

the Bulletin

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

Unique campaign supports small biz in city's East End

By Topiltzin Gomez Honeycomb Credit

East End - For nearly six months, it has been everything but “business as usual” for most local businesses, and all indications point to pandemic restrictions remaining for the foreseeable future.

Azorean Café (4715 Liberty Ave.) and Everyday's a Sunday (4919 Penn Ave.) are still feeling the pinch, but both neighborhood spots are now taking a unique approach to survival: “loyalty bonds.”

Everyday's A Sunday, a café located in the heart of Garfield, has pivoted its business to better serve delivery customers in what could well be the slow months to come. “The pandemic has totally shut down our walk-in traffic” owner/manager Natalie DeiCas revealed.

She and other local entrepreneurs have
See **Loyalty Bonds** | page 2



ABOVE: Natalie DeiCas shows off the new GrubHub kiosk at her café, Everyday's a Sunday (4919 Penn Ave.), in Garfield. The kiosk, which is the first of its kind in Pittsburgh, will streamline the ordering operations for DeiCas' customers. Read about how Everyday's a Sunday, and other local businesses, are turning to “loyalty bonds” during the pandemic [at left]. Photo by John Colombo.

City pilots ‘neighborhood traffic circles’ on N. Euclid Ave.

By Elizabeth Sensky East Liberty Development, Inc.

East Liberty - As some local drivers and cyclists may have already noticed, North Euclid Avenue is currently undergoing changes to its traffic flow.

Yellow traffic poles now guide cars and bikes through new “neighborhood traffic circles” along the avenue, which stretches from Highland Park to East Liberty.

In July, MoveForwardPGH, an initiative of the City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI), installed the traffic circles at four N. Euclid intersections: Callowhill Street, Hampton Street, Hays Street, and Rippey Street.

Modeled on similar traffic circles used in other cities throughout the country, they are essentially mini-roundabouts - part of a “traffic calming” tactic used to slow vehicle speeds at less-busy intersections.

Many advocates believe the circles provide a good option for slowing vehicle speeds, while also diverting cut-through traffic, on neighborhood streets.

“We’re tasked with calming traffic in key locations to reduce speed and make sure people have safe alternatives to get where

See **Traffic Circles** | page 6



ABOVE: A cyclist navigates new “neighborhood traffic circles” in Highland Park. Read more at right. Photo courtesy of Bike Pittsburgh.

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PEOPLE'S INDIAN: FEEDING
GARFIELD THROUGH THE YEARS

ALEXANDER'S BISTRO SAYS
'GOODBYE' TO BLOOMFIELD

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Loyalty Bonds continued from page 1

decided to run loyalty bond campaigns through Honeycomb Credit - a Pittsburgh startup that connects local businesses to capital from community members.

A loyalty bond is like a gift card, but it cannot be fully spent at once. When a customer purchases a loyalty bond, they receive 1.3 times the value of the bond in purchased goods or services, in six-month increments, over the course of two years.

“Loyalty bonds are a win-win for everyone,” DeiCas explained. “People can support us now and get a 30% discount in the future. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

Azorean Café, a Bloomfield restaurant specializing in Azorean and Portuguese cuisine, recently re-opened after enduring a six-week closure.

“These loyalty bonds will help us offset our lost revenue,” owner Elsa Santos said, “so that we can keep our team and continue

providing essential meals and products to our local community.”

Because the amount of each loyalty bond vests over time, the long-term benefits to customers are obvious. Meanwhile, the benefits to entrepreneurs like DeiCas and Santos - who need “capital in the door,” but are worried about a financial strain if their gift cards were all redeemed at once - are significant in the short- and long-term.

The system provides loyal customers with an incentive to purchase store credit now, then reap even more benefits down the road. Every six months, a loyalty bond buyer will receive one quarter of the loyalty bond’s amount.

For example, when a customer buys a \$100 loyalty bond, they will receive \$32.50 every six months; over the next two years, that “store credit” amounts to a total of \$130.

“With loyalty bonds, people are putting

their dollars to work locally,” DeiCas noted. “We have a way for people to invest in the businesses that they can’t wait to see when this pandemic is over.”

“War Bonds for Main Street” might seem like an exaggeration, but it serves as a rally cry for local businesses at a critical juncture - when support from everyday customers is the difference between a business thriving or closing.

To learn more about buying loyalty bonds for these local businesses, and others, visit honeycombcredit.com/bonds.

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ABOVE: GrubHub’s tamper-proof packaging guarantees a safe kitchen-to-customer experience at Everyday’s a Sunday café. Photo by John Colombo.

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After years-long crisis, lead levels in PGH water finally meet federal compliance

By Juliette Rihl PublicSource

Pittsburgh - For the first time in four years, the lead levels in Pittsburgh's drinking water are compliant with federal standards.

The most recent lead test results that cover January through June 2020 came out to 5.1 parts per billion (ppb), Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) Executive Director Will Pickering said at a press conference on Jul. 22. According to a press release, it is PWSA's lowest lead test result in over 20 years.

It is the second consecutive test in which the PWSA came in under the 15 ppb action level set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Now that PWSA has two tests under 15 ppb in consecutive six-month periods, its requirement by the state Department of Environmental Protection to replace 7% of [PWSA's] lead lines every six months can be lifted. The previous test, spanning July through December 2019, came out to 10 ppb.

The PWSA is attributing the successful turnaround to a new water treatment process and its aggressive lead line replacement program. The sample tests, however, are only conducted on homes without replaced lines, so replacing lead lines on its own does not lower testing levels.

In 2019, the water authority added orthophosphate to PWSA's treatment process. Orthophosphate is a chemical that forms a protective layer on metal pipes and helps to limit corrosion. "It's proving to be effective here and working better over time," Pickering said of the additive.

The agency has also been replacing lead lines since 2016. In the past 12 months, PWSA replaced more than 3,200 lead lines — nearly four times as much as was required by the DEP.

