will have 7 years to repay the loan in full.

Recovery loans can be used to pay hiring and payroll costs, purchase of inventory, e-commerce, sales and marketing costs, rent, utilities, and other expenses that would need to be approved by the URA.

The second type of loan is a so-called “emergency loan.” It is limited to no more than \$15,000, and carries a 0% interest rate for the life of the loan. Repayments of loan

principal are deferred for six months, and the loan has to be repaid in three years’ time.

Just like the recovery loans, no personal guarantees would be required if the company is a corporate entity, and no fees will be owed to the URA for making the loan. The eligible uses are the same as they are for the recovery loans.

Those business owners or nonprofits who might be interested in utilizing either of these programs should direct an e-mail to Jennifer Wilhelm (JWilhelm@ura.org) or Rochelle Lilien (RLilien@ura.org). ♦

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VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING: LAWRENCEVILLE RESIDENTS

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Every month, we will feature speakers who can share information, resources, and connections to help us cope with life during the pandemic – and also to celebrate our community and all the good things we are doing for our neighbors. If you want to take part in any of these meetings, please RSVP to info@lunited.org or call 412-397-8488.

CCRP student Zaire Giles earns scholarship to Penn State University

By Zaire Giles CCRP student, 2020 Barack Obama Academy graduate



ABOVE: Zaire Giles (seated) reflects on his accomplishments with his proud mother, Sonya. Giles recently received his acceptance letter, and scholarship, from Penn State University. Photo courtesy of Judy Lubarski.

Pittsburgh - My story is one of hard work finally starting to pay off.

Over the course of my seven consecutive years of both Middle and High School at Barack Obama Academy of International Studies, I've put everything into my academic progression, so I understand the true importance of a good education.

By my senior year, it was only a matter of capitalizing on my hard work and achievements and finding people to help guide me in putting the pieces together. My involvement with the College & Career Readiness Program (CCRP) at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, Youth Enrichment Services, and many other helpful people and organizations contributed greatly to my success story.

I never could have hoped to receive so much assistance for college, both financially and personally, and also to meet so many influential people who will continue helping me along the way. I am now committing to Penn State University, and receiving the school's Clark Scholars Program Scholarship, which covers my full tuition for the next four years of college.

The amount of excitement and elation I feel from receiving such a generous scholarship simply cannot be put into words. I humbly accept this glorious opportunity that only 10 students received from Penn State. I look forward to my next journey in education at University Park, hoping to continue this string of success for many years to come. ♦

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Neighborhood FOCUS

East Liberty churches connect with members online

By Elizabeth Sensky East Liberty Development, Inc.

East Liberty - In uncertain times, people often turn to their faith for hope and reassurance. Houses of worship become gathering places where community members can lean on each other, but that has not been possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although new safety protocols prevent their congregants from meeting in person, local churches are still finding ways to offer both the spiritual and material support their members need to make it through the crisis.

At what is probably East Liberty's most recognizable church, East Liberty Presbyterian (ELPC, 116 S. Highland Ave.), the leap to digital services was not a large one, Rev. Dr. Randall Bush explained.

"Fortunately, we've been livestreaming our 11 a.m. worship service for several years now, and we have a strong social media presence, a robust website, and a good database of email addresses for congregation members," he said. "During this season, we've been more intentional about the quality and authenticity of our live-stream service and we've added in a Zoom capacity for our earlier, contemporary Sunday service at 8:45 a.m. We've also found ways to do adult Sunday school classes, new brief prayer services, confirmation classes, youth group gatherings, Bible studies, and more through online offerings."

Crossroads Church (325 N Highland Ave.) has also found success in adapting its services and small group sessions to the virtual platform. Pastor Jonathan Cordle

'We're here for Pittsburgh and we're diligently trying to shine a light during this dark time.'

- Bri Saleone, North Way Christian Community Church

BELOW: Members of North Way Christian Community Church congregate online while living under quarantine. East Liberty's communities of faith have been connecting on computers, lifting spirits from a safe distance during the pandemic. Photo courtesy of Bri Saleone.



explained that his organization is still doing what it has always been doing, only now via Zoom instead of in-person.

Crossroads also created an online prayer center to help members come together in prayer while sheltering at home. Cordle noted that, rather than causing confusion and separation, the crisis has actually rooted the church in its mission.