Now that PWSA is in compliance, its leadership, along with Mayor Bill Peduto, said it will continue to replace lead lines as it digs up streets for other water line projects. The goal is to have all of the lead lines replaced by 2026. Pickering said the number of remaining lead lines is "a moving target," as some of PWSA's records are over 100 years old, but that he believes there are still thousands left to replace.

Lead is a neurotoxin, and no level of it is considered safe to ingest. It is particularly harmful for small children.

Pittsburgh's lead crisis gained public attention in 2012, when PWSA hired the water management company Veolia to manage its day-to-day operations. In 2014, PWSA switched its anti-corrosion additive from soda ash to the cheaper caustic soda, without following the testing process required by the DEP.

In 2016, two years after the Flint, Mich. water crisis gained public attention, Pittsburgh's lead levels tested at 22 ppb, causing public outcry and a class-action lawsuit by residents. The most recent sample, from January through June 2020, was taken from 158 homes with lead service lines or plumbing. The test result of 5.1 ppb is the 90th percentile of the sample.

Per a settlement with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, PWSA is set to hire an independent monitor and donate a combined \$500,000 to the nonprofit Women for a Healthy Environment and Allegheny County's Safe and Healthy Homes program, which work to protect local communities from lead exposure. In 2017, PWSA was assessed a civil penalty of \$2.4 million by the DEP, of which up to \$1.8 million could go toward community improvements such as replacing lead lines.

Pickering said customer safety is the authority's priority moving forward. "There's nothing more important than making sure that their water is safe to drink, and we hope that we can regain their trust in the next few years," he said.

[PublicSource is an independent news organization in Pittsburgh. Visit PublicSource.org.] ♦

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the Bulletin

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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, and are open to the public. Meetings are currently being conducted online via Zoom; email Nina@Bloomfield-Garfield.org for more details.

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

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Bloomfield ShurSave closing, 'Community Market' coming soon

A Message from Bloomfield Development Corporation

Bloomfield - On Jul. 6, Echo Realty, owners of the ShurSave IGA grocery store and property, announced that ShurSave will be closing by the end of July.

The owner followed the announcement with the news that the store will reopen as "Community Market," and continue in operation during the planning phase of the eventual redevelopment of the entire property.

The Community Market store will be operated by Giant Eagle and will open as soon as possible. The store will be closed for a period of time while the changeover

happens, and the length of the closure depends on what permits may be needed. Community Market is reaching out to current [ShurSave] employees soon to discuss the transition.

Echo Realty has remained in contact with Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) this year and has been responsive to the needs of the community to retain a retail grocery.

On a call in June with BDC's Executive Director, a representative from Echo said "our number one priority for the site redevelopment is a retail grocery store." ♦



Zoning board hears plans to convert former senior home into apartments

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

East Liberty - On Jul. 23, the city zoning board took testimony from a Pittsburgh developer who plans to convert the former Angelus Convalescent Center on Amber Street into thirty apartments.

For over 65 years, the Angelus Center served as an assisted-living complex for hundreds of local seniors. Then, in 2018, the company that owned it decided to close the home and have its residents transferred to other facilities.

Purchased earlier this year for \$1.5 million by 200 Amber Street LLC, the property sits 100 feet off of South Negley Avenue, next to what was once Enright Parklet.

The developer, CLS Star Real Estate Development, advertises itself as a “real estate investment, development, and manage-

ment company” on its website and claims, among its projects, a 125-unit student housing development.

The project was in front of the zoning board because CLS Star is seeking relief from the zoning code, which requires a larger amount of land area for each housing unit than what the building can offer.

The developer also aims to have what is called a “Special Exception” approved that allows the building to continue to be used in a manner that does not conform to the R-3-M zoning classification for the area.

The principal of CLS Star, Ahron Freilich, described a project to the zoning board that will consist of a mix of studio and one-bedroom units that he said will offer apartments at “below-market rates, with



ABOVE: The former Angelus Convalescent Center in the 200 block of Amber St. in East Liberty. Photo by Joe Reuben.

no units above \$1,000 per month and several with rents as low as \$500 per month.” He produced a letter of support from East Liberty Development, Inc.

Dan Rothschild, whose firm, Rothschild Doyno Collaborative, has prepared architectural plans for the project, said it would bring “affordable housing to a part of the city that could very much use it.”

No floors would be added to the existing two-story structure, Rothschild said, and a new landscaping plan would feature two outdoor courtyards. An existing parking lot across Amber Street from the building would offer 27 parking spaces to the future tenants of the building. CLS Star also plans to convert a home adjacent to the center into a three-unit apartment complex.

Six residents of Amber Street and nearby South St. Clair Street voiced their concerns to the zoning board about the density of the proposed development, and what it could mean for a neighborhood that they say is already experiencing parking problems during the day.

Amber St. homeowner Steve Quick, asked for a postponement of the hearing; board chair Alice Mitinger said this could not be granted because testimony had already been taken for the record. But after hearing from several more residents, and from Shawn Carter, an assistant to City Councilman Rev. Ricky Burgess, Mitinger decided to hold the record open for another four weeks.

She encouraged Freilich to meet with Carter and the Amber St. residents one more time - in order to respond to the concerns that were raised, and look at some possible remedies, like having the area designated as a residential permit parking zone.

That designation, however, could take two years or longer to put in place, based on the history of setting up similar zones in other nearby neighborhoods. Carter agreed to report back to the board after meeting with the developer and local residents.

Look to future editions of *The Bulletin* for updates on the redevelopment of the former Angelus Center. ♦

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2020 Census: 'fill form and be counted'

By Sam Spearing *Bloomfield Development Corporation*

Insight/Pittsburgh - The U.S. Census is vital to making sure our community receives proper funding and representation from the federal government. Pittsburgh's response rate is about 8% below the average national rate [established in 2010]. It is imperative for neighbors across the city to complete the census - by mail, phone, or online - in order to help provide an accurate count in 2020.

Recent funding from the CARES Act, which distributed money based on census data, allowed the state of Pennsylvania to offer \$150 million in rental assistance and \$25 million in mortgage assistance to Pennsylvanians struggling due to the economic impact of COVID-19 [Interested Allegheny County residents may visit covidrentrelief.allegheny-county.us/apply or call 412-248-0021 to find out if they qualify for up to \$1,700/month in rent and utility assistance].

At the state level, federal funding is often tied to data collected by the census. In 2015 alone, 152 different federal programs used census data to make funding decisions. If you or someone you know receives SNAP (food stamps) or Medicaid, remember that the federal government uses census data to decide how much funding to allocate to Pennsylvanians for those programs. At the same time, many smaller programs - like those providing school-age children with free breakfast & lunch, or the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) - also rely on census data for their support. In 2017, SFMNP sent farmers market vouchers to 811,809 qualifying seniors across the country; many local shoppers use their vouchers at the Bloomfield Saturday Market and Lawrenceville Farmers Market.

Infrastructure work and transit funding also rely heavily on federal support. In 2015, the federal Dept. of Transportation distributed \$38 billion for highway planning and construction, such as replacing old overpasses and fixing deteriorating roads.

In 2020, we need to make sure that as many of our neighbors as possible are counted in the census in order to ensure funding for our communities. If you or a neighbor lost a census form you received in the mail, you can complete the census online (my2020census.gov) or by phone at 844-330-2020. ♦

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Traffic Circles *continued from page 1*

they need to go,” Kimberly Lucas, Assistant Director of DOMI, said. “We’ve needed to expand the tools in our toolkit, so we’re looking at successful interventions from cities across the country. One successful device we’ve found are these neighborhood traffic circles.”

When it came to N. Euclid, DOMI conducted extensive data analysis and considered anecdotal input from local residents before making a decision.

Since average vehicle speeds in the area did not warrant the use of speed humps, the traffic circles were selected as an alternative that could also address dangerous collisions and reckless driving.

“We eventually plan to ‘traffic calm’ North Euclid Avenue in its entirety, but we wanted to pilot the idea first,” Lucas said.



ABOVE: New signage warns drivers of the impending roundabout on N. Euclid Ave. These temporary “traffic calming” installations could become permanent features in the near future. Photo courtesy of BikePGH.

During the pilot, which runs for one month, MoveForwardPGH will meet with various stakeholders - emergency responders, snowplow operators, Pittsburgh Public Schools, representatives from the Americans with Disabilities Act taskforce, and local community members - to get their feedback.

Designed to be temporary, the N. Euclid traffic circles are comprised of reflective paint, flex posts, and temporary sign poles. The final design will consist of a sloped concrete curb, space for plants in the center, and a standard signpost.

The city will monitor the temporary circles’ use, and then make any necessary adjustments before turning them into permanent features.

The four pilot locations were chosen because they each represent different traffic scenarios that the City would like to test in relation to the traffic circles, like the Port Authority buses on Callowhill Street, and a higher volume of traffic along Rippey Street.

MoveForwardPGH will use temporary radar units to measure vehicle speed and temporary cameras to understand how people, particularly those piloting large vehicles such as buses, are responding to

the new interventions.

The pilot’s active data collection is scheduled to run for one month and conclude in early August. Pending results of evaluation, the final circle designs may be modified and otherwise installed in fall 2020.

As an initiative, MoveForwardPGH aims to rapidly implement the City’s brand new “Bike(+) Plan.”

“One tool outlined in the plan is ‘traffic calming’ because, if a road is slowed down, it’s not only safer for bicyclists, but it’s also safer for pedestrians, drivers, and residents on the street,” Lucas noted. “Basically, we can achieve multiple goals, while also helping create a well-connected bike network.”

Stay tuned for updates at MoveForwardPGH.org. ♦



ABOVE: Keeping right through the new traffic curve, a cyclist cruises along N. Euclid Ave. Photo courtesy of BikePGH.

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BGC testimony on PWSA's proposed rate increase

By Richard Swartz *Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation*

[Editor's Note: Richard Swartz, executive director of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation offered the following testimony before the PA Public Utility Commission on Jul. 2, regarding a rate increase sought by the Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority.]

Thank you for allowing me to address the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission in the matter of the rate increases being sought by the Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority [PWSA] for 2021 and beyond.

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation has been involved in the development of over 200 rental units in Garfield and surrounding neighborhoods over the past 31 years. These consist of both apartments and single-family homes. Nearly all of these units are occupied by individuals or families whose incomes do not exceed 60% of the median household income for the Pittsburgh region. To give you an idea of what that means, a single person earning less than \$35,000/year, or a 3-person family earning less than \$45,000 annually, would be the typical profile of the tenants we serve.

While we understand the need that the PWSA has to increase its rates, in light of the commitment it's making to infrastructure upgrades, including the replacement of lead water lines serving older single-family homes, we have to say that how these increases are phased in is also of great concern to those of us in the rental housing business. As you're aware, an increase of 29.6% for 2021 has been proposed for the rate associated with apartment and commercial buildings. This is a very large rate hike by most standards, and apartment buildings are not eligible for the lead line replacement program either, so it's clear we're not deriving as much in the way of direct benefit from this set of capital improvements as, say, a homeowner in Highland Park.

To give you a better sense of the impact a 29.6% increase would have, we are partners with another nonprofit in the ownership of a 16-unit apartment building at 5456 Penn Avenue in the Garfield-Friendship business district. We have tenants paying as little as \$475 per month for a one-bedroom unit, and \$550/month for a two bedroom. Our water and sewage bills in recent months have been averaging right around \$1,000/month for this property. A rate increase of this size, if enacted for 2021, would add nearly \$300 *per month*, not per year, to our annual water and sewage costs.

We are obligated, by virtue of the financing we received to renovate this building, to hold rents at levels that are affordable to households earning 50% or less of median household income. Those incomes are even less than the figures I noted earlier. Were this rate increase to be approved by the PUC [PA Public Utility Commission], we would have no choice but to increase the rents our tenants would have to pay by at least \$20/month

per unit, on average, next year. For someone whose gross income may be no more than \$18,000 or \$20,000 annually, we'd be taking another \$240 from him or her in 2021 - just to be able to keep up with our obligations to the PWSA.