"It's been a powerful reminder that church was never meant to be an event, but a way of living with others as we follow after Jesus," Cordle said. "We've been going through this season together and looking for ways to be as helpful to our neighbors as possible, which involves flexibility and creativity since we're trying to keep our distance."

Cordle and his congregants have been staying busy during quarantine by preparing 1,000 "encouragement bags" for the staff of local hospitals and nursing homes, participating in a food drive with Bridge City Church, and partnering with other local churches to distribute lunches to students and their families who have been dealing with food insecurity.

North Way Christian Community Church (5941 Penn Ave.) also reacted quickly to meet the needs of its congregation, providing meals through a food bank and making the switch to virtual services at lightning speed. After closing its doors on Mar. 13, the church launched its first virtual live service the next day.

"The response has been amazing," Bri Saleone, Discipleship Director for North Way, shared. "We continue hearing countless stories about how people who have never walked into a church before are now attending services online, week after week."

ELPC also reported an increase in new members who discovered their services online. "Our Facebook and YouTube followers have increased significantly, and we have a range of new donations through online giving," Bush explained. "We even have people from out of state who are asking to join our church since they've come to know us through online offerings."

Despite the advantages and convenience of virtual services, many congregants

- continued on next page -



ABOVE: East Liberty Presbyterian Church members catch up with each other online. Photo courtesy of Rev. Dr. Randy Bush.



"Like" the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
(Facebook.com/BloomGarCorp)

for the latest neighborhood information and community updates.

- continued from previous page -

agree that nothing can replace the real thing. And, as Bush observed, virtual services are not ideal for ELPC's older members because many have no internet connection at home. He said the church will find a balance between in-person worship and online offerings as the crisis abates.

A significant portion of Crossroads' members work in healthcare or the nonprofit sector, and are busy helping others on the frontlines, which makes it difficult to connect with them online.

"Those folks need encouragement and a good nap. Others that are isolated, living by themselves, just need a touch or a voice," Cordle said.

While touch may be a long way off, the faith community remains hopeful and heartened by the ways this pandemic has brought people together, albeit from a distance.

"Something that has surprised me is that I've heard so many people asking how they can help right now," Cordle said. "It doesn't matter how much they need themselves; they are still looking for ways to serve others. It's incredible to witness generosity like that."

Saleone points to hope as a driving force that will guide North Way, and the rest of Pittsburgh's faith community, through the crisis.

"We do not want people going on this life journey alone, but instead with a community that supports them and raises them up," she said. "We're here for Pittsburgh and we're diligently trying to shine a light during this dark time."

Learn more about these churches' virtual services at cathedralofhope.org, xr.church/locations/east-liberty, and northway.org/campus/east-end-campus. ♦



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Volunteer Voices: Pastor Chad & Johanna Collins of Valley View Presbyterian Church

Interview by Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Garfield - Pastor Chad and Johanna Collins have been active in local volunteer efforts for many years. Alongside their fellow congregants at Valley View Presbyterian Church, the Collins family helps operate a distribution site for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank - serving residents of Garfield and the surrounding neighborhoods.

On the first Friday of every month, Valley View hosts a drive-up food distribution event from its 601 N. Aiken Ave. location. On the last three Thursdays of the month [*not every week, as it was mistakenly phrased in the May Bulletin*], church members deliver food to local residents. The pastor and his wife encourage any Garfield families in need to participate in Valley View's food delivery program by calling 412-708-6158, and then leaving a message stating their name, address, and the number of people living in their home; no documents are needed to participate.

In catching up on neighborhood news with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), Chad and Johanna got a chance to illustrate how, and why, they began feeding their neighbors in Garfield. The following transcript has been edited for space.

BGC: When did you both begin volunteering?

Johanna: "As a young person - in New York City and Lancaster, PA - I volunteered through my church, helping with little kids at a summer day camp, and also volunteering at a soup kitchen. And when I was a teenager, I got into some trouble and had to do community service at a nursing home, where I learned a lot. I'm really thankful for all those early experiences."

Chad: "As a teenager, I volunteered with Camp Shining Arrow in Penn Hills, a summer camp for young people with serious disabilities. I also served meals at East End Cooperative Ministry's homeless shelter with my church family."

BGC: How did you get involved with food distribution in Garfield?

Chad: "When I became the pastor of Valley View in 2005, the church had already been a longtime agency for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The Food Bank asked us if we could serve more people because, at that time, there were hundreds of

households in Garfield that had no access to a local food pantry. So, we added a second day of distribution and called it "Isaiah's Kitchen," inspired by *Isaiah 55:1-3*."