If PWSA were able to adjust its rates in recognition of the limited incomes of tenants living in buildings such as ours, then some relief could be offered to us from the rate increases that for-profit landlords in more affluent parts of the city would be asked to absorb. But the PWSA can make no such distinction, unlike the county, which can - if asked - cut the assessment for real estate taxes on buildings whose rent structure is limited by the mortgage financing agreements that are in place with its lenders. Because of this flexibility, even though the owner of 5456 Penn Avenue is a 501 (c) (3), or charitable entity, its building is on the tax rolls so that our tenants can help pay for the critical services they may need someday from the city and/or county.

I don't think I need to point out that the rate increase proposed for 2021 is the same for all commercial buildings in the city, whether they happen to be in Garfield or Shadyside, which is less than a mile away from Penn Avenue. So, by their very nature, PWSA rates are highly regressive in nature.

For us to find a way to meet such an increase in 2021 without raising rents would mean our having to cut some other expense. But we are not going to pursue a path that, in the end, leaves us owning a building that is not quite up to standards because we had to cut back on repairs, or maintenance, or insurance coverage just so we could pay our bill from the PWSA. We *will* have to raise rents if the rate increase holds at 29.6%.

Let me offer a suggestion. I see that a second rate increase of roughly 6.3% for commercial buildings will be sought for 2022, assuming that a rate increase of 29.6% is approved by the PUC for 2021. Why not reduce the rate increase proposed for 2021, cutting it to, say, 15%, and taking the rate increase for 2022 to 15%? We would still be facing a hike of \$1800/year in water and sewage costs in 2021 for our apartment building at 5456 Penn Avenue, which, while still not welcome, would be far more manageable.

Moving forward, we don't want to put the PWSA in a financial straitjacket by asking it to make significant investments in our water and sewage infrastructure, but denying it a way to help pay for them. Today, we're simply asking the PWSA not to do the same to those of us who are in the affordable housing business.

Don't ask for more in the way of a rate increase from apartment building owners in Garfield, particularly those who are dedicated to serving working-class people, than you're asking of single-family homeowners in Shadyside. Thank you. ♦

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1:30 p.m. - Jude Wudarczyk, former long time resident of Lawrenceville, will be discussing The Lawrenceville Burying Ground. Established in 1814 for the Soldiers of Allegheny Arsenal and early residents of Lawrenceville.

2:15 p.m. - Dr. Elisabeth Roark, from Chatham University, will be discussing Allegheny Cemetery. The largest cemetery in Pittsburgh; it was established in 1844 as the sixth Rural Cemetery in the country.

3 p.m. - Jim Wudarczyk, longtime resident of Lawrenceville, will be discussing St. Mary's Cemetery. Established in the 1850's as one of the earliest Roman Catholic cemeteries in the Pittsburgh area.

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Neighborhood FOCUS

People's Indian: feeding Garfield families in uncertain times

By Andrew McKeon *The Bulletin*

Garfield - In 1987, the Pabla family opened People's Grocery store at 5136 Penn Ave. The store's opening represented a milestone for Kulwant Pabla, who had recently moved to Pittsburgh while everyone else was busy leaving town.

Building on the grocery store's success, Kulwant and his brother, Kuldip, opened People's Indian restaurant (5147 Penn Ave.) across the street in 1995. The rest is history, but the restaurant's origin story is still unknown to many customers.

The Pabla family hails from Lasara, a small town in the Punjab region of northwest India. Kulwant's son - Harpreet Pabla, who manages the restaurant - compares the footprint of his father's hometown to that of the Gators' home neighborhood.

"Lasara is a little place that's actually about as big as Garfield," he explained. As a Sikh growing up in a Hindu-focused India, life was not easy for Pabla's father.

'If you look at relief efforts in every part of the world, Sikhs have been feeding people left & right.'

- Harpreet Pabla, People's Indian restaurant

"[Kulwant] is one of four brothers and two sisters, a strong family raised in a third-world country. To them, Garfield is literally a 'land of opportunity,'" he said.

Upon moving from India to Pittsburgh at the age of 11, Pabla had no idea what to expect. "When I moved here in 1993, Garfield was very different than what you see now," he told *The Bulletin*. "You had all kinds of gang activity. There used to be an ATM right there [southeast corner of Penn & Evaline]. One time, during a shootout, one of the bullets went through the ATM," Pabla recalled, "and it travelled all the way to where my uncle and I were standing in the [People's Grocery] store."

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BELOW: Kulwant Pabla (left) and his son Harpreet are ready for the lunch rush at People's Indian. Photo by Andrew McKeon.



When the COVID-19 pandemic hit home in March, the Pabla family was already leaning in a charitable direction. Working tirelessly for four months, the family provided upwards of 4,500 free lunches to those in need.

"If you look at relief efforts in every part of the world, Sikhs have been feeding people left and right," Pabla said. "A few weeks ago, *The New York Times* ran a headline that was something like 'If you want to learn how to feed people, learn from the Sikhs.'"

From March through June, the Pablas' restaurant received all sorts of calls for help. Most of the orders came from local families facing real hardships, but some callers seemed to be exploiting the charity of People's Indian.

When the restaurant ran out of chicken, on account of national food shortages during the pandemic, the Pablas did not expect people to turn their nose up at free vegetarian food – but they were in for a surprise.

"You'd be shocked by how many people said they didn't want it. They'd say 'No, I don't want that, but when you have chicken curry again, let me know,'" Pabla noted.

"If you're choosing, you don't really need it."

In 1984, the Indian government sent troops to the Golden Temple - a place of wor-

- continued on next page -

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- continued from previous page -

ship - and massacred Sikh women and children en masse. For the next 10+ years, throughout India, young men were regularly “disappeared” by not-so-mysterious agents of the federal government.