Johanna: "The connection that Valley View and Chad had with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank was the bridge for me to get involved. I love that the Food Bank has served Pittsburgh residents for so long and helped to fill the gaps of food insecurity. The staff members, like MaryAnn and Brian, keep the organization running smoothly and keep the needs of their agencies and clients at the forefront."

BGC: How has Valley View's food distribution process changed during the pandemic?

Johanna: "In the days of this pandemic, Chad has organized, with the help of other Garfield agencies, a weekly list of neighbors needing food. He does the food ordering and organizes the volunteers. On Thursdays, I pick up from the Food Bank's headquarters, along with others like Terron Paxton, Shaneeka Dyre, Jazzy Saunders, AJ & Jeff Monsma, Joey Kennedy, and Jody Choder. We repack the food into boxes and deliver it to people's homes. On the first Friday of the month, we work with an expanded team of volunteers to unload a huge delivery of food, then pack it into people's vehicles and deliver it to seniors."

BGC: What motivates you to keep loading and unloading boxes of food every week?

Chad: "It's fun! And, we have so many joyful memories of working together to load up boxes and bags with all sorts of items: canned tuna, frozen steaks, chicken, orange juice, cereal, cabbages, apples, rolls, eggs, etc. As we've knocked on our beloved neighbors' doors, our common refrain of, "Valley View Food Bank" has been met with smiles and thanks. It also provides us with moments to connect with the storytellers and 'history keepers' of our community."

BGC: Who plays a role in supporting your mission and providing inspiration?

Chad: "The members of Valley View are a huge inspiration! They are so hard-working, dedicated, and willing to share and bless others. Our children are also always willing to help. Even after a long week of school and activities, they will often jump in and give time and efforts to collaborate in caring." ♦



ABOVE: Pastor Chad Collins sorts through donated items during a food distribution event at Valley View Presbyterian Church. Photo by Joey Kennedy.

BELOW: Johanna Collins (right) and a fellow volunteer transport boxes of food supplied by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Look to page 12 for more action shots of the Garfield site's operation. Photo by Joey Kennedy.



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BELOW: A volunteer smiles beneath an emoji mask during a drive-up food distribution event in Garfield on May 1. Photo by Joey Kennedy.



ABOVE: Neighbors organize boxes of food from the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank at Valley View Presbyterian Church on May 1. Photo by Joey Kennedy.

BELOW: As one volunteer proves, distributing tons and tons of food requires a lot of elbow grease, patience, and arm strength. Photo by Joey Kennedy.



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AT LEFT: Johanna Collins packs boxes full of donated food items during a drive-up distribution event at Valley View Presbyterian Church on Friday, May 1. Collins and her husband, Pastor Chad, volunteer with other church members - four times a month- to feed their Garfield neighbors. Photo by Joey Kennedy.

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LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

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

Real Estate Sales (for the month of April 2020)

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, RE/MAX Select Realty

Bloomfield

Assunta Ricci to Hema Solomon at 219 Taylor St. for \$285,000.

Erin R Anderson to Nickolas Lapp at 4622 Carroll St. for \$289,000.

George A & Bernadette Givens to Jason W & Helen E Shaffer at 4808 Lima Way for \$176,000.

Ilario Silla to Jessica E Smith at 417 Taylor St. for \$363,000.

Justin J Czarnecki to Sarah Jill Simkin at 376-378 S. Evaline St. for \$426,000.

Robert Buck to Peanut Capital LLC at 4063 Cabinet St. for \$201,111.

Robert L Podolinski to James & Diane Miller at 436 Cedarville St. for \$192,000.

Friendship

Douglas D Hutchinson to Alora Living LLC at 307 Roup Ave. for \$337,000.

Garfield

Amina Mugaza Muya to Julie Mallis at 4810 Rosetta St. for \$180,000.

Argelim Properties LLC to Mina Shnoudah at 5206 Dearborn St. for \$265,000.

Christopher Harrison to Cynthia Adams at 0 Dearborn St. for \$30,000.

City Of Pittsburgh to Curt Denhardt at 121 N. Aiken Ave. for \$5,900.

Edward G McCabe III to Pedantic LLC at 110 S. Atlantic Ave. for \$275,000.