“For us, when it comes to Black Lives Matter [BLM], this really hits home,” Pabla said. “As Sikhs, our war has always been against oppression.” The Pablas recently devoted an entire face of their building [at the corner of S. Evaline & Penn] to the BLM movement. “When people say there’s no racism, that’s only because it doesn’t affect them,” Pabla noted. “If you’re not black, and you’re not being hunted, your reality is very different from theirs.”

Although he never knew the Indian caste system while living there, he soon found out in Fox Chapel - as a result of a classroom conversation. “Growing up in India, I had friends from many different castes, which is socially unacceptable,” Pabla said. “My parents wanted me to have a more human perspective that wasn’t shaped by the caste system.”

Pabla still finds it hard to reckon with the dividing lines of American society. “In the Sikh holy book, there are different writings by all sorts of holy men, including Hindus and Muslims,” he explained. “There are members of lower and higher castes whose writings are part of the same foundation. It’s very inclusive.”

Much to the delight of its loyal customers, People’s Indian launched its new pizza menu on Jul. 24. Six gourmet pizzas, including “Singh is King” and “Striaght Outta Punjab,” aim to combine traditional Indian flavors with American tastes.

Pabla knew his pizza concept could succeed, but he never could have predicted the kind of volume that it has generated for People’s Indian. At this point, the restaurant is making 50-60 pizzas every day, which taxes its kitchen.

“I’d love to get some more kitchen space so that we could start something like an Indian bakery that serves cakes and pastries,” Pabla revealed. “It’s a very different flavor; the icing is lighter and it’s not as sugary as American cakes.”

He is excited to support Chislett St. Market, a grocery that his cousin just opened in Morningside - the neighborhood where a teenage Harpreet came of age in the ‘90s.

From cake-icing to “life mantras,” Pabla is certain of one thing: “If you put good out there into the world, then good comes back to you.” ♦



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Alexander's Italian Bistro closes in Bloomfield, Colaizzi family shares fond memories

Interview by Lily Thornton Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

BELOW: Alexander's Italian Bistro (5104 Liberty Ave.), a Bloomfield institution, is closing its doors for good because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo by Andrew McKeon.



Bloomfield - Serving the local community since 1977, Alexander's Italian Bistro is closing its doors for good at 5104 Liberty Ave. The restaurant space, which has been owned and operated by the Colaizzi family for more than 60 years, has earned many loyal customers on its way to becoming a neighborhood fixture.

Owner Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft recently corresponded with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) about her family's fond memories of running the restaurant. The following transcript has been edited for space.

BGC: How long has your family owned Alexander's Italian Bistro?

Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft: "A little over 60 years ago, my grandfather Alex Colaizzi and his cousin Tony Tumolo opened a restaurant called "Alto" at 5104 Liberty Ave. In the early '70s, my Uncle Bobby bought the restaurant and ran it for seven years as "Bobby C's." Then, in 1977, my mom and dad [Sue and Alex Colaizzi] bought the restaurant from my uncle and named it 'Alexander's.'"

BGC: What were the early days like at Alexander's?

Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft: "It was a family-owned and -operated restaurant; my dad named dishes after his children, his parents, and his grandchildren. We only sourced local food, and we made everything in-house. If tomatoes were in season, we made more sauce than you can imagine. It was not unusual to find a waiter or waitresses giving away a quart of sauce and a loaf of bread at the end of the night, for no charge, just because we loved our customers."

BGC: What prompted you to close your business?

Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft: "We decided to close due to the pandemic. Most restaurant money is made on alcohol sales, and the food profit margin is very slim. At first, when we were forced to close temporarily, we didn't realize the gravity of the pandemic. We thought we'd be closed for a couple weeks and then re-open with vigor. But as we went to re-open, we had to lower our seating capacity, so the opportunities to pay our bills and our employees, and to turn a profit, were squashed."

BGC: Anything you'd like to say to all your customers and the Bloomfield community?

Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft: "Our business was built on customer loyalty. If there's anything we would say to our community, it's just a huge 'thank you' from the bottom of our hearts. You welcomed us with open arms 60 years ago and you're still sharing stories with us on Facebook. Your phone calls and messages have really put the seal of approval on the way we ran our family business."

BGC: As a business owner, what is your favorite "Bloomfield memory"?

Kimberly Colaizzi Ifft: "My favorite memory of Alexander's: I can singlehandedly say that it was every one of our parties. Our family parties, our anniversaries, and even our funerals - we celebrated all of our milestones at Alexander's. The cool part about it was, not only did we celebrate all of our milestones, but we got to be part of our customers' milestones as well. When someone's family member was in the hospital, they would come and grab a bite in between visits. When someone was having a baby, they came in between check-ups and then, a few weeks, later they'd bring that beautiful baby to the restaurant and we all got to celebrate. That's probably what we'll miss the most - the camaraderie that we had with our customers and employees. They loved us selflessly, and we loved every time somebody walked through our door." ♦

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Farmers Market brings curbside & social services together in Lawrenceville

By Sara Draper-Zivetz *Lawrenceville United*

Perspective/Lawrenceville - For many families, getting fresh and nutritious food on the table has never been easy. And now that COVID-19 is upending schedules, routines, and budgets, that daily challenge has only worsened.

This season, the Lawrenceville Farmers Market (LFM) remains committed to meeting the food needs of local families while also expanding food access throughout our region. Every Tuesday through October, the market will run from 3 to 7 p.m. at Arsenal Park (250 40th St.).

We accept both P-EBT and SNAP at the market. Thanks to LFM's partnership with The Food Trust and Just Harvest, we can match these benefits dollar-for-dollar with "Food Bucks" this season. This means that if you come to the market with \$20 in benefits to spend, you'll get \$20 *more* to spend on fruits and veggies, with no limit. Just stop by the orange info tent to get free food money.

We recently launched our curbside pick-up program, "LFM to Go," where no

in-person shopping is required. Customers can place pre-orders with their favorite market vendors, and then arrange for a Tuesday pick-up at the 39th St. entrance to Arsenal Park. Visit lunited.org/lfm-to-go for more details.

Anyone who needs help accessing food assistance like SNAP is welcome to answer some questions on the LFM sign-in form that will help us follow up with them. Staff members from state Representative Sara Innamorato's office will also be on hand to answer questions at the market; they can provide support navigating PA state policies and programs affecting your family.

Local parents with school-aged children are encouraged to stop by the info tent to grab a free backpack full of school supplies. LFM volunteers will even help you carry groceries to your car or bus stop.

As we continue to adapt and improve our market in the era of COVID-19, we welcome feedback and requests for other ways that we can better serve you. See you at the market, or curbside. ♦

City and County offering rental assistance

A Message from the City of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh - While Gov. Tom Wolf has extended protections for homeowners and renters from foreclosure or eviction through August 31, eligible residents of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh should be aware they can apply for rental assistance if needed.

Allegheny County has the CARES Rent Relief Program (C-RRP), and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh has the Housing Stabilization Program (HSP) under the umbrella of the Housing Opportunity Fund.

C-RRP offers up to six months of rent assistance to December 30, 2020. HSP offers up to \$3,000 for rent, mortgage, legal, and utility assistance. Those seeking assistance may find more information about County programs online at covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us [see flyer below for details]. Information about URA programs is available at ura.org/pages/housing-opportunity-fund-programs. City and county residents may also seek help from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency at by visiting phfa.org/pacares.

Mayor William Peduto this spring directed funding to the Commission on Human Relations to offer rental mediation services to those impacted by COVID-19. The city's Financial Empowerment Centers have also been helping residents with free financial management consulting during the pandemic.

"One of our goals is to help those in need avoid evictions and other financial catastrophes before they happen. I want to thank all of our public and private sector partners for their assistance in providing people the help they so desperately need right now," Mayor Peduto said. ♦

PENN AVE RECONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY MEETING

**Phase II reconstructs Penn Ave.
between Evaline & Graham streets.**

The second phase of Penn Ave reconstruction in Garfield & Bloomfield is now projected for 2022. Please join us for this planning meeting with representatives from The City of Pittsburgh and PWSA.


Thursday Aug 6 | 11am-Noon
You must register to participate

This meeting will be on ZOOM & you can join via phone or computer.
Residents can ask questions about the project and process.

Community input on traffic, the streetscape design,
& community requested additions is to be collected in Spring of 2021.
Ground breaking and start of construction is estimated for 2022



TO REGISTER FOR THE MEETING
Contact Nina at the BGC Office
nina@bloomfield-garfield.org
412-441-6950 x 17



Need help paying rent? We're here to help!

Allegheny County CARES Rent Relief Program

If you are:

- A renter in Allegheny County who has lost at least 30% of your income since March 1st due to COVID-19
- A landlord who has lost rental income because a renter lost a job due to COVID-19


And meet the following income guidelines:

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gross Income	\$58,100	\$66,400	\$74,700	\$83,000	\$89,700	\$96,300	\$103,000	\$109,600

You may be eligible for up to \$1,500 a month per household in rental assistance and up to \$200/month to cover certain additional utilities/court fees.

TO APPLY BY SEPTEMBER 30:

- Go here: COVIDrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us
- Call our Resource Navigator, Anna Hudson at 412-436-9537 who will walk you through the application





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LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

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

Real Estate Sales (for the month of June 2020)

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, RE/MAX Select Realty

Bloomfield

Alexandra Dreyzin to Jeremy T Gorniak at 4790 Yew St. for \$270,000.

Ann & David J Jastrab to Tim Owczarzak at 4533 Friendship Ave. for \$167,000.

Bloomfield Heights Development LLC to HC Property Solution LLC at 4055 Howley St. for \$215,000.

Danielle A Mccullough to John Whitefoot at 4008 Howley St. for \$221,000.

Francesca L Sieg to Bluegreen Properties LLC at 200 Taylor St. for \$1,005,225.

RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP to 3M Holdings LLC at 248 S. Mathilda St. for \$450,000.

Ryan P Mulvaney to Richard & Nancy Cohen at 211 S. Pacific Ave. for \$645,000.

Friendship

Decourcy & Susan McIntosh to Brian Riedel at 4 Clarendon Pl for \$343,000.

RD Real Estate Debt Fund II LP to 3M Holdings LLC at 353 Stratford Ave. for \$450,000.

Garfield

Abigail Yasmin Sanders to Vishal Dahya at 5121 Dearborn St. for \$292,500.

Albert A & Yvonne Gibbs to Lys Real Estate LLC at 237 N. Graham St. for \$73,000.

Andette LLC to Suknessnag LLC at 4905 Penn Ave. for \$500,000.

Daniel Boyd to Nicholas Moellers at 5491 Penn Ave. Unit A206 for \$252,000.

East Liberty Development Incorporated to Desi Rai Laprade at 208 N. Fairmount St. for \$167,000.

Philip D & Elisa Cupelli to 4632 Penn Ave. LLC at 4632 Penn Ave. for \$258,750.

Thomas Q Berna to Odie's Development Company at 0 Columbo St. for \$13,000.

East Liberty

Alison Schmeck to Lynelle Jones at 725 N. Beatty St. for \$527,000.

Div 6325 Penn LLC to Walnut Penn Shady LP at 6315-6325 Penn Ave. for \$9,975,000.

East Liberty Development Incorporated to Deshawn D Daniels at 5641 Rural St. for \$177,000.

East Liberty Station Associates to Lore PPA BkSq4 Villages Agent LLC at 6343 Penn Ave. for \$23,612,625.

Geneva Jordan to Ultraviolet Solutions LLC at 517 N. Euclid Ave. for \$90,000.

Harry & Frances Spiegel to Rose Schoy at 612 Chislett St. for \$109,000.

Kipp R & Dantae R Jackson to Ian D & Jessa Darwin at 6106 Saint Marie St. for \$295,000.