Zachary Wooldridge to Daniel Hatfield at 5217-5219 Kincaid St. for \$92,000.

East Liberty

AGLK Property Solutions LLC to John M Hohos at 6212 Saint Marie St. for \$374,250.

Lawrenceville

100 AWOA LLC to Matthew V & Julia Lorenz at 0 Keystone St. for \$85,000.

20186Wy-59 LLC to Seyedalim Malakouti at 218 Fisk St. for \$515,000.

5515 Butler Street Development LP to Matthew Phillips at 5575 Butler St. for \$499,900.

Anthony J & Jean M Cimino to Sean P McDonnell at 320 37th St. for \$250,000.

Beautiful Green Enterprises LLC to Richard B & Susan C Alameddine at 4221 Calvin St. for \$235,000.

Bradford Brothers LLC to Michael Worthy at 5210 Keystone St. for \$311,000.

Douglas J Marciniak to Lindsay M Rozynek at 226 46th St. for \$345,000.

Elizabeth S. Cullinan to Emily Gianamore at 5331 1/2 Carnegie St. for \$308,000.

Ian D & Jessa C Darwin to Nicole Morgan Deal at 5603 Wickliff St. for \$170,000.

Janice W Donatelli to New Alliance Federal Credit Union at 3709 Butler St. for \$750,000.

Jordan D & Abby R Smoke to Michaela Kron at 189 34th St. for \$339,000.

Karen Chapple to Mp Project Two LLC at 3521 Penn Ave. for \$120,000.

Kristin J Bundy to Thomas E & Morgan C

Agnesini at 188 46th St. for \$265,800.

Matthew T Mcdermit to Anna Mirzayan at 4207 Post St. for \$292,000.

Nicholas J & Dorothy A Balkovec to Jeffrey J Mrkonich at 326 42nd St. for \$365,000.

Noah I Himberger to Robert & Sarah Hill at 229 Fisk St. for \$482,500.

R Kyndall Properties LP to Gele Brown Moloney at 5224 Duncan St. for \$547,000.

Raymond H Swanson to Kevin Collins at 5232 Carnegie St. for \$396,350.

Richard W & Geraldine A Rizer to Cameron Jonard at 4618 Plummer St. for \$278,000.

Robert C Pasa to Kaytlin Sisco at 3730 Liberty Ave. for \$150,000.

Stanton Heights

Arnold & Myrna Weisband to Dara M Goldhagen at 1557 Hawthorne St. for \$280,000.

Caroline Simard to Christie Schroth at 5520 Celadine St. for \$258,000.

Donald E Moran to Dzintra Putri Ullis at 4362 Coleridge St. for \$125,000.

Francis E & Rosemary Matesic to Erin P Straw at 1507 Simona Dr for \$174,000.

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. ♦



Father's day is a special day of the year to remember our fathers and father figures.

Yet, as we know, it can also be a very difficult time for those who grew-up without or who have lost a father.

If your father is living, let him know how much he means to you. If he is deceased, take a few minutes to remember and reflect on how he has made you the person that you are.



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Where to vote: consolidated polling places, other changes for primary election

By Nina Gibbs Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Allegheny County - Residents who have not registered for a mail-in ballot are in luck, because voting locations will be open for the primary election on Tuesday, Jun. 2.

According to the Allegheny County Elections Division, households with eligible voters will receive a postcard, prior to Election Day, identifying their specific polling place. Allegheny County will operate 147 polling locations, but still cover 416 election districts - a mitigation measure taken to protect voters during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approximately one-third of the polling places that operate during a normal election will be active for the primary election this year. This is important because it means that many voters must travel to other neighborhoods just to cast their vote.

According to the County's list of consolidated polling places, Bloomfield residents (Ward 8) will vote in Garfield at the Community Activity Center (113 N. Pacific Ave.). Garfield residents (Ward 10), however, will cast their ballots alongside Morningside residents (Ward 10) at the Sunnyside School (4801 Stanton Ave.). Polish Hill residents (Ward 6) will join their Lawrenceville neighbors (Ward 9) to vote at the Teamsters Temple Banquet Hall (4701 Butler St.).

As determined by the Board of Elections, some locations may include multiple polling places so that social distancing and other mitigation measures may be followed on Election Day.