Old Republic Diversified Services, Inc. to Michelle Hodge at 605 N. Saint Clair St. for \$490,000.

Peter Ennis to Molly E Ennis at 5617 Hays St. for \$175,000.

PGH Theological Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church to Ahi-Stanton Highland Apartments, Inc. at 6004 Stanton Ave. for \$2,500,000.

PGH Theological Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church to Ahi-Stanton Highland Apartments, Inc. at 738 N. Highland Ave. for \$2,500,000.

Richard Garnett to Manal Shouman at 600 N. Euclid Ave. for \$32,000.

Lawrenceville

20186WY-44 LLC to Thiagarajan Meyyappan at 5153 Carnegie St. for \$320,000.

5515 Butler Street Development LP to Christian & Melinda Bosquet at 168 56th St. for \$564,900.

5515 Butler Street Development LP to Linda Laura & Gregory Paul Maynes at 156 56th St. for \$499,900.

Aaron R Garland to Robert A Miller at 5434 Natrona Way for \$340,000.

Andrew B & Virginia C Hendryx to Katherine F Drummond at 271 Fisk St. for \$465,000.

Corey J Dedomenic to Brad W Groff at 115 53rd St. for \$215,000.

Francis & Irene Garrison to Judith Lynn Dennison at 4211 Sherrod St. for \$187,000.

Jacob W Mohin to Audra Josephine Hunter at 297 Fisk St. for \$375,000.

Jane Elizabeth Richey to Stephanie Chavez-Yenter at 4423 Davison St. for \$273,000.

Jeralyn & Robert Beach to Harly A Stuyvesant at 5171 Stanton Ave. for \$240,000.

Jillian Lapinski to Iryna Sulimova at 153 43rd 1/2 St. for \$299,000.

Lawrenceville Corporation to Jaclyn Sternick at 4916 Plum Way for \$127,500.

Louise M & Lois Clara Shero to Kevin J Mcguire at 4018 Arsenal Pl for \$240,000.

Marlene M & James G Steigerwald to Pgh1 Realty LLC at 4306 Main St. for \$110,000.

Matthew C Black to Joshua D Wheless at 3949 Liberty Ave. for \$617,500.

Matthew D Brennan to Jaclyn Maria Bala at 3607 Butler St. Unit 202 for \$270,000.

Michele T Viola to Catherine Lafferty at 255 40th St. for \$275,000.

Norene O'Connor to Kurt G Dittmer at 5303 Mccandless Ave. for \$94,500.

Pittsburgh Residential Solutions LLC to

Alexander M Shaen at 5235 Duncan St. for \$417,000.

Property Trio LLC to Blake Norton at 5268 Holmes St. for \$239,000.

Riverside Prop Two LP to Erin M Maidman at 4630 Hatfield St. for \$447,500.

Rub-A-Dub-Dub, Inc. to Costello Properties LLC at 3828 Penn Ave. for \$300,000.

Terra Firm Capital LLC to Karina C Westfall at 5237 Lotus Way for \$235,000.

William R Winkeler Jr to David John Lovett at 183 Home St. for \$428,000.

Stanton Heights

Justin D & Starry J Ray to Gregory W Angelides & Mary Smith at 5549 Camelia St. for \$221,600.

Philip C & Donna M Allen to Anthony M Schroeder at 1150 Brintell St. for \$226,000.

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

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

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New pandemic protocol: 'giving our time to each other'

By Maggie K. Jones *Bulletin contributor*

Op-Ed/Pittsburgh - When it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic, too many people just assume it's okay to go out in public without wearing a facemask.

Those who don't socially distance are being selfish, ignoring their obligation - as a human - to help protect their neighbors' health. We have to listen to our doctors & scientists and, until they find a vaccine, be cautious and caring in our everyday lives. Think of all the lives lost so far.

Use your common sense and do the right things: wear a mask outside, stay home when you're sick, stay six feet away from other people in public places, and wash your hands as often as possible; if you don't know how long to wash your hands, slowly sing the "Happy Birthday" song to completion.

When we all take a few steps outside of our normal routines, instead of thinking selfishly, we can help slow the spread of COVID-19 and save lives in the process.

We are giving our time to each other by staying at home, remaining mindful of our neighbors, and praying for the less fortunate. Everyone is struggling to adapt to these new ways of living but, if we all do our part, we can look back at this time together as one of great strength and teamwork.

When you're at the grocery store, why not just purchase only the items you actually

need - instead of clearing out the shelves and leaving nothing behind for anyone else? When your shopping is done, please return home as soon as you can, no matter how great it feels to be out of the house.

Things can be replaced, but people can't, and the COVID-19 threat is even more lethal to vulnerable populations like seniors and people who are already stricken by illnesses like cancer or immune disorders. Even healthy people get sick when they're not following the simple safety guidelines.

Those who work in hospitals, and on the many other front lines of the pandemic, need our support while they do God's work. Although a simple "thank you" message means a lot during times like these, we should try to get creative (we've got the free time) and find new ways to give back to our COVID-19 fighters.

When it comes to good, old-fashioned, financial contributions, there are many organizations in our area that desperately need your support.

Look at the food banks, for starters, or the many hospital and church charities supporting vulnerable populations here in Pittsburgh. These are only a few possible destinations for your donations, but your heart will tell you how and where to give.

We can all overcome this pandemic together to build a much better tomorrow. ♦

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation & Assemblies are looking into Wifi access and computers for the community. We want to get an idea of what people have and what people need.

Take the survey online!
www.Bloomfield-Garfield.org

What street do you live on? (this is to map the access to wifi) *

Do you have access to wifi at your home? * Mark only one

- ☐ Yes, I have Comcast/Verizon/Green Light/Etc
- ☐ No ☐ Yes, I pick it up from a neighbors
- ☐ I use a hotspot from a library or a prepaid hotspot
- ☐ I use my phone as a hotspot

Do you get online for the following * Check all that apply.

- ☐ School ☐ Work
- ☐ Relax-media watching like movies tv ☐ Gaming

What device do you use to get online? *Check all that apply.