On Tuesday, Jun. 2, the polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.; voters are not required to show their photo ID card in order to vote. County residents are encouraged to visit alleghenyvotes.com to find their polling place ahead of the Jun. 2 primary. See below for a list of local voting locations. ♦

East End Polling Places

- Wards 6 & 9: Teamsters Temple Banquet Hall (4701 Butler St.)
- Ward 8: BGC Community Activity Center (113 N. Pacific Ave.)
- Ward 10: Sunnyside School (4801 Stanton Ave.)
- Ward 11: Fulton School (5799 Hampton St.)
- Ward 12: Kingsley Association (6435 Frankstown Ave.)



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Assemble hosts virtual summer camps

By Andrea Petrillo *Assemble*

Garfield - Like many local organizations, Assemble (4824 Penn Ave.) was forced to abruptly discontinue in-person events in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the sudden cancelation of numerous day camps and afterschool programs, the organization quickly pivoted to online learning. Assemble now hosts digital hangouts where its afterschool groups can continue making and learning together, from a safe distance.

While Pennsylvania and many other states are now feeling the pressure to quickly reopen, the Assemble team wants to rely on data that is still being analyzed by research institutions like the Center for Disease Control. The team will reach out to Assemble students and families to get their feedback before making any decisions.

"Summer camp is a big part of what we do at Assemble," Founder & Executive Director, Nina Barbuto, said. "It's been a way for us to really get to know our kids and families, as well as watch our kids grow over the years. Making the call to just offer Virtual Camps was really difficult but, ultimately, we need to guarantee that we'll be able to keep our campers safe and healthy. We're still here and ready to support learning in

Garfield in new ways."

Though summer camps represent a large part of Assemble's service hours and revenue, Barbuto is excited to continue the venture into online learning with 8 weeks of summer classes beginning Jun. 15.

Once a young learner registers for virtual summer classes, they will receive a "material kit" including everything needed to participate. As always, Garfield residents can attend for free; scholarship pricing is available for residents of other neighborhoods, with no application required.

Virtual Assemble summer classes are a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math) digital hangout for kids [ages 6-15] to learn about the world by making, testing out wild ideas, and building a better future.

Each week, students explore via hands-on activities and special visits from local artists, makers, and technologists who share their passion and talents with the group.

The classes are hosted on Google Hangouts, a free calling application available on smartphones and computers. Students may register for Virtual Assemble classes by visiting assemblepgh.org. ♦

'EastField Cooperative Garden' grows from local labor of love

A Message from the Three Rivers Agricultural Land Initiative



ABOVE: Garden organizer Gary Cirrincione (right) joins fellow supporters for the opening of 'EastField Cooperative Garden' - so named for its Black St. location, right along the border of East Liberty and Garfield. Photo courtesy of TRALI.

East Liberty - The Three Rivers Agricultural Land Initiative (TRALI) has protected its first community garden, the "EastField Cooperative Garden," an accomplishment long in the making on Black St. According to garden organizer Gary Cirrincione, the initiative has been working towards this achievement for more than a decade.

"For twelve years, we've worked this soil, fostered a community, and shared the literal - and metaphorical - fruits of the labor from this garden," he said. "Permanent protection of the land gives us peace of mind, knowing that the diverse, multigenerational place we've built can never be taken away."

A joint venture between two Pittsburgh-area nonprofits, Grow Pittsburgh and Allegheny Land Trust, TRALI works to protect urban agricultural lands in perpetuity.

"We've had the privilege of helping supply this garden with materials to grow into what it is now," Grow Pittsburgh Executive Director Jake Seltman said. "It is both a relief, and a gift, to now be able to promise that all their work will be protected and enjoyed for generations to come."

Since 2013, the EastField Cooperative Garden has been supported by Grow Pittsburgh's Community Garden Sustainability Fund, a program established to support gardens in Allegheny County.

The garden provides opportunities for local residents to grow healthy food, work the soil, and interact cooperatively with their neighbors. Currently, the garden is home to 38 wood-framed, raised beds; ten of these beds - featuring herbs, greens, tomatoes, and strawberries - are shared by all neighborhood gardeners.

Chris Beichner, President/CEO of Allegheny Land Trust, is happy to help local residents reap the collaborative rewards. "We're thrilled to apply tools that connect our neighbors, while also addressing common concerns about food insecurity," he said.

Community gardens are natural hubs for stormwater mitigation, habitat creation, and community-building. To learn more about TRALI, visit GrowPittsburgh.org. ♦

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