- ☐ A computer (desktop or laptop) ☐ Tablet (Ipad etc)
- ☐ Phone ☐ I can't get online

What times of day do you use the internet the most? *

How many people and their ages are in your household*

Provide contact information for updates:

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____



Return survey to Nina at the BGC Office
5149 Penn Ave, PGH PA 15224
412-441-6950 x 17



Back to School... Already!

It's hard to believe that in a few weeks school will begin again. Before sending your children off, stop and read the following tips.

Young Students

Pedestrian injuries are the second leading cause of unintentional death among children ages 5 to 14. So make sure that children:

- Look left, right then left again before crossing the street.
- Always try to cross a street when a crossing guard is present.
- Cross in front of the bus only after the driver signals it's okay.

High School Students

Statistics show that teen drivers are four times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes than more experienced drivers. If your children drive to school:

- Teach them, as well as, all passengers to buckle-up.
- Remind them to obey the speed limits
- Enforce no-drinking-and-driving rules.

College Students

The number one crime on college campuses is theft. One-out-of-every 10 college students will be robbed while away at school.

- Remind students to always lock dormitory doors.
- Tell students not to keep large amounts of money in their rooms.
- Have students mark personal property with identifiable marks.



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City, AHN to partner on support for those experiencing homelessness

By Timothy McNulty City of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh - The City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Health Network (AHN) are creating a new model for responding to the needs of those experiencing homelessness, problematic substance abuse, and unaddressed mental health issues.

The program is managed by the Office of Mayor William Peduto, Office of Management & Budget, Dept. of Public Safety, and AHN's Center for Inclusion Health.

Building community-based, street outreach teams to connect people with services, housing resources, and health supports, the program will also collaborate with first responders to prevent continued engagement and promote healthier outcomes.

This program comes from funds allocated to the City under the federal CARES ("Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security" Act).

The new initiative, which was announced Apr. 28, was developed in response to longstanding calls from the community and Pittsburgh Public Safety to provide more robust supports for individuals with unmet needs in Pittsburgh communities.

Often, when first responders from Public Safety respond to calls to address these needs, they are not provided with the tools to do so.

"As part of the Center for Inclusion Health's ongoing commitment to health equity for vulnerable and marginalized populations in our region, especially persons experiencing homelessness, we are extremely grateful to have been awarded this funding. We look forward to working with the City of Pittsburgh to create innovative street outreach models that help mitigate risks posed by the compounding public health crises of homelessness, COVID-19, and social exclusion," Patrick Perri, MD, Medical Director at AHN Center for Inclusion Health, said.

The program aligns with a "Housing First" model, aimed at ensuring that people are able to access housing without barriers, while addressing health as a critical part of stable housing and wellbeing.

COVID-19 has resulted in increased housing instability and crises, and as such, the City anticipates continued calls to first responders. ♦

AT RIGHT:

Garfield artist Kenneth Neely's BLM sign comes from the heart - and represents the hearts of many. Neely's thoughtful and colorful message joins many others - proudly standing in solidarity with advocates from the Black Lives Matter movement. Photo courtesy of Kenneth Neely.



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Selling a home isn't just putting a sign in the ground!

What often appears to be an easy process, involves much more.

Is your home prepared to sell, not to your standards but to the buying population standards? What might that entail?

Are you pricing your home appropriately? Are you underpriced and leaving money on the table? Are you overpriced and costing yourself time and buyers?

How and where are you advertising your home? Are you limiting your exposure to only a segment of the market or are you exposing your home to the entire marketplace of buyers?

Are you putting your schedule ahead of the potential buyer schedule? Who is this person that I am letting into my home?

Paperwork, Paperwork, Paperwork. Do I really understand what I am signing and all the legal implications and consequences that come with it?

What financing standards will my home meet?

What is reasonable or not when it comes to inspections? Have I properly exposed everything? Am I giving away more money than I should? Do I really have a problem? Maybe I do have a problem?

What do I need to do to go to closing? What is involved with that?

A good agent should be able to help you through what on the surface may seem to be simple but in reality, can be complicated and involves most likely your most expensive investment.

My goal as your agent is to get you the most money possible with the least amount of stress during the process and to make sure we are doing things the right way. My job is to work with you in understanding the questions above.

Please don't approach selling your most expensive investment like a yard sale!

Free  **Food**

www.Bloomfield-Garfield.org

Free Boxes of Produce for Pick up- Garfield Jubilee 412-665-5222

5323 Penn Ave (Parking lot behind church)

Weekly distribution of produce and dairy products

11am-3pm. Day changes. Call for availability.

Free Meals for Pick up- Everyday's a Sunday 4919 Penn Ave 15224

412FoodRescue donations

Wed-Fri 11am to 2pm,

Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat 6pm to supplies run out.

Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank Distribution Site-

3rd Saturday of the Month at 9am

Morningside Church of God in Christ-5173 Dearborn St, 15224.

Residents of GARFIELD (15224, 15206) can be issued food boxes and must bring proof of residence and source of financial income

Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank Distribution Site -

First Friday of the Month at 11am car pick up

Valley View Presbyterian Church- 601 N Aiken Ave, 15206

The last three Thursday's of the month delivery of food boxes.

Must call to participate 412-708-6158



DO YOU NEED HELP?

- Do you need help with **Medicare?**
- Are you struggling to **pay for your Part D prescription drugs or other healthcare costs?**
- Do you need help **understanding your coverage?**

The **APPRISE Program** can help people with Medicare by screening them for assistance programs, such as:

- Extra Help Program – which helps lower the cost of Part D prescription drug costs
- Medicare Savings Programs – which covers the payment of the Medicare Part B premium

APPRISE can also help you understand your Medicare coverage, preventative benefits, and give you free, accurate, unbiased advice.

call **APPRISE** at 412.661.1438
or visit wfspa.org/service/apprise

APPRISE is the Pennsylvania State Health Insurance Assistance Program and works in partnership with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Area Agency on Aging.